

Response of the

South Eastern Education and Library Board

to the Report

by

The Post-Primary Review Body



**SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION
AND LIBRARY BOARD**

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Section 1

1. Introduction

- 1.1** The South Eastern Education and Library Board welcomes the opportunity to respond to the recommendations for the future organisation of education in Northern Ireland as presented in the Report by the Post-Primary Review Body (October 2001). The Board has always recognised the importance of creating an educational structure which provides for, and develops, the unique attributes of each young person to enable them to achieve their full potential. For that reason, the Board strongly commends that the key motivation of the Report is to enhance the educational and life chances of all young people in Northern Ireland. However, the Board does regret that this vision focused only on post-primary provision and did not include children in early years and primary education.
- 1.2** The South Eastern Education and Library Board also welcomes the Education Minister's invitation (17 January 2002) to focus the debate on the wider issues involved in post-primary arrangements. Consequently, the Board's response has been expanded to include modifications and alternative proposals to the Report.
- 1.3** Central to the Board's suggested arrangements for post-primary education is the premise that the Review of Post-Primary education and the Review of the Curriculum need to be considered in parallel. Therefore the Board's response will also include curriculum proposals wherever appropriate.
- 1.4** In presenting this response, the South Eastern Education and Library Board would wish to express its recognition and appreciation of the valuable contribution made by all schools to the education and development of young people in Northern Ireland. Moreover, the Board would wish to emphasise that in any re-organisation of post-primary education, the focus must be the improvement and enhancement of the educational experience of each young person, while at the same time retaining all that is excellent within the present system.

2. The Consultation Process

2.1 To assist the Board in formulating its views on the Report, a number of consultative and information-gathering exercises was undertaken. These included:

- ❖ A presentation on the German education system by Dr J Martini from Magbeburg University.
- ❖ A presentation on the Craigavon system by a post-primary principal who had been actively involved in the process.
- ❖ Discussions with European teachers from Germany, Greece, Portugal and Spain who were on exchange visits with SEELB teachers.
- ❖ Study visits to Craigavon, Scotland and Wales to investigate at first hand their respective post-primary education systems.
- ❖ A comprehensive review of the Board's Position Paper on Selection.

In addition, the South Eastern Education and Library Board engaged in a rigorous consultation exercise with all stakeholders involved in the present and future education of young people in nursery, primary, post-primary and special education. The Board was determined to ensure that all interested parties had an opportunity to express their views and to comment on all aspects of the report, especially the three integral innovations.

Consequently, 35 consultation sessions took place between November 2001 and May 2002 involving pupils, parents, teachers, principals and governors as well as with all Board staff

	Sessions	Approx Numbers
Pupils	3	150
Parents	10	900
Primary Principals	3	144
Post-Primary Principals	2	31
Primary Governors	7	97
Post-Primary Governors	2	31
Special Schools	1	14
Chinese Community	1	35
SEELB Staff	6	250
<i>Views and comments are summarised in Appendix A</i>		

The information gathered during the consultation process was considered fully at a series of Special Board meetings and used to inform and guide the official response from the South Eastern Education and Library Board.

- 2.2** The response by the Board will be presented under headings which reflect the relevant chapters in the Report.

Section 2

3. Our Vision for the Future of Post-Primary Education [Chapter 5]

3.1 The South Eastern Education and Library Board is committed fully to the centrality of the child in the educational process. Furthermore, the Board is convinced that an educational structure must be devised to maximise the unique potential of all young people in their academic, social, moral and personal development in order that they are equipped to lead fulfilling lives and to play a productive role in society. Therefore, the Board endorses the Vision and Underlying Objectives for the future of post-primary education in Northern Ireland set out in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6 of the Report.

3.2 While recognising and valuing the recommendation that any vision and objectives for an educational system require to be reinforced by principles which will influence and be at the heart of policy and practice, the Board recommends the following Guiding Principles as more meaningful alternatives to those outlined in paragraph 5.7.

- ❖ Each young person should be valued equally.
- ❖ Education should be an enjoyable experience that contributes to the development of the self confidence of all young people.
- ❖ All young people should be enabled to develop their talents to the full and to realise their creative potential, including accepting responsibility for their own lives and making a positive contribution to society.
- ❖ Young people should be encouraged to develop a love of learning that will be sustained throughout life.
- ❖ The education system should provide for the development of all aspects of the individual, including the intellectual, spiritual, moral, cultural, social, physical, emotional and creative.
- ❖ Education should promote a culture of tolerance and respect.

