A job well done...

As the school year 2006 – 07 draws to a close I want to use this opportunity to thank most sincerely, INTO members up and down the country for excellent work on the class size campaign. In years to come I hope that this year will be seen as the time when we made real progress to end the overcrowding in our classes.

And while at the time of writing it is by no means obvious what the make up of the next government will be it is clear that whatever government is formed cannot ignore the very strong message on this issue that all politicians got from the electorate.

Before Christmas last year, government was not prepared to move beyond already promised minor reductions in class sizes despite firm commitments in the Programme for Government. Neither was primary education featuring strongly in issues that were of concern to the electorate. All that changed in February and March this year when thanks to the efforts of INTO activists up and down the country, 18,000 people attended meetings to voice their clear opinions on Ireland’s over crowded classes. The fact that management and parents joined in and fully supported the campaign added significant strength to our cause.

During the election campaign canvassers from all parties reported to us that the issue was being raised on the doorsteps. The media highlighted class sizes regularly during the campaign with education consistently in the top ten concerns of voters. A measure of how far our campaign put class sizes up the political agenda can be seen from the fact that in his first public appearance on the night of the count An Taoiseach listed action on class size as the second issue (after A and E) on which the public wanted to see action.

This was down to our campaign.

However, like the formation of a new government, we are not over the line yet and we must be vigilant to ensure that pre-election promises on class size become a reality.

The success of our campaign shows what can be achieved when we as teachers through the INTO, put in a determined effort to secure badly needed improvements in primary education. It shows clearly the value of unity of purpose which the INTO provides and what the combined efforts of members up and down the country can deliver.

On behalf of the Organisation I want to wish all members a well deserved summer break and hope that the new school year will see you all refreshed and ready for further INTO activity. There is clearly more to be done, especially in ensuring that promised additional funding for schools is delivered. But it is important to recognise what has been achieved by members and express appreciation for those efforts.

We must build on this success. Our Organisation has a fine blend of experience and energy which we must continue to unite in order to progress our various agendas.

Beireann nínt bua.

General Secretary

In this issue...

Tax and maternity benefit 4
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Cover pic: Dr Peadar Cremin, President, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, making presentation to Angela Dunne. Angela is the first graduate of Mary I to become INTO President.
Vacation periods generally are reckoned as sick leave where a teacher is absent on sick leave both before and after the vacation period.

The article below is based on the Sick Leave Circular 16/05

Teachers absent on sick leave

who provide a medical certificate of fitness to resume teaching prior to a school vacation

Where a teacher is absent on sick leave immediately before and after a school vacation period, a teacher is deemed to be sick for the whole vacation. If a teacher provides a certificate of fitness to resume duty prior to or during a period of vacation, sick leave during the period of vacation may be discounted. The advice of the Chief Medical Officer may be sought as to whether the vacation period should have been discounted as sick leave if the teacher:

• is on sick leave up to the school vacation or has resumed teaching duty within the last two weeks prior to the school vacation; and
• goes on sick leave again immediately after the vacation or within two weeks after the school vacation.

Tax and maternity benefit

Teachers who pay PRSI at the full rate (ie, class A PRSI) are entitled to Tax Exemption on that portion of their maternity leave salary which is in actual fact paid as maternity benefit by the Department of Social and Family Affairs (DSFA). They are also be entitled to a refund of PRSI contributions which are deducted from that portion. Enquiries to the Revenue and DSFA confirm that this is the case.

Currently the DES deducts full tax and PRSI from teachers Maternity Leave Salary without taking the Tax/PRSI exempt status of the DSFA Maternity Benefit element into account. Typically this portion of salary is in the region of €250 a week. Affected teachers should request an MB2a form from the Maternity Benefit Section of the DSFA which states the amount of DSFA Maternity Benefit which was paid to the DES directly on their behalf.

Eligible teachers should also request a letter from the DES Primary Payments section to s tate that they received a full salary while on Maternity Leave and that they paid Tax/PRSI on the full amount. These documents along with a P60 for the relevant Tax Year(s) of their Maternity Leave should be sent to their Tax Office to generate the tax rebate which may be as high as 42% x €250 x 18/22 weeks or €1,890 / €2,310 (approx.) per period of leave. A refund of the relevant PRSI contributions can also be obtained by completing Form PRSIREF1 which is available from the DSFA at www.welfare.ie. This form has to be stamped at Section 4 by the DES before being sent to the DSFA to receive the PRSI refund which is somewhere in the region of another €300.

It remains to be clarified whether the retrospective four year limit now enforced by Revenue for Tax Reviews applies in these cases. Head Office is seeking to clarify the situation further regarding those Class A PRSI teachers whose Maternity Leave occurred more than four years ago. In the meantime any teachers affected should contact their Tax Office and the DSFA Maternity Benefit Section in Letterkenny at 0190 690690 for advice.

Disability Benefit payable to Class A contributors via their salary while on sick leave is taxable but the PRSI contributions on the DSFA Disability Benefit portion can be reclaimed using Form PRSIREF 1.

Sick leave and vacation periods

2007 Presidential Dinner

District X will host the Presidential Dinner in honour of Angela Dunne in the Dolmen Hotel, Kilkenny Road, Carlow on Saturday 13 October 2007.

Tickets at €65 each are available from:
Ned O’Keefe, Oak Park Road, Carlow.
Tel 059 9142741/086 3351759
E-mail: nan20k@iolfree.ie

District X members to order their tickets through their branch secretaries. Cheques to be made payable to: District X Presidential Dinner.

Fixed Term Work Act and Roll Over Contracts

A number of queries have recently been received in relation to the position of temporary teachers employed during the current school year and where there is a further contract for a temporary teacher available in the next school year. DES Circular 10/2006 clarified a number of issues in relation to the implementation of the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act 2003. The circular confirmed that anticipated vacancies of more than 22 (shortly 26) weeks duration should be advertised and filled through a formal recruitment process using the same procedures and criteria as for permanent vacancies.

The circular further confirmed that, where fully qualified teachers engaged in successive contracts in the same or similar positions with the same employer, an interview process is required for the initial appointment only. The circular also clarifies issues relating to a number of conditions of employment for fixed term employees.

The circular is available on both the DES and INTO websites.
Supporting Assessment in Primary Schools

The Teacher Education Section of the DES has recently written to schools regarding inservice training in relation to Pupil Assessment. The following advice was posted on the INTO website as guidance for members:

1. The DES letter states “your school is now invited to participate in this training”. If it doesn’t suit the school to participate then it is open to the school to defer participation until the next round of training.

2. Following discussions with the DES the INTO received clarification that substitute cover will be provided in all cases where it is required.

3. Where there are several teachers teaching the same grade (e.g., four teaching 1st class) it is a matter for the principal to select the teachers to attend training (training will be eventually rolled out to all teachers).

4. The letter suggests that the teachers attending would be those who would be administering the testing in the coming year. The INTO interpretation of the coming year is the 2007-2008 school year.

5. Some schools to date have not determined their class allocations for the 2007-2008 school year. If this is the case, it is open to a school to defer attendance until a further round of training.

Inservise 2007-2008

At time of writing no decision has been made by the DES in relation to inservice for the school year 2007-2008.

Given that the planned curriculum implementation phase will be completed by June 2007, the annual six inservice days, agreed in 1999, are not guaranteed to continue.

How inservice will be organised and provided in the future has yet to be decided.

The Regional Curriculum Support Service and PCSP will continue during 2007-2008 and cuiditheoireacht will continue to be available. The School Development Planning Service is also continuing for 2007-2008. Prior to taking their school development planning day schools should consult with their SDP facilitator.

The INTO has indicated to the DES that as a priority whole school professional development is required for assessment.

The INTO has also informed the DES that teachers have indicated their need for professional development related to special education / IEPs and teaching English as an additional language, among other issues such as child protection and early childhood education.
Dear Colleagues,
As you may be aware I will be a candidate on the NUI (National University of Ireland) panel in the forthcoming Seanad Election. I would deeply appreciate the support of you and your members at Branch and school level to ensure as much support as possible.

Táim i dTeach Laighnín anois le scór bliain agus i rith an tréimhsé sin tá sé flor le rág chuairteach chuansaisigh polasaíthe an INTO, gach seans a fhuaireas. In Seanad Éireann I have been a constant voice for the INTO and for primary education and have ensured that at all times the concerns of teachers and the needs of education have been to the fore.

Táim ag braith gur nó r ar bailt an INTO and would appreciate your active support again.

The INTO’s candidate...

As you will have seen from the coverage of the recent General Election, education continues to be an important political issue in this country. This includes not just the class size campaign, which the INTO successfully organised in recent times, but issues as diverse as educational disadvantage, catering for children with special education needs, ensuring proper education for children who have English as an additional language, and the whole area of funding and resourcing of primary education.

In this regard, it is important that the INTO has a strong advocate for education and our policies in the Oireachtas. To this end it is vital that Joe O’Toole, our former General Secretary, is re-elected in the current Seanad Éireann election. We are asking all our members who are registered to vote to return their ballot paper with the Number 1 vote for Joe O’Toole in the Seanad and that you also ask your friends and family members who have votes to support him as well.

Joe’s ability to highlight issues such as class size, resourcing of schools, school leadership and the implementation of the EPSEN Act in recent times has greatly contributed to our progress on these issues. We want to ensure that Joe remains a constant voice for education through his re-election.

Yours sincerely

Angela Dunne          John Carr
INTO Resident        INTO General Secretary.

The following documents are available to download from www.joetoole.net

The EPSEN Act – An Interpretation for teachers;
Towards a School Bullying Policy; Polasáid Gaeilge an tSeanadóir Joe O’Toole and Ról an tSbóir Gaeilge Questionnaire (completed by second level teachers).

The Election Process

● Registered graduates of NUI colleges are entitled to vote in the Seanad Éireann election. Teachers with degrees from the newer universities including DCU and UL are not eligible to vote and this issue is being pursued by the INTO.

● Ballot papers will issue on 19 June and must be returned by Monday, 23 July.

Like to help in the campaign? Please contact Aoife at 6183786 or email Joe at joe@joetoole.net

Vote No 1 Joe O’Toole – A Constant Voice for Education
# Teachers’ Salary Scales and Allowances

Current Salary Scales shown below reflect the 2% Towards 2016 increase applied on 1 June ’07

## PRINCIPALS’ ALLOWANCES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>*</th>
<th>Current scale</th>
<th>3% 01/12/06</th>
<th>2% 01/06/07</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>II (6-7)</td>
<td>10,247</td>
<td>10,452</td>
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<tr>
<td>III (8-11)</td>
<td>12,021</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV (12-13)</td>
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<td>V (14-16)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI (17-19)</td>
<td>18,745</td>
<td>19,420</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII (20-23)</td>
<td>21,007</td>
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<tr>
<td>VIII (24-26)</td>
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<td>IX (27-30)</td>
<td>24,975</td>
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<tr>
<td>X (31-35)</td>
<td>26,715</td>
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<tr>
<td>XI (36+)</td>
<td>29,248</td>
<td>29,833</td>
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* Size of school by total number of authorised teaching posts inclusive of principals indicated by brackets

## COMMON BASIC SCALES

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<tr>
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<td>31,497</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>32,575</td>
<td>33,227</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>35,333</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>36,421</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>37,507</td>
<td>38,257</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>40,241</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>41,607</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>46,500</td>
<td>47,430</td>
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<td>14, 15, 16</td>
<td>47,868</td>
<td>48,825</td>
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<td>17, 18, 19, 20</td>
<td>49,679</td>
<td>50,673</td>
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<tr>
<td>21, 22, 23, 24</td>
<td>52,177</td>
<td>53,221</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>55,478</td>
<td>56,588</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>59,125</td>
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## DEPUTY PRINCIPALS’ ALLOWANCES

<table>
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<th>Current scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I (1-5)</td>
<td>3,702</td>
<td>3,776</td>
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<tr>
<td>II (6-7)</td>
<td>4,844</td>
<td>4,941</td>
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<tr>
<td>III (8-11)</td>
<td>6,405</td>
<td>6,533</td>
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<td>IV (12-13)</td>
<td>8,027</td>
<td>8,188</td>
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<tr>
<td>V (14-16)</td>
<td>9,599</td>
<td>9,791</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI (17-19)</td>
<td>11,240</td>
<td>11,465</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII (20-23)</td>
<td>12,820</td>
<td>13,076</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII (24-26)</td>
<td>14,371</td>
<td>14,658</td>
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<tr>
<td>IX (27-30)</td>
<td>15,592</td>
<td>15,904</td>
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<tr>
<td>X (31-35)</td>
<td>16,784</td>
<td>17,120</td>
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<tr>
<td>XI (36+)</td>
<td>18,629</td>
<td>19,002</td>
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* Size of school by total number of authorised teaching posts inclusive of principals indicated by brackets

## OTHER ALLOWANCES

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<tr>
<th>Current scale</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching through Irish</td>
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<td>1,585</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaeltacht Grant Island Allowance</td>
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<td>3,068</td>
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<tr>
<td>1,810</td>
<td>1,846</td>
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## GRADED POSTS

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal Special Duties Post</td>
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<td>8,536</td>
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<tr>
<td>3,702</td>
<td>3,776</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## TEACHERS WITH MORE THAN 35 YEARS SERVICE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Current scale</th>
<th>3% 01/12/06</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,282</td>
<td>2,328</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CALCULATING SALARY

A teacher’s gross salary is comprised of various elements as follows:
1. The apropriate incremental point of the common basic scale.
2. Additional allowance for academic qualifications.
3. Additional allowance for a promoted post (ie, principal, deputy principal, assistant principal, special duties teacher).
4. Other Special Allowances.
5. Teachers’ Children’s Allowance in certain cases.

* Note: These allowances may not be applicable to all teachers.

Teachers should check their salary and ensure that they are on the correct point of the incremental scale and are in receipt of the appropriate allowances.

## ALLOCATIONS ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current scale</th>
<th>3% 01/12/06</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Primary Degree (Pass)</td>
<td>1,810</td>
<td>1,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Masters Degree by Thesis or Exam (Pass)</td>
<td>4,831</td>
<td>4,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Primary Degree (1st/2nd Hons)</td>
<td>4,831</td>
<td>4,928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Masters Degree (1st/2nd Hons)</td>
<td>5,398</td>
<td>5,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e Doctors Degree</td>
<td>6,030</td>
<td>6,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f (i) H Dip in Ed (Pass)</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Higher Froebel Cert</td>
<td>580</td>
<td>592</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g (i) H Dip in Ed (1st/2nd Hons)</td>
<td>1,214</td>
<td>1,238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Ard Teastas Gaeilge</td>
<td>1,214</td>
<td>1,238</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Special Education Diplomas | 2,393 | 2,441 |

Only one of the allowances at (f) or (g) may be held together with one of the allowances (a) to (e)

Figures for 01/06/07 have been generated by INTO Head Office and have not been confirmed by DES.
New Circular on English as an Additional Language

The DES is issuing a circular to all primary and post primary schools in relation to meeting the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. The circular outlines the importance of creating an inclusive school environment and the role of the language support teacher. It also deals with assessing the pupils’ level of language proficiency using the Integrate Ireland Language and Training Assessment Test.

The circular goes on to outline the process for allocating additional teacher support, including the number of teachers allowed when the number of pupils requiring language support is 14 or greater. It also specifies that, where language resources are required for individual pupils for longer than two years, details of the assessed level of language competence and specific detail of how the school has addressed the needs of pupils in the previous two years must be outlined. Applications for additional teaching support can be completed using the existing forms for primary and post-primary schools.

The INTO has been in discussion with the DES on a number of issues in relation to children with English as an additional language, including the lifting of the cap and the ending of the two year support rule. An additional 200 teachers were employed for this purpose in recent months and a further 150 are being employed in the next school year as part of the commitments in the Towards 2016 National Agreement.

New Autism units

The DES has confirmed that, as part of the ongoing commitment to provision for special educational needs, new units will be opened throughout the country in primary schools to cater for children with autism. Sanction for the teachers has already been given and a programme of training for the teachers has begun in the relevant schools. The DES has also agreed that, while an Autism unit may eventually have two or three classes with between 12 and 18 children, a school that has a teaching principal and four other mainstream classes will convert to having an administrative principal post when the first child is enrolled.

The INTO is in discussions with the DES in relation to a number of schools who have teaching principals with at least five mainstream classes plus an Autism class with up to six children and who, under the regulations, do not currently qualify for administrative status. The Special Education Support Service has also recently held seminars for teachers and principals in both special and mainstream schools who have Autism units or classes.

This is part of an ongoing and developing programme of inservice in special educational needs provided by the SESS and further details will be outlined in the InTouch magazine in the coming months.

Benefit Funds Committee

Pictured at a recent Benefit Funds Committee meeting in INTO Head Office (l to r) Sile Chuinnnneagain, Division II, Anne Kennelly, Division III, Patrick McAllister, Division I, Martina Johnson, Division V and John Daly, Division IV.

NCCA guidelines on special education

The NCCA has recently published guidelines for pupils with mild, moderate, and severe and profound learning disabilities.

The guidelines, which cover the subject areas of the primary school curriculum, will issue shortly to all teachers. They also cover school and classroom planning, communication and language, assessment, supporting teaching and learning through ICT, and managing challenging behaviour.

The guidelines and the introductory booklet are also available as downloads from the NCCA website at www.ncca.ie.
National Educational Welfare Board consults on Codes of Behaviour

The National Educational Welfare Board (NEWB) has commenced a consultation process on draft Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour. These Guidelines are prepared on foot of NEWB’s responsibility under Section 25 of the Education (Welfare) Act, 2000.

"Under the law, the board of management of a school must prepare and make available a Code of Behaviour in respect of its students. Working on the code presents an ideal opportunity for all members of the school community to come together under the leadership of the board of management and the principal to build a partnership that is focused on the education of the students in a school", Eddie Wa rd, Chief Executive of the National Educational Welfare Board said.

“The thrust of the Guidelines is that by working in an inclusive way with teachers, students and families, it is more likely that school policies will be successful in getting the buy in of all members of the school community. This approach helps prevent and reduce incidents of unwanted behaviour and leads to better outcomes for all. The code should be a living policy having at its heart an overall emphasis of the promotion of positive relationships at every level of the school community. The code is not just a crisis reference document.

“The Guidelines bring together guidance on good practice, both local and international, and essential information on relevant aspects of the law. They aim to standardise practices and approaches and provide practical guidance on how to develop an inclusive, child-centred, behavioural policy that promotes a positive teaching and learning environment, whether schools are preparing a Code for the first time or auditing an existing one. The Guidelines strike a balance between prescribing detail on the one hand and the need for each school to develop its own policies and practices that best suit its circumstances and ethos.

