How much do you need to run a primary school every day?

A lot more than that!
We Irish like to say we value education. In this month’s budget the government will have the chance to show how much it values education.

As a country, after many years of sacrifice, we are beginning to turn the corner. Ireland is in a new phase of growth. That growth will be nourished by choices government will make, starting with the budget.

And those choices will be influenced by those who stand up for primary education and convince the government to invest more in primary education. That is why it is essential that this week, we all let our TDs know of our vision for primary education and how they can help us to achieve it.

For starters we need a level playing field. Irish classes are the largest in the Eurozone. International research over 30 years shows that smaller classes are directly linked to higher academic achievement. The research on this, especially for younger pupils, is unequivocal. Irish children need smaller classes.

The State gives primary schools 92c per pupil per day to cover running costs. Second level schools get almost double that for each of their students. Primary school classrooms must be opened, heated, cleaned and maintained for a month longer, but are expected to do this with just over half the funding.

Leadership matters in every field. In big schools we need to develop leadership teams of teachers to play a part in school leadership. This edition carries well-thought out proposals from the PDC. In smaller schools teaching principals need a day a week free from teaching to focus on leading the school.

That’s what Stand up for primary education is all about – a better economy, a fairer society and a road map to achieve it.

If you haven’t yet done so please email your local TDs this week through www.standupprimary.ie. Your emails can persuade government to deliver for primary schools in the budget.

Sheila Nunan

Valuing primary education

Primary v second level – the case for equal funding

For starters we need a level playing field. Irish classes are the largest in the Eurozone. International research over 30 years shows that smaller classes are directly linked to higher academic achievement. The research on this, especially for younger pupils, is unequivocal. Irish children need smaller classes.

The State gives primary schools 92c per pupil per day to cover running costs. Second level schools get almost double
CONTENTS

KEEPING INTOUCH
Interactive dialogue with members, and key news items
3 Editorial
Valuing primary education
7 Letters
10 thing you should know
9 INTO website Members’ Area – check your details
Subsearch

INTO NEWS
The Irish National Teachers’ Organisation … who’s who, what’s new, and what’s happening
10 Pregnancy related sick leave
What is TCC?
Emma Dineen’s visit to the Aran Islands
13 Branch and District Officers’ Conference
Stand up for primary education campaign update
15 Minor works grant
New Teaching Council
ECCERA Conference, Barcelona
16 Special Ed announcement
LRA ratified
INTO meets student union officials
17 Principals – posts of responsibility
18 DEIS review
Membership Plus
19 Different Families, Same Love

INTO ADVICE
INTO advice for members on issues of importance
29 Thinking of buying a car?
ConsumerHelp tips
30 Planning and preparation
Advice for newly qualified teachers
31 NEPS new online resource
Technology enhancing education for all
33 A decade of European collaboration
Happy 10th birthday eTwinning!

NORTHERN NEWS
24 Action for language tutors
INTO membership pays off
25 Educational and Skills Authority
Anger over assessment arrangements
Branch officers’ training

21 In the media
Retreats from retirement functions held around the country
23 Ten reasons to join the INTO
District 14 honours retirees
27 Solidarity – Global Schoolroom
28 Principals’ seminars

Cover pic: Teacher Cathy O’Brien and pupil from Educate Together NS, Celbridge, Co Kildare. Photographer: Moya Nolan
NEWSDESK

News from the world of education and trade unionism, at home and abroad

37 New boards of management
   - Teacher’s music documentary
   - Sciath Na Scol Chorcai AGM

38 Wellness 365 – a success story
   - Science video competition
   - Former INTO member elected as pioneer president

39 Cumann na mBunscol
   - Making dreams come true
   - Chance of a lifetime

40 First graduates of Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, 1902
   - Creative Schools Award 2015

41 Clare and Limerick Education Centres’ – call for papers
   - Fulbright Awards
   - Coachford Branch presentation
   - Head of Education in Dublin Zoo retires