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- ❖ Education should have regard to the changing needs of society and the economy and should equip each young person with the necessary values and skills to meet these challenges.
 - ❖ Teachers, support staff and parents should be highly valued as partners in the pursuit of excellence.
 - ❖ There should be parity of esteem for **all educational pathways**.
 - ❖ The curriculum and assessment arrangements should take account of research on learning abilities.

4. *The Curriculum and Pupil Assessment [Chapter 8]*

The Curriculum

- 4.1** The Board agrees that the Review of Post-Primary Education and the Review of the Curriculum are inextricably linked. Taken together they afford a unique and important opportunity to develop education provision which will be more interesting and relevant to all young people in the Province. In particular, for that small but significant minority for whom education has, in the past, been a less than positive and rewarding experience.
- 4.2** Both proposals also provide a very real opportunity for the whole education community to ensure that future provision develops young people's personal qualities and enhances their ability to function as productive and engaged citizens, capable of meeting the challenges of society in the future. However, the Board would wish to emphasise that any decisions about the future structure of post-primary education need to be based on agreement as to what young people ought to gain from their experiences in school.
- 4.3** Having listened to and considered in detail the comments of all interested parties, the Board's position in relation to the current assessment arrangements at the end of Key Stage 2 remains unchanged. It is the Board's view that selection at age 11 should be abolished and replaced by a new common curriculum from year 1 to year 10 which would be

followed by all pupils in order to provide a meaningful continuum of educational experience.

- 4.4** This new common curriculum should be designed to develop pupils' key skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT. A range of other attributes should also be developed, for example, creativity, emotional development, personal and social education, confidence and self-esteem. In particular, the Board would wish to ensure that this common curriculum would improve flexibility and choice by allowing teachers to apply their professional expertise in developing educational plans which recognise the uniqueness of each individual.
- 4.5** From year 11 onwards this new curriculum should be augmented by appropriate programmes selected by the young person under guidance from professionals and parents. These programmes should be created to develop the skills and competencies reflecting a young person's interests, aptitudes, abilities, further educational pathways and career options. To support this approach, the Board recommends that education after Key Stage 3 should be presented on a modular basis which takes account of all aspects of the curriculum such as personal and social education, subject specialisms, careers education as well as personal interests. The Board will comment in due course and in more detail on the recent proposals for the revised curriculum.

Pupil Assessment

- 4.6** The South Eastern Education and Library Board acknowledges the evidence from recent research [*Black and William 1998*] that assessment is one of the most powerful educational tools for promoting effective learning. In particular, the research evidence in *Assessment for Learning* [*Assessment Reform Group 1999*] reminds the Board that successful learning occurs when learners have ownership of their learning; when they understand the goals they are aiming for; and when they are motivated and have the skills to achieve success. The Board advocates that not only are these essential features of day-to-day learning in the classroom, but they are also the key ingredients of successful lifelong learning.

4.7 The South Eastern Education and Library Board concurs with the Report's objective of developing an holistic assessment system which can be used by parents and teachers to guide learners throughout their educational experience. Furthermore, the Board is in agreement that while any assessment system must command the complete confidence of pupils, parents, teachers and the wider community, it must not increase levels of administration and record-keeping for schools.

4.8 On the basis of the consultation responses summarised in Appendix A, the South Eastern Education and Library Board is not satisfied that the Pupil Profile as presently described will succeed in meeting all of the above requirements. It is the Board's view that the Pupil Profile should be extended into a *Lifelong Learning Profile* by the inclusion of the following features.

To be an effective tool for learning the Profile would need to be:

- ❖ a combination of information which encourages and motivates pupils as well as being informative and useful to professionals and parents;
- ❖ evidence based;
- ❖ easily managed and understood;
- ❖ of a standardised format;
- ❖ 100% moderated;
- ❖ used for the purpose of election to career pathways;
- ❖ available to all pupils, parents and principals when pathway choices are made.