“A school’s Code of Behaviour is one of a range of initiatives that can support schools in relation to behaviour. The Guidelines will enhance the ability of boards of management, school principals and teachers in carrying out their duties and supports the exercise of professional judgement by all who work in the school”, he added.

In late 2005, the Board appointed an expert group including school teachers, principals; parents and experts from the fields of the law and child psychology to draw up draft Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour. Their experience together with other expert inputs have shaped the Guidelines which are now the basis for an open consultation process involving national associations of parents, recognised school management organisations, trade unions, staff associations representing teacher and other relevant organisations, children and young people. The consultation period is two months.

The feedback from this consultation process will inform the Guidelines for Developing School Codes of Behaviour which will be issued to all schools, primary and post primary, in the 2007/2008 school year.

The NEWB’s draft Guidelines on Developing School Codes of Behaviour are available on www.newb.ie

The INTO has been in discussions with the NEWB and a further update will be given in September.

Adaptation period for teachers trained abroad

Under the terms of Statutory Instrument u’94, teachers who do not have the appropriate standard in curricular Irish must be offered the choice of an aptitude test (ie. An Scrudu le hÁghaidh Chaillocht sa Ghaeilge) or the alternative option of an adaptation period.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the Statutory Instrument, the Teaching Council is now formulating proposals for the development of the adaptation period which by law must be no longer than three years. Proposals under consideration by the Council for the adaptation period may include: Assessing the level of competence of the candidates; Attendance at approved courses in the Irish language; Periods of time spent in the Gaeltacht; and an assessment of the teaching of Irish in the classroom.

The choice to opt for the aptitude test or the adaptation period is solely a matter for the individual applicant concerned. Further details on the adaptation period will be available as soon as same are finalised by the Teaching Council. The Teaching Council has indicated that the new arrangements will be published on the Council website as soon as they are finalised. Persons are also welcome to contact the INTO.

Teaching Council bursaries for teachers

On 15 May 2007 the Teaching Council announced its first scheme of bursaries for teachers undertaking practitioner-based research ie, where the focus is on the teacher’s practice and is directly related to teaching, learning and assessment.

Up to ten such bursaries will be awarded in 2007. The amount of bursary awarded may vary in each case but each will be subject to a maximum of €5,000.

Teachers wishing to apply for bursaries should download the application form from the Teaching Council website at www.teachingcouncil.ie and submit a completed form no later than 5pm on 20 June 2007 to:
Bursary Administrator
The Teaching Council
Block A, Maynooth Business Campus
Maynooth, Co Kildare.
Meeting the challenges of diversity

Irish society is changing as reflected in classrooms, workplaces and society generally. The diversity of people’s national and cultural backgrounds is evident across the country.

One of the grounds on which discrimination is prohibited by law is that of race. The Equality Committee recently invited the Irish Trade Union Trust (a division of SIPTU) to provide its members with a Diversity Awareness Training session. Kevin Glackin of the ITUT conducted the training.

**Human migration and its benefits**
Kevin Glackin distinguished the various forms of human migration, which has been a recurring phenomenon through the ages. Those involved include economic migrants (usually young adults who represent loss of an important asset for their native country), asylum seekers (seeking refugee status and recognition) and refugees (having a well-founded fear of persecution at home, as defined by the 1951 Geneva Convention).

The 2006 Census suggests there are around 400,000 non-Irish nationals in the Republic. More than eight in ten migrant workers here come from the EU States. Those from outside the EU generally require a Work Permit or Green Card (depending on income from their job) to work here. Migrant workers are essential to our economic development, as were our own emigrants whose remittances were significant in earlier periods of Irish history.

Migrant workers and their families may have many issues to face here. These include isolation, a sense of not belonging, problems with qualification recognition, a language barrier and potential discrimination.

**‘One race, many ethnic groups’**
In addressing the Equality Committee, Kevin Glackin offered definitions of a range of terms including “ethnicity”, “prejudice” and “racism”. Ethnicity is a social construction which identifies people with a particular group, often descended from common ancestors. Group members may share a range of common cultural traits.

Although the concept of ‘race’ is often used, in legislation and elsewhere, to distinguish groups of people, he emphasised that there is in fact a common, human race. Within this, there are many ethnicities as defined socially.

**Possible conflicts**
The Equality Committee heard of the need to challenge discrimination in workplaces and in broader society, and also to value the cultures, practices and traditions of minority ethnic groups in Ireland. Possible sources of conflict in this area – one example being different views and practices on the corporal punishment of children by their parents – were discussed. The Committee intends to return to the theme of ethnicity, and its relevance in education, in setting out its future work programmes.

Globalisation, equality and workers’ rights

The ICTU Women’s Committees’ (North and South) Seminar 2007 on the above theme was attended by 160 delegates, among them nine INTO representatives. The Seminar heard ICTU General Secretary, David Beggs highlight problems faced by women, in particular, in the developing world. These included the lack of adequate health care, particularly for AIDS sufferers, few education opportunities and the fact that 70% of refugees through conflict and displacement are women.

**A global perspective**
Three main themes were considered by workshops at the seminar. These were:
- Support for trade unions in developing countries;
- Responsible consumerism; and
- Globalisation and migration.

On capacity building of trade unions, a proposed project to link ICTU with the Lesotho Congress of Democratic Unions was outlined. Addressing the migration theme, Salome Mhugua Henry of the African Women’s Network outlined the experiences of women migrants in Ireland. In her paper, she covered issues in and barriers to employment, and concerns about recognition of qualifications.

The demand from consumers in the developed world for cheaper clothes has led to downgrading of conditions in factories elsewhere. Instances were cited of poor conditions in China, Indonesia and India. A number of campaign websites with information on responsible consumerism include: www.ictuglobal.org, www.nosweat.org, and www.ethicalthreads.co.uk.

**In Brief...**
The first meeting of the ASTI Gay and Lesbian Equality Network took place earlier this year at the union’s head office. (The INTO LGBT Group, tel. 087 6652839, was set up in 2004). A survey published by DCU in 2006 found that 7% of second-level teachers were aware of instances of homophobic bullying at school.

INTO has met with FLAC about their campaign to restore Child Benefit as a universal payment (see April/May InTouch Equalities page). The campaign (details at www.flac.ie) will seek to make an impact in advance of any Constitutional Referendum on children’s rights.

“...When bullying takes place in an organisation, it has an effect on all members of staff, either directly or indirectly” – John Treacy, CEO, Irish Sports Council, responding to an INTO invitation to write about dignity at work, preparatory to the Equality Conference 2007.

The Report with recommendations on multi-faith schools in Ireland, published on 24 May, may be accessed on the Council of Europe website (www.coe.int) go to ‘Human Rights’ then ‘Home’.  

InTouch June 2007
Polasí Oideachais don Ghaeltacht

OGG in collaboration with Údarás na Gaeltachta held a conference on ‘Toward an Education Policy’ for the Gaeltacht on 18-20 April 2007. The conference was attended by Angela Dunne, President, Máire Ní Chuinneagáin, CEC and Deirbhíle Nic Craith, Senior Official. Presentations addressed the following issues:

- Polasaí Gaeilge sa Scoll Ghaeltachta.
- Oideachas Múinteoirí.
- Boird Oideachais don Gaeltacht.
- Struchtúr an oideachais i New Brunswick, Canada.
- Supporting the use of Basque Language in Education. Suggestions were made in relation to the need for teacher education courses through the medium of Irish. In addition, a paper was presented based on research commissioned by COGG, in relation to the need for an authoritative structure to support education in the Gaeltacht, on the basis that recommendations in relation to Education policy in the Gaeltacht have been made since the foundation of the State, but never implemented, leading to the current crisis in relation to Gaeltacht education. It was stated that the DES had responsibility for education in the Gaeltacht but that it never developed proactive policies in relation to meeting the educational needs of the Gaeltacht as a linguistic community. The presenter from New Brunswick outlined how the French had set up a separate educational structure in New Brunswick in order to support the provision of education through French for the speaking community, who were a minority within the province.

Labhair Micheál Ó Móráin, iarphríomhoire, ar na dhuilán a bhathe le deis Gaeilge a ullmhú agus labhair an cígrí Seán Ó Floinn ar na teorírí a bhaite le pleán scóil don Ghaeltacht a chur le chéile. Labhair Jaseon Uillbarri ó thiar na mBacach ar an bpobal atá acu chur le húsáid na Bascache. Bhí plé ar oideachas Múinteoirí le cur in lathair ó Phádraig Ó Duibhir, Coláiste Phádraig agus Hywel Gunn Lewis na Coláiste na Tríonóide, Caermarthen sa Bhreatain Bheag.

COGG inti preaparadh a choiníl i lár na nollag: dhá a bhainteachtais i nGaeilge a bhufúil i Béarla in uachtar teicneolaíocht ar dhóigh na híomlán. Dún an fháil a chur a sheoladh le teicneolaíocht a bhainteachta椅 i Gaeilge.

Struchtúr Oideachais

I dtuaireasc a scriobh an Dr Peadar Ó Flatharta don Chomhhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscoilíochta dá bhán a chlú ar a chéile. Bhí an chéad duine a dhuine i bhfeidhmiú an stáit mar aisteachtaí do úsáid na Gaeilge a bhaint in ann go náisiúnta.

L

Nouveau Brunswick

"L’école est le cadre le plus nécessaire au maintien de la langue et de la culture." Is iad cúrsaí oideachais an cnámh spaire is mó idir na Béarlaí agus na Francóiseoirí i gCheanada. Chuir Daniel Bourgeois polasaí oideachais Nouveau Brunswick láthair. Dhrigh sé ar an struchtúr oideachais atá acu chun tadh le hoideachas na bhFraincseoirí. Síst dó-thaeanghais é Nouveau Brunswick a bhfuil i Béarla in uachtar na. Tá an fhreainnis in uachtar i gcéantaraithe. Tá struchtúr oideachais comh-threoirmhair na ann do na Francóiseoirí a chinnntiú go bhfuighigh sé an aici cearta oideach-asúla ina dteanga féin. Duirt an Ùras Bourgeois nach n-aonadh struchtúrtúr dathetheanga a ra a mhonn gurbh í an teanga a lú iubh na fhaisnéise agus a bháis don bhfrainn a sheasú. Tá an-chomharaí a bhí in ann dtábhachtachtaí nó naireamh. In Éileann, in Béarla, in Ùr Ùr Bourgeois nó a shocraíotáin n-aonadh struchtúr dathetheanga a ra a mhonn gurbh í an teanga a lú iubh na fhaisnéise agus a bháis don bhfrainn a sheasú. Tá an-chomharaí a bhí in ann dtábhachtachtaí nó naireamh. In Éileann, in Béarla, in Ùr Ùr Bourgeois nó a shocraíotáin n-aonadh struchtúr dathetheanga a ra a mhonn gurbh í an teanga a lú iubh na fhaisnéise agus a bháis don bhfrainn a sheasú. Tá an-chomharaí a bhí in ann dtábhachtachtaí nó naireamh. In Éileann, in Béarla, in Ùr Ùr Bourgeois nó a shocraíotáin n-aonadh struchtúr dathetheanga a ra a mhonn gurbh í an teanga a lú iubh na fhaisnéise agus a bháis don bhfrainn a sheasú.
**Friends First**

Friends First Finance are delighted to invite INTO members to apply for an unsecured personal loan with the following special terms:

- Preferential fixed rate of interest.
- No early settlement penalties.
- No administration/set-up/documenta-
  tion fees.
- No savings history required.
- Preferential underwriting criteria.

- Optional payment protection plan.

If you would like to apply for this offer please contact Friends First Finance on 1850 403 404 or please refer to the insert enclosed with this magazine.

All lending is subject to status.

Friends First Finance Ltd is regulated by the Financial Regulator.

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**PhoneWatch**

Eircom PhoneWatch has an extensive range of alarm systems and products to suit all your security needs.

A 24 hour monitored security solution from the leaders in the residential security market means that your keyholders and/or the emergency services will always be on hand to check on your home – minutes after your alarm is activated.

Eircom PhoneWatch will watch over your home, and personally deal with all your alarm activations, day and night, so you're free to sleep soundly and free to get on with your life.

Please contact 1850 500 900 or log on to the benefits page of the INTO website for more information.

This offer is valid until 1 September 2007 and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

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**VIVAS Health**

VIVAS Health are delighted to announce an official INTO Affinity Scheme.

For further information please contact 1850 71 66 66 and quote INTO to avail of the 10% Affinity Group Scheme discount.

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**The Financial Regulator**

The INTO would like to remind our members of the free and very useful information available on the Financial Regulator’s website www.itisyourmoney.ie or contact the Regulator at 1890 777 777.

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**Attention all Staff Representatives**

The Children's Medical and Research Foundation INTO Fund – 2007 Final Appeal

Please return any outstanding ticket counterfoils and monies for the INTO Children's Medical and Research Foundation INTO Annual Draw to Georgina Markey in INTO Head Office before Wednesday, 13 June 2007.

The draw will take place on Friday, 15 June 2007 in INTO Head Office.

Just to remind you the prizes this year are:

- 1st prize: Toyota Avensis
- 2nd prize: €5,000
- 3rd and 4th prizes: €2,500
- 5th and 6th prizes: €2,000
- 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th prizes: €1,000

and all proceeds from the draw will go towards the purchase of a Hydrotherapy Unit for the treatment of Children suffering with arthritis which is urgently required by Our Lady’s Hospital.

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**INTO Travel Insurance**

The INTO travel insurance is now available to purchase on line at www.cormarketravel.com/INTO at €73 per annum.
INTO online summer programme 2007

Enrolling on www.into-elearning.com

- Mathematics, sharpening minds not pencils (new).
- Teaching English as an additional language, an intercultural approach (new).

Each of the above courses costs €75. Participants must enrol and purchase their course on line. Enrolment is open. Courses commence 2 July and run until 24 August. For further information: www.into-elearning.com

There are still places available on the INTO Summer Programme ‘07.

For an application form and further details visit http://www.into.ie/ROI/ProfessionalDevelopmentAndTradeUnionTraining/SummerProgramme/e/SummerCoursesSchools/

Courses include:

Online course descriptions

Teaching English as an Additional Language: an Intercultural Approach (Colaiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education in Collaboration with INTO Professional Development Unit) This course is aimed at equipping teachers with a range of practical strategies for teaching children who are learning English as an additional language. It will explore the principles and practice of teaching EAL within the broader context of intercultural issues in Ireland, highlighting the importance of the child’s home language(s) and looking at whole-school approaches to inclusion. It will also explore strategies for building positive links with minority language parents. The course is aimed at mainstream teachers as well as Language Support Teachers.

Mathematics: Sharpening Minds not Pencils! This course will explore all strands of the maths curricula. It will encourage the use of manipulatives, and mathematical games in the teaching of maths. It will develop problem solving strategies from Infants to sixth class. All participating teachers will be provided with opportunities to experience the key methodologies of the overall curriculum.

Appreciating the Visual Arts (2007 edition) This course will explore the area of looking and responding to art across all six strands: drawing, paint & colour, print, clay, construction and fabric and fibre. The course will also take specific art examples and explore responses to them, how they can be used as stimuli for creation and how they can be integrated and linked to other curricular areas. The examples explored will cover a variety of genres of Irish and international art.

Interactive Teaching Methodologies (2007 edition)
This course will explore and appraise the following interactive teaching and learning methodologies: cooperative learning, peer tutoring, project learning and mind mapping. The course will show how these methodologies can be introduced at all class levels and within all curricular areas. The course will also explore pupils’ learning styles, multiple intelligences and the creation of an effective learning environment.

A Cross Curricular Approach to Human Rights in Education (2007 edition) This course will explore the area of human rights in a societal context, human rights education in a primary school context and how to create and maintain a school and classroom environment based on human rights. In particular, the course will explore the content of human rights education as developed by the Lift Off Project and will be grounded within the existing curriculum various exemplars methodologies, as well as suggestions for further integration with all curricular areas, will be explored.

SCG PREPARATION SUMMER COURSE

A five day summer course is aimed at teachers who hope to sit the exams in 2008. Also suitable for those repeating oral/aural exam.

2 – 6 July 2007
Freebel College of Education, Sion Hill, Blackrock, Co Dublin.
Cost €40.
Three EPV days awarded on course completion for eligible teachers.

Further details: contact Joanna on 01 8047758 or email: jwalsh@into.ie

To apply for this course, you can complete the summer course application form available in April/May edition of InTouch or download it from www.into.ie and return it to, Joanna Walsh, INTO Head Office, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Decline in biodiversity

The Heritage Council is launching a campaign to raise awareness about the need to halt the decline in biodiversity. The campaign includes a website www.biodiversitywatch.ie which will be launched in May. The site is organised around habitats and will highlight species in danger. Also included are downloadable sheets to take with you when going on a walk and show what to look out for, including endangered plants, animals and birds. Children and adults who spot endangered species are asked to report their sightings on the website.

Ireland’s biodiversity has declined rapidly over the past 30 years. Over 29 bird species and 120 species of flowering plants are in serious decline — mainly due to the cumulative impact of unprecedented development, certain farming practices such as the overuse of nitrates, removal of native hedgerows and draining of wetland, household and industrial pollution and also some forestry practices.

“The situation is serious because everything in nature is interconnected. We are all part of the intricate web of nature and we must protect it for our long-term health and well-being,” said Isabella Smyth, Communications Officer with the Heritage Council. “We need to take a more holistic view and change the way our landscape is managed if we are to save our wildlife and maintain a healthy environment.”

For further details and a list of endangered species, visit www.into.ie/ROI/ProfessionalDevelopmentAndTradeUnionTraining/HeritageInSchools/
The Education Rights Development Project is an Irish Aid funded project being co-ordinated by the INTO in Ireland and by CESESMA in Nicaragua. It focuses on three inter-related developmental issues: Child Labour, Fair Trade and the Right to Education, and has special relevance to teachers, children, and young adults in both societies. The project’s strategic aim is to develop responsible global citizenship through the promotion of awareness of these issues at primary level.

In practical terms the project will develop, pilot and publish educational materials for use in Irish and Nicaraguan primary schools, design and deliver professional development courses for teachers and establish sustainable partnerships between schools in Ireland and Nicaragua through a school-twinning programme.

In Ireland the project pack designed by the eight practising teachers involved in the project has been piloted in a variety of schools across the country. The pack espouses the 1999 curriculum in composition and approach, and is divided into four sections: Junior and Senior Infants, First and Second Classes, Third and Fourth Classes and Fifth and Sixth Classes. Each section contains separate lesson plans on Nicaragua, Child Labour, Fair Trade and the Right to Education.