42 Earning the Blue flag
   - RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra Musical Adventures

FINISHING TOUCHES

61 Noticeboard
   - Upcoming events

62 Comhar Linn draw and crossword
   - Cool Apps for School

63 Scoilnet Panel
   - “All I want for Christmas is … a real Irish Christmas Tree!”
   - See page 60 for more details on competition

TEACHING MATTERS

43 PDST
   - ICT in teaching, learning and assessment

44 Discovery and learning at Dublin Zoo

47 A salute to the public service
   - Opinion by Tom Clonan

48 1916 centenary programme
   - What’s planned for primary schools
   - Competitions

51 Tour de Picnic
   - Merrilyn Campbell on her cycle to Electric Picnic 2015

57 Celebrating 25 years of educational partnership – what have we learned?
   - Home School Community Liaison scheme

55 Ballymun partnership
   - Write Minded literacy strategy

56 The inside story of a website
   - www.iamanartist.ie

58 Irish resources
   - Tips from COGG

59 Book reviews
   - Rugby, nature and the universe
Dear Editor,

A recent OECD report released on the negative impact of technology in education is not surprising. The ICT in education sector is littered with hardware focussed, well-intended, but ultimately futile initiatives. Until education drives the technology choice and not visa-versa, the outcome will not change.

Based on ten years working in ICT in education globally, Camara Education has learned the lessons from which many initiatives have failed. 150,000 Kenyan students are currently delivering measurably improved maths results as part of the iMlango project.

Camara Education strongly urges that ICT not be forgotten as a tool to improve education so that the ICT-led transformation seen in so many sectors can be replicated in education.

Hester Jackman, Camara Education.

CAMARA is an international charity that operates as a social enterprise that uses technology to deliver 21st century skills, and as such improve education in disadvantaged communities around the world. To read more on Camara see InTouch, March 2011, on www.into.ie

Channel swim

Earlier this year, InTouch highlighted the fact that Maura Twomey, an ex-INTO member, was setting out to swim the English Channel in July in aid of Build4Life/Cystic Fibrosis who fundraise for children attending Cork University Hospital.

Maura, who at 59 years of age became the oldest Irish person to complete this arduous swim, sent the following message to InTouch readers:

“A very big thank you to all of you for your interest and support, social, psychological and financial. I had a lovely day and swam from England to France in 16 hours and 23 minutes. We blew away the financial goal of €20,000 by raising over €26,729.59. Build4Life is very happy and I am both humbled and very grateful.”

Technology in education

10 things you should know

1. All pregnancy related sick leave before the introduction of the new scheme to be discounted. Page 10.
2. New Teaching Council to be elected. INTO will endorse candidates. Page 15.
3. Update on Stand up for primary education campaign – contact your TD if you have not done so already. Page 13.
8. 10 reasons to join the INTO. Page 23.
10. What is eTwinning? Find out on page 33.
INTO website Members’ Area

Check your details

In the Members’ Area of the INTO website you will find information and resources as well as access to your own membership record. The following information may be helpful to members accessing the Members’ Area 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. Please note that you must enter your surname as it appears on your INTO membership card.
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. You should not 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 six characters and a maximum of 12.
6. Enter personal email address if desired.

We strongly advise members to check their membership details to ensure that we have your latest contact details.

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.
- It may be the case that we don’t have your date of birth on record. If this is the case you will be unable to register for the Members’ Area until we have this information. Please call 01 8047780 to speak to our Membership Section. They will be able to update your details.

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’ Area, click on the ‘My Details’ button on the right of the screen to view your personal details.
- We strongly advise members to check their membership details to ensure that we have your latest contact details.
- If you have forgotten your password, you can re-register to get a new password or click on the ‘Forgotten password’ link.
- If you experience problems registering or need any assistance, please email support@into.ie or phone 01 804 7780.

NEED A SUB/NEED SUB WORK?

Make SubSearch work for you

INTO SubSearch is designed to help teachers find substitute work and to help principals find substitutes.