4.9 From year 11 onwards the Board advises that each young person's achievements, aptitudes and attitudes should be recognised by the award of credits for each successfully completed module administered through a *Modular Accreditation System*. Credits would be awarded for the development of all types of achievement including the intellectual, social, cultural, physical, emotional and creative aspects of the individual.

4.10 Designing such an assessment system would enhance the flexibility and choice offered to young people both in terms of the pace and the stage at which credits are acquired. In addition, tests of attainment and other forms of assessment would no longer be constrained by age; rather, they could be undertaken at a time when young learners are likely to realise their full potential. Approached in this way, assessment has the capacity to become not only a powerful tool to enhance learning but a positive and enjoyable experience for all.

4.11 The development of a *Modular Accreditation System* would also facilitate the ability of pupils to change direction in their studies, to change their course of study or even the institution at which they are studying, while still being credited for the modules already completed. These credits could then be added to or enhanced throughout Further and Higher Education and Training, thus promoting a true Lifelong Learning Profile.

5. *The Administrative Arrangements for Transfer* **[Chapter 9]**

5.1 Having fully considered the advantages and disadvantages of a range of options for transfer expressed through the consultation process, the Board is of the opinion that progression by choice should take place at 14. The well-documented problems associated with the present system of transfer at 11 could be overcome by delaying election until this later age. Various options exist for progression by choice at 14 and they will be considered in more detail in Section 6. However, there are several persuasive arguments to support this view:

- 1.** The choice of future educational pathways would occur at a time when the development of a young person's skills and abilities is more predictive of later performance.
- 2.** At 14, the interests and motivational patterns amongst young people are more firmly established and thus more accurate as an indicator of future achievement.
- 3.** At the age of 14 the young person will be more mature to participate actively in the choice of appropriate educational pathways.

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4. By the age of 14 young people will have spent ten years in a socially inclusive educational system with the attendant benefits for their social, cultural and personal development.
 5. Progression by choice at age 14 would parallel the process by which Transition Plans for pupils with Special Educational Needs are formulated. This would promote consonance within a culture of increased integration of special educational needs pupils into mainstream school.
- 5.2** The Board is of the view that postponing the choice of appropriate educational pathways to 14 years of age is preferable to the problems and concerns associated with the present transfer system at age 11. However, in reaching this position the South Eastern Education and Library Board acknowledges the real difficulties associated with choice being deferred to this later age.
- 5.3** The Board strongly recommends that the process by which progression is effected should be inclusive, with the pupil, parent, teacher and career guidance officer meeting towards the end of year 10 to discuss possible educational pathways for progression. This discussion would be informed and guided by the young person's Lifelong Learning Profile which would be available to schools when pathway choices are being made.
- 5.4** If tests were to be included as part of the quantitative evidence in the Lifelong Learning Profile, it is suggested that these tests should be designed to target the desired curriculum outcomes. Moreover, it is recommended that they should be standardised, externally marked and moderated. Thus, these tests would be more reliable, valid, fair and would not distort the Key Stage 3 curriculum.
- 5.5** It is consistent with the views expressed by the Board in this response that the admissions criteria will depend upon the model adopted for election at 14. Therefore, the whole area of admissions criteria as set out in paragraph 9.30 of the Report will require to be reconsidered.
- 5.6** To support progression by choice and to ensure consistency and coherence the Board recommends that transfer should be administered

by experienced and trained personnel within the Education and Library Boards.

6. *Structural Arrangements for Second Level Education* ***[Chapter 10]***

- 6.1** The South Eastern Education and Library Board wholeheartedly endorses the Report's objective that a post-primary structure should be founded on the basis of raising achievement through co-operation and interdependence, flexibility and choice, mutual respect and inclusion. While there was overwhelming support for these principles, the evidence from the consultation sessions was that the proposed Collegial system would not succeed in achieving this objective. Indeed, grave concerns have been expressed about the disadvantages which could accrue to some young people in a Collegiate, in particular those who live in rural areas. The Board proposes therefore, that incentives should be provided to encourage locally agreed collaborative arrangements, such as clustering, which would foster the key objective cited above.
- 6.2** As previously stated, the Board adopts the view that there should be a common curriculum for all pupils from year 1 to year 10. Inevitably, this common curriculum will influence the most appropriate structure and system for post-primary re-organisation, based as it will be on the pupils' identified needs. The Board is convinced that from year 11 onwards young people should have a wide range of available choices of future educational pathways. Within such choices, opportunities should be created to focus on a curriculum which reflects young people's interests, abilities and future career options, while paying sufficient attention to the agreed core skills and competences.
- 6.3** Consequently, the Board contends that a pluralist provision should be offered which allows each young person to elect a suitable educational pathway. In the interests of parity of esteem it is important that there should be convergence of previously separate academic and technical/vocational routes. Also central to this suggested arrangement is the premise that schools should have the opportunity to develop distinctive specialisms, for example in the performing arts, science and technology, multi-media, the environmental sciences, languages and sport. The

