Larger classes
– a cheap fix at their expense
Now that the dust of ‘back to school’ has settled we need to focus on the challenges ahead. The most challenging of these is next month’s budget.

If reports are to be believed there will be no let up on the government’s austerity policy. This means more hardship for workers, their families and public services.

The share of public spending earmarked for education in Ireland has fallen dramatically. *Education at a Glance 2013* published by the OECD in June showed 9.4 per cent of government spending in Ireland in 2011 was allocated to education compared to 13.7 per cent in 2000.

This compares unfavourably with other OECD countries where an average of 13 per cent of public spending goes to education, a figure which in other countries has increased from 12.6 per cent in 2000.

This level of spending is directly responsible for cuts to school budgets, school staffing and special needs teaching hours. It is why Irish class sizes remain the second most crowded in the EU at 24 pupils per class compared to an EU average of 20 per class.

Despite the cuts Irish teachers continue to turn below average investment into above average outcomes. But there is a limit to what teachers can do when faced with year on year budgetary cutbacks in vital resources.

The support of every INTO member in every school will be needed to protect primary education. Full details of the pre-budget campaign are in this edition of *InTouch*. Your active participation is vital to its success.

*Eloise Horgan*

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**Class size matters**
Editorial

Class size matters

What you need to know

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circulated education magazine in Ireland. Articles published in InTouch are also available on our website www.into.ie

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

While every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this publication is up to date and correct, no responsibility will be taken by the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation for any error which might occur.

Except where the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation has formally negotiated agreements as part of its services to members, inclusion of an advertisement does not imply any form of recommendation. While every effort is made to ensure the reliability of advertisers, the INTO cannot accept liability for the quality of goods and services offered.
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53 Watch out for this symbol in InTouch news sections. It means the news item may be of interest to members both North and South
Haddington Road Agreement implemented

The terms of the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) came into effect on 1 July 2013. Among the operational issues are:
- All primary teachers will receive their next increment which, for most teachers, is 1 September 2013.
- Primary teachers earning over €65,000 received a discount of the equivalent of the supervision allowance against the amount of their gross salary loss.
- The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform issued an instruction that the salary deductions should be taken on a pro rata basis from teachers’ allowances rather than the common basic scale. This is reflected in the outline of the deductions on salary slips.
- The DES has issued Circular 33/2013 which confirms that, with effect from the beginning of the 2013/14 school year, participation in the Supervision Scheme will be compulsory for all teachers. Teachers are already committed to 37 hours’ supervision. This commitment continues under the agreement. The additional six hours confirmed in the circular for each teacher (totalling 43 hours) is taken as the equivalent substitution cover at primary level for potential absences for teachers under uncertified sick leave for this year or the first day of force majeure or family illness leave from next year.
- Teachers’ entitlement to uncertified sick leave has already been reduced in common with other public servants to seven days over a two year period. Under the terms of the HRA there will be no substitute cover for uncertified sick leave from the beginning of 2013/2014 school year onwards. Other provisions for substitute cover remain in place, although there will be further changes in the next school year.

The INTO website contains further information on the implementation of the HRA, including a series of frequently asked questions.

Special education teaching cuts reversed

In June the INTO welcomed the decision of the Minister for Education and Skills Ruairi Quinn to retain the level of resource teaching for pupils with special educational needs at last year’s levels. The INTO had strongly condemned a proposed 10% cut to resource teaching time against the supervision allowance and the amount of their gross salary loss. The INTO had strongly condemned a proposed 10% cut to resource teaching time against the supervision allowance.

The Minister has also announced the establishment of a working group to develop a new model for allocating resource teachers in schools. The NCSE is also consulting with the education partners following the publication of the policy advice paper on a revised model of special education resources allocation. The CEC is currently considering the issue of models of special education support in schools and will be reviewing policy in the coming months.

Redeployment panels update

Over 400 permanent teachers were successfully redeployed through the panel system this year. Changes to the operation of the panel system, including the earlier introduction of panel managers in certain areas, ensured the more efficient operation of the system. In addition to the 400 permanent teachers, almost 1,000 non-permanent teachers were entitled to panel rights. At the time of going to print the vast majority of those teachers have secured employment, although there have been difficulties in certain areas. A further update is due to be published by the DES in early September.

Pay increases for recent graduates

Under the terms of the Haddington Road Agreement, graduates from 2011, 2012 and 2013 are placed on revised salary scales which came into effect on 1 July 2013.

The revised salary scales show increases in salary for these graduates and an equalisation at the top of the salary scales for those who graduated from colleges in 2011 and 2012. This issue was pursued by INTO representatives during the course of the HRA discussions. Details of the salary scales are published on the INTO website and in the INTO Member’s Diary.

Arrears paid to primary teachers

During the course of last year the INTO pursued the issue of the underpayment of recent graduates due to their placement on wrong salary scale points or being paid at unqualified rates as substitutes.

The appropriate changes to salary scales and allowances were not implemented by the DES and the INTO raised the matter on an ongoing basis, including at a meeting between the Minister and recent graduates.

In June a total of €2.68 million was paid to:
- 839 primary teachers on the wrong salary point; and
- 705 primary teachers on the wrong allowance.

(with one teacher getting €8,573.80)

School placement developments

Following the publication of its policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education, the Teaching Council has prepared guidelines to enhance the experience of student teachers doing teaching practice or school placement.

These guidelines have been sent to all Colleges of Education. These guidelines will be implemented as part of the processes and relationships being developed between the colleges and schools.

A leaflet explaining the guidelines will be circulated to schools later this term. Further information on www.into.ie/ROI

InTouch September 2013
Droichead directive in place

The Teaching Council published proposals in the last school year for a pilot scheme for a new model of induction and probation for newly qualified teachers known as Droichead. Following consultation with members, the CEC submitted a formal response to the Teaching Council which is available on the INTO website (Members’ Area). At its June meeting the CEC decided to issue the following directive to members:

The CEC directs INTO members not to participate in the Droichead pilot scheme being proposed by the Teaching Council, pending the outcome of a vote by members.

The Directive comprehends all INTO members and became operative from Friday 21 June 2013.

INTO principal wins court action

INTO member Nora Kelly, principal teacher of St Joseph’s NS in Valleymount Co Wicklow, has won a high court action regarding disciplinary procedures concerning Ms Kelly’s alleged conduct at management.

At its June meeting the CEC, subsequently initiated legal proceedings. The judicial review hearing took place over several days in the High Court in July 2013.

In a judgement delivered on 6 August 2013, Ms Justice O’Malley found that the board had been neither fair nor rational on a number of counts in arriving at their decisions. Accordingly, she decided to quash both decisions of the board of management in respect of demotion.

A full report on the terms of the judgement, which has significance as regards disciplinary procedures in schools and the appeals process, will be carried in October’s InTouch.

10 THINGS you should know

1 The Haddington Road Agreement was implemented for INTO members with effect from 1 July. Further details are outlined on page 7 of this issue and on the INTO website.

2 The INTO in common with other education partners is launching a campaign to protect primary education in the context of Budget 2014. The INTO is particularly focusing on class size and details are outlined in a special eight page supplement in this issue.

3 Over 400 permanent teachers, and almost 1,000 non-permanent teachers secured panel rights this year. All permanent teachers and the vast majority of the non-permanent teachers have secured employment at the time of going to print.

4 Following repeated INTO representations 839 recent graduates received arrears in pay and 705 received arrears in allowances in June, totalling €2.8m.

5 Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act will be implemented from 1 November and an important notice is printed on page 9.

6 The application date determined by NCSE for late applications for resource teaching and SNA support for pupils with special education needs.

7 The Droichead proposals for probation and induction into the teaching profession published by the Teaching Council are subject to an INTO directive. (See information above.)

8 World Teachers’ Day is on 5 October and further details are printed on page 26 of this issue. See also www.ei-ie.org

9 The biennial Principals’ and Deputy Principals’ Conference will focus on the challenges facing school leadership and increasing concerns about workload, when it takes place on 26-27 September next.

10 Members are encouraged to log on to the Members’ Area of the INTO website and update their details including email and mobile phone contact details to receive regular updates from the INTO.
Members’ area – INTO website

In the Members’ Area of the INTO website you will find a wealth of invaluable information on topics such as classroom resources, administrative policies and curricular plans. You will also find useful tools such as a pension calculator. To access this area you must first register. The following information may be helpful to members who are accessing the Members’ Area for the first time.

**Logging in for the first time?**

1. Go to www.into.ie/ROI
2. Select the ‘new user’ link on the top right corner of the ROI homepage. This will bring you to the Registration page.
3. Enter your date of birth, payroll number, roll number and surname. Your surname should be the same as that on your membership card. If this name is incorrect you will have the opportunity to change it once you log in.
4. Membership number field: your username is your INTO membership number which you will find on your INTO membership card. Please note that the first character is the letter ‘I’ followed by two zeros. These three characters automatically appear for first time and repeat logins. You only need to enter the last five digits that appear on your membership card. (Northern Ireland members please note that the first three characters are a capital ‘N’ followed by two zeros).
5. Create Password field: when choosing a password you should choose something cryptic to make it difficult to guess e.g. include alphanumeric characters and symbols. Try not to choose something obvious like the name of your partner, children or school. Most importantly choose one that you will remember. Your password must be a minimum of 6 characters and a maximum of 12.
6. Enter personal email address if desired.
7. Read the ‘Terms and Conditions’ and click ‘Yes’ to accept them.
8. Select ‘Submit’.

**Difficulty logging in**

If you experience difficulty logging in, things to look out for are:
- Check that you have entered your roll number, teacher number etc. correctly.
- Check that your surname is the same as the surname listed on your membership card.
- Make sure you have entered your membership number correctly.

**Subsequent logins**

- Enter the last five digits of your membership number in the username field.
- Enter your password.
- Select ‘Log in’.
- Once you have accessed the Members’ Only area, click on the ‘My Details’ button on the right of the screen to view your personal details.
- If you have forgotten your password, you can re-register to get a new password.
- If you experience problems registering or need any assistance, please email support@into.ie or phone (01) 804 7713.

Tell us what you think ...

Have you something to say about an article you have read in InTouch, or is there an issue on which you want to communicate with others? Email editor@into.ie or write to the Editor, InTouch, INTO, Vere Foster House, 35 Parnell Sq, Dublin 1.
Mark all such communications ‘for publication’ and give a contact telephone number.
A €50 book token will be awarded each month for the prize letter published. Long letters may be edited.
### Teacher wins Part-time Work Act case

The Department of Education and Skills has been instructed to pay arrears of €62,000 and €5,000 in compensation to a part-time teacher. The teacher, who worked in the Modern Languages Pilot Initiative, had been paid an hourly rate which did not reflect her qualifications and service. In a Rights Commissioner recommendation issued in July, the Commissioner found that the DES was the employer for the purposes of the Part-time Work Act 2003, and that the DES assertion that the teacher was not appropriately qualified for the post did not constitute objective justification for payment at the unqualified rate.

The INTO took cases on behalf of four such teachers, and this was the first one which was decided. We are hopeful that this decision will assist in resolving this long-standing grievance on behalf of the former teachers in the Modern Languages Pilot Initiative.

### Equality Committee

The next meeting of the Equality Committee will take place in INTO Head Office on 13 September 2013. The committee is looking forward to following up on their successful conference in March with some advice for schools on mental health issues. The committee has also prioritised the area of gender in education for the coming year and they hope to present a project at the Education International 2nd World Women’s Conference, which will take place in Dublin in April 2014.

### Maternity leave cases

During the summer, the INTO lodged cases with the Rights Commissioner Service and the Equality Tribunal on behalf of a number of teachers who have been adversely affected by the changes to maternity in lieu introduced on 1 May 2013. These cases will take some time to come to hearing, but we hope that a successful outcome in these cases will ensure that the changes are reversed.

### Investment in education

Congress, recognising the link between education investment, improved quality of life, economic competitive advantage and a more equal society, calls on Governments North and South to prioritise education spending at primary level to ensure that:

- a) expenditure per pupil at primary level is increased to above the OECD average;
- b) Irish class sizes are reduced to the OECD average;
- c) the recent 15% cut in teaching for children with special needs is reversed;
- d) supplementary English language teaching and additional teaching for Traveller children is restored;
- e) schools are not required to rely on voluntary contributions or local fundraising to meet standard operating costs;
- f) the decision to end both the Summer Works Scheme and the minor repairs grant is reversed;
- g) funding for book rental schemes matches the real cost of such schemes;
- h) a broadband connectivity programme similar to second level is extended to primary schools;
- i) funding for the repair and replacement of ICT is provided to schools on an annual basis;
- j) the conditions of employment of teachers and all education workers are protected;
- k) school curricula are not narrowed in response to testing and “outcome” regimes which narrow the education experience;

teachers and education workers are consulted on all aspects of proposed education reform.
INTO welcomes new Head Office interns

The INTO Intern scheme has been running for the past two years and has been a huge success and a very positive experience all round.

We bade farewell to Teresa Walsh in July and our new interns for the 2012/13 school year, Hazel O’Connor and Andrew Bowen, have now joined us in Head Office. Hazel has been teaching in St Fiacc’s NS, Graiguecullen, Carlow. She is a member of North Carlow Branch and is a member of the branch committee. Andrew teaches in Scoil Mhuire Naofa, Carrigtwohill, Co Cork. He is a member of Midleton Branch and has served as Midleton branch secretary and vicechair of District XVI.

We very much look forward to working with Hazel and Andrew.

David O’Sullivan, previously an intern, was appointed as an INTO official earlier this year.

Hazel O’Connor & Andrew Bowen

INTO Member’s Diary

The INTO Member’s Diary is currently being posted to members. New members will receive their diaries directly from Head Office. The diary normally posts in June. This year, we were awaiting confirmation of salary scales and other information so were unable to finalise for printing until the end of June.

Ragtime, flashmob and one act plays

An update from the Teachers’ Musical Society

June was a month of great celebration for the Teachers’ Musical Society as members of the society travelled to the Association of Irish Musical Society (AIMS) annual awards ceremony in Killarney. The society’s 2013 production Michael Collins – A Musical Drama, was nominated for six awards. The group won awards for Best Chorus, Best Supporting Actor (Seán McMahon), Best Director (Eoin Cannon) and the show was awarded second place in the Best Overall Show in Ireland for the 2012/2013 season. Other nominees were Seamus Sullivan for Best Supporting Actor and Frank Beadle for Best Male Singer.

The society is keen to hear from both male and females interested in joining the cast of this exciting show. An information night will be held in the Teachers’ Club, Parnell Square, on 14 October in advance of auditions. For further details please email teachers.ms@gmail.com or phone 087 2728316.

While Ragtime is the main production of the year, the society participates in and organises other events throughout the year. Members were involved in a musical flash mob in August and plans are underway for the society’s festival of one act plays which runs in the Teachers’ Club, Parnell Square, Wednesday 9 to Saturday 12 October at 8pm nightly. Tickets are available on the door.

INTO Presidential Dinner

INTO Presidential Dinner 2013 to celebrate the election of Brendan O’Sullivan as President of the INTO

Venue: Regency Airport Hotel, Swords Road, Dublin
Date: Saturday, 12 October 2013
Tickets: €65 from Niall (District XIV Secretary)
Mobile: 087 6988540
Email: district14@into.ie

Break – a play set in an Irish staffroom

Break, HotForTheatre’s new show in this year’s Dublin Fringe Festival cracks open the staffroom, and asks some serious questions about Ireland’s education system from a teacher’s perspective. The show aims to examine how the system works… or in some cases doesn’t work. Amy Conroy has used her many years of experience as a drama teacher and facilitator in schools to write this latest show. She is fascinated by what the role of teachers should be, what is expected of them, how far above and beyond the call of duty they are expected to go, and what about the things they can’t do – whose job is that?

Cast includes:
Clare Barrett, Amy Conroy, Damien Devaney, Elyne Harrington, Tom Lane and Mark Fitzgerald.

Project Arts Centre (Space Upstairs)
5-21 September, 2013.
www.fringefest.com

Draoiacht Arts Centre
Blanchardstown
www.draoicht.ie
Info: www.hotfortheatre.com
**INTO SubSearch** is designed to help teachers find substitute work – whether just out of college or seeking part-time employment.

**How it works**
Substitutes register their profiles and availability on the site – while principals can search for registered substitutes in their area.

**SubSearch facilities include:**
- Substitutes may register for work in up to three locations.
- Principals can search for available qualified teachers within specified distances.
- Both substitutes and principals can indicate a preference for work in a Gaelscoil or Gaeltacht situation.
- Video tutorials and FAQs about using SubSearch are available online.
- A search facility is included whereby the category of 'substitute available' is returned in accordance with Circular 31/2011. Responses are categorised in the search i.e. listing qualified primary teachers first, followed by retired qualified primary teachers, followed by other teachers.
- Both substitutes and principals can indicate a preference for work in a Gaelscoil or Gaeltacht situation.
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Register on subsearch.into.ie
Find the mobile version at msub.into.ie

**XXX**

**Comhar Linn Draw Winners**

**May 2013**
**Car:** Toyota Auris
Gillian Kelly, Presentation Convent, Bandon, Co Cork.

**Cash:** €750
Eithne and Edward Kennedy, Navan Road, Dublin 7.

**Weekend for two plus two All Ireland Football final Tickets**
Fiona Yeates, Cooneal NS, Ballina, Co Mayo.
Brian Leonard, Co Sligo.

**June 2013**
**Car:** Toyota Auris
Helen O’Toole, Athlone, Co Westmeath.

**Cash:** €750
Noel Ward, Dublin 6W.

**Weekend for two plus two All Ireland Football final Tickets**
Claire McGrane, Loreto Junior NS, Dublin 12.
Maureen Kearney, Co Sligo.

**July 2013**
**Car:** Toyota Auris
Dublin 12.
Claire O’Rourke, St John Bosco SNS, Dublin 7.

**Cash:** €750
Catriona Cannon, Scoil Iosagain, Crumlin, Dublin 12.

**Weekend for two plus two All Ireland Football final Tickets**
Claire Foskin, Castaheany Educate Together NS, Clonee, Dublin 15.
Liam Maloney, Co Tipperary.

**INTO Consultative Conference on Education 2013**

This year, the annual INTO Consultative Conference on Education will take place in the Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise, on Friday 15 and Saturday 16 November 2013. This year, the conference will focus on the theme of ‘Numeracy in the Classroom’.

Please note that this is a delegate only conference and only those members nominated by their branch and district as delegates can attend. If you are interested, make sure you attend your September/ October branch meeting to put your name forward.
INTO Members’ Draw raises €50,000 for Children’s Medical and Research Foundation

Proceeds from the 2013 annual INTO Members’ Draw were presented to Joe Quinsey, Chief Executive of the Children’s Medical and Research Foundation by the INTO President, Brendan O’Sullivan, and Georgina Glackin (INTO General Treasurer’s office) on 18 July. The draw income totalled €81,000, with a prize fund of €31,000. The Children’s Medical and Research Foundation is the fundraising wing of the Our Lady’s Children’s Hospital, Crumlin. The hospital is Ireland’s largest paediatric hospital and is responsible nationally for the provision of the majority of tertiary care services for children. It is the national centre in Ireland for a range of specialties including childhood cancers and blood disorders, cardiac diseases, major burns, cystic fibrosis and rheumatology.