Schools and substitutes register on subsearch.into.ie – substitutes can register their availability on the site while principals can search for registered substitutes in their area.

Video tutorials and FAQs on how to use SubSearch are available on the website.

We urge all primary schools to register on subsearch.into.ie
The Teachers’ Conciliation Council (TCC) is a negotiating forum with representatives of teacher unions, school management bodies, the DES and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, which meets five to six times per year. Teachers, and public service unions generally, do not have access to the Labour Court under the main industrial relations laws. The TCC was therefore established to provide a forum for discussion of conditions of employment issues. There is an arbitration facility in case of serious disagreement on certain issues.

In addition to earlier developments regarding serious illness accrued under the previous scheme (INTO website, latest news section, 19 June 2015), this improves the paid illness leave position of a number of teachers compared to what it would be without this measure.

The Teachers’ Conciliation Council (TCC) is a negotiating forum with representatives of teacher unions, school management bodies, the DES and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, which meets five to six times per year. Teachers, and public service unions generally, do not have access to the Labour Court under the main industrial relations laws. The TCC was therefore established to provide a forum for discussion of conditions of employment issues. There is an arbitration facility in case of serious disagreement on certain issues.

The TCC is, however, limited in its powers by national pay policy, FEMPI legislation and a bar currently in place on cost-increasing claims. Nonetheless, progress has been made on a number of issues at TCC including payroll matters, the revised sick leave provisions and the standardising of the school year.

INTO breakthrough on pregnancy related illness leave

Leave prior to new scheme to be discounted

All pregnancy related illness leave that occurred before the introduction of the new Public Service Sick Leave Scheme is to be discounted, for the purpose of calculating access to paid sick leave under the revised scheme. This was confirmed to the INTO at the September meeting of the Teachers’ Conciliation Council.

This is a significant breakthrough on the issue of pregnancy related illness leave (PRIL). Previous proposals on this had been rejected by the INTO as they proposed to restore PRIL time as sick leave entitlement at the half pay rate only. Over several months, the INTO led the demand to have pre-September 2014 PRIL treated as if it had never occurred. We made clear our preparedness to challenge legally any other situation.

In addition to earlier developments regarding serious illness accrued under the previous scheme (INTO website, latest news section, 19 June 2015), this improves the paid illness leave position of a number of teachers compared to what it would be without this measure.

The issue of PRIL accrued before the new sick leave rules has been of concern for a number of members. Some teachers found themselves with access to little or no paid illness leave due to previous PRIL.

The DES is currently drafting a detailed circular on illness leave and this will confirm the position formally. Discussions will take place to deal with any outstanding issues, e.g. where teachers have already suffered income loss due to PRIL accrued before 1 September 2014.

What is the Teachers’ Conciliation Council?

The Teachers’ Conciliation Council (TCC) is a negotiating forum with representatives of teacher unions, school management bodies, the DES and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, which meets five to six times per year. Teachers, and public service unions generally, do not have access to the Labour Court under the main industrial relations laws. The TCC was therefore established to provide a forum for discussion of conditions of employment issues. There is an arbitration facility in case of serious disagreement on certain issues.

The TCC is, however, limited in its powers by national pay policy, FEMPI legislation and a bar currently in place on cost-increasing claims. Nonetheless, progress has been made on a number of issues at TCC including payroll matters, the revised sick leave provisions and the standardising of the school year.

INTO President visits the Aran Islands

The President of the INTO, Emma Dineen, recently visited members in the Aran Islands. She was accompanied by Joe Killeen, CEC Rep and Michael Gallagher, Galway Branch Secretary. Reflecting on the meeting with members Emma Dineen said, “we need to experience island life to have any concept of the issues teachers face on a daily basis.”

Transport and weather are the first hurdles a teacher has to negotiate. “If the weather is bad the boat or plane may not travel, so for a teacher or a substitute teacher, who has to come from the mainland, access to the workplace is always a worry.”

