

InTouch

Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann



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175 years of
national schools

Happy Christmas to all our Readers

Looking back – looking forward

This issue, the last of 2006, has a particular focus on Irish educational history, this year being the 175th anniversary of the establishment of the national school system.

Such a review is important as it gives us an opportunity to link with the past. In doing so we can see clearly how successive generations of INTO members have contributed to significant improvements in the education system over those years. It provides us, this generation of teachers, with a chance to acknowledge their efforts to protect and enhance the conditions of employment of teachers.

But looking back must also serve another purpose. Our INTO history is our link to the past but it is also our bridge to the future. We must therefore take stock of the present and plan to improve all our futures.

There is no doubt that when this phase of INTO history comes to be written that there will be many achievements to celebrate. A decade ago, there were 470,000 pupils in primary schools being taught by 21,000 teachers. Today, the primary school population is on the rise but has not yet climbed back to 1996 levels. Yet in our schools today there are 28,000 teachers, almost every one fully qualified to teach in primary schools, an increase of 33% in staffing levels. This is as a direct result of a number of specific campaigns undertaken by INTO in securing special education resources, removing untrained personnel

from our classes and ensuring that newcomer children receive additional teaching supports.

This generation of teachers has also made significant progress in the area of substandard school buildings, curriculum reform and the establishment of the Teaching Council. All of these were goals of previous generations of teachers.

In the recent past a number of smaller gains have also been made. We have secured changes to the way developing schools will be staffed and the appointment of administrative deputy principals in very large schools. These are longstanding demands of the INTO.

But while linking with the past, both recent and far distant, we must build for the future. We must set our targets and work to achieve them. Among our priorities must be improvements for the teaching principal and further reductions in class sizes. We must ensure that there is real investment in ICTs for schools that includes training for teachers.

As 2006 draws to a close I thank all INTO members whose efforts brought about recent gains and look forward in the new year, to making further progress with the support of all members.

General Secretary



Nollaig faoi shó chugaibh Rath agus bláth na h-athbhlíana oraibh go léir Go raith fad saoil agaibh

On behalf of the INTO, I would like to extend Christmas greetings to all our members, in particular to staff representatives and committee members at Branch, District and National levels. Greetings too to our many colleagues and friends in other kindred organisations including

management authorities, teacher and other trade unions, Department officials, teacher training institutions, *InTouch* advertisers and members of the media.

The Organisation will not be sending Christmas cards this year. Instead it will donate the costs associated with the sending of Christmas cards to CARI Foundation (Children at Risk in Ireland).

*Beireann buan bua
John Carr*

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3% payment delay

The meeting of the Education Performance Verification Group, which was scheduled to confirm teachers' ongoing co-operation with modernisation and change under the terms of T2016, has been deferred until 7 December.

As a result, the 3% increase due from 1 December is unlikely to

be reflected in salaries until January 2007.

The deferment has been arranged to allow for clarification of issues that have arisen in the discussions between the parties.

Further updates on this issue will be available on the INTO website.

Everybody in?

INTO Staff Representatives are asked to ensure that all new teachers are approached to join the INTO.

At a time of increasing change and modernisation in the education service it is important that new teachers have the protection and support of their trade

union. More than 11,000 extra teachers have been employed in primary schools in recent years, as well as those who fill vacancies from teachers leaving or retiring.

Membership forms are available from your local Branch Secretary.

Adoptive leave change

Following representations from the INTO to the Teachers' Conciliation Council, the leave-in-lieu for paid adoptive leave is to be extended. Leave-in-lieu for paid adoptive leave is to be extended from 22 days to 27 days.

Paid maternity leave (currently 22 weeks) attracts 30 days leave-in-lieu while paid adoptive leave (currently 20 weeks) only attracts 22 days.

The change in leave-in-lieu for adoptive leave was granted to reflect the fact that there is only a difference of two weeks between paid maternity and paid adoptive leave.

INTO calls for rise in funding

The INTO pre-budget submission called for a big increase in school funding to end what John Carr, General Secretary, said were effectively local education taxes by parents having to fundraise, and principals having to spend almost as much time on fundraising as they do on leading teaching and learning. The key points of the submission, which is available in full on the INTO website (www.into.ie), are:

- Substantially increased funding to meet greatly increased running costs.
- A commitment to end the disparity in funding between primary and second level schools.
- A substantial increase in secretarial and caretaking funding.
- An additional reduction in the primary

school staffing schedule.

- The development of a National Speech and Language Therapy service for pupils
- The expansion of the National Educational Psychological Service
- The development of a school meals service.
- The integrated delivery of social and medical services.
- The provision of a comprehensive nation-wide early education structure.
- A maximum class size of 20:1 in all infant classes.
- A class room assistant in all infant classes.
- An increase in the Budget for Capital Works.
- Significant capital investment in modern computer technology

Minor works grant increases by 44%

On 13 November 2007 the Minister for Education and Science announced that the devolved grant for minor works in schools would increase from €3,807 pa plus €2.70 per pupil to €5,500 pa plus €8.50 per pupil. The €50.80 grant per pupil for pupils in special schools or special classes in mainstream schools increased to €74 per pupil pa. Funding must be spent on the physical infrastructure of the school or

on items of furniture and equipment for educational use including IT related equipment.

In addition, this year, the grant is being increased, on a once off basis, by €2,000 per primary school to provide capital funding to meet PE equipment renewal requirements. The first priority for this additional once off additional capital funding is to address any health and safety issues in relation to goalposts in schools.

INTO welcomed the increase

in funding as the Organisation has been calling for an increase in this grant in recent years. As an increase of this scale is well overdue. The grant was introduced in 1997 and devolved in 2000 and the level of the grant had not been increased since then.

Full details are available in Circular Letter 0141/2006 available on www.into.ie or www.education.ie. This Circular supersedes Circular 4/00 which is now withdrawn.

Diary delayed

Due to production delays outside our control the 2007/08 INTO Member's Diary will be posted to schools at the beginning of January. To bring the diary in line with the academic year this diary will be a 20 month diary and will cover the period January 2007 to August 2008.

800 extra teachers

As part of the publication of the Budget estimates, Minister Mary Hanafin TD announced that an additional 800 teachers would be employed in primary schools from next September as follows:

- 300 for changes to the staffing schedule and for increased enrolments in existing schools;
- 200 for English language teaching;
- 200 for developing schools;

- and 100 for special education provision.

Responding to the announcement INTO General Secretary John Carr welcomed the significant number of posts which would be deployed into areas of critical need. He said he was disappointed, however, that the Minister had not done more for schools with large class numbers, in line with the Programme for Government promises.

Estimates show funding increase

The budget estimates published on 16 November indicate that, at primary level, the basic rate of capitation will increase by €18 per pupil next year. Schools will now receive €63.58 per pupil to cover expenses such as heating, lighting and insurance costs.

The ancillary services grant, which covers the costs of secretaries and care-takers is to increase by €6.50 to €145.50 per pupil. This means that a primary school

with 300 pupils will get an increase of €7,400 in funding next year, bringing their funding to just under €93,000 to meet such costs. Funding has also been provided to begin the implementation of the EPSEN Act, although the exact details have still to be revealed. Extra resources are also promised for NEPS and the NEWB.

In a separate development Minister Hanafin announced the issuing of a €2,000 grant for primary schools to renew PE equipment.

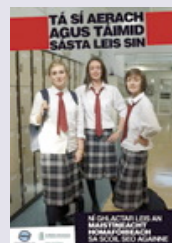
Changes for developing schools

Minister Mary Hanafin, TD, has announced changes in the criteria for small schools to qualify for developing school status. The number of additional pupils that must be enrolled before an extra teacher can be

appointed has been reduced from 25 to 15. Two other criteria must also be reached, namely the average class size in the school is in excess of 28 and there is an excess of five pupils above the required number for the additional appointment.

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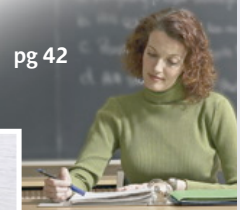
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Benchmarking Hearing

INTO, ASTI, TUI make joint submission

The three teacher unions made a joint presentation of their claim for increased salary and allowances at an oral hearing of the second Public Service Benchmarking Body on 20 November. The core elements of the presentation centred on:

- Comparing teachers with private sector grades.
- Comparing teachers with public sector grades.
- Career earnings for a variety of jobs comparable to teachers.

The methodology adopted in the Benchmarking process allows for the benchmarking of three grades in each sector. For teachers this means principals (with deputy principals linked), assistant principals (with special duties teachers linked) and teachers. The integrated claim presented by the unions includes:

- a general increase to the common basic scale with a particular increase of 10% applicable to the 8th point of the scale onwards
- a shortening of the incremental scale
- a restructuring and extension of Qualification Allowances to include an increase of 10% and the restructuring of all academic

qualification allowances in relation to the honours undergraduate degree

- the payment of a Higher Diploma allowance to all teachers and the payment of a qualification allowance to holders of recognised appropriate 3rd level diplomas in areas such as special educational needs, career guidance and learning support
- an increase of 10% to the Assistant Principals' Allowance and to all categories of principals' allowances,
- the inclusion of all school staff for the calculation of a school's entitlement to posts of responsibility the recognition of all school staff for the calculation of principals' allowances and the removal of the cap on principals' allowances
- the payment of an allowance to teachers working in schools officially designated as disadvantaged, schools for young offenders and high support units.

The unions presented a coherent, well researched and integrated case relating to all teachers in the education system. They requested that serious consideration be given to all aspects of the claim



The INTO group at the oral submission to the Benchmarking Body included Angela Dunne, Vice President, Declan Kelleher, CEC, Noreen Flynn, CEC, John Boyle, CEC, John Carr, General Secretary, Denis Bohane, President, Sheila Nunan, General Treasurer, Zita Bolton, INTO Official, Billy Sheehan, Assistant General Secretary, Tom O'Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary, Peter Mullan, Senior Official.

which, they contended, were required to recruit, retain and motivate the effective, high calibre teachers that are required by a modern and dynamic education system.

They said the claim was designed to ensure equity between employees in the public and private sector, to support continued modernization in the Irish education system and to underpin the

country's competitiveness and continued economic prosperity.

Background documents were circulated to all schools on CD in September and are available on the INTO website. The Benchmarking Body is due to report in the second half of 2007.

See page 15 for the presentation made on primary principals.

History of St Pat's College



An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern TD, launched a history of St. Patrick's College of Education on 6 November last. The book, edited by College lecturer James Kelly, is reviewed on page 59 of this issue.

Pictured at the launch are Paucic Travers, President of St Patrick's College, Denis Bohane, INTO President, An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern TD, and James Kelly, editor of the book.

History of education

This issue of InTouch is themed to celebrate 175 years since the foundation of the National School System in 1831.

INTO Head Office has been engaged in a project to electronically store archive issues of the Irish School Weekly and other journals from the past.

A variety of these, from various decades, will be available from the INTO website as downloads shortly.

Circulars 2006

Circular No.	Description	Issued
Pay 05/06	New arrangements for the payment of substitute (casual/non casual) special needs assistants from 1 January 06	Jan '06
09/06	Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003 Teacher's contract of indefinite duration	Jan '06
11/06	Fee for purchase of Primary School Curriculum (1999)	May '06
15/06	National day of protest, Friday 9 December 05	Feb '06
21/06	Revision of Spouses' and Children's Pension scheme	Mar '06
23/06	Regulations governing the appointment and retention of teachers in primary schools for the school year 2006/7	Mar '06
24/06	Appeal board for mainstream staffing in primary schools	Mar '06
27/06	Masters in Special Education Needs (MSEN) 2006/7	Mar '06
29/06	School books grant scheme	Apr '06
35/06	Combined post graduate diploma programme of training for learning support and special educational needs teachers in primary schools, special schools, post-primary schools and other educational services 2006/7 year.	May '06
33/06	2005 Teacher Fee Refund scheme	Apr '06
36/06	Special Education Needs (SEN) – Arrangements for the 2006/7 school year in relation to the general allocation and certain other school matters	Apr '06
39/06	National Day of Protest, Friday, 9 December 05	May '06
40/06	National Day of Protest, Friday, 9 December 05	May '06
42/06	National Day of Protest, Friday, 9 December 05	May '06
44/06	National Day of Protest, Friday, 9 December 05	May '06
47/06	Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003 adjudication process	May '06
49/06	Payment in respect of supervision/substitute for academic years 2002/3, 2003/4, 2004/5 in VTOS and senior Traveller training centres.	Jun '06
54/06	Revision of salaries for caretakers employed under the terms of the Department's 1979 scheme from 1 December 2005	May '06
58/06	Redundancy arrangements for special needs assistants	May '06
59/06	Seniority for special needs assistants	May '06
61/06	Child protection guidelines and procedures for primary schools	Jun '06
64/06	Summer Works Scheme 2007.	Jun '06
71/06	Cost limit for primary school buildings	Jun '06
73/06	Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) for teachers working with pupils with ASD in special schools, special classes or as resource teachers in mainstream primary schools 2006/7	Jun '06
86/06	Payments arrangements for part-time SNAs for July and August 2006	Jun '06
88/06	Health and safety matters – management of mould	Jun '06
90/06	Adoptive leave arrangements for permanent and temporary/fixed term primary school teachers	Jun '06

Circular No.	Description	Issued
91/06	Maternity leave arrangements for permanent and temporary/fixed term primary school teachers	Jun '06
93/06	Revision of rates of pay for part-time teachers	Jun '06
94/06	New arrangements for the vetting of teaching and non-teaching staff	Jul '06
95/06	Revision of salaries for clerical officers employed under the terms of the Department's 1978 scheme from 1 June 06	Jul '06
96/06	Revision of salaries for caretakers employed under the terms of the Department's 1978 scheme from 1 June 06	Jul '06
97/06	Small Schools Scheme 2007	Aug '06
98/06	Permanent Accommodation Scheme 2007	Aug '06
104/06	Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003 – phase two discussions	Jul '06
105/06	Employment of qualified primary school teachers	Jul '06
109/06	Revision of teachers salaries from 1 June 06	Aug '06
112/06	Revision of salaries for special needs assistants from 1 June 06	Aug '06
123/06	Organisation of Working Time Act 1997, public holiday entitlements of primary school teachers	Sept '06
131/06	Rental of temporary school accommodation	Oct '06
132/06	Travel pass scheme for teachers	Oct '06
134/06	Application for part-time learning support/resource teacher (LSRT), resource teacher (RT) grants 2006/7.	Oct '06
136/06	Application for part-time special subject teacher grants 2006/7	Oct '06
137/06	Early retirement for teachers	Nov '06
139/06	Incremental Credit Scheme for special needs assistants in primary, post primary and VEC schools	Nov '06
140/06	Probationary requirements for primary teachers	Nov '06
141/06	Grant scheme for minor works to national school properties	Nov '06

Primary Substitute Salary

Closing Dates for December 2006 Payrolls

Please note the following arrangements with regard to closing dates for December payrolls which will apply to Primary Substitute Teachers.

Failure to submit substitute salary claim forms on or before the closing date will result in a delay in the payment of primary substitute teachers.

Payment Date	Payroll Period	Closing Dates
28 Dec 06	2006/52	08 Dec 06
11 Jan 07	2006/02	29 Dec 06

Launch of employee assistance service for teachers

A new Employee Assistance Service for Teachers was formally launched on 8 November 2006.

INTO General Secretary Mr John Carr warmly welcomed the launch of the scheme. "The scheme will give teachers and their families easy access to confidential counselling services and will help members in coping with personal and work related issues. The roll out of the scheme to schools is very welcome and I would urge members to avail of this new support service," he said.

The service is being provided by VHI Corporate Solutions, who have been contracted by the DES to deliver the



Employee Assistance Service. The new service is:

- Available to teachers whose positions are funded by the DES and members of their immediate families.
- Available throughout the 26 counties.
- Free of charge.
- Accessible on a 24 hour basis, 365 days a year.
- Confidential and independent of the DES.
- Delivered by professional staff who are bound by the ethics and codes of practice of the Irish Association of

Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP).

Services available:

The following services are available:

- Single session or short-term structured telephone counselling.
- Face to face counselling – based on a short-term model of up to six counselling sessions.

The EAS will provide assistance in relation to work related issues such as change, isolation, workload, stress, workplace conflict, as well as personal issues including health, relationships, addictions, bereavement, etc.

Contacting the service

The initial point of contact with the service is through Freephone: 1800 411 057 or

email: eas@vhics.ie

Where one to one counselling is sought, appointments will be arranged at a venue within a reasonable travelling distance for the teacher.

All schools have been circulated with information brochures and the services contact details. Further information is available on the DES Website: www.education.ie

Mr Billy Sheehan, Assistant General Secretary will have responsibility as INTO liaison person with the Employee Assistance Service.



Léargas award

St Mary's NS, Fairview are delighted to announce that their French Project has won the European Language Label Award 2006. The project, entitled *The Process of Applying Lateral Thinking skills to the Teaching and Learning of French as a Modern Language and Culture in Primary School*, was awarded this accolade by Léargas. St Mary's NS is the only primary school in the country to receive this European award in 2006.

A group of fifth class girls presented a French Cultural Project to their peers and Suzanne O'Brien and Eileen Geaney presented aspects of the project at the IATSE (Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education) Conference 2006 as part of the 'Differentiated Instruction for Inclusion: From Critical Thinking to Collaborative Learning using ICT' paper, allowing for another aspect of peer tutoring.

This innovative approach to teaching and learning French in St Mary's was pioneered by Suzanne O'Brien, who in turn was supported by the ICT co-ordinator, Eileen Geaney with the active co-operation and help from class teacher,

Bryan Kennedy. The project was greatly supported by the Principal of St Mary's, Margaret Kelly.



TG4s Ronan Mac an Iomaire presents Eileen Geaney and Suzanne O'Brien with the European Language Label Award.

INTO online facilities upgraded

The October and November meetings of the CEC were, for the first time, devoid of papers being printed and circulated by post. A secure website (extranet) has been developed where agendas, minutes and discussion papers are stored electronically. Members of the CEC then use their laptop computers to access the papers during the meetings.

An extranet has also been developed with resources for Branch, District and Forum officers, and further extranets are being put in place for all national committees.

Online Claim System for schools (OCS)

The INTO is in discussion with the DES about the development of a facility to make claims online for payments to substitute teachers and part-time teachers. This system has already been devel-

oped for second level schools and the INTO is pressing for an early introduction in primary schools.

The INTO has also proposed that an online facility should be developed for the return of

statistics and other data to the DES. It is now expected that the online claim system will be operational later this school year and that training for school personnel will begin next term.

In other developments, online facilities are being finalised to allow Branch and District officers to return information and forms to Head Office through the internet. Agreement has also been reached on the development of an electronic newsletter for members which will start issuing in December.

Teaching Council publishes draft codes of professional conduct for teachers

The Teaching Council is required to “establish, publish, review and maintain codes of professional conduct for teachers which

shall include standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence”. The Council has drawn up Draft Codes of Professional Conduct in two

parts. The first part relates to professional practice and includes “standards of teaching, knowledge, skill and competence”. The second part

deals specifically with professional conduct. The following are **highlights** from the Draft Codes which may be viewed in full on www.teachingcouncil.ie

Draft Code of Professional Practice

- Teachers recognise that differences in students’ backgrounds can shape experience and impact on learning. They apply their knowledge of students’ backgrounds, experiences and learning modes to their teaching.
- Teachers apply their knowledge of students’ holistic development to their teaching and to the promotion of social responsibilities.
- Teachers recognise the individual potential of students.
- Teachers plan and communicate clear, challenging and achievable expectations for students.
- Teachers appreciate that parents are the primary educators of their children. They build trust with parents and actively communicate and collaborate with them in the education of their children.
- Teachers engage in the dynamic processes by which curriculum is designed and implemented and students’ learning is facilitated and evaluated.
- Teachers know and understand the subject matter of the relevant curriculum/syllabus, how it is linked to other subjects and related to life experiences.
- Teachers use appropriate pedagogical approaches that assist students to learn in a variety of ways.
- Teachers employ a variety of available

curriculum resources to enhance and enrich the learning environment.

- Teachers use a range of strategies to support, monitor and assess students’ learning, their approach to learning and their progress.
- As agents of change, teachers are involved in the design, development, implementation and evaluation of the curriculum at classroom, school and national levels.
- Teachers acknowledge the interdependence of teacher learning and student learning.
- Continuous professional development is both a right and a responsibility and should be supported by policy and resources at local, regional and national level.
- Teachers act in a spirit of collegiality with professional colleagues, both as team members and as team leaders.
- Teachers in their professional role work within the framework of relevant legislation and regulations.
- Teachers work to develop positive relationships with parents, school management and co-professionals.
- Effective teaching requires the support and positive collaboration of the wider community. Teachers, through their schools, utilise the community as a learning resource.
- Teachers are educational leaders who contribute to creating and sustaining learning communities in their classrooms.

Participation of teachers

Teachers are invited to participate in the process of communicating/discussing the Codes. The main elements of this process are:

Website

The entire text of the draft Codes is available for download on the Council’s website: www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Accompanying documentation

The Council has produced a prompt sheet to assist teachers in considering the draft Codes and another to assist those who may wish to facilitate staff-room discussions on the Codes. Both are available in English and Irish on the Council’s website www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Meetings for teachers

A series of six regional meetings for teachers will be organized. These will afford teachers a further opportunity to reflect and engage in group discussion on the draft Codes. These are likely to take place in December and January. Further details will be available on the ‘News and Events’ page of the website www.teachingcouncil.ie

Circulation of Codes

In early 2007, all teachers will receive a copy of the Codes and they will be formally launched.

Draft Code of Professional Conduct

- Teachers should take care of students under their supervision with the aim of ensuring their safety and welfare insofar as is reasonably practicable.
- Teachers should respect confidential information relating to colleagues, students and families gained in the course of professional

practice, unless the wellbeing of an individual or a legal imperative requires disclosure.

- Teachers should act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work.
- Teachers should respect students, their parents, carers and colleagues and interact with them in a way which is non-discriminatory in relation to gender, marital status, family status, sexual

orientation, religion, age, disability, race, ethnicity, membership of the Travelling Community and socio-economic status.

- Teachers should provide complete and accurate information and authentic documents with respect to their professional qualifications, experience and status.
- Teachers should avoid direct conflict between private interests and their profes-

sional work.

- Teachers should not practice the profession while under the influence of any substance which impairs their ability or medical fitness.
- Teachers should uphold the reputation and standing of the profession.
- Teachers should provide complete and accurate information on any matter as requested by the Council.

Tackling homophobic bullying

An initiative just launched aims to tackle the marginalisation and harassment reported by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (lgbt) students in post-primary schools.

Under the project, copies of a booklet *Making Your School Safe* and of posters on the theme are being distributed to the schools. The materials are available as Gaeilge agus i mBéarla and were produced by the Equality Authority and the Belong To Youth (www.belongto.org) organisation.

The project is supported by a range of bodies including An Garda Síochána, the National



Parents' Council and the post-primary teacher unions, ASTI and TUI.



Male-free zone emerging?

Is the male primary teacher to join thatched cottages, wild salmon, the Irish suckler herd and Gaeltacht areas in the media list labelled “facing extinction”?

Publication launched

A book launched on 20 November examines the current position, based to a large extent on the views of primary teachers, and retains the question mark in its title. The book – *Facing Extinction? Why Men are not Attracted to Primary Teaching* – is published by Liffey Press and is the work of Dr Eileen Drew, Associate Professor in Trinity College's Department of Statistics. Dr Drew's research has previously addressed issues of equality, including gender and disability. Her recent work has examined both sides of the gender segregation divide in occupations, examining the lack of women in engineering and of men in primary teaching.

Facing Extinction follows a survey of over 600 teachers who had entered the profession in the last 10 years. The survey found that the positive attractions of teaching are offset by issues including the length of the salary scale and poor advancement opportunities. The teachers believe that other issues putting potential male entrants off include the high standard of Gaelige required and fear of false allegations. Despite these issues, nine out of ten of those surveyed want more men in primary teaching.