Brendan and Georgina were brought on a tour of the cardiac ward which is outdated, congested and cramped. Healthcare in 2013 has simply outgrown the existing cardiac facilities designed and built in the 1950s. The new cardiac unit is currently being built thanks to public fundraising initiatives and will open by the end of this year.

Joe Quinsey from the CMRF said, “Our work here in the Children’s Medical and Research Foundation is vital and urgent. Children are suffering right now from the most serious and harrowing illnesses and conditions. We need to provide the best facilities and equipment to save their lives, ease their burden and speed up healing”. Joe thanked the members of the INTO for their contribution to the annual draw.

Congratulations to all the prize winners and thank you for making a difference to the lives of sick children.

INTouch Members’ Draw raises €50,000 for Children’s Medical and Research Foundation

Paddy’s school garden Blooms

We were delighted to see Paddy Madden’s school garden at Bloom again this year. The garden has been a feature of the SEED stand at Bloom for the last few years and is very popular with visitors to the event. Paddy, who lectures on SESE in the Marino Institute of Education, writes the very popular SESE series of tips for InTouch which has ‘zoomed in’ on everything from plants to trees to mammals and garden creatures.

Pictured at Bloom were Paddy Madden, Moira Bennett, Principal, Scoil Chaitríona Girls’ NS, Coolock, who visited the school garden at Bloom, and Tom O’Sullivan, editor of InTouch.

SCHOOL GARDEN CONFERENCE

Venue:
Marino Institute of Education, Dublin

Date:
Saturday Oct. 5th 2013

Time: 10am – 4.15pm
Fee: €50

Register via
www.SchoolEarthEd.ie

Paddy’s school garden Blooms

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Pictured at Bloom were Paddy Madden, Moira Bennett, Principal, Scoil Chaitríona Girls’ NS, Coolock, who visited the school garden at Bloom, and Tom O’Sullivan, editor of InTouch.
Went to a garden party...

On Wednesday 10 July Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, hosted a garden party at Áras an Uachtárain to commemorate the 1913 Lockout.

The president welcomed representatives of trade unions to the event which, he said, commemorated the courage, endurance and historical human rights significance of the Great Dublin Lockout of 1913. He stated that; “We must always respect what James Connolly and Jim Larkin brought to the Trade Union Movement and what they faced in terms of the Lockout of 1913, and the social forces that colluded and combined to defeat them. We pay tribute to them today with this gathering, and to all of you, invited today, for your painstaking efforts to create a society defined by solidarity and equality for all its citizens.”

Discussions on disability access

On 27 June last, Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO Education Officer, and Deirdre O’Connor, INTO Equality Officer, met with the Registrars and access officers of the colleges of education in the offices of the Teaching Council in Maynooth. Dr Mary Liz Trant, Director of the National Access Office, also attended the meeting. The colleges of education have been working towards significantly improving access for students with disabilities to primary teacher education programmes. The colleges outlined the changes which are taking place, including the revision of the Health Status Information Form and the entry of the colleges into the DARE scheme which promotes entry to higher education for persons with disabilities. The importance of the colleges working collaboratively with schools in this area was emphasised, particularly in relation to school placements, in order to overcome the barriers that have historically existed in access to teacher education programmes for students with disabilities.

In the photograph, front row left to right: Prof Eugene Wall, Mary Immaculate College Limerick, Mai Ralph, Marino Institute of Education, Dr Peter Kenny, Froebel College of Education, Audrey Halpin, Church of Ireland College of Education, Olivia Bree, St Patrick’s College Drumcondra. Back row left to right: Deirdre O’Connor, INTO, Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO, Dr Mary-Liz Trant, Head of the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education, Higher Education Authority, Maura Moore, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Vivienne Byrne, St Patrick’s College Drumcondra, Dr Seán Delaney, Marino Institute of Education, was unable to attend the meeting.

Limerick, Mai Ralph, Marino Institute of Education, Dr Peter Kenny, Froebel College of Education, Audrey Halpin, Church of Ireland College of Education, Olivia Bree, St Patrick’s College Drumcondra. Back row left to right: Deirdre O’Connor, INTO, Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO, Dr Mary-Liz Trant, Head of the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education, Higher Education Authority, Maura Moore, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Vivienne Byrne, St Patrick’s College Drumcondra, Dr Seán Delaney, Marino Institute of Education, was unable to attend the meeting.

Annual Vere Foster lecture

The annual Vere Foster lecture organised by INTO Northern Committee was held this summer on the theme ‘Jim Larkin in Belfast’. The speaker was author, distinguished local historian and INTO member Jimmy McDermott. Pictured at the lecture in Crumlin Road Gaol were historian Niamh Pairsell; Noel Ward, Deputy General Secretary; Jimmy McDermott and Gerry Murphy, Northern Secretary.
Croke Park CPD
INTO Learning has developed a series of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Packages in response to a demand from schools for support in the implementation of ‘Croke Park hour’ sessions. Packages are designed to facilitate whole staff professional development and include packages on:
- Child Protection.
- Bookmaking (Visual Arts and Literacy).
- Comprehension.
- Literature Circles.
- School Self-Evaluation.
For detailed information on the above, including slideshow overviews of content, go to www.intolearning.ie.

Online introductory course for learning support/resource teachers
This course will be delivered online over nine modules commencing Tuesday 2 October. The modules are designed to lead the teacher through the initial stages of setting up a learning support/resource system in their school and the management of children receiving such support. One module will be delivered online each Monday (excluding midterm) and participants can work through the course content at their own pace. A support facilitator will assist participants and will host a weekly chat session to discuss module themes. An interactive discussion forum for each module will allow participants to share learning and experiences and to seek clarification on module content. Specific course criteria will apply to participants wishing to receive a Certificate of Course Completion. This course costs €180.

The module outline is as follows:
- Module 1: Introduction.
- Module 2: Selection and Assessment.
- Module 3: Models of Support.
- Module 4: Approaches and Methodologies 1: Oral Language.
- Module 5: Approaches and Methodologies 2: Reading.
- Module 6: Approaches and Methodologies 3: Writing and Spelling
- Module 7: Approaches and Methodologies 4: Mathematics.
- Module 9: Administration and Record Keeping.
Registration will open on Monday 16 September. Further details: Erin on 01 804 7756 or email emcgann@into.ie.

Supporting literacy development across the primary school
This course will be delivered over four modules from mid-October. Further details in October InTouch and on www.intolearning.ie

‘Pop Up’ PLCs in November
INTO Learning will continue its series of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) through the hosting of a short-term online PLC on the theme ‘Visual Arts and Literacy’ in November 2013. The group will be facilitated and the aim will be to share and discuss classroom experiences, opinions and resources on this theme. Members will be encouraged to contribute photographs and a short description of one art lesson in the classroom. On closure of the community after three weeks, each member will have access to the shared ideas of the group in the form of a downloadable slideshow presentation.
Further information is available on www.intolearning.ie.

CEOL Ireland: music courses to go online!
Ceol’s Music Online Courses for primary teachers include weekly lesson plans and music resources, supporting the approaches and methodologies outlined in the Primary School Music Curriculum (all strands and strand units). The programmes are designed to enable teachers to teach music in a simple and fun way, regardless of musical background and levels of confidence in their abilities. There will be continuous facilitated support and lessons will be supported by video demonstrations of the teaching approaches and methodologies involved. Discussion forums and weekly opportunities for ‘live chat’ will provide opportunities for teachers to discuss progress and to share experiences.

Ceol’s online programmes will be available for registration from September 2013. These include:
- Stage One – Junior Infants
- Stage Two – Senior Infants
- Stage Three – First Class
- Stage Four – Second Class
Go to www.intolearning.ie for further details and to register. Registration on the above is now available at the reduced rate of €100 for the full school year.
See more of what Ceol can offer on www.ceolireland.ie.

Scoil Samhraigh, Dún Chaoin
D’éirigh go hiontach leis an gcúrsa Gaeilge agus Oidhreacht a d’aеraighe Cumann na mBuainnhteoirí agus a tionolaíodh in Iarlaith Dubhneach an tseachtain seo caite. D’fhreastail os cionn cáed bunnuinhteoirí ó roinn mhaithe áiteanna ar fud na tíre ar an gcúrsa agus bhí ranganna agus imeachtaí eile ar bun in ionad An Bhlascaoid Mhóir, Dún Chaoin agus sa Scóil Náisiúnta Bhlascaoid Mhóir. Dhubhnaíochta atá ar fáil le haghaidh na haois a bhí ceist ag an gcúrsa agus is féidir an rud seo a fháiladh faoi mhíniú na bliana seo chugainn agus sinn go léir slán. Ní fhéidir leis an gcúrsa seo a bhí ann agus tá sé i gcóras againn do an mhíniú dirtear leis an gcúrsa sa bhliain seo chugainn. Ní hamháin go bhfuil eolaíochtaí ina gcéadú agus is féidir an rud seo a fháiladh faoi mhíniú na bliana seo chugainn.

Seán McMahón, INTO Vice President, pictured with course organisers, Nuala Úi Gheartailt and Seán Ó Catháin.

Supported by Foras na Gaeilge

For further information on this course, visit www.ceolireland.ie.

Autumn on www.intolearning.ie
Trade union training for INTO officers

A wide ranging programme of Trade Union Training is planned for the coming term. Officers at district, branch and forum level are being notified separately about the training arrangements. The programme is part of the continuing commitment to support the work of INTO officers throughout the country.

District Tutors’ Training will be targeted at providing support seminars for staff representatives around the country. District officers’ training will be focused on district organisation, campaigning and lobbying strategies, and increasing participation. Branch officers training will be focused on branch organisation, communicating with members, and increasing participation. Forum officers training will be focused on forum operations, communications and feedback, and increasing participation. Each training seminar can accommodate 60 officers, based on

Cathaoirleach and secretary, with some capacity for organisers from the bigger branches.

### Trade Union Training – Schedule, Term 1

#### District Tutors

- Thursday and Friday, September 12 and 13

#### District Officers

- Thursday and Friday, September 19 and 20

#### Branch Officers

- Thursday and Friday, October 3 and 4
- Thursday and Friday, October 10 and 11
- Thursday and Friday, October 17 and 18

#### Forum Officers

- Thursday and Friday, November 7 and 8
- Thursday and Friday, November 21 and 22

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Should I stay or should I go? INTO advice and support

The INTO deals with a large volume of queries on an ongoing basis from teachers who are contemplating retirement and who wish to discuss the options available to them.

We anticipate that, over the next number of months, the volume of queries in this regard will increase significantly. Teachers are aware that under the Haddington Road Agreement (HRA) a pay-cut came into effect on 1 July 2013 for teachers earning over €65,000. However, teachers who retire prior to 31 August 2014 (the ‘grace period’) will have pension and lumpsum calculated on their pre-pay-cut salary.

The INTO Queryline has put the following measures in place to manage these queries:

1. A number of examples of the differences in retiring before or after the ‘grace period’ are on the INTO website.
2. A pension calculator is available on the INTO website which allows members to generate estimates of pension and lump sum.
3. A podcast is available on the website which ‘talks through’ the examples referred to at (i) above.
4. A series of regional meetings will take place throughout the country. These are single topic meetings and are designed for one specific purpose, namely to assist members in understanding the relevance of the ‘grace period’ when calculating pension and lump sum.

A number of these events have already been organised for the following venues:

- 27 September – 6.30 p.m. – Killashee House Hotel, Naas – PDP Conference.
- 17 October – 3.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Silver Springs, Cork.
- 22 October – 3.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Regency Hotel, Dublin.
- 24 October – 3.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Clayton Hotel, Galway.
- 5 November – 3.30 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley.
- 15 November – 6.30 p.m. – Heritage Hotel, Portlaoise – Education Conference.

Please note that these are an initial list of venues and others will be added as required.

Teachers are requested to reserve a place on one of these courses by emailing their name and preferred venue to stayorgo@into.ie. Please note that the seminars that are to take place in relation to the PDP Conference and Education Conference are not confined to delegates.

A full schedule of two day Retirement Planning Seminars will also be run during the course of the 2013/14 school year. These courses will be rolled out from November onwards. The dates for these seminars will be carried in the October InTouch and application forms will be downloadable from the INTO website.

vi The Queryline will continue to deal with calls and queries from individual members. However, we would ask people in the first instance to avail of the resources available on our website and to attend one of the ‘Should I Stay or Should I Go’ Seminars. Our retirement team will be spending significant time away from the office at meetings and seminars and may not be readily available. We do, of course, understand that some members will have individual or personal queries that cannot be addressed via the website or at a public meeting and we will endeavour to deal with such queries as speedily and as efficiently as possible.

Finally, we would like to reassure teachers that the INTO will provide every assistance possible in relation to members contemplating retirement. Teachers have almost 12 months to consider the matter prior to giving notification to the BOM/DES by the end of May 2014. It is also worth emphasising that the ‘grace period’ is only one of the issues to be considered in contemplating retirement and, on its own, should not be the decisive factor.
The country’s largest teaching union has accused the Government of enforcing savage cuts on pupils with special needs. The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO) claimed that schools with more than 20 pupils who need resource classes or additional support face losing one of those dedicated teachers.

Irish Independent, 20 June 2013

**Teaching cut announcement criticised**

Criticism of cuts to extra teaching for children with special needs, has been criticised by education figures... The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation said the delay was insensitive to the workings of schools. It said principals who have to share resource teachers with other schools are struggling to organise staff for September.

Irish Examiner, 22 June 2013

**Special needs education cuts slammed by teachers union**

The country’s largest teaching union has accused the Government of enforcing savage cuts on pupils with special needs. The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO) claimed that schools with more than 20 pupils who need resource classes or additional support face losing one of those dedicated teachers.

Irish Independent, 20 June 2013

**Hours for special needs pupils cut by 10%**

The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation strongly condemned the cuts, describing them as “savage”. The union said the Department of Education and the council were “attempting to hide the extent of cutbacks” from parents. “Given the increase in special needs children, in real terms this is a significant cutback in resource support for special needs,” the union said.

The Irish Times, 20 June 2013

**Education at a Glance 2013 Report**

‘Less funds for education over bank bailouts’

Less money is being spent on education in Ireland as a direct result of propping up the banks, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development has said. The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation said the OECD information on Ireland typically dated from 2010 and so did not include recent salary cuts and the impact of the pension levy. The union also pointed to the finding that Irish class sizes at primary level remains the second highest in the EU, at 24 pupils per class. Only England has bigger class sizes in Europe.

Irish Examiner, 26 June 2013

**Proportion of public expenditure on education fell by 40% in a decade**

OECD report finds educational attainment levels in Ireland have increased significantly since 2000. Reacting to the report Peter Mullan of the Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO) said the fall in the proportion of public spending on education was directly responsible for cuts to school budgets, school staffing and special needs teaching hours.

The Irish Times, 26 June 2013

**Government halves its spending on education over the last 16 years**

Government spending on education has fallen sharply since 2000. The INTO said the figures show that education spending as a proportion of all public spending has more than halved from 19 per cent in 1997 to 9.4 per cent. The union said the fall in spending was hitting schools hard and argued it was responsible for cuts to school budgets, school staffing and special needs teaching hours.

On the airwaves

**Six One News – RTE 1**

Interview with Sheila Nunan who condemns cuts to special needs teaching in schools.

25 June 2013

**DriveTime – RTE Radio 1**

Interview with John Boyle (CEC, INTO) on special needs cuts.

20 June 2013

**Michael Reade Show – LMFM**

Brendan O’Sullivan (President, INTO) discusses cuts to resource teaching.

20 June 2013

**Morning Mix – South East Radio**

Extended feature on criticism for the latest cuts to SNA resource teaching hours. Interview: Brendan O’Sullivan (INTO) 20 June 2013

**Kildare Today – KFM**

More cuts to special needs school resources criticised. Interview: Bryan O’Reilly (INTO Executive)

20 June 2013

**Tommy Marren – Midwest Radio**

Brendan O’Sullivan (President, INTO) discusses special needs cuts.

20 June 2013

**Morning Focus – Clare FM**

Sean McMahon (INTO Executive) discusses cuts to resource hours.

20 June 2013

**Ireland AM – TV3**

Noel Ward (Deputy General Secretary, INTO) discusses special needs cuts.

20 June 2013

**RTE News**

Primary teachers’ union the INTO has strongly criticised the resulting reduction in the allocation to individual students. The union has accused the Department of Education and the Council of attempting to hide the extent of the cutbacks.

19 June 2013

**Newstalk.ie**

The INTO has described the cuts as “savage” and it says schools will not be able to cope. Sheila Nunan, General Secretary of the INTO, said primary schools would not be able to meet children’s special needs. “Expecting special needs children to develop with three quarters of the resources in some of the most overcrowded classrooms in the EU is preposterous,” she added.

19 June 2013

**Six One News – RTE**

Children with disabilities face further cuts to teaching hours. Interview with Brendan O’Sullivan (INTO).

19 June 2013
Those of you who were delegates at the INTO Congress at Easter may remember seeing a bunch of clowns in attendance. Yes! Real clowns! Clowns of the red-nose-and-juggling variety! The multi-coloured clad clowns may have looked a little unconventional amongst the teaching professionals but represented the Dublin-based charity, Clowns for Haiti, who were invited to attend as partners of the INTO's Global Solidarity Initiative. And so they commanded a stand at the Silver Springs Moran Hotel in the main conference lobby right opposite the coffee dock – which proved helpful in keeping their energies clown-high!

After a successful pilot in selected schools in 2012, Clowns for Haiti were there to announce the launch of the ‘The Clowns for Haiti Pencil-case Appeal’, to be rolled out in schools from September 2013. Co-founder of the charity, Peter Hanley, said, “We were delighted to be at the Congress to launch the project. It’s such a simple and easy idea – the children loved it last year and we’re thrilled to have INTO support for the 2013 academic year.” In short, the project involves linking Irish and Haitian schoolchildren through the gifting of pencil-cases. The Irish schoolchildren fill the pencil-cases with five items of their own unwanted stationary items, and a short letter for their Haitian counterpart. Clowns for Haiti will ensure that each pencil-case is gifted to those schoolchildren in Haiti who are the most in need... and so friendships begin...

Don Conway, teacher and committee member of Clowns for Haiti, commented that the appeal of the project lies in its simplicity, “As teachers, we understand the importance of making this initiative teacher-friendly as well as student-friendly. We have developed a short, interactive DVD for teachers to play at the start of a lesson or in a whole-school assembly. All information and instructions for the students are contained in this DVD and we’ve made sure to make it accessible for all ages and classes. It’s fun, easy and educational.”

Clowns for Haiti was established in 2009 by a committed group of teachers, nurses and business-people who who have a real heart for Haiti. From the outset, they decided to make education the focus of the charity’s work. Hundreds of schools were decimated in the devastating earthquake that struck the island in January 2010 and over the last four years, Clowns for Haiti have been raising funds to assist in the rebuilding and re-sourcing of schools in Haiti.