At the INTO other hurdles for these very committed teachers were highlighted. “While some schools are maintaining numbers, others are declining. Not all the children may come from Irish speaking homes and English may not even be the first language yet small numbers dictate that supports are not available. At the very least government needs to recognise our island schools as special settings requiring special allocations”.

Emigration too has left its mark. The need to go to the mainland to access third level education and employment opportunities is ever present. Many go but not enough return. It was obvious that teachers from the three islands valued the chance to get together at the INTO meeting where trade union updates and educational conversations took place.

A mhúinteoirí na n-oileáin ba cheart go mbeimís go léir buíoch dá lán!
Branch and District Officers’ Conference

Croke Park, Dublin, September 2015
Midway between the All Ireland hurling and football finals in Croke Park, INTO activists gathered for the now traditional start of the year Branch and District Officers’ Conference. This year the focus was on Budget 2016 and the general election which will be held this school year. The main focus of the event was the *Stand up for primary education* campaign.

Rosena Jordan, INTO Vice President welcomed the 230 people that attended. Sheila Nunan, General Secretary then provided details of the campaign activities including face to face lobbying, the postcard campaign and the website lobbying. She urged all INTO members to support the *Stand up* campaign to secure smaller class sizes, fairer funding and increased support for school leadership.

She pointed out that the support of teachers, parents and members of local communities was essential to make progress on these issues.

A portion of the conference saw branch officers meet in district groups to organise campaign activities in each district. The conference concluded with a round-up of current issues by the general secretary.

It’s not too late to be part of *Stand up for primary education*

**EMAIL CAMPAIGN**
Please ask parents to contact local TDs by email using the campaign website www.standupprimary.ie. There’s a sample request letter on the INTO website. It’s very straightforward. All a person has to do is go to www.standupprimary.ie, select ‘Email your local TD’ and select her/his constituency. The programme will generate an email address for the relevant TDs and a pre-worded email ready to send. Don’t forget to ask friends and family to do the same.

**POSTCARD CAMPAIGN**
Postcards for parents to send to local TDs have been sent to every school for parents. Please remind them to send them to TDs, especially Government TDs before the budget this month. A list of current TDs in each constituency is available on the INTO website under the *Stand up for primary education* link. Some schools have indicated that they will collect the postcards from parents, sort them according to each TD and post them to each TD in the constituency. This is a good way of ensuring that post cards reach the TDs. Please note that Leinster House does not accept bulk deliveries by hand.
The INTO has noted the absence of a minor works grant in the schedule of grants for schools and has written to the minister to seek its inclusion this year. Acknowledging that the government must find the money to build new schools for additional pupils, the INTO has insisted it must also make sure that existing schools are maintained in good condition.

This means continuing to fund the Summer Works Scheme and the grant for minor works which allows school boards to keep buildings in good repair.

The INTO is acutely aware of the issue of school funding and last year when the grant was not included in the published schedule, the union not only lobbyed to ensure that this grant was paid last year, but ensured that it was paid to schools with temporary recognition for the first time.

"Failure to pay the minor repair grant will push schools further into debt and increase pressures on hard pressed parents to fund their children’s education," said Sheila Nunan, General Secretary. "Continued reliance on charity and local fundraising for essentials is not acceptable. The state must fund primary education fairly."

The current term of the Teaching Council will end in March 2016. A new Council will be set up by means of an election among the teaching population and nominations by representative organisations. It is expected that the election will take place between end of January/February to March 2016.

**INTO endorsement of candidates**

The CEC has decided to continue the process of endorsing candidates who may wish to seek election to the Council. In that regard, the CEC has decided that:

» Members seeking INTO’s endorsement for their candidature should request same by email to the General Secretary, Sheila Nunan, on or before Friday, 20 November 2015. The following email address has been designated for that purpose – tcelection2016@into.ie

» The Organisation will endorse a maximum of four to six candidates in each of the four constituencies – namely Dublin, Leinster, Munster and Connaught/Ulster. It is understood that the electoral constituencies will be based on the 2009 European electoral constituencies.

» A process to facilitate endorsement will be conducted at the December meetings of the district committees.

