



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Veronica Bintley
Departmental Assembly Liaison Officer
Department of Education
Rathgael House
Balloo Road
Bangor
BT19 7PR

15 November 2013

Our Ref: PMcC/SMcG/1026

Dear Veronica

ETI Inquiry – Oral Evidence Session 13 November 2013

At its meeting on 13 November 2013, the Committee received a number of briefings as part of its Inquiry into the Education and Training Inspectorate and the School Improvement Process.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek:

1. clarification regarding the number of complaints (successful or otherwise) made against it in respect of school inspections to the NI Ombudsman and/or the Information Commissioner; and to ask for details of successful complaints;
2. clarification regarding the number of judicial reviews (successful or otherwise) made against the Department in respect of school inspections; and to ask for details of successful judicial reviews or judicial reviews which were the subject of a settlement;
3. commentary in response to the suggestion that the principles of 'Every School a Good School' were in one case applied by ETI to a school retrospectively;
4. commentary in response to the suggestion that confidentiality is applied by ETI selectively in that it is afforded to complainants, but not certain staff members;
5. commentary in response to the suggestion that it is/was ETI's practice to destroy evidence relating to school inspections following the completion of inspection reports;

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6. commentary as to how the assessment of school leadership by ETI is influenced by the non-compliance by staff with action plans and programmes recommended by ETI following an inspection report;
7. commentary as to how the assessment of school leadership by ETI is influenced by staff complaints linked to the resolution of staff performance management issues; and
8. commentary that school leaders had in some cases complied with ETI requirements outlined in an inspection report but found that further requirements were put forward by ETI in subsequent reports.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to seek:

9. further information on the weighting allocated in school inspections to end of Key Stage assessments (as opposed to individual school pupil monitoring systems) as compared to other inspection findings;
10. commentary on suggestions of interference by ETI senior management with regard to the outcome of school inspections; and
11. clarification as to the value placed by ETI on skills-based or vocational courses as opposed to academic courses when judging school performance.

The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to determine how ETI benchmarks its inspection activities; assesses Inspectors; and provides training and development for Inspectors.

A response by 29 November 2013 would be appreciated.

Please be aware that all correspondence pertaining to the Education and Training Inspectorate and School Improvement Process Inquiry will be published on the Committee for Education webpage once it has been considered by the Committee for Education.

Yours sincerely



Peter McCallion
Committee Clerk