

NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL

NITC STATEMENT

RE: POST-PRIMARY TRANSFER

Due to the on-going health crisis and a marked lack of leadership from the Department of Education, the Year 7 cohort of children and their schools have been placed in an unacceptable and untenable position.

This situation has not been created by primary schools nor is it the responsibility of primary schools to address or resolve it.

It is the position of NITC that primary school principals and teachers should not participate in any activity relating to the potential selection of children based on academic criteria. This includes the organisation or facilitation of any assessments requested by parents or other schools, the rank ordering of children and/or responding to requests for any form of ranking or recommendation facilitating entry to a particular school.

Whilst parents are entitled to request the results of any already completed standardised test pertaining to their child, schools should reject any request from parents or other schools to report any performance related assessment which is outside of the normal practice of the school.

NITC maintains that the Minister has had it within his power to direct post-primary schools that they should not use such information for selection purposes. His avoidance of providing clear direction on this issue has resulted in further avoidable anxiety being placed on children and parents and intense and unfair pressures being placed on primary school principals to find solutions.

Minister Weir has, however, previously confirmed that ‘it remains for individual Boards of Governors to define the criteria they wish to use to select children for admission’.

Primary schools should not, and do not, have a role to play in this process.

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