» Conventions may have to be held in the event that additional candidates are seeking endorsement.

» Further information on the process and details of the constituencies will be outlined in the November 2015 issue of InTouch.

**ECCERA Conference, Barcelona**

Emma Dineen, INTO President and Deirbhile Nic Craith, Director of Education and Research, attended the recent European Early Childhood Education Research Conference and presented on the role of play in the primary school curriculum – To play or not to play: curriculum for four to six year olds.

Play is a central feature of the Primary School Curriculum, 1999 but its use in infant classrooms is challenging given the lack of resources and large class sizes. Drawing on the recent focus group research on the primary curriculum carried out by the INTO Education Committee and a survey of teachers who attended the Aistear professional development workshops in 2013, the INTO’s presentation focused on the tensions teachers experience when trying to use Aistear, develop a play-based approach to teaching and learning and plan for teaching 11 curricular subjects.

Any revision of the primary school curriculum for the infant classes needs to address curriculum overload, large class sizes and the provision of resources, including indoor and outdoor space, if the thinking and philosophy underpinning Aistear are to be fully incorporated in to primary schools.
New model for allocating additional teachers

Pilot project announced to test new model

The DES has announced that a pilot of a new model for allocating additional teaching resources to schools to support children with special educational needs will take place in 47 schools during the 2015/16 school year.

Testing of a new model was a key demand of the INTO. In September 2014, in its response to the DES proposals, the INTO stated clearly, “Any new model will need to be tested and made subject to any necessary modifications before implementation nationally.”

Responding to the announcement the INTO said the pilot project would be closely studied by the union and by teachers in schools. The union warned that any attempt to use the proposed new system to cut back on resources to children with special needs would be firmly resisted. The INTO said in the first place schools will want to see a lifting of the ban on promotion in schools and a reversal of the 15 per cent cut in special education teaching posts in recent years.

The INTO also said the current system was introduced to reduce interminable and unmanageable waiting times for children needing extra help. It was designed to eliminate bureaucratic hurdles that had to be cleared before resources could be given and to give some certainty to schools, parents and teachers.

Sheila Nunan, General Secretary, said the current system was not perfect but it ensured children got access to resource teaching in a timely fashion. “It is open, transparent and in general, has the support of parents and teachers,” she said.

She said additional paperwork and unnecessarily complicated application processes are not acceptable to class teachers already struggling with some of the largest classes in the EU and to principal teachers, most of whom teach fulltime.

Lansdowne Road Agreement ratified by ICTU

Public services committee of Congress backs the LRA

The Lansdowne Road Agreement (LRA) was formally ratified last month by the Public Services Committee of the ICTU.

Under the LRA, the threshold for the pension levy will increase next year resulting in a salary uplift of €732 in 2016. The threshold will be further increased in 2017 resulting in a €1,000 earnings increase. The agreement will also bring about a €1,000 increase in 2017.

The LRA also provides a timeframe for the restoration on salary scales of a supervision and substitution payment abolished under the Haddington Road Agreement and the restoration of pay to those earning more than €65,000.

The deal, negotiated in May and recommended to members by the CEC, was accepted by INTO members. The ICTU ratification of the LRA will now be communicated formally to government by ICTU.

INTO meets student union officials

Last month INTO officials met with officers of the students’ unions in colleges of education to discuss a number of issues of concern. These issues included the cost of Gaeltacht placements during initial teacher education, the rising costs of school placements and future arrangements for induction/probation.

The students’ union officials outlined that the time they were required to attend courses in the Gaeltacht had doubled, while at the same time, the state contribution to these courses had been withdrawn. This requirement means that teacher education students have to fund the entire cost of these extended placements from their own resources while at the same time having to fund an additional year in college because of the extension to teacher education.

Similar concerns were raised about increasing costs for school placements due to the extended time now being provided for this aspect of teacher education. In addition, concern was expressed about a lack of information among students regarding future arrangements for induction/probation.