In the Junior classes pupils will be enabled to understand the concepts of fairness, want vs need and cause and consequence. At the senior end the specifics of child labour, the right to education and Fairtrade are discussed and developed. Lessons include real life stories and photos from children in Nicaragua. The lessons cover a wide range of curricular areas and encourage pupils to engage in active learning and develop their analytical and critical thinking abilities. The pack is currently undergoing final editing based on feedback received from the pilot phase.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all the schools and teachers who participated in the piloting of the pack. Their evaluation of the lessons has been hugely significant in deciding on the final presentation of the pack. The pack will be published in the autumn and made available to all schools and education bodies.

To complement the education pack three summer courses entitled ‘Introducing Fairtrade, Child Labour and the Right to Education in Primary Schools’ are being delivered. One course will be delivered in Dublin, one in Mullingar and one in Kinsale. Over the duration of the course teachers will discuss their perception of a developing country. They will be informed about social, political, educational, economic issues in Nicaragua. They will explore the area of human rights and their impact on our lives and the lives of other nations. They will explore the issues surrounding child labour, the right to education and Fairtrade. They will be made aware of the reality of child labour, the right to education and fairtrade in Nicaragua. They will be introduced to the materials in the Fair Trade, Child Labour and the Right to Education Pack and participate in activities as presented in the pack. They will discuss the central issues regarding introducing and developing this topic into primary education. They will also explore using images/photos, drama, art and real life stories as pedagogical tools and how various approaches taken can impact on children’s perception of developing countries (ie the importance of avoiding stereotyping). They will appraise the classroom management aspects of exploring these issues with children. They will also appraise supplementary materials available to aid the introduction of these issues at primary level.

Finally, they will be afforded the opportunity to express their own experiences of the issues central to the course. Teachers wishing to enroll on the course should contact the relevant course co-ordinators – see INTO website and April/May InTouch for details.

BECOMING INVOLVED IN INTO

One day seminar

A course on Becoming Involved in INTO was held on Tuesday 22 and Wednesday, 23 May 2007 in the Days Inn Hotel, Galway. The aim of the course was to increase participation in the INTO by providing members with information about their conditions of employment, legislation and other education issues, and to provide information on the INTO itself. Approximately 30 participants attended the course, which was very successful.

Appointment procedures seminars

As a result of successful feedback from previous seminars, and a demand for further courses the INTO ran another One Day Seminar on ‘Appointments Procedures’. The aims of the seminar which was presented by INTO Officials was to:

- update principals on the procedures relevant to the appointment of teachers;
- update principals on recent legislation and Equality Tribunal decisions in the area;
- enable principals, in their role as members of selection boards, to manage the appointment of teachers more effectively.
- provide principals with information on the implementation of the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term) Work Act 2003 and the Protection of Employees (Part-Time) Work Act 2001.

The seminar was held in the City North Hotel, Gormanstown, Co Meath and approximately 45 participants attended.
Show me the money

Primary school finance was the subject of the last programme in the current series of *Show Me The Money* with Eddie Hobbs, screened on RTÉ1 on Sunday 13 May 2007. The idea for this programme stemmed from an approach last year by the production company to the INTO looking for a primary teacher to take part. The INTO suggested that rather than focus on personal finances, the issue of the running costs of primary schools would be of interest to the general public given the reliance by all schools on voluntary contributions and fundraising.

Kathryn Crowley, Principal of St Louise de Marillac NS in Ballinamore agreed to participate in the programme with the full support of the Board of Management, patron and teachers in the school. The production team met with the Board of Management and after several interviews with Kathryn and briefings from the INTO, decided to make the programme.

Making the programme involved a substantial time commitment from Kathryn which was given willingly. It was an ideal opportunity to highlight the shortfall in school funding through a high profile show and it made the public aware of the real difficulties facing schools in relation to finance.

Viewers of the programme will be aware that as part of the programme Eddie Hobbs suggests ways to generate additional income and cut backs in non-essential expenditure. Over the course of three series he has been fairly successful in this regard. On this issue, for the first time, he was unable to propose cutbacks or ways to generate other money.

The sight of Eddie Hobbs, walking away from camera and putting his arm's up in despair said it all about how primary schools are funded.

The INTO is particularly grateful to Kathryn for her work in highlighting this issue and would also like to thank all those who worked on the programme.

Kathryn Crowley, Principal of St Louise de Marillac NS

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The party leaders and education

Education featured strongly with Gerry Adams (16%) and Pat Rabbitte (12%). Ten percent of Trevor Sargent’s time was devoted to education. Lowest education percentage went to Bertie Aherne (7%), behind Enda Kenny and Michael McDowell (8% each).

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Election issues in the different regions

Health and housing were the two top issues overall, although the Economy was Dublin’s hottest topic. Media outlets in the West devoted almost a quarter of their coverage on Environmental issues. Pensioners were almost ignored except in the South East and the Midlands. In terms of overall mentions Education was joint 5th overall behind Health which was substantially in front of Housing, Transport and Tax. Education tied with environment overall ahead of crime, childcare, trustworthiness and the economy.

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Class Size coverage in the election

Education coverage during the election was dominated by the issue of overcrowded classes in primary schools. The issue featured regularly in both national and in regional papers.

It came through strongly when each party launched its manifesto, but in particular when education manifestos were launched and prioritized at press conferences.

Education has consistently stayed in the top six issues covered in the media during the General Election, with class size in primary schools dominating education coverage.
Newly appointed principal or deputy principal?
... then sign up for Leadership Development for Schools

Misneach
If you are a first-time principal or acting principal, appointed within the last twelve months, you are eligible to apply for the Misneach programme.

The programme is facilitated by LDS personnel, both full-time seconded team members and Associates who, as serving school leaders, offer their experience and support to all participants.

This programme focuses on the learning and development needs of the principal during his/her first two years following appointment. The key constituent elements of the programme include:

1. Four residential meetings over two school years interjecting a series of modules.
2. A mentoring support system.
3. An ICT mediated support. The cost of accommodation and travel to the Residenciais is funded by the DES. Teaching Principals may also claim for substitute cover to attend Misneach. As soon as you are appointed to the position of principal, application should be made on the official application form. This is currently being mailed to primary schools.
   You may also use the form below or visit the LDS website at www.ldsl.ie

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Tánaiste
A new programme of leadership development focusing on newly appointed deputy principals at primary level has been developed by LDS.

Tánaiste Primary will endeavour to develop the skills necessary for deputy principals to approach their role with confidence and to work effectively with the principal and other school leaders in order to ensure high quality teaching and learning in the school.

Programme participants will be facilitated in developing their understanding of leadership in schools today and to enhance their interpersonal skills and competencies in the exercise of their role in the school community.

Programme content
Reflecting the main concerns of deputy principals, Tánaiste Primary will include:

- The evolving role of the deputy principal in leading learning in the school.
- Working collaboratively as part of the leadership team.
- Interpersonal leadership – emotional intelligence.
- Communication skills and managing conflict.

The programme will be facilitated by LDS personnel, all of whom are experienced deputy principals and principals.

It will consist of two two-day residential sessions with substitute cover provided. It is proposed to hold the first residential session in early December, with the second following in the spring term. As this is a national programme, the venue will be centrally located.

Applications are invited for this programme and interested deputy principals should complete the form below or visit the LDS website to complete the form online www.ldsl.ie.

If you are using application forms printed on this page please return to Linda Hogan, Leadership Development for Schools, Clare Education Centre, Government Offices, Kilrush Road, Ennis, Co. Clare.

APPLICATION FORM
Newly appointed principal

First name(s): ............................................. Surname(s): .............................................
Street address: .........................................................................................................................
Town: ............................................. County: .............................................
Home tel: ............................................. Mobile: ............................................. E-mail: .............................................
School Name: .............................................
School address: .........................................................................................................................
Town: ............................................. County: .............................................
School tel: ............................................. School roll no: .............................................
School e-mail: ............................................. Number of teachers: .............................................
Position: ............................................. Date of appointment to position: .............................................
Signed: ............................................. Date: .............................................
Offi ce use only
Date received: ............................................. Signed: .............................................

APPLICATION FORM
Newly appointed deputy principal

First name(s): ............................................. Surname(s): .............................................
Street address: .........................................................................................................................
Town: ............................................. County: .............................................
Home tel: ............................................. Mobile: ............................................. E-mail: .............................................
School Name: .............................................
School address: .........................................................................................................................
Town: ............................................. County: .............................................
School tel: ............................................. School roll no: .............................................
School e-mail: ............................................. Number of teachers: .............................................
Date of appointment as Deputy Principal: .............................................
Signed: ............................................. Date: .............................................
Offi ce use only
Date received: ............................................. Signed: .............................................
INTO run the Belfast Marathon for the Global Campaign for Education

An INTO team ran the Belfast Marathon on the May bank holiday Monday. The team was made up of Frank Bunting, INTO Northern Secretary, Deirdre O’Connor, INTO Senior Official, Orla Walsh, INTO Official; Laura Gartsie, INTO Clerical Officer and Alison Gilliland, INTO Senior Official.

The race started at 9 am with 26 miles 385 yards looming ahead.

Frank got off to a blistering start and ran 6 miles before handing over to Orla. After completing 3.5 miles Orla handed over to Alison who just a bout survived a 7.1 mile stretch to hand over to Deirdre. Deirdre took over and raced the 5.3 miles along Belfast Lough. Laura then completed the final 4.3 miles back home to the finish line.

The team officially completed the race in 4:02:03 hrs, coming 665th out of 1,632 marathon teams. The team was raising funds to support the work of the Global Campaign for Education.

The Global Campaign for Education is a coalition of teacher unions, international non-governmental organisations, teachers, children and campaigners in over 100 countries. Its members are united in their mission to make sure all governments live up to their promises and take immediate action to deliver the right to every person to have a free, quality education. INTO is part of this coalition.

The Irish section of the coalition is based at Action Aid International Ireland in Dublin.

Any members wishing to donate to the fund can send their contributions c/o INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Members of Marathon team from l to r: Alison Gilliland, Deirdre O’Connor, Frank Bunting, Orla Walsh and Laura Gartsie.

Clicking on Joyce

On 16 June (Bloomsday), Clicking on Joyce will be performed in the Teachers’ Club, 36/37 Parnell Square at 8 pm.

In 1904 James Joyce took singing lessons from Vincent O’Brien in 37 Parnell Sq.

Each year Michael Shanley and Club Ensemble perform songs alluded to in Dubliners, Portrait of The Artist and Ulysses.

Those familiar with the internet will know that ‘clicking’ on a blue, highlighted piece of text links to another website. In the same way, Joyce created a multi-media, aural, dimension to his works by embedding words from songs and song titles in his text.

Music Hall, operatic arias, ballads and popular songs are all alluded to.

Club Ensemble and Colm ‘Stride’ O’Brien perform over twenty musical pieces in an enchanting Edwardian soirée.

Admission is free but booking is advisable. Phone 086 3574050.

Father and son reunion

In an interesting historical development, Enda Hickey recently became Principal of Timahoe NS in Co Laois, while his father, Joe, is still serving as a Principal in Rath NS in Portarlington.

InTouch would be interested to hear from other father/mother and son/daughter combinations who are serving as principals to see how widespread this phenomenon is throughout primary education!

Eithne Shanley and Jimmy Kelly in full voice
Educate Together launch new three year plan

Educate Together launched their *The Future Starts Here Every Day* three year business plan for Educate Together in the Chester Beatty Library on 29 March 2007. This is a purposeful and forward-thinking plan that clarifies exactly what Educate Together stands for and outlines their priorities for the future. These include supporting and consolidating their existing network, expanding the number of Educate Together schools and the impact of their ethos as well as building and maintaining organisational capacity.

Pictured at the launch are (l to r) Frieda Mc Govern, Educate Together Director and former Principal North Bay Educate Together NS, Paul Rowe, CEO Educate Together, Maeve McCarthy, Swords Educate Together NS and Fergus Finlay CEO, Barnardos.

Ennis Branch thanks Declan

Pictured at a presentation to Declan Kelleher after Ennis Branch AGM in appreciation of his eleven years as District Representative: (back l to r) Phil Brennan artist and Ennis member, Catherine Sweeney, Cathaoirleach, Mary Kelleher, Declan Kelleher, INTO Vice President, Dick O’Connell, Branch Secretary, to gether with Derbhile Kelleher (front left) and Muireann Kelleher.

Community Awards Honour Teachers

At a recent community awards ceremony in Basin Lane, James Street, Noreen Flynn (CEC Representative District IX) and Sinead Harmey (Mater Dei PS) were both acknowledged for their contribution to school and wider community. Pictured at the ceremony are from left to right Mary Murphy (Deputy Principal), Noreen Flynn (CEC Rep), Sr Rita Wynne (Principal), Melissa Hogan, Sheila Early (HSCLT) and Sinead Harmey (Green Schools Co-ordinator)
Question and answer

I am making the minimum payment off my credit card debt and find that the interest charged is quite high. How can I reduce the amount I pay in interest?

Credit card debt is a very expensive form of credit. By paying off the minimum amount you are only managing to pay off the monthly interest plus a small amount off the capital.

You need to review your finances and put a plan in place to pay off as much as you can afford on a monthly basis.

You should also consider taking out a personal loan at a lower APR and pay off the credit card debt.

Some cards have an introductory interest free period, if you switch to a new provider. This option may be worth consideration if you can pay off the loan during the introductory rate period and remember to avoid using the card until you have cleared the outstanding balance.

When you have cleared the outstanding balance set up a direct debit to transfer the monthly amount due from your current account. This will clear your account and avoid unnecessary interest charges.

Credit card debt should be addressed promptly. Calculate the amount of interest charged to your account in the last year. Compare this cost with a personal loan. You will readily identify the savings which can be achieved. As interest rates are rising, the sooner you take, the more you will save.

TIP

Crossword No. 96

Across
1. Sack boxers and find emergency personnel. (16)
7. Fish that expects to be paid on delivery! (3)
9. Poke with a soft stick. (4)
10. Sounds like it’s not the false worker that skipped school. (6)
11. The document shows intelligence about right. (4)
14. If this is what you do, then on your bike! (5)
15. Alan reverses around a turn for Mrs O’Loan. (5)
16. Money that makes the accountant quiet! (4)
18. Ponderato and her colleagues. (5)
21. No guy can be this immature. (5)
22. The rodent, though shy, turns up. (5)
23. This ointment can rescue about fifty. (5)
24. A number cheer for this animal. (4)
25. This young fowl might break the lot up. (5)
26. Neither S nor U will provide this fabric. (5)
29. Kilkenny’s river consists of Northern mineral. (4)
33. It lends rigidity to the structure at the end of the street. (6)
34. Broke the news about being stitched up. (4)
36 and 37. One develops an eye for this – the way a right becomes more valuable. (12)

Down
1. Tree for Irish gents? (3)
2. Make the headless newlywed travel on horseback. (4)
3. Your destiny is to destroy the feta. (4)
4. As garnish as an ad guy can be. (5)
5. A harmonic weight placed above Pachino. (5)
6. Disfigure the Southern automobile. (4)
8. At which ones bids for windmills and clags? (5,7)
9. State that is home to nine Navy pats, perhaps. (12)
12. Is this handbook not automatically provided? (6)
13. Groups of people make jokes about a cardinal. (5)
14. One animal arrived ahead of fifty. (5)
17. In Saul, my refuge is found. (6)
19. Commit a crime to make the Pole duck. (5)
20. Can one give the cardinal a vestment at this latitude? (5)
21. I leave the restaurant employer for a drink. (5)
28. Cyril has the words of the mixed up. (5)
30. Decompose a roster. (4)
31. Islamic sect involved in the sushi affair. (4)
32. In the North, such force is required to scatter pins. (11,11)
35. Pale as a headless whooper. (3)

In Touch Crossword No. 95 Solution

Winners of April Draw
CAR – TOYOTA AURIS
Melissa Hogan, Mater Dei National School, Dublin 8.

CASH – €1500
Mairead Power, North Dublin NS Project, Ballymun Road, Dublin 11

WEEKEND FOR TWO IN JURY’S DOYLE HOTEL
Caoimhin O’Grada, Mercy NS, Sligo.

WEEKEND FOR TWO IN JURY’S DOYLE HOTEL
Mary Helana Devenney, St Oliver Plunkett NS, Dundalk, Co Louth.

NAME: 
ADDRESS: 

Winners of Comhar Linn Cross Word No. 94 are Ciarán O’Righil, Milltown Malbay, Co Clare and M.C. Carey, Drumcondra, Dublin 9

InTouch  June 2007  23
Scríobh Leabhar!

Are you looking for a new approach to the writing strand of the Irish curriculum? Why not follow a trend set by over 100 teachers who this year inspired their classes to write, design and publish their own books in Irish

if you would like your own class to have this positive experience of writing books ‘as Gaeilge’, you will find lessons and guidelines in both Irish and English on the website www.writeabook.ie. You can also contact your local education centre to check if the Write-a-Book project is being organised in your area.

Páistí ón Scoil Náisiúnta Oideachas le Chéile agus ó Scoil Náisiúnta Mín na Manrach i gCo Dhún na nGall lena gcuid oibre. Aontaíonn Maria Ní Dhonnchadhá ó Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Án Tuairín, Co. na Gaillimhe léi, “Bhain na gastúr flor shásamh agus tairbhe as an tionscnamh Scríobh Leabhar”.

Tugann an tionscnamh ‘Scribh Leabhar’ deise do pháistí taithi a fháil ar an gcruithneachta, ar an bpróiseas scribhneoireachta agus, ar ndóigh, ar an spraoi, a bhainneann lena leabhair féin a scriobh agus a fhoilsíú. Cuirteadh túis leis an tionscnamh in Ionad Oideachais na Carraige Dubh 22 bliain ó shin, agus bhíonn sé ar siúl go biantúil in Ionad Oideachais éagsúla timpeall na tíre anois. I mbliana chuairg Bord na Leabhar Gaeilge agus An Chomhhairle um Oideachas Gaeilfachtá agus Gaeil-scoloolcha (COGG) i gcomhpháirt le tri Ionad Oideachais (Gaillimh, Dún na nGall agus An Charraigh Dubh) agus bunaidh sé clé phiolóithach chun tacú le múinteoirí na dalaithe a spreagadh chun leabhair Ghaeilge a scriobh.

Reáchtáladh cúrsaí oiliúna de na múinteoirí le cabhrú ón gcéard Tacaíochta don Churaclam Bunscole (PCSP). Sna cúrsaí pléadh an scribhneoireacht Ghaeilge is chead curaclam bunscoile agus conas samhlaíocht na bpáistí a florháirt, agus eagrainn ceard-lanna ar leabharcheangal agus maisiú leabhair.

