



ATL Response to the Lisanelly Educational Campus, July 2010

Representing over 160,000 members, the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (hereafter ATL) is the UK's third largest teaching union – and it keeps growing. What is so unique about ATL is the breadth of membership, which encompasses education professionals from early years right through to further education. Members include teachers, lecturers, teacher trainers, classroom assistants and non teaching professionals involved in education. ATL has no affiliation to any political party, but is affiliated to both the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU). ATL would make the following points to the Evaluation of the Union Learning Fund.

The Northern Ireland Branch Committee of our Association have discussed the Lisanelly campus proposal and are fully supportive.

Strategic Fit:

The proposed campus will address many of the strategic matters raised first in Sir George Bain's Strategic Review of Education, including the need for Area Based Planning, sustainable schools and the statutory requirement (from 2013) for a Pupil Entitlement and access to a broad and varied curriculum. The campus is also an exciting, shared development within an education system which is recognisably over-administered and balkanised by social class, religious, geographical and sectoral balkanisation.

Division Costs

The serious thing is that this sectoral and sectarian division is costly. Research carried out by Deloitte into the financial cost of the Northern Ireland divide **(1)** estimates that savings of £79.6m could be realised in the school estate, savings of £6.4m could be achieved in school management administration, together with up to £543,000 in savings unifying teacher training institutions. **We pay a very high price for social, sectarian and geographical segregation in education.**

Sectarian differentials:

Recently, ATL has raised with concern the disparity in achievement and performance levels between sectors. It is clear that communal division has attracted attention due to the increasing differentials in respective communal performance **(2 unless stated)** :

- More the 75% of LTE (Lower than Expected) schools are in the (Protestant) Controlled sector – mainly clustered in Belfast.
- Within the LTE Protestant Controlled schools, 50%+ of pupils were eligible for Free School Meals and 1 in 5 were identified as having special educational needs.
- A socially Disadvantaged pupil in a Catholic (Maintained) school will have a 1 in 5 chance of going to University, compared to a similar pupil in a Protestant (Controlled) school, who has a 1 in 10 chance; **(3)**
- At Key Stage 2 in English and Maths, 11% of LTE schools are Protestant (Controlled), compared to 3% Catholic (Maintained)
- At Key Stage 3 English, 25% of Catholic Maintained Schools were HTE (Higher than Expected) as compared to 2% Protestant Controlled schools.
- At GCSE English and Maths, 14% of Protestant Controlled schools are underperforming, as against 4% of Catholic Maintained schools.
- Only 29% of Protestant FSM pupils achieved 5 GCSEs (A-C), as compared to 42% of Catholics
- 25% of Catholic Maintained schools are HTE in English, with 20% HTE in English, as compared with 0% (Zero) Protestant Controlled schools in the HTE (Higher than Expected) category.

Our view it that ideas such as the Lisanelly Campus could, and should, help narrow this performance gap and promote more socially balanced approaches to education provision.

Ends.....

References

- 1) Deloitte MCS: Research into the financial cost of the Northern Ireland divide, Chapter 9, p56-63 commissioned for the inter-departmental Cost of the Divide Steering Group by OFMDFM, 2007.
- 2) Statistics taken from Every Child an Equal Child, An Equality Commission Statement on Key Inequalities in Education and a Strategy for Intervention November 2008 ISBN 978-1-906414-14-6
- 3) Speech of Cairíona Ruane to the Association of Northern Ireland Education and Library Boards, 17th October 2008, see www.deni.gov.uk

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