Board would also emphasise that throughout each young person's educational career, but especially at progression from year 10 to year 11, procedures must be in place to guarantee seamless transition and continuity of learning. Irrespective of which pathway is chosen, the Board is of the view that key skills such as literacy, numeracy and ICT should maintain their central position.

- 6.4** In order to achieve this, the South Eastern Education and Library Board believes that at least three feasible models for the re-structuring of post-primary education merit further attention.

Model A

Pupils transfer at 11 to local community colleges where they follow a common curriculum up to 14 and then elect to attend specialist academies.

Model B

Pupils transfer at 11 to local community colleges where they follow a common curriculum up to 14 and then elect within that college to follow appropriate educational pathways.

Model C

Pupils transfer at 11 to 11-16 community colleges and then elect appropriate curriculum pathways to separate sixth form colleges.

All of these options promote continuity of provision, flexibility of choice and maximise the principle of equality of access and opportunity. At the same time, they enhance the status of vocational qualifications and promote all aspects of integration.

- 6.5** While all colleges should be able to choose whether to make provision up to 18 years, pupils would still be entitled to complete their statutory education at 16. However, this opportunity should be offered only to those young people who wish to take up employment or pursue a full time course in Further Education. For the remainder, continued attendance might be encouraged by the introduction of an Attendance Allowance similar to that adopted in some areas of Scotland.

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- 6.6** When considering arrangements along the lines suggested above a major challenge will be the inclusion of pupils with a wide range of educational needs within mainstream schools. The South Eastern Education and Library Board believes that inclusion should be effected only when it is clearly in the interests of the individual and does not adversely affect the education of other pupils.
- 6.7** The Board recognises that special consideration will need to be accorded to those pupils who have special educational needs because of emotional and behavioural problems. The Board is firmly of the opinion that a key element in meeting the needs of these pupils, as well as minimizing the disruptive effect which they may have on the education of other pupils, is the adoption of a flexible and relevant curriculum in tandem with appropriate staffing resources.
- 6.8** The overwhelming body of evidence from the Board's consultation has indicated that any changes to the post-primary system should be gradual, with transition arrangements planned carefully. Furthermore, the Board maintains that it is essential that any changes should have full regard for the educational interests of all young people, whether in pre-school, primary school or already in the early stages of post-primary education.

7. *Resources* ***[Chapter 12]***

- 7.1** The South Eastern Education and Library Board is of the view that any change to the current system of post-primary provision, and in particular the implementation of the alternative proposals offered in this response, will have significant resource implications for the education service. These must be given due consideration as they represent an essential investment in developing high quality education which will promote and make provision for lifelong learning.
- 7.2** Many concerns were expressed during the Board's consultation sessions about anomalies and inequalities within the present LMS funding scheme. Arrangements for LMS will, of necessity, depend upon the nature of the model adopted for post-primary education. Therefore, the

Board is firmly of the opinion that any decisions about a common funding formula for schools should be deferred until an educational structure has been agreed.