Guidance Counsellors support INTO initiative

The new book comes at a time when INTO is preparing to publish a leaflet drafted by our Equality Committee which seeks to persuade second-level students, and especially males, to consider primary teaching as a career. The leaflet, which has now secured the support of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, will be in all second-level schools early in the New Year.

IN BRIEF....

What is it about schools? This question may be in the minds of delegates to the INTO Conference 'Dignity at work – Tackling Bullying and Harassment' in March (delegates to be selected at branch January meetings). A Manchester University study (2000) found that one worker in four had experienced workplace bullying at some point in the previous five years. Among teachers, the figure was more than one in three! And the *European Working Conditions Survey* (2006) found higher levels of bullying in “larger organisations, especially in the health and education sectors”.

Many employers recognise the practical benefits of good employment practices. One company making strides in equality at work is Dublin Bus. Its equality programme aims to create an atmosphere of mutual respect in the organisation. One result of its related recruitment policy has been a significant increase in the **racial diversity** of its bus drivers, reflecting the multiculturalism of Ireland today.

Diversity in Equality Committee publications

The Equality Committee aims to address a number of the grounds in equality legislation in forthcoming publications.

A *Males into Primary Teaching* leaflet for second-level students is related to the gender ground. The gender, family status and marital status grounds will be reflected in a leaflet on teachers' family-related leave provisions, to be issued in 2007.

Addressing the broad equality principle of individual dignity, the results of the workplace bullying survey conducted at INTO branch meetings will be issued early in the New Year. In preparation

for its March Conference, the Equality Committee is also to publish reflections on workplace dignity and bullying from a range of people with prominent positions in Irish life. Responses already received include:

- From a newspaper editor: “Admitting it all is very difficult. The reaction of people when you tell them is often more difficult. A sort of aversion. An avoidance...”
- From a County Manager: “People are the most valuable asset of an organisation, and it is essential that we foster a culture of respect and dignity of the individual at all levels”.



Equality Committee members meeting in head office: l. to r. Maree Fa rell, Committee Leas-Chathaoirleach (Dublin, District 14); Eoin Shaughnessy (Galway, District 6); Moira Liddane (Kildare, District 7); Brigid Cahalane (Cork, District 16)

Traveller Education Strategy launched

The Minister for Education and Science, Ms Mary Hanafin TD, launched a report and recommendations for a Traveller Education Strategy on 21 November. The report presented to the Minister:

- examines existing provisions and supports for Travellers in education at all levels from pre-school to higher education;
- identifies objectives for Traveller education, sets out plans of action, with suggested time scales;
- makes recommendations in relation to optimising or re-allocating existing resources;
- sets out expected outcomes;
- addresses all aspects of Traveller education taking a holistic lifelong learning perspective from pre-school provision to adult and

continuing education. One of the areas of immediate priority for the Minister is the mainstreaming of provision for Travellers. "This will be achieved by the phasing out, over a period of time, of segregated provision for Travellers in pre-schools, primary and post primary education. It will also include the ending of enhanced capitation grants for Travellers, over 12 years of age, attending primary schools in order to ensure progression onto second level and beyond," said Minister Hanafin. Other recommendations relate to the role of resource teachers for Travellers, the Visiting Teachers for Travellers Service and supports for Traveller education.

The report, which is available from both the INTO and DES websites, is the result of a working group established between



Pictured at the launch are Tom O'Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary INTO, Rosemary Taylor, Visiting Teacher Service, Minister Mary Hanafin TD, Breda Naughton, DES, Ann Donnellan, VTS and Jim Mulkerins, Principal Officer in the DES Social Inclusion Unit. Tom, Ann, Rosemary and Breda were all members of the Working Group for the strategy.

the Advisory Committee on Traveller Education and the

Statutory Committee on Educational Disadvantage.

80 posts in home-school liaison

An additional 80 home school community liaison teachers are to be appointed to help children at risk of dropping out of school or not being able to participate fully in the education system, bringing the total number of HSCL teachers to 450.

While most of the posts are in

primary schools and clusters, some will be in post-primary schools only and some will be shared between primary and post-primary. Details of the revised cluster arrangements have issued to the schools concerned. In light of concerns raised by the INTO about some of the cluster arrangements, the

DES has agreed to review these in the coming months. The total number of posts allocated to date at primary level under the DEIS initiative on educational disadvantage has now topped 150.

These include posts to allow administrative principals in Band 1 and Band 2 schools, addi-

tional teachers to implement class size ratios in Band 1, posts in special education and HSCL provision in urban and rural schools. In addition to this a total of €1.8 million was distributed in grants to schools under the School Support Programme of the DEIS in the middle of November.

Increased capitation rates for special schools

Brigid McManus, Secretary General of the DES announced increased capitation rates for special schools and classes at the NABMSE Annual Conference. For most categories of special schools the differential lower rate for children under 12 is being removed. In the case of special classes in mainstream schools an increase of 3.0% is also been given to all classes, other than

those catering for mild GLD and Specific Learning Disabilities. These classes will get the same increase as pupils in mainstream classes, whose capitation has been increased by €18. INTO General Secretary John Carr said that the increases were welcome but he was disappointed that the MGLD and SLD rates were not at the same level as all other categories.



Pictured at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education are Teresa Griffin, Principal Officer in the Special Education section of the DES, Aileen Broderick, Secretary of NABMSE, Sr Marie Carroll, Chairperson of NABMSE, Brigid McManus, Secretary General of DES, and Antoinette Buggle, NCSE.

INTO meets Benchmarking Body

Separate case made for principals

On the afternoon of the 20 November an INTO delegation made the case for two elements of the salary claim directly related to primary principals, namely:

- Parity of allowances at primary and post-primary levels
- The removal of the bottom three bands of the principals' allowance scale

Teaching Principals

In making the case for the elimination of the bottom bands of the current schedule the INTO said that small schools hold a unique place in the Irish education system. 77% of primary schools have eight teachers or fewer. A distinctive feature of the role of principal teacher in a small school is that it combines full-time class teaching duties with the organisational, management and leadership functions attaching to the role.

Typically, a principal teacher of a small school is teaching a full class, most frequently in a multi-grade situation. He/she is fully occupied with this task during the course of the regular school day.

The principal teacher has responsibility for the guidance and direction of teaching and other staff in the school. This

includes responsibility for creating a school environment conducive to teaching and learning, and monitoring the performance of pupils. In addition to the pivotal educational and instructional leadership provided by the principal, he/she has extensive and wide-ranging managerial, organisational and administrative responsibilities.

Such functions are, in the main, conducted once the teaching day has concluded. Since the advent of a very strong legislative and regulatory environment, the workload of teaching principals has increased enormously.

Declan Kelleher, CEC, spoke of his experience as a teaching principal and the significant changes impacting since the last benchmarking review.

Survey Results

Supporting documentation, surveys and explanatory diagrams were presented at the hearing. The results from recent INTO surveys provide evidence that recruitment problems are acute in smaller schools. The INTO surveyed 598 principal teachers appointed between 2004 and 2006.

The results indicated that almost 60% of positions are now attracting three or fewer

applicants. In recent meetings that the INTO arranged with managerial bodies across all sectors of primary education there is a consensus that we are facing a recruitment crisis, particularly in smaller schools. John Carr said; "we know of no other profession where promoted posts are considered so unattractive. This developing crisis requires urgent attention."

A more in-depth survey was carried out in Limerick City and County to ascertain information regarding retention issues. The results indicated:

- That 16% of principals stepped down from the role before retirement, although doing so resulted in no recognition for pension and lump sum purposes of their time as principal.
- That 66% of respondents indicated that they would avail of the opportunity to step down if there was recognition for pension and lump sum purposes of their time as principal.

Salary Differential

Supplementary comments from the respondents outlined that, for teaching principal positions, the lack of differential between an Assistant Principal salary level and the

allowance for the teaching principal of smaller schools was a disincentive to apply for a position. They also indicated that the differential between deputy principal of a large school, and principalship of a small to medium sized school, also acted as a disincentive to apply for promotion. This information was also presented at the hearing.

In conclusion John Carr, General Secretary said "I have confidence in placing these claims before the benchmarking body on behalf of primary principals. There is broad support from the education community and among the general trade union movement for this additional salary claim being made by the INTO for primary principals".

He added that he passionately believes, as do our members, that our demands are genuine, measured and capable of implementation. He said there was a sense of expectation that these long felt grievances which have not been addressed satisfactorily in any other forum will be addressed on this occasion. "A successful outcome will not only benefit our members but will also impact positively on school communities throughout the country," he said.

Deputy administrative principals created

The Minister for Education and Science Mary Hanafin T.D. has announced a series of measures to assist primary school principals with particularly significant levels of non-teaching duties. The new measures include:

- the creation of administrative Deputy Principals in schools with **24 or more** mainstream class teachers,
- the creation of administrative Deputy Principals in mainstream schools that, in addition to their ordinary mainstream class teachers, also have **five or more** special classes for children

with low incidence special needs, and

- that when a school with a **Principal and four** or more mainstream class teachers also has a specialist autism unit, established under approval of the National Council for Special Education, the Principal will be appointed on an administrative basis. An autism unit is defined as two differentiated autism classes and provision for younger children with autism i.e. a total capacity for 12-18 children with autism.

Minister Hanafin said "the introduction of these measures will improve the capacity

of the schools in question to cater for the educational needs of all their pupils and will assist their principals in their work".

INTO General Secretary John Carr welcomed the new initiative to support school leadership. He added, however, that further significant support is required for teaching principals, as well as the extension of administrative deputy principals to special schools and designated disadvantaged schools with large numbers of staff.

The individual schools concerned are being contacted the DES about the new arrangements.

Just published

The INTO has recently published *Social, Personal and Health Education – SPHE in Primary Schools*.

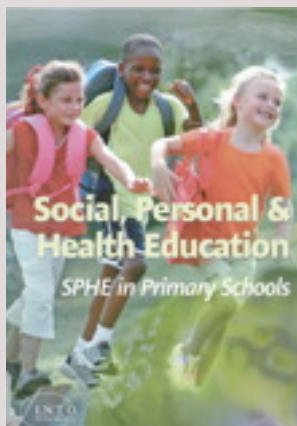
Part One of this report provides an overview of the SPHE curriculum and the challenges involved in its implementation, which comprised the background paper presented to the Consultative Conference on Education in November 2005.

Part Two includes the presentations of the conference, in addition to a report of the discussion groups.

Given the significance of the growing problem of obesity, the main recommendations of the Task Force on Obesity as they pertain to primary schools, are outlined in Part Three, in addition to some commentary on this issue as it concerns schools.

INTO would like to acknowledge the work of the INTO Education Committee and Deirbhile Nic Craith, Senior Official, in publishing this report.

The report is available from INTO Publications Section at 01 8047712 or email yvonnek@into.ie. Cost is €6.



Seoladh cóirghaoithe

Ar an Satharn, 30 Meán Fómhair 2006 rinne an Dr Áine Ní Ghadhra, Uachtarán, Coláiste Mhuire, Institiúid Oideachais Marino, Cóir Ghaoithe a sheoladh ag ócáid sa Choláiste. Is cúrsa ullmhúcháin é Cóir Ghaoithe don Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (SCG), an scrúdú a chaithfidh múinteoirí bunscoile, a fuair a gcuid oiliúna thar lear, tabhairt faoi le lánaitheantas a bhaint amach mar mhúinteoirí sa tír seo. Is iad údair an leabhair ná Aodán Mac Suibhne agus Marie Whelton, atá ag obair mar léachtóirí i gColáiste Mhuire. Cuirfidh an seacht gcéad iarrthóir a bheidh ag tabhairt faoin SCG i mbliana fáilte roimh an leabhar seo ina bhfuil ábhar foghlama a chabhróidh leo an SCG a bhaint amach.

The launch of Cóir Ghaoithe was attended by a large gathering which included members of the Christian Brother Community, Governing Body Members, SCG Tutors, Education Centre Directors and staff members from Marino. The Department of Education was represented by members of the Inspectorate and representatives from the INTO also attended. Special guests at the occasion were three of the 716 SCG candidates who will undertake the exam this year; Anne Doran and Rónán Ruddy both of whom teach in St Mary's SNS in Rowlagh, Clondalkin, and Patrick Quigley who is teaching in St Patrick's SNS in Skerries.

At the launch Dr Anne Ó Gara in her address welcomed the publication of the book and paid tribute to the pioneering work undertaken by Aodán Mac Suibhne and Dr Marie Whelton. In an insightful analysis of Cóir Ghaoithe Dr O'Gara outlined each module of the book in turn and

highlighted in detail the benefits which this work will bestow upon SCG applicants who will study for the exam. Dr O'Gara paid particular tribute to the rich tradition in the teaching of Irish which successive generations of Christian Brothers had earned for Marino and that the new publication Cóir Ghaoithe would add to and continue this fine tradition.



INTO Vice President Angela Dunne and Education Officer Deirbhile Nic Craith at the launch

Children's rights alliance and the decision for referendum on children's right

The Children's Rights Alliance is a coalition of 80 non-governmental organisations, including the INTO, which aims to secure the implementation in Ireland of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In its report to the UN in March this year, the Alliance singled out constitutional change as the key reform needed to enable Ireland to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Following the recent announcement by the Government that it would hold a referendum on

children's rights, the CRA, who welcomed the announcement, was asked to lead the consultation with the non-governmental sector in relation to the formulation of the wording for the proposed amendment.

In this role, the Alliance will consult with its eighty member organisations, who, in addition to the INTO, include a cross-section of organisations working directly and indirectly to promote the welfare of children and families. The Alliance will endeavour to generate a consensus regarding a proposed wording.

Teanga agus Litearthacht

D'eagraigh an NCCA próiseas comhairliúcháin maidir le treoirínite a chur ar fáil do scoileanna Gaeltachta agus scoileanna lánGhaeilge ar theanga agus ar thús na litearthachta.

Cuireadh ceistneoirí amach chuig na scoileanna agus lorgaíodh aighneachtaí mar chuid den phróiseas. Tá cóip d'aighneacht Chumann Múinteoirí Éireann ar fáil ar ár suíomh gréasáin.

Ag éirí as an bpróiseas comhairliúcháin, cuirfidh an NCCA comhairle ar an Aire Oideachais & Eolaíochta faoin gceist seo.

Vere Foster 1819 – 1900

First President of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Vere Foster was born in Copenhagen of an Irish-born father. He worked in the UK Diplomatic Corps but left to help the victims of the great Famine on his brother's estate in Ardee, Co Louth.

Concerned by reports of the terrible conditions for those using emigrant ships, Foster campaigned in the USA and Britain for improved

conditions for passengers. He helped to found and became the first President of the INTO, travelling throughout the country campaigning for the maintenance and improvement of national schools.

Foster is also known for the popular 'Vere Foster National School Writing Books'. He died in Belfast on 21 December 1900.



VERE FOSTER MEDAL WINNERS



Coláiste Mhuire Marino: Emma Clancy pictured with Pádraig Ó Ceanainn, Director of Teaching Practice; Dr Ann O'Gara, President, Marino College of Education and John Carr, INTO General Secretary.



Hibernia College: Bridget Ann Monaghan with Sheila Nunan, INTO General Treasurer.



St Patrick's College: Michelle Whelan with INTO President Denis Bohane.



Mary Immaculate College: Sinéad Bernadette McEnery being presented with her medal by Denis Bohane, INTO President.

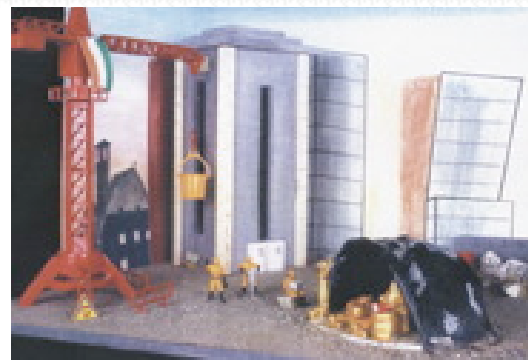
Cross Border Human Rights Education Conference

A Cross Border Conference on Human rights took place on Friday, 20 October 2006 in the Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast. The conference entitled 'Inspiring Practice: Human Rights Education in Primary Schools' is co-hosted by the Lift Off project partners: Amnesty International Irish Section, Amnesty International UK Section, INTO, UTU and Education International in association with the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Irish Human Rights Commission. The conference included presentations on human rights by experts in the USA, UK, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland as well as several panel discussions, workshops, question and answer sessions.

The conference explored

the latest thinking in Human Rights Education and showcase best international practice in the primary education sector. It also provided an opportunity for those involved in human rights education in Ireland to share experiences, discuss and debate key issues impacting on human rights education. Alison Gilliland, Senior Official, gave a presentation on the INTO online summer course: 'A Cross Curricular Approach to Human Rights Education' in one of the workshops.

Another workshop focused on pupils managing their rights within a school context. Pupils from Griffeen Valley Educate Together NS detailed how they established their own Students' Union while pupils from St Mark's Primary School informed delegates about their Students' Council.



Modern take on crib wins trip to Rome

Some pupils in St Ultan's special school in Navan took a very modern approach to a recent competition. The pupils designed and made a crib which won the honour of a place at the famous annual Italian crib exhibition, Mostra 100 Presepi. The Navan crib is one of four Irish cribs featured in the event which opened in Rome on 23 November and will remain there until 6 January. This is the first time Ireland had taken part in this exhibition.

The crib is set on a building site with a tower block called 'Ultan's Towers'. St Joseph, in keeping with his trade, is shown putting the final touches to the crib. Baby Jesus is shown lying on a pallet and cats and dogs are present instead of sheep and donkey. The workmen shown in yellow are the wise men and each brings a gift and a fire is burning in a barrel. No doubt it was this attention to detail which captured the judges who were representative of the National Gallery, the Irish Museum of Modern Art and the Royal Hibernian Academy.

The Mostra takes place in the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo in beautiful Pizza del Popolo. The pupils will be able to see their work on display as they fly out to Rome on 12 December for four days. The remainder of the cribs which took part in the competition will be display in Farmleigh from 15 December to 7 January 2007.



Carmona Special NS, St John of God Carmona Services, DunLaoghaire, Co Dublin, are also one of the winners of Crib Ireland competition 2006.

Operation Maintain Hope



In July 32 volunteers travelled to Ngong in Kenya to refurbish Shelter Children's Home and to build additional accommodation and sanitation facilities. The project, "Operation Maintain Hope", was facilitated by Refugee Trust International which has since changed its name to VITA. Central to the group were INTO members from Kildare, Wexford and Dublin and we received a generous grant from the INTO

Solidarity Fund. Some teachers taught in Kibiko primary school adjacent to the building project. Next year's 'Operation Maintain Hope' involves the building of accommodation for street children in Mombasa who, while attending school by day, return to the streets and all their implicit dangers at night. For more information on the project and the work of VITA, contact Gerry O'Donoghue at 087-2642887

INTO online induction course for learning-support/resource teachers

Just over 400 teachers participated in the INTO online Induction Course for Learning-Support/Resource teachers that commenced on 25 September. This professional development course was run on the INTO professional development website, www.e-learning.com. The course aimed to guide learning support/resource teachers who have taken up the position in their schools for the first time. The course was originally designed last year by a team of practising teachers and College of Education lecturers and re-edited this year in light of suggestions from last year's participants. The course was delivered over nine weekly modules compared to six modules last year. A module on supporting children with emotional and behavioural difficulties was added in. Course content was informative and supported by self check activities and recommended reading and resources. The final module, module nine was delivered on Monday, 27 November. The course will

remain available to participants until the end of December.

Participants were geographically grouped into 12 groups countrywide. Participants in each group were offered an opportunity to meet during the initial stages of the course. The focus of these meetings was to outline the course content, structure and delivery, discuss course requirements, meet the group on-line facilitator and network with fellow participants. The online facilitator supporting each group was an experienced and practising learning support/resource. The role of the facilitator was to respond to participant queries and concerns, host a weekly online chat session and monitor participant postings.

Participants were awarded a Certificate of Course Completion if they fulfilled course requirements. The principal course requirement was to contribute to the discussion forum on each of the nine modules. These fora posed participants with reflective comments such as: 'Consider the following points from

Teaching Talking by Ann Locke and Maggie Beech; "No matter what a child is doing, his or her understanding and talking will not be extending if no one is talking to him or her," (pg 14) and "Try to talk to the child whenever possible while he or she is busy and talk about what is being done. When children's hands are active they are usually much more fluent than when they are just talking," (pg 62) or "The Friday Spelling Test should be abolished. It is merely a traditional practice that does little to enhance either the teacher's perception of a child's progress, or a child's own performance."

Although the course could be completed in one's 'own time' and at one's 'pace' it must be acknowledged that the course demanded a huge amount of time, commitment and energy of which participants gave without reserve. This no doubt reflects the professionalism and dedication of the course participants to their own professional development, to the schools they teach in and to the children they teach.



New Professional Development Official

Orla Walsh is a native of Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon. She graduated from St Patrick's College, Drumcondra in 1995 and she holds a MA in Education from California State University, Chico. In 1998, Orla was appointed Principal of Mary Immaculate NS, Collooney, Co Sligo. In 2004, Orla was seconded to PCSP as a PE Trainer followed by PE/SPHE Cuiditheoir. Orla has worked as an INTO tutor and designer on Professional Development Summer Programmes.

Special education in Irish classrooms – a practical guide

The INTO would like to congratulate Fiona King on her first publication: *Special Education In Irish Classrooms – A Practical Guide*. Fiona is a resource teacher working in Fahy NS, Co Mayo. She collaborates extensively with the INTO Professional Development Unit as a course designer, tutor and facilitator for the Interactive Teaching and Learning summer courses and the online Induction Course for Learning Support Resource Teachers. Fiona also fronted the recently produced INTO training DVD on peer tutoring. In her book,

Fiona offers insights into the issues involved, and offers practical strategies to successfully include all pupils in the educational experience.

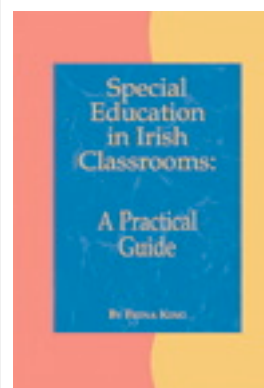
It is very much a 'how-to' book, written in the context of current special education thinking in Ireland. It explores the difficulties that teachers can experience with in-class support and withdrawal teaching and provides great practical examples of how to get started. It describes ways to provide quality supplementary teaching through in-class support, which will provide better classroom

instruction for all pupils.

Differentiation of support is the key to successful curricular inclusion. It is achieved through using alternative teaching methods, resources and groupings to meet an individual's needs. This book successfully outlines some alternative teaching methods, using a practical, hands-on style based on many years of study and teaching practice. It will be of immense help to all teachers, both mainstream and support throughout the country.

Fiona's book is available in all bookshops or from [www](http://www.primaryabc.ie).

primaryabc.ie Price: €5.99 or by contacting Brian Gilsonan, Primary ABC, 01 2695008; primaryabc@eircom.net



IN THE MEDIA

€6.5m primary PE scheme 'not enough'

THE Government has been accused of underfunding physical education for pupils at primary level, despite announcing a €6.5 million sports grant scheme for primary schools.

Education Minister Mary Hanafin released details of the package at the Fianna Fáil Árd Fheis last weekend, promising €2,000 for each of the country's 3,200 primary schools towards the cost of replacing and upgrading PE equipment.

General Secretary of the INTO, John Carr said: "It will take more than an announcement like this to make up for the real lack of facilities for physical education in schools. Unless there is substantial investment in providing indoor facilities in schools, the PE curriculum just will not happen and there is no point in pretending that it will..."

Niall Murray,
Irish Examiner. 8 Nov '06
Education Correspondent

PE grant scheme

Disgracefully inadequate response

It was reasonable to expect that a jaundiced view would be taken by the INTO at an announcement by Education Minister Mary Hanafin in relation to physical education.

The Minister released details of a sports grant, which was dropped by her predecessor Noel Dempsey three years ago against the advice of the union.

The announcement, made at last weekend's Árd Fheis which was a rallying exercise for next year's General Election, was in any case a derisory €6.5 million.