The way in which they connect the two international communities of Haitians and Irish is through the performing arts. “Tapping into the children’s imagination through the medium of drama is a very powerful educational tool,” says Dorothy Godsil, teacher and committee member of Clowns for Haiti. “Clowns can communicate a real social message by bringing a sense of fun into the classroom – and that applies in Cork, Galway and Port au Prince!” In their repertoire, the Clowns provide impromptu appearances, planned workshops and full-scale productions – most notably the one they staged last year in The Ark, the purpose-built cultural centre for primary school children in Dublin’s Temple Bar. Over 300 schoolchildren were entertained through mime, music and dance and heard of the story of Haiti and how both countries can help each other.

All schools will be invited to participate in ‘The Clowns for Haiti Pencil-case Appeal 2013’. Emails will be sent to principals nationwide in September 2013 with further details of how to participate.

If you would like to find out more about Clowns for Haiti, check out the website at www.clownsforhaiti.com where you can read their blog and see photos of their recent trip to Haiti. Alternatively you can follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/clownsforhaiti or follow them on Twitter. Any questions specifically about the project, please email clownsforhaiti@gmail.com
Continue saving with Membership Plus and INTO in 2013/2014

Your new Membership Plus card is enclosed with this issue of InTouch

If your card is missing, please contact the INTO office on 01 804 7700. New members will receive their cards directly from Head Office.

Activate your card straight away for a chance to win €50
Everyone who activates their 2013/2014 Membership Plus card by 31 October 2013 will enter a draw to win a €50 Shopping Card of their choice from our selection of discounted shopping cards.

To activate your new Membership Plus card and get the full benefit of the new and improved Membership Plus website:
1. Go to www.membershipplus.ie or access link to Membership Plus from www.into.ie/ROI
2. When prompted, enter your Membership Plus card number beginning MTS. Please note it is not necessary to use your INTO membership number.
3. Click on the Register button to complete the short activation process. You will then be able to view the full range of offers, be kept up to date with the newest offers, enter fantastic competitions and much more.

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New circular on roll books

Over the summer, the DES issued Circular 028/2013 in relation to simplified arrangements for the maintenance of the Register (Clárleabhar), Roll Book (Leabhar Rolla) and the Daily Attendance Book (Leabhar Tinrimh). The circular also clarifies the issue of the Register maintained under the Education Welfare Act (2000).

The circular sets out that the school's Register (Clárleabhar) is the 'register' for the purposes of Section 20 of the Education Welfare Act 2000. The Act requires that once a child is registered in the school, the child's name must remain on the register, until such time as the principal of the school has been notified that the child is registered in another school. The circular also states that the requirement to "remove" the name from the register will be by means of a note in the Clárleabhar.

The simplified arrangements for the keeping of the school records include changes in the information required in the Clárleabhar (e.g. parents' occupation, information on attainment not required), in the Leabhar Rolla (e.g. averages and aggregate figures no longer required) and an electronic version of the Leabhar Tinrimh.

The INTO has welcomed the clarifications and changes, but has expressed disappointment that the circular does not make provision for the use of electronic roll books. In its submission to the DES on this matter, the INTO called for the recognition of electronic attendance recording systems as the school records.

Circular 31/2011 sets out a series of measures in relation to teacher recruitment, including the requirement to prioritise unemployed teachers over those in receipt of a pension, and registered teachers over unregistered people.

The DES has also implemented the following procedures in relation to the employment of retired teachers and unregistered people:

- The Department will have regular reports on the incidence of hiring of retirees and unregistered people. These reports are likely to be produced on a quarterly basis.
- Where there is significant use of long-term engagement of retired teachers or unregistered people by schools, the Department will write to the management bodies and unions informing them of this and the schools in question.
- The Department may also write to boards of management to request the board to provide evidence to the Department of compliance with the terms of Circular 31/2011 – i.e. requesting the furnishing of documentation on the appointment procedure and reports prepared by the principal for the board of management in relation to the appointment of retired teachers of unregistered people in the school.
- If necessary, the Department will also consider the publication of the names of schools where it is satisfied that there is persistent long-term engagement of retired teachers or unregistered people by schools.

These measures signal a more vigorous approach by the DES to this issue. Both the INTO and the Retired Teachers' Association of Ireland have campaigned for and support the above measures. All schools should prioritise unemployed teachers for any substitute and/or temporary positions in schools during this difficult economic and employment period. This is particularly important in the context of both probation of recently qualified teachers, and also teachers seeking to accumulate service for redeployment panel rights.

School leadership at a crossroads

The biennial INTO Principals’ and Deputy Principals’ Conference will take place this year on Friday, 27 September and Saturday 28 in the Killashee House Hotel, Co Kildare. Over 300 delegates from Principals’ and Deputy Principals’ forums throughout the country will be in attendance for the two day conference. Key issues being addressed during the conference will include current challenges facing school leadership in the context of austerity policies and the ever-increasing workload in leading learning in schools. The keynote speaker at the conference will be Shane Martin, a leading psychologist within the field of education who has worked extensively with principal teachers. A live webcast of the conference sessions will be available on the INTO website and further details, including the timetable, will be posted on the INTO website when finalised.

INTO Advice for members on issues of importance

Use unemployed teachers as substitutes

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An occasional column on health and healthy living.....

Back to school... How to hold onto that natural glow!

You can't beat a natural glow and it's always a challenge to try and hang onto it as long as possible especially after a great summer or holiday. The trick is to get into a good routine of eating well, keeping up the exercise and, where necessary, taking the right supplements.

As the saying goes, “beauty comes from within”. Just as your face can betray your emotions, your skin can betray your inner health. Poor skin condition is often the body's method of communicating that deeper internal problems may exist. Dry flaky skin may indicate that you don’t have enough oils in your diet or are not drinking enough water. Soggy skin may indicate that the liver is under pressure. So to achieve beautiful skin we have to treat from the inside out!

Proper nourishment for the skin is vital. Wholesome nutrient rich foods such as fresh fruit and vegetables, wholegrains, nuts and seeds are important. Zinc is a particularly potent antioxidant for the skin but it also helps with wound healing and laying down collagen. Zinc deficiency has been shown to exacerbate eczema and acne conditions so supplementing with zinc would be recommended in such cases.

Some people put up with dry, flaky and dull skin applying endless creams to no avail. Essential fatty acids and water are all internal moisturisers which should produce far better results. Incorporating some omega 3 fish oil or flax seed oil into the diet and drinking about ½ litres of water per day should make a significant difference. Skin gets thirsty too! You may also benefit from taking some silica, which provides the skin with the building blocks it needs to repair damage and renew skin cells. Silica needs to be taken for several months to achieve firm and smooth skin.

The digestive system and skin tend to be very closely connected. If you tend to suffer from sluggish bowels on a regular basis, it may well be affecting the condition of your skin. If wastes are not eliminated efficiently, they accumulate within the bloodstream and are recycled in the liver. This puts the liver under more pressure and excess toxins may be eliminated via the skin, triggering boils and spots! If you feel that your liver is a bit sluggish and overloaded, you may benefit from taking a combination of milk thistle and dandelion which will gently aid the elimination of toxins from the liver and help to regenerate liver cells.

The beauty industry is built upon promises of anti-aging miracles. The truth is the simple approach works best. Plenty of good sleep, exercise, water and fresh air all contribute to better skin and will help to keep you in the holiday mood long after you open the school books!

Contact Catherine Mulcahy at info@yourtonic.com if you would like any particular issues covered in this column. For information on your natural health and beauty needs please visit www.yourtonic.com. Tel: ROI: 01 283 3777 / Nth Ireland 087 024 03318. Also available through Membership Plus

Note: The information provided in this column does not seek to treat, diagnose, cure or replace medical or specialist advice. If you are currently taking prescription medication and intend to take nutritional or herbal supplements, always consult with your doctor. Do not begin a course of complementary therapy without first consulting your doctor if you are pregnant, are trying to conceive or are breast feeding.

Gill & Macmillan announces deal for exclusive distribution of Oxford Reading Tree and Project X in Ireland

Gill & Macmillan has announced that it has teamed up with Oxford University Press to become the exclusive distributor in Ireland of Oxford’s world famous reading programmes, Oxford Reading Tree and Project X. Gill & Macmillan can now offer better value than ever before to teachers on all packs.

Most teachers will be aware of Oxford Reading Tree’s excellent core readers, but the programme offers much more. The Floppy’s Phonics series for younger learners support the teaching of any synthetic phonics programme in schools, while senior classes will enjoy TreeTops Graphic Novels or True Stories. With lots of exciting series to choose from, Oxford Reading Tree is the ideal programme for schools setting up a literacy initiative such as Literacy Lift Off, or for station teaching. Particularly appealing to boys, Oxford’s Project X is a thematically based, character-driven and action-packed programme that will get children hooked on reading and writing.

Gill & Macmillan’s 2013 catalogue outlines all of the carefully graded packs available, which are suited to a variety of needs and budgets. The catalogue will arrive in schools in early September.
As a newly qualified teacher (NQT) structuring a long-term/termly plan can be challenging at the start of the year. The aim of a long-term/termly plan is to provide a road-map for the teaching and learning which is proposed with the class, for the term ahead.

The template and suggestions (right), under the various headings, may be helpful as you approach the preparation of the long-term/termly plan.

Long-term planning can be undertaken on a termly basis from September to December and January to June or alternatively you can plan for each term, whichever you find more efficient and beneficial.

Keep the long-term/termly plan succinct, realistic and relevant to the learning needs of the class. It is a working document and can be amended at any stage throughout the term.

For guidelines on short-term planning and also planning guidelines for resource and special education contexts see www.teacherinduction.ie. For queries on induction please email Mary Burke at mary.burke@spd.dcu.ie.

### Aims
Choose relevant aims and align them with those agreed in the school plan. Broad aims/objectives for that particular subject area are taken directly from the primary curriculum documents.

### Content
(a) Strands and strand units
Choose strand(s) and strand unit(s) for the subject area for the term. Link with the school plan. It is important to refer to the school plan to ascertain the strand units to be covered in a particular school year where subjects have been organised over a two year period.

(b) An overview of the content objectives to be taught and/or examples of learning activities
Choose relevant sections of the content objectives for that term and give some examples of learning activities.

(c) Skills and concepts to be developed
Match the skills to be developed with the relevant content objectives chosen. Example from infant history curriculum

Skills: Working as a historian: time and chronology, using evidence, communication.

### Approaches and Methodologies
Outline methods and approaches to support the content objectives and skills chosen e.g. working as a historian: interviewing an older person; using evidence: use of photographs. Ensure that a variety of approaches and methodologies are chosen over the year. Include how the learning will be organised for the class with regard to pair-work, group work, independent work etc. It is important to pay particular attention to using flexible grouping systems throughout the year.

### Resources
Name relevant resources to be used in that particular subject area for that term.

### Differentiation
Choose relevant strategies related to the content outlined above. Record resource/learning support provision.

### Assessment
Choose relevant assessment methods. Refer to the continuum of assessment methods (page 13) and ‘Bloom’s Taxonomy’ (pages 86-88) in Assessment in the Primary School – Guidelines for Schools (NCCA 2007).

### Linkage and Integration
Link and integrate subjects only where relevant. Refer to curriculum documents in each subject area for ideas on linkage/integration with other subjects.
This year, the Separated Teachers’ Support Group will mark 25 years since its foundation. The group was formed in 1988 by three brave and visionary INTO members, Fiona Poole, Tadhg Mac Phaidin and Maurice Kearney. While serving members in their respective union roles they became very much aware of the need for support which was felt by separated teachers, at that time in Ireland, in a climate which was hostile, both professionally and socially. Fiona had served as branch and district officer, CEC member and former INTO president, Tadhg served as member of the Benefit Funds Committee and Maurice was an active member of the Navan Branch. In discussing how they could best provide support to members, the idea of forming a support group was born. The first meeting was held in Dublin in November 1988.

The group subsequently became known as the INTO Separated Teachers’ Support Group (STSG). While initially membership was limited to separated primary teachers, it was later agreed that membership would be made available to single parents, widowed and divorced teachers. Many discussions have taken place over the years, in relation to changing the name of the group but a better title has not emerged. In relation to changing the name of the group but a better title has not emerged. In discussions over the years, in relation to changing the name of the group but a better title has not emerged.

Provided inservice module, raising awareness of the needs of bereaved children in the classroom.

Since its formation, officers and STSG members have actively pursued several personal and professional issues in members’ best interests. A sample of the many achievements to date is as follows:

- Made a submission of CEC for the provision of workshops and lectures which have been available:
  - Financial management.
  - Art therapy workshop.
  - Updates on family law.
  - Tour of Botanic Gardens.
  - T’ai chi workshop.
  - Mindfulness.

Responses from members surveyed in 2012 showed that 70% of members regard the provision of workshops and lectures as important.

Since its formation, officers and STSG members have actively pursued several personal and professional issues in members’ best interests. A sample of the many achievements to date is as follows:

- Made a submission of CEC for the provision of days off with pay to attend court hearings – one day’s pay now allowed.
- Provided inservice module, raising awareness of the needs of bereaved children in the classroom.
- Input into employment equality legislation.
- Information to members on Spouses’ and Children’s Scheme.

Thanks to Tadhg, Club na Múinteoirí is home to an extensive library. Each year, a grant is made available to members wishing to pursue further study. An independent assessor reviews applications.

Meetings are advertised in InTouch and on the INTO website www.into.ie. Club na Múinteoirí is the venue for three of the five meetings held annually. Two meetings – in January and October – are held in different parts of the country. These ‘away meetings’ make STSG accessible to members outside Dublin. Each November, members are honoured by the President’s visit to the AGM. Each meeting incorporates a lively social element which facilitates the development of warm friendships among group members. Results of the 2012 survey show that 81% of members regard social activities as important.

While marriage break-up today happens in a more accepting world, the individual trauma has not lessened. The loss and or death of a spouse have a huge impact on a person’s life.

The contribution by members who served the group in the role of chairperson, secretary, or treasurer during the past 25 years is much appreciated.

Past members and friends are most welcome to attend the celebration dinner in October when we can catch up and celebrate the pivotal role played by STSG in supporting members and being a powerful positive influence at a crucial period in their professional lives and for being the launch pad for so many firm friendships.

Fiona, Tadhg and Maurice, you have made a difference for many members of STSG.

**Renee Flynn** retired teacher and STSG secretary

### Upcoming events

**Meeting**

**Date:** Saturday, 12 October at 8 p.m. **Venue:** Club na Múinteoirí. **Contact** Chairperson, Trudy Carroll Miller at 042 9383670 or 0044 7931609315. Secretary, Renee Flynn at 090 6634618 or 087 6448402.

**STSG celebration dinner in the Grand Hotel, Malahide, to mark its 25th anniversary**

**Date:** Saturday, 12 October at 8 p.m. **Past members and friends, irrespective of status, welcome.**

**Contact** Secretary, Renee Flynn at 090 6634618 or 087 6448402 or Treasurer, Mary Kneafsey at 086 1944397.
An Cháilíocht as Ghaeilge – the Irish Language Requirement

Déanann Peadar Mac Giolla Bhriighde, Comhordaitheoir na Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge, cur síos ar an gCáilíocht sa Ghaeilge.

Cad é agus dó a bhfuil an Cháilíocht?

Bíonn ar fhillmhúinteoirí a thaitheann a gcoiriúil ollscolaigh lasmuigh den stát an Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge a bhaint amach le lán-aitheantaí a fháil mar bhunmhúinteoirí sa tír seo.

The Cáilíocht sa Ghaeilge (Irish Language Requirement) provides an opportunity for teachers who obtained their Primary Teaching qualification outside of the State and who have a curriculum shortfall in Irish, to make good that shortfall.

Rogha

Tá dhá bealach ann leis an Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge a bhaint amach. Dá bharr sin, tá rogha ag iarraidh. Traditionally primary teachers wishing to fulfil the Irish Language Requirement (An Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge) undertook the Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (SCG – Aptitude Test) as a means of acquiring the necessary qualification. Candidates now have the option of fulfilling the Irish Language Requirement by undertaking an Adaptation Period (OCG – Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge).

Difriochtai idir an SCG agus OCG

Tá difriochtai tábhachtacha idir an SCG agus OCG. There are important differences between the SCG and OCG. In this regard, prospective applicants are advised to consult carefully the information and guidance available at the website www.ilrweb.ie. In OCG (Adaptation Period) there is a strong emphasis on Múineadh na Gaeilge and on the candidate’s competency in Irish. The candidate’s competency to teach Irish in a mainstream class setting is assessed in the classroom itself and the candidate’s competency in Irish is assessed at the end of the Adaptation Period. Also in OCG, candidates must complete a minimum of 120 school days of teaching as a mainstream class teacher in one or more schools. That requirement does not apply to the SCG (An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge). Those differences between SCG and OCG can be determining factors for many as to which option or route to choose. A comparison of the main aspects of both the SCG and OCG is presented below.

An Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge – SCG and OCG

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCG: An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (Aptitude Test)</th>
<th>OCG: Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (Adaptation Period)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Modules to be achieved:</strong></td>
<td>Four independent assessment modules.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 1:</strong></td>
<td>1. Written Assessment (General Language assessment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Paper 1 (General Language examination includes practical element of Teaching of Irish, examined in the classroom.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 2:</strong></td>
<td>2. Aural Assessment (Multiple choice format)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Paper 2 (Examination of selected prose and poetry includes practical element of Language and Culture Project, examined in the classroom.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 3:</strong></td>
<td>3. Oral Irish Assessment (Picture discussion and general interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Aural Examination (Written answer format)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Module 4:</strong></td>
<td>4. Assessment of the Teaching of Irish (Assessed in a classroom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Oral Examination (Reading of passage and general interview)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pass Mark:</strong></td>
<td>40% in each assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Visit:</strong></td>
<td>One school visit during mid Jan/Feb for the examination of practical elements of Paper 1 and/or Paper 2.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom requirements:</strong></td>
<td>Candidates must be working in a mainstream class in a teacher capacity. A candidate must satisfy a Specific Adaptation Period Practice Requirement of a minimum of 120 school days, in each of which Irish is taught.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaeltacht Placement:</strong></td>
<td>Candidates must attend a recognised OCG Gaeltacht Course. It is strongly recommended that candidates undertake the Gaeltacht course placement before presenting for the Oral Examination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Candidates must attend a recognised SCG Gaeltacht Course. It is strongly recommended that candidates undertake the Gaeltacht course placement before presenting for the Oral Examination.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Candidates are advised to consult both the SCG Guide and OCG Guide carefully at www.ilrweb.ie before making a decision on which option (SCG or OCG) to choose.
Líon na nIarrthóirí a bhain pas (40%) amach um Cháisc 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>An Scruúdú le hAlmhaidh Cáilíochta (SCG)</th>
<th>Olraimh le hAlmhaidh Cáilíochta (OCG)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Páipéar 1</td>
<td>124 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muineadh na Gaeilge</td>
<td>46 (98%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Páipéar 2</td>
<td>114 (83%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Triail Scriofo</td>
<td>39 (74%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Triail Chluastuisceana</td>
<td>122 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Triail Chluastuisceana</td>
<td>38 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Scruúdú i Labhairt na Gaeilge.</td>
<td>126 (84%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Triail i Labhairt na Gaeilge.</td>
<td>37 (73%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ag clárú don Scrúdú

Candidates wishing to undertake the SCG examination or OCG assessment during the 2013/14 academic year must register with the Cáilíocht sa Ghaeilge Office in the Marino Institute of Education by 31 October, 2013 (registration forms available at www.ilrweb.ie). Early registration is advised. Registration allows a candidate to enter for the examination, provides access to materials and elements of online learning and will also allow a candidate to provide school details which the Cáilíocht sa Ghaeilge Office will require in order to co-ordinate the school based practical aspects.