- 7.3** It is also important that the Department of Education recognises that any successful change programme will require extra funding. It would not be acceptable for future post-primary arrangements to be funded at the expense of the primary sector. Many of the Board's alternative proposals place significant new demands on primary schools and it will be essential for them to be properly resourced in order to implement new procedures successfully.
- 7.4** The expansion of the Pupil Profile into a *Lifelong Learning Profile* will create professional development and training needs for teachers right across the education service. There are likely to be peak funding requirements at the early stages when the costs of establishing new management information systems and providing effective teacher training will be most demanding. Furthermore, the effective development of the Modular Accreditation System across all stages of education would have resource implications not only for CCEA but for staffing and support costs for schools. It is the Board's view that no change process can be successful unless these resource issues are addressed very carefully.
- 7.5** The South Eastern Education and Library Board agrees with the comments in section 12.31 of the Report that the standard of accommodation and facilities available to schools have an important bearing on their status and the esteem of pupils and teachers. If post-primary schools are to have genuine parity of esteem the Board considers that it is essential that funding is allocated to redress those shortcomings in facilities and equipment experienced by some schools. A programme of modernisation, including, where appropriate, the provision of facilities which would support a specialism, would ensure that all young people are afforded equality of educational opportunity.
- 7.6** It is the Board's opinion that the costs of maintaining transport assistance in a Collegial System would be prohibitive. On the other hand, the alternative proposals for the restructuring of post-primary education outlined in this response would have the added advantage of significantly reducing transport costs.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1** The South Eastern Education and Library Board has maintained consistently the view that developing the unique attributes of each young person should lie at the heart of our education system. Therefore the Board's aim has been to identify clearly the curriculum and structural arrangements necessary to encourage and support an enrichment of the quality of life for individuals, local communities and society through co-operation, mutual respect and real partnership. The Board believes that the comments and proposals offered throughout this response would create such an educational system; one that is of the highest quality as well as the most appropriate for all young people in Northern Ireland.
- 8.2** The abolition of the transfer test and its replacement by a new common curriculum for all pupils in years 1 to 10 realises and puts into practice the Board's aim. While promoting and developing agreed generic skills it would provide a flexible approach through the non-core elements which ensures that the educational process is more meaningful and rewarding for each individual.
- 8.3** For reasons of equity, equality of opportunity and excellence, the Board has concluded that progression from a year 1 to year 10 all-ability school system, to one of a range of types of post year 10 provision should occur at age 14. The introduction of a Lifelong Learning Profile would facilitate progression by choice through guiding and informing pupils, parents, teachers and schools. Furthermore, the development of a Modular Accreditation System across all stages of education would create an assessment structure which enables all young people to reach their full potential as well as encouraging genuine lifelong learning.
- 8.4** The South Eastern Education and Library Board is firmly of the opinion that any changes to the post-primary system should be gradual and planned carefully to take account of the demands which will be placed on teachers, pupils, parents and governors.
- 8.5** The Board recognises that the review of post-primary education and the review of the curriculum are inextricably linked. However, it is important to emphasise that any decisions about future post-primary structures should follow on from agreement about the revised aim and new objectives for the curriculum.

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- 8.6** Successful change in post-primary education will only be possible if the resource implications are fully addressed. The Board would wish to emphasise that in the interests of creating genuine parity of esteem for schools extra funding will need to be made available.
- 8.7** The South Eastern Education and Library Board's recommendations presented in this response focus on the young person as the learner at the centre of all that education provides. It is the Board's view that these recommendations will raise the standards of learning and levels of achievement of all young people in Northern Ireland, through the provision of high quality education which promotes and makes provision for lifelong learning. As a consequence of these changes the South Eastern Education and Library Board believes that there would be a trained and flexible workforce which recognises the need for and benefits to be derived from continuous education; citizens, who would have the skills and attributes to create a caring and tolerant society, and who could respond rapidly and appropriately to future challenges.
- 8.8** The South Eastern Education and Library Board does not underestimate the challenges which these comments and proposals will present. However, the Board looks forward to working with all those concerned in shaping the future structure, content and above all, the purpose of the education system for young people in Northern Ireland.

APPENDIX A

*Summary of Responses
from the*

South Eastern Education and Library Board

*Consultation Sessions
on the
Report by The Post-Primary
Review Body*



**SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION
AND LIBRARY BOARD**

Pupils

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

Overwhelming agreement with the abolition of the 11+.

Most felt that academic ability should be part of the selection process, otherwise post-primary schools would test them in year 8 and they thought it would be fairer to be judged by their primary teachers.

The majority wanted transfer to continue at 11 and loudly rejected delaying it until 14. However, one lone voice did offer the following plea, "Girls mature quicker than boys so why not wait a while until we are all equal".

The only other criteria they objected to was the siblings one, as they said it could be a disadvantage.

2. Pupil Profile

All welcomed the Pupil Profile as it highlights achievement, qualities and personality.

