

Controlled Schools' Support Council gives evidence to MPs' inquiry



Barry Mullholland, Chief Executive, CSSSC



The panel giving evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee



Heather Murray, Council member, CSSSC

CSSSC representatives have given evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee as part of its inquiry into education funding.

Saying that schools are at "rock bottom", Millington Primary School Principal and Council member Heather Murray highlighted how she was "having to make decisions on things like reducing the staffing – non-teaching staffing, teaching staffing – which has a very direct impact on the children's learning".

"Because of the funding crisis that is in our schools, we are having to make decisions based on the cost of education, rather than what we truly believe is the value of education... in developing the whole child," she added.

The session on Wednesday 5 December provided an opportunity for CSSSC to share concerns raised by controlled school principals from all sectors, as well as to highlight the need for increased capital and resources funding in the education system.

CSSSC Chief Executive Barry Mullholland told the committee "There is not enough money in the education budget... I am talking to

principals who are having to make awful decisions in terms of the running of their schools and reductions in terms of their teaching and non-teaching workforce."

"They are having to make curricular choices that they would not have dreamed of having to make within the last five years", he said.

CSSSC has consistently acknowledged that budgets are finite, but the reality is that controlled schools are struggling to deliver the essential curriculum to continue to provide high quality education to over 140,000 pupils to enable them to realise their potential.

Barry Mullholland highlighted that "education must continue to be valued and given the priority it deserves across all government departments; after all, our schools are educating the next generation".

CSSSC continues to engage with the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee and will be providing further evidence when the Committee visits Northern Ireland on 28 January 2019.



Jayne Millar CSSSC, Heather McKenzie CSSSC and Dr David McKee, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

Energising leaders

CSSSC's first teachers' professional learning seminar focusing on primary school leaders took place on Friday 11 January.

Sixty principals from across Northern Ireland participated. The event included a panel discussion with serving principals; insights from David McKee of Stranmillis University College on the impact of sedentary behaviour and how to incorporate more movement into our days; and some practical insights from Patrick Anderson of Aware on how to manage stress.



Energising leaders (L-R) Jayne Millar CSSSC, Mark Hall, Richmount PS, Sharon Lennon, Carrickmannon PS, Heather McKenzie CSSSC, Colin Elliott, Brownlee PS and Sara McCracken CSSSC

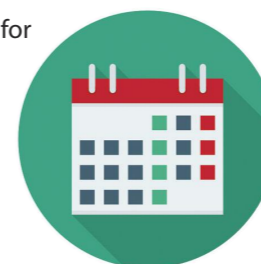
Upcoming events

CSSSC has planned a number of events for schools over the coming months.

To view the full calendar of events see <http://www.csscni.org.uk/events/upcoming-events/>. Registration details are emailed to schools.

Forthcoming events include:

- Women's leadership development
- TPL events for nursery, special and post primary school leaders
- Seminars to disseminate the ethos toolkit
- Raising the profile of controlled schools
- TRC governor training sessions



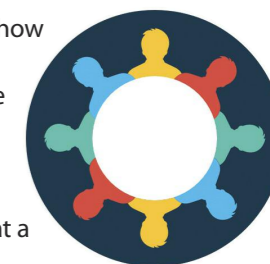
Governors: The way ahead

As a representative organisation, it is important that we continuously engage with school leaders, including governors. An important strategic function for CSSSC is to encourage and nominate governors in controlled schools and ensure ethos is part of employment considerations. CSSSC values the significant contribution that governors make.

We would welcome the opportunity to attend a meeting of your Board of Governors. This would enable a representative from CSSSC to engage with governors to both raise awareness of the functions of CSSSC and listen to governors' views on key issues.

Feedback will help inform CSSSC as to how the Council can best represent the interests of controlled schools and the sector as a whole.

Please contact us to arrange attendance of a CSSSC representative at a future meeting.



Representing you

The inaugural AGM of the Controlled Schools' Support Council on 8 March 2017 saw the election of its Board of Directors.

The Directors, representing schools, the Transferor Representatives' Council and those from a public appointments process will serve for four years.

Full details are available on our website: <http://www.csscni.org.uk/about-csssc/directors/>



SCHOOLS' REPRESENTATIVES:

- Grace Trimble – Nursery
- Heather Murray – Primary
- Gillian Dunlop – Primary
- Hugh McCarthy – Non-selective post primary
- Robin McLaughlin – Grammar
- Raymond McFeeters – Special

TRANSFEROR REPRESENTATIVES' COUNCIL:

- Peter Hamill (Dr)
- Kenneth Twyble
- Andrew Brown (Dr) (Vice-chairperson)

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS:

- Mark Orr QC (Chairperson)
- Johnny Graham OBE
- Bill Reilly MBE, FRICS
- Dorothy Black MBE



HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

Our team of experienced staff is here to help you. Please don't hesitate to contact us about any issue.