Cúrseáil

Candidates when registering may also indicate their interest in undertaking an optional face-to-face course. Subject to sufficient demand, courses for the SCG/OCG are provided through the Education Centre network. The course materials have been designed by Rannóg na Gaeilge, Marino Institute of Education, and tutors have received training from Rannóg na Gaeilge, Marino. The commitment and support given to candidates by the Education Centre network and course tutors have been an important element in the success enjoyed by applicants. Where possible, it is highly recommended that candidates undertake a suitable course. Courses also offer regular and consistent contact with tutors and other candidates. Fees for these courses are payable directly to the Education Centre.

Tállí 2013/14

Candidates should note that fees to undertake the Cáilíocht sa Ghaeilge have increased. The increase in fees is due to the cessation of the part-funding which had been provided in previous years. Further details are available at www.ilrweb.ie

Eolas

Tuilleadh eolais faoin SCG agus OCG: Ríomhphost: scginfo@mie.ie agus ocginfo@mie.ie Gréasán: www.ilrweb.ie

Tá Peadar Mac Giolla Bhríghde ar iasacht ó Scóil Réalt na Mara, na Scéire.
The formal commencement of Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act, 2001 is fast approaching. The Department of Education and Skills’ Circular Letter (0025/2013) on Section 30 sets out the requirement for teachers in recognised schools to be registered.

From 1 November 2013, teacher’s employed in state-funded teaching positions in Ireland will be required to be registered with the Teaching Council in order to be eligible for payment of salary by the State. If you are a teacher who has not yet applied for registration, you should apply to the Teaching Council immediately. Registration application forms are available on www.teachingcouncil.ie

The Garda Vetting process must be completed before registration can be finalised. At periods of high demand, the Garda vetting element of registration may take 8-12 weeks to complete. The Council advises applicants for registration to apply to the Teaching Council for garda vetting without delay. Garda vetting application forms for teachers may be requested via the homepage of www.teachingcouncil.ie

Saturday, 5 October 2013 marks UNESCO World Teachers’ Day and, in celebration, the Teaching Council will host FÉILTE, the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence, at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham.

FÉILTE will offer a canvas on which teachers can paint the story of their own innovative professional practice. Examples of projects that will be highlighted by teachers on the day include: how to create a nurture room for children with behavioural problems; education through craft; apps for children with autism; utilising tablets in the classroom; anti-bullying strategies; communities of practice for teachers; leadership strategies.

The festival will be opened with an address by The Irish Times columnist Fintan O’Toole and will be closed with a ‘chat show’ hosted by RTÉ presenter and TCD PhD candidate Aoibhinn Ni Shúilleabháin and a performance by the National Children’s Choir.

All registered teachers will be invited to attend. As space is limited, attendance will be awarded on a lottery basis. Teachers will be emailed in September and asked to indicate if they would like to attend. Those who are selected in the lottery will be contacted with further details.

Further information as it becomes available can be found on www.teachingcouncil.ie

The teaching council to celebrate teachers’ professional practice at FÉILTE on World Teachers’ Day

Council provides teachers with free access to research resource

From 1 September 2013, all registered teachers will have free access to the EBSCO Education Source, a collection of over 1,700 journals, ebooks, and additional citations, monographs and abstracts in the field of education.

The Council’s Policy on the Continuum of Teacher Education promotes teachers as enquiry-oriented, life-long learners. The Code of Professional Conduct says that teachers should “inform their professional judgement and practice by engaging with and reflecting on … learning theory [and] pedagogy…”

The Council is seeking to actively encourage and facilitate this practice by offering free access to current research in education and pedagogy, thereby informing and enhancing practice as educators.

Access to the research resource is via www.teachingcouncil.ie

What teachers may access

• 1,700 journals
• 550 books and monographs
• Numerous education-related conference papers
• Citations for over 4 million articles
Class size under threat

Class sizes in primary schools are under threat in the next budget. Minister Ruairí Quinn said, after reversing the cuts to special education teaching in June, that he would have to find the equivalent €24 million to pay for the reversal from other means within the Department, including looking at class sizes.

Since then there has been further media speculation about the level of cuts to be imposed by the Government to education in the next budget. The original figure was €44 million to be cut from the education budget. The latest speculation has increased to almost €100 million due to money for the redress scheme for victims of child abuse. The CEC of the INTO has considered the threats to increased class size at its recent meetings and, in common with other education partners, has launched a campaign to protect primary education and investment in children’s futures.

Ireland already has the second highest primary class sizes in the EU. Higher classes mean less individual attention for pupils, increased pressure on other resources including special education within schools, and increased work pressure on overstretched school communities. It also means a loss of hundreds of teaching jobs with the knock-on effect of significantly less employment opportunities for teaching graduates.

The CEC is therefore calling on all members to play a part in the campaign to protect primary education and protect primary class sizes. Within this supplement we are publishing a range of information and facts and figures about primary class sizes. This includes the current staffing schedule but also what other staffing schedules could look like.

In addition, the CEC is also raising the unfair attack on smaller schools, particularly those with higher enrolments. The continuing increase in the enrolment requirements for those schools is part of this campaign.

We are republishing here the recommendation of the INTO Task Force on Smaller Schools, which are being pursued by the CEC.

What you can do!

- Make yourself aware of the issues.
- Attend local meetings on class size.
- Send the campaign postcard to your local TDs.
- Email your local politicians through the INTO website at www.into.ie/ROI.
- Ask your friends to support the campaign.
- Display the campaign poster (distributed with this InTouch) in your school.

Join the email campaign to lobby your TD

The INTO is seeking to stop an increase in class sizes in primary schools. Irish class sizes are the second highest in the EU, marginally behind the UK. On average Irish teachers teach three extra children per class more than their EU colleagues. Almost uniquely, in Ireland average class sizes decrease as a child moves from primary to second level. In most EU countries the opposite is the case.

Increases to Irish class sizes are not sustainable and will undermine government initiatives including literacy and numeracy, school self evaluation and anti-bullying programmes.

The INTO website is hosting a facility whereby INTO members, parents and other members of school communities throughout the country can email their local TDs. You can select your own constituency and the programme will generate email addresses for the relevant TDs. The following wording is preset on the email but can be adapted as necessary:

I am writing to you as a concerned constituent. I am deeply concerned about the threats to class sizes in primary schools and further cuts to primary education. I believe that the Government needs to protect this vital service. Research has shown that in smaller classes:
- each pupil gets more attention from the teacher thus enabling more one to one and group teaching;
- fewer pupils distract each other leading to more time on task for pupils;
- each pupil gets more use of shared educational resources such as computers;
- teachers can teach differently to suit individual pupils leading to improved learning outcomes;
- there is more classroom space to work with, meaning pupils have a more positive learning experience in schools;
- teachers get to know their pupils better and can make significant contributions to the social and emotional development of children;
- teachers can deal with hidden curriculum issues such as bullying and well-being more effectively;
- smaller classes are most important when children are young.

Please join the campaign by emailing your local representatives and encourage others to do so.
Budget 2014 challenges*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st, 2nd and early years education</th>
<th>2012 estimate</th>
<th>2012 provisional</th>
<th>2013 estimate outturn</th>
<th>% Change 2013 estimate versus 2012 estimate</th>
<th>2012 outturn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other programme expenditure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ pay</td>
<td>3,783</td>
<td>3,737</td>
<td>3,799</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-teaching pay</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superannuation costs</td>
<td>1,019</td>
<td>1,088</td>
<td>1,041</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School transport</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to schools, VECs/ETBs etc</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to education bodies</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher education</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redress/Child Abuse Commission</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>-18%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>-13%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6,050</td>
<td>6,012</td>
<td>6,060</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall programme total</td>
<td>6,123</td>
<td>6,081</td>
<td>6,131</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expenditure 2012 versus 2013 (€m)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay</td>
<td>€5,351</td>
<td>€5,289</td>
<td>€5,275</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensions</td>
<td>€1,103</td>
<td>€1,188</td>
<td>€1,128</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay and pensions total</td>
<td>€6,454</td>
<td>€6,477</td>
<td>€6,403</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-pay</td>
<td>€1,788</td>
<td>€1,715</td>
<td>€1,690</td>
<td>-4%</td>
<td>-5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current expenditure</td>
<td>€8,242</td>
<td>€8,192</td>
<td>€8,093</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure</td>
<td>€430</td>
<td>€410</td>
<td>€414</td>
<td>-5%</td>
<td>-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross expenditure</td>
<td>€8,672</td>
<td>€8,602</td>
<td>€8,307</td>
<td>-1%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriations-in-Aid</td>
<td>€609</td>
<td>€580</td>
<td>€580</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>-1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net expenditure</td>
<td>€8,065</td>
<td>€8,022</td>
<td>€7,927</td>
<td>-3%</td>
<td>-2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary teachers by job role

- Class Size
  - 64.14%
  - Special education – 30.04%
  - Other (admin, HSC, special etc) – 5.82%

Increasing pupil population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Projected Pupils Enrolled</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>€26,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>€29,127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>€32,019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>€34,743</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Savings measures (€m)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revised exchequer ceiling 2013</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Savings measures introduced in Budget 2013 (included in (c))</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog A – align teacher/SNA sick leave with civil service</td>
<td>€4.0</td>
<td>€4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog A – revised maternity leave arrangements for teachers/SNAs</td>
<td>€11.0</td>
<td>€20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog A – increase PTR for PLC schools by 2 points</td>
<td>€6.0</td>
<td>€10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog B – revised allowances to further education training scheme participants</td>
<td>€10.5</td>
<td>€21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog C – increase third level student contribution by €250 in 2013, 2014 and 2015</td>
<td>€18.5</td>
<td>€37.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog C – 3% reduction in income threshold for student grants</td>
<td>€2.0</td>
<td>€5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog A – reduce allocation to VECs (cash balances)</td>
<td>€13.0</td>
<td>€20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prog C – reduce allocation to universities/ITOs (cash balances)</td>
<td>€25.0</td>
<td>€50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>€90.0</td>
<td>€103.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unallocated savings included in 2014 ceiling</td>
<td>€44.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Figures from presentation to Oireachtas Committee

** Class Size

30.04%

5.82%

64.14%
Staffing schedules for primary schools

Under Budget 2012, the Minister for Education announced revised staffing figures for two, three and four-teacher schools for the years 2012/2013, 2013/2014, and 2014/2015. These are outlined in Figure 1 on this page. The current staffing figures under Circular 07/2012, for primary schools above four-class teacher level, are outlined in Figure 2. The figures in the current schedule are a combination of figures in Circular 20/2007 and Circular 23/2006. As a general rule the current figures are based on a gap of 27 or 28 in appointment figures above four-teacher school level (with the notable exception of P+16 to P+17, which is a gap of 38).

In looking to possible scenarios where a staffing schedule could be worsened under the next budget, the relevant figures to look at are those which would require an additional 29 or an additional 30 pupils. These are shown in Circular 09/2002 and Circular 12/2001. For information purposes therefore these are also published as part of Figure 2.

**Figure 1: Smaller Schools Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal plus Classroom Teachers</th>
<th>2012/2013</th>
<th>2013/2014</th>
<th>2014/2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P+1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+3</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>86</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 2: Other Schools Schedules**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P+4</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+5</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+6</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+7</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+8</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>P+9</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>238</td>
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<td>P+10</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>270</td>
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<tr>
<td>P+11</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>296</td>
<td>300</td>
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<td>P+14</td>
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<td>P+23</td>
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<td>610</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P+24</td>
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<tr>
<td>P+25</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>683</td>
<td>702</td>
<td>720</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Add for each subsequent teacher: 28 27 28 29 30
Sustaining a network of small schools

Report of INTO task force

Following the impact of Budget 2012 on small schools, Congress 2012 instructed the CEC to establish a Task Force to make recommendations to support and protect small schools.

The CEC adopted the recommendations of the Task Force as follows:

1. Three and four teacher schools
At this stage the changes to the schedule for the 2012/13 school year (i.e. increase to 14, 51 and 83 pupils) are being implemented.

Therefore, the immediate objective of the INTO in relation to three and four teacher schools must be to prevent the proposed increases planned for the 2013/14 and 2014/15 school years, i.e. to maintain 51 and 83 as the appointment figures for the 3rd and 4th teachers respectively.

Once this objective is achieved, the INTO should then pursue the objective of securing the restoration of the appointment/retention figures to 49 and 81 pupils for the appointment / retention of the third and fourth teacher respectively.

2. Two teacher schools with lower enrolments
It is also proposed by the DES to set 20 as the appointment/retention figure for the second teacher. The existing number of 12 pupils is to increase to 14 (2012/13), to 17 (2013/14) and to 20 (2014/15).

The INTO believes that a minimum enrolment should not on its own be the only determinant as to whether a second teacher is appointed/retained in a school. A range of other factors need to be considered including: geographical remotesness, distance from other schools of the same ethos, special consideration for schools serving Gaeltacht communities and the fabric of the school building.

Accordingly, a school which is essential and vital to the community is a ‘required school’ and should not be deprived of its own two teacher school status solely on the basis of not meeting an arbitrary minimum enrolment threshold.

Furthermore, the most significant staffing resource in small schools is the class teachers and this should be reflected in the DES’s allocation of staffing resources to these schools.

The Task Force recommends that a number of regional meetings of teachers working in schools with 20 pupils or less would be held in the autumn term to hear directly from these teachers.

3. Gaeltacht schools
As outlined above, the INTO believes that special consideration should be given to schools serving Gaeltacht communities.

The INTO must seek the restoration to Gaeltacht schools of the more favourable retention figure for the four teacher school which was abolished in Budget 2012. The INTO should also seek confirmation from the DES of a commitment to retain the continuance of the more favourable retention figures that currently exist for Gaeltacht schools with five to 11 teachers.

4. One teacher schools
Principals of one teacher schools have expressed serious concern on many occasions in relation to difficulties associated with teaching in one teacher schools. These concerns have included professional and social isolation, difficulties in teaching multigrade / all classes and concerns relating to health and safety and child protection. The INTO believes that it is unacceptable to expect one teacher to work in these conditions. In circumstances where a one teacher school is required, the INTO calls for the appointment of a classroom assistant to avoid the situation where the teacher is the only adult in the school.

5. Re-establishment of separate appointment and retention figures for all three and four teacher schools
Prior to the school year 2010/11 all schools had a separate appointment and retention schedule. The retention figure was slightly lower than the appointment figure. This ensured that a school did not lose a teacher with the departure of one family or even one child from a school. The INTO believes that a more favourable retention figure should be restored immediately for three teacher and four teacher schools as this would enable these schools to manage their enrolments in a more coherent and consistent manner.

6. Retrospective changes to the staffing schedule
The Task Force condemns the retrospective
dis-improvement to the staffing schedule for the 2012/13 school year and calls on the DES to give schools a year’s notice of any dis-improvement to the staffing schedule to enable those schools whose staffing will be reduced to plan for their changed circumstances.

7. Incentivised voluntary amalgamations

The agreed procedure governing the amalgamation of schools should be revised as a matter of urgency to include in particular, increased clarity regarding:

(i) who initiates and leads the process;
(ii) at what stage the process would automatically commence in the case of a small school with an irreversible decline in pupil numbers; and
(iii) the nature and extent of the consultation process with the local school community.

In addition, where it is the preference of small schools to amalgamate, a range of incentives should be put in place including:

- a special grant from the DES to the schools concerned, to employ an independent facilitator to manage the consultation/feasibility process prior to any decision to amalgamate being finalised;
- dedicated funding from the School Buildings Budget for construction/refurbishment work required;
- enhanced staffing for an amalgamated school;
- enhanced funding for the newly amalgamated school for its first five years in operation, i.e. the capitation grant that would be paid to the schools if they remain separate should be available to the newly amalgamated school;
- more flexible school transport arrangements; and
- an early retirement option for teachers in the amalgamating schools.

8. Shared services

The concept of shared services is a familiar concept to small schools and one that is viewed positively for example, in relation to shared GAM posts or clusters for principal release days. The creation of panels of supply teachers to cover teacher absences would be a huge support for small schools and should be pursued.

However, the clustering of two or more schools under one principal as happens in other countries, does not in itself enhance the sustainability of those schools and may even be considered a further erosion of a school’s autonomy.

9. DES value for money audit for small schools

The changes announced in Budget 2012 have caused widespread concern to communities served by small schools, including schools at present unaffected by the proposed increases in enrolment thresholds. The concern is that the government’s long term strategy is the closure of all two and three teacher schools. Following the publication of the VFM audit of small schools the Government /DES should clarify as a matter of urgency its position in relation to these schools.

10. Role of the CEC/INTO

The Task Force is of the view that the INTO should actively engage/negotiate with the DES in pursuit of the above objectives as part of its ongoing staffing campaign.

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**Table 1. National school pupils and teachers (mainstream classes), classified by pupil size of school**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pupil Size</th>
<th>Less than 50–99</th>
<th>50–99</th>
<th>100–199</th>
<th>200–299</th>
<th>300–499</th>
<th>Over 500</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>824</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>3,159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Teachers</td>
<td>1,221</td>
<td>2,880</td>
<td>4,620</td>
<td>4,703</td>
<td>5,074</td>
<td>2,218</td>
<td>20,716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Teachers</td>
<td>1,425</td>
<td>3,943.5</td>
<td>6,623</td>
<td>7,042.5</td>
<td>7,333</td>
<td>3,176</td>
<td>29,643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>18,230</td>
<td>61,854</td>
<td>113,196</td>
<td>131,519</td>
<td>131,465</td>
<td>59,953</td>
<td>506,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Class Size</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Teachers per School</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Note**: This table excludes pupils with special needs in mainstream national schools and their teachers as well as pupils in special schools and their teachers.

**Please note**: that the withdrawal of the Resource Teachers for Travellers in 2011 resulted in a change in the way pupils who are members of the Traveller community are counted in the annual Census of Primary Schools. This has led to a once-off discontinuity in the count of pupils in mainstream classes in mainstream schools, and that of pupils with special needs in mainstream schools.

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**Table 2. Outline of primary school provision in selected jurisdictions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>No of schools</th>
<th>% Schools &lt;50 pupils</th>
<th>% Schools &lt;100 pupils</th>
<th>No of pupils (all schools)</th>
<th>Average class size</th>
<th>Average school size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>3,165</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>45.9</td>
<td>492,742</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>863</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>154,652</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>16,971</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>3,963,980</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>1,435</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>191,460</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>2,099</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>365,320</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>2,033</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>416,587</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria, Australia</td>
<td>1,565</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>461,162</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>295</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Educational research shows that smaller classes lead to better learning outcomes for pupils, particularly in primary schools when children are young. It is also clear that reductions in class size positively benefit disadvantaged and minority children. Smaller numbers give teachers more time to work with individual pupils and allow them to teach differently, to implement the curriculum as intended. Improvements in children’s learning outcomes have been recorded where classes have been reduced to 20 pupils or less in initiatives that were properly planned, well implemented and recorded.