It was paltry in the face of the problem in physical education that is being confronted every day by primary schools, largely because of Government inaction...

If, as she maintained, it was part of the Government's "continued commitment" to modernise facilities in schools, then it was a disgraceful and inadequate response.

Irish Examiner. Editorial
8 Nov '06

Class welfare in the schools

Our healthy economy and the generally comfortable life that it has given most citizens was built on high educational standards that began with the vision of Donogh O'Malley 40 years ago.

As part of a constant evolution, primary teachers were given a revised curriculum in 1999. The aspiration was to develop the potential of every child. Subjects that had been traditionally neglected in Irish education such as art, drama, music social and personal health education were to be nurtured.

As were maths and English.

Today we read that the teachers themselves believe the curriculum is failing, undermined by class numbers that are far too large.

According to a survey carried out by INTO, a sizeable minority of primary teachers believe the revised curriculum is too broad...

Reduce class sizes? Easier said than done, perhaps.

But that's what they told O'Malley too.

Irish Independent. Editorial
18 Nov '06

Teachers predict fall in standards of literacy and numeracy

Standards of literacy and numeracy are set to fall, primary school teachers predict. A sizeable minority believe that the revised curriculum is too broad and that it is very difficult to cover all areas of it properly.

Large class sizes, particularly in multi-class groups, are the major barrier to the successful implementation of the curriculum, according to the survey carried out by the INTO. It shows that teachers have concerns about what can be realistically achieved in school. Some state that individual attention for pupils is impossible due to large classes. More teachers argue that newcomer children without English and special needs children would be better taught in a smaller class.

Other concerns relate to implementing the revised curriculum in old schools with very basic facilities. Although

many teachers stated that they enjoyed teaching the revised curriculum, a lack of resources, class size and time constraints are major problems. Teachers pointed out that if schools are to move away from working with textbooks, then they should be provided with adequate teaching material and resources relating to the revised curriculum...

INTO General Secretary, John Carr said it was time people realised that the individual attention demanded by the revised curriculum was impossible in the second-largest classes in Europe.

"One or two clapped-out computers per class, which are more often out of service due to a lack of technical support, will never produce the high-tech graduates that our economy needs," he said.

John Walshe,
Education Editor
Irish Independent 18 Nov '06

INTO calls for funding for essential primary costs

Many primary schools will not be able to pay essential bills for heating, cleaning, water and other basics unless funding is increased significantly in the forthcoming Budget, according to the Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

The union, representing more than 25,000 teachers in the State, says many primary schools are "on the breadline" because of vastly increased costs.

John Carr, the union's General Secretary, said yesterday: "If schools were businesses many would be bankrupt. Others are being kept afloat by parent contributions and fundraising activities."

Mr Carr said Irish education

spending was one of the lowest in the developed world. Primary schools attracted only about a third of total Government education spending, much less than third level.

Mr Carr said many parents often raised questions when asked for voluntary contributions or being asked to attend fundraising events.

"They expect the State to provide for free primary education. What they often fail to realise is that schools are not raising money to get additional extras. They are fundraising for the bare necessities.

Seán Flynn
Education Editor
The Irish Times. 7 Nov '06

Christmas Hampers to be won

Win one of six luxury Christmas Hampers with thanks from:

EBS would like to wish all the INTO members a very Happy Christmas. If you are a first time buyer trading up or thinking of switching mortgage, EBS has a mortgage affinity package for INTO members. Contact 01 6132795 or email Westmorelandst@mail.ebs.ie for more information.

with **AIB** Merry Christmas and a happy new year from all of us in AIB Card Issuing.

Bank of Ireland would like to wish a very Happy Christmas to all INTO members. Remember for

your banking needs drop into your local branch or call 1890 365 777* – we'd love to talk to you. * To monitor the ongoing quality of our service, calls may be recorded. Bank of Ireland is regulated by the Financial Regulator.

Friends First Finance wish all INTO members a happy and peaceful Christmas, and a prosperous 2007. Friends First Finance provide personal loans to INTO members with preferential underwriting criteria and discounted interest rates.

For more information, please call 1850 403 404. Friends First Finance Ltd. is regulated by the Financial Regulator.

cornmarket group financial services ltd Happy Christmas to all our INTO customers from Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd providing Salary Protection Scheme, AVCs, Carplan Car Insurance and Travel and Home Insurance. Contact 01 408 4000.

Vhi Healthcare Sponsored events

Work life balance workshops will take place on 18 January in Drumcondra Education Centre, Dublin and the 25 January 2007 in the Dublin West Education Centre, Tallaght.

Voice Coaching workshops take place on 13 February in the Blackrock Education Centre, Co

Dublin and on 15 February in Dundalk Education Centre.

Contact 01 804 7745 for more information. Vhi Healthcare would like to wish all INTO customers a very happy and healthy Christmas.

For information on all Vhi Healthcare's products and services, please log on to www.vhi.ie

Christmas draw for hampers

To be in with a chance to win one of the six luxury hampers, simply send your contact details on a postcard to Christmas Hamper Competition, Benefits Section, INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 by 15 December 2006.

Juvent 1000 The new technology to combat osteoporosis

Christmas promotion for INTO members – €400 discount.

The dynamic motion therapy of Juvent 1000 follows 25 years of research funded by NASA, NIH and other agencies, and is assembled in Waterford for the world market.

Juvent 1000 gentle vibrations re-stimulates Type IIA rapid muscle activity lost in ageing. The muscular stimulations place tiny stresses on bones which result in improved:

- bone density, quality and strength;
- skeletal musculature;
- better balance and postural stability;

• blood flow in circulatory system. Conforms to international standards – ISO 2631. Works well with prescribed drugs and provides an excellent choice for those unable to take medication. Qualifies for Med 1 income tax relief. Juvent 1000 may be tested in pharmacies throughout Ireland.

For further information contact local sales agents:

South/South East 087 1318 021.
East/West of Shannon:
087 1259 530.
East Coast: 087 7932042.

COMPETITION WINNER The lucky winner of the luxury break in the Radisson SAS hotel, Limerick is Marie Quirke, Bagenalstown, Co Carlow.

the Liffey Press Special Christmas Book Offer

The Liffey Press is offering readers of *InTouch* a special offer on two new books that are ideal for planning school or family outings. *For the Kids 2: A Family Friendly Guide to Outings and Activities for Children in Ireland* and *The Museums of Ireland: A Celebration* include listings for hundreds of fun and interesting places to take children of all ages. Order them today!



Buy both for only €25.00 (includes p&p) – a savings of 42% off the combined retail price! Just ring The Liffey Press at 01-8511458 or by email at info@theliffeypress.com.

Marriot hotels Galway City and Enfield, Co Meath

The Courtyard by Marriott, Galway City, and the Marriott Johnstown House Hotel and Spa, Enfield, Co Meath, are delighted to offer INTO members the following:

Courtyard by Marriott, Galway City
€129pps. Any 2 nights B&B and 1 evening meal (including weekends).
€149pps. Any 2 nights B&B and 1 evening meal (including weekends) during June, July and August.

Marriott Johnstown House Hotel and Spa, Enfield, Co Meath
€179pps. Any 2 nights B&B and 1 evening meal (including weekends).

All offers are subject to availability and valid until October 2007. To avail of this offer, please quote INTO offer when making your reservation to galway.reservations@courtyardgalway.com or reservations@johnstownhouse.com

For further information please log on to the Marriott website at www.marriott.ie

Christmas draw

To launch the special promotion for INTO members, we are offering a prize for two adults of two nights bed and breakfast with one evening dinner for the Courtyard by Marriott, Galway City. The stylish hotel

boasts spacious bedrooms, Olive Tree restaurant, Point Bar, fitness suite and secure overnight parking. You will also have access to the Absolute Spa which has a thermal suite, relaxation room and a full range of treatments and therapies. It promises to be a haven of deserved bliss and relaxation and the ideal place to rejuvenate mind, body and soul.

To enter this competition please send your contact details on a postcard to the Benefits Section, INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 by 19 December.



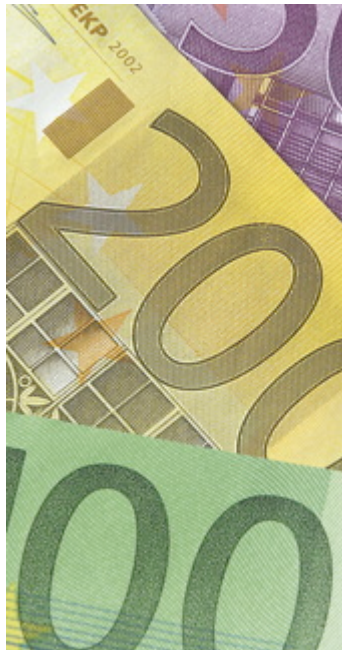
Question and answer

Q. Where can I get information on the cost of a Personal Loan?

A. In today's financial services market, it's reasonably easy to obtain a loan from many of the financial service providers who, in many cases have a multiple of loan products available at various rates. Very often, it's quite difficult to ascertain which is the best product

In the last 12 months, the ECB rate has risen four times from 2.5% to 3.25% with another increase predicted before the new year. This has resulted in an increase in the rates applicable to personal loans.

The Financial Regulator has published a Personal Loan Cost Survey on their website. It's



very informative and will provide you with a range of providers. You will find it at www.ifsra.ie

TIP

You should always check out the cost of credit and the terms and conditions which apply when you take out a loan. If you do your homework, you will find that there are significant differences in the cost of credit from the various providers.

In one example, we found that on a loan of €3,000 payable over three years in regular monthly instalments the difference between the most and least expensive option was over €1,200.

WINNERS OF OCT DRAW

Car – Toyota Corolla

Evanna Linehan,
SN Coill Dubh, Naas,
Co Kildare.

Cash – €1,500

Theresa O'Dea,
Rathmines,
Dublin 6.

Weekend for two

Brid and Sean Uí Riain,
Blackrock,
Co Dublin.

Weekend for two

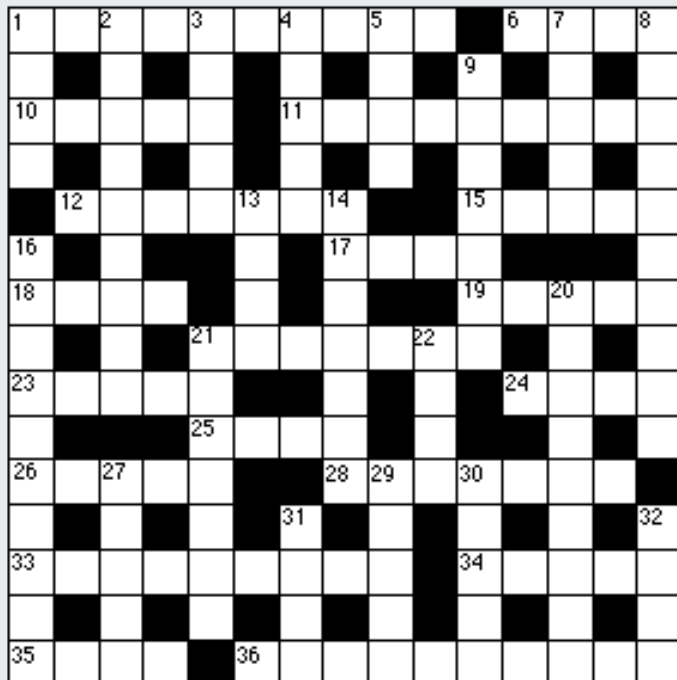
Brid and Jeremiah Cronin,
Killarney,
Co Kerry.

Crossword No. 92

A draw for 2 x €100 will be made from all correct entries

Simply complete the crossword and send it

to InTouch, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, before Friday 19th January, 2007



Across

1. Member of an order that upset the racist? Nice. (10)
6. Mimicked a quiet editor. (4)
10. Get more from the minor actor. (5)
11. Eddy might provide a way to find polo. (9)
12. Mathematicians are forever writing letters on this subject. (7)
15. Unrehearsed movement to free commercials? (2,3)
17. Close to the Northern listener. (4)
18. With such a line, a kiss is achieved. (4)
19. The clergyman takes six by automobile. (5)
21. It makes the air ripe - that's plain. (7)
23. The thank-you letter from Greece. (5)
24. The Pole set fire to the narrow opening. (4)
25. Golf club which can smooth things out. (4)
26. Sticky stuff that makes one misbehave again? (5)
28. One is having a chat, thanks to the novice ruler. (7)
33. Equine footwear or equine gardening equipment? (9)
34. Note, the alcoholic may reddened. (5)
35. Part of the neck described by the Northern primate. (4)
36. Write it up here that I'd wear both, possibly. (10)

Down

1. I leave the leader for a worker in the kitchen. (4)
2. It sounds like the moon was seated while on fire! (9)
3. The First Lady swallowed the commercial? Get away! (5)
4. Act submissively, in a more bovine way? (5)
5. Keen to have a Prima Donna turn up. (4)

7. Skulk like a public relations fly-by-night. (5)
8. Ponder how to reverse a move to freedom? (10)
9. Here in Portugal, one might regale about five. (7)
13. The pig is a constrictor, right? (4)
14. A nice tan can seem very old. (7)
16. Fowl with portable electricity? (7,3)
20. Flower found with a dull cane, perhaps. (9)
21. See father bury the artist. (7)
22. If you want a statue, I do fifty. (4)
27. Remove this for the southern journey. (5)
29. Ward off the avenue to the right. (5)
30. Bake baboons' innards, providing this food. (5)
31. The former Iranian ruler sounds positively Irish! (4)
32. Drop the outhouse. (4)

In Touch Bumper Christmas Crossword, November 2006 Solutions

Across 1. Shepherds 6. Skipped 10. Cow 12. Out 13. Alter 14. UFO 15. Run 16. Thermometer 17. Overdoes 20. Plum 21. Garda 22. Cos 24. Sitcom 26. Stra 29. Tulip 31. Eclair 32. Homework 33. Limbo 34. Tap-in 36. Sentence 38. Gadget 39. Ninth 42. Terms 46. Studio 47. Ski 48. Graph 49. Pils 50. Silencer 54. Confiscated 57. Ada 58. Art 59. Album 60. Gym 61. Dy 62. Notable 63. Persevere

Down 1. Season's greetings 2. Entreats 3. Herod 4. Route 5. Soot 6. Stream 7. Item 8. Primary Curriculum Support Programme 9. Distract 11. Wine 18. Ohm 19. Spot 21. Gem 25. Option 27. Rio 28. Present 30. Tree 32. Heed 33. Learnt 35. Pencil-case 37. Cur 40. High Noon 41. Doh 43. Mass 44. Educable 45. Patient 46. Sal 49. Potage 51. Inter 52. Erase 53. Card 55. Crib 56. Damp

NAME:

ADDRESS:

Winners of Comhar Linn Crossword No. 90 are:
Brian Ó Nualláin, An Rinn Mhór, Gaillimh and
Joan Doherty, Cahir Boys N.S. Co. Tipperary

INTO Education Conference 2006

The annual INTO Consultative Conference on Education took place in Ennis, Co. Clare on 17 and 18 November 2006 on the themes of the 'INTO Survey on the Curriculum – Presentation of Findings' and 'Teacher Education – the Continuum'.

The impact of class size on curriculum implementation

Speaking at the opening session of the conference the General Secretary, John Carr took the opportunity to highlight the importance of the Organisation's class size campaign.

Commenting on WSE reports, he stated that few, if any refer to large class sizes, particularly in multi-class groups and the breadth and detail contained in the revised curriculum that makes it very difficult to cover all areas properly. He went on to say that "the individual attention demanded by the revised curriculum is impossible in the second largest classes in Europe. One or two clapped out computers per class, which are more often out of service due to a lack of technical support, will never produce the high tech graduates that our economy needs. Discovery learning, problem solving, co-operative learning and hands on learning in real life situations are the first casualty in our large classes. I also think it's

fair to say that despite the thousands of special needs teachers in our schools the inclusion of special needs pupils and newcomer children are making huge demands on teachers and are impacting on curriculum outcomes because their needs cannot be met in large classes where they spend most of the day unsupported.

New INTO research shows that in many places we have a long road to travel. Only 12 percent of children in the South Dublin/North Wicklow area are in classes of less than twenty. In the bigger schools, many in the Minister's own constituency, over a quarter are in classes of more than 30. Two thirds of pupils are in classes of between 20 and 29.

In his presentation the General Secretary also referred to the lack of funding and resources to support curriculum implementation and the challenges pertaining to the dual role of principals in leading learning and administration.



Alice O'Connell and Pat Scanlon of the INTO Education Committee are pictured with Ruaidhri de Paor, INTO President Denis Bohane, General Secretary John Carr and Education Committee Cathaoirleach Mary Cawley at the opening of the conference

Teacher education

Since the INTO last discussed teacher education in 1995 and professional development in 1994, there have been many developments including:

- a major OECD report on *Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*;
- the *OECD Thematic Review of Early Years Education and Care Policy in Ireland*;
- the *2010 Lisbon Agenda* focussing on improving teacher education; and
- the *Bologna process*, which aims to create convergence in higher level education.

At national level there has been:

- a *Review of Teacher Education* (Kellaghan, 2001);
- a Pilot Project on Induction (2002);
- primary Curriculum Support Programme, (PCSP); and
- other support initiatives – SDP, LDS, SESS, CAPP, SMPP.

The Department of Education and Science

Paul Ryan, Principal Officer of the Teacher Education Section of the DES, said that there was a need to support teaching and learning to ensure a continued quality of education and to improve student outcomes. The DES gave formal recognition to the teacher education continuum and its three stages, which should be considered within an overall framework.

He offered the key thought that "Teacher education and development leads to improvement in teaching and learning – improved student outcomes and enhanced inclusivity in schools," and stated the need for assessment and analysis of the current situation and the development of options to address shortfalls and potential improvements.

He saw teachers as being adaptable, team-oriented,

pedagogically versatile, expert in core competencies, reflective and committed to ongoing learning and development, having a mastery of content and being involved in ongoing development of pedagogical and content knowledge throughout their career. He focused on the key role of school leaders in improving schools, the link between teacher development and school development, and the need for teacher development to be efficient and effective and of minimal disruption to schools.

Regarding initial teacher education, he stated that the current sectoral approach and duration should be retained and that theory, content and pedagogy should be integrated. He referred to the need for more emphasis on assessment, classroom management, special needs, inclusion, ICTs and collaborative planning and a more varied and challenging teaching practice. He referred to the lifelong nature of CPD and the need for a restructured format which would be proactive and strategic rather than reactive and ad hoc and which would build on current strengths. He referred to the need for CPD to include accreditation, a teacher Professional Development Portfolio, a single point of contact for schools re CPD, both in-school and out-of-school provision, summer courses and EPV days. He concluded by stating that we must build upon the successes to date but realise that change must occur to prepare teachers to meet emerging challenges, to continue to provide a quality education and to improve student outcomes.

The Teaching Council

Áine Lawlor, the Director of the Teaching Council, outlined the main functions of the Teaching

See the INTO website www.into.ie for a full report and webcast of the conference



Left: Seán Rowland of Hibernia Collegewith Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO Education Officer

Right: Milo Walsh, Dympna Mulkerrins and Rosena Jordan of the INTO Education Committee.

Council as it pertains to teacher education. In summary, the Teaching Council must:

- Review standards of entry to teacher education courses.
- Review and accredit teacher education courses.
- Establish procedures for induction and probation.
- Review standards for the practice of teaching.
- Review and accredit continuing education and training of teachers.
- Advise the Minister.
- Consult with institutions of higher education and training.

A new voice for teachers

Eddie McArdle, Director of the General Teaching Council in Northern Ireland, gave a most inspiring presentation on the challenges facing teachers in the 21st century. He reflected on teachers, and who they are in the context of a knowledge society and global economy. He saw teachers as keepers of tomorrow and makers of meaning. He spoke of the Chindia factor – China becoming the largest economy of the world, and the increasing outsourcing of jobs. He stated that knowledge was now the most valuable resource, that innovation/ingenuity are essential for survival, that knowledge grows exponentially in networks, which build ‘soft’ skills and that knowing is

less important than knowing how to get to know more. Teaching for the knowledge society will involve creativity, flexibility, problem solving, ingenuity, collective intelligence, risk-taking and continuous improvement and that we need to promote deep cognitive learning, work and learn in collegial teams, build a capacity for change and risk and contribute and draw on collective intelligence. He referred to the moral purpose of teaching, the common good and the importance of values.

Education Committee presentations

Patrick Dorrian, District 1, outlined the current approach to the continuum of teacher education in Northern Ireland. Teacher education in Northern Ireland is a partnership approach between the Higher Education Institutions, the schools, the Education and Library Boards, the students and the teachers, and includes initial teacher education, induction, early professional development and continuous professional development. CPD currently consists of school based one day or one hour training from the Curriculum and Assessment Support Service, school based cascade training by colleagues, off



Mary Burke and Joan Keating of the NQT Induction Project with Pairc Travers of St Patrick’s College

campus courses, twilight courses, (including accredited courses) a professional qualification for headship (PQH) and a bursary scheme organised by the General Teaching Council (GTCNI). Teachers have a ‘career profile’, which is a record of the professional development, and which is also kept by the Teaching Council. Siobhán Lynskey, District VI, outlined some key demands in relation to the continuum of teacher education. She called for an immediate roll out of induction for all NQTs on a phased basis.

In relation to CPD she demanded the establishment of

a National CPD Framework, which would meet system, school and individual needs. Róisín Nic Tighearnáin, District VII, spoke of teaching in today’s society. She quoted Maxine Green, speaking about teachers and teaching, as saying: “If curriculum is a set of stories one generation chooses to tell the next, the choosing is important, but so too is the telling, and most crucial of all is the storyteller.” Róisín said we need to examine the skills, attributes and perceptions that teachers must possess in order to fulfil their role as educators in this new millennium. (Cont. p26)

Teacher education (cont.)



Eileen Flynn of SDPS and Paddy Flood of LDS at the conference.



Teaching is about relationships – it is about intellectual and emotional engagement with pupils, with parents and with colleagues both in and out of the classroom.

The terrain of the Irish primary class has dramatically changed in the past ten years. Our classrooms have become multi-cultural, inclusive communities.

The content of preservice education has addressed the changing social context of the Irish primary classroom in terms of some of the challenges presented to teachers. The development and intercultural education project (DICE) and the increasing number of elective studies in intercultural education, special education and early childhood education are examples of where colleges have been proactive in meeting the changing needs of primary schools in Ireland. However, preservice education now needs to address the changing types of schools such as Gaelscoileanna and Educate Together schools. Teachers at preservice level need to be educated in the ethical curriculum and surely there is a need for a Bun Chéim Múinteoireachta go h-iomlán trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Teachers themselves need to be confident, capable learners who love to learn and who have fair, unlimited and enriched access to learning. They need to be reflective practitioners who believe that they have a positive, significant and lasting impact on the way the world learns.

E-learning in teacher education

Nicholas Breakwell of Hibernia College outlined some of the scope of e-learning for teachers. He described the traditional paradigm of learning as being the university or college as the learner’s focus and the focus of learning. A shift in the paradigm of learning would see a much stronger focus on learning networks and school focused learning, where learning is accessible anytime, anywhere with the learner the core of their own multilevel, flexible, transitory and expedient series of dynamic networks. He described a course as being made up of discrete learning events and that by mapping each kind of learning event, targeted online facilitation and learner support can be built.

Colleges of Education

St Patrick’s College, Mary Immaculate College and Froebel College (on behalf of the Trinity Colleges) outlined the challenges to teacher education as they saw them. Pauric Travers of St Patrick’s College, identified the key issues as the duration and content of programme, proper relationship with schools, balance of personal and professional development and the changing needs of society we serve. He endorsed Fullan’s *Moral Purpose of Teaching* and referred to the importance of Finland as a model worth considering. He identified the

key challenges of initial teacher education as the balance between theory and practice, new subjects, the role of the ‘Academic’ subject, relationships and partnerships with schools. He warned against the Induction Project becoming “another endless pilot”.

Peadar Cremin of Mary Immaculate College endorsed the contributions of the other colleges and focussed on the importance of teacher education as opposed to teacher training.