Bhain na páistí uísdáidh as an bpróiseas ‘dreachtaiteach’ chun leabhair éagsúla de gach cineál ge nea scriobh – leabhair feic-sín, leabhair chócaireachta, leabhair dháunta, leabhair eolaíoga agus eile. Mhalartaigh scolíeanna na leabhair eatarthu, chun sean a thabhairt do na dalaithe a gcuid saothar a roint.

dóibh ó thaobh na scribhneoireachta de. Thosaigh siad ag scriobh leabhair eile as a stuaire féin i ndiaidh dóibh a bheith párteach sa scéim ‘Scribh Leabhar’ a deir Máiread Ní Thuama, múinteoir rangá i Scoil Móloga, Baile Átha Cliath. “Thaithin sé go mór leis na páistí a bheith ag scriobh agus ag maísiú na leabhair, a léamh leabhar a chéile agus ag roinnt smaointe lena chéile. D’fhoghlaim siad an-chuid mar gheall ar struchtúr abairtí agus scileanna scribhneoireachta le linn an tionscnaímh, rud a chabhraighonn go mór leo ina gcuid oibre. Aontaíonn Maria Ní Dhonnchadhá ó Scoil Náisiúnta Mhuire, Án Tuairín, Co. na Gaillimhe léi, “Bhain na gasúr flor shásamh agus tairbhe as an tionscnamh Scríobh Leabhar”.

Páistí ón Scoil Náisiúnta Oideachas le Chéile agus ó Scoil Náisiúnta Mín na Manrach i gCo Dhún na nGall lena gcuid leabhar
INTO meet DES on EPSEN Act

The INTO met with the Special Education Section of the Department of Education in late May. This meeting formed part of the consultation process between the DES and the education partners concerning the implementation of the EPSEN Act, 2004.

The INTO highlighted several issues that would impact upon the successful implementation of the Act.

The INTO emphasised that while IEPs would be required for children with special education needs under the Act, the nature and detail of IEPs would vary depending on the level of disability. It is important that the focus remain on the educational progress of the child rather than creating a bureaucracy of paperwork.

The INTO said that relevant professional development should be targeted at whole schools staffs as well as specific staff members to ensure that all teachers receive training in the system outlined by the Act, as well as in the various guidelines produced by the NCSE, NEPS, and other education bodies.

A system to release teachers from teaching duties must be created to deliver the team approach espoused in the Act.

The INTO also stressed that while the principal may delegate responsibility for SEN each large school/cluster of smaller schools would require a SEN co-ordinator and that additional posts of responsibility would need to be created.

The INTO emphasised that it is imperative that the implementation of the Act does not overburden principals. Principals, in particular teaching principals, would require significant administrative and secretarial support.

Other resource implications would include school accommodation requirements, IT support regarding templates for writing IEPs and guidelines for interpreting various sections of the Act. The need to expand the HSCL scheme to special schools was highlighted. It was stressed that pupils with SEN in mainstream classes would require enhanced capitation to contribute to the funding of SEN materials. It was clearly indicated by INTO that support services such as NEPS and SESS would have to be expanded to fulfill needs and expectations under the Act.

The INTO also raised the necessity to develop a review process for the decision of individual SENOs. This is a significant failing in the system at this time and needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency. The EPSEN Act allows for a variety of issues and actions to be appealed to the Special Education Appeals Board. The INTO believes it is unfair to all concerned, including teachers, parents, pupils and SENOs that there is no process to review decisions.

Although current timeframes set down in the Implementation Plan were no longer relevant, the importance of adhering to the sequence of sections being implemented was stressed.

The SEN motion passed at Congress was also presented to the DES at this meeting. INTO will meet with the DES again in the new school year to discuss these issues.

Health and Education to interact

The implementation plan developed by the National Council for Special Education for the phased implementation of the Education for Persons with Special Education Needs Act 2004 was submitted to the Minister for Education and Science on 1 October 2006.

The plan, which was covered in detail in the March issue of InTouch, outlines a comprehensive schedule for the implementation of the various sections of the Act, the resources required and estimates on the financial implications of implementing the Act over a five year period.

The rephas, as yet, been no formal response to the implementation plan of the NCSE by the Minister and the Department of Education and Science. A number of the projected dates for the implementation of various sections have come and gone. Therefore, while the sequencing of the sections is still important, the actual dates on which various aspects of the Act will come into force remain to be clarified. This includes the triggering of the statutory requirement for assessments and individual education plans for children covered by the legislation.

In tandem with the implementation of the EPSEN Act 2004 on the education side, the Disability Act 2005 is being implemented on the health side. As part of that process the standards for assessment have been adopted by the board of the interim Health Information Quality Authority. These standards cover assessments carried out by health and/or education professionals and include the underlying principles, information on assessments, access to assessments, the development of a co-ordinated approach to the assessment of needs, and provision for the monitoring and review of assessments.

As part of the implementation of the Disability Act, Part II (covering the assessment of needs, service statements and redress) is being enacted with effect from 1 June 2007 for children under five years of age.

Information will be issued to schools in relation to the enactment of this part of the Act by the Department of Education and Science. However, it is important to note that the relevant provisions of the EPSEN Act 2004 in relation to assessment provision and IEPs have not, as yet been enacted.

The impact of Part II of the Disability Act will, in the main, be on the provision of appropriate health services.

The INTO will also be raising the implementation of the EPSEN Act, and the co-ordination between it and the Disability Act, with the new Minister for Education and Science when he/she takes office.

Further updates on the implementation of both Acts will be covered in future issues of InTouch and on the INTO website. The National Council for Special Education is also discussing these issues at present.
Going on holiday?

Sort out your finances before you go

If you are planning a well-earned summer break abroad this summer, there are a few financial matters that you might want to consider before you go. Making sure you have the right type of holiday insurance and a few different ways of getting money while you are away should be top of your holiday ‘to do’ list.

Travel insurance
Your tour operator, travel agent or airline may offer you travel insurance and while some tour operators may insist that you have insurance before you travel, you can buy it from any provider. You can buy travel insurance from your bank, insurance company, online, over the ‘phone and from travel agents. There are many providers in the market and prices vary quite considerably. Make sure you buy a policy that suits your needs at the best price. Benefits vary with travel insurance policies – read the small print, particularly in relation to your entitlements if your flight is delayed, your property or money is stolen or you get injured while away. Also check what conditions you will have to satisfy to make a claim, such as reporting any loss or theft to the police and to the insurance company help-line. If anything goes wrong while you are away, you will want to know that it will be dealt with. If you have health insurance, this may cover you for certain medical expenses while you are abroad so you can buy travel insurance as an ‘add on’ to your health insurance that will cover you for delays, loss of luggage etc.

If you take a few holidays a year, it might be worth getting an annual policy, which can be cheaper than several one-off policies. If you decide to get an annual policy, think about where you are likely to be travelling – most cover Europe or worldwide, so if your policy covers Europe only, you might need to get additional insurance during the year.

Spending money
At most holiday destinations, ATMs are plentiful and as long as you have the required symbols on your card, you will have no problem using your ATM card or credit card to get money. Remember getting cash from an ATM with your credit card is one of the most expensive ways of getting foreign currency. Your ATM card will have certain symbols on it that show if it can be used abroad. These symbols are: LINK® (can be used in UK only), Maestro®, Cirrus® and Visa Plus®. These same symbols will be displayed on ATM machines abroad, so you can check to see which machines you can use. If your Laser card has a Maestro® symbol, you can use it to pay for goods and services anywhere you see the Maestro® sign. It works exactly as you would use Laser at home. Make a note of the phone number for your bank in case you need to report loss or theft of any of your cards while you are away, and keep it somewhere safe.

But if you are going off the beaten track or to a more exotic destination, it is a good idea to have an alternative to your ATM and credit card, such as some US Dollars, some local currency or a combination of these. In some countries, ATMs may not be as reliable as they are at home, but remember you can also take money on your credit card over the counter in a bank in an emergency. You may be asked for identification when using your credit or Laser card in certain countries, such as Spain, so it is a good idea to bring your passport or driving licence when you are out shopping.

Find out more
When you take out euro anywhere in the European Union, or buy something using your Laser or credit card in the eurozone, you will only pay what you would pay for the transaction at home – but there are additional charges for using your ATM, Laser and credit card outside the eurozone. You can find out what the charges are for using your ATM and Laser card abroad by checking with your bank or looking at the Financial Regulator’s credit card adviser survey, for credit card charges.

Outdoor Education

Summer course

Unwind into nature with this practical, relaxed, enjoyable and hands on course which will ease you into your well deserved and long awaited holiday break.

This course aims to provide participants with the opportunity to explore the great outdoors and enjoy nature.

It combines SESE and PE (Outdoor and Adventure) through trails, walks, orienteering, photography, kayaking, team building.

District 08
Branch: Dublin South County
St Joseph’s NS, Vallemount Blessington, Co. Wicklow
July 2-6th
Co-ordinator: Ged Doyle, Vallemount, Blessington, Co Wicklow
(h) 045 867925 (s) 045 867289
(m) 087 7903722

Su doku

The Comhar Linn Su Doku challenge is to fill every 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 29
Cross border project supports ICTU Congress

The ICTU Congress which is being held in Bundoran this year, from July 3-6, has the support of one of the main Cross Border projects in the North West Region. The project known as Destination North West is a cross border tourism marketing initiative, with the following key partners, Fáilte Ireland North West, Derry City Council, Fermanagh District Council, Strabane District Council, Omagh District Council, Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council, Cookstown District Council and the North West Region Cross Border Group.

Funding for 75% of the project is provided through the EU INTERREG IIIA Programme Ireland/Northern Ireland.

North and South has suffered a very significant downturn in tourism business because of the troubles and it is now vital that the agencies and the private sector work together on a cross border basis to address the difficulties faced.

Destination North West is very pleased that the ICTU is holding their Congress in the region this year and are delighted to be given the opportunity to showcase what the project is about to Conference delegates.

The North West project is the largest ever Cross Border Tourism Project in Ireland, at a value of £2,000,000 with another £800,000 being put into the international marketing of the region from Tourism Ireland.

Ombudsman for Children – nationwide project

The Ombudsman for Children’s Office (OCO) is delighted to offer every school in Ireland the chance to get involved in a nationwide project this autumn. Children from the ages of 4-18 years will vote on issues important to them in a referendum style event. The Ombudsman will then commit to working on the top issues selected over the next three years. In planning this project, the OCO engaged in a significant consultation process with key education stakeholders – including teachers, teacher unions, parents’ groups and networks representing boards of management.

At the same time, the OCO commissioned University College Cork to identify the main issues affecting children in Ireland and obstacles to them realising their rights. An interlist of issues was produced, which included having a voice; play and recreation; education; and health. These were tested with more than 150 young people in ten diverse groups countrywide. The findings will be published later this summer.

In schools that decide to participate, children in fifth or sixth class will be invited to lead on the project across their school with the support of their teachers. The OCO has worked with a team of experienced writers, all of whom have significant teaching experience, to produce a set of materials to support the lead class. The team has also developed materials for junior class upwards to help their teachers inform the child about the issues they will vote on. The OCO have produced a set of materials which it hopes will complement the SHPE curriculum at primary level.

Letters will be sent to principals shortly inviting them to register their interest in the project and the full set of support materials will be sent to participating schools at the beginning of the new school year.

New human rights education materials

The LIFT OFF Initiative, a cross border partnership between Amnesty International Irish Section, Amnesty International UK, the INTO and the Ulster Teachers’ Union, has just published Me, You, Everyone, a human rights education resource for 5th and 6th class.

The materials were written by a team of teachers with support from the initiative and were piloted in 21 schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

“Me, You, Everyone works with children’s innate sense of fairness and facilitates the exploration of the importance of human rights in class, it encourages and cultivates in the children a caring and responsible attitude to their immediate environment and to the wider world around them.

“It promotes equality, encourages the exploration of and participation in democracy and democratic institutions, and emphasises how every person comes into contact with human rights (or abuses of) on a daily basis. It encourages empathy for those whose human rights are violated, whether these be children being bullied in schools, or children who do not have adequate shelter or food or access to education...

“I believe that this programme helps teachers to prepare children to participate as informed, caring and responsible members of society.”

(quote from Liz Morris, Griffeen Valley Educate Together NS, Lucan, Co Dublin)

For information contact Louise Beirne: 01-6776361 or lbeirne@amnesty.ie.
2007 Gaelic Telecom National Awards

The 2007 Cumann na mBunscol National Awards will take place on Saturday, 8 December in Lyrath Estate Hotel, Kilkenny. This is the second year of Gaelic Telecom’s sponsorship of the event and there are some notable changes this year. Over the years there have been some notable guests of honour, including An Taoiseach, the Minister for Education and Science, and Uachtaráin na hÉireann Mary McAleese. As in previous years there are nine categories, but this year the emphasis is on entries from individual schools. There are five categories in this section, four of which individual schools may enter. They are:

- large school of the year;
- small school of the year;
- best hurling/camogie promotion;
- best football promotion;
- best handball/rounders promotion.

The two categories which are open to county coisti are:

- public relations of the year; and
- publication of the year (including website).

Promotion of the year is a category that is limited to the provinces and counties and also includes submissions which may not be covered by a particular category. Finally the Pat Trainor Memorial Award, which is dedicated to our late treasurer, is given to a member of Cumann na mBunscol in recognition for outstanding service. Individual teachers or coisti may nominate a teacher whom they feel would be a worthy recipient of this award. The closing date for the award this year is Wednesday, 17 October. Entries should be sent to the following: Ulster – Pat McGivern, St Patrick’s PS, Coalisland, Co Tyrone; Leinster – Ciarán Byrne, St. Patrick’s BNS, Wicklow Town; Munster – Bro. James Dormer, CBS Doon, Co Limerick Connacht – Richard Bowles, 30 Boland’s Court, Gort, Co Galway.

Entry forms may be downloaded from www.scoilspport.org.

Junior Whistlers Initiative

The Junior Whistlers Initiative will be officially launched in September and each school will receive their Junior Whistlers Pack shortly afterwards. This initiative is a nationwide extension of the Young Whistlers scheme which has been running successfully in Dublin for some years. Junior Whistlers has been developed by Tom FitzPatrick in St Patrick’s College of Education and Muiris Ó Suilleabháin from the National Referee’s Forum. Both Tom and Muiris are national school teachers so the pack is very suitable for pupils and teachers. Each pack contains a number of cards, each of which addresses an area of refereeing. Much of the material encompasses areas of the SPHE curriculum and is cross-curricular in many respects. Themes which are dealt with in the cards are practical issues of refereeing and respect and enjoyment. There are some interactive cards and also a set of teacher cards. The rewill be full report on the Junior Whistlers in the October issue of InTouch.

Boys’ National Handball Day

The Boys’ National Handball Exhibition Day took place on Saturday, 28 April, in Croke Park. Twenty four boys, six from each province, three under eleven and three under thirteen, played single and doubles matches having qualified from their respective counties and provinces.

A memorable day was had by all and once again Cumann na mBunscol Náisiúnta is indebted to Noeleen Rooney, Paul Harte, Ciarán Byrne and Paddy Corbett for organising the event. All participants received a specially commissioned Azzurri jersey on the day, and they and their parents were provided with some light refreshments.

Thanks to Ciarán O’Sullivan from Na Fianna GAA Club in Dublin who refereed all the matches. Photographs from the boys’ and girls’ handball days are available on www.scoolspport.org.

INTO CONGRESS 2007 AZZURRI COMPETITION WINNERS

1st: €500 voucher plus jacket – Marie Byrne, Firmount NS, Co Cork.
2nd: €250 voucher plus jacket – Mary Burke O’Grownwey NS, Meath.
3 rd: €100 voucher plus jacket – Marian Anderson, Anacarty NS, Co Tipperary.

In addition each of the following won a waterproof breathable jacket: Fionnuala McGahern, Co Cavan; D. Keenan, Jonesborough NS, Co Down; Helen Byrne, Coolarne NS, Co Galway; Mary McGee, St Rynagh’s NS, Co Offaly; Nessa Cullinane, Scoil Bháirne na nInn, Co Kerry.
INTO retirement planning seminars

The INTO is now accepting applications for the March 2008 Retirement Planning Seminar. It will be held in All Hallows College, Drumcondra in 8/9 March, 2008.

The seminars are open to those contemplating retirement and places are generally allocated on a date of retirement basis.

The programme includes talks on the following:

- Superannuation
- Enjoying a healthy retirement.
- Social Welfare entitlements.
- Budgeting for retirement.
- Handling the lifestyle change.
- Making the most of your investments.
- Income tax.
- Wills and inheritance tax.
- An introduction to the Retired Teachers’ Association.

The seminars are run over one and half days i.e. Friday and half day Saturday. The Department of Education and Science allows teachers to absent themselves from school on the Friday in order to attend the seminar and substitute cover is approved by the DES where necessary. Prior approval of the board of management for attendance is required.

There is a non-refundable fee of €40 in respect of each person attending. A list of local B&Bs will be circulated prior to the seminar and participants will be responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements.

Members wishing to attend a retirement seminar are asked to complete the application form below and return it to:

Retirement Planning Seminar, INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

Each course is restricted to a maximum of 75 people. Precise details of venue, timetable, accommodation etc. will be circulated to participants at a later date.

INTO Retirement Planning Seminar Application Form

NAME: ........................................................................................................................................

HOME ADDRESS: ........................................................................................................................
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PHONE (x): .................................................... PHONE (s): .........................................................

ROLL NUMBER: ...................................... TEACHER REF. NO: ........................................

INTO BRANCH: ................................................ EMAIL ADDRESS: ........................................

DATE OF RETIREMENT: .................................................................

Cheque (made payable to INTO Funds) in the amount of € is enclosed with this application.

Because of the demand for these seminars we would ask that if you have already attended an INTO retirement planning seminar please do not re-apply. You may be denying a place to one of your colleagues who has not yet attended.

8/9 March, 2008

Retirements

MONAGHAN

Members who attended a recent retirement function in Ballybay Co Monaghan are (back L to R) Peter McGrane, CEC; Margaret McCluskey, Chairperson; Catherine Flanagan, Secretary; Susanne Tinnelly, Vice Chairperson; (front L to R) Matilda Latimer; Brendan Kelly and Helen Forster.

MALLOW

Pictured at the Mallow Branch retirement function are from front row L to R, Liz Mannix, Sal O’Hanlon, Nora Fa r i s e y and Sr Agnes Noonan. Back row L to R: Jerry Lynch, Cathaoirleach, Mallow Branch; Denis Bohane, INTO President 06/07 and Seamus Hennigan

SU DOKU SOLUTION

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INTO/EBS Handwriting Competition

National Prize Giving Ceremony

EBS Building Society and the INTO celebrated with the winners of this year’s National Handwriting Competition at the Prize Giving Awards Ceremony which was held in EBS Head Office, Dublin 4, on Saturday, 31 March.