However, some commentators refuse to accept the research findings. In particular, these critics ignore the evidence that shows class size reductions benefit younger children. They also tend to argue that because other changes are required to drive improvements (such as the need for teachers to teach differently in smaller classes) the causal link between smaller classes and better outcomes is at best tenuous. This ignores the point that smaller classes are needed to allow teachers to teach differently. Critics also point to problems with teacher supply and teacher quality where reductions were not planned properly and associated costs and challenges such as increased classroom accommodation. So what does research on class size tell us?

**Educational research on class size**

It is true that for many years researchers failed to establish a link between smaller classes and better pupil achievement. This was because studies compared large and larger classes. Clear evidence of a positive benefit did not emerge until class sizes were reduced to approximately 20 per class. There is now enough quality research available, including several large scale studies, to show that smaller class sizes, particularly when children are young, produce better outcomes for children.

In 1978, Smith and Glass analysed 77 studies on class size and achievement and concluded that small classes were associated with higher achievement where the number of students in the class was fewer than 20.

In 1989, Slavin found that smaller classes had a positive effect on students where classes were reduced for at least a year to less than 20 students but the study also found that gains did not persist when classes were increased.

In 1986, Robinson et al concluded that the clearest evidence of positive outcomes from class reductions was at primary level, particularly from kindergarten to third grade, and that reducing class size especially benefited disadvantaged pupils. They also warned that positive effects were less likely if teachers did not change how they taught and how they managed their classrooms.

Using data from more than 800 school districts in Texas (2.4 million pupils), Ferguson, in the late 1980s, found that pupil achievement fell as classes reduced to 18 pupils. In 1997, Wenglinsky published findings on the relationship between class size and pupil achievement. This found that at fourth grade smaller classes were related to higher mathematics achievement while at the eighth grade level, smaller classes improved the school social environment, which in turn led to higher achievement.

**Class reduction initiatives**

Data from class reduction initiatives in the USA (Indiana, Tennessee, North Carolina, and Wisconsin) have expanded the research evidence on class size reductions in the early primary school years.

**Indiana:** Beginning in 1984, Indiana’s *Prime Time* saw the reduction of class size to 18 in kindergarten to third grade classrooms. Implementation was not rigorously controlled and the results were mixed. An evaluation of the project found that the reading scores of pupils in the smaller classes in first grade showed the greatest improvement.

**Tennessee:** Tennessee’s *Project STAR* (Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio) made important contributions to the quality of research evidence concerning class size reductions. A four-year longitudinal study showed that the pupils in smaller classes outperformed those in larger classes on both standardised and curriculum-based tests.

Subsequent research (*Lasting Benefits Study 1989*) showed the positive effects of class size reductions persisted. In 4th grade, students from the smaller classes outperformed the students from the larger classes in all academic subjects, were better behaved, made more effort and showed more initiative. Higher academic achievement continued as the pupils progressed through school.

**Burke County, North Carolina:** Another initiative to reduce class size took place in 1990 in Burke County, North Carolina. The goal was to reduce class size to 15 students in all first, second, and third classes and was accompanied by professional development activities for teachers in the area of teaching and assessment. Evaluation found that pupils in the smaller classes did better in both reading and mathematics achievement tests. Independent classroom observations of classroom activity showed increased teaching time in the smaller classes.

**Wisconsin:** In 1996-97, Wisconsin introduced a class size reduction programme called *SAGE* (Student Achievement Guarantee in Education) involving smaller classes from kindergarten to third grade in school
districts serving students from low-income families. SAGE program classrooms had one teacher to 15 students or two teacher teams with 30 students. SAGE first-grade students performed consistently better than comparison students in mathematics, reading, language arts, and total scores for the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills. These findings are consistent with the findings in Project STAR.

Other initiatives
In 1984, Texas passed legislation requiring a maximum class size of 22 students from kindergarten to 4th grade. Nevada began a class size reduction program in 1990-91, beginning with a target of a 15 to 1 for kindergarten and 1st grade followed by a class size of 22 for 4th through 6th grade and 25 for 7th through 12th-grade. In 1995, Virginia began an effort to reduce class size in kindergarten through 3rd-grade classes for at-risk students.

In 1996-97, California began a class size reduction programme aimed at reducing class sizes to 20 up to third grade. Nearly two million children were placed in smaller classes but learning outcomes were less than expected because the initiative resulted in the hiring of many persons with no teaching qualifications as teachers.

Summary research conclusions
Overall, research shows class size reductions need to be less than 20 pupils in the early grades (Kindergarten to third grade). These lead to higher student achievement with the average student moving from the 50th percentile up to somewhere above the 60th percentile with larger gains for disadvantaged and minority students. Students, teachers, and parents all report positive effects from the impact of class size reductions on the quality of classroom activity.

Why are smaller classes better?
When there are less than twenty children in a classroom, each pupil gets more attention from the teacher. Fewer pupils distract each other. Reduced class size also reduces the level of noise in a classroom. Each pupil receives a larger portion of the educational resources and consequently each pupil learns more.

The teachers have more flexibility to use different teaching techniques suited to the needs of individual students. Teachers find that they have more classroom space to work with because they are using the same classrooms with smaller numbers of students. Reduced class sizes also changes the educational opportunities beyond the classroom because teachers have more time to work with parents.

The quality of teaching in smaller classes is a significant factor. Teachers know their pupils well and can track how each pupil is doing. The teacher can intervene effectively to help individual pupils.

Researchers have also pointed out to better relationships in smaller classes. Pupils to are more engaged in classroom learning.

Smaller classes are a positive influence in the early years when children are learning how to be pupils in classrooms for the first time.

Small classes are a preventive, rather than a remedial, approach. Smaller classes help pupils to get a good start and avoid the more difficult educational path of falling behind and having to find help to catch up with their peers.

How small do classes need to be?
Research shows that class size reductions only bring benefits if reduced significantly and below a certain threshold. Reducing class size from 30 to 25, for example, may have no effect. It is unlikely that there is a single ‘magic number’ below which class size will suddenly produce a beneficial effect, but it is clear from research evidence that class sizes of 20 or below make a difference.

Class size and pupil teacher ratio
Pupil teacher ratio and class size are very different concepts. Reducing the ratio of pupils to teachers does not necessarily mean a reduction in class size.

Average class size is got by dividing the number of pupils by the number of class teachers only. In Ireland this is 24 pupils compared to an EU average of 20. Irish classes contain 20 per cent more pupils than EU classrooms.

Pupil teacher ratio is found by dividing the number of pupils by all the teachers in the system including non-class teaching staff such as administrative principals, resource teachers and home-school teachers. At primary level in Ireland this is 16 per teacher compared to EU average of 14.

The main policy initiative in Ireland in recent years has been to change the pupil teacher ratio and not to reduce class size.

Conclusion
Reducing class size to below 20 when pupils are young leads to higher pupil achievement.

The evidence is clear larger classes when children are young are a cheap fix at their expense.
Overcrowded classes – the facts

Ireland has second most crowded class sizes in the EU

Fact file
Ireland has the second most crowded classes in the EU at an average of 24 pupils per class compared to an EU 21 average of 20 per class. Only in England are classes at primary level bigger than in Ireland.

Over 100,000 pupils in Irish primary schools are in supersized classes of 30 or greater.

Schools have lost an average of half a teacher since this time last year and are feeling the squeeze. Staffing cuts such as the loss of Traveller teachers, English language teachers, disadvantaged staffing and special needs are having a big effect.

Pupil-teacher ratio figures show the extent of the teacher losses suffered in schools. The 2011/12 figure was an average of 16.2 pupils for each teacher, up from 15.7 in 2010/11, reversing a downward trend of at least 12 years.

Improvements to primary education made in recent years are now being reversed by successive Budget cuts. Irish class sizes are back to where they were a decade ago and getting worse. In 2002, average class size in Ireland was 24.5 the same as it is today.

Latest figures show that:
- 22.3pc of primary pupils are in classes of 30 or more – up from 19.8pc the previous year
- 88pc of pupils are in classes of 20 or more, up from 86pc the previous year
- 11.9pc of pupils are in classes under 20, down from 14pc.

Comment
The figures show the impact of government cutbacks on the ground in schools and are a wake-up call for the Minister who must stop the rise in overcrowded classes.

Irish class sizes are back to where they were a decade ago and getting worse. More than one hundred thousand children (112,821) are in classes of 30 pupils or more, up ten per cent on the previous year.

The primary school classroom is the frontline of the education service. It is where most children spend the majority of their time. Increases in class size affect over half a million pupils and their families.

At the same time as class sizes are rising non-class teachers are being cut from the system. More and more responsibility is being put on the class teacher to meet the needs of children with little English, special needs or disadvantaged backgrounds.

What the Department of Education and Skills states about overcrowded classes
The curriculum includes guidelines on methodologies. It builds on the latest research into, and the most up-to-date expertise on childhood learning. Used by teachers in the infant classes in primary schools, and coupled with additional resources for equipment and, in particular cases, by smaller child : adult ratios, the curriculum guidelines and methodologies should prove adequate to address the educational needs of the children in infant classes in primary schools.

- Much debate in recent years has centred on the optimal child : adult ratio and the implications of this ratio for effective learning. International research indicates that smaller ratios (18:1) in the initial years are beneficial, in particular for disadvantaged and minority students.
- …the clearest evidence of positive effects is in the primary grades, particularly kindergarten through third grade, and that reducing class size is especially promising for disadvantaged and minority students.
- Children who are in situations of relatively small child : adult ratios in preschool settings may find it difficult to adapt to the much larger class sizes in primary schools.

(From the White Paper Ready To Learn – Early Childhood Education in Primary Schools)
Transport Union staff struck and Dublin’s trams stopped running on 26 August 1913. Thus began a dispute which featured a ‘lockout’ of union members and which lasted into the following year.

In this centenary year, Lockout commemorations include a state event, the issuing of a postage stamp and a tenement living experience in Dublin’s Henrietta Street.

The reprinting of Padraig Yeates’s Lockout – Dublin 1913 is also a significant memorial. Well-written and painstakingly researched, it is the definitive history of the momentous events of 1913.

Balance?
This account of the lockout is as well balanced as might reasonably be expected. After all, how is a story to be balanced when one wealthy protagonist threatens to starve organised workers and their struggling families – a third of the city’s population, many housed in condemned tenements – into subjugation?

William Martin Murphy, his commercial empire spanning newspapers, hotels and the transport industry… aimed at smashing the union.

Nolan and John Byrne at the hands of police, the Church Street tenement collapse which left seven dead, the efforts at resolution including a Board of Trade inquiry, gestures of solidarity like food shipments from Britain, the involvement of prominent feminists including those behind the ill-fated Kiddies’ Scheme, the role of church, law courts and press, and the eventual fading out of the dispute in winter 1913–14 on terms hailed by employers as a victory.

Among other features of the lockout outlined by Yeates are:
- The backing of British trade unions for those locked out, to the tune of over €10 million in today’s terms.
- Support for Larkin and the workers, often powerfully expressed, from artists like Sean O’Casey, Yeats, George Russell and Shaw.
- School strikes in central Dublin where pupils rather than teachers demonstrated for Larkin. (Although the NUT in Britain contributed almost £1,000 to strike funds, the INTO was not involved and indeed had felt the lash of Larkin’s tongue in his Irish Worker paper earlier that year).

Absolute right
The dispute was fundamentally about power and the employers’ claim of absolute right to dictate both collective bargaining terms and the union to which workers might belong.

Although often referenced in union debate now, Dublin/Irish working and living conditions are very different 100 years after the lockout. There are issues to debate and lessons to learn from the dispute but such lessons are not easily applied today.

Moral victory, material defeat
Larkin and his union lost the battle but their stand was courageous and admirable, even heroic. The regard in which Larkin was held had not diminished after his nine-year sojourn in the US from 1914. On his return, he founded the Workers’ Union of Ireland which with the original Transport Union now make up SIPTU. Larkin’s popularity was also reflected in his election to both Dublin Corporation and the Dáil.

Although the lockout involved a huge struggle of ideas and power, Yeates regards the particular dispute as fundamentally unnecessary and as owing much to the uncompromising personalities of Larkin and Murphy. The long conflict was also “a far shabbier, bloodier and more mundane affair than the myth allows (and) … a much more closely run battle”.

Padraig Yeates has in this book done a uniquely valuable service, impossible to capture in a short review, to labour and trade union history. Running to some 600 pages with comprehensive notes, bibliography and index, this is a lucid account and analysis. Finding any fault would be to nit-pick, given the overall quality and scope of his achievement.

Noel Ward, Deputy General Secretary/General Treasurer

Want to read more about what was happening 100 years ago. Link to http://www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/IrishSchoolWeekly1913/ to read School Weekly magazines published that year.
The boys and girls of fifth and sixth classes in Carrig NS near Birr County Offaly spent the last year working on a film called Kate’s Ghost. Our film is based on Catherine Mahon, the first principal of our school in 1911. Catherine was the first woman to be elected president of the INTO in 1912 and went on to serve a second term in 1913.

Catherine was noted as a powerful public speaker and she encouraged women to become more involved in their union. She was a suffragette and was very involved with issues of equality and social justice. She also went on to serve on the North Tipperary County Council and on the Health Board.

When we discussed various ways we could celebrate the centenary of Catherine becoming president of the INTO, we discussed various options before deciding to make a film. The children worked with a scriptwriter called Stephen Goldsmith and decided to look at an aspect of Catherine’s life as a teacher and trade unionist rather than a biographical account of her life. This had already been done in great detail in a book by Síle Ní Chuinneagáin.

The aspect chosen was that of too much homework. The children complained among themselves that they had to spend far too much time doing homework and decided to go on strike. However, Catherine ‘appears’ to them and advises that they first go down the route of negotiation and that strike should be viewed as the last option open to them. The children thoroughly enjoyed producing this film. Although the subject matter of the film is a serious one, it is dealt with in a humorous way.

We are very proud of our final product. We feel it is a very enjoyable short film (approximately 22 minutes) that captures the essence of Catherine Mahon, a very important figure both in the history of the INTO and of our school, through the eyes of the children. We have had a fantastic reaction to our film from everyone who has seen it so far.

We worked with a local film company in Birr called Hello Camera on this project and found them fantastic to work with. We would also like to thank the INTO for their help with the project. If you would like to purchase a copy of our film, it costs €10 and can be sourced by contacting our school secretary Teresa on 057 9120804. We think our film would be an excellent addition to any school’s film collection – but then we would, wouldn’t we!

Tony Sampson is Principal of Carrig NS, Birr.

Catherine Mahon, first woman president of INTO.
Growing up in Ireland — a study of 5-year-olds

What is Growing Up in Ireland?
Growing Up in Ireland is the national longitudinal study of children. It includes 10,000 5-year-olds and 8,000 13-year-olds. The aim of Growing Up in Ireland is to describe and increase our understanding of all aspects of the lives of children in Ireland. The study focuses on a wide range of child outcomes, in particular their physical, socio-emotional and cognitive development, including school performance. For the younger children (at 5 years of age) the transition to primary school and how well they are settling into school is particularly important.

From an educational perspective Growing Up in Ireland looks at what role the education system plays in a child’s development, with a view to informing policies which encourage positive educational outcomes for as many children as possible. Most importantly, the study allows us to relate a range of personal, family, community and school characteristics to a child’s success in the educational system.

Growing Up in Ireland is a longitudinal study. This means that we record information from the same set of children (and their families) at different points in their lives. This allows us to track the children’s development over time.

Interviewing in the homes
Since March of this year we have been interviewing the families of 5-year-olds in our study in their homes. This has involved the child’s parent(s) filling out questionnaires, as well as the children themselves completing two cognitive tests.

When we are interviewing in the child’s home we ask his/her parent to sign a consent form to allow us to approach the child’s teacher to complete a questionnaire about the child and how he/she is doing in school.

Interviewing in schools from November 2013
From the beginning of November (after the mid-term at Halloween) we will be approaching schools to ask teachers to help us with Growing Up in Ireland. We will be asking the teachers of 5-year-olds who are in the study to fill out a questionnaire about any study child (or children) they have in their class.

There are about 10,000 5-year-old children in Growing Up in Ireland across all schools in the country. We estimate that we will be asking most teachers involved in the study to complete a questionnaire on one to three children. Teachers will also be asked to complete a very short questionnaire on themselves. The school principal will be asked to complete a short questionnaire, mostly on the school and its resources.

The cooperation and participation of the schools and teachers of 5-year-olds in Growing Up in Ireland is central to the study’s success. Although participation in the study is voluntary the people carrying it out would urge all schools and relevant teachers to support us in our work.

The importance of Growing Up in Ireland cannot be overstated. We hope that by carrying out studies such as this we can improve our knowledge of children and childhood in Ireland and help to make real and lasting improvements in their lives and the lives of their families.

Who is funding Growing Up in Ireland?
Growing Up in Ireland is fully funded by the Government, through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in conjunction with the Department of Social Protection and the Central Statistics Office. The Department of Education and Skills is represented on the Steering Committee for the project.

The Study is being carried out by a group of independent researchers led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College, Dublin.

The teacher’s participation in Growing Up in Ireland is supported by the INTO.

Confidentiality
The information provided by ALL respondents in Growing Up in Ireland is strictly confidential. It can be used only for statistical purposes. Confidentiality is guaranteed by law under the Statistics Act (1993). This covers all questionnaires completed by children, parents, teachers, principals etc. Parents cannot access the information which a teacher provides about their child.

We hope teachers will be able to assist us with this work in the 2013/14 school year and help us to make a difference for all children living in Ireland.

More information on Growing Up in Ireland can be found at: www.growingup.ie

Child and Family Agency will incorporate the NEWB

The Minister for Children, Frances Fitzgerald, has published a Bill to establish the Child and Family Agency. The Agency will take over the functions of the Family Support Agency and the National Education Welfare Board. The objective is to support and promote the development, welfare and protection of children, with a specific focus on children in the care system, victims of domestic violence and services relating to psychological welfare of the children. It will also support and encourage the effective functioning of families. The new Agency is also tasked to maintain and develop support services, including in local communities; publish information and research and advise the Minister on the functions of the Agency. The National Educational Welfare Board is to be dissolved and the functions will transfer to the Agency.

Dr Concepta Conaty Memorial Bursary

The Dr Concepta Conaty Memorial Bursary was set up to honour the life’s work of a visionary and dedicated Irish educator who passed away in 2009.

The 2013 Bursary was awarded to Pauline O’Hanlon, St Aidan’s SNS, Brookfield, Tallaght, for her research entitled Family Learning and explored how she, as home school community liaison coordinator (HSCL), can support parents and teachers to work in partnership to support children’s educational attainment.

Concepta Conaty was principal of Sacred Heart JNS, Killinarden, Tallaght, in 1990. She was approached by the DES to set up a scheme to pilot the then revolutionary concept of partnership between parents and teachers in the education of their children. The pilot ran for three years after which time it was mainstreamed.