Brian Tubbert outlined the unique feature of the Trinity model being a fourth year which takes place in the evening and which includes an induction module. He suggested that

consideration be given to commencing the graduate programme in the autumn and extending it to two academic years. He also suggested that consideration be given to offering the Graduate Diploma on a modular basis.

All colleges supported the concept of a continuum of teacher education, though indicated the need for a coherent framework, which would be diverse, flexible, modular and which would meet needs across the system.

The Colleges expressed a willingness to embrace on-line learning as part of post-graduate studies and CPD but did not wish to see initial teacher education taking place online.

WHEN CHANGE MEETS REVISION

Ruaidhrí de Paor, who recently completed his doctorate on the development of the Primary Curriculum 1999, gave an overview of some of his key findings. He outlined the less than prescriptive nature of the curriculum text and its consequences – freedom to suit differing contexts but huge responsibility on practitioners. He gave evidence from the teachers interviewed individually and in focus groups with regard to perceptions and perspectives towards the Curriculum in its initial stages of implementation. He referred to the assess-

ment model from Michael Fullan on successful implementation – possible use of new materials or technologies; the use of new teaching approaches and the possible alteration of beliefs. He also referred to evidence from his observation of teachers’ practice – professionals, protectionists and conservatives, and outlined some recommendations for policy makers regarding continuing professional development, and more research into the level of engagement in classrooms with the reforms of the Revised curriculum.

INTO curriculum survey 2005

Each decade, the INTO surveys members as part of its ongoing monitoring of changes in teacher attitudes and approaches to the Primary Curriculum. As the previous INTO curriculum research project was conducted in 1995, the 2005 survey was of particular interest and importance as it was the first since the implementation of the Revised Curriculum.

The results show that in general, it can be concluded that teachers are embracing the Primary School Curriculum 1999. Analysis of respondents' comments indicates overwhelming support, on the whole, for the revised curriculum. Words such as "great energizer", "wonderful", "exciting", "worthwhile", "child-friendly", "modern" and "creative" were attributed to it, however, they were balanced by further comments relating to curriculum overload, class size, time, planning, funding and resources.

The two areas of greatest concern to teachers regarding the implementation of the revised curriculum were class size and funding/resources. Many teachers who praised the curriculum maintained that it was extremely difficult to implement satisfactorily in large classes and teachers of multi-classes experienced particular difficulties. It was also felt strongly that schools need to be provided with adequate resources to enable teachers to adopt the teaching methodologies prescribed.

Some respondents expressed concern regarding falling standards. A number of areas were mentioned specifically eg, the three Rs, literacy in junior classes, spellings and tables.

There was considerable support for ongoing inservice, upskilling and training. English, PE, special education and the teaching of non-nationals were specified as areas in need of attention.

Language

Teachers reported the usage of a wide variety of activities to support oral language development in English and to support children's reading. More than 90% of teachers supported the principles underpinning the writing curriculum. However, there is scope for further development, as some activities, such as Improvisational Drama, are under utilised by some teachers. Class novels could also be more extensively used.

Sa Ghaeilge, is léir go bhfuil tréan iarracht á dhéanamh ag múinteoirí an curaclam a chur i bhfadhm. D'fháilteoidís roimh áiseanna breise cé go bhfuil na múinteoirí sásta ar an iomlán leis na hacmhainní atá ar fáil.

More than half of the respondents held positive views in relation to the introduction

of modern languages as part of the primary curriculum as it would broaden children's experience.

Mathematics

This survey showed a general adaptability amongst teachers towards the revised curriculum with the vast majority having no problems with the mathematics strands. A very large majority felt that they were successful in their mathematics teaching although almost half the respondents listed some problem in using a constructivist approach to the teaching of the revised mathematics curriculum.

Respondents employed a variety of organisational structures in their mathematics teaching but whole-class presentation is still the most frequently used. Textbooks remained the most used resource for the teaching and there was also good use of concrete materials and resource books. Calculators and ICT were not widely used. In general, respondents presented pupils with many methods for solving problems and also encourage a combination of strategies for problem solving.

Social, Scientific and Environmental Studies (SESE)

At the time of the survey, the revised curriculum in history and geography had not yet been implemented though the professional development programme had begun. However, many features of the history and geography curriculum were considered by teachers as being of significance in their planning and teaching.

Teachers reported frequent use of questioning and observation skills in science and reported that pupils were often given opportunities to undertake practical investigations, though not many had an investigation table in their classrooms. Very few teachers reported using ICT in science, but the environment was frequently used.

The Arts

Teachers had not fully embraced the strand unit Looking and Responding, as comfortably as they had Making Art. Paint and colour and drawing tended to dominate teachers' planning in the visual arts. Most appreciation of art is taking place within the school. Pupils generally have a choice in the materials they use.

Though the Drama curriculum had not been implemented at the time of the survey, many teachers reported that they engaged in mime and stories as part of the English and Irish curriculum.

Teachers reported that their pupils were

exposed to a broad range of music experiences. Singing and listening to music were the elements of music most frequently used in the classroom. Pupils are most likely to listen to classical and traditional music, but also hear popular and sacred music.

Physical Education (PE)

Teachers reported that pupils experienced a range of PE activities, though not all pupils experience the Aquatics strand of the curriculum. Many schools did not have adequate facilities and resources in order to fully implement the PE curriculum. Many schools utilised the various coaching schemes that are available to primary schools.

Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE)

Teachers reported that SPHE was being successfully taught through a cross-curricular approach. The Stay Safe programme was taught in one third of schools. Walk Tall and other programmes were also used by schools. Many teachers reported difficulties in teaching the sensitive areas of the RSE programme.

Special education teaching

The most frequently used approach to supporting pupils with special needs was to withdraw individual pupils or groups of children for additional support teaching. Teachers also reported, however, that support is given to special needs pupils, either individually or in groups, within their classrooms.

Professional development

On the whole, teachers reported that their experience of the inservice seminars provided by the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) was positive. The inschool support provided by the PCSP was also very well received.

Assessment

Teachers reported the use of a number of tools to assess the progress of their pupils. Teacher observation, standardised tests and teacher designed tests were the most frequently used tools. Progress records were also used, particularly in maths and English.

Alice O'Connell, District XVI gave an overview of some of the main findings of the INTO survey and Pat Scanlon, District XI, presented some of the key findings of other evaluations of the curriculum since 1999 including INTO, DES and NCCA.

Moving your mortgage

What to think about

Continuing the series of articles from the Financial Regulator, again this month we focus on mortgages. Future articles will cover car loans, car and home insurance, credit cards and protecting your personal financial information.

When you first take out your mortgage, you spend time shopping around to see what the best option is, whether that is with your local bank, building society or through an affinity offer with your union. You spend time looking at fixed rates, variable rates, trackers, the term of your mortgage and figuring out how much you can borrow. And then forget all about your mortgage.

By doing this, you could be missing out on potential savings on your mortgage. By shortening the term of your mortgage, increasing the repayments or switching to a cheaper lender, you could save yourself a lot of money over the life of your mortgage. Before you think about moving your mortgage, look at the costs involved and factor this into your calculations. It may not be worth moving to another provider if the costs of switching are high and the savings you will make are modest. To move your mortgage, you will usually have to pay a fee to have your home valued and legal fees, though some lenders will offer to pay your fees. Also, be aware that if you have a fixed rate mortgage, you may have to pay a fee to break the fixed term mortgage.

People move their mortgages for all sorts of reasons but, aside from getting a better

deal, one of the main reasons is to release equity from their homes. Many people want to release some of the equity in their home, maybe to pay for home improvements, a new car or to buy an investment property. Borrowing money against your home to buy an investment property can make good financial sense but only if you can afford it. As with any mortgage, what you need is to focus on is whether you can comfortably afford the repayments, both now and into the future. Bear in mind that your repayments will increase if you release equity from your home. If you rely on rental income to help pay your mortgage, make sure you have a financial cushion, so that you can meet repayments even if you have no rental income for a time.

Another common reason for releasing equity is to consolidate debts. This can be tempting because monthly repayments will be lower after consolidating debts into a single mortgage. But there are risks that you

should consider. It may appear to cost less, but spreading the cost of short-term debt like credit card bills or a personal loan over the life of a mortgage will cost you more in the long term because you will be paying more interest. So if you are considering this option, ask your lender if you can split the new loan so that you pay off your personal loans over a shorter term. Remortgaging can be useful if it is part of an overall plan to manage your finances more effectively. If you take on more debt in the future, you may not have the option to remortgage again.

For more information on moving your mortgage and remortgaging, read *Mortgages Made Easy*. Copies are available by calling the Financial Regulator's consumer helpline on 1890 77 77 77, logging onto www.itsyourmoney.ie or by calling into the Consumer Information Centre on College Green in Dublin.

Next month's column will look at borrowing money to buy a new car.

Phone In

consumer help-line,
lo-call 1890 77 77 77

Log In

www.itsyourmoney.ie
consumerinfo@financialregulator.ie

Drop In

Information Centre,
6-8 College Green, Dublin 2

The Financial Regulator is an independent watchdog set up to protect you and give you free, independent information in plain English on financial products such as mortgages, personal loans, insurance, credit cards, pensions, savings and investments and more.



FINANCIAL REGULATOR
Rialtóir Airgeadais

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		5	4		7		2	8

SU DOKU

The Comhar Linn Su Doku challenge is to fill every space in the grid with one of the digits 1 to 9, so that all 9 digits appear on each row and each column, as well as in each of the 9 square-shaped cells. There is a unique solution to each puzzle. Good luck. Solution on page 63

West Mayo retirement



Teachers who were recipients of presentations in Hotel Westport at the INTO West Mayo retirement function, front from left Dorothy Shaw Holy Trinity, Michael O'Malley Louisburgh NS, Mary O'Malley Killen NS. Back, from left, Michael Carney Treasurer Tony Varley Secretary and Walter Cox, Chairperson. Picture: Frank Dolan.

National School System – 175th anniversary

More than any other Irish institution, the national school has touched the lives of virtually every Irish person. Few places in Ireland are far away from a local national school and often that school is at the heart of the local community. Years after we have left national school, many of us hold strong memories of the lessons we learned, our teachers who taught us and the friends we made there. For most of us it was our first experience outside the familiar surroundings of our homes and families, and a chance to take the first step on a whole new world of learning.

When the first Commissioners of National Education agreed to establish

and manage a new elementary school system for Ireland in 1831, they could hardly have dared to hope that the Irish National School System could become so deeply engrained in Irish life. Irish people had a deep respect for education long before 1831, of course, and for a considerable part of the nineteenth century the national schools co-existed with the older hedge schools or pay schools.

In general, the new schools were a remarkably successful experiment in the provision of education. By the end of the nineteenth century literacy was accepted as a skill to be acquired by all children, and few places were without their local school. Indeed, I know that the Irish national school system was envied and imitated

in many countries around the world.

The National School System proved to be adaptable and resilient too. In the twentieth century children were equipped with sound skills in literacy, numeracy and other areas of learning. Bhí na scoileanna náisiúnta chun tosaigh in Athbheochan na Gaeilge agus tá gá suim a ath-mhúscailt inni arís. In the 1960s and 1970s it responded to new ideas on children's learning as the child-centred curriculum was introduced and the close of the century coincided with further curricular change.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication and inspiring teaching of countless generations of Irish national school teachers. I am

proud of the achievements of the modern, bright and exciting national schools that exist all around the country. I am deeply grateful to the thousands of teachers whose work turns those buildings into places of real learning and enjoyment each day. I am conscious, too, of the huge voluntary effort that parents and others contribute to managing local schools.

Like every generation, we face new challenges but I am confident that the Irish National School System and all involved in it will continue to serve the needs of Irish children with the same success and distinction that it has served us for the last 175 years.

Mary Hanafin, TD,
Minister for Education
and Science

NOTABLE DATES

1868 – 1890

- INTO formed from amalgam of 71 local teacher associations.
- The report of the Powis Commission in 1870 recommends security of tenure for teachers with three months' notice of dismissal and an appeals procedure. It also recommends payment by results.
- In 1875 the INTO succeeds in ensuring the provision of teachers' residences.
- Establishment of contributory pension fund for national teachers in 1879.

1891 – 1920

- Mayo Statute agreed in 1894.
- In 1898 the Belmore Commission on National Education urges a child-centred approach to education.
- Abolition of payment by results and the introduction of incremental scales.
- In 1907 the INTO Congress changes Organisation Rules to allow for the election of two women to reserved places on the CEC.

1921 – 1950

- INTO convenes a National Programme Conference in 1922, which forms the basis of curricular policy in the Irish Free State.
- In 1923 the Government cuts teacher salaries by 10%.
- In 1924 the Department of Education is established.
- In 1933 prominent INTO members move to make home ownership possible for teach-

ers by establishing the Educational Building Society in the Teachers' Club in Dublin.

- In 1937 the INTO succeeds in getting redeployment rights through the establishment of Diocesan panels.
- In 1938 the Government enforces the early retirement of women teachers. A marriage ban on women teachers had been in force since 1934.
- Teachers strike on salary in 1946 (see *March InTouch*)
- The enforced early retirement of women teachers is rescinded in 1948.
- INTO successfully lobbies for the recognition and establishment of a Special Education sector for children with disabilities.

1951 – 1980

- Conciliation and Arbitration Scheme for Teachers established in 1951.
- The marriage ban on women teachers is ended in 1958.
- 1967 sees the introduction of free post-primary education and a school transport scheme.
- New Curriculum issued in 1971 including aspects such as art and crafts, an expanded music programme, elementary science and physical education.
- In 1968 the Ryan Tribunal establishes a common basic scale for primary and post-primary teachers.
- In 1974 the basic qualification for primary teaching achieves university status with the introduction of the B. Ed degree.

- In 1975 Management Boards for National Schools are introduced.
- Equal pay is introduced in 1977, abolishing the differential whereby married men were on a different scale to single men and women.
- 1980 sees a major review of teachers' salaries and allowances following a campaign by the teachers' unions.

1981 – 1999

- The Government decides in 1985 not to honour an independent arbitration award of 10% to teachers. The three teachers' unions, under the banner of Teachers United, successfully campaign on the issue including strike action and a rally in Croke Park of 20,000 teachers.
- 1985 sees the introduction of a Career Break scheme for teachers.
- 1987 sees the first of a series of national programmes on pay and social policy agreed.
- 1998 Education Act.
- Revised Primary School Curriculum is published by the NCCA in 1999.

2000 – 2006

- New Special Education system introduced.
- Teaching Council established.
- Hibernia College starts online training of teachers
- National Council for Special Education (NCSE) established.
- Education Welfare Act – National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) established.
- Benchmarking Review awards 13% to teachers.

Women teachers and the

In February 1904 the INTO began publishing *The Irish School Weekly* which originally cost 2d per copy and was registered as a newspaper. It was available from newsagents or directly from the publishers in Talbot Street, Dublin, and one did not have to be a member of the INTO to avail of the information and advice offered.

Women and the INTO

In 1904 there were 12,281 national teachers in Ireland. Just over half of these were women. Not all teachers joined the local associations that cumulatively formed the INTO. Membership was an ongoing cause of concern as less than fifty per cent of national school teachers were 'associated'. Women teachers, though more numerous than their male colleagues, made up a small percentage of association membership. Those women who were members were slow to attend local association meetings. Association officers were usually men. At national level men administered the INTO as they had from the foundation of the Organisation by Vere Foster in 1868. The Congress Committee comprised men exclusively but women members were graciously permitted to help organise the Congress Ball. This was consistent with general practice at a time when the dominant domestic ideology dictated that women were best suited to the private sphere of the home. In 1907 Organisation Rules were changed to admit two women to the Central Executive Committee. Even this tentative step was not universally welcomed. One concerned female teacher wrote to the editor of *The Irish School Weekly* to question the propriety of two lone women sitting for long stretches in the company of so many men!

Articles in *The Irish School Weekly* were written almost exclusively by men and covered the educational and professional concerns of the Organisation. An article worthy of note, which was not typical of the general trend, appeared in the issue of 18 January 1908. It was a transcript of an address entitled *Ladies and the Organisation* made by Catherine Mahon to a meeting in Cork. Catherine was the foremost woman in the INTO at the time and was later to become its first female president. In her address she reminded women teachers, perhaps controversially, that their first duty was to their schools and their second to their homes. She advocated that women should take an active part in the INTO. Local associations held their meetings on



Saturday at the time. She encouraged women

“For one Saturday every two or three months make arrangements to have stockings mended, blouses ironed, shopping done and log books filled either before or after, so as to have (their) Saturday free for the meeting”.

A help column

Teachers wrote to *The Irish School Weekly* looking for help with various professional problems. To maintain anonymity correspondents invariably used pen names such as ‘Savonarola’, ‘Violet’ and ‘Pythagoras’. One can only guess as to the nature of their problems because the answers alone appeared in print and were cloaked in mystery. In the ‘Replies to Queries’ column, 23 November, 1918 were the following:

“Miriam – (1) We don’t think it is likely. (2) Would have a reasonable chance. (3) Roughly, £35 0. (4) Yes. (5) Not necessarily. Little Flower – (1) He is. (2) Our interpretation exactly coincides with yours. Perhaps manager may be able to get an official explanation of the riddle.”

The Irish School Weekly carried advertisements for teaching jobs in Ireland and abroad. These advertisements usually specified whether a master or mistress was required. Job advertisements for women teachers often stipulated proficiency at music. The following advertisement, which appeared in the issue of 15 August 1914, was typical:

“Wanted – On 1 November Trained Female Assistant Teacher (RC) for school in Co Antrim; average 60 for year ending

31/12/13. Vocal and instrumental music indispensable; Irish a recommendation. Applications with copies of testimonials to be addressed ‘North’ Office of this paper”.

Less frequently there were advertisements for clerical vacancies in the Organisation’s headquarters, which by 1918 was 9 Gardiner’s Place, Dublin. In the issue of 23 November 1918 the Organisation’s General Secretary, TJ O’Connell invited fully-qualified and experienced shorthand typists to apply to him enclosing copies of testimonials and certificates. Applicants (who must be ladies) were to state their expected salaries and were informed that preference would be given to daughters or near relatives of associated teachers!

From the beginning there was a page in *The Irish School Weekly* devoted exclusively to matters concerning women teachers. In the issue of 6 February, 1904 women teachers were informed that “long skirts with their trains and consequent trouble” had gone out of fashion and that skirts two or three inches from the ground were ‘quite the vogue’. Tam O’Shanters in crocheted wool were deemed suitable for any occasion “in the country where wind and weather are such considerations and spoil more delicate millinery.”

The Woman’s World of 23 April 1904 illustrates the multitudinous range of the page with six short articles entitled *An Indian Lady Lecturer in Dublin, Kindergarten System in Ireland, A New Entertainer, Ex-Queen Isabella of Spain, The Fish Course, and Recipe for Wrinkles*. Readers were advised not to worry in order to prevent wrinkles. The article went on

Irish School Weekly

“Women are meant to be the happy, hopeful, helpful part of the community. We need our bright eyes, our rosy lips, our smiles and gay laughs, if we are to accomplish our work in this world. We are ‘natural actors, natural deceivers’, they say, and to what better end can we put our powers than to frighten worry away from our homes and lives.”

The Lady Teacher's Page

In the issue of February 3, 1906 the name of the page was changed and *The Lady Teacher's Own Page* was introduced for the first time. Kathleen Roche, supposedly a principal teacher from Dublin, was charged with writing this page. ‘Kathleen Roche’ may have been a nom de plume for Catherine Mahon. In *The Lady Teacher's Own Page* she wrote about the pressing women's issues of the day such as the consuming question of women's suffrage. She championed equal pay for equal work. In the issue of 23 November 1918 she reproduced an article on the matter originally published in *The Irish Citizen*, the publication of the feminist movement in Ireland at the time. She commented on the small percentage of women teachers who attended association meetings and annual Congress. She suggested that as associations generally sent two representatives to Congress there should be one woman and one man in each delegation. Kathleen wrote of the visits of inspectors and the teaching of sewing.

Side by side with the most laudable of feminist theory or the most progressive professional ideas would come an article on women's dress or on how to pack for vacations. *The Lady Teacher's Own Page* in the issue of 28 March 1908 concentrated entirely on fashion. Stripes and small checks were popular that spring but, as Kathleen Roche pointed out, plain materials had the advantage of not dating. She continued

“As far as sleeves are concerned, we are at absolute freedom. All lengths are worn... The dressiest length for the sleeve is ending just below the elbow, and there are so many pretty ways of finishing such a sleeve, I do not wonder it is popular. For instance, when the arm is plump and well shaped, the prettiest way is to end the sleeve with a band of insertion or velvet, but if the arm is thin what more becoming than a frill of lace?”

In the issue of 24 July 1909 she devoted much of the page to hints for packing.

These included making a list, keeping everything as flat as possible and never leaving packing to the last minute, as this was, she claimed, a source of worry and fatigue. She proceeded to include an amalgam of short pieces. One article was headed *Some Don'ts (sic) in Dress*. These included “Don't dress your head at the expense of your hands and feet,” “Don't wear a white underskirt unless it is white” and “Don't imagine beauty will atone for untidiness!” Another article on the same page informed the reader that women had been elected to Parliament – in 1360.

Advertisements

The Irish School Weekly carried professional and personal advertisements. The professional commercials were for such items as school readers, books on the teaching of different subjects, special books for lady teachers, pens, copy books – especially those with headlines for the teaching of handwriting – *An Claidheamh Solais* and *The Times Educational Supplement*.

The aspirations of teachers were fed and formed by the commercials that illustrate how teachers viewed themselves and how they were viewed by society. Teachers were expected by the general public, and by the National Board, to maintain a certain standard of living and decorum. There were advertisements for house-swapping arrangements, holidays, bicycles and furniture. To begin with bicycle adverts often portrayed male teachers only. By 1918 not only were women teachers included in such advertisements but they were featured on the cover of the publication. Teachers did not consider their own salaries were adequate. However it was obvious that they

were generally considered ‘safe bets’ for credit and in a position to pay for such luxury items such as pianos. Teachers were offered loans and investment schemes. They were offered insurance from one tenacious Limerick entrepreneur whose advertisement appeared in several issues of *The Irish School Weekly*. During the Great War, teachers were encouraged to buy war savings certificates at 15/6 each. They were also given notes, with answers, as to how to incorporate the idea of war savings certificates into their arithmetic programme. During the War several advertisements appeared for paper recycling. Schools would be reimbursed if they forwarded old roll-books, copies, journals, readers and School Weeklies for recycling.

There were advertisements for clothes, accessories and cosmetics. The food advertisements often emphasised woman's role as the parent who carried the most responsibility for the family's wellbeing. Advertisements for medications generally followed suit but the commercial for Veno's cough syrup that appeared in the issue of 23 November 1918 was an exception. This neatly underlined man's dominance even in domestic matters that were traditionally ceded to the mother.

One very interesting advertisement for corsets appeared on the cover of the 21 June 1902 issue of *The Irish Teacher's Journal*, the precursor of *The Irish School Weekly*. One must wonder what would be the reaction today if similar advertisements appeared on the cover of *InTouch!*

Eilís O'Sullivan teaches in St Mary's Girls' School, Limerick. She is currently on secondment as an Education Officer in the NCCA

Latest Novelty in Corsets.
THOMSON'S "GRACIOSA"
Patented and Registered.
UNBREAKABLE WAIST.
NATURAL HINCE.
Extract from Madame Schild's Fashion Journals for March.
A New Corset.
This novelty is a very clever arrangement of the nature of a hinge at the waist, so that the wearer does not break the sticks when sleeping. This alteration in the corset in no way interferes with the support which the corset should give to the body; on the contrary, if anything, it gives greater strength without pressure upon the hip bones, and yet makes the body more supple. This corset is called "The Graciosa," is extremely comfortable to wear even from the first, it fits the body at once, and is as easy as a glove, and is manufactured by Messrs. W. S. Thomson & Co. Can be had of all ladies outfitters.
Made in White, Dove, Black, and Cream. 8/11
Only one price.
To be had of all Drapers. If difficulty, send postal order direct to manufacturers, and the Corset will at once be sent.
W. S. THOMSON & CO., Ltd.,
Newmarket, London, N.E. 1
And mention this paper.