Speaking at the award ceremony, Angela Dunne, Vice President of the INTO said: “We are delighted to be here again in EBS celebrating with the winners of the 2007 INTO/EBS Handwriting Competition. It is fantastic to watch the popularity of this competition grow over the last number of years and we are grateful to EBS for continuing to partner us in our pursuit to keep the art of handwriting alive.

“There is an enormous workload involved and we appreciate and acknowledge the work of the local INTO Coordinators and the National Coordinator Peter McGrane, CEC, for their time and dedication to making this event a great success year on year.”

Commenting on the achievement of the award winners, Dave Keenan, Director of People, Communications, said: “EBS Building Society has a heritage in the area of education and is delighted to have a number of exciting programmes underway with partners such as the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA), the Business Studies Teachers Association of Ireland (BSTAI) and of course the INTO – one of our oldest partnerships.

“Congratulations to all those who received an award today and to all those who entered. It is encouraging to see that so many students remain committed to excellence and quality in the area of handwriting while also acquiring the relevant word processing and computer skills that are needed to participate fully in today’s knowledge economy.”

Left: Brian Ormond; Grace Driver, St Louis Girls NS, Monaghan and INTO President, Angela Dunne.

Below: Éadaoin Murphy, St Aidan’s NS, Co Kilkenny, Tony Jackman, St John’s Senior NS, Kilkenny and Mykaela Foley, Dromtrasna NS, Co Limerick.

Photographs: Jason Clarke Photography

This is the 15th year of the competition which has grown in size and scale over the past decade and a half. This year there were thousands of entries from over 700 schools.

The competition was open to all children, from infants to 6th class. There were also two categories for special recognition for achievement in handwriting this year.

Participants were asked to write a piece on a subject of their choice and to submit their entries through their primary school teacher and the INTO co-ordinator in their local area.

Guidelines for applicants varied for the different age groups. Entries were judged on neatness, style, flair and layout of the handwriting.

The winning handwriting entries were displayed throughout the office building for guests at the ceremony to admire.

It was a very enjoyable afternoon for the children and their families with a special appearance by Barney and his friends, clowns and magicians.

The Master of Ceremonies at this year’s event was TV presenter Brian Ormond.
Professor Tom Collins is Head of Education in the National University of Ireland, Maynooth and Chairperson of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. He was a guest of the INTO at Annual Congress in Cork and gave the reply to the President’s speech on behalf of the guests at the opening session. The following are excerpts from a wide-ranging, thoughtful and well received contribution which broadly focussed on the primary school in a changing Ireland. The full presentation can be found on www.into.ie.

There are a few ideas that I am interested in exploring with you. There is a view among sociologists, whom Michael O’Leary recently referred to as the “greatest shower of headbangers he had ever met in his life” that every thirty or forty years, Ireland as an entity, shifts on its axis and heads off in a different direction. It seems to me that in the mid-1960s, forty years ago such an axial shift happened in Ireland which in some senses underpinned much of the way the country developed over the last thirty or forty years.

The second Vatican Council turned much of Catholic Church teaching on its head. The prevailing view for centuries prior to the Council was that people were basically evil and predisposed to eternal damnation, without heavy Church intervention. It could be said that Irish primary education took that view literally. The job of the teacher was, to some extent at any rate, to expurgate Original Sin in its multifaceted expressions in the student population! In rural communities, especially, the school-master, priest and sergeant presented a formidable authoritarian presence as a deadly triumvirate marshalling the moral, educational and social lives of the entire community.

Returning childhood to children
A recurring theme in twentieth century Irish literature is that of stolen childhood – be it by harsh and oppressive institutions, by abusive institutions or simply by a monolithic cultural prescription of the true and pure Irish. Yeats captured this theme most eloquently in his poem The Stolen Child
For he comes the human child,
To the waters and the wild,
With a fairy hand in hand,
From a world more full of weeping than he can understand.

With the second Vatican Council and other secular developments in the 1960s, a new era was ushered in, predicated on the notion that people were capable of saving their own souls, could be trusted to be good and were innately self-actualising. The abolition of the Primary Certificate Examination in 1968 could be seen as part of a wider process of returning childhood to children and of facilitating a new and liberated culture in Irish Primary Education.

Part of what primary teaching has been doing for the last thirty years can be seen as somehow making recompense; returning the experience, the joy and the wonder of childhood back to children.

The feminisation of teaching
An element of this process has been the feminisation of teaching. Commentators occasionally worry about this. I do not share this worry. I greatly welcome it. It is bringing qualities of child-centeredness, nurturance and emotional intelligence into places where sometimes those qualities in the past, were not as evident. It is important to say that the first verb in the 1999 curriculum is the verb to celebrate, ie “to celebrate the uniqueness of the child and to respond to the individual potential of each child”. The challenge to primary schooling most particularly to teaching and learning is to continue the process of developmental child-centred pedagogies which have been developing in primary schools over the past three decades, but most particularly since the introduction of the 1999 curriculum.

Modern childhood
It is important to say that in returning childhood to children, the school has emerged as an absolutely central and critical locale. I get the impression that while childhood was lost in so many places in the twentieth century, it is now under enormous threat from other sources. Children are growing up in a more depleted environment where the cultural and social richness of home and community life has been leached by the demands of the economy and the lure of a commodified and consumer culture. They are spending seventeen and a half hours per week looking at television – which is more time per annum than they spend in school. In addition, they are spending lengthy periods playing computer games or in other forms of electronic connectivity.

The economy in particular is bidding parental time and the associated emotional and intellectual energy away from children. The school is increasingly one of the few places where children now feel at the absolute centre of the community, where they feel safe, secure and stimulated. This has underpinned the political success of the campaign to reduce class sizes. The fact that the INTO succeeded in bringing eighteen thousand parents into meetings is a statement of the moral position which schools and primary teaching now occupy in this society.

System change
There is of course the task of aligning the second level experience with the primary experience. As Director of Dundalk Institute of Technology we worked with teachers in the surrounding hinterland on the primary science programme. Each May the children from the primary schools would visit the campus and present their experiments. They would hit the college like a hurricane! Their love for learning and their excitement with their learning was overwhelming. My colleagues on the staff would look at them with envy and bemoan the fact that such enthusiasm seemed to have deserted them by the time they reached eighteen. It appears, therefore, that while the
Annual Congress

primary sector successfully hands on a generation eager to learn, the post-primary sector seems to find this a good bit more difficult. The overwhelming significance of the Leaving Certificate in the second level experience means that the child development tasks which the young teenager encounters between the age of thirteen and sixteen are frequently subordinated to the demands of a terminal examination to be encountered at eighteen.

A case can be made for taking on board the learning at primary with regad to how children learn and applying this learning particularly in the first three years of second level. This would require a mindset change at many levels. It would mean that the pressure would be on adapting systems rather than people. The integration of children with special needs into mainstream schooling will further the argument for system change and in this sense can have a hugely positive impact for all school children. Indeed, it has become apparent to me that a teacher who is trained to work with children with special needs is likely to be capable of working with all children in a positive and developmental way. Similarly, schools and organisational structures which can respond to the needs of special needs students are also most likely to be able to do so for all.

The professional development of teachers

In a changing society the issue of continuing professional development of teachers becomes all the more important. Teaching is an isolated profession. In both primary and second level teachers spend a great deal of time with their students in the classroom and moments of collegial exchange in the staff room are snatched as brief moments of respite and recuperation. Staff development is more than simply being introduced to a new syllabus. It is more about people with a depth of craft knowledge, with multiple years of experience, having the opportunity to reflect on that experience and move the project onwards. The culture of enthusiasm and engagement so characterises the primary teaching profession must never be taken as a given. It can only be sustained if continuous replenished with opportunities for development and reflection.

It might also be useful to reflect on the possibility that teachers do not talk enough to each other, children's stories fail to get told in a political way. Each child's story is a personal and individualised one. It is only when professionals talk to each other that it becomes apparent that the individual story may well me a wider structural story. It is in this way that the personal becomes political. You as teachers are encountering the successes of modern Ireland but you are also on a daily basis encountering its failures – the disadvantaged children; the children who at the age of six are already being prepared for early school leaving; the children who are being neglected; who simply do not have the background of cultural and social support to sustain them through education. But these are not just individual stories. They are structural ones. They are stories that can have an impact on how this society wants to organise itself and distribute its resources amongst its people.

Education as a citizen entitlement means that terms like customer and consumer are offensive to educators because they suggest a capability to purchase and the privatising of a public good.

Education Priorities

I will close by commenting on some policy priorities in the world of education. I would support proposal that a named percentage of GNP be established as a target spend in education. If we grew our education investment to 7% per annum of GNP it would yield approximately an additional €2,000 per person in fulltime education into the system. On average, therefore, a school with one hundred children in it would have an additional €20,000 with which to recruit extra staff and source additional resources to support the learning. Think of what that would do for you!

I do agree we should shift the funding emphasis to early years education and in that regad to would include primary but I would also focus on pre-school. We need to look at using the primary system as the vehicle to carry pre-school education. The cost of introducing an entitlement for one year universal pre-school education would be less that €200 million recurrent per annum. This is a miniscule expenditure in the context of a total bill of €7.8 billion on education generally.

In conclusion, in my role as Chair of the NCNA I am struck by the quality of the interaction and thought, that happens amongst the partners in education. This is a unique institutional presence in Irish education. It is hugely gratifying that the multiplicity of partners drawn from every sector in Irish education work to such effect within this organisation. The NCNA in its composition and processes may act as a useful model for other more troubled areas in the public sector such as health.

No society entrusts its young to the care of others without the greatest attention. Irish society is privileged and fortunate to be able to entrust its young to your care.
Learning from the Holocaust
Study Visit to Krakow

Twenty teachers participated in a study visit to Krakow in April, organised by the Holocaust Educational Trust of Ireland (HETI). Among the group of teachers were five from the primary sector, including four members of staff from Coláiste Mhuire Marino Institute of Education (Paddy Madden, Joan Kiely, Laura Walsh and Barbara O’Toole), and Tom Larkin from North Kildare Educate Together National School. Mary Banotti, former MEP and current patron of the Holocaust Educational Trust, also participated.

The trip was preceded and followed by two day-long seminars run by Lynn Jackson of HETI and Chana Moshenska of the University of Sussex, in order to provide a contextual overview prior to the visit and then to consider the application of the learning to the classroom, on our return.

The study trip itself included guided tours of the Jewish quarter of Krakow; the Galicia Jewish Museum, which houses a photographic exhibition of Jewish life in Poland up to and after WW2; Schindler’s factory; Plaszow camp on the outskirts of the city; along with talks from survivors of the Nazi regime in Poland.

A day was spent touring Auschwitz-Birkenau, which was one of six death camps that were built on Polish soil, of the 16,000 camps that were developed across occupied Europe.

While the impact of a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau is personal to each person who undertakes it, certain aspects stood out, such as the vastness of Birkenau, with the railway track leading under the gate tower to the sites of the gas chambers and crematoria; the entrance to Auschwitz with its infamous ‘Arbeit Macht Frei’; the brick-built barracks with the rows of ‘bunks’; and the collections of personal belongings of people who perished in the camps.

HETI produced the Crocus Project pack in September 2006 as a resource for teachers for introducing the topic of the Holocaust to 5th and 6th class children. This August the Trust will run a summer course for primary teachers (5th and 6th class) and secondary teachers, ‘Teaching the Holocaust’, which will take place from 20 to 22 August. Further details are available from HETI on 01-669 0593 or email info@hetireland.org

INTO Principals’ Summer Course
Three day intensive summer course for newly appointed principals
This course will aim at equipping principals in the basics of the role of principal. It will explore the administrative role of the principal, the legal role and the role of people/team management and delegation. This course is designed to dovetail into the 2007/08 Míseach Programme.

See April/May InTouch or INTO website (Professional Development Section) for more information.

Reach your Sporting Peak with Asthma

“Asthma shouldn’t be a hurdle in sport and exercise” is the message to parents and children this summer from the Asthma Society of Ireland (ASI).

The aim of the ‘Reach your Peak with Asthma’ campaign is to encourage young people with asthma to participate fully in sport and exercise and to provide them, their parents, teachers and coaches with the necessary knowledge so that they can participate meaningfully and safely in sporting activities.

An information pack about asthma and sport will be distributed to primary and post primary schools and sporting bodies nationwide.

Contact the ASI at 01 878 8511 or www.asthmasciety.ie
Séan was ten before anybody realised that the words moved when he tried to read. ‘I couldn’t read because the letters wouldn’t stay still for long enough,’ he said. “But I looked at Orla beside me. The words were moving on her book but she could read fine. I looked at Dylan on my other side. I could see his words moving but he had no trouble reading them. I knew then what the problem was – it was me – I was stupid.”

Of course what Séan did not realise was that the words were not moving – they simply appeared to do so due to the faulty operation of the visual processing mechanism of his particular brain. This moving words experience is just one aspect of what we now know to be Irlen Syndrome.

What is Irlen Syndrome?
Irlen syndrome is a visual perceptual disorder. It is not an optical defect – these individuals may have perfect eyesight. However, the visual part of their brain fails to integrate all aspects of what they see effectively, and creates a faulty image for the cognitive apparatus of their brain to interpret. For example, it may fail to integrate all frequencies of light equally, leaving the individual seeing ‘rainbow’ colours where everyone else sees white light. This faulty imaging may also lead to heightened ‘glare’ from white and/or glossy materials; extreme sensitivity to bright sunlight, headlights at night, even streetlights; difficulties perceiving print, numbers, music notes because they may appear to move, shake, blur, run together, disappear and reappear, rise up, float around, sink into the paper, or fall off the edge of the page; difficulty tolerating fluorescent light as it appears to flicker inside the tube; problems with depth perception ranging from difficulty telling where the page begins and ends, to difficulty stepping onto an escalator.

Professor Helen Irlen first noticed these issues in the early 1980s while working with adults with reading difficulties in California. Quite by accident, one of the students discovered that her reading improved dramatically when a coloured overlay was put over the page. Helen took her cue from this, and her subsequent in-depth, long-term research, leading to the development of Irlen colour overlays and tinted lenses, has helped millions of sufferers all over the world.

At the same time, in New Zealand, teacher Olive Meares was documenting some of the same effects. Thus, the syndrome is sometimes referred to as Meares-Irlen syndrome, particularly on the website of the UK Department of Education and Skills [www.dfe.gov.uk].

Irlen Syndrome and Dyslexia
Specific Learning Difference (dyslexia) manifests as an unexpected and persistent difficulty in learning to read, spell and write despite adequate intelligence, opportunity to learn and appropriate teaching. However, for some students described as dyslexic, their struggle may not be with reading skills at all but with trying to see print which is unstable or distorted. Professor Irlen found that almost half the children and adults with perceptual processing problems had originally been mis-diagnosed with dyslexia. (See www.irlen.com for sample distortions.) Even the best tutoring and remediation will fail if the child cannot see and track the words reliably.

There are many reasons for reading difficulties. Irlen filters and lenses will only help those whose difficulties are due to the atypical visual perceptual processing described above. But for those in this category, the improvement is immediate, and lasting. Recent research indicates that up to 60% of those who find reading difficult, fatiguing or stressful can be helped considerably by the Irlen method. This is not just an issue for poor readers. Some people who can read adequately, find that they cannot read for long, and never read for enjoyment. This is due to the “ten minute factor”. Research has shown that many
of the problems associated with Irlen syndrome take effect when the person has been actively reading (or trying to read) for a bout ten minutes. Then the effort becomes too much and the reader gives up. The child is then told to “make a better effort”, “get stuck into your work”, “stop being so lazy”, and so on. Parents are told that they have a short attention span. However, they may be genuinely fatigued. The reason is simple.

A person with Irlen syndrome, as we now know, perceives the page and the print environment differently. Their brain has to constantly make adaptations and compensations in order for them to read (or try to read).

(One mother, who has a university degree, never reads unnecessarily because “it’s like trying to read raindrops running down a windowpane”). Reading was slow and inefficient, with little fluency and poor comprehension. The individual is unaware of the huge strain his/her brain is under, and the colossal energy s/he is putting into the perception and reading effort. Then the brain hits the fatigue barrier. The child does not know why s/he stops — s/he just knows that s/he cannot continue.

Some children will get a headache at this point. They literally have ‘a pain in their brain’. Unsurprisingly, this experience does not lead one to a love of books and reading. It affects motivation, energy levels, self-esteem, and can lead to school refusal, even depression.

Unfortunately, these effects seem most pronounced in high contrast situations such as black print on white paper, i.e. most of our books. As a person with mild Irlen syndrome myself, the text moves for me when the page is blue and yellow. The first time it happened (about 15 years ago) I was dumbstruck — the words were all floating above the page like a host of little fairies. It was quite attractive actually. However, I would not like to have to read that text! Fortunately for me, we rarely see yellow-on-blue text except occasionally in magazines. You can try out the effects of changing background colour on www.irlen.net; www.dvn.co.za; www.colouruz.co.uk

The depth perception aspect of Irlen syndrome can affect handwriting. The child may write uphill or downhill, spacing between letters and words may be uneven, non-existent or huge. Letter size may be bizarre, and they may be unable to write consistently on the line.

In the past, coloured overlays and lenses have been misguidedly presented, on occasion, as “a cure for dyslexia” by those who did not understand Irlen syndrome. We now know that they address the problems of distorted visual processing (Irlen syndrome), not dyslexia. Irlen syndrome is a perceptual disorder while dyslexia is a learning difficulty. A person may have either problem individually, while some may indeed have both. Professor Irlen believes that up to 45% of the dyslexic population also have aspects of Irlen syndrome.

Please remember that, even where Irlen overlays and lenses dramatically reduce a child’s problems with print, they do not teach them to read. The child must still acquire the skills of reading. The colour aids simply level the playing field and give them a sporting chance of success. As one teacher said “He’s still struggling hard with reading, but at least the words are staying on the page now”. That has to make life easier!

Irlen Syndrome and ADD/ADHD

Many children with poor concentration, problems staying on-task, distractability, and difficulty sitting still have been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), or ADD with Hyperactivity (ADHD). However, many of these characteristics are associated with Irlen syndrome. Children with light sensitivity in particular may fall into this category. It is difficult to keep looking at a page which is constantly glowing or flashing or flickering at you, or where the white space overpowers the black print. It is hard to focus for long on words or numbers or notes which are jiggling or floating. These are extremely uncomfortable sensations which make it very difficult to sit still and engage with work. One boy described “beautiful rivers of yellow and red flowing down the sides of the page”. He found it almost impossible to concentrate on the printed text because his eyes kept straying to these ‘rivers’.

If you have a child with ADD/ADHD symptoms who is able to concentrate perfectly well on non-print tasks (eg. painting, jigsaws), consider that s/he may be experiencing some of the discomfort issues above when dealing with the printed page. Irlen practitioners believe that up to one-third of children diagnosed with ADD/ADHD may be helped by Irlen treatment methods.