Concepta’s vision, commitment and integrity ensured that all who worked with her were impressed and inspired. This is the third year that the Bursary has been awarded. The purpose of the award is not only to recognise Concepta’s life work and her immense contribution to Irish education but also to ensure that this work will be sustained by all who engage with marginalised families.

Carol Lannin, Regional Coordinator, HSCL Scheme, National Educational Welfare Board.
In September 2008, as a response to the adverse situation that was prevalent in Limerick City at the time the twenty-two primary and post-primary DEIS schools were invited to take part in a two year scheme, which would facilitate them to open their schools for activities outside of school time. This scheme was funded through Dormant Accounts to maximise community use of premises and facilities. The scheme was initiated by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in response to the Fitzgerald Report.

A total of €1.694m was made available through the Dormant Accounts scheme. Schools applied for a grant of up to €25,000 for capital projects, and used this grant to renovate buildings, buy equipment, develop facilities and install safety and security equipment. Schools also applied for up to €26,000 per year over two years to run programmes for children and adults. These programmes took place before and after school hours and during holiday times. The programmes were different in each school and included sports and fitness, music, information and communication technologies (ICT), languages, crafts, homework clubs, parenting classes and adult education.

The DES led and administered the scheme. The Transforming Education through Dialogue Project (TED), Curriculum Development Unit, Mary Immaculate College worked closely with the DES and the schools to support the scheme. The schools, DES and TED formed a network – OSCAILT – which provided a forum to share good practice and build cohesion and shared aims. OSCAILT continues after the scheme with a mission to open schools for ‘Life, Learning and Leisure’.

A report was launched in June by Minister of State Jan O’Sullivan and is available on line at www.limerick.ie/media/.

The benefits of the scheme were many and varied. The benefits to children included:
- the development of positive attitudes to lifelong learning and the building of aspirations;
- the enhancement of positive relationships between children and school staff;
- the cultivation of positive inter-relationships between children;
- the provision of opportunities to engage in a wide variety of activities which enable children to have fun while at the same time facilitating the development of a range of skills and talents. Parents highlighted the safety aspect of the school environment.

The benefits to parents and adult learners included:
- academic and skill development, opportunities for personal development and developing friendships;
- opportunities for accreditation and building aspirations and confidence.

The benefits to the school included:
- improved school experience for children and staff.
- School cultures were enhanced and there was a positive development of relationships with the community.
- Schools benefited from improved facilities and equipment.
- They extended school opening hours and this provided opportunities for school personnel to build positive relationships with parents, adult learners and the broader community.
- Schools also shared facilities and programmes and they had the financial resources to offer a rich menu of activities.

The report concludes that the scheme “had a major positive impact on the quality of life and learning for children, parents and adult learners, positively influenced school culture and built community pride” (p. 87). The following recommendations are suggested:
- The development of national policy to support strategic development of after-school services for children.
- The experience of the scheme should be considered as part of the planned review of the School Completion Programme (SCP).
- The existing opportunities to deliver after-school programmes in schools through the SCP, DEIS funding, volunteers, the Home-School Community Liaison (HSCL) scheme and the local Vocational Educational Committee should be further developed.
- The OSCAILT forum, as a model of good practice to nurture collaboration and support across key players in the education sector, should be noted as part of the evaluation of DEIS and should continue to operate as a support to Limerick DEIS school principals and teachers.
- Opportunities for greater collaboration between principals, HSCL Coordinators, SCP personnel in organising, administering and facilitating after school activities should be explored.

A full length version of this article is available at www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/InTouch/FullLengthArticles/

Written by Dr Ann Higgins and Dr Susan Frawley

Minister Jan O’Sullivan and Dr Ann Higgins with members of the OSCAILT team at the launch of the report.
How do Irish schools compare with schools around the world?

In June the Educational Research Centre (ERC) published National Schools, International contexts: Beyond the PIRLS and TIMSS test results. This new publication, edited by Eemer Eivers and Aidan Clerkin of the ERC, builds on the results of the 2011 PIRLS and TIMSS study of literacy, mathematics and science and examines in significant detail how Irish schools, teachers, classrooms, and pupils compare with their counterparts in across the globe.

Pupils

Compared to most other countries, Irish pupils are more likely to report feeling safe in school, and less likely to experience bullying. On the other hand, Irish children, particularly boys, are less inclined to say they like, or feel they belong, in school.

Irish pupils have more positive attitudes to reading and science than the international average but they are less positive about maths.

Aidan Clerkin reported that while Irish pupils were generally quite engaged in the classroom “teachers reported a widespread problem with pupils coming to class too tired to concentrate.” “This may be related to pupils’ reports that more than half had a TV in their bedroom, and one in five had a computer in their bedroom,” said Clerkin.

Pupils who spoke English as an additional language (EAL) – particularly those who never spoke English at home – tended to do less well than native speakers on the tests.

Parents

Irish parents almost universally agreed that their child’s school provided a safe environment. Irish parents were close to the international average for volunteering and well above average for monitoring and helping with homework.

Commenting on home-school communication, Eemer Eivers described the type of information given to Irish parents as somewhat imbalanced. “Compared to other countries, there is much less information on academic achievement and much more information on non-academic accomplishments. Ireland is unusual too, in the extent to which homework is used as a means of communication between home and school.”

Teachers, schools and curriculum

Irish teachers are younger than average, have high levels of career satisfaction, average confidence in their ability to teach maths, and below average confidence in their ability to teach science.

They report very low levels of collaboration with other teachers, and lower-than-average participation in continuing professional development activities for each of reading, maths, and science.

Irish schools tend to be considerably smaller than schools in most countries, and more likely to be located than rural areas. Ireland was one of only three countries where no children could access a science laboratory, and was slightly below average on availability of computers for pupils.

The average number of pupils in a classroom in Ireland is larger than average. The curriculum experienced by Irish pupils is unusual in two regards. First, the reading, mathematics and science curricula are older than those in many other countries.

Second, Irish pupils spent considerably less time than the international average in science lessons – whether we consider the official curriculum, or the curriculum as implemented by teachers.

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) and TIMSS (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study) are international studies of reading, mathematics and science. In 2011, more than 4,500 pupils in Ireland completed the tests and questionnaires – providing comparative achievement information at primary school level for Ireland for the first time since 1995.

Irish pupils scored well above average in international literacy tests and performed significantly above the average in maths and science. When the results were released in December 2012 the general secretary of the INTO Sheila Nunan described the outcomes as a good news story for Irish education and said the results reflected the hard work of Irish primary teachers.

“In particular,” said Ms Nunan, “Irish teachers can be proud of efforts made to tackle educational disadvantage and improve literacy levels.”

She said only three per cent of Irish pupils failed to reach the low benchmark level in reading compared to five per cent internationally. In reading Ireland ranked tenth out of 45 countries, in mathematics Irish pupils came in seventeenth out of 50 countries while in science Ireland was placed twenty-second place out of 50 countries.

The report National Schools, international contexts: Beyond the PIRLS and TIMSS test results can be downloaded in its entirety, or chapter by chapter, from www.erc.ie/pirlstimss.
Summer of pride

There was a break in the clouds halfway through the Dublin Gay Pride Parade, the sun beamed down on the 30,000 or so participants and it didn’t stop shining for a whole month! That was the start of our summer and it was a very busy one!

The INTO Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Teachers’ Group had our largest ever turn-out at Dublin Pride this year. We were joined by over fifty colleagues, both gay and straight, and buoyed along by the brilliant music of MaSamba who marched with us on the day. Pride festivals are both an opportunity to highlight inequality in the treatment of LGBT people and for straight people to show solidarity with LGBT colleagues, friends and loved ones, and that was certainly our experience of Pride this year. Our straight colleagues marched with us, our friends marched with us and the highlight of the day for many was to see young families lining the parade route and small children waving rainbow flags and cheering for the teachers as we walked by.

A week later we were in Belfast with the Northern Irish branch of the INTO and the experience was the same. Brilliant sunshine, a brilliant crowd, and once again we were cheered along the way by parents and pupils who had turned out to show their support for their LGBT teachers.

August saw members of the INTO LGBT Teachers’ Group travel to Stockholm to attend a seminar hosted by Lärarförbundet’s LGBT Network (the Swedish Teachers’ Union) as part of Stockholm Pride. We joined with teaching colleagues from Sweden, Germany and the UK to share experiences with other individuals, groups and networks working to promote LGBT rights in their unions, in the education sector and in society. While many teachers recounted positive experiences of ‘coming out’ to colleagues, students and the wider school community, this was still a challenging area for many teachers. The inclusion and visibility of LGBT teachers in schools was highlighted as a key issue as were the following topics of discussion:

- The visibility and inclusion of LGBT teachers in school.
- LGBT role models in school.
- LGBT inclusion in the school curriculum.
- The representation of LGBT families in school text books.
- LGBT parents.
- The training of teachers on LGBT matters.
- Section 37.1. in the Irish context and its implications.

It was a wonderful summer and not just in terms of the weather! The group’s new banner displays our motto ‘Visibility, Diversity, Equality’. We hope we’ve made some progress in addressing the visibility of LGBT teachers by attending these events over the summer months and we are happy and grateful to have had the support and involvement of straight colleagues at the pride festivals. Although we’re all back in our classrooms and staffrooms this week, the summer isn’t quite over yet. The Limerick Pride Festival is taking place this week, culminating in a pride parade on Saturday 7 September. Members of the LGBT Teachers’ Group will be travelling to Limerick from around the country to take part in the parade and we’d love to see you there. Come walk with your LGBT colleagues in the parade, or just cheer from the street, help us end this great summer with a bang!

Find us on Facebook and Twitter.
St Patrick’s NS, Glencullen win Irish Aid Award

And the winner of this year’s Our World Irish Aid Awards 2013 is... As 36 young 5th and 6th class pupils (and one not-so-young teaching principal) held a collective breath, we came to the culmination of months of hard work. The standard of this year’s entrants was extraordinary and I dared not hope that we could be so fortunate as to receive the prestigious overall trophy from over 1,000 entries. But...

Our journey began back in January with the announcement of this year’s theme ‘Education for All the World’s Children’. This is the United Nations 2nd Millennium Development Goal, which seeks to ensure that, by 2015, children all over the world are able to complete a full course of primary schooling. The Our World Irish Aid Awards encourage primary school children in Ireland to learn about the lives of children in the developing world and use their knowledge to create projects in a variety of media: from art, drama and essays to poetry, film and music. The Awards Programme is designed to foster a greater understanding of the Millennium Development Goals and Irish Aid’s work in developing countries.

Using the lesson plans and web links provided we spent a number of weeks exploring the barriers that face children in accessing education. These can include gender discrimination, poverty, location, special education needs, war, hunger, child labour, and many more. We examined the case of Pakistan student Malala Yousafzai. The pupils designed questionnaires and emailed them to field workers in Concern, VSO, Trocaire and Suas with exciting, informative responses. Using all this information, the children were able to consider and mindmap realistic solutions to overcoming such barriers.

Following this, we faced the daunting prospect of how to illustrate the students’ learning in creating a project. Any medium is acceptable under the award guidelines and this can be quite overwhelming for a teacher. However, I have discovered young people are more than capable of taking the lead using their own unique ideas. These included designing:

- Viktor’s Story – a Minecraft adventure story for PC;
- a filmed drama Malala’s Story;
- a lego model maze;
- Bashing Barriers board game;
- Medicine Moments – a ‘Scratch’ game;
- Field, Home, School – a yard game;
- an art model school showing how many barriers there are before you reach school; and
- a giant pencil case with reflections of the process presented on giant pencils.

The pupils also had to show how they engaged with the wider community. This included an interactive exhibition in the school hall, communication of our project via Facebook, Twitter and our school website, a specific blog outlining all our work and playing the various games with all the classes throughout the school. We also attempted to write postcards to all the 189 countries that have to complete their Millennium Development Goals by 2015. Finally, three of the girls filmed a documentary throughout the project and this was viewed by all in the community. This work was completed through February and early March.

I’m sure teachers reading this must think I’m crazy taking this on. But we were, in essence, completing every subject area of the curriculum while integrating 21st century learning tools. The students were fully engaged, enthusiastic and, most importantly, working at each individual’s full potential. As a class teacher, every day was a joyful buzz of discovery-based learning. As school principal, the entire school was engaged in peer learning. And, most importantly, all students were engaging with serious economic and political issues as global citizens.

Some may think that while the project is a great piece of fun, there is no place for it in an overcrowded curriculum. Two days after we won the award in June Minister Quinn announced a 25% cut in special needs resource hour teaching. I walked in the following morning to an indignant, angry group of children who had heard the news on their tvs and radios. After all the work we had done in examining barriers to education in developing countries, here in our own country, a similar discrimination was taking place.

I am extraordinarily proud of each of these students. I have no doubt that engagement with this project has changed the course of some students’ lives. And while I know that future presidents and taoiseachs may well sit before me, every single one of these 11 and 12 year olds will be members of tomorrow’s society, making decisions and formulating opinions on the injustice others in our global community face. The Our World Irish Aid Awards project sets them out on this path and I for one look forward to being part of their world.

Kathleen Byrne, teaching principal, St Patrick’s NS, Glencullen.
While traditionally, Irish classrooms have displayed examples of published posters and teacher-generated charts on the walls, with changing constructivist methodologies which value the involvement of pupils, further learning and integration of subjects, interactive displays are becoming more commonplace in Irish classrooms today. With interactive displays, pupils are much more likely to pay attention to the display if they have to do something with it, rather than just looking passively at it (Moon, 2005, p.146). The level of interaction can range from simply involving pupils in displaying their own work, to writing/recording open-ended questions and answers, to creating a game or competition based on the display or using the display as a summary to reinforce learning on a chosen theme. By creating a multi-sensory approach to displays, the learning generated can involve visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities where pupils look, read, discuss, record, think, touch and taste. This print-rich environment not only supports content and language learning, but encourages pupils to appreciate a physically attractive learning environment and learn beyond their class textbooks.

This article will define and identify the components of an effective display, along with providing examples of what to display, ideas on how to make your own display and recommended sources to further consult.

What is an effective display?
“Display does not just mean putting up a few pictures or posters on the wall to make it look nice. It is an attractive collection of things which are arranged in a meaningful way with a clear learning purpose.” (Moon, 2000, p. 145) If changed regularly, an effective classroom display has the potential to create a stimulating environment which attracts and motivates students of all ages for learning.

An effective display has…
- A theme.
- A clear focus on student learning.
- Meaning.
- Connection with the current curriculum topic.

References

Special thanks to:
Laura Cosgrove, Elizabeth Daly, Eimear Ryan and Niamh Moriarty, students of Mary Immaculate College Final Year Elective – Advanced Approaches to Teaching and Learning, for their interactive display on ‘The Titanic’.

Displays for the primary school
What to display

While displays have traditionally focussed on subject areas or particular themes such as the seasons of the year, children’s learning is most likely to be extended from those displays that feature an in-depth exploration of a topic from a variety of subject perspectives. Current local, national and international topics of interest can be structured into an interactive display and be explored from a variety of different perspectives. An example below of a display structured on ‘The Titanic’, in this the 100th anniversary year of its sinking, is a good example of how to construct a three-dimensional display that will attract and motivate students to learn more about the topic.

The example displayed ensures children can be active in their exploration of the theme of the display, as illustrated by the variety of activities. It’s three-dimensional nature ensures it will capture students’ attention and provide a focal point for discussion.

Classroom displays can also consist of:

- Word walls/word banks/topic terminology.
- Examples of student work e.g. writing, art, stories/poems, student booklets, written presentations.
- Posters, mind maps, summaries, class rules, diagrams, charts, timelines, celebrations.
- Flashcards on equipment/classroom objects/extension box.
- Message Board with lists of ‘things to do’ or ‘messages’ for students/parents.
- Signs, logos, key vocabulary.
- Topic table: displaying objects related to a topic/theme.
- Table display: e.g. music/mathematical/scientific/IT aids.

How to make your own display

“Classroom displays are one of the most powerful and overlooked tools for teaching.” (Clayton, M.K. & Forton, M.B. 2001) Making your own display requires courage, planning, time and energy and some teachers fear their lack of artistic skills. However, images may be photocopied onto overhead paper and traced using either an overhead projector or document camera. Also Microsoft Publisher can be used to create banners and headings and some websites give permission to download images for free.

The following steps are involved in making a display:

- Decide on theme/focus.
- Make a draft of layout.
- Choose backing paper and borders – choose bright contrasting colours, using the colour wheel below.

Create visual impact with mounting:

- Involve all the students, regardless of ability levels: use the display as a motivator for their examples of work.
- Label pieces of work, include sub-headings.
- Reflect on and discuss curricular topic.
- Include an aspect of on-going interaction to maintain student interest and extend learning e.g. a competition, cloze reading/writing exercise; a question box; changing/adding information to display.
- Change regularly (Using a thematic approach, based on curricular topics or to coincide with religious holidays, if applicable).

Useful website

Below you will find some useful resources for ideas on the construction of displays, themes for displays and content for chosen themes.


Dr Fiodhna Gardiner-Hyland is an Education Methodology Lecturer at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Email: fiodhna.gardiner@mic.ul.ie. Dr John O’Shea is a Lecturer in Mathematics Education and Education Methodology at Mary Immaculate College, University of Limerick. Email: john.oshea@mic.ul.ie
What is IMMA?
IMMA is the national institution for the collection and presentation of modern and contemporary art, its mission is to foster within society an awareness, understanding and involvement in the visual arts. Throughout the school year we run a rich and varied programme of events for primary school teachers and pupils that support and develop creativity, placing the contemporary child and contemporary art at the core of its engagement.

The Curriculum and Contemporary Art: Free art workshops for primary school teachers
Running from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. over six Saturdays between September and April this free continuing professional development programme for primary teachers is led by artists and IMMA’s mediators. The workshops provide an opportunity for teachers to explore contemporary art practice through discussion and creative processes. At the core of this programme we aim to provide teachers with the opportunity to develop their own skills and understanding of the visual arts. Each session focuses on a specific exhibition, and we have an exciting programme of workshops in the autumn that will look at the Surrealist artist Leonora Carrington (21 September), IMMA’s collection (26 October), Eileen Gray and architecture (9 November) and aesthetics in contemporary art (18 January).

Primary School Programme: Look, discuss and do
For our autumn-winter Primary School Programme we invite primary school pupils and teachers to engage with the extraordinary world of Surrealist painter Leonora Carrington. Running over two hours, a primary school visit facilitates looking, discussing, and responding through art making processes. For this exhibition we will be focusing on surreal narratives, Celtic mythology and fairy tales. For a fee of €25 (DEIS exempt) you can book a place on our primary school programme via our website at www.imma.ie.

Resources and self-guided visits
We encourage teachers to bring their class on self-guided visits to the museum and support this through free online resources and art packs available from the bookshop. IMMA Our Collection is a booklet for teachers and a series of themed art packs for children about IMMA and its collection. Our People and Portraits pack is currently available from the museum bookshop, along with the teacher’s booklet. You can also visit the IMMA website, www.imma.ie to view our new online collection and to access a variety of web resources in our schools pages, including notes on how to visit a gallery and notes for teachers on our exhibition Leonora Carrington.