The general secretary provided details of the INTO’s Stand up for primary education campaign and sought the support of the student unions in the colleges.

Channels of communication were agreed for the coming year.
In 2009, the Government decided to implement a recruitment and promotion moratorium across the civil and public sector. With effect from 27 March 2009 Circular 22/09 set out that schools could no longer make any appointments to assistant principal and special duties posts, nor could they replace post-holders on leave of absence. The effect of the moratorium is severe.

A discussion paper at the recent Principals’ and Deputy Principals’ Conference in Kilkenny (available on the INTO website) set out the situation in detail. It called for the INTO to enter into negotiations immediately to seek the creation/restoration of an effective in-school management structure to support leadership in primary school.

The following recommendations set out the basis for a revised structure.

- A revised system of in-school management should be based on the creation of in-school management teams. These teams would consist of the principal, deputy principal and post-holders. The allocation of posts should be based on the total number of full-time equivalent teaching posts in the school.
- In line with the team approach to in-school management, that there be one level of promoted post in primary schools, at a level between existing assistant principal and special duties post. This would allow for clarity around the level of responsibility attaching to posts and fairer distribution of duties. In smaller schools, a post-holder at this level would allow for meaningful distribution of leadership and management duties. Any salary anomalies arising from the creation of such posts, vis a vis allowances for deputy principals’ and principals’ should also be addressed.
- A number of areas should be agreed as core work for the in-school management team. These could include curricular areas, special education, assessment, behaviour and attendance, supporting teachers initial and induction phases of their career, ICT and initiatives such as literacy and numeracy, school self-evaluation and Aistear. Other management type duties such as health and safety could also be included. Other duties might include the management of extra curricular activities and pastoral care duties. Within schools, there would be increased flexibility and autonomy in the allocation of duties to posts holders and/or the allocation of posts, within agreed guidelines.
- That as a priority, posts are restored to schools initially and immediately, on the basis of a base line 40% of staff members promoted. Schools which currently have less than 40% of teachers promoted should be prioritised in making allocations of new posts.
- Funds should be made available to each school to allow them to incentivise work on a particular initiative or task for a period of time.
- Review and prioritisation of duties for the in-school management team would be a matter for the school staff, carried out on a regular basis (not longer than three years).
- The in-school management team should report on its work, on a regular basis, to the school staff and the board of management.
- The role of the deputy principal should be developed at school level, and through training in conjunction with the principal teacher e.g. through programmes similar to Forbairt.
- Appropriate training should be available to all members of the in-school management team.
- Selection procedures for posts should be fair, transparent and manageable, recognising previous contribution to school activities and programmes, as well as experience and aptitude.
- That the changes proposed would be phased in to ensure the effective implementation of same.

A full report of the conference will be carried in the next edition of InTouch.
DEIS review must not lead to cuts
Leading academic sounds warning

Dr Paul Downes, Educational Disadvantage Centre, Drumcondra, has warned that any review of DEIS must not be an exercise in expenditure reductions and cuts to the scheme.

At a recent meeting of Dublin North City Branch, focussing on DEIS and the review, Dr Downes highlighted key issues that must come to the fore the DEIS review.

Among some of the key areas or principles suggested by Dr Downes were:

- The review must be a holistic review wide in scope and not a cost cutting exercise narrowly focused only on pupil-teacher ratio.
- The need for a fresh commitment from DES to DEIS schools given that there has not been a national strategic response to poverty in education since the economic crash.
- A commitment to review only in context of extra resources for DEIS.
- The improved budgetary situation needs to impact upon DEIS.
- A commitment not to penalise DEIS schools for success by reducing investment, but rather to maintain and to increase success.

INTO members made many valuable contributions. These included the need for an expanded resourcing and funding of breakfast/lunch schemes, the extension of supports for emotional and mental health, better resourcing of home-school liaison links and the improvement of pupil-teacher ratios.

Dr Downes addressed the issue of food poverty, citing research in 2010 which found 20.9% of students asked reported going to school or bed hungry because there was not enough food at home. He also pointed out that there is no national strategic strategy to combat hunger in school.