These light-sensitive issues may become more pronounced when the child is using a computer. If you see a student shading their eyes from the screen, squinting, or changing position constantly to avoid glare, s/he is suffering extreme discomfort, and should only use the computer for short stretches at a time.

Fluorescent lighting may also be a torment to this student as s/he can actually see the light energy flickering in the tube. The constant movement is very distracting, causes severe eye-fatigue and headaches. These light bulbs should be replaced with ‘daylight’ bulbs available from your electrical supplies shop which simulate natural light and so not have the flicker effect. Incidentally, this is an issue for pupils on the autistic spectrum also — it is recommended that daylight bulbs should always be used in their environment.

Irlen Syndrome and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

Many of the visual perceptual difficulties experienced by children with ASD can be reduced through the Irlen method. These include squinting, sideways glances, looking away from visual targets, finger flicking, poor eye contact, poking or rubbing the eyes, being mesmerized by colours, lights or patterns, poor fine or gross motor coordination, behaviour which changes

in bright lights or sunlight. Irlen treatment has been found to help approximately 50% of these children. Please go to the autism section of www.irlen.net to see very effective sample distortions as a child with ASD might see them.

Irlen in Ireland

Irlen in Ireland has stood the test of time. Marita McGeady—a mother, teacher, and wearer of Irlen lenses — has been diagnosing and treating Irlen syndrome here since 1987. Based in Dublin. (To see if you or your child may have Irlen issues, take the ‘Self-Test’ of symptoms on www.irlen.com ).

Preliminary screening is available around the country, from which people can be referred on to Marita if they exhibit significant symptoms. See www.irlen.net for further details of Irlen in Ireland.

Conclusion

Thus, Irlen syndrome is a perceptual disorder which can exist on its own or in conjunction with other difficulties. Most sufferers will have a ‘pick-and-mix’ of the symptoms rather than all of them. The Irlen treatment method is non-invasive and provides immediate relief when prescribed properly. It can alleviate or remove symptoms in over 40% of cases of learning difficulties. However, it is not a miracle cure — it simply makes visual life comfortable for the child, and gives them a fighting chance of tackling their work. They still have to learn to read, spell, and write. Occasionally the Irlen method is the only treatment a child needs but, more often, it is just one layer of a person’s problems, or as Helen Irlen says “one piece of the puzzle”.

I would also like to direct people to the work of Professor Arnold Wilkins at the Psychology Department of the University of Essex where there is a unit dedicated to researching visual sensory dysfunctions (www.essex.ac.uk/psychology) and follow links to ‘sensory’.

Fiona de Buitleir, Reading Class, Ennis National School, Co Clare
The twinning of the kingdoms

Kerry & LESOTHO

The Twinning the Kingdoms project between Kerry and Lesotho came about through an initiative of Kerry Action for Development Education (KADE, in June 2005). It is now a thriving far reaching programme which is already bringing benefits to the people of both kingdoms.

Like KADE, the Twinning is rooted in the Millennium Development Goals. These goals were set by the UN in 2000:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
- Achieve universal education.
- Promote gender equality and empower women.
- Reduce child mortality.
- Improve maternal health.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
- Ensure environmental sustainability.
- Create a global partnership for development.

The photographs accompanying this article represent these goals. They were taken by Eileen O’Leary in Lesotho and have been exhibited all over Kerry.

I had the pleasure of visiting there myself last year. I was struck by the spectacular beauty of this ‘Kingdom in the Sky’, the friendliness of the people but saddened by the shadow cast on the society by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Visited many schools and several orphanages. I am proud to say that the INTO Global fund has been very generous to the orphans in Lesotho.

The Twinning project is determined to provide practical assistance at local level on the ground. Some of the work done to date includes:

- Slattery’s travel including Lesotho for first time in its new catalogue.
- Two students from Lesotho attending four year degree course on tourism at ITT funded by local business, Rotary and ITT.
- Two Lesotho students on 12 month outdoor pursuits course in Cahirciveen funded by FAS.
- Two students from ITT Social Studies course placed in Lesotho Orphanage for work experience. Two more students have been selected and will travel in September for their placement.
- FAS Media arrange advanced training in RTE for two Lesotho television engineers.
- Three transition year students from Dingle travelled with photographer Eileen O’Leary to Lesotho on research project.
- Various schools around the county in the process of linking up Lesotho schools.
- Over seven different locations/groups around Kerry now involved in fund raising for direct action.
- Substantial orphanage building project under consultation with Caherciveen group.
- Teacher from Dingle doing volunteer stint in Lesotho school in our ‘Support a Village’ project.
- Support a Village project has established a range of micro loans to set up employment including, rearing pigs, rearing chickens, candle making, dressmaking.
- Rotary and ICA looking at converting small house in the village to resource centre, to be used for training in nutrition, caring for Aids victims, orphan support, and for visiting doctor, nurse and dentist.
- Talks taking place at the moment with some of Kerry’s leading property and investment groups with a view to exploring possible investment in Lesotho.
- Funds to purchase a tractor for a community group were raised, so fields could be ploughed to supply maize to the large orphan population in the area of the village.
- Tralee Probus Ladies are sponsoring an orphaned child to complete secondary school.
- A documentary that I produced on the HIV/AIDS pandemic was broadcast twice on Radio Kerry.

All of this has happened through local effort and commitment. The Twinning received great support from Irish Aid to get the project up and running and hopefully this will continue. The people of Kerry have taken the Twinning of the Kingdoms to heights we never dared to dream of in the early stages. We are confident this too will continue. Ar scath a cheile a mhairimid.

Sean Lyons, Holy Family BNS, Tralee, Co Kerry
SLATES UP! Schools and collaborative group discussions and investigations of pictorial and written primary sources. For teachers, this resource eases planning for History, by outlining how various units and activities link with the Curriculum's strands and develop skills and concepts. In addition, it includes a number of extension activities and outlines opportunities for integration and local studies.

**Slates Up!** is currently used and enjoyed by primary teachers nationwide. Its adaptable design enables teachers to follow its activities in succession, select individual activities or use the **Slates Up!** as the foundation for a larger integrated project on the general topic of schools and schooling in the past.

**Experience of primary teachers using Slates Up!**

Three teachers, Una Breathnach from St. Catherine's School, Cabra, Dublin, Jean Glenfield from Wesley College, Dublin, Head of Preparatory Department and Mary O'Brien of Loughmore National School, Co Tipperary, all of who have been working with **Slates Up!** in their primary history classes, have recorded their experiences.

Una Breathnach writes: “Many primary school children have not reached the stage of abstract thinking and find history quite difficult. They naturally have difficulty imagining the past. **Slates Up!** solved a lot of these difficulties for me as the teacher of a sixth class in a DEIS school.

“Each task card was short and simple. The children themselves extracted the information from questions based on the primary sources given e.g. pictures etc. This method of gaining information consolidates the facts in the minds of the children and helps them to retain what they have learnt. The children enjoyed the discussions, which arose from the questions and they loved the worksheets. Practical elements of other subjects such as Maths, Geography and Art were cleverly incorporated in each task card for example: reading time-tables, architectural plans, drawing to scale, measuring, making charts, comparisons, cause and effect and more.

“A trip to the classroom museum in the Church of Ireland College of Education copper-fastened the work done in school. This gave the children hands on experience of life in a 19th century school. They were asked to write with their less dominant hand to show them how difficult it was for left-handed children to write with the right hand.

“Most importantly **Slates Up!** can be used with all levels of ability and all age groups. A teacher of first class used parts of the book when teaching the class about ‘long ago’ The children not only learned a lot but also remembered with interest what they had learned. I have no doubt this learning experience will remain with them throughout their lives. **Slates Up!** provides in my view, everything a teacher requires to bring the subject to life. The ‘summary of activities’ at the front of the book is a teacher’s ‘dream’ for keeping records.”

The second teacher, Jean Glenfield, used the activity sheets provided in **Slates Up!** and was able to extend the topic of the nineteenth century classroom across the curriculum: “**Slates Up!** is one instance where a book should be judged by its cover. The beautifully reproduced 17th century school posters on the outside invite the browser in, when they are not disappointed by the contents.

“The material is produced in bite-sized user friendly, photocopiable units, ably supported by the excellent teaching guidelines. The judiciously chosen primary sources expose 21st century pupils to life for their counterparts in a Kildare Place Society School. Topics such as buildings, curriculum, methodology and discipline are forensically examined with inevitable comparisons to contemporary educational practice drawn and assessed.

“The activity sheets are purposeful and practical, facilitating individual or collaborative group work, while the inclusion of a unit entitled **Re-enactment of a 19th Century School Day** provides an entertaining way of consolidating all the learning.

“One month’s work drawn from **Slates Up!** will not exhaust the material. There is plenty here for the resourceful teacher to dip into over a period of time and still realise new potential. While the programme is history based, it trawls across the curriculum drawing strands from Geography (countries of the world, trade), Mathematics (scale), Drama (role-play), Craft (model-making), English (grammar) to mention just some of the useful tangents presented to the teacher.

“The impact on pupils by this programme is impressive. Not only is the learning process absorbing and fun, but also it facilitates a strong grasp of education in the 1800s. This was evidenced by the children’s excellent recall during an end
schooling in the 19th century

of year test. Not only were facts retained, but also clearly an ability to empathize with a 19th century pupil along with an appreciation of the significance of education had been fostered.

Mary O’Brien, the third teacher, used the material for role play and drama through which the class themselves recreated the activities of a nineteenth century classroom: “With the help of my third and fourth mixed class, I decided to recreate some of the 19th century school lessons in Arithmetic, Reading and Writing. We stacked the classroom chairs, put tables and school bags to one side and cleared my desk. We were left with an empty space in the portacabin—a rare sight! I drew a semi-circular chalk line on the floor. The children had to stand behind this with their toes perfectly positioned behind it. We role-played a typical reading lesson from 1825 using a photocopiable story called The Farmer and his Son and the question and answers sheet available in Slates Up!

“A child acted as the monitor and the class had to obey everything Kieran, the monitor, said. He instructed the first pupils to read the first sentence of the piece. The second pupil read the second sentence and so on. In 1825, if a child came across a word, s/he could not read, they had to pause on that word until they finished it out! They could not move on or re-read any of the words before this word. If they disobeyed the rule or could not figure out the word, the monitor instructed the next pupil to continue reading, starting at the difficult word. If s/he could not read the word, the next pupil attempted it and so on. We re-enacted all this.

“The monitor never corrected the mistakes of the pupils. Instead s/he instructed the next pupil to do so. When the entire story was read, Kieran (our monitor) asked individual pupils a series of questions. The children had to speak clearly when the monitor asked them a question. Kieran rewarded each pupil with a ‘Reading Merit Ticket’ (photocopied from Slates Up!). The class loved this lesson. We compared and contrasted it with our everyday reading lessons. I took coloured and black and white photos at the 19th century lessons, as they were being re-enacted.

“The next lesson that we role-played, was an arithmetic lesson. I made a large chart of the Arithmetic tables and stuck it on the wall (photocopied from Slates Up!). Elish acted as monitor this time. She stood on the far right of the semi-circle and the pupils stood to the left of her surrounding the semi-circle with their toes perfectly positioned behind the chalk line. The atmosphere was one of quietness and obedience’. Elish said “Prepare” and the children took their places behind the chart e.g. 3 times 2 are 6. The first pupil repeated it looking at the chart. The monitor repeated this with the next line and next pupil and so on. She then instructed the pupils to “change position”. The children turned their backs to the Arithmetic chart but still stayed near the semi-circle. The monitor stood in front of the pupils and asked the same questions to the pupils, as before only this time they had to answer individually without the aid of the chart.

“If a pupil made a mistake in 1825, the next pupil corrected him/her. If s/he did not correct the mistakes then the other pupils corrected each other until the correct answer was supplied. We re-enacted all this. The monitor gave the pupils time to think before they answered. The next time, the pupils had to answer straight away or else the monitor moved on to the next pupil. Elish our monitor varied the exercise by asking the arithmetic question lines out of the order in which they are listed on the chart. She also asked pupils out of order by pointing at them with her forefinger on her right hand! The kids really enjoyed this! More photos were taken! Elish rewarded pupils with arithmetic merit tickets!

“We re-enacted a ‘learning to write’ lesson. Each pupil was seated at his or her desk and had a piece of ruled paper. They pretended to use an ink pen and had a spare sheet beside them as a blotter. They recreated a second class scene where the pupils who usually write on slate were given an opportunity to write with ‘ink pen’ and so were very excited. We also conducted a ‘writing by dictation lesson’. Our monitor stood in front of the pupils and said the word ‘vegetables’ and any pupil who knew the name of a vegetable placed their right elbow on the lower edge of the desk. The children were genuinely excited doing this lesson as they liked putting their elbow on the desk!

“Their favourite re-enactments were the punishments of the 19th century. We role-played a child being told so that her merit ticket was taken away from her. Some children stood in the corner as a punishment while others looked on. We pretended it was those who were misbehaving had to stay back and contrasted these punishments with those of today. They drew pictures of what it would be like to stand on a bench or a desk for certain duration as was the case in 1825.”

Conclusion
The primary sources used in Slates Up! come from the archive of the Kildare Place Society (Society for Promotion of the Education of the Poor of Ireland) founded in 1811. These archives, which are held at the Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines, are particularly concerned with the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the 1820s.

In an attempt to make these archives more readily available to schools, a project was undertaken by a working group at CICE to produce a selection of documents and to design work sheets for classes on the topic of Schools and Schooling in the 19th Century. The volume has been published by CICE Publications with the support of the Heritage Council, the Church Education Society and the Church of Ireland College of Education. The two Dublin schools involved in the article later visited the Plunket Museum of Irish Education in the Church of Ireland College of Education, as a follow-up of their work on Slates Up! (The Museum is open by appointment only)

Copies of Slates Up! can be ordered in writing or by email to: library@cie.ie. Cost €20 per copy or €15 per copy for orders of ten or more.

Karen Willoughby, Susan Parkes, CICE, Rathmines, Dublin 6
Launched by the Christian Brothers in 1914 to compete with the perceived imperialist propaganda of British boy's papers, Our Boys was a highly successful publishing enterprise which at one stage of its long existence (ceasing publication in the 1990s) outsold all other magazines combined in this country, becoming in the process a veritable institution in the process of Irish boyhood. The influence of this magazine was to extend beyond the boundaries of Ireland as it was made available to the Irish communities of England, Australia and the US and even as far afield as India, where it was distributed through the Christian Brothers' schools.

Support for such initiatives as the revival of the Irish language, the GAA and the economic ideology of Irish Ireland in Our Boys placed the paper firmly in the vanguard of separatist thinking at a pivotal stage of national events, the War of Independence era. This was part of the rationale behind the foundation of this magazine – instilling an impressionable generation of Irish youth with the principles of nationalism, encouraging them to see themselves as uniquely Irish rather than British, outlining the manner in which such nationalist idealism might be expressed and fostering their growing sense of Gaelic self-identity. Even Irish music was harnessed in this campaign, Irish ballads, many of which had a very pro-nationalist orientation, featuring extensively in the magazine.

Historical fiction in Our Boys drew on the events of Ireland's past – filtered through the prism of Catholic/nationalist experience, episodes of anti-Catholic persecution being particularly popular, having as they did a latent resonance for the Home Rule struggle that dominated Irish politics for the first decade of the magazine's existence. Thus, among other historical events, the Cromwellian era became a standard theme as it allowed for a clear and unambiguous expression of the suffering of Irish Catholics at the hands of ruthless Roundheads. An example of this form of narrative would be The Childstealers (1917 – 1920) which was a serial concerning the capture and enslavement of Irish children for a life of toil on the sugar plantations of the West Indies. Brother Canice Craven who edited the magazine during the War of Independence was not slow to draw on contemporary events for fictional material and during this period there were stories that featured hunger-strikes and the adventures of nationalist youth who were not afraid to oppose the British occupation of Ireland.

For all its stated mission to "enlighten and entertain" with a pronounced emphasis on Irish Catholicism (the missionary was a common role model), the Irish paper also offered its readers the full range of conventional adventure stories that were available in its British counterparts. There was, however, one crucial difference in the manner in which the Christian Brothers presented this material – the heroic figure whose exploits dominated these tales was, more often than not, Irish – cowboys, detectives, school boys and even space explorers were all indigenous figures with whom Irish boys could identify, a nationalist version of the 'stiff upper lip' tradition of British adventure narrative. Thus the deeds of Sergeant Maloney of the Moutnies, O'Malley the International Detective, the perennial schoolboy, Murphy (who first appeared in the pages of Our Boys in the 1940s) and Professor O'Callaghan and his fellow space explorers offered Irish boys local heroes with whom they could identify and emulate.

Perhaps the most consistently iconic feature of the Our Boys magazine throughout its long life, and an aspect that is recalled with a great deal of nostalgic affection by many former readers, are the Kitty the Hare stories of Victor O'D. Power. These tales first appeared in Our Boys in November 1924 and may be said to encapsulate the spirit of pastoral romanticism which permeated the early years of the Free State. This series went on to become a high-
light of the magazine for the next 65 years (though Power died in 1929). His fictional creation, Kitty the Hare, was a travelling woman who roamed the countryside of Munster. Each issue found her recounting a tale, either from the confines of her own fireside or the hearth of a household she was visiting. This was a woman who was received warmly by those who lived in isolated farmsteads, in a pre-technology area such travellers were appreciated, being bearers of news and gossip that brightened up the routine of everyday life. In this age news had a certain currency and was treated as such by those who made a living moving from place to place. His chosen title for this series conveys much of its atmosphere: These were Tales Told in the Turflight. This is an essentially rural world, a timeless place in which the established mores of folklore govern the lives of the country people. Many of the elements of the social, economic and cultural tenets through which the newly independent Ireland defined her distinct identity are to be found in these tales of magic and mystery, fairies and pookas. The heroes and heroines of these tales live among the hills of west Cork and Kerry. Their lives are governed by the harsh reality of existence at a time of widespread poverty, high mortality (which explains, to a degree, the number of ghost stories among the material) and mass emigration.

There were literally dozens of stories in this series extending across the broad range of Irish folklore. The series featured ghost stories such as Pat Kearney’s Promise, By Little Nan’s Grave and The Ghost of Ownahinch, mystery stories like The Mystery of Eily Forde, The Midnight Thief and The Mystery of Denis Maguire. Accounts of supernatural influence such as Seamus Buckley and the Good People, The Stolen Child and Thegve Maguire and The Banshee also featured. The Tales Told in the Turflight series was to prove so popular with successive generations of Our Boys readers that it appeared in the magazine until the 1990s.