WHOOPIING COUGH
Three Little Sufferers Cured.
Mrs. York, 2, King's Road, Rushden, Northants, says: "One of my little boys caught whooping cough, and soon was very ill indeed. The attacks were extremely severe, and generally ended in vomiting. My husband suggested Veno's. He had taken it himself, and knew its value. So I got some for the child, and soon there was an improvement. The attacks became less violent, and quickly he recovered. Since then Veno's has cured my other children of the same ailment."
Veno's Lightning Cough Cure is the Recognized Modern Remedy for
COUGHS & COLDS, LUNG TROUBLES, BRONCHITIS, ASTHMA, DIFFICULT BREATHING, WHOOPIING COUGH, BLOOD SPITTING, HOARSENESS, INFLUENZA.
Large Size, 1/3 and 3/4. The 3/4 size is the most economical.
Chemist and Medicine Vendors the world over. Avoid imitations.
VENO'S LIGHTNING COUGH CURE

From the first ever editorial

Irish Teachers' Journal, January 1, 1868

Were all the funds that have been left for education properly managed, and devoted to their original purpose, the education of the poor would give us comparatively little concern. But these funds have been diverted into other channels; they have been wasted in litigation, and the poor have been – to put the matter plainly – robbed. Universities themselves, now almost exclusively devoted to the upper classes, were originally intended for the poor.

It is high time that something

were done towards the proper management of endowed, chartered, and incorporated schools, and that our Universities should be freed from some of those restrictions which confine their benefits too much to sect and party.

And why should we not have a Minister of Education? Surely education demands large and liberal oversight and that official power and authority which is best represented by a department of the public service with a responsible Minister at its head.

Your choice of post

INTO advice for young teachers 1933

Rarely has the young teacher much choice in selecting a post. He is usually glad to take the first position that offers.

Should a choice present itself, however, the young teacher is strongly advised to accept an assistantship in preference to a principalship, and

to take an assistantship in a large school in preference to a similar position in a small school.

The advantages to a young teacher of a period of “apprenticeship” as assistant in a good well-managed school at the outset of his career can scarcely be estimated.

The case for married women

Irish School Weekly, February 10, 1923

We have heard a good deal in recent years about the danger of married women neglecting their school for their household duties. That there is always some danger of the kind we do not want to deny; but before it is accepted by educational authorities anywhere as adequate ground for the abolition of this class of teacher, a little thought to the other side of the case might be desirable. Suppose it were decided to send all the married lady teachers about their business, from what class would their successors have to be selected? The answer comes immediately to our mind’s ear and from a chorus of many voices, “from the unmarried lady teachers, of course; there is an abundant supply of them waiting”. So there is,

indeed; but we have a further question to ask:

“Would not most of these now single ladies be likely to get married later on? How do you propose to treat them when they do so?”

There will be many female voices absent from the chorus this time, but one answer only is possible, “Sack the lot and get another new supply of lady teachers unencumbered with husbands.” So on, and so on, ad infinitum. The inevitable effect would be that most of our lady teachers would become mere birds of passage in the profession, their frequent coming, and going, causing more unsettlement and more confusion in the work of the schools than we have ever known during the time we have been dealing with the married lady teacher.

Relations between inspectors and managers and teachers

Department Circular 1959

So that all inspectors, and in particular future inspectors, may fully appreciate the great importance to the maintenance of the good relations which for a considerable number of years have existed between inspectors, managers and teachers, it is desired to re-state in this section the directions issued in previous circulars.

The inspector should constantly keep in mind that his success in improving the work in the schools depends largely on his maintaining friendly relations with the managers and teachers and gaining their confidence, collaboration and goodwill. He will not secure the whole-hearted confidence and

co-operation of the teachers unless he puts both teachers and pupils at their ease during his visits. He should avoid showing before the pupils impatience or dissatisfaction with the teacher’s performance of duty and should be scrupulously careful not to do or say anything which might impair the teacher’s self-confidence or lower his standing in the eyes of his pupils.

If he has to point out to the teacher any shortcomings in his work, he should do so with tact and restraint and out of the presence or, at any rate, out of the hearing of the pupils.

At all times the inspector’s manner, speech and demeanour should be to teachers and pupils a model of correct and courteous behaviour.

800 THE IRISH SCHOOL WEEKLY, DECEMBER 27th, 1906.


Notes on Constipation.

(See Free Trial Offer below.)

CONSTIPATION, or a confined and sluggish Condition of the Bowels causes Headache, Nausea, Sickness, Biliousness, Flatulence, Heartburn, Acidity, Palpitation, Distension, Sallow Skin, Blisters and Pimples, Coated Tongue, Impure Breath, and is also one of the most troublesome complications of Indigestion, Sluggish Liver and Nervousness.

The Remedy.

The Cure of Constipation must be brought about by Nature’s own Method. Drastic Purgatives only add to the trouble, and weaken the Patient. Fruit is the ideal Laxative. Guy’s Fruit Pills contain only the extract of Pure, Ripe, and Wholesome Fruits. They cure Constipation naturally, and form the most reliable Aperient known to Medical Science.



Positive Evidence as to the Value of Guy’s Fruit Pills.

Gets no effect.
The Bar. C. B. Bessonneau writes from Henberg, Germany:—
“I found a few weeks ago sent me a box of Guy’s Fruit Pills, and I must not say that they seem to me the genuine and yet the most effective Aperient that I have ever come across.”

Much easier and more cheerful.
Market Place, Thame.
“I am very much troubled by Constipation, but having taken Guy’s Fruit Pills, feel much easier and more cheerful.”
FNO. BARNETT.

Obstinate Constipation cured.
Temple Street, Edinburg.
“I have been taking Guy’s Pills, and have certainly derived benefit from them. I suffered from Obstinate Constipation.”
J. HOOKER.

They leave no Constipation.
Cognesball, near Kilmartin, Essex.
“Guy’s Fruit Pills act beneficially with me. If I take two or an empty stomach they operate especially in the morning, and spare me constipation on the following day, which is the case with all other pills that I have taken.”
FNO. B. TURNER.

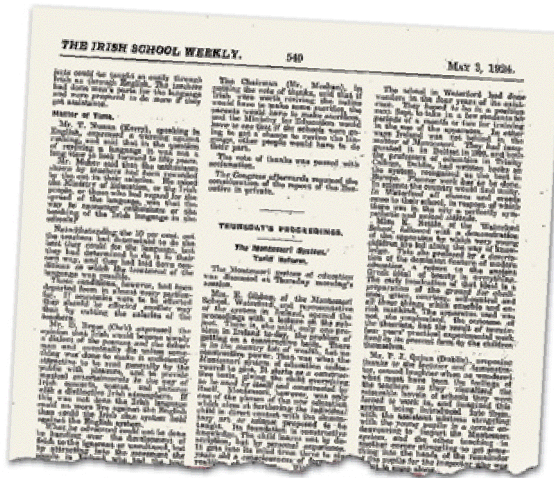
They do not cause pain.
45 Gipsy Hill, Upper Norwood, S.E.
“I am particularly pleased with Guy’s Fruit Pills. Most Pills are too strong and purgative; these are not so, and do not cause pain.”
E. KETTERWELL.

They do not weaken.
114 West Street, Paisley Road, Glasgow.
“I must say Guy’s Fruit Pills have done me good, and I find they do not weaken the system or pain the Intestines.”
WILLIAM CAMPBELL.

TEST THEM FREE OF CHARGE.
We desire the merits and virtues of Guy’s Fruit Pills for the relief of Constipation to be more fully known. To this end, therefore, we offer to send samples of Guy’s Fruit Pills free and post paid to all who will write to us for same.

Address: GUY’S TONIC CO., (No. 83 Dept.)
12 Buckingham Palace Road, London, S.W.

Celebrating a Montessori centenary



EpiphanY Day on 6 January – the visit of the Magi with their Gifts – will be celebrated in a special way this year in Italy and throughout the world. It was the day that Maria Montessori opened her first school exactly 100 years ago. The gift that she gave to the world was an approach to education that is now just coming into its own.

Montessori education is thought by many to be a rather elitist, exclusive and expensive form of schooling for the wealthy. Or, even more worryingly, a catchy brand-name applied freely to unregulated ‘play-schools’ and crèches. Both are unfortunate (but admittedly sometimes true) perceptions. Montessori’s first school was established in a large public-housing project in a disadvantaged slum area not far from the unfashionable district of the major railway station in Rome.

The school housed 60 children between three and six years of age. Its aim was to apply a method of education that would nourish in a purposeful and practical way the potential of children who might otherwise be neglected or dismissed as being too great a challenge for the public authorities. Children were provided with a clean, ordered, structured and prepared learning environment that allowed them choice, empowerment, sufficient time and the experience of taking responsibility and receiving success. Parental and family partnership was an important requirement. The child-centred nature of the school was evident in the name Montessori herself gave it: The Children’s House. It became a model for Montessori schools everywhere.

Maria Montessori had already shown herself to be an exceptional person. Strong-willed and determined, she risked her father’s disapproval to go on to become Italy’s first female medical doctor. She founded Italy’s first feminist association. She was, in a patriarchal and judgemental society, a single mother devoted to the upbringing of her son. As medical director of the special school attached to the psychiatric clinic of Rome, she discovered what these children needed was education and not just medical care. To everyone’s astonishment, she gave up medicine for teaching and argued that if her methods worked so well with children with learning disabilities they must logically work even better with

children in ordinary schools.

The methods that made her system so famous and effective were supported and sponsored in the USA by Alexander Graham Bell who saw it as having a future for the education of children as powerful as the future of the telephone for mass communication.

Montessori methods are based on these principles:

- Children are naturally active and want to learn. What and how they learn is decided by age, interest, sensitive developmental periods, and the prepared learning environment.
- The child wants to work independently. The teacher recognises that the child is saying: “Help me to do it myself.”
- Promoting, above all, respect for each child, taking care of one another and being helpful is given special application when there are classes of children of different ages.
- The teacher cultivates primarily an attitude of support, respect, interest, frankness and care.
- Concrete practical sensorial materials helps children in their development, promotes working independently and guarantees progress. Montessori, recognising the power of active learning and the range of multiple intelligences urged her teachers not to give more to the ears and to the eyes than you give to the hands.

Montessori education came to Ireland as early as 1920 when Mrs Eleanora Gibbon opened a Montessori class in Newtown Primary School in Waterford. Waterford indeed was to become a ‘Montessori city’ with all of its major primary schools: St Otteran’s Mercy NS, Bishop Foy Primary

School, the Ursuline Convent Schools and the Christian Brothers all adopting Montessorian practices.

In 1924 the INTO Congress was addressed on Montessori Education by Eleanora Gibbon and by Edward Culverwell, Professor of Education at Trinity College Dublin. Culverwell was so convinced by the power and potential of Montessori’s methods that he wrote a book strongly advocating the general adoption of the system in the national schools. Strong opposition from the government advisor Professor of Education Rev. TJ Corcoran SJ of UCD, because of his interpretation of Montessori’s belief in the ‘freedom’ of the child, saw to it sadly that such an opportunity was frustrated and the system marginalized.

Maria Montessori herself visited Waterford in 1927 where she was given a memorable reception. Other visitors like a former Commissioner of the Board of National Education, Major Dease, declared: “I am glad to know that there is education in a real sense in one spot in Ireland.” Senator W.B. Yeates was so taken by what he saw in Waterford that he composed his famous poem *Amongst School Children*.

A far-sighted initiative by a Montessori teacher from the Kerry Gaeltacht, Mrs Sighle Fitzgerald in the 1970s allowed for the creation of what we would now call distance-learning possibilities with the London Montessori Centre founded by Margaret Homfray and Phoebe Child, two of Maria Montessori’s English students. St Nicholas’s Montessori College Ireland emerged out of this development. SNMCI now offers three and four year full-time degree programmes and a one year postgraduate programme in Montessori Education accredited by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council. The Primary School Curriculum of 1999 incorporates many of the principles espoused and practiced by Montessori education. These include the constructivist nature of children’s learning, a holistic inter-connected curriculum and inclusive education.

A special conference will be held in St Nicholas Montessori College, from Friday, 26 to Sunday, 28 January 2007. See Notices page for details.

Sean Griffin, Academic Head, St Nicholas Montessori College, Dun Laoghaire.

Teachers and politics

Every now and again one of our newspapers publishes a (usually mis-informed) article about members of the teaching profession who are serving as public representatives. The inference is that these are double-jobbing cheats, and the further implication is that serving teachers should be banned from offering themselves for election to Dáil or Seanad, or abandon their profession if they are elected.

The reality is more complex, and much more favourable to teachers than is generally supposed. In fact, the history of the arrangements governing teachers who are elected to the Oireachtas shows, instead, a battle against obscurantism and a proud record of union policy in defence of their members.

The issue first arose in February 1923 when a Mr William Cummins, then principal of a three-teacher national school in Newbridge, Co Kildare, was elected to the Senate of the Irish Free State in a by-election. His salary at the school was £430 per annum; a Senator's salary was £360. His manager, Rev. L Brophy PP, wrote to the Department of Education to say that he had consulted the local bishop, Dr Patrick Foley, and had told Mr Cunningham that in the view of himself and the bishop "the interests of the school and of the pupils could not be satisfactorily provided for by means of a substitute." He based this view on a section in the Rules of the National Board of Education which inhibited teachers from taking up any position or employment incompatible with the efficient discharge of their duties as teachers.

Mr Cummins at first apparently agreed to serve for only a few months and then resign.

Later, however, he appears to have changed his mind, and offered to agree to the appointment of a full-time substitute who would take his classes while he was in the Seanad. Fr Brophy went to Dublin, where he told one of the civil servants involved that he and the bishop were absolutely opposed to this because "the position of teacher is quite incompatible with that of Senator as he cannot be in two places at the same time," and the proposed

arrangement "would simply disturb the school."

Fr Bradley told Cunningham that he should resign either from the Seanad or from his job. Cunningham went straight to TJ O'Connell.

TJ O'Connell now wrote to the Department to say that "to insist on Mr Cummins' resignation would be altogether unwarranted. He has been called upon to discharge a very

important public duty and he should not, because of that, be compelled to relinquish his ordinary means of livelihood."

Whether defeated by logic, industrial muscle, or some combination of both, the bishop and the manager retired from the fray. Cummins was re-elected in 1925 and served until May 1936.

Of course this was not the end of the matter. Over the succeeding years, the INTO had to fight hard to ensure that teachers who were appointed as substitutes to take the places of INTO members elected to the Oireachtas should become entitled to adequate remuneration and security.

In the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in particular, successive improvements were negotiated. They were increasingly chosen from among the ranks of the properly trained and qualified; they were teachers moved onto the full incremental scale; and their temporary status was adjusted to the point where, after a number of years as substitutes, they were entitled to permanency and to go onto the Panel if the teacher for whom they were substituting retired from or otherwise left the Oireachtas.

When Michéal Martin was Minister for Education, further changes were agreed as a result of which the Oireachtas member – rather than the substitute teacher – would now go on the panel if s/he or she left the Oireachtas, and appropriate financial arrangements were also put in place.

As well as Michéal Martin, Trevor Sargent and Enda Kenny are now also among the teacher TDs who, together with their substitutes, are the present embodiment of an enlightened and democratic policy fought for by the INTO for a period of some seven decades.

... a battle against obscurantism and a proud record of union policy in defence of their members



Front cover picture:
the former Training College Building in Marlboro Street,
now part of the Department of Education and Science

John Horgan, former lecturer, DCU

From assimilation to affirmation

Cultural identity and the National School System from 1831-1922

The 1831 letter of the Irish Chief Secretary, Lord Stanley, to the Lord Lieutenant, the Duke of Leinster, establishing one of the world's first state-subsidised, secular systems of primary school education must be viewed in the historical, political and cultural context of the time.

The political motivation of the British Government was clear. By the mid-1820s it was estimated that approximately 500,000 children were being educated in unregulated hedge-schools.¹ These were regarded with suspicion by the authorities as subversive agents of sedition and disaffection to the Government. A state system of elementary education would hopefully wean the peasantry from the corrupting influence of agitating hedge-school masters while simultaneously cultivating a civic spirit in Ireland which would be more favourable to the Crown and the prevailing constitutional settlement. It would furthermore be a serviceable vehicle for the social, political and cultural assimilation of the native Irish into the post-Union polity.

Many of Ireland's contemporary social ills were attributed to widespread illiteracy and ignorance. Indolence and lack of enterprise

were viewed as their natural consequences. A national school system, regulated by a National Board of Education and superintended by accredited inspectors was seen as a wholesome antidote to the country's problems.

Within 18 years the number of schools affiliated to the National Board had mushroomed dramatically from 789 in 1831 to 4,321 by 1849. Yet concerns about the cultural and political imperatives of the new system were soon being raised. The redoubtable Dr McHale, Archbishop of Tuam, railed against what he viewed as the anti-national (and anti-Catholic) complexion of the schools and proscribed their establishment in his diocese. Eloquent testimony to the validity of his concerns is given by the following verse which was taught in many national schools of this early period: *I thank the goodness and the grace That on my birth hath shined And made me in this Christian Age A happy English Child.*

Contrary to popular myth no rule ever actually existed explicitly prohibiting the teaching of the Irish language in the new schools. Nonetheless, in the words of the Commissioners (of the National Board) "the

anxiety of the promoters of the National System was to encourage the cultivation of the English language, and to make English the language of the schools".² There is evidence that as early as 1834 and 1844 the Board refused requests to sanction the teaching of the language as it did not come "within the framework of their plan of education".

The reading materials issued by the Board for use in schools over the course of the nineteenth century lend a penetrating insight into the cultural-assimilationist tendencies of the system at this time. Appropriate conclusions may be drawn from the following prose and poetry works taken from official 'Reading Books' issued between 1834 and 1890: *British Empire, Mr Pitt's Reply to Sir Horace Walpolen, British Constitution, Parts I-III, Westminster Abbey, The Battle of Agincourt, Dover Cliff, Epistle to the Earl of Oxford, Ode to Eaton College, Loss of the Royal George, Burial of Sir John Moore and Ye Mariners of England.*³

The dearth of references to Ireland, her history, culture and traditions in the reading programme of the national schools drew the following caustic editorial from *The Nation* in 1867:

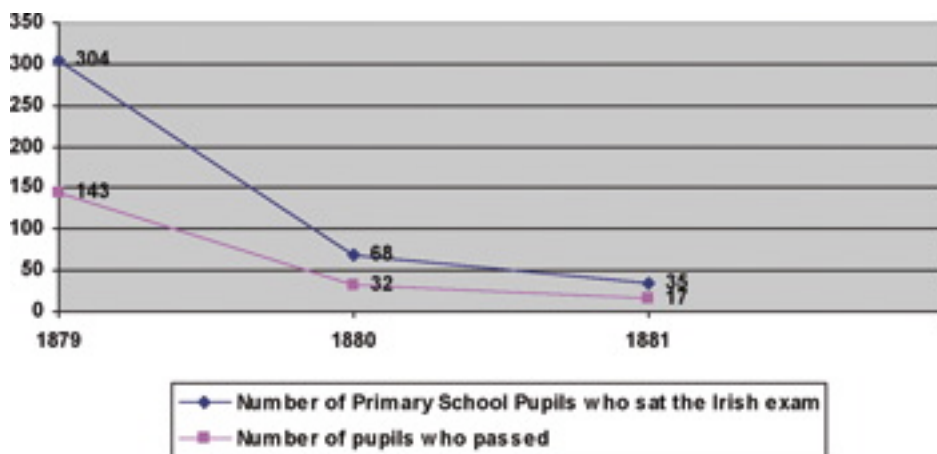


Figure 1: National school pupils who studied Irish 1879-1881

“It has been... announced that the reading books... are being revised... the object (being) to introduce into them some acknowledgement of the existence of such a country as Ireland...”⁴

By 1855 serious concern was being raised by no less a figure than the Chief Inspector, Sir Patrick Keenan, that National System was “quietly but certainly destroying the national legend, national music and national language of the country...”⁵

He reiterated his anxieties about this deleterious cultural influence in his reports of 1856 and 1858, and again in his 1868 submission to the Powis Commission, damning the policy of teaching Irish speaking children through the medium of English as “defective, irrational and impractical” and “a mere idle, profitless waste of time”.⁶ Scarcely surprising then that by 1865 the system was being decried by Isaac Butt as “a national system, maintained and supported in defiance of the sentiment of the nation”.⁷

Following intensive lobbying from various groups including the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, the INTO, the hierarchy and the nationalist political establishment, in 1878 the

National Board reluctantly conceded the right for senior primary school pupils to study Celtic outside school hours as an optional extra on the payment of a two shilling per quarter fee. The constrictions governing the circumstances under which Irish could be taught, as well as the arid, academic nature of the officially prescribed course meant that its success as a cultural project was fatally compromised from the outset, as the following table (fig. 1) illustrates:

It wasn’t until the foundation of Conradh na Gaeilge (1893) and the blossoming of the Gaelic Revival movement thereafter that the imperial assumptions underlying the ethos of the national school system came to be seriously challenged. Pearse’s savage indictment of British education policy in Ireland in *The Murder Machine* (1915) was one of many salvos in a determined struggle by the newly emergent forces in Irish political and cultural life to wrest control of the schools from the Castle faction and imbue them with a more Gaelic spirit.

The drive and energy with which the Gaelic League focused on the National School as the pre-eminent instrument of cultural revival and affirmation led to a

string of concessions being wrung from the National Board and a flowering in the percentage of schools in which Irish was taught (see fig. 2).

The Revised Programme (1900) led to the teaching of Irish within school hours while the Bilingual Programme (1904) for the first time officially sanctioned the use of Irish as a medium of instruction within Irish speaking districts. This programme was trumpeted by An Claidheamh Soluis as “the beginning of the end of the fight of the Primary Schools”.⁸ The foundation of the Irish Free State (1922) marked the dawning of a new era in Irish primary schooling in which the promotion and celebration of Gaelic cultural values would be to the fore. In January 1922, the Provisional Government declared as the kernel of its educational policy “the strengthening of the national fibre by giving the language, history, music and traditions of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish schools”.⁹

The first native Aire Oideachais, Fionán Uí Loinsigh subsequently announced that from 17 March 1922 one hour of each school day was to be spent on the teaching of the Irish language as the first step in its ultimate revival. In the words of the INTO organ *Irish Schools Weekly*: “Never before was the responsibility placed on National Teachers so great – the responsibility of resuscitating the language and culture of Ireland, and of building up a future in which the Irish language and Irish ideals will be the elements in which we live and work”.¹⁰

Ninety years after its establishment as the anglicising agent of a foreign government, the National Education System was now the foremost tool in the process of gaelicising the children of a native one. The wheel had turned full circle.

