Association of Teachers and Lecturers

ATL Recommendations to the Committee for Education - Inquiry into the Education and Training Inspectorate and the School Improvement Process.

RECOMMENDATIONS: *to improve the approach to school improvement*

1. *Undertake a cost benefit analysis* of the relationship between inspection and school improvement (*Whitby, K. 2010 in Perry, C., 2012, P21*)
2. *Develop a supportive quality assurance model* (Finland/Scotland) which uses positive language (*for example, Very Confident, Confident, Not Confident*) aligned to support systems that involve more seconded teachers;
3. *Stream-line future school evaluation processes* to provide clearer guidance on data requirements; permit verbal (and written) challenge; reduce reporting timescales; and improve the qualitative detail of unpublished reporting to schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS: *to improve the assessment of value-added*

4. *Use NISRA census information* and *geographic information system (GIS)* to identify school characteristics and to stratify schools by socio-economic intake to help allocate resources effectively, target social need and calculate value-added.
5. *Assess productive language (oracy) on entry to school* as a key indicator of future educational potential and as a base-line measure of school value-added.

RECOMMENDATIONS: *to improve system monitoring*

6. *Use light sampling* to provide robust and independent monitoring data over time**,** disentangling teacher assessment from accountability (*Tymms & Merrill*);
7. *Use International data* (PIRLS, TIMSS and PISA) to provide additional quantitative and qualitative information as a broader comparative measure.

RECOMMENDATIONS *for alternative measures of achievement*

8. *Commission international research* and *development* to assist CCEA in developing innovative 21st Century assessments and examinations.
9. *Separate teacher assessment from accountability* to safeguard assessment for learning.
10. *Develop wider indicators* to '*enable progress in all important learning goals to be reported'* (*ARG, 2008*) and to broaden measurement of 'value-added'.
11. *Use standardised testing data sensitively within schools only for* diagnostic, formative and value-added purposes to prevent teaching to the test.
12. *Use pupil attitudinal and 'well-being' surveys sensitively* to gain insight into the correlation between 'motivation', 'liking' and achievement (*Sturman, 2012*).
13. *Develop 'unseen' thinking skills assessments* 'to ensure that important 21st Century skills become valued in the education system' (*OECD, 2011: 19*).
14. *Develop new qualifications for N. Ireland* which reflect the needs of young people, the economy and employment in the 21st Century (*CBI, 2012*).
15. *Introduce a measure to reduce the number of pupils leaving school with no qualifications* by an agreed percentage.
16. *Review Programme for Government Targets and NI Audit Office Monitoring* to reflect these recommendations, based on an understanding of supportive accountability.

RECOMMENDATIONS *for additional powers, governance and transparency*

17. *Ensure accurate and transparent media reporting of educational outcomes.*

18. *Require that the evidence-base for ETI judgements is open and transparent.*

19. *Ensure that all future educational policy is based on sound research.*

20. *Invest in teacher professional development and improve political and public respect for teaching as a profession:* Re-route spending on statutory assessment and evaluation systems towards teacher professional development. Develop greater political and public appreciation of the complexity of education, issues of socio-economic deprivation and equity, and the quality of the public service which teachers provide.