

# NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL

27 August 2025

## **NITC gravely concerned with decision by minister to press ahead with legislation against teachers**

In response to the outcome of the public consultation on proposals to strengthen legislation on school inspections, the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) is gravely concerned that the Minister of Education has chosen to ignore the views expressed by those who took time to respond.

The callous disregard of the views expressed begs the question as to why the minister put forward a consultation when he had obviously already decided to move forward with this punitive legislation against members of the teaching profession who simply wish to exercise their right to legitimate protest.

NITC calls on the Minister to withdraw the proposal to move this legislation forward, and instead redirect his efforts into engaging constructively with the teacher unions to solve the chronic underfunding of education and the continued devaluing of the teaching profession here.

Jacquie White, Ulster Teachers' Union General Secretary and NITC Chairperson said:

"Respondents, many of whom are teachers and parents have spoken clearly – the majority oppose this legislation, yet the Education Minister is pressing ahead regardless.

To ignore the voice of the profession is to risk undermining the very partnership needed to improve education. The future of inspection of schools in Northern Ireland should be based on partnership—not legislation leading to prosecution."

Mark McTaggart, INTO Northern Secretary and NITC Secretary stated:

"At a time when teaching unions have been engaging positively with the Independent Review of Teacher workload and the Education and Training Inspectorate this retrograde step by the Minister has the potential to totally undermine the progress made.

In disregarding the views of the respondents, he is in danger of destroying the very partnerships of stakeholder that are necessary in moving towards a truly world class education system in the north."

Justin McCamphill, NASUWT National Official for Northern Ireland, added:

"Teachers across Northern Ireland are deeply concerned by the Department's determination to push through this punitive legislation. The consultation itself revealed that the vast majority of education professionals and a majority of parents are opposed to these changes, yet the Department has pressed ahead regardless.

This move will severely damage morale and industrial relations at a time when we should be working together to build a world-class education system. Teachers are not against inspection – but they are against being criminalised for standing up for their rights."

Dr Graham Gault, NAHT Northern Ireland National Secretary continued:

“NAHT is concerned that the Minister has not given due consideration to the consultation responses received and appears to be pursuing an agenda that seeks to restrict legitimate trade union activities. NAHT believes it that would be more prudent and constructive for the Minister and the Department to direct their efforts towards sustainably resolving the fundamental issues that have necessitated industrial action within the profession.”