Lastly, Dr Downes called for a wide range of collaboration between government departments in the review, explaining that the DES, Department of Children and Youth Affairs, along with the Department of Health need to put their resources together rather than persist with a fragmented approach. He also pointed out that listening to those on the ground in schools and conducting research in the area is central to a worthwhile review.

Finally, he highlighted the need for a multidisciplinary approach by outside agencies such as outreach community supports and speech and language supports.

Membership Plus brings you fantastic savings across the country

Make savings from your INTO membership
Use your INTO Membership Plus card to gain access to a great range of special offers and discounts for you and your family. From restaurants to hotels, cinemas to fashion, leisure centres to golf courses, hairdressers to big brand names, there is something for everyone. And there are significant savings to be made.

Your 2014/2016 INTO Membership Plus card is valid for two years until the end of September 2016.

Win a book hamper worth €500 from Kennys.ie with Membership Plus

Kenny's is Ireland’s largest online bookshop with free shipping worldwide on everything! You can save up to 10% with your Membership Plus card and could win a book hamper worth €500.

Simply visit www.membershipplus.ie/teachers before 31 October to enter.

New offers now available with your Membership Plus card
We have added over 300 offers to the website this year and continue to add more each week.

Some of the latest ones include:

- Aksoy Jewellers 10% Cork
- Beechdale Garden Centre 10% Enniscorthy, Co Wexford
- Born Clothing 10% Branches across Ireland
- Buckley Cycles 10% Cork
- Cycle SuperStore 10% Dublin 24 and online
- Hand Footwear 10% Co Monaghan
- Irish Independent 10% Free trial and special member offer
- Kilkenny Shop 10% Branches across Ireland
- LoveSuits 10% Dublin
- Outdoor Sports 10% Mullingar
- Weir and Sons 10% Dublin 2 and Dundrum

If you are a new INTO member activate your card as soon as you receive it. To activate your card, simply go to www.membershipplus.ie/teachers.
Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O’Sullivan, recently launched ‘Different Families, Same Love’, a poster that celebrates the diversity of families in Ireland today. This ground-breaking resource was designed specifically for Irish primary classrooms at the request of teachers striving to find materials that reflect the reality of their students’ lives. The poster is available now for all primary school teachers and you’ll find yours enclosed in this month’s InTouch magazine.

Families are central to the formation of children’s identity and are the primary lens through which they view their world. Furthermore, ‘Myself and My Family’ is a core strand unit of the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum. Families in Ireland are diverse. They come in all shapes and sizes. All over the country there are children who come from mother and father headed families, lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) headed families, multi-cultural families, families from the Travelling or Roma community, families headed by members of the extended family, adoptive and foster families, and step parent families amongst others. It is vitally important for these children to see their families represented in classroom lessons, displays and discussions. This creates a positive school climate that celebrates the diversity of students and fosters respect and acceptance of all families.

The Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools, issued by the Department of Education and Skills in 2013, were warmly welcomed by teachers and parents. Bullying directly impacts on our students’ mental health and wellbeing. Children who are LGBT or perceived to be, children with LGBT parents or family members, children who do not conform to gender norms (i.e. boys who like pink, girls with short hair), or children with LGBT friends can be particularly vulnerable to homophobic and transphobic bullying. Significantly for these children, the procedures included a specific requirement for all schools to implement educational and preventative strategies to prevent this kind of bullying.

‘Different Families, Same Love’, the poster included in this month’s InTouch, aims to stimulate conversation in a safe learning environment and encourage correct and positive language about LGBT people and families. This proactive approach serves as an additional preventative strategy to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying and supports teachers in translating the anti-bullying procedures from policy to practice. Students, teachers and other staff members are thus empowered to celebrate difference and challenge prejudice.

The poster is suitable for all classes in primary school, from junior infants to 6th class. Key questions and age-appropriate lesson ideas linked to the SPHE curriculum are laid out by class level