You can also visit our interactive map on our website to find your designated school support officer.

Controlled Schools' Support Council
 Second Floor, Main Building
 Stranmillis University College
 Stranmillis Road
 Belfast
 BT9 5DY

Telephone: 028 9531 3030
 Email: info@csscni.org.uk
 Web: csscni.org.uk

Christmas card winners unveiled

Congratulations to Katie Withers from Elmgrove Primary School and Nursery Unit who's Christmas tree was declared the winner of CSSC's 2018 Christmas card competition.

The collective entry from the nursery unit at Omagh County and Caleb Beacom, also from Elmgrove, were announced as runners-up.

Thank you to all the nursery schools that participated. CSSC Board members had the unenviable task of choosing their favourites from 57 entries.



Omagh nursery school Christmas card winners with Mrs MacCrossan



Elmgrove Primary school winners pictured with Jayne Millar, Head of Education Support, CSSC

CSSC raises over £1800 for Cancer Focus

Staff participated in a moonlit walk up Cave Hill in November in aid of Cancer Focus NI, CSSC's charity of the year. The event was enjoyed by all, despite dense fog meaning the team couldn't see anything from the top!

We are delighted to have raised £1,830 to date, and we will continue to fundraise in memory of our former colleague Pearse McCormick.



Schools' estate and area planning

One of CSSC's key functions is participating in the planning of the schools' estate and to participate in area planning. CSSC ensures that the controlled sector has a voice and advocates on behalf of controlled schools in the area planning process.

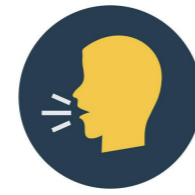
Did you know that CSSC



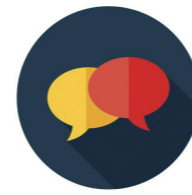
staff, including the Chief Executive, Head of Education Support and School Support Officers are involved in area planning groups at all levels, in the Area Planning Steering Group, Area Planning Working Group and Area Planning Local Groups *



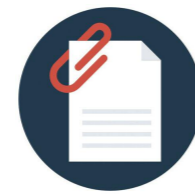
responses are informed by engagement with controlled schools which may be affected by the development proposal



representatives contribute to the development of the area plan and annual action plans



provides advice to schools in submitting their own response to development proposals



responds to every planning development proposal relating to controlled schools and those which could have an impact on the sector or individual controlled schools



provides advice to schools regarding their own school estate, for example about initiating changes to admissions or enrolment numbers

In numbers:

75

responses have been submitted by CSSC during EA's pre-publication consultations and DE's consultations for development proposals since September 2016

142

controlled schools engaged with CSSC to inform these responses

6

CSSC officers are involved in area planning groups, coordinated by the Department of Education and the Education Authority

* <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/articles/area-planning-overview>

Killicomaine JHS well-being ambassadors promoting good mental health

A new group of "well-being ambassadors" has been formed in Killicomaine Junior High to improve mental health in the school.

The well-being ambassadors have organised workshops and competitions on themes such as anti-bullying, anti-racism and RAOK (random acts of kindness). In April the group gave a presentation to all the schools across Craigavon Area Learning Community of the work they have done.



Killicomaine Junior High School well-being ambassadors

250 primary school children to learn sign language



P4 pupils from Ballymacash Primary School pictured with (l-r) Principal Stephen Gray, sign language tutor Anthony Sinclair, Brian Kelly, Chair of the Board of Governors of Ballymacash Primary School, Maeve Walls, Director of Culture at the Department of Communities, School Support Officer Tracey Woods and Chief Executive Barry Mulholland CSSC, John Dickson, Department of Education Sectoral Bodies Support Team and Johnny Graham, CSSC

Over 250 primary school children and their parents will learn sign language in nine controlled primary schools thanks to funding secured by CSSC from the Department for Communities Sign Language Partnership Funding Group.

Pupils from Ballymacash Primary School, under the direction of tutor Anthony Sinclair, demonstrated their communication skills and understanding of sign language as a language in its own right at the launch in December.



Pupils and staff from Ballymacash Primary School, with Tracey Woods CSSC and tutor Anthony Sinclair

Apply now for Erasmus+ funding!



€36 million of Erasmus+ funding is reserved in 2019 for UK schools and colleges. The funding supports professional development for school staff. It can cover job-shadowing and teaching placements overseas, or staff can join training courses on topics such as school leadership, STEM and much more. Erasmus+ funding also supports pupil exchanges in Europe, and enables schools to work on projects with schools abroad.

There are two main application deadlines for 2019: **5 February** and **21 March**. Visit <https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/schools-funding> to find out more.