Oilibhéar Ó Braonáin, MA, M.Ed,
INTO member currently on second-
ment to the European School in
Luxembourg

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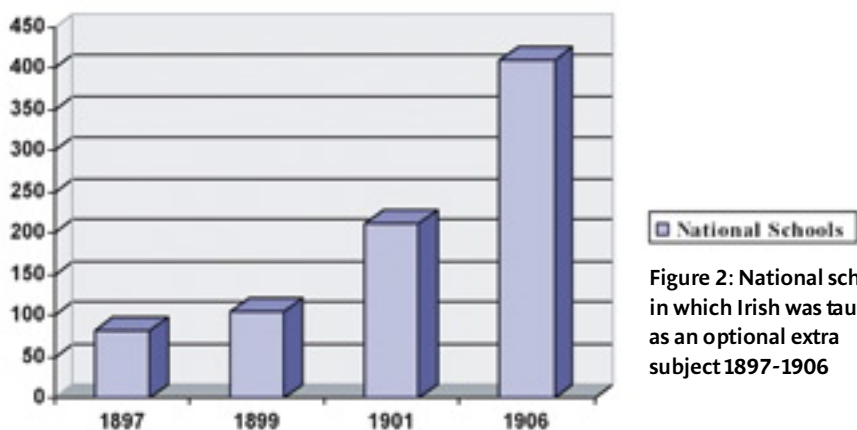


Figure 2: National schools in which Irish was taught as an optional extra subject 1897-1906

Election Notices

At the time of printing, Head Office was in receipt of the following:

Central Executive Committee

The following have given notice, that if sufficiently nominated it is their intention to be candidates for election to the Central Executive Committee:

President

Ms Angela Dunne

Vice President

Mr Declan Kelleher

District I

Ms Mary Cahillane

District II

Mr Tony Lappin

District III

Mr Gerard McGeehan

District IV

Mr Jim Higgins

District V

Mr Peter McGrane

District VI

Ms Máire Ní Chuinneagáin

District VII

Ms Helen O'Gorman

District VIII

Mr John Boyle

District IX

Ms Noreen Flynn

District X

Ms Claire Byrne

District XI

Mr Sean McMahan

District XII

Ms Emma Dineen

District XIII

Mr Seamus Long

District XIV

Mr Brendan O'Sullivan

District XV

Mr Donal O'Donoghue

District XVI

Ms Anne Fay

Division III – Bye-Election

Central Executive Committee

Mr. Gerard McGeehan (Cardonagh/Moville) was validly nominated by the following branches:

Cardonagh/Moville	0304
Carrick-on-Shannon	0305
Donegal North West	0307
Letterkenny	0310

Rosguill and Doe 0313
Mr Gerard McGeehan was declared elected to the position of District III CEC Representative.

Education Committee

District II – Bye-Election

Mr Charles Glenn was validly nominated by the following branches:

North Armagh	0202
Derry City	0207
Newry	0214

Mr Charles Glenn was declared elected to the position of District II EDC Representative

District VIII – Bye-Election

Mr Francis Roche (Dublin South County) was validly nominated by the following branches:

Dublin South County	0802
Arklow	0805
Rathdrum	0806
Wicklow	0807

Mr Francis Roches was declared

elected to the position of District VIII EDC Representative.

Benefit Funds Committee

The following have given notice, that if sufficiently nominated it is their intention to be candidates for election to the Benefit Funds Committee Divisions I and II:

Division I

Mr Paddy McAllister

National Appeals Panel

The following has given notice, that if sufficiently nominated it is his intention to be a candidate for election to the National Appeals Panel Division I:

Division I

Mr Peter Darcy

TEACHER EXCHANGE

A scheme to allow permanent teachers to temporarily exchange posts was introduced in September 1994. The full terms of the scheme are outlined in DES Circular 12/97 which should be consulted for full details.

Seeking an Exchange?

Each teacher wishing to participate in an exchange must find a partner to exchange with. As in previous years, in order to facilitate teachers making contact with a partner for the purpose of an exchange, a list of teachers interested in an exchange will be compiled in INTO Head Office.

Teachers who wish to have their names on the list should complete and return the application form below. Application forms should be returned by Friday, 19 January 2007.

The completed list of candidates for exchange will be

forwarded to every person on the list as soon as possible after the closing date.

Last year, a very small number of teachers availed of this service and, accordingly, teachers interested in an exchange may

need to consider other avenues to secure a partner (contacting schools directly, advertising in local/national newspapers, etc).

Please note: The INTO has no role in matching teachers or approving exchanges. The

purpose of the INTO list is simply to facilitate teachers making contact with potential partners. Applications for teacher exchange must be submitted to boards of management on or before 1 March '07.

TEACHER EXCHANGE		NO.
Name:	Home address	
School address	
.....	
.....	Home tel:	
School tel:	Seeking transfer to:	
Roll no:	
I wish to be contacted at (please tick): School only <input type="checkbox"/> Home only <input type="checkbox"/> Either <input type="checkbox"/>		
Please return to: Eileen O'Donnell, Teacher Exchange, INTO Head Office, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 by 19 January, 2007.		

Taoiseach launches new €40 Million Development at Marino Institute of Education

An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern, TD, officially opened a new €40 million educational development at the Marino Institute of Education (MIE) on 24 November. Comprising a mix of state of the art student accommodation, educational and sports facilities, the ‘Centenary Buildings’ mark a significant step in the evolution of MIE from its teacher training origins

dating back 100 years. Located alongside existing educational and conference facilities at the MIE Campus, the new 135,000 sq ft. development includes:

- **Education:** Five fully equipped lecture theatre and seminar rooms ranging from (50 capacity to 160 capacity);
- **Sport:** a large multi-purpose sports hall designed for

teaching student teachers PE. The hall can also cater for up to 600 persons for meetings, graduations, exams and other events;

- **Accommodation:**
 - Student accommodation comprising 75 self contained purpose designed student apartments – accommodating 302 students of MIE and other third level institutions including DCU,

DIT and Mater Dei.

- Community residence for the local Christian Brothers. This replaces the previous residence that was removed to facilitate the new development

- **Catering:** New kitchens, stores and a full service restaurant and a common room for use by students, conference delegates and staff.

Finian supports school protest



Pictured with Finian McGrath TD are pupils, teachers Caoimhe de Búrca, Póla Ní Chinnsealaigh and Principal, Ultan Mac Mathúna.

Sixty pupils from Gaelscoil na Camóige in Clondalkin visited Dáil Éireann last month. However, with the help of their teachers they used the tour to demonstrate their unhappiness at the inadequate conditions at the school and the inability of the Department of Education and Science to acquire a site for their school.

Since its establishment 13 years ago the school has been waiting for permanent accommodation. It is housed entirely in old, run-down pre-fabricated buildings secured at the time by the school’s landlord.

The pupils and teachers were

met by Independent TD, Finian Mc Grath at the Dail who said that the buildings are a disgrace to the Government, successive Ministers at the Department of Education and Science and to a society that stands by and accepts this for our children. “At a rental cost of almost €100,000 per year this is a dreadful waste of state funds,” he said. “Had the Department bought a site and built a school in time the teachers and children would not have had to suffer the Dickensian conditions at the school and tax-payers’ money would have been put to good use in capital expenditure.

HEAD OFFICE CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

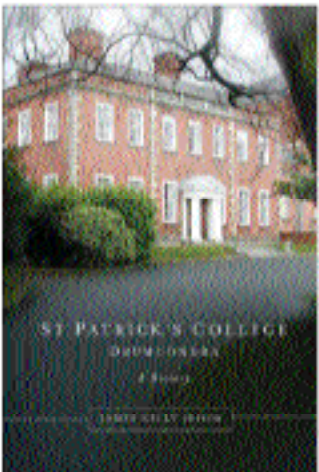
INTO Head Office will close on Friday 22 December at 5.00 p.m. and will reopen on Tuesday 2 January at 9.00 p.m.

The right to read campaign

The Right to Read Campaign is a campaign to tackle literacy problems among children in Dublin City. The campaign is being supported by Barnardos, SIPTU, INTO, TUI, ASTI, SVP and NALA. The Right to Read Campaign wants to see major improvements in three key areas to improve the conditions in which children learn to read. These areas are: homework clubs, houses and libraries

Provision of €1.2 million has already been made in the 2007 Dublin City Council estimates for the realisation of the three Right to Read Campaign principles.





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James Kelly EDITOR

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SO get into it



Pictured at the launch of the Special Olympics Ireland Schools' Programme called SO Get Into It, proudly sponsored by SPAR, are Denis Bohane, INTO President; Maire Ui Ghormain, Principal, Central Model Junior School; Mary Hanafin, TD, Minister for Education and Science; Derval O'Rourke, World Indoor Athletics Champion; John Caul, Principal, Central Model Senior School; Goretta Newell, Schools' Manager, Special Olympics Ireland and Mary Davis, CEO, Special Olympics Ireland.

The programme, which was piloted in Hollypark BNS and delivered to 3,200 primary schools, contains four books with age appropriate, cross curricular lesson plans, worksheets and a short DVD which aim to foster understanding of and respect for the needs of all students, particularly the needs of those with disabilities.

Photography: Mark McCall Photography

Men in teaching study launched

Senator Joe O'Toole, former General Secretary of the INTO, recently launched *Facing Extinction? Why Men are Not Attracted to Primary Teaching* which is the result of a study by Professor Eileen Drew of TCD as to why men are not being attracted to a career in primary teaching.

Among the conclusions of the study are that, while primary

teaching is a rewarding and satisfying career for many teachers, the length of the pay scale, fear of allegations of abuse and the standard of Irish required for entry to Colleges of Education act as disincentives to men. See Equality (page 13) for report of this book. *Facing Extinction* is published by Liffey Press and costs €17.95 ISBN 1905 785 135.



Pictured at the launch are Cathal Kelly of the Equality Authority, Professor Eileen Drew of TCD, Senator Joe O'Toole, Dr John Hegarty, Pr ovost of Trinity College, Kathy McHugh, Cathaoirleach of the INTO Equality Committee and Seamus McLoughlin, Principal Officer in the Central Policy Unit of the DES.

New development education course



Pictured at the launch of the new Graduate Diploma course in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick are: Mary McCusker (student on the course and Class representative); Dr Teresa O'Doherty (Head of Education, MIC); Fiona O'Dwyer (student on the course and Class representative); Dr Claire W Lyons (Director of Development Education, MIC); Deirdre O'Rourke (Research Fellow, Educating the Development Educators Project, MIC); Minister Conor Lenihan (Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs with Special Responsibility for Overseas Development and Human Rights); Dr Peadar Cremin (President, MIC); Denis Bohane (President INTO); Michael McHugh (Manager, Comhar Linn); Dr James G. Deegan (Director, Postgraduate Studies in Education, MIC).
Photocourtesy of Press 22, Limerick.

New Sponsor for Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta Awards



Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta is delighted to announce that Gaelic Telecom has agreed to sponsor the national awards which will be held this year on 9 December in the Berkeley Court Hotel. This is the ninth year of the awards which honour and reward the voluntary efforts of the national school teachers of all of Ireland who give of their time freely in order to promote our national games of hurling, camogie, football, rounders and handball. For eight years Roadstone Provinces Ltd. sponsored this ceremony which has had special guest appearances from Uachtarán na h-Éireann, Mary McAleese and An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern. Indeed Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta is delighted to welcome back Mary Hanafin for the 2006 awards. Another guest on the night will be Ireland's gold medallist from the 1956 Olympic Games, Ronnie Delaney. Your Cumann na mBunscol county secretary will have details on availability of tickets. (Details of secretaries in October's *InTouch*.)

The categories reflect the various aspects of work that the

units of Cumann na mBunscol promotes. One other category marks the efforts of a teacher who has promoted our games in a special way over a long period of time. This award is known as The Pat Trainor Award and is named in honour of our late treasurer who passed away in 2005. The recipient of this award will not be announced until the night of the awards, but the teacher who receives it will be someone who has given many years of sterling support to the aims and objectives of Cumann na mBunscol. To keep up to date with the Gaelic Telecom National Awards and other happenings within Cumann na mBunscol log on to www.scoilsport.org.

Gaelic Telecom/National Awards 2006 nominees

Best Hurling/Camogie Promotion: Cumann na mBunscol, Árd Mhacha. Cumann na mBunscol, Loch Garman. Scoil na mBráithre, Doon, Luimhneach.

Best Football Promotion: Cumann na mBunscol, Port Láirge. Cumann na mBunscol, Gaillimh.

Assessor's Merit Award: Cumann

na mBunscol, Aontroim. St John's English, Co Tyrone. Sciath na Scoil, Corcaigh. Cumann na mBunscol, Cabhán. Cumann na mBunscol, Cill Mhantáin.

County Website/ Publication of the Year: Cumann na mBunscol, Áth Cliath. Cumann na mBunscol, Clár. Cumann na mBunscol, Árd Mhacha.

Annual Fixtures/Information Booklet of the Year: Cumann na mBunscol, Cill Mhantáin.

Cumann na mBunscol, Gaillimh.

Cumann na mBunscol, Sligeach.

Public Relations of the Year: Cumann na mBunscol, Árd Mhacha. Cumann na mBunscol, Áth Cliath. Cumann na mBunscol, AN Dún.

Small School of the Year: Tattygar P S, Co Fermanagh. Doon CBS P S, Co Limerick.

Large School of the Year: Scoil na mBraithre, Árd Mhacha. St Oliver's NS, Cill Áirne, Co Ciarraí. Sundays Well Boys NS, Corcaigh.



Pictured at Croke Park last May for the official launch of the Cumann na mBunscol and Gaelic Telecom sponsorship were Alan Falsey, Gaelic Telecom; Nickey Brennan, Uachtarán CLG; Margaret Cunningham, Cathaoirleach, Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta; and four pupils from Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa in Gleann Dá Loch.

British Primary Schools GAA Conference

On Saturday, 21 October three members of Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta attended a conference in the GAA Grounds Ruislip, London. The purpose of this meeting was to share ideas with teachers, club members and teacher educators in England who have an interest in promoting gaelic games.

The organiser of this event was Pat Morrissey, a London born teacher who has a passion for gaelic games. Indeed pupils from Pat's school have visited Cork and have hosted pupils from Cork in London for close

on six years.

There were inputs from the members of the national committee on the Go Games and on ways of how to increase the awareness of local media of gaelic games in schools. Difficulties faced by schools and clubs on both sides of the Irish Sea were shared and it was heartening for the English schools and clubs to hear that Cumann na mBunscol faces similar difficulties in Ireland.

Perhaps the largest area of concern for the UK delegates was the decrease in first and second generation Irish chil-

dren in their schools, and in Ireland there is the challenge of newcomer children enrolling in our schools. Gaelic games, in order to survive in the UK, must become attractive to children from many different ethnic backgrounds. In Ireland we must challenge immigrant children to play our native games.

Speakers included Tommy Harrell, Secretary of the London County Board and Larry O'Leary the Chairperson. Since Cumann na mBunscol Londain was officially launched by An Taoiseach Bertie Ahern in 2003, it has been the co-operation of the

local clubs that has assisted the London schools in promoting gaelic games. At the conference there were delegates from Warwickshire and Hertfordshire who were interested in imitating the London model. It is likely over the next few years that there will be units of Cumann na mBunscol not only in these two regions but also in Lancashire, Yorkshire and in Glasgow.

Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta looks forward to many years of exchanges with our neighbours and friends across the water.

Teachers' professional development

Lessons from the evaluation of the PCSP

Change in primary education

The 17 decades since the 1831 Stanley Letter that established the system of national schools in Ireland have witnessed periodic bouts of change that seem to have increased in frequency and intensity in recent years. Developments in relation to management, funding, staffing, enrolments, curriculum, and methodology all contribute to an ever-evolving image of primary education. The system has absorbed a number of significant curricular revisions in the past 175 years, more often than not without concomitant support for the teachers expected to implement the changes. Plans for substantial professional development for teachers in relation to *Curaclam na Bunscoile* (1971) ultimately stalled due to exchequer contraction in the early 1970s. Realisation that the lack of inservice compromised full implementation of that curriculum served as one catalyst to avoid similar problems in relation to the Primary School Curriculum (1999).

Variably termed inservice education, incareer education, INSET and teacher learning, the impetus latterly given to professional development for teachers reflects increased attention to supporting teachers continuously through the three main phases of their professional lives: pre-service, induction and incareer.

The Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP)

Opting for phased implementation of the 1999 curriculum, the education partners devised an integrated curriculum-implementation and professional development process, sequentially rolled out from 1999 to the present by the PCSP. The early

development of the PCSP drew on prior experience of providing support to teachers at post-primary level as well as on support provided at primary level as part of the INTO Professional Development Unit, *Schools IT2000* and *Stay Safe* to name a few.

The evaluation

Given the importance attached to the remit of the PCSP in assisting teachers to implement the curriculum, a number of approaches were used to monitor the programme. Internal monitoring was conducted by the PCSP and DES. Additionally, after a tendering process, the School of Education in Trinity College was invited by the DES and NCCA to undertake an independent, external evaluation of the PCSP. What follows is a brief overview of some of the findings contained in the *Final Report*, presented to the DES in May 2005. The Trinity Evaluation was one of three studies (Murchan et al, 2005; DES, 2005, NCCA, 2005) anticipated in Circular M26/03 as part of the Review and Consolidation Year 2003-2004.

Some readers of *InTouch* will already be familiar with elements of the Trinity College evaluation. Conducted during 2003 and 2004, principals and teachers in 247 schools nationwide gave generously of their time to assist the research, which focused largely on subjects 'inserviced' up until 2003: English, Gaeilge, visual arts, mathematics, SPHE and science. Teachers seconded to the PCSP as co-ordinators, trainers and *cuiditheoirí* also participated, as did personnel in education centres, the DES, NCCA, INTO, NPC-P and other relevant stakeholder agencies. Using a mixed-methods research design, the researchers provided an analy-

sis of the functioning of the PCSP and nascent Regional Curriculum Support Service (RCSS) with a view to highlighting best practice and making formative recommendations.

Overview of findings

State-led professional development is not new in either primary or post-primary education in Ireland. However, the PCSP was very ambitious and unparalleled in scale. With a full-time staff of between 50 and 112 seconded teachers in the period evaluated, the programme reached all teachers in over 3,200 primary schools nationally. Exchequer funding for the programme totalled some €25 million in the period 1999-2003 and the evaluation concluded that it was effectively used. The cost of the programme is estimated at approximately €191 per teacher per annum, or €11.27 per child per annum.

The secondment of primary teachers to the PCSP as Trainers and *Cuiditheoirí* resonates well with teachers generally. Support is provided through an effective partnership between the PCSP and the Education Centres. Most of the initial difficulties in hosting seminars (for example, choice of seminar locations, clustering of schools) were minimised as the programme matured.

Support is delivered primarily through seminars for schools or school clusters followed by visits to schools by *Cuiditheoirí*. The research found high levels of participant satisfaction with the seminars. Teachers regarded the seminars as helpful in acquiring knowledge and understanding about the content of the curriculum and also in interacting professionally with teachers in other schools. Certain key messages underpinned the seminars. Whereas

many teachers could subsequently identify most of these key messages as pertinent to the seminars and the curriculum, there was some confusion also. The evaluation found need to further develop teachers' familiarity with the new instructional methodologies promoted in the curriculum and to promote lasting change in teachers' classroom practice to bring about the type of learning implicit in the curriculum.

Advice provided by the *Cuiditheoirí* was also highly valued by teachers. There is broad consensus that such an advisory network, separate to the DES Inspectorate, should become a permanent feature of primary education. Strengths of the *Cuiditheoirí* include their capacity to clarify subject content and methodologies for teachers, to facilitate curriculum planning, and to



development

highlight resources available to teachers. There is further scope for the RCSS going forward to model teaching methodologies with classes and to facilitate teachers' self-reflection on their own teaching. The recent switch to training Cuiditheoirí conversant with a range of subjects is welcome and may well facilitate teachers in more fully realising the central curricular principle of integration of learning. Schools need also to look critically at how they can best benefit from the service available, for example, by prioritising their specific needs in advance of visits and engaging with Cuiditheoirí on the basis of these needs. The work of Trainers and Cuiditheoirí was complemented by the provision of information in a well-designed website, www.pcsp.ie.

Promoting change

One major expectation from professional development ought to be positive change in children's learning. Securing that change is not straightforward, necessitating changes in teacher's knowledge, methodology and practice, amongst other factors.

Diagrammatically the elements of change can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 1:
Interdependent curriculum reform.



Teachers and DES inspectors interviewed in the evaluation highlighted positive changes in teachers' understanding of the curriculum: teachers are more conversant with an expanded and more complex curriculum and feel more knowledgeable about its aims, principles, content, skills and methodologies. The research noted more tentative changes in relation to use of methodologies, teachers' practice and children's learning. Examples of change included higher levels of pupil-to-teacher and pupil-to-pupil dialogue in classes, greater curriculum-related discourse amongst teachers generally, use of concrete materials and practical, investigative approaches in maths and science. The areas of ICT, assessment, group work and differentiation represent areas for further development. Despite solid use in schools of the curriculum and teacher guidelines in planning for teaching, a significant reliance on pupil textbooks in the mediation of the curriculum to children was noted also.

The evaluation detected increased levels of curriculum planning in schools but also encountered mixed views on the purpose and perceived effectiveness of planning in its present form. There was more than a suggestion that the emphasis on planning and actual curriculum

implementation needs to be rebalanced.

Looking to the future

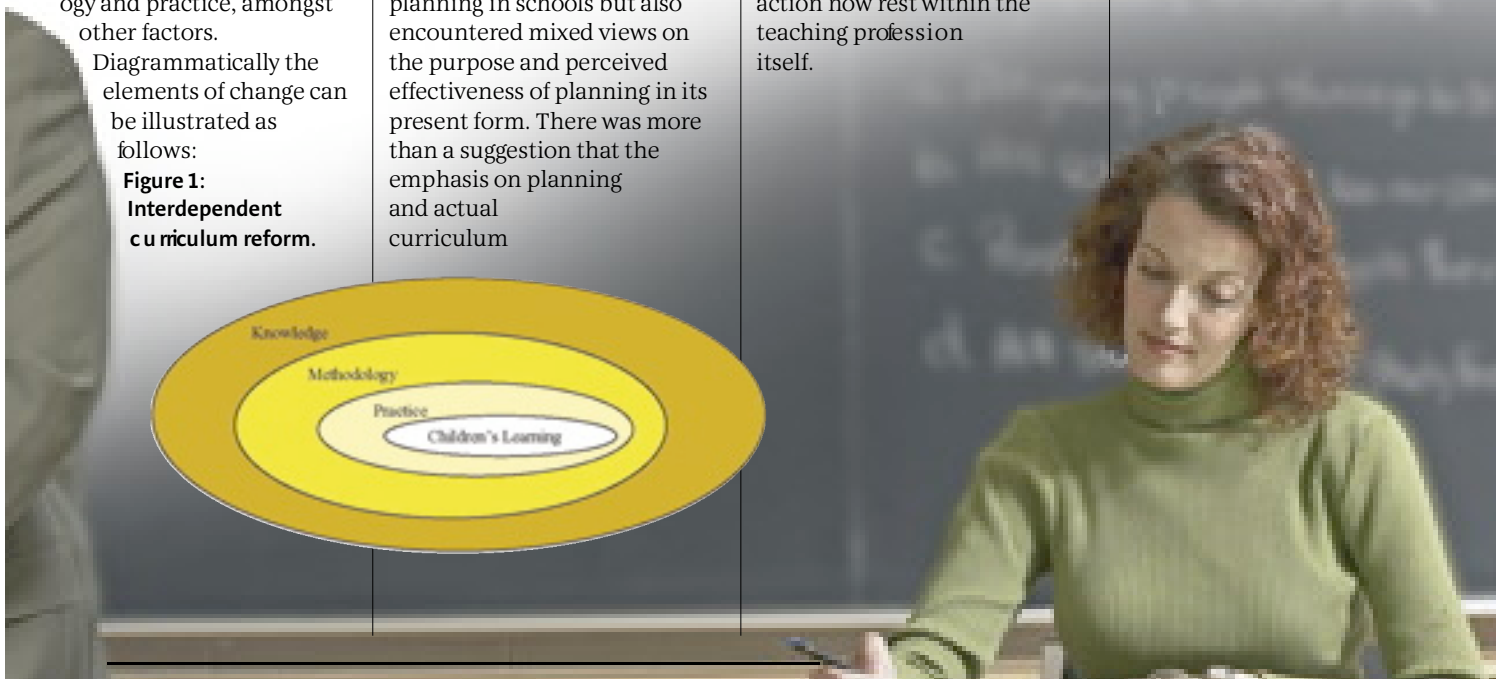
The evaluation probed teachers' own perceptions of areas in need of further support. Most of the needs relate to generic, non subject-specific aspects of teaching and learning such as special educational needs, promoting problem-solving, differentiation, ICTs, collaborative learning, pupil assessment and classroom management. Amongst the 34 recommendations contained in the *Final Report* is a call for a comprehensive, long-term policy on continuing professional development for teachers. Such a policy should encompass national, school-based and individually-prioritised professional development. Teaching and learning can be enhanced through more systematic reflection on practice by teachers themselves and by a continued commitment to maintaining and enhancing their professional capacity. Given the statutory powers conferred on the newly-enacted Teaching Council, the opportunities for action now rest within the teaching profession itself.