IMMA re-launch weekend 12 and 13 October 2013!
We are delighted to announce that the main building of the museum, which has been closed the past two years, will be opening again on the 12 October, with a weekend of celebratory events for all ages. This includes a special family exhibition running from the 12 – 20 October, which will be complimented by a number of participatory activities and workshops for families.

For further information on our exhibitions, primary school and teachers’ programmes, please contact Katy Fitzpatrick, Children’s Programme Co-ordinator at katy.fitzpatrick@imma.ie or check out our website at www.imma.ie.

IMMA is giving away a prize of a copy of IMMA Our Collection teacher’s booklet and a People and Portraits pack for every pupil in their class. To submit an entry for this prize, please email Katy Fitzpatrick by Friday 25 October with the subject line IMMA Our Collection.

“I have always found that the nature of the works shown at IMMA are of such inherent value and such a wonderful stimulus that the children engage with them at quite a deep level.”
Mary Hurley, Teacher, St Killian’s Senior National School, Dublin 24

Cúrsaí Teagaisc
Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA)
Autumn programme for schools and teachers at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham

“I was thoroughly impressed by the manner in which the visit was structured, the knowledge of the mediator, the questions posed to the children, the exhibits on view and opportunity for the children to express their own creativity in the workshop. What they gained from the trip was immeasurable as they benefited socially, artistically and culturally.”
Eimear Miley, Teacher, St Killian’s Senior National School, Dublin 24
A thematic approach

Scollnet theme pages present teachers with a simple way to use ICT in the classroom

There are currently 58 different theme pages on the Primary section of Scoilnet (www.scoilnet.ie) and the pages are consistently among the most viewed across the entire site. Covering an array of topics across subjects the methodology behind the pages follows the general Scoilnet portal approach — with each page containing a series of external web links to various sources relating to a specific theme.

The topics for the themes and the content for the pages are sourced and described by teachers. In general the pages have a common layout with sections for facts or information; class activities; project ideas; and teachers’ information.

Cross-curricular

Many of the theme pages take an integrated approach across subjects while others link specific strands. Integrated learning, both within subjects and between curricular areas, is an important principle of the curriculum and the Scoilnet theme pages allow teachers to use blocks of time in a very efficient way.

From the feedback given to Scoilnet, teachers like using the theme pages as they allow learning to appear more natural and the teaching is more creative and enjoyable. This would seem to be particularly the case when the themes are topical. Last year, the centenary of the sinking of the Titanic saw almost 20,000 views of the ‘RMS Titanic’ theme page in April alone. Teachers were able to use the theme page to teach SESE History (the events, eyewitness accounts, emigration); SESE Geography (icebergs; geographical location of passengers); Visual Arts (colouring, model making).

If there is a downside, it may be that teachers need to spend time planning, particularly initially, how they are going to engage with the theme page in class – being always conscious of staying within curriculum requirements. This is something that Scoilnet is looking to address in the future with specific curriculum linkages placed in the descriptions on the theme pages.

Ancient Greece to inventors and inventions

The collection of theme pages is quite broad with a particularly good subject representation from SESE History, Maths, SESE Geography, English and SESE Science.

Some of the pages have been on the site for some years and one of the challenges for the Scoilnet team is to ensure that the external links within the pages continue to work. To this end the pages are systematically reviewed twice a year and new links added or deleted where appropriate.

There has been a growing trend for readers to contact Scoilnet and suggest specific links for these theme pages. It might be a cultural thing, but it seems that such suggestions mostly originate from the United States where students are sometimes required to share a new resource with a website they have used in class. The engagement is done through the teacher to whom the link is initially given.

See Scoilnet’s Primary theme pages at scoilnet.ie/primary_theme_pages.shtm.

The most viewed theme pages in 2012 were:

1) Titanic (scoilnet.ie/themepage_rms_titanic.shtm);
2) Halloween (scoilnet.ie/halloween_theme_page.shtm);
3) St Patrick (scoilnet.ie/theme_page_st_patrick.shtm);
4) London Olympics (scoilnet.ie/theme_page_london_olympics.shtm);
5) Stone Age (scoilnet.ie/stone_age_theme_page.shtm);

CPD Reminder

PDST Technology in Education (formerly NCTE) continues to provide and fund free courses on ICT in teaching and learning after school through the education centre network. Contact your local education centre for this term’s courses or ask them to arrange (free) whole school training in your school. You might want to avail of a short refresher course on the things you learnt during an ICT summer course, for instance. See www.ncte.ie/courses for details.

Short online courses will also be available this term through TeacherCPD.ie, the online learning platform for free courses delivered by PDST Technology in Education. See TeacherCPD.ie for details.

Compiled by Patrick Coffey, PDST Technology in Education

Time

The theme page on ‘Time’ in many ways exemplifies the approach behind these pages. Time is an important strand unit for all levels of the primary curriculum and the teacher who selected content for the page added material for:
- helping children tell the time of the day (analogue and digital);
- time zones;
- history of clocks;
- how time was measured in the past;
- quizzes and crosswords about time.

Literacy is included through a consonants and vowels game played with a countdown clock.

(See scoilnet.ie/Time_Theme_page.shtm)
Concept mapping

Linking scientific concepts together in the primary science classroom

"The teaching of science in the primary curriculum involves the development of two types of understanding: conceptual understanding and procedural understanding. Children's conceptual understanding is concerned with the development of scientific knowledge and with their deepening understanding of fundamental scientific ideas." (DES, 1999)

As discussed in the previous edition of In-Touch March 2013 (Primary science – linking concepts and ideas), scientific concepts are ideas and generalisations which children acquire about themselves and their surroundings through using scientific skills in a wide variety of practical experiences. Concepts are used to organise thinking and knowledge and to communicate ideas to others.

New concepts become more meaningful when they are interrelated with other concepts. Concept mapping is a practical versatile educational tool useful in eliciting, representing and assessing pupils’ understanding. The process of constructing a concept map (concept mapping) is a very effective teaching and learning strategy which is graphic in nature, encouraging the learner to think and focus on the relationships between terms. Concept maps can provide a graphical summary of pupils’ ideas, understanding and what they have learned, with an emphasis on the relationship between different concepts (Novak & Gowin, 1984).

What is a concept map?

Concept maps include concepts, usually enclosed in circles or boxes and relationships between concepts indicated by a connecting link between two concepts. Words on the line, are referred to as ‘linking words’ or ‘linking phrases’, specify the relationships between the two concepts.

Introducing concept maps activity
1. Children’s first attempt to create a concept map should be done within the context of a simple, familiar topic and using a small number of concepts.
2. Young children are not going to be able to initially construct a concept map on their own. This process should start by having children observe their teacher creating concept maps.
3. Select the key concepts of the topic after discussing with children what they have seen or learned.
4. On a large piece of paper or the board, write or draw (or use pictures or photos) the key concepts.
5. Put the words or pictures in large circles or boxes (concepts could also be written on flash cards).
6. To better familiarise children with concept maps, pictures (or photos or drawing images) can replace text labels (words) because children communicate ideas better through symbols. Drawings or pictures can also be used by and for children who speak a different language or have reading or writing problems (Pearson & Somekh, 2003) (Figure 2).
7. Connect the concepts (circles) with a line (or an arrow depending on the relationship you want to represent). As you link the two concepts, ask the children to state in a simple and short sentence the relationship between them (e.g. "The sun gives light").
8. Place emphasis on the linking or joining words and help children understand that they are what makes the whole thing have meaning (Figure 3).
9. Label the line using simple action words (e.g. warms, gives, needs) that specify the relationship between the concepts. Write the connecting word on the line.
10. Use different colours for circles and links to help children see these as different types of information.

Pupils constructing their own concept maps
1. During group discussion, the teacher asks children to talk about the things they have learned through the exploration of the topic. As children talk, the teacher writes down in ready-made paper circles the key concepts arising from children’s observations and ideas (e.g. ‘leaves’ and ‘stems’). Circles should be large enough for children to draw on the side of each word a picture that symbolizes the specific concept. In this way, concepts can be ‘read’ by everybody no matter their communicative and linguistic capacities.
2. Next, circles are put on the floor, and children are asked to arrange them in a simple sentence that expresses the relationship between them. Once children have identified the relationship between the concepts and created their sentences, circles can be glued on a large piece of paper so links can be drawn.
3. Finally, children are prompted to show the relationship between the concepts by connecting them with lines (or arrows if needed, Figure 4). Then, the teacher (or

Figure 1. Concept map drawn by a 6 year old child. (Novak, 2006)

The above concept map (Figure 1) drawn by a 6 year old pupil, shows the child’s understanding of the concepts of water i.e. solid, river, steam, ice, liquid and gas.

Figure 2. Using pictures to make concept maps.

Figure 3. Introducing linking words into concept maps.

Figure 4. Showing the relationship between the concepts by connecting them with lines and action words.
children themselves) can write the action word (verb) that completes the proposition.

Adaptations to concept mapping

- Use cards with pictures and words, pieces of string and pegs. The children can then physically link two cards on a piece of string. Other strings containing cards can then be attached.
- Provide children with key words and phrases that they can either copy or stick onto a large sheet of paper. It is up to the children how they decide to link these words together (Figure 5).
- They can stick their own words on a page and then draw arrows connecting the words.
- Use a magnetic board to stick pictures/key words to (Figure 6).
- Include an opportunity for students to redraw and revise their maps. For example, allow pupils to create a rough draft using sticky notes, then ask to draw a final version of their concept map without using sticky notes. By re-drawing their maps, students are encouraged to continue reflecting on the meaning of the science terms (Figure 7).
- Invite the children to construct their own concept diagrams before and after covering a Strand or Strand Unit in science.
- There are also a number of database packages that are appropriate for designing and modelling how to construct concept maps: 2Investigate, Textease, FlexiTREE, eConnect from the 2Simple and MS Access (Figure 8).

Dr Maeve Liston is a lecturer in Science Education Mary Immaculate College and Associate of the National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching and Learning (NCE-MSTL)

Email: maeve.liston@mic.ul.ie

References
Select an activity from this menu. Alternatively, plan an integrated unit of work by merging activities appropriate to your class needs.

**Five visual art ideas**

1. ‘The Marrog’ – Paint and colour
   Student plans an A3 picture of Marrog. Focus on purple hair, half yellow/red teeth, deep blue nose. Mix primary colours and add texture using sand, washing powder. Use different brush strokes i.e. vertical/horizontal/circular/oblique to create depth in one feature e.g. wild hair. Student adds effects e.g. writing on the painting, turning the painting upside down, adding shiny/metallic materials, scratching lines on paint, emphasising one feature e.g. eye or tooth or arm or ear.

2. ‘Marrog footprint!’ – Print
   Teacher ‘finds’ the Marrog’s footprint in the bathroom. Student makes own A3 footprint, collecting one recyclable object e.g. bottle top, corrugated card, bubble wrap, rubber band. Pairs use one object each and two colours to overprint on cut-out footprint. Treasure hunt for footprints around the school.

3. ‘The Planets’ – Clay
   Whole class write a pneumonic to memorise the planets (see History Idea 2). Students research the layout/proportions of planets. Use clay to make individual planets, paying attention to varying size, surface and planets with orbit rings e.g. Saturn. Students paint the dried planets e.g. blue and white of Neptune, coloured swirls of Jupiter, blue and green of Uranus’ blue. Use the clay planets to physically show how the solar system moves in space.

4. ‘Rocket!’ – Construction and re-construction
   Groups of threes (3s) invent and construct a rocket for the Marrog’s journey. Using cm² paper, ruler and set square, groups design a 2-D rocket. Collect recyclable objects and arrange and secure 3-D shapes e.g. discarded toy pieces, jewellery, CDs. However… the Marrog’s rocket crash-landed. Groups must write the instructions on how to re-assemble the rocket. Display somewhere on 3D rocket.

5. ‘A Uniform for Marrog!’ – Fabric and fibre
   Class decide size of Marrog. Pairs cut template of face and body. Some pairs create funky uniform for school on Earth; others create space-age uniform for school on Mars. Display on a washing line for all to enjoy!

**Seven English language ideas**

1. ‘You Don’t Frighten Us!’
   Students start a character profile on the Marrog. Initially, he is hostile but over time, new information is added to show how the class befriend him and find his ‘softer’ side.

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_The Marrog_ by R.C. Scriven (about the visit of an alien from Mars).

My desk’s at the back of the class
And nobody nobody knows
I’m a Marrog from Mars
With a body of brass
And seventeen fingers and toes.
Wouldn’t they shriek if they knew
I’ve three eyes at the back of my head
And my hair is bright purple
My nose is deep blue
And my teeth are half yellow, half red?
My five arms are silver with knives on them sharper than spears.
I could go back right now if I liked –
And return in a million light years.
I could gobble them all for
I’m seven foot tall
And I’m breathing green flames from my ears.
Wouldn’t they yell if they knew
If they guessed that a Marrog was here?
Ha-ha they haven’t a clue –
Or wouldn’t they tremble with fear?
“Look, look, a Marrog!”
They’d all scrum and shout.
The blackboard would fall and the ceiling would crack
And the teacher would faint, I suppose.
But I grin to myself, sitting right at the back
And Nobody nobody knows.

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24 Pottery Lane, London W11 4LZ fax: 0207 727 9037
24 classroom activities suited to third and fourth classes

2. In-role writing as the Marrog: 
Student writes on-going diary entries using some codes, words from Mars as well as English.

3. Descriptions! 
Write a description from the Marrog’s point of view a) his journey from outer space; b) his view from the back of the classroom.

4. Letters to Mars: 
As a concerned classmate, write a letter home to his mum and/or an email to his friend. Remember your intended audience e.g. would you write to his/her mum, informing her about the crash landing?

5. Write a fact-file: 
Create a fact-file on desks on Earth over the years. Then, create a fact-file on a desk in Marrog’s school in Mars. Compare.

6. Reaction! 
Write a reaction to the poem on an alien-shaped sheet of paper.

7. Reading Instructions! 
A group volunteer their rocket to have crash-landed on Earth. Class watch as one Marrog or a group of friendly humans read the instructions on how to re-construct this rocket. Then do it!

Geography – Three quick ideas!
1. Mapping! Draw a map/birds-eye view of the classroom. Encourage use of correct mapping symbols and scale. Skills include using pictures, maps, models and globes.

2. Apping! Use apps such as NASA/Planets to track the Marrog’s journey from Mars to Earth!

3. Postcards to Mars! Design a postcard to send home to Marrog’s mum, showcasing local tourist attractions.

Three history ideas 
1. Mini-project on the Romans. Create a mini-project based on everyday life in Ancient Rome. Include the fact that the Ancient Romans feared Mars, the god of war. Challenge: class dress two volunteers as an Ancient Roman man and woman. Why not dress up a third as Mars!

2. Remembering the eight Planets: class make up a pneumonic for remembering the eight planets. For example: My Very Excellent Mother Just Served Us Noodles. Mercury, Venus, Earth (not named after Roman god), Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune.
Notes: (a) Pluto is no longer considered a planet. 
(b) Seven out of eight planets are named after Roman gods.

3. Myths and Legends. Students research myths about famous monsters such as Bigfoot (North America), Loch Ness monster (Scotland) and Yeti or the Abominable Snowman from the Himalayas. Groups (fours) select a myth e.g. Yeti. They write a short narrative in role as Yeti showing how humans have hunted him. Share this narrative on the myth with other groups e.g. reading aloud with sound effects, action song, rap, drama.

Three SPHE ideas 
1. The Class Rules 
The class have stumbled on a way to ‘see’ the ‘once invisible’ Marrog. What might this trick be? The Marrog is not very well behaved. Class like him and want to help him fit in. Class collaborate to formulate a new class code. Students try to convince the Marrog (pupil-in-role) of the value of these rules. Teacher writes an A3 class code of copy. Marrog needs to agree on and sign each rule.

2. ‘You’re Ugly!’ 
The teacher discovers that Marrog is being teased and taunted about his appearance. The Marrog’s feelings are hurt. 
(a) Class discussion: 
- How does he feel? 
- What should he do? 
- How can we help him?
(b) ‘Compliments’: Students (in role as Marrogs) walk (shuffle) around classroom, complimenting each other on their appearance.

3. ‘Lunchtime!’ 
The Marrog has no lunch. He finds a lunchbox and opens it. He examines food taken from the four main food groups. But…. the Marrog cannot eat this kind of food. He only eats metal. Bring in one box as his lunchbox. Students create a lunch for him by bringing in small scraps of recycled items, discarded ‘bits and bobs’. Place the lunchbox centrally. Teacher secretly removes bits each day!

Three drama ideas 
1. ‘But Mammy…’: Child Sees a Rocket! Small group improvisation (3s) starting with opening phrase: ‘But Mammy…’ child tries to tell his/her parents that alien rocket is landing outside their window. They are busy…. until…. groups enact, creating their own dramatic ending!

2. Make a TV ad. 
Groups (4s or 5s) create a 30 second TV ad for Marrog conditioner or toothpaste. Brainstorm students’ favourite TV ads.

Step 1: Groups decide on: roles e.g. actor(s), camera man; jingle (phrase or motto); visuals.

Step 2: Create script. Name the product. Include humour and enticements e.g. ‘buy one, get one free’, ‘free delivery’.

Step 3: Seven – ten minutes to practise their performance.

Step 4: Time to perform! 
Tip: Rest of class in role of (itchy/foulsmelling) Marrogs who are watching the TV ads in turn.

3. ‘So Long! Farewell!’ 
Group improvisation: it is time for the Marrog to return home. Groups (fours or fives) devise the ‘Going-Away’ ceremony. Include an inspiring speech by the President, a gift from planet Earth, the rocket launch to Mars and ....

Written by Macroom Arts Circle members: Fiona Angland, Teresa Downey, Marie-Therese O’Callaghan, Mary McCarthy, Sinead Twomey and facilitated by Helen Hallissey.
What is it?
What is it? A garden which grows plants from the continents of origin of children in the school. Some plants from Asia for example represent all the Asian countries.

Background information
‘Profile 6 Migration and Diversity’ in the 2011 Census states that people from 187 different nationalities work in Ireland. It also states:

- The number of non-Irish nationals has increased by 124,624 persons or by 29.7% since 2006. Their number stood at 544,357 in 2011. In 2002 they represented 5.8% of the population; in 2011 this figure increased to 12%.
- The highest number of non-nationals according to continent are as follows: Europe-Poland 122,585 Asia-India 16,986 Africa-Nigeria 17,642 South America-Brazil 8,704 North America-U.S. 11,015 Oceania-Australia 2,849

Why have an inclusive garden in the school?
1. Most schools have a proportion of non-national children.
2. This garden will make these children feel more accepted.
3. They will see a parallel between the world of plants and that of people viz. there are no boundaries to settlement and establishment.
4. It could trigger a study of a plant’s country of origin.
5. It will enable all children to appreciate the diversity of plant-life on the planet.

Did you know?
The highest number of European non-nationals come from Poland; the lowest number come from Luxembourg.