The majority said that it was important that both parents and pupils should have an input into its contents.

Many emphasised the need to have safeguards in place to prevent prejudice and that it should be checked and balanced to make up for Transfer Test grading.

3. Admissions Criteria

All rejected parental preference on the grounds that pupils themselves should be consulted "as we would feel happier going into a school if we had chosen it".

Many were concerned that parents would choose grammar schools even if their children couldn't cope.

4. The Collegial System

Most said that in theory the Collegiates seemed like a good model to maximise choices and resources as well as improving inter-school relations.

Many reservations were expressed such as 'uniform clearly indicates religion making us easy targets', 'the best schools may withdraw, removing resources' and 'would teachers know how to teach all pupils?'

Primary Parents

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

The majority agreed that the transfer tests should end.

50% thought that transfer should occur at 11; 50% that it should be at 14.

Most believed that assessment by academic ability should be used by post-primary schools to select pupils.

2. Pupil Profile

Most said that the Pupil Profile will inform parents but not guide them as parents have established views about schools.

Most parents want the Pupil Profile to be 100% standardised and moderated.

Alternatives suggested for the profile were:

- Craigavon system.
- Continuous assessment and moderated tests.
- Nearest school to home.
- Three tests instead of two and discard the lowest paper.

3. Admissions Criteria

Only 20% of parents agreed that parental preference should have statutory priority for admission to post-primary schools.

80% said that parents would have no real choice until secondary schools were brought up to the standard of excellence of grammar schools.

The majority believed that academic ability should be one of the admissions criteria.

Other suggestions for the admissions criteria were:

- Continuous assessment from Key Stage 1;
- Standardised tests;
- The outcomes from Cognitive Abilities Tests.

4. The Collegial System

All parents rejected the collegial system.

Most felt that schools did not need to be grouped as competition was healthy and to be encouraged.

Many said that raising the standard of secondary schools should occur first.

Some suggested the introduction of a comprehensive system or partnership between schools by mutual agreement.

Primary School Governors

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

95% were in favour of the ending of transfer tests on the condition that a suitable replacement was thoroughly researched.

5% said that some form of tests should be used.

100% agreed that post-primary schools need to see all information before accepting pupils to ensure all needs can be met.

50% said that transfer should take place at 14.

2. Pupil Profile

74% felt that the Pupil Profile would inform and guide parents - at least those who wanted to be guided.

Others expressed the concern that the Pupil Profile was open to abuse.

Alternatives suggested to the Profile were:

- Middle schools.
- A combination of tests and continuous assessment.
- Transfer at 14.

3. Admissions Criteria

There was 100% agreement that parental preference should have statutory priority but they added that at present it would be unworkable because of the perceived low status of secondary schools.

The proximity criteria was rejected as unfair. Many expressed concerns about the children of staff criteria and all wanted the special circumstances criteria clarified.

Academic ability and outcomes from Pupil Profile were suggested as alternative criteria.

4. The Collegial System

100% rejected Collegiates.

65% said they would prefer comprehensives until 14 or the Dickson Plan.

Many suggested the need to improve secondary schools first so that there would be genuine choice. Then to create vocational routes with equal status to academic routes.

Primary Principals

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

There may be an improved primary curriculum but teachers will be under more pressure.

No primary teachers were involved in drawing up the Report.

The proposals are high on vision but the workings are impractical.

Middle schools should be in place before transfer at 14, for example, existing secondary schools should be used as Key Stage 3 colleges.

2. Pupil Profile

Agree that it should not be used for admissions purposes.

Concerned that parents and post-primary schools will ignore them.

Will cause pressure on primary teachers in particular teaching Principals.

3. Admissions Criteria

The reality is that parents will choose grammar schools.

All admissions criteria are much too narrow and open to more abuse than the existing system.

It's selection by postcode.

4. The Collegial System

An over-bureaucratic system which does not address the issues of time, transport and timetabling.

Collegial system will work better under Junior High system.

Post Primary Principals

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

Total agreement with need to abolish transfer tests.

Divided over age of transfer, some suggested that 14 would be a more appropriate age.

Many said that some form of selection will still be required if the individual needs of every pupil are to be met.

2. Pupil Profile

Currently the education children receive in P6 and P7 is potentially damaging. This new structure should prepare children much better for the next phase of education and ensure progression.