**Dr Damian Murchan,
Dr Andrew Loxley and Mr
Keith Johnston, School of
Education, Trinity College,
Dublin**

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The authors gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Micheline Quinn, Helen Fitzgerald and Simona Manao in the completion of the research. The evaluation was funded by the DES and the NCCA (under the National Development Plan, 2000-2006). The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views or policy of the DES or the NCCA.



Extended Post of Responsibility Schedule

The INTO has negotiated an extended schedule of posts of responsibility up to 57 teacher school level. There was an error in the schedule printed last month and this is the corrected version for all schools

APPENDIX B: SCHEDULE OF POSTS

PRIMARY POSTS SCHEDULE

Number of Authorised Posts (incl Principal)	Principal	Deputy Principal	Assistant Principal Posts	Special Duties Posts
1	1	0	0	0
2	1	0	0	1
3	1	1	0	0
4	1	1	0	1
5	1	1	0	1
6	1	1	0	1
7	1	1	0	2
8	1	1	0	2
9	1	1	0	3
10	1	1	0	3
11	1	1	0	3
12	1	1	0	4
13	1	1	0	4
14	1	1	1	4
15	1	1	1	4
16	1	1	1	5
17	1	1	1	5
18	1	1	1	6
19	1	1	1	6
20	1	1	2	6
21	1	1	2	6
22	1	1	2	7
23	1	1	2	7
24	1	1	3	7
25	1	1	3	7
26	1	1	3	8
27	1	1	3	8
28	1	1	3	9
29	1	1	3	9
30	1	1	3	10
31	1	1	3	10
32	1	1	4	10
33	1	1	4	10
34	1	1	4	11
35	1	1	4	11
36	1	1	5	11
37	1	1	5	11
38	1	1	5	12
39	1	1	5	12
40	1	1	6	12
41	1	1	6	12
42	1	1	6	13
43	1	1	6	13
44	1	1	7	13
45	1	1	7	13
46	1	1	7	14
47	1	1	7	14
48	1	1	8	14
49	1	1	8	14
50	1	1	8	15
51	1	1	8	15
52	1	1	9	15
53	1	1	9	15
54	1	1	9	16
55	1	1	9	16
56	1	1	10	16
57	1	1	10	16

Fine Gael Education plan

On Friday 24 November Enda Kenny, TD, the leader of Fine Gael set out his party's plans for the education sector. In a speech to a Fine Gael Policy Forum he said,

"We have to radically transform the way we approach our education system. Saying that it is 'good enough' is not enough.

Among the proposals put forward by Mr Kenny were: within five years:

- Give a laptop to every child entering secondary school.
- Redesign course material around the new technology.
- Complete a radical teacher-training programme.
- Get new schools on stream, when and where necessary, especially in our new and growing communities.
- Standardise literacy and numeracy tests for all children.
- Identify, instigate and reinforce the highest-possible standards and methods of teaching
- Audit teachers in skills and methodologies every five years.
- Open up teaching, fast-tracking entry for mature experts and professionals in other critical areas.
- Publish Annual School Reports.
- Lengthening either the school day or the school year at second level.
- €100m to support the recruitment of new teachers.
- Expand the school-building programme, targeting especially science, ICT and sports facilities.
- Recognise the challenges arising from a more multicultural Ireland and target extra resources to address this issue.
- Introduce fixed-term contracts for all school principals, to encourage innovation and new thinking in education leaders. At the end of their tenure, retain them within the school system as a 'bank' of expertise, experience and knowledge.
- Instigate premium payments to teachers in the most challenging schools, incentivising leaders in education to work with children at risk of disadvantage.

LETTER TO EDITOR

A chara,
At our recent Clonmel Branch committee meeting the issues concerning our members who have worked previously as substitute teachers were discussed. Incremental credit and pensionable service are two of the areas of critical concern for our members. This

may apply to all teachers but, perhaps critically, to teachers who worked for long periods as substitutes in the 80s and 90s when it was extremely difficult to attain temporary or permanent status.

We note that progress on these issues has been slow to date and we call on the DES and

INTO General Secretary to enter meaningful discussions with a view to securing incremental credit and pensionability for all service given as teachers.

We further ask that all teachers, who may be affected by these issues highlight their own circumstances with their CEC rep and at Branch and District

meetings.

Finally, we respectfully request that all Branches and Districts put forward motions to Congress on these issues with a vision to securing justice for all our affected colleagues.

Is mise le meas,
*Aidan Gaughran on behalf of
Clonmel Branch Committee*

Guide to SPHE curriculum materials

Making the Links is a guide to using materials from the *Walk Tall* programme, the *Relationships and Sexuality Education* programme (RSE) and the *Stay Safe* programme. It is a response to requests from teachers for a comprehensive guide to using these materials in the context of the SPHE curriculum.

This guide was initiated and funded by the *Walk Tall* Programme Support Service and was developed in collaboration with the *Relationships and Sexuality Education* (RSE) and *Stay Safe* Support Services.

Making the links aims to assist teachers in:

- Planning for SPHE.
- Identifying:
 - a) the common themes in the programmes;
 - b) the specific aims of each of the programmes;
 - c) how content objectives of the SPHE curriculum can be addressed through the use of lessons from the programmes.

Making the Links will also enable teachers to identify areas of the SPHE curriculum



not addressed by the programmes. It is intended to assist teachers primarily in the planning of discrete SPHE time (30 minutes per week).

Planning your SPHE curriculum

All the strand units of the SPHE curriculum should be taught over each two-year cycle. It is recommended that the teacher would choose some content from each of the three major strands in any one year. There are nine strand units for all classes from junior infants to second class and ten strand

units for all classes from third class onwards:

- Year one strand units: self identity, taking care of my body, growing and changing, myself and my family and developing citizenship;
 - Year two strand units: safety and protection, making decisions, my friends and other people, relating to others and media education.
- OR
- Year one strand units: self identity, safety and protection, making decisions, myself and my family and

developing citizenship.

- Year two strand units: taking care of my body, growing and changing, my friends and other people relating to others and media education.

It is recommended that within the strand units, planning is done through the content objectives. It is important to ensure that all the strand units are covered over each two year cycle.

Linking the programmes to content objectives of the SPHE curriculum

- Pages 13 to 44 contain lessons from the three programmes which can address content objectives of the SPHE curriculum.
- The lessons are colour coded to distinguish the programmes.
- When teaching a strand unit the teacher can identify lessons from which to choose.
- As this guide is not prescriptive teachers will select appropriate lessons to address specific content objectives.
- The reare classroom planning record sheets on pages 45 to 53.

100 years young

On 24 November 2006 Mary Bridget Stephens, retired national school teacher, celebrated her 100th birthday.

Mary, a native of Toureen, Spencilhill, Co Clare was educated in Knockaneen NS and Coláiste Muire Secondary School, Ennis.

She trained as a national school teacher in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick from 1926/8.

Her first teaching post was in Rockmount NS in the parish of Miltown Malbay.

In 1936 she married Albert Stephens from Cranny, they set up home in Ennis and she drove to Rockmount school every day.

They had three daughters, Marie, Eileen, and Anne.

During Bridie's time in Rockmount school there was a shortage of petrol due to 'the emergency' during the war years, so she stayed in accommodation near the school from Monday to Friday.

Bridie's husband Albert died in 1952. In 1954 she moved to Tubber NS, near Gort, where she took up the post of Principal.

Since Bridie retired in 1973 her greatest joy is watching her grandchildren growing up and enjoying her favourite pastime, reading. She gets through two library books every week and the daily newspaper!



Pictured making a presentation to Bridie are Edward Corry (grandson), Ann Troy (daughter, also a teacher), Catherine Sweeney, Cathaoirleach, Ennis Branch, Declan Kelleher, CEC, Eileen Corry (daughter), Mary B. Stephens and INTO President, Denis Bohane.

Cultural society – an Australian reality

Breda Tomkins writes about the education system in Australia

“G’day mate!...” a familiar and well known Australian greeting ... the Aussie hello ... but who or what exactly makes up the present day Australian? On reaching Australian shores, one is greeted with an array of continental faces, an intriguing blend for us Irish, where it is only in recent years that an intercultural mix is becoming a reality on our green isle. No longer is the tourist the foreign face, but the ‘Irish resident’, something that is a normal part of life for the Australian, and has been for many years. The Australian resident now has a family tree which makes interesting reading for us where, traditionally, Mam and Dad are generally both Irish. It’s not only the matter of a strictly Italian, Asian or African background but significant cultural diversity in many cases, which includes integration from opposite parts of the globe. With this comes a tremendous pride, one that is evident in adult and child alike.

Arriving in Williamstown, Melbourne, I was greeted with very enthusiastic children, who on hearing my strong accent, jumped at the opportunity to share their Irish roots. This, of course, led to a group sharing of family trees, one more interesting than the next. I was impressed, their tales rendering my own, where both parents come from the same ‘county’, a very boring offering in comparison.

St Mary’s is in quite an affluent part of Melbourne and an eye opener to the multicultural fusion that is evident in Australian society. Most of the kids were born in Australia and there were no Asian or African children to be seen bar two new arrivals. It is not the usual ‘set up’ in Melbourne schools but ironically what we are used to in many schools in Ireland. The difference is experience and acceptance of what is to be the growing future and reality in the Irish schools system. Coincidentally, two Ethiopian children had arrived just as I did and the principal was only delighted to let me teach them both, as they had no English upon arrival.

They were very eager to learn, good-natured and happy, while the other pupils were very encouraging and friendly to them. Both class teachers however, did admit the difficulty of not having enough time in the school day to give individual teaching time to two children, obviously ‘lost’ in understanding huge parts of the daily programme. This again would be something that the Irish teacher could relate to but not the Australian norm.

Hence the reason I chose to change schools and move this time to a school where interculturalism is not only a reality but also the main focus of the school.

St Monica’s in Footscray is a suburban school in a society where there is a large Asian population. 60% of the pupils are Vietnamese and the other 40% a mixture of backgrounds, ranging from Indian to Thai, European to Filipino and Colombian. Now this is a school experience we Irish teachers couldn’t even picture. The pupils are generally calmer than the Irish pupil, but emotions are more suppressed, a characteristic of their culture. There is an evident Asian awareness in the school and the school itself has a sister school in Vietnam. The reare Vietnamese lessons once weekly and just recently I had the pleasure of watching the pupils celebrate the autumn Moon Festival – a celebration of their culture, enjoyed by all. The costumes, dancing, story telling and ‘moon cake’ went down well. The religion and social studies areas of the curriculum has a focus on refugee rights and social justice. Australian volunteer workers come to the school to talk about work they do overseas eg, with street kids in Malaysia ... and there is a yearly ‘Refugee Week’. This year the grade six students entered an Australian History Challenge stemming from this focus and five won prizes, much to their delight! Two pupils concentrated on the work of the Australian/New Zealand Army Corps and three on Pawel Strzelecki, a Polish man who did exceptional work with the Aborigines and Caroline Chisholm who aided European immigrants in trouble.

And the work doesn’t stop here. The AFL (Australian Football League) have set up workshops in the Western suburbs of Melbourne, to target the children of African and Asian backgrounds and encourage them to play football, a sport alien to their culture. Training, matches and then a trip to a real nighttime ‘footie’ game. A food fiesta was also held in the school to introduce the students to the diet, cuisine and foods of other cultures. The range in Australia is phenomenal and this ‘food queen’ is sorry to

have missed out on that week! From footie to food and pupils to parents. The parental support is exceptional in St Monica’s, which is of course a bonus for the pupils who get extra tutoring after school and at weekends. It does also mean that the children are not mixing much with children outside their own culture at times. Education is always a priority and the community is working to create a balance.

Overall I was highly impressed with St Monica’s. The atmosphere is very special and welcoming and the manners and attitude of the children outstanding. The dedication and hard work of teachers and pupils alike is really inspiring. You can see it is something that has been achieved over time and the school only has 170 pupils, small by Melbourne standards, a city with a population the same as Ireland’s. But it is an eye opener and an insight into what potentially could be an issue in years to come, in an Irish school society where we are just getting used to our new and expanding intercultural society.

Breda Tomkins, currently on career break from St Joseph’s NS Bonnybrook, Dublin 17



Children from St Monica’s enjoy the autumn Moon Festival

The great outdoors

Activity breaks in primary school

Many years ago, I was teaching in a disadvantaged area of Dublin. Fresh out of St Pats, I found myself in front of a very challenging group of children, and I was under pressure to keep some of them even mildly interested in school. I found that major inventiveness in terms of drama, music, and sports made a huge difference to their performance in school – not a new discovery by any means, and probably one my college lecturers had mentioned, but I didn't fully understand how it worked until I was in the mix myself.

A brochure arrived to the staff room, offering high adrenaline activity breaks for schools. I noticed surfing on the list of activities, and I was intrigued. Surfing in Ireland? That had to be fun! I decided to pitch the idea to my principal, and to parents, and everyone was enthusiastic. We subsidised the cost by doing a few fundraisers, and suddenly there I was, heading west with a colleague and two sixth classes.

The trip was a total success. The children were very excited at the idea of travelling to the country, and it gave me great leverage in the classroom for the weeks previous. While spending two full days and nights with my 12 year olds seemed daunting, I was totally overwhelmed by the insight gained by working with my kids outside of the classroom. I gained insider knowledge into what the nick-

names were, what kind of music they liked, who could play guitar, who the joke tellers and raconteurs were. The children themselves loved the activities. Kids who did not shine academically gained new kudos for surfing skills, climbing – and the whole trip became a fond reference point for our classroom chats.

From that year on, I took a trip each year, and was never disappointed – there was a huge sense of loyalty and camaraderie between myself and my students, a break-down of classroom formality which enabled us to work much better in the classroom. It became a 'carrot' that worked superbly during the first half of the year. There was no incentive that worked better for me. Many years later, I would meet grown past-pupils, and it was always what they remembered about our school trip. Parents were also very supportive, and really did appreciate the time we spent arranging and running the trips.

There are many reasons that teachers may be dissuaded from travelling with children to a residential centre. However, some of the good school-focused centres make it much easier for teachers to enjoy the break without having to add a whole new workload. Centre staff immediately take over, and while teachers join in where they need to, the responsibility for behaviour, activities and safety is assumed by the centre staff.

Teachers can have a very pleasant break, if they choose a good centre, and there are

some excellent centres working with schools.

Teachers should find out how experienced the centre is in working with primary school groups. Ask for a copy of the Centre Public Liability documentation, and ask to see the consent forms provided for children. Good centres will have individual documentation that you can send straight home, including medical history, code of conduct etc. Ask for information regarding the Child Protection Policy. Ask for references from other primary schools. Ask about staff qualifications.

The cost of a break for students depends on the activities, but you are probably looking at €90 for a one night break and around €160 for two nights. This will usually include meals and activities: equipment, instruction, evening fun and night supervision. The cheapest is rarely the best option: the children need good food and plenty of it, well qualified

instructors, proper fitting equipment, warm beds and showers, comfortable areas for gathering together and competent caring. Teachers should also have comfortable accommodation, and have an option to be accom-

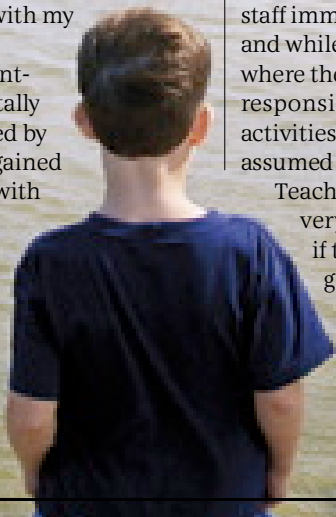
modated in a different part of the centre if they wish.

Teachers should never be asked to stay with students in dorms, or supervise at night time. Good centres have teacher preview weekends. There is usually no cost to teachers, and often centres will subsidise students who cannot afford to make a trip: this will usually be at the discretion of the school principal and the centre.

Outdoor instructors are often great role models for children. They are usually very interested in sport, they will encourage the children to enjoy fit, healthy outdoor pursuits, eat well and healthily, be active and energetic. It is also a great opportunity, should the teacher be inclined, to integrate many other educational topics: geography, topography, climate – there are many interesting field trips that do not have to be high-adrenaline. Issues such as environmental pollution, litter, vandalism of safety equipment – children will be able to relate to why these things are important. I always found surfing to be a brilliant activity for kids – it is 'cool', fun, all kids can try it, it is safe and easy to learn, and children will find a new respect for the ocean. The trip away can provide a starting point or a finishing point for projects, creative writing, art and photography, multimedia... It is an inclusive, all round educational experience. We have a fabulous resource in our landscape, we have some excellent educational centres and I would encourage teachers and principals to make the trip part of the school year.

I didn't fully understand how it worked until I was in the mix myself.

Niamh Hamill graduated from St Patrick's College in 1987, and taught in Dublin for 13 years.



Tá an Nollaig ag teacht!

Discovering Christmas on Scoilnet

Scoilnet Christmas Themepage:

www.scoilnet.ie

Searching the internet for engaging Christmas activities can be a time-consuming task. Scoilnet has done the searching for teachers and compiled a list of lesson plans and resources relating to Christmas crafts, readings, quizzes, games and colouring, all of which can be found in the Scoilnet Christmas Themepage.

Children can:

- read about the Christmas Story;
- learn about traditions all over the world;
- partake in an advent calendar quiz;
- send an e-card; and
- build a snowman.



Storytime on Scoilnet:

www.scoilnet.ie/storytime

Scoilnet are looking for poems from children about Christmas. So, you can work with the children to write a poem with no more than 70 words and submit it to Storytime on Scoilnet www.scoilnet.ie/storytime.

Visit the Scoilnet teachers' homepage for other resources

www.scoilnet.ie/T_Primary.aspx



Share your Christmas artwork on

www.iamanartist.ie

If children in your class have made something in clay, painted a lovely picture or constructed something for the festive season take a digital photo of it and send it to artist@ncte.ie for the **I am an Artist Gallery**.

Additional resources on the internet:

- Lots of interesting activities on these two sites:

- www.abcteach.com/directory/seasonalholidays/christmas/
- www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/xmas/
- Write a letter to Santa – www.emailsanta.com/email_santa.asp
- Visit the North Pole online at www.northpole.com
- The INTO website has some interesting festive resources at www.into.ie/ROI/Interactive/ClassroomResources/Festive/
- Visit www.softwarecentral.ie/Projects/MusicTechnologySoftware/ for some advice on different software packages and technology for music which might come in useful during the festive season.

It's a great time to use the digital camera or the digital video (DV) camera to capture the many activities and events that are undertaken during this time in schools and begin to build your own school archive of events. For help on using the digital video camera check out the teaching resources on the FÍS website www.fis.ie

NCTE Digital Schools Awards take off

Twenty four schools have already been awarded Digital School status in 2006. To celebrate this achievement several of the successful schools have held award ceremonies in their schools and the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin has attended quite a number around the country. Minister Hanafin commented at the award presentation to Scoil San Treasa primary school in Mount Merrion and St Brigid's BNS, Foxrock, Co Dublin: "This award will provide a notable mark of ICT achievement visible to pupils, parents, and staff and to the wider community. The award will also affirm the dedication and commitment of teachers and schools who through their expertise show innovation in teaching and learning using ICT."

The full list of awarded schools to date can be seen on



"Thank you, we are delighted with the award and the recognition", Finbarr O'Regan, Carnaun NS, Athenry, Co Galway

www.digitalschools.ie. We expect that a further 26 schools will achieve the award over the next

few months. In 2007, the NCTE will begin the registration of requests for validation from

other interested schools and further information on this will be available from the local ICT

advisory service in January 2007.

What is the aim of the Digital Schools Award?

The central aim of the NCTE Digital Schools Award is to recognise excellence in a school's approach to the integration of ICT in learning and teaching. There are many schools out there who have achieved a very impressive level of ICT integration in their schools. The steering group for this initiative (NCTE, INTO, IPPN, and CESI) feels very strongly that where such vision, leadership and pro-activity by teachers exists that it cries out for recognition and acknowledgement. Each successful school receives a plaque and a specially designed logo that can be used on literature and on the school website.

How do I achieve a Digital Schools Award?

To achieve a Digital Schools Award, each participating school must fulfil Identified criteria. The criteria are categorized as follows:

- Leadership and Vision.
 - ICT in the Curriculum.
 - School ICT Culture.
 - Professional Development.
 - Resources and Infrastructure.
- To assist in this process, a self-evaluation tool based on the Digital Schools' criteria has been developed. This is also a very useful tool for all schools who wish to develop or explore



Digital Schools Award is unveiled by Minister Hanafin at St Joseph's BNS, Terenure

the use of ICT in their schools. It enables schools to verify where they are in relation to ICT integration and to identify areas that require improvement. This evaluation tool can be accessed on www.digitalschools.ie. The local ICT advisory service has a key role to play in supporting schools as they strive to achieve a Digital Schools Award. When a school has completed a self-evaluation they should contact the local ICT advisor, www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/AdvisorNetwork. The ICT Advisor will visit the school to offer support,



guidance and practical advice towards achieving the award. It is also worth noting that engaging with the self-evaluation process for this award is extremely helpful when schools are developing or updating their ICT plans. *Stokane NS, Sligo:* "The pupils learn so much more than computer skills," said Vincent McMahon, Principal, "the use of technology also improves their communication and literacy skills."

For further information visit the Digital Schools Award website at www.digitalschools.ie. Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir ó gach duine san Ionad Náisiúnta don Teicneolaíocht san Oideachas.

Anne White, National Centre for Technology in Education, www.ncte



Safer Internet Day 2007 Competition

The fourth annual Safer Internet Day (SID) will be celebrated on 6 February 2007.

Your school is invited to take part in creating awareness material on one of three themes:

- E-privacy – Protecting personal information online.
- Netiquette – Treating others with respect online.
- The Power of Images – How to share photos and remain safe online.

You could win valuable prizes for your school up to the value of €1500.

For more details visit www.webwise.ie or contact internetsafety@ncte.ie.

ICT Professional Development for Teachers

The National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) delivers a range of ICT professional development courses to teachers through the network of Education Centres. Many autumn courses are well underway, with schedules for spring 2007 currently being compiled.

If there is a particular area of ICT in which you are interested, please get in touch with your local ICT advisory service. As well as the advertised courses, additional courses can be scheduled on demand if there are sufficient numbers. Similarly, all courses and support

groups can be run on a 'whole-school' basis. This means that a course or support group can be customised to meet the particular needs of your school. Please note that a minimum of 10 participants is needed to run a whole-school event.

New – Christmas Support Groups

Many education centres are running ICT support groups on the theme of Christmas this year. Examples of these include:

- Christmas internet resources for the junior class.
- Christmas internet resources for the senior class.

- Creating Christmas resources using content-free software.

Support groups are typically two and half hours in duration and can take place in your local education centre or in your school if required (minimum of 10 participants).

Please contact your local ICT advisory service for more information on these and other NCTE ICT courses www.ncte.ie/advisornetwork.

Course information is also available on the NCTE's website www.ncte.ie/courses

Note: All courses are fully funded by the NCTE.

Pádraig Ó Néill 1939-2006

Rugadh Pádraig taobh leis An Sciobairín in Iarthar Chorcaí. Chaith sé a shaol mar mhúinteoir in Oirthear Chorcaí – ar dtús i gCarnaig Thuathail agus ina dhiaidh sin i bParóiste an Ghleanntáin. Thug sé seal mar mhúinteoir agus príom-hoide in Inse Rátha agus ina dhiaidh sin i Scoil an Chroí Naofa sa Ghleanntán féin.

As a teacher, as in everything else he did, he was very committed – motivated and motivating, always looking for a new approach. His work was thorough, well-prepared and it showed.

From his earliest days as a teacher he got involved in INTO affairs. While teachers' salaries in the early sixties were low, young teachers in particular were badly paid. When Pádraig started teaching in 1959 the starting salary for 'women and single men' was £360 pa! Also, in those days young teachers were expected to be seen but not heard in many INTO branches! Pádraig was among a group of young tigers who forced a phalanx sean-bhunaithe in branches to listen to their grievances. The Liston, Mangan and Sandys awards successively followed which brought starting salaries for women and single men up to £620 in 1965. Ryan Tribunal awards followed in 1968.