Suitable representative plants from the different continents

Europe
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>CONTAINER?</th>
<th>HARDINESS</th>
<th>FLOWERING</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cyclamen purpurascens</td>
<td>Cyclamen</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>July-Sept</td>
<td>Hungary to Southern Italy</td>
<td>Soil must be rich in organic matter. Trim back after flowering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyssum Saxatile</td>
<td>Golden Dust</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>April-June</td>
<td>East Europe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festuca glauca</td>
<td>Blue Fescue</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>June-July</td>
<td>Europe</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

North America
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aster novibeli</td>
<td>Michaelmas Daisy</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Sept-Oct</td>
<td>Canada to Arizona</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heuchera sanguinea</td>
<td>Coral Flower</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>June-Sept</td>
<td>Mexico, Arizona</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eschscholzia californica</td>
<td>California Poppy</td>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>June-Sept</td>
<td>California</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
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South America
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<tr>
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<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fuchsia/ Tom Thumb</td>
<td>Fuchsia</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Sept-Oct</td>
<td>South and Central Uruguay</td>
<td>Cut back in March to 2.5cm.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zephyranthes candida</td>
<td>Storm Lily</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Sept-Oct</td>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tropaeolum Majus</td>
<td>nasturtium</td>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not hardy</td>
<td>Aug-Sept</td>
<td>Chile to Mexico</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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Africa
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<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
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<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pelargonium</td>
<td>Geranium</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not hardy</td>
<td>June-Sept</td>
<td>South Africa, Namibia</td>
<td>Don’t overwater Bring inside in winter. Cut stems in half.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Osteosperum</td>
<td>African or Cape Daisy</td>
<td>P grown as</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not hardy</td>
<td>May-Sept</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Renew each year from cuttings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impatiens walleriana</td>
<td>Busy-lizzie</td>
<td>HHA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not hardy</td>
<td>April-Oct</td>
<td>East Africa</td>
<td>Bring indoors in winter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Containers

All these plants can be grown in containers. Obtain recycled washing-machine and tumble-dryer drums from the Clondalkin Community Recycling Initiative. See www.ccri.ie

Planting up the containers

1. Put small stones in the bottom for drainage. Fill to three-quarters full with loam-based compost such as John Innes No. 3 for Shrubs. Use peat-free compost or peat-free compost and soil for the rest. Place the plant’s container in the compost to determine space.

2. Ensure the root-ball is moist by inserting it in a bucket of water for a few minutes. Loosen the roots and place it in the container. Add compost gradually, firming it down as the root-ball is covered.

3. Push slow-release fertilizer pellets into the compost. Do not let it dry out.

Possible layout

1. Arrange the containers in a circle to represent the earth. Beside the container(s) representing the particular continent place a sign with a list of all the countries represented by children from there in the school. Stick the country flags beside the countries’ names.

2. Label plants grown in the ground around the school with their country of origin. Some suitable ones:

- Choisya ternata (Mexico);
- Penstemon spp (Central and North America);
- Phlox drumondii (North America);
- Acer palmatum (Japan);
- Nepeta neriosa (Kashmir);
- Buddleia davidii (China);
- Sedum spectabile (China and Korea);
- Mahonia japonica (Japan);
- Cotoneaster horizontalis (China);
- Verbena bonariensis (South America);
- Buddleia globosa (Chile and Argentina);
- Crocosmia ‘Severn Sunrise’ (South Africa);
- Philadelphus coronarius (Italy).

Resources

Websites mentioned plus:

- www.tes.co.uk/ks2-citizenship-primary-teaching-resources/ – Lesson ideas on diversity
- www.gould.org.au – Multicultural food gardens
- www.cjee.lakeheadu.ca – Paper on multicultural gardening
- www.cso.ie – 2011 census
- www.theflowerexpert.com/content/aboutflowers/national-flowers – National flowers
- People, Plants & Places by Julian Agyeman (Southgate) 1995

Literacy/Literachtach

Perennial/Iblaintóig: Plant with a non-woody stem that usually dies down in winter and grows again in the following years. Planda le gas neamhadhmadach a théann i léig de ghnáth sa gheimhreadh agus a fhásann arís sna blianta dar gcomónt.

Annual/Iblaintóig: Plant that fulfils its whole life-cycle in a single year. Planda a chomhghníomhann a shaolré ar fad in aon bhliain amháin.

Hardy/plant hardy/Hardy: Plant that survives the winter in Ireland. Planda a thagann tríd an gheimhreadh in Éirinn.

Bulb/Bléib: Rounded food-storage organ such as an onion which contains food for the plant’s new shoots. Orgán cuar a stórálann bia do na buinneoga/meatháin/péacáin nua.

Key

HA = hardy annual;
SH = shrub;
HHA = half hardy annual;
P = perennial;
B = bulb;

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Oceania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
<th>COMMON NAME</th>
<th>TYPE</th>
<th>CONTAINER?</th>
<th>HARDINESS</th>
<th>FLOWERING</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hebe x franciscana/ Blue Gem’</td>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>June-Oct</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Trim after flowering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senecio laxifolius</td>
<td>Daisy Bush</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>June-July</td>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>Remove dead shoots in spring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xerocochrysium bracteatum</td>
<td>Straw Flower</td>
<td>HA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>July-Sept</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Sow seeds in spring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Asia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LATIN NAME</th>
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<th>FLOWERING</th>
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<th>NOTES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bergenia cordifolia</td>
<td>Elephant’s Ears</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>March-April</td>
<td>Siberia</td>
<td>Remove stems after flowering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrangea macrophylla</td>
<td>Hydrangea</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>July-Sept</td>
<td>China, Japan</td>
<td>Plenty of organic matter. Mulch in April.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosta plantaginea</td>
<td>Plantain Lily</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Hardy</td>
<td>Aug-Sept</td>
<td>Japan, China</td>
<td>Dead-head faded blooms.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Paddy Madden lectures on SESE in the Marino Institute of Education. He also gives short courses to whole staffs on school gardening. His book, Go Wild at School, has recently been reprinted. Available for €18 (including p&p) from paddy.madden@mie.ie

The first Irish School Gardening Conference will be held in MIE on 5 October. See www.schoolearthed.ie for application form and details.
Tá sraith d’acmhainní foghlama digiteacha a leagann béim ar shaol agus oidhreacht Colm Cille ar fáil ar shuíomh CCEA. Is féidir iad a úsáid le ceiliúradh a dhéanamh ar Chathair Chultúir 2013. Déanann na acmhainní iniúchadh ar oidhreacht shaibhir Cholm Cille, atá ar dhuine de na híocóin chultúrtha is mó i stair na hÉireann, trí teicneolaíocht cheannródaíoch ag cruthaithe a úsáid.

Sa phacáiste tá
l Aip i-teileafóin a fhéachann ar Cholm Cille agus ar na seoda cultúrtha a d’fhág sé mar oidhreacht;
l láthair gréasáin idirghníomhaí na Gaeilge – Saol agus Oidhreacht;
l gearrscannáin a dhéanann cíoradh ar shaol Cholm Cille;
l sraith de leabhair dátheangacha atá le fáil saor in aisce.

Cabhraíonn na acmhainní le forbairt a dhéanamh ar scileanna traschuraclaim agus réimse foghlama a leagtar béim orthu sa Churaclam. Déanann an ghearrscannáin luachmhanach cúrsaitheach a úsáid mar aon le teicneolaíocht gairid agus i comhthéacs an gcoimhneachtaí. Úsáidtear an teicneolaíocht ar dhuine i gcóras focail. Léiríonn na acmhainní freisin conas is féidir an teicneolaíocht a úsáid chun feabhas a thabhairt iad leis an fhaisnéis nó as an fhaisnéis.

Ar fáil
Is féidir an t-ábhar ar fad a íoslódáil saor in aisce ón suíomh www.ccea.org.uk – Irish Medium.

Ó Lámhscríbhinní go Réimheabhair – Colm Cille, Saol agus Oidhreacht

Tá sraith d’acmhainní foghlaí gan chuid d’aois agus d阜 a bhíonn againn ar Cholm Cille a bhíonn an fhaisnéis iotála iomhá ina shuíomh CCEA. Is féidir iad a íoslódáil mar a d’éirigh leis an fhaisnéis a fháil mar gheall ar an gcoimhneachtaí agus anfhaisnéis a bhíonn ann.

Sa phacáiste tá
l Aip i-teileafóin a fhéachann ar Cholm Cille agus ar na seoda cultúrtha a d’fhág sé mar oideachtaí;
l láthair gréasánacha, leabhair agus scannáin idirghníomhaí na Gaeilge – Saol agus Oidhreacht;
l gearrscannáin a dhéanann cíoradh ar shaol Cholm Cille;
l sraith de leabhair dátheangacha atá le fáil saor in aisce.

Cabhraíonn an fhaisnéis iomhá le forbairt a dhéanamh ar an bhfaisnéis traschuraclaim agus réimse foghlaí gan leagtar béim orthu sa Churaclam. Déanann an ghearrscannáin luachmhanach cúrsaitheach a úsáid mar aon le teicneolaíocht gairid agus i comhthéacs an gcoimhneachtaí. Úsáidtear an teicneolaíocht ar dhuine i gcóras focail. Léiríonn na acmhainní freisin conas is féidir an teicneolaíocht a úsáid chun feabhas a thabhairt iad leis an fhaisnéis nó as an fhaisnéis.

Ar fáil
Is féidir an t-ábhar ar fad a íoslódáil saor in aisce ón suíomh www.ccea.org.uk – Irish Medium.

Cúrsaí Teagaisc

Acmhainní Gaeilge ó Thuaisceart Éireann

A useful new resource for independent reading

_The Literacy Box_ is a new resource from Prim-Ed to promote independent reading. There are three levels: 5–7 years (Box 1), 8–10 years (Box 2) and 11+ (Box 3). More able readers at one level may need to dip into activities at the next level and vice versa.

Each Box contains: teacher’s guide, 75 illustrated four page cards in 15 graded, colour-coded sections, 75 answer cards and 25 student tracking sheets.

The teacher’s guide is wide-ranging with comprehensive teacher’s notes on each card. As pupils are expected to work their way independently through the box there are pointers on how to scaffold this learning, at first with a sample card to demonstrate to the whole class. Teachers would, however, have to direct pupils to the coloured section appropriate to his/her ability. The resource would be enhanced if there was a test to do this or if the sections were matched to scores achieved in standardised tests. There is a section on comprehension strategies and over 80 copymasters covering proof-reading and editing skills, teaching comprehension strategies and grammar and word study also.

Each four page card contains a page of illustrated text and three pages containing multiple choice questions under the following headings: ‘Comprehension’ (literal, inferential and applied questions), ‘All about Words’, and ‘Grammar’.

Pupils are given an answer recording sheet (copymaster in teacher’s guide) on which to record their answers. They then select the appropriate answer card and correct their work. They also complete a student tracking sheet to record cards and sections completed as it would be impractical for each pupil to complete the cards in numerical order. There is also a teacher tracking sheet in the teacher’s guide which allows the teacher to monitor pupils progress and to use the information for reporting, assessment and planning future lessons based on common or recurrent errors.

The following genres are covered in the series:

- Fiction and Poetry – recount, science fiction, horror/supernatural, mystery, fables, fairytales, fantasy, folktales, adventure, humour, poetry, myths, legends, plays.
- Nonfiction – recount, reports, letters/emails, procedures, posters, expositions, book reviews, explanations, discussions, descriptions, retrieval charts, interviews.

This resource (once the preparatory work is done) would work very well for early finishers, station teaching activities, and in multi-class settings. It would allow the teacher to ensure there is differentiation of pace and task for pupils. In using the resource pupils would move from directed learning to guided learning. The self-correction element enables pupils to engage in assessment for learning.

_The Literacy Box_ is available from www.prim-ed.com and the online price is €250 per level.

Reviewed by Caroline McCarthy, Scoil Mhuire Naisiunta, Co Clare.

An entertaining blend of historical facts and conspiratorial fun

Is it real? Did it really happen? Could the rumours be true? These are questions that intrigue the inquisitive mind of a reader. _SOS Lusitania_ by Kevin Kiely is a lovely children’s novel written in the overall brand of _The Da Vinci Code_ in that it mixes well known facts with a possible conspiracy and allows the reader to question the commonly held truth.

The novel is a well structured and written account of the sinking of the great ocean liner the Lusitania, as told through the character of little 13 year old Finbar Kennedy. Finbar runs away from home Queenstown (Cobh) to stow away on the liner where his Dad works on its voyage to New York. We get a good account of life in Queenstown in 1915 including of his local school and the local teacher ‘Chalky Dempsey’.

Thrown into the mix with all the factual stuff of the liner being sunk by the German torpedo are German and British spies, gold, guns, explosives and a love interest à la _Titanic_ for young Finbar.

It would be well suited to novel reading in senior classes of both boys and girls, with possibly the boys enjoying the talk of spies and war a little more. I would invest a little discussion on picturing the main characters as they enter the story. It is a novel that runs smoothly from start to finish, where all that you see is not as it seems!

_SOS Lusitania_ by Kevin Kiely is published by O’Brien Press, and costs € 7.99.


Reviewed by Niall Crofton, St Brendan’s PS, Birr, Co Offaly.

Win a copy of _SOS Lusitania_

O’Brien Press have kindly offered _InTouch_ three copies of _SOS Lusitania_ for a draw for members. To enter, email your contact details to competitions@into.ie, putting the words _SOS Lusitania_ in the subject line. Competition closing date is 20 September 2013.
Volunteers wanted – The Gambia

GIVE (Gambia Ireland Volunteers in Education)
Interested in a teacher/education project, January/February/March/April 2014
Volunteers wanted for six/twelve weeks in The Gambia, the smiling coast of West Africa. It’s an opportunity of a lifetime! Suit retired/career break teachers. Full info from Joe Griffin 087 225 5040 or www.giveireland.ie.

Teachers with disabilities

An INTO member wishes to make contact with teachers/student teachers with physical or sensory disabilities. This research is part of a doctoral thesis through Queen’s University Belfast, and is subject to ethical guidelines. The researcher can travel to meet interested participants, can be contacted at mtnolan56@gmail.com, and would be most grateful for your response.

RAI Conference

The 37th RAI Annual International Conference takes place in the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin from 26 to 28 September. The theme is ‘Language, Literacy and Literature: Re-imagining Teaching and Learning’. This year’s keynote speakers are Catherine Snow, Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education and Robert Dunbar, Children’s book critic and former Head of English in CICE.

Bullying

The Teachers Against Bullying helpline aims to help teachers and principals who have been, or are being bullied by member/s of school staff and/or inspectors and/or BOM. Contact Teresa McMahon at tel 01 2883062 (5 to 9 pm – Mondays and Wednesdays only)

Dates for your diary

Engineers Week 2014
9 - 15 February 2014
Keep an eye on www.engineersweek.ie or www.steps.ie for details over the coming months.

Seachtain na Gaeilge 2014 will run from 1 to 17 March.

Goal Jersey Day is on 4 October

With the date now quickly approaching, GOAL is calling on students and teachers to sign up to their annual Jersey Day fundraiser. This year’s event will take place in schools across the country on Friday, 4 October, and GOAL is encouraging those who want to participate to get in touch with the charity as soon as possible.

The fundraiser simply asks people from all over the country to wear their favourite sports jersey for the day, and make a contribution to GOAL’s work in the developing world. Last year, almost 200 schools participated. GOAL is hoping to make this year’s event bigger and better than ever, and once again, raise as much money as possible for some of the world’s poorest people.

GOAL is currently working in 13 countries, where it is delivering emergency relief and vital services such as education, healthcare and water, sanitation, and hygiene programmes. For more information on GOAL Jersey Day, or to sign up to the event, email schools@goal.ie or visit www.goal.ie
Exploring emotion regulation

Niamh O’Sullivan, a student on the MSc in Work and Organisational Behaviour course at the University of Limerick, is looking for volunteers (primary teachers) to take part in interviews for the thesis component of her course.

Title of Project: Emotion Regulation, Student Discipline and Teacher Wellbeing – a qualitative exploration of the experiences of primary school teachers in Ireland.

Aim: To explore the experiences of the emotion regulation carried out by primary school teachers. “Emotion regulation refers to the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them and how they experience or express their emotions” 1. (Gross 1998 in Sutton and Wheatly 2003, p.344). The focus of the research will be on emotion regulation in relation to the discipline process in schools, looking at the types of emotions that are regulated and the consequences, if any, of this regulation on the wellbeing of the teachers in question. The research will look at regulating emotions within the classroom as well as outside of the classroom when dealing with all stakeholders in the discipline process from students, co-workers, management to parents.

Format: One on one interviews. All data will be treated in strict confidence. Teachers and their schools will not be identified. The interviews will take about an hour.

Full ethical approval for the project has been granted by the Kemmy Business School Board of Ethics. For more details or to take part please contact Niamh at neevodee@gmail.com


Winner of June InTouch competition

Congratulations to Rachel Galvin from Co Cork who was the lucky winner of the June InTouch competition.

Rachel won a three night family break which she could choose to spend in either the Galway Bay Hotel or Hodson Bay Hotel.

Well done Rachel!
Show a little aTREEciation

Tree Day – 10 October – Lá na gCrann

It is hard to believe that it is 17 years since myself and the late Marian Rollins, signed off on the first Tree Day primary school resource pack for the Tree Council of Ireland. It has been going from strength to strength ever since. This year, Tree Day, once again supported by Tetra Pak, will be held in schools on 10 October. The theme, ‘Show a little aTREEciation’ or ‘Bí mór le crann mór’, is a call to schools to explore and appreciate all that nature has to offer and the important role that trees play in our lives. Children can learn how trees can help the environment, how they improve the air we breathe, how essential they are for birds and other wildlife and, overall, how important it is to plant a tree.

The Tree Day website www.treeday.ie has been updated with lots of new material offering a comprehensive resource to help teachers to bring Tree Day into the classroom. The website, guided by Sammy Squirrel, features interactive, curriculum-based lessons in both Irish and English. It includes Tree Day school projects, poster downloads, word games, colouring pages and provides other information for schools on woodland walks, tips for helping the environment, a guide to our native trees, simple instructions for growing a tree in a school milk carton, and much more. Each year a different native tree is celebrated on Tree Day and this year the spotlight is on the hawthorn tree.

On Tree Day, many schools participate in guided tree and woodland walks at various locations, enabling children to connect directly with nature in an enjoyable way. These walks are provided with the kind support of the National Parks and Wildlife Service, Coillte, OPW and the Dublin local authorities. Book yours as soon as you can – they are free and hugely enjoyable.

This year, having listened to feedback from teachers who want to lead their own walk, we have included a note on the website for teachers on how to lead a tree walk, which provides some simple guidance and tips for how to make a walk interesting for pupils.

To tie in with the theme of ‘Show a little aTREEciation’, a series of seven ‘Tree Tweets’ have been created, each containing environmental messages for children. These ‘Tweets’, each of which will be carried on Avonmore school milk cartons, will serve to remind children and adults alike about the importance of respecting, renewing, recycling, replanting, repairing and rejoicing in the many resources made from trees.

The Tree Council of Ireland is proud to continue this important aspect of environmental education and is urging people to get involved and celebrate Tree Day.

Éanna Ní Lamhna