In evoking the Western landscape, Power’s stories may be seen in the context of a national sense of identity, a form of self-image, from the early days of the Free State. The Christian Brothers placing of the Turflight Tales in the setting of a youth magazine indicates, it may be argued, a further sense of commitment on their part to the promotion of the dominant ideology (rural, Gaelic and Catholic) which had been central to their ethos almost from their inception and which underpinned the Order’s policy in its classroom teaching and also featured prominently in the various textbooks which the Brothers produced.

The golden age of the boys’ story paper is considered to have been between the conclusion of the Second World War (the end of paper rationing) and the late 1960s (the advent of children’s television). By this time a certain fragmentation had occurred in the leisure reading market. Competition from American magazines which were now available on this side of the Atlantic was one aspect of this increasingly competitive era. Colourful and stylish, American publishing houses such as DC and Marvel introducing such creations as Superman and Batman to children whose tastes had been made more sophisticated by exposure to the action and complex narrative structures of cinema and television. The advent of teen culture, coinciding with greater economic prosperity opened up a range of entertainment opportunities as advertisers competed for the pocket-money of a generation of young people who had more disposable income than their predecessors. Such traditional pastimes as reading, whether book or story paper, were swiftly losing their appeal for a generation of young people who were now confronted with more elaborate choices.

Cultural developments in the youth reading market – the increasing popularity of magazines devoted to pop music and soccer, for example, also had a major impact on sales of Our Boys. Throughout the seventies and eighties the demands on the editor were to increase as technological advances resulted in greater availability of attractive leisure options for modern youth. Brother Liam McInerney, who was the last editor (1972 – early 1990s), resisted the temptation to include what he considered ‘non-Irish’ entertainment forms in his magazine and faced growing difficulty in meeting his monthly sales targets as a consequence – rising publishing and distribution costs further compounding these pressures. By the early 1990s the drain of capital on the magazine’s reserves had become unsustainable. Brother McInerney felt that he could no longer look to the Order itself for the necessary subvention to keep Our Boys afloat. It was with great reluctance that he was forced to bow to the reality of the market and wind up his beloved boys’ paper. Liam McInerney had presided over a great institution of Irish life over the most difficult period of the magazine’s long and illustrious existence. He bore the strain of managing Our Boys at a time when Irish life was undergoing profound and significant change and sustained the paper beyond what should have been its natural demise – Boys Own, its British rival, had folded in 1967, for example and by the mid-1970s the landscape of children’s leisure reading had changed beyond recognition, none of the boy’s papers that were so popular in the post-war era were by then available on the news stands. Under these circumstances, by keeping Our Boys in being as he did, Brother MacInerney succeeded where many of his metropolitan counterparts had failed.

The lives of modern Irish children are very different to what their predecessors enjoyed or endured, depending on one’s perspective. The classically depraved ‘Irish childhood’ of the 40s, 50s and 60s has become an international literary cliche – economic wealth has at least ensured that most children are better off in material terms (whatever about the emotional and moral malaise that has now replaced the gritty certainty that once lay at the heart of Irish family life).

Children of today have so much in terms of advanced technological entertainment ‘platforms’. They live in a world of instant communication through their ubiquitous mobile phones, enjoy foreign holidays and want for little in a culture that is nakedly consumer-driven.

Our Boys magazine harks back to an Ireland of the past, and in common with such British counterparts as Victor, Hotspur, Lion and Tiger provided hours of innocent escapism for successive generations of Irish youth. In some parallel universe of fantasy O’Hara the Outlaw still rides to the rescue of Irish children before they are placed aboard Cromwellian slave-ships and Kitty the Hare is in her old chair as we listen to the patter of rain on the cottage window, the howl of the wind as the storm increases in ferocity. In our collective imagination we sit by that eternal source of comfort, of security, of physical and emotional warmth, the blazing turf fire, in whose light the story was told, its ever-changing shadows dancing on the kitchen wall.
Oral Language

Members of Primary Curriculum Support outline oral language strategies for use in the classroom

The Primary School Curriculum advocates play as a crucial learning medium in the junior classes, expanding imagination and language

- **Listening and concentration**
  - Developing listening skills is fundamental to attaining objectives in the strand unit *receptiveness to language*, at all class levels.
  - In the junior classes activities might include:
    - **Identify environmental sounds**
      - Use tapes, sounds produced by teacher/child or musical instruments
    - **Games**
      - Musical Chairs, Traffic lights, Simon Says, Oranges and Lemons, Remote Control
    - **Repeat rhythms or word lists**
      - “I went to the Market and I bought a ...” each child repeating previous items and adding another...
    - **Focused listening**
      - Children count the number of times they hear a word/ phrase/ character name as teacher reads story or show appropriate prop as mentioned in story.
    - **Mime** feelings, actions, everyday situations such as eating breakfast, making a sandwich.
  - In the senior classes, the following activities can further enhance listening and concentration.
    - **Identify an error in a sentence**
      - I saw an invisible man at the shop.

At all levels children should be enabled to recognise facets of good listening. Teachers can model situations demonstrating good and poor listening skills. In this way children identify the need for eye-contact, commenting or questioning without interrupting and the use of appropriate facial expression and body language.

The strand Unit Competence and confidence in using language involves children extending vocabulary, developing sentence structure and fluency.

- **Extending vocabulary**
  - Extending vocabulary and understanding of the relationship between words is important in learning language and in accessing all areas of the curriculum to learn through language.
  - The following activities are aimed at developing vocabulary.
    - **Teacher tells a story**
      - During the story teacher shows individual pictures/ props representing characters or events in the story. Children name these.
    - **Children name associated words with chosen theme**
      - All children clap twice for each new word for example,
tree (clap, clap), branch (clap, clap), nut (clap, clap).

- Parts whole Children identify topics when given three clues e.g. trunk, tusks, grey (elephant).
- Odd one out Child selects the odd one out from a series of words or objects and justifies choice.
- Create themed lists in round robin fashion Each word starting with the final letter of the previous word.
- Name three 3-4 players. Each player names three items from category on card e.g. three things that can fly, three things that are found in a fire pit, three things that live in water.

Children should be encouraged to develop banks of interesting words. Words encountered during reading can be added so that children experience new words in context and can use these appropriately when writing.

Describing

The development of accurate and elaborate descriptive skills adds to the child’s competence and confidence in reading, while enhancing creative writing skills. The following activities may be adapted for all class levels.

- What am I? Child gives clues about a picture or item so that peers can suggest what it might be.
- Feelie bags Include items of different shape, size, texture and materials e.g. feather, thread, stone, page etc. The child describes these facets in order to identify unseen object in the bag.
- Paired drawing One child describes a picture to partner who draws it.
- Barrier games Children have pictures which have a number of differences. They take turns to describe their picture and thereby identify the differences.
- For sale Children describe an item that they have for sale.
- Discovery Children describe an item they have found. This may be fictitious and lead to a discussion about who may have used it and for what purpose.
- Picture of people (not famous) taken from magazines Children invent a life for them – family? job? hobbies? car? mobile phone?
- Freeze framing characters Pause while reading narrative story and children assume character roles and speak their thoughts.
- What happened before and after? The children can describe a picture or suggest what is just outside the frame.
- Commentator Create commentary on short excerpts of football match/ race/ fashion show.

Developing cognitive abilities through language

The strand unit, developing cognitive abilities through language, involves discussing, questioning, predicting, reasoning and justifying. The following activities can be used to promote these language skills.

- Predict What would happen if... Ireland won the World Cup? Westl evisited our school?
- Word tennis Partners compose sentence or a story one phrase or sentence at a time.
- I recommend Children recommend a holiday destination, model of car, book and justify recommendation.

The development of accurate and elaborate descriptive skills adds to the child’s competence and confidence in reading, while enhancing creative writing skills.

Denoting position and sequencing

These language skills have a positive impact on the child’s comprehension, mathematical language and understanding and can be fostered at all class levels.

- Teacher and child give positional commands This may be done through PE as child instructs peers to move five steps forward and to the right.
- Build it Two children given the same materials instruct each other to construct an identical object on each side of a screen.
- Directions Use local/street maps to give and elicit directions. Check your local tourist office for resources.
- Sequencing Sequence a series of pictures from a well known story
- Instructions and Procedures Give/follow a series of instructions e.g., how to make a cup of tea, create a pattern.
- Make a story Chain stories whereby a story is told in round robin fashion.
- Picture revelation Reveal a small part of a picture. Children suggest theme/content/context of the picture as it is gradually unveiled.
- Talk your way out of this Create scenario and child explains themselves e.g., a broken window, meet your mother in shop when you said you were going to friend’s house.
- Jigsaw activities across the curriculum Children from group intermingle with other groups to disseminate findings for their investigation/ share their stories.
- Nomination Children nominate a character from TV or a book for an award and justify nomination.
- What for Child suggests an item that he will bring on a trip. Another child asks “What for?” and s/he must justify his selection. Random pictures of items may be used to extend this activity.
- Debates Given statement, children can select agree/ disagree/ don’t cards and justify their selection. Such topics can be extended to compose questions and conduct surveys, the results of which can be illustrated during a maths lesson. Strategies to improve debate or persuasive argument could also be modelled.

Story bag Use three props as a stimulus for group story telling. These stories can then be presented to the class, typed and used as reading material or a springboard for further development in writing.

Through meaningful interaction with adults and peers in one to one, group and whole class situations, objectives within the strand unit, Emotional and imaginative development through language can be attained. The Primary School Curriculum advocates play as a crucial learning medium in the junior classes, expanding imagination and language. Role play also provides an excellent context for this interaction at all levels. It can be supported by Language Experience Approach activities which can vary from making sandwiches to tending to the school garden. Board games also provide a motivating method of teaching specific language skills such as turn taking, listening, questioning and vocabulary extension.

How to Identify and Support Children with Speech and Language Difficulties by Jan Speake (ISBN 1850393615) provides practical guidelines and checklists for identification of children who are experiencing language difficulties.

Further language activities can be found in Teaching Talking (second ed) by Ann Locke and Maggie Beech (ISBN 0-7087-1484-6) and under Oral Language in the English section of www.pcspl.ie which also provides comprehensive suggestions on planning and organisation for oral language in the classroom.

Submitted by member of Primary Curriculum Support Programme,
www.pcspl.ie
Out & About

T he summer has arrived and the children are itching and restless to learn ‘outdoors’. Can ICT be used in the outdoor learning space? There are a range of portable digital devices which can help connect the indoors with the outdoors.

For example:

- digital camera;
- digital video (DV)

(often referred to as DV camcorder):
- mini disc player;
- digital voice recorders;
- mobile phone;
- PDAs;
- data loggers.

School tour
The school tour is a good place to start. Many of you may have already been on your school tour but for those of you who have not, it is nice to bring along a digital camera or the DV camera to capture the places you will visit, the journey there and back and the stories along the way. For those children who are willing and able, it might be an idea to make a short video of the school trip. On return to their school, the footage can be edited or you can hook it up to a TV screen and just play it back unedited. Not every piece of footage has to look like a film/movie! The school sports day is another day for capturing some precious moments. Check out the weather in advance on www.meteireann.ie!

For those of you who are undergoing school building work during the summer and are expecting to return in September to a different ‘site’, now is a good time to gather some information in relation to the existing environments. The children might be interested in interviewing teachers who have been teaching in prefabs for a while and what they are looking forward to about their ‘new’ classrooms. The children might use the camera or a digital voice recorder and then use software to create a multimedia presentation eg, Photostory or Textease.

In the garden
Another place of interest is the school garden. There is lots of scope for using cameras here. On my way to work every morning, I have the pleasure of passing Whitecross NS, Julianstown, Co Meath, which boasts a beautiful garden, forever changing through seasonal, natural and human interventions. It is a good idea to take a photo of the garden at different stages during the year (from the same vantage point) to see and record the different colours, different growth and activities at play throughout the change of seasons. Children could also use the photos to plan for further development eg. How could we add some colour to the garden in winter? What are the species of wildlife encountered in visiting the garden at different times of the year? Pictures of the garden are a wonderful resource for creative writing, oral language development, geographical and environmental observations throughout the year. In Whitecross, they have a beautiful display of butterflies which the children have created and exhibited in their garden – an
outdoor exhibition! It looks fantastic – Well done to all involved!
Scolinet has a Gardening Projects in Schools section which may be of interest
www.scolinet.ie/article.aspx?id=4622. Another lovely site is
www.irishwildflowers.ie/

Looking back on the school year
It’s not too late to gather some reflective thoughts and memories from the school year and from the sixth class children who are moving on to post –
primary school in September 2007. Children in sixth class could carry out interviews with each other using a DV camera for video footage or audio recording using a microphone and a mini-disc recorder or a digital voice recorder. Some digital cameras have the capacity to record video or sound. It can be a very educational and fun exercise to discuss and agree on the range of set questions to be asked.
Audacity is a free, easy-to-use audio editor and recorder and can be downloaded free from www.audacity.sourceforge.net. The children might decide to create a visual snapshot of the year and create their own soundtrack. They could burn it onto a CD and take it with them when leaving the school. It could be their digital yearbook. If there is scope, it might be time to play around with some animation. Lesson plan 3 of the teaching resources on the FIS website, www.fis.ie, provides some guidance on animation. Examples of animation software include Techlearning – Video blender, Stop Motion Pro, I Can Animate (for Mac only).
As with all content, please ensure that appropriate permissions are obtained particularly in relation to photos, video and audio footage.

Bainigi an-taitneamh as
na laethanta saoire –
Anne White, National Coordinator, National Centre for Technology in Education
www.ncte.ie

Information updates from NCTE

Updated advice sheets
The NCTE is currently updating the Advice Sheets on the NCTE website www.ncte.ie/ICTAdviceSupport/AdviceSheets/. The advice sheets provide information on a range of ICT related areas e.g. Digital Projectors.

Summer courses
Many of you may have already registered for summer courses, if not, please note the following course. Using ICT as a Teaching and Learning Tool, is running in a number of locations throughout the country.
A NEW Online course – ‘Developing an E-Learning Culture in your school’ will also be available for teachers during the summer. Places are limited.

For further information see
www.into-elearning.com

These courses were designed and developed by the NCTE in collaboration with the INTO and are fully funded by the NCTE. The €40 booking fee is refundable on course completion.

Internet safety
NEW – ‘Integrating Internet Safety into Teaching and Learning’. The NCTE has just completed the development of this course for teachers as part of the Webwise initiative www.webwise.ie. The course will support teachers in helping young people stay safe when using online technologies in school and in the wider community.

Please contact the ICT Advisory Service in your area for details. www.ncte.ie/ICTTraining/AdvisorNetwork

The broadband service desk
The ServiceDesk remains open during the summer holidays and can be contacted by calling 1800 33 44 66 or by emailing, servicedesk@ncte.ie
For further information see
www.ncte.ie www.scolinet.ie
and www.softwarecentral.ie
Story Sacks
An exciting way of bringing books to life!

Story Sacks offer a fun, multi-sensory approach to sharing stories with children. The bringing together of spoken word, music and items related to a story has long been recognised as an excellent way of developing communication between pupils and/or adults (Barron, N. and Powell, J. 2003). However, while story sacks have been used and adapted for example, in ‘Curiosity Kits’ (Lewis et al., 2000), to date they are still underused in the primary classroom. This article explores ideas on how teachers can create and use story sacks with their classes to engage and excite children about reading. Story sacks have the potential to be motivating, challenging and a colourful resource – use them to increase children’s interest, involvement and understanding of stories.

The ‘Story Sack’ concept was developed by former head teacher Neil Griffiths in 1995, following research in the UK which showed that the number of children being read a bedtime story was only 16%, compared to over 30% of their parents’ generation, and that this lack of reading could be directly linked to literacy problems.

Neil Griffiths created Story Sacks as an alternative way for children to benefit from books and, most importantly as a fun activity where learning takes place without noticing (Griffiths, 2000). They are designed to help adults share books with children in a way that is positive, theatrical, special, interactive and fun. They are a way to get children of all ages and all cultures more interested in reading.

What is a Story Sack?
A story sack is a large cloth bag containing a good quality storybook with supporting materials, such as puppets, soft toys of the main characters and a game to stimulate reading/language skills. There is usually an audio tape of the story so as children can follow along as they read or act out parts of the story. It also consists of a non-fiction book on a related topic.

The sack opens up the world of books and allows further exploration and enjoyment through using props and related activities. Focusing on a particular tale, it is a tool used to promote reading in school and at home. So open up the story sack and discover what’s inside!

Why use Story Sacks in the primary classroom?
What story sacks offer the primary classroom is the chance to make sharing a book pleasurable (Griffiths, N. 2001). Accompanied by puppets, scenery, activities and games, stories become more lifelike and appealing. Research has shown that learning that provides endless fun and enjoyment has invariably a positive effect on children’s retention abilities (James, F. and Kerr, A. 1998). By catching and holding sustained interest, story sacks are a visually attractive and tactile resource, providing children with concrete reinforcement of the storyline. This has the potential to motivate and excite children about reading.

By providing a meaningful context in which to learn, story sacks encourage both active listening and participation in reading. All supporting materials included in the story sack are designed to extend the reading experience and stimulate further language activities. This in turn enhances comprehension, vocabulary, phonic, rhyming and decoding skills.
(Griffiths, N. 2000). Children can participate in dramatising the events of the story by using puppets and other materials such as scenery that are provided in the bag. Interactive response activities related to the story can be made, helping children understand the ‘new language’. Furthermore, they encourage children to see themselves as real readers and promote a life long love of reading.

How to make your own story sacks

**Start with a bag** It doesn’t have to be a fancy bag! Even a simple paper bag will do. Just decorate the outside of the bag, fill it with the book and supporting materials and there you are! However, if you want to get a bit fancier, go to your local dressmaker and have a sack custom-designed. These can be decorated using fabric paints, embroidery and the name of the story can be sewn onto the outside of the bag.

What the bag looks like doesn’t really matter too much, although you do want it to look inviting to the children. It is what’s inside the bag that counts!

**Picking a story** What story book you choose will depend on the children you are making it for. Most importantly, pick a book appropriate for the chosen age group. Take into account any special interests of your class including favourite themes, characters, authors and genre. The more interested the children are about the subject of the story, the more likely they will truly enjoy the book and possibly read it independently at a later stage.

If a story has a strong storyline and quality illustrations, then it will have more appeal to the children. However, not every book is suitable for use in a story sack if the story has too many central characters, too few props or too many props in the storyline, then it may be difficult to make into a story sack.

