



**Irish National Teachers' Organisation**  
**Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann**



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*A nation's greatness depends upon the education of its people*



## BULLETIN 2

### ETI Safeguarding Proforma 2019-20

21<sup>st</sup> August 2019

This document is now being widely circulated, by ETI, to schools in advance of the beginning of the new 2019/20 school year. There are a number of additions to the Proforma. This Proforma has not been the subject of any Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) or INTO consultation.

The Proforma makes reference to the Education and Libraries Order of 2003 and reminds Boards of Governors that they have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school and to decide on measures to be taken to protect pupils from abuse.

This has been an agreed annual responsibility which has been dutifully carried out by school managements and governors, however, this year has seen the controversial inclusion of the Addressing Bullying in Schools (NI) Act 2016 and substantive changes to questions including a staff code of conduct. In light of this INTO must provide the following advice and guidance in relation to our members' engagement with the revised Proforma.

Our position on both of these issues remains unchanged. INTO, in concert with the other unions of the NITC have previously apprised management side of their opposition to, and lack of confidence in the Addressing Bullying Act's ability to properly address bullying in schools. Simply it is the NITC's opinion that this new legislation merely records instances of bullying thereby falling short in its stated objective of offering support to schools to properly address bullying. While awaiting a full consultation on the outworkings of the Act, NITC is advising its constituent members not to engage with this policy.

Similarly, INTO has not, at Teachers' Negotiating Committee Level, been able to agree a code of conduct suitable for all teachers in Northern Ireland and therefore advises its members not to sign any code of conduct that is presented to school staffs. INTO cannot countenance the prospect of teachers in different schools being subjected to haphazard codes of conducts hastily compiled and worded according to the notions and ideas of discrete Boards of Governors.

At the end of the Safeguarding Proforma there is an additional comments box which affords school managements the opportunity to reference INTO's instruction to its members not to engage with either of these two elements from section 19.

Further advice or clarification in relation to INTO's advice of non-engagement with either the Anti-Bullying Legislation or the code of conduct will be made available.

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