Pádraig became Cathaoirleach of the old Cork City Branch in 1969 and later became Cathaoirleach of the old District 12. He attended every Congress from 1960 until his retirement in 1997. He represented District

12 on the Standing Orders Committee of Congress, became Secretary of it and when his good friend the late John Joe Connolly became Vice-President in 1984 he replaced him as Cathaoirleach. When the then District 12 was split in 1990 he became the CEC representative for the new District 16. The caring and keen sense of justice he showed in his teaching he also displayed in his INTO work. There was no trouble too great or no time too long if he had to solve a problem for a member. People sought him out for advice and they not only had confidence in him but knew that the confidentiality of their business was assured.

He retired in 1997 and turned his hands to talents he had little time to display heretofore. He was a skilled woodworker and produced woodcarvings and furniture as well as conventional woodwork. He loved gardening and, had he been given time, his garden in the house Rita and himself moved to after his retirement could have become a venue in the garden-viewing circuit. He also showed his talent in painting and had an exhibition in Middleton as well as having a permanent exhibition in Vienna Woods Hotel in Glanmire. One of his paintings hangs in the Teachers' Club.

He was a very humble shy person. Yet he could speak to and hold the attention of up to 800 people as he did at many a Congress.

A man of strong convictions, he had great respect for tradition. But he was always aware of the danger of being hide-bound by tradition, of there being other views, of others having different priorities and commitments. While he enjoyed his retirement, unfortunately it was very short. Good preparation being the hallmark of his life, when illness struck him he set about organising his affairs and faced the end with equanimity. A deeply-committed Christian, he had always been a spiritual person and prayed daily.

Is annamh a thagann leithéid Phádraig in ár measc agus bhí an t-ádh linn san INTO agus i gCorcaigh go mór mór go raibh sé sásta a chuid ama a chaitheamh ar son múinteoirí agus son an oideachais. Cailleadh é ar Aoine an Chéasta i mbliana. Chomh maith lena bhean Rita, a chaith oiread san ama ina theannta ag Comhdhála thar na blianta, fágann sé ceathrar iníon atá go léir gafa leis an oideachas – Sinéad, Clíona, Éimear agus Aoife. Is baill den



Chumann iad Clíona agus Éimear in Iarthar Chorcaí sa cheantar as a dtáinig sé féin. Fágfaidh mé an focal scoir ag iar-Uachtarán de chuid an Chumainn, Austin Corcoran; "He displayed qualities of integrity, leadership, courage, loyalty and stamina. He was as honest as his Maker."

Joe Mac Coitir, Cóbh, Co Chorcaí

John (Seán) O'Sullivan – an appreciation

The unexpected and untimely death of Seán O'Sullivan came as a shock to his wide circle of friends within teaching circles and in the wider community. The esteem in which Seán was held was reflected by the huge turnout at his removal and funeral in Valleymount Church, the community where Seán and his wife Kathleen had made their home for over forty years. Seán was born in Killree and raised in Killaloe. A talented hurler, he captained Clare minor hurling team as well as representing his native county at senior level. He began his teaching career in



Monaseed NS, Co Wexford, in 1958. In 1962 Seán and Kathleen moved to Valleymount parish to teach in Lacken NS, before moving across Blessington Lake in 1965 to their beloved Valleymount NS where they spent thirty five happy and productive years with Seán as principal and Kathleen as deputy principal.

Seán was at the heart of the local community particularly in promoting gaelic games. For many years he was involved in the local GAA club, as a player and as an official, and won county titles both as a player and as a manager. With his good friend Pat Daye, Seán founded Cumann na

mBunscol Cill Mhantáin. He truly believed in the ethos of participation and his pioneering work meant that thousands of children were introduced to gaelic games. Seán was also a highly regarded figure in the organisation at national level and was a former chairperson of Cumann na mBunscol Laighean.

Seán was also actively involved in the INTO for many years and was a former chairperson of Blessington branch. He represented the branch at district level for many years. Seán also had a great love of nature and an encyclopaedic knowledge of the environment. He loved spending time in his garden tending his many plants and listening to the sounds of

the birds. When he retired in December 2000 working in his garden was one of the things he was most looking forward to. Seán was a kind, gentle and unassuming person whose work as a teacher impacted positively on the lives of those who came in contact with him. Those who knew him are mourning the loss of a great friend and true gentleman.

To his wife Kathleen, on the loss of her beloved John, his sons Aidan and Seán, daughters-in-law, grandchildren and wide circle of friends, we offer our deepest sympathy. Ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís.

Tony McGinley, Principal, SN Móin an Bhealaigh, Valleymount, Co Wicklow

A tribute to Nuala Harte

Nuala Harte (nee O' Donovan), a native of Droum House Leap, Co Cork, was one of 14 children. She attended local national schools and having completed her secondary education at Mount St Michael, Rosscarbery, she attended Carysfort College where she graduated in 1972. She began her teaching career in Union Hall NS. After her marriage to Michael Harte, Cahermore, Rosscarbery, she taught in Ardagh BNS from 1979 to 2002.

First and foremost Nuala was a family person, a devoted wife, mother, sister and daughter. She opened her home and heart to one and all. She was a connecting force in her family, in the community, in her workplace and among her huge circle of friends.



Her teaching career was a labour of devotion and love. Her positive approach elicited the best from everyone with whom she came in contact. She nurtured the self-esteem of her pupils and instilled confidence in them. Her deep faith was displayed in the time and energy she devoted to preparing her classes for the sacraments.

Nuala had a beautiful singing voice, which she put to good use in the local church choir and as a member of the Carbery Choral Society. She had a special interest in history and contributed many articles to local historical journals.

There were no boundaries for Nuala. She endeared herself to all. Her charisma permeated everything she did.

She bore her illness with admirable courage and dignity and true to her nature

her faith along with the support of a loving family sustained her to the end.

Nuala was an active member of the Clonakilty Branch of the INTO. All of us who met her feel privileged to have known her. Her many INTO friends, colleagues and acquaintances will miss her. But the greatest loss is to her family. To Michael she was a dedicated wife and soul mate. To her five boys Fergal, Vincent, Michael, Daniel, Liam and daughter in law Susan she was a devoted and proud mother.

We extend our deepest sympathies to all her family. Her huge funeral bore testament to her popularity in the community.

Dimigh Nuala ar Shlí Na Firinne ar an triú la de Mhí Na Nollag 2005.

Ar dheis De go raibh a anam dilis.

From all her friends and colleagues.

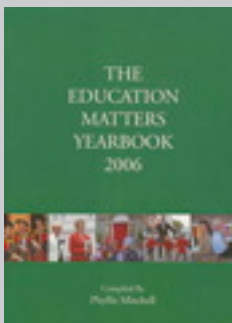
THE EDUCATION MATTERS YEARBOOK 2006

by Phyllis Mitchell

The Education Matters Yearbook 2006 is the first education yearbook to be published in Ireland. Education Matters was first established in 1987 as a newsprint publication and since 2004 has

been published exclusively on the internet with a fortnightly email distributed to over 8,000 signed up subscribers. This publication is a synopsis of education news, for the academic year 2005-2006 and also contains original articles.

The Yearbook captures a digest of news stories and other material in a book form which reflects education in Ireland during the last academic year. It details a number of major issues throughout the year such as Whole School Evaluation, discipline and behaviour, the Teaching Council and the Irish language in the form of press reports from a variety of newspapers.



The Yearbook also contains contributions from those involved in management issues and whole school issues such as special education, bullying, newcomer children and obesity.

Issues of personal and professional interest to teachers are also covered such as managing stress and pensions. Union issues are well covered with contributions from the three teacher unions including a review of the school year 2005-2006 from an INTO perspective by Denis Bohane, President INTO. Other issues which teachers may find of interest include a section on technology and early childhood education.

The Education Matters Yearbook 2006 is available from bookshops or from Primary ABC at primaryabc@eircom.net (phone 01 2695008, price €29.99).

80:20 DEVELOPMENT IN AN UNEQUAL WORLD

80:20 provides an introductory overview of key issues, debates and challenges in development, human rights and related areas and is designed for use in education.

This book reviews a broad range of topics including:

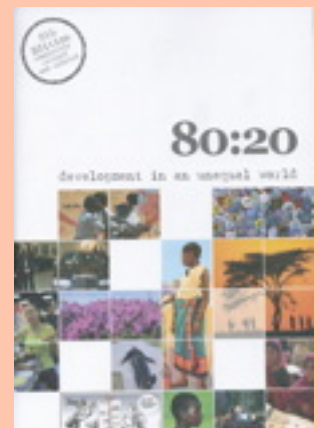
- development, hunger, population, gender, human rights, health, HIV/AIDS, education, MDGs, trade, debt, arms, aid etc;
- suggestions and ideas for taking action; and
- Martyn Turner and Brick cartoons, photographs, topic graphs etc.

In addition to the full text of the book, a CD is available providing additional information including activities for use in classrooms, community and youth work, principles and practices in development education, methodologies, plus a range of 'stimulus' sheets introducing and exploring key topics.

Cost: €22.50 + 2.0% P&P (discounts for bulk orders)

To purchase a copy of the book contact orders@8020.ie or 01 2860487.

See also www.8020.ie or www.developmenteducation.ie



Dyslexia: an Irish perspective

By Mary Ball, Anne Hughes and Wyn McCormack

This book is written for parents, teachers and other adults who suspect that someone they know may have undiagnosed dyslexia or another specific learning difficulty. The authors offer various definitions for dyslexia and indicate the characteristics and indicators of dyslexia in an individual. The indicators are listed chronologically, so typical difficulties experienced by a child can be identified according to their age. The authors stress that no child will have all the indicators, and the amount of indicators a child has does not determine the severity of the condition.

Dyspraxia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, aspergers and specific language impairment are also referred to and discussed but in less detail than dyslexia which is the main focus of the book.

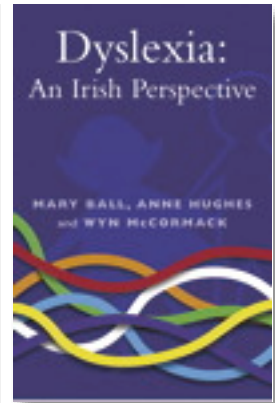
The authors discuss formally identifying dyslexia through assessment. They offer advice to parents following diagnosis and detail provision for students in the Irish school system. There are several chapters devoted to helping parents support their dyslexic child at home as s/he progresses through primary to secondary school.

A list of useful addresses, websites and contacts for

parents and teachers is included in the book along with explanations for salient acronyms ie, IEP (Individual Education Plan), NCSE (National Council for Special Education), valuable information for parents and teachers alike. There is also a glossary of terms to make this difficult area more accessible and easier to decipher.

Dyslexia: An Irish Perspective is an invaluable resource for parents, teachers and schools as it offers vital information during the initial diagnosis and then advice on how to support the child living with dyslexia.

The book is published by



Blackhall Publishing. ISBN is 1 842180 95 9. The price is €17.95.

Reviewed by Regina Halpin, Archbishop Ryan NS, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

Alice again by Judi Curtin

This is the second book about two best friends, Megan and Alice, whose lives were sadly changed when Alice's parents decided to separate. Megan's train journey to Dublin to visit her friend sets the scene for another exciting read.

If I had been 10+ when I read the first book, I would've been eagerly looking forward to this one. As an adult reader I was very pleased to meet the two friends again.



This time Alice has plans to drive her mother's boyfriend away and as her final effort sets up an amusing scene in the coffee shop.

All ends well when it is discovered that he is her mother's life coach and that she has consulted him for advice. She decides to move back to Limerick with the two children.

This book would be a useful aid for SPHE by discussing the themes such as friends moving way, loyalty

to friends, different family situations and especially diet since there is such a contrast between attitudes towards food and type of food consumed in both families and since the consequences of eating a lot of coloured sweets are described so humourously.

As with *Alice Next Door* this is an excellent book to have in the library as it portrays life outside the traditional family setting, and also just to give 10 to 12 year olds the pure enjoyment of reading a good story.

Published by the O'Brien Press, ISBN 0862789567, cost €7.95

Reviewed by Teresa McMahon, retired teacher, Blackrock, Co Dublin

Ó Lúibíní Lú by Caitríona Ní Mhurchú

Is fuath le Rósmáire Ní Ghrifín rudaí cailíneach. Ni thaitníonn gúnaí léi ná seoda. Is gráin léi an dath bándearg agus a cuid gruaige fada. B'fhearr léi i bhfad áit a fháil ar fhoireann na scoile mar chúlbáire. Níl sí puinn sásta mar sin a fháil amach, ar a deichiú lá breithe, gur síóg í. B'fhéidir áfach go bhfuil an tuairim atá aici de cad is síóg ann, lochtach.

Oiriúnach do ghasúr ar bith a

bhain taitneamh as Harry Potter nó Artemis Fowl feictear dom go mbainfeadh paistí níos óige taitneamh as an scéal a chloisteáil. Tá greann ag baint leis an scéal seo ach go háirithe nuair is ag deighleáil lena deartháir ionúin "an pleota" atá Rósmáire. Is deas gur ar mhíteaseolaíocht thraidisiúnta na hÉireann atá an "saol eile" bunaithe agus is deise fós gur cailín í an laoch.

Seo í an chéad leabhar i

sraith; carachtar Rósmháire péinteáilte dúinn agus go leor féid i rachaí maidir le h-eachtraí curtha mar shíol i dtalamh. Tá mo shuim múscaillte agus beidh spéis agam a léamh conas mar a thiocfaidh blathú ar an scéal. Oiriúnach d'aois ghrúpa 8-12.

Foilsithe ag: Cló Iar Chonnachta. Costas: €8

Léirmheas le Siobhán Uí Bhraoin, Scoil Chualann, Bré, Co Chill Mhantáin



St Patrick's College, Drumcondra: A history

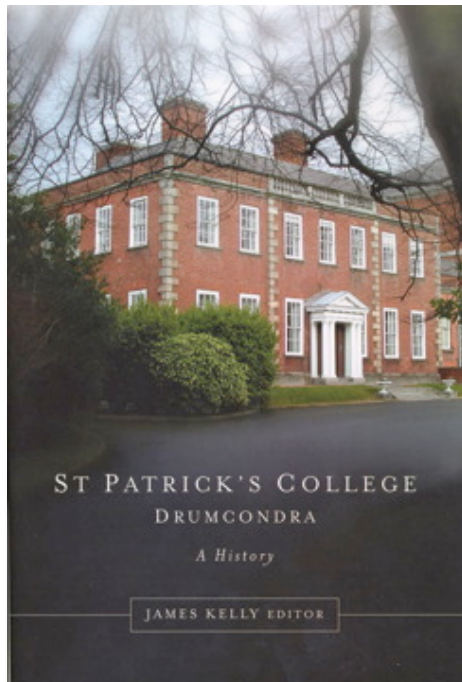
James Kelly, Editor

It has been anecdotally estimated that St Patrick's College's network extends to half of Ireland's schools. Not only have its graduates moulded the Republic's young citizens, but the influence of its writers, public figures and local leaders cannot be overestimated. Its story encapsulates the tale of Irish primary education, and, in the process, plots Ireland's modernisation. This collection of essays does justice to those stories; and offers much, much more.

It was St Patrick's good fortune to be able to draw on scholarly historians and educationalists from its ranks: of the eight contributors here, only John Walsh is not from the Drumcondra stable; one, Joe Doyle, is a graduate of the College's doctoral programme. The resulting volume is diverse, entertaining and densely informative. Local historians everywhere (and Drumcondriacs such as myself) will find a mine of information on the role an institution can play in local history in James Kelly's opening essay. Members of the Georgian society will value his meticulous description of Belvedere House, the architectural gem at the centre of the College campus. Urban historical geographers will avidly read Ruth McManus on the evolution of Drumcondra, from notorious highwaymen's haunt to garden suburb. (As late as 1899, Milbourne Ave, skirting the campus, was a manure-strewn rural lane.) Sociologists will note the underlying emphasis on upward social mobility – the insistence that the men wear hats, that they learn how to dine in women's company, and so on.

Folklorists and social scientists will recognise the wealth of insight in Eoghan Ó Súillea-bháin's fascinating essay. The innate decency of a scholarly young student, John McGahern, shines through in an episode that encapsulates the tension between anti-intellectualism and the high culture that were both a feature of the profession.

Of course the book's over-riding interest is in education. Joe Doyle, Carla King and



Diarmaid Ferriter take readers through arguments – still familiar – about over-educated teachers (“grinders and not professors are required”, one ‘expert’ noted in 1868), poor salaries (teachers in 1858 were paid salaries “you would not give the humblest porter”), and, post-1930, about the Gaelicisation of the profession. In 1883, the cost of teacher education was £20, a year's salary. Half was paid by the parish, the remainder by the student teacher. Cost remained a severe obstacle to the sons of labourers, artisans and small farmers. Yet the profession provided many with an escape route.

What did young countrymen make of what Francis MacManus calls the “mild discipline” of the Vincentian community that ran the College? (To essayist Carla King, it is “regimentation”.) Fr Peter Byrne, first principal of the ‘new’ College (its former site was 1-2 Drumcondra Road), who trained as an officer at St Cyr Military Academy in France, must have seemed very exotic. Fr Donal Cregan's vision, his campus

extension and emphasis on academic standards, are impressive. In contrast is a student whose letter home obsessively harasses parents for cigarette money in a Myles na Gopaleen-like parody. But he's poignantly reminiscent of Patrick Kavanagh's Pat Maguire (in *The Great Hunger*), who miserably consoled himself that “he had a cigarette to smoke and a pound to spend/ on drink”.

Writer Peadar O'Donnell makes a cameo appearance, promoting his “Red faith” – his communist sympathies – among four Donegal men. High spirits lead to a scatter of students around 1940 tethering a goat to a rostrum and placing before it a copy of a book by the lecturer – who reacted predictably.

Serious matters take centre stage, however: in the 1960s the INTO plays a significant role in the struggle for degree status, first sought decades earlier: it was not until the linkage with the NUI in 1973 that the battle was won. Ciaran Sugrue plots this episode, attending en route to the geographical distribution of students and the feminization of teaching, which was achieved with astonishing rapidity. Both his closing remarks and the editor's afterword provide one yardstick against which the College's and the profession's future may be measured.

St Pat's has as many histories as students. This book unlocks its archives to breathe life into scores of them.

Published by Four Courts Press.
ISBN 1-84682-009x. Cost €45.

Reviewed by Mary Shine Thompson, a former primary teacher. She is lecturer in English and College Coordinator of Research at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Her recent publications include *Studies in Children's Literature* (Ed.) (with C. Keenan) (2004); *Selected Plays by Austin Clarke* (Chosen and Ed. with Intro.) (2005); *Treasure Islands: Studies in Children's Literature* (Ed.) (with C. Keenan) (2005); *Skellig Sunset*, by Michael Kirby (Ed. with Intro.), (2006).

12 Days of Christmas

Kathleen Darragh who teaches in St Mary's Primary School, Cushendall, has launched a new children's Christmas book *12 Days of Christmas*. This book, based on the song *The*

Twelve Days of Christmas, provides a different way of telling the Christmas story and message and will show children that Christmas is a season not just one day. Illustrations are by

Jeanette Dunne and are very child friendly and colourful. The book costs €2.95 and is published by Veritas. ISBN: 1853909394 See www.veritas.ie for more details.



COPY DATE

Copy you wish to have considered for publication in the January/February issue of *InTouch* should arrive in Head Office by 8 January. Copy for March issue should arrive by 12 February.

WILDLIFE EDUCATION

NORTH MIDLANDS EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

The National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) programmes are provided through the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as a means of (i) promoting awareness, knowledge and appreciation of our native flora, fauna and their habitats; (ii) fostering individual and collective responsibility for the welfare and conservation of our natural heritage; and (iii) providing information and advice on environmental issues.

Programmes in the North Midlands Region are available free to primary school students in South Leitrim, Roscommon, Longford, Cavan, Monaghan and Westmeath. Current programmes are 'Our Wildlife', 'Our Bogs', and 'Our Woodland and Hedgerows'.

Contact the NPWS for further details and booking forms. Tel 071 9666932. Email: ballinafadrec@environ.ie. Post: Education Programme Office, NPWS, Ballinafad, Co Sligo.

COMPETITION WINNER

The winner of the Outside the Box Learning Resources competition (€50 book voucher) at the Consultative Conference on Education was Mary Conneely, Marymount NS, Drogheda.

GET WRITING NOW!

PEOPLE'S COLLEGE SHORT STORY COMPETITION

The People's College is pleased to announce its very first writing competition – open to all.

The judge will be renowned Dublin author, Peter Sheridan. Winners will be announced in April 2007 and published in the 2007 *People's College Creative Writing Group Anthology*.

First prize €350, second prize €250 and third prize €150.

Closing date for entries: 28 February 2007 and entries should be sent to People's College Writing Competition, 31 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Entry fee €8 euro for first entry and €5 euro for each subsequent entry by the same author. Past and present students of the People's College and trade union members' fee is €5 for the first entry and €3 for subsequent entries.

For more details and rules log onto www.peoplescollege.ie

BREAK TIME / PLAY TIME

An online survey will be carried out by Susan Marron over the coming weeks using a selected sample of primary school principals to ascertain factors that influence children's physical activity levels at break time. This will be followed by observations of children's physical activity in some schools in early spring.

Susan, a lecturer at St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9, is carrying out this research as part of a Masters degree thesis. She would very much appreciate your completion of the online questionnaire.

IATSE CONFERENCE

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education will hold their 2007 Conference on 7, 8 and 9 June 2007 in St Patrick's College. Theme: *Focus on the Student – in the Midst of Policy and Paper*. This conference will put the spotlight on the students themselves – all those with special educational needs in both special and mainstream schools.

IATSE invites papers/presentations/workshops for this conference. Please submit a short abstract (maximum 100 words) to: IATSE Conference Director, Drumcondra Education Centre, Dublin 9.

Queries and submissions by e-mail to: conference@iatse.ie. Closing date for submissions: Wednesday, 20 December.

CONCERT

Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education is celebrating its biennial concert on Wednesday, 13 December 2006, at 8 pm, in the Mahony hall at the Helix. The concert will comprise a series of musical and drama acts woven together and will be an opportunity for the future teachers of the College to bring their talents and gifts to the community. Details: mairin.nichonghaile@mie.ie

REUNION

Calling all ex-Carysfort from the 1979-82 cohort. Reunion provisionally planned for 17 November 2007. Please email fmccutcheon@esatclear.ie or ring/text 086 3429113 to gauge level of interest and to get the ball rolling!

INTO / STSG

The General Meeting of the Separated Teachers' Support Group will take place in the Gresham Metropole Hotel, Mac Curtain St, Cork, at 11.00 am. on Saturday 20 January 2007. New members welcome. Separated, divorced, widowed, lone parents. ASTI, TUI, IFUT members welcome.

Further information from: Chairperson: Maura Killackey; Tel: 0505 21694; 087 1233456; Secretary: Christina Henry: 01 8481405; 087 6201153.

MONTESSORI 100

Conference: Education: Reshaping our Approach. Celebrating 100 years of Montessori schools. Dates: 26 to 28 January 2007. Speakers include: Sighle Fitzgerald (Ireland); Ben van der Hilst (Netherlands); Claus Dieter Kaul (Austria); Els Westra-Mattijssen and Joyce Kruijs (Netherlands).

Venue: Montessori College, 16 Adelaide St, Dun Laoghaire, Dublin. Conference Fee: € 40 (including reception and coffee) Registration details: aileen@snmci.ie

SU DOKU SOLUTION

Solution to quiz on page 28.

3	4	2	5	7	9	6	8	1
9	5	6	1	4	8	2	3	7
7	1	8	3	6	2	4	5	9
5	7	9	2	8	6	3	1	4
2	3	1	9	5	4	8	7	6
6	8	4	7	1	3	5	9	2
8	9	3	6	2	1	7	4	5
4	2	7	8	9	5	1	6	3
1	6	5	4	3	7	9	2	8

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The views expressed in this journal are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the INTO.

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