The Profile requires greater trust of primary school assessment.

The Pupils Profile must be piloted to ensure credibility and then moderated.

3. Admissions Criteria

While the notion of Grammar Schools remains the development of equality between schools is unlikely to be achieved.

If parents don't get their first choice then they are disadvantaged in getting into the next school.

General agreement that the criteria will not work.

4. The Collegial System

There was a fear that individual schools will lose their ethos.

Will only work with effective co-operation between all principals yet competition is the standard.

Concerned about the amount of time and self-sacrifice required by principals to make it work.

Post Primary School Governors

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

100% agreed that the transfer tests should end provided a suitable alternative was in place.

100% agreed that transfer should take place at 11.

Most believed that academic ability should be part of the transfer process.

2. Pupil Profile

50% said that the Pupil Profile should inform and guide parents.

75% suggested Junior High schools or local community colleges as a more suitable means of transferring to post-primary school.

3. Admissions Criteria

The majority rejected parental preference as a priority and suggested instead a partnership between pupils, parents and schools.

Many suggested also that proximity as a criteria should be removed and replaced with the outcome from the Pupil Profile.

4. The Collegial System

100% rejected Collegiates.

The majority thought that extra funding should be provided first to raise the profile of secondary schools.

Some suggested the alternative of a Junior High system.

Special Schools

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

All were in favour of the ending of transfer tests.

All agreed that assessment by academic ability should not be used by post-primary schools to select pupils.

50% said that transfer should continue to take place at 11; 50% preferred transfer at the end of Key Stage 3.

provide a real opportunity for the various schools to become centres of excellence.

Most expressed the belief that the Collegiate management system had much to commend it.

All agreed that special schools ought to have been part of the Collegial System rather than assigning SEN teachers to the role of trainers.

2. Pupil Profile

All agreed that the Pupil Profile was an effective means to guide parental choice as it was used already in SEN.

Many believed that parents will choose grammar schools assuming it is the best school but not considering whether it will meet the needs of the child.

Alternatives suggested were:

- Comprehensive schools;
- A system of Primary, Junior High and Senior High schools.

3. Admissions Criteria

The majority suggested that parental preference should operate only in partnership with teachers and schools.

All disagreed that SEN pupils should be brought into mainstream schools.

4. The Collegial System

Most said that the Collegial System would

Chinese Community

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

All were very worried that children in the next few years would be used as guinea pigs.

The majority were in favour of retaining the 11+.

If the test were to be abolished all would prefer that it is replaced by 65% exam and 35% continuous assessment.

Most parents wanted transfer to take place at 11.

2. Pupil Profile

The majority considered that the Profile may disadvantage ethnic minority groups.

Many were concerned that as Chinese people are not as outgoing and exuberant as the local pupils, they would be disadvantaged when being assessed on the personal attitudes and aptitudes criteria.

3. Admissions Criteria

Parental preference was considered irrelevant as every Chinese parent wants their child to attend a grammar school even if they don't have the academic ability.

All felt disappointed that academic ability was not one of the admissions criteria.

All disagreed totally with the proximity criteria.

4. The Collegial System

All parents were uncertain about the Collegial System.

Some considered that schools may set their own entrance requirements.

SEELB Staff

1. Future Transfer Arrangements

80% agreed that the transfer tests should end.

The majority wanted academic ability to be taken into consideration when post-primary schools are selecting pupils.

100% said that transfer should take place at 14.

2. Pupil Profile

Most believed that parents will choose the most prestigious school regardless of what the profile says.

Many were concerned with the risk of favouritism or abuse that could occur with the Profile.

Alternatives suggested were:

- Comprehensives up to 14 then the Craigavon approach.
- Post-primary principals should select.
- Transfer based on standardised tests and continuous assessment.

3. Admissions Criteria

50% agreed that parental preference should be given statutory priority.

All said that proximity to home should not be the deciding factor and the criteria for special circumstances should be clarified.

Other admissions criteria suggested were academic ability, vocational needs and post-primary school involvement.

4. The Collegial System

100% rejected the Collegial System as unworkable.

Many expressed the belief that money needs to be spent on low achieving secondary schools first, before diluting an existing good system.

Some stated that integrated education should be a consideration.