**Filling your story sack** The sack should be filled with items that support the central story book.

Here are some ideas to help you decide what to put in the sack with the story book:

- Soft toys of the main characters (or masks, puppets, costumes).
- Props, scenery, artifacts related to the story.
- A non-fiction book to learn more about the factual parts of the story.
- A cassette tape of the story being told (either purchased or home made).
- A language game based on the story eg. word bingo.
- Related videos.
- Written activities eg. comprehension questions, word searches, crosswords.

Each sack may contain materials which bring the story alive and help children learn through play. However, it is important that you make story sacks that are manageable – usually, no more than seven items are included in any one sack, to prevent overload of supporting materials. You just want enough characters and items to bring the story to life. It should also be sturdy and safe, with nothing sharp as a toy. By introducing variety, you will make maximum use of the resources and retain children’s interest!

**Bag + Book + Toys + Activities = Story Sack!**

**Bring your books to life!**

Story Sacks are fun, interactive, attractive and a powerful learning tool in any primary classroom. Through supplying your time and creativity, they have the potential to enhance children’s English language abilities, both oral and written. They also offer the potential for collaboration with homes and provide a valuable resource for parents to share with their child. What better way to enjoy reading with young learners, than through sharing Story Sacks.

**References**


Griffiths, N (2001) *Once upon a time... Literacy Today* No.26, p.9


**Where can I find out more about Story Sacks?**

National Literacy Trust (UK) Storysacks page – gives examples of story sacks in practice and features links to further resources: www.literacytrust.org.uk/socialinclusion/earlyyears/storysackspractice.html

Fiodhna Hyland is a lecturer in the Education Faculty at the Abu Dhabi Women’s College, United Arab Emirates.
National Teachers’ Salaries and Pensions 1831 – 2000

By Dr Michael Moroney

It is well known fact that teachers become shrinking violets when confronting matters relating to personal pay and pensions.

For such people, Dr Michael Moroney—late of INTO Head Office—has written a learned, 365 page volume, National Teachers’ Salaries and Pensions 1831-2000—A historical chronology and review of the role of the INTO which answers all questions relating to teachers’ incomes.

He has forensically chronicled the historical growth and development of teacher remuneration from the foundation of the national school system in 1831 up to 2000. He has also chronicled the seminal role played by the INTO in that development from its own foundation in 1868.

In a short review, one can only express awe and wonder at the breadth, depth and sweep of research required to complete such a project. There are 11 pages of references alone to back up 365 pages of narrative.

The story is tightly written and clinically presented in six organic modules: 1831-1872, 1872-1900, 1900-1922, 1922-1948, 1948-1968 and 1968-2000. It is a work that is complex but accessible, detailed but digestible, encyclopaedic but memorable.

Dr Moroney deserves the applause and congratulations of teachers for following the negotiation and money trails back to 1831 when teachers were paid an average annual salary of £10 (£15) for men and £8 (£12) for women.

This most welcome book should be required reading in the Colleges of Education so that students may learn how hard-fought and demanding were the battles fought by our forbears in order to extract concessions from reluctant Governments to protect and enhance the status of teachers—a task that will face us as urgently in the future as it did in the past.

Published by the Institute of Public Administration, 57-61 Lansdowne Road, Dublin 4, in association with the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation.


Reviewed by Austin P Corcoran, INTO President 2004 - 2005.

Female Education in Ireland 1700-1900

by Deirdre Raftery and Susan Parkes

At a time when, with little or no public debate, the first state primary schools are being established in Ireland (through the VEC) it is good to be reminded of how in another era control and participation in education were so fervently fought for and prized. Who managed the schools, who attended which type of school, who studied what curriculum, who could attend university, who could sit for public examinations, all of these questions were seen as of vital importance. Their importance as issues impacting on the progress of a nation is evident in the research drawn together by Raftery and Parkes in their recent publication Female Education in Ireland 1700-1900.

The book covers a wide range of topics including the schooling of destitute girls in workhouse and industrial schools; the education of girls in the national school system; intermediate education for girls and the struggle to have university degrees awarded to women.

It gives an insight into the appalling conditions and the neglect of formal education in the charter and industrial schools.

It illustrates the pragmatism of parents who removed their daughters from ordinary national schools in favour of convent schools because instruction in fine needlework provided in convents would enable girls to earn a livelihood.

It also shows how social class distinctions were maintained in many convent schools through the separation of children on the basis of whether their parents paid a small fee or not.

When reading of the achievements of women educationalists who succeeded in gaining the right for girls to sit the Intermediate Examination and the right of women to obtain university degrees one wonders whether there are such dedicated activists in the field of education in Ireland today.

The book includes good illustrations although one cannot help but ask whether the cover photograph is really from the 1890s as cited or from a later date.

Highly recommended reading for anyone interested in the history of education


Reviewed by Sile Chúinneangáin, INTO Benefit Funds Committee and Principal of St Pauls JNS, Malahide Rd, Dublin.
Maths Tracker

Maths Tracker is a computer-based maths diagnostic program suitable for first, second and third class pupils who are experiencing difficulties with the revised maths curriculum, but it may also be used as an ongoing assessment tool in mainstream classes. Each class level contains three tests, with a total of 150 multiple-choice questions, covering all strands of the curriculum. An individual report is generated on completion of each test and these can also be used to build up a pupil profile that is also provided in the program. The pupil report sheets can be printed out, but the program does not store the results.

The pupil interface is clear and easy to follow. Each task is presented in an attractive and colourful manner, and the multiple-choice options are clearly presented and easy to read. There are audio clues that indicate whether a child has got the right or wrong answer, but these can be turned off if desired. There is no visual clue given. Once an option has been selected, the pupil is automatically led on to the next task. S/he must complete all the questions in the section, and has no way to escape the current screen until a selection is made.

The rear section that provides information and instructions for teachers. A print option would be useful on this page, so that teachers could keep the information for future reference off-screen. Maths Tracker is a very useful and easy-to-use diagnostic tool for teachers of first, second and third classes, Learning Support, Special Needs etc. Most importantly, this is Irish software which supports the Irish curriculum. Cost: €1.25 for site licence Available from: Donal Horgan, 6 Shelton, St Patrick’s Hill, Cork. Email: donalhorgan@eircom.net www.aiseanna.com

Reviewed by Christina Ní Dhreachtaidh, St Martin de Porres NS, Tallaght, Dublin 24

Faith and the Nation by Kevin Williams

Faith and the Nation examines the interplay of Catholicism and the Irish State. It takes an historic and developmental approach and examines the implications of the interaction for education in particular. The author places the new religious education programmes for primary and post-primary levels in their educational, cultural and institutional settings and outlines the State’s neutral position towards them. Controversial issues are included – diversity, freedom from indoctrination, religious ethos etc. and teased out. The main themes and ideas of this book are communicated easily and directly. The effective approach of utilising the work of writers well known to us (e.g. Roddy Doyle and John McGahern among many others) illustrate the cultural roots of faith among people and measure their depth and influence. This is one manifestation of ‘nation’. The state represents the other and the author narrates the story of the state’s move towards neutrality. It is interesting that we’re familiar with texts in this story (the White Paper, the revised Primary Curriculum, Junior Certificate RE syllabus, etc) but in this book they are combined to chart the state’s own journey.

What of a roadmap for a new Ireland? The author draws on his wide-ranging experience to guide us in a more diversified Ireland towards a way of balancing the new demands with the deep-rooted beliefs in our society. It’s interesting that so many echoes of what he writes of are contained in the INTO 2003 survey on ‘Teaching Religion. Faith and the Nation is an excellent explanation of the positions adopted by Irish primary teachers towards religion.

Published by Dominican Publications. ISBN 1-871552-94-5. Retail price is €12.99.

Reviewed by Don Herron, Principal, St John Bosco Snr BNS, Dublin 7

... Other recommended titles ...

Look what blew into the Zoo
Crammed with exotic animals, fun personalities and plenty of action, this delightful tale contains all the magical elements to stimulate young, inquisitive and fun-loving minds. Written by Fiona Tierney and beautifully illustrated by Una Healy, it can be enjoyed by toddlers, right through to early readers. €8.99 from bookstores and website www.primaryabc.ie. ISBN 095458373-6

Know Yourself – Know the World
A Step by Step Guide to a Drama Project for the Primary Classroom. By Pete Mullineaux, an Irish drama teacher and facilitator. This is a comprehensive, Irish produced resource linked to all the curriculum drama strands and strand units. Produced by Louisburgh Community Project, cost €4.50 plus p&p (includes DVD). For info: Learning Horizons at 01 4115372, info@learninghorizons.ie, or www.learninghorizons.ie

Step by Step Educational Drama. A cross curricular use of Drama in the Primary classroom.
A practical resource for busy teachers wishing to incorporate drama into their classroom. Sessions are described in easy to follow, step by step instructions. Published by the National Association for Youth Drama, authors are Joanna Parkes and Sarah FitzGibbon. €20 plus p&p Info from www.youthdrama.ie or tel 01 8781301

Don’t Ask Alice!
Latest in the hugely popular Alice series. Judi Curtin’s Alice series is growing in popularity ISBN 9781847370933. Cost €7.95. Category: Girls aged 10+.?

Sin Iad na Rudai Le Mairin Ni Laoithí Uí Shé
A Tribute to Bríd Laffan

Bríd graduated from Carysfort College in 1968 and over the next 20 years taught in a number of schools both here and in Canada, including the Central Model School in Marlboro Street and Catherine McAuley School, Baggot Street, before taking up the position of National Co-ordinator of the Support Teachers’ Programme in 2000. In 2001 Bríd joined the Special Education Department in St Patrick’s College as a lecturer in special education. Throughout her wide and varied career, Bríd influenced the work of hundreds of teachers.

Bríd’s poise and gentle personality touched everyone she met – students, colleagues, friends and family. She exuded an air of calmness and serenity which was especially evident in the way she dealt with her illness. She absolutely refused to allow her illness to interfere with the day-to-day activities of her life. On 20 April 2006, Bríd lost her bravely fought battle with cancer.

Those of us who were lucky enough to have known Bríd will agree that her passing has been a devastating blow. Her greatest gift, amongst many, was her ability to listen and to give advice in such a way that the recipient thought they had come up with the solution to a problem themselves! Bríd made it her business to meet friends and colleagues regularly for coffee, a chat and a ‘catch-up’. She had a keen interest in the lives of others and equally shared her own news with an openness that was infectious.

Bríd’s zest for life and her determination to live each day to the full has been, and will continue to be, an inspiration to us all. As a tribute, a granite seat was installed in the grounds of St Patrick’s College on Bríd’s first anniversary.

We miss Bríd very much but no one misses her more than her husband Vincent, who was her rock of strength, her brothers John and Seamus and sisters Mary and Sr Joan. Solas na solse dá hānam dilis.

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Michele Spellman – An appreciation

On 11 January 2007, the whole school community of Sliabh á Mhádra NS was shocked to hear of the sudden and totally unexpected death of Michele Spellman, one of its beloved and respected teachers.

Michele was a wonderful, kind and compassionate person and conscientious and dedicated resource teacher who loved helping children with specific learning difficulties. She was outstanding in this area of education, an absolute fountain of expertise and knowledge which she shared gladly and freely with colleagues.

Michele attended Strawberry Hill training college in Twickenham and taught for sometime in England, before moving to Ireland in 1989 with her husband Martin.

We were blessed in 2002 when Michele was appointed our full time resource teacher, having previously served part time for two years. Her teaching career was a labour of love and devotion. She nurtured the self-esteem of her pupils and they responded to her encouragement and enjoyed blissfully the time they spent with her.

Michele touched and enriched the lives of all she met and she will be sorely missed by her colleagues her in Sliabh á Mhádra NS and also in the Dyslexia Centre in Collis Sandes, Tralee. The turnout of teachers, parents and children at her funeral bore testament to her popularity and the respect in which she was held.

We extend our deepest sympathies to her family, especially her husband Martin and daughters Laura, Rebecca and Gemma.

Ní bheidh leithéid ann arís.

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Reading Recovery founder dies – Marie Clay

Marie Clay the internationally known educator/researcher died on Friday, 13 April 2007 age 81.

Tributes were paid to her in the New Zealand Herald and the New York Times. The Institute of Education, University of London and the International Reading Association acclaimed her as a “world leader in literacy”. She died in Auckland after a short illness.

Marie developed the Reading Recovery programme in the mid 1970s. This is an early intervention programme that targets children who have difficulty reading and writing, and within 12 to 20 weeks most of these children are brought up to class level. Some of Marie Clay’s books include Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part One and Literacy Lessons Designed for Individuals Part Two and more recently Literacy Lessons.

Marie Mildred Irwin was born in Wellington New Zealand. She earned a bachelor and masters degree from the University of New Zealand and studied child psychology at the University of Minnesota in the early 1950s. She earned a doctorate in education from the University of Auckland in 1966 and was a past President of the International Reading Association.

Reading Recovery is now being used in Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland and the United States.

It was introduced into the Republic of Ireland in 2000 and is spreading throughout the country. The Reading Recovery National Administration Centre is located in Monaghan Education Centre. There are teacher training centres in Marino Institute of Education, Galway, Cork and Limerick. Two more training centres are due to open in September.

The training as a Reading Recovery teacher is currently available to teachers working in DEIS schools.

Marie Clay through her work in literacy learning, touched the lives of many teachers, and changed the lives of many children who participated in the Reading Recovery Programme. We are truly indebted to her for all her achievements in education.

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InTouch June 2007
**COPY DATE**
Copy wish you to have considered for publication in the September issue of InTouch should arrive in Head Office by 13 August.

**CELTIC PARK AFC (BEAUMONT)**
5th Year celebration. Calling all ex-players.
Tel: Donal O’Donoghue at 01 8369474.

**CALLING ALL NQTs**
Are you a recently Qualified Primary Teacher?
- Are you interested in bringing a global perspective into your classroom and would like support to do so?
- Would you like to share your thoughts and ideas.
- Are you interested in shaping a global education programme for newly qualified teachers.
If you are then Comhlámh’s Compass Project would like to invite you to be part of their Focus Group for the Global Education Programme (Pilot).
For information contact Sarina Bellisimo on 01 478 3940 or at sarina@comhlamh.org

**RAI**
Reading Association of Ireland invites applications for Biennial Award Outstanding Thesis on Literacy. The award of €1,000 and RAI medal will be presented at the RAI annual conference 27-29 September 2007 at CICE. Deadline for applications: 30 July 2007. Details available from eithne.kennedy@spd.dcu.ie or www.reading.ie

**RE-UNIONS**
**MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE**
The following reunions will take place in 2007.
- 10 Year Reunion – Class of 1997: MIC and Clarion Hotel on 29 September.
For further info visit http://friends.mic.ie to register online or contact Deirdre Carroll, Mary 1 Alumni, South Circular Road, Limerick. Tel 061 204935 or email alumni@mic.ul.ie

Mary J – 1974-1977
30 Year Reunion of First B.Ed Graduates 1974-1977
All members of this illustrious, historic, (not to mention exclusive!) group are invited to attend 30 Year Reunion Lunch in the Castletroy Park Hotel, Limerick on Saturday, 6 October 2007.
If you have any photos of ‘the good old days’ dig them out so we can have a laugh at ourselves – while we’re still able to see clearly!
Contact: Alice O’Connell 087 6794645 (aliceoo@iol.ie), Liam O’Brien 086 8207560, Sheila Crowley 087 6853612

Mary I Class of 79-82
Silver Jubilee Reunion. Saturday, 10 November 2007. Itinerary: Mass at 7pm in Hotel followed by Buffet Reception in Castletroy Park Hotel.
Tickets 65 p/p or cheque made payable to Mary Immaculate Reunion 2007 account, enclosing SAE to: Mary (Daly) Richardson, Ballylart, Brittas, Co Limerick. 087 2320199, Una (Keane) Hoigni, Coolesteigh, Clonlara, Co Clare. 086 8045825.

Marion Morrin, 16A Knockhill, Ennis Rd, Limerick. 087 1255796, Pat Millane, Wood Road, Kilmure, Co Clare 087 2744795.
Tony Harnett, Laugh, Lissnagry, Co Limerick. 087 1352438.
Accommodation enquiries direct to hotel at 061 335566

**ST PAT’S CLASS OF 1982**
25 Year Reunion Dates: Friday, 14 September (Teachers’ Club), Saturday, 15 September (St Patrick’s College from 7 pm). For info: email cp@iol.ie or contact Caitríona Carney (Farrelly), 086 8519357; Johnny McCaw 086 611954; Kathryn Crowley (Sheahan) 086 2350964; Eugene Duffy 087 955101.

**BULLYING**
Teachers Against Bullying helpline aims to help teachers and principals who have been, or are being bullied by any member/s of school staff and/or inspectors and/or BOM.
Contact Teresa Mc Mahon. Tel: 01 2883062, 7-9 p.m. email: tmnm45@eircom.net

**ILSA CONFERENCE**
Irish Learning Support Association annual conference. Theme: Responding to the Challenge of Inclusion. Venue: St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra, Dublin. Date: 21/22 September. Wide selection of presentations on topics of interest to learning support, language support and resource teachers. Booking will close on 15 June.

**MEI 2 CONFERENCE**
Walking the Talk: Using Mathematics Education Research. Venue: St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra, Dublin 9 on Friday and Saturday, 14 and 15 September, 2007.
For further information, visit http://www.spd.dcu.ie/main/academic/education/mathscourse_2007html or contact Therese Dooley at 01 8842067 or email therese.dooley@spd.dcu.ie
*DES approved but teacher substitution costs not borne by DES.

**TEACHING THE HOLOCAUST**
Three day summer course for teachers – 20/2/22 August 2007. The course addresses the complex subject of the Holocaust and how to teach it in the classroom.
For further info: Holocaust Educational Trust of Ireland, Clifton House, Lr Fitzwilliam St, Dublin 2. Tel 01 6690593 or Dublin info@hitreland.org

**STSG**
Separated Teachers’ Support Group. Social Evening will be held on Saturday, 9 June at 8.00 pm. Venue: Club na Muinteoirí, Parnell Sq, Dublin 1. For further info contact Chairperson: Maura Killacky: 0850 21694 or 087 1233456 or Secretary: Christina Henry: 01 8481405 or 087 6201513 New members welcome.

**SUMMER CLOSURE**
INTO Head Office will close for the summer break from Monday 30 July, reopening on Monday 13 August.

InTouch June 2007

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Editor: Tom O’Sullivan
Assistant Editor: Lori Kealy
Editorial Assistants: Niamh Conluff, Yvonne Kermey
Advertising: Mary Bird Smyth, Advertising Executive; Merrilyn Campbell, Booking Co-ordinator
Design: David Cooke
Photography: Moya Nolan, Index Open.

Correspondence to: The Editor, InTouch, INTO Head Office, Vere Foster House, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Telephone: 8047700
Fax: 8722462. Local: 1850 708 708.
Email: editor@into.ie
Website: http://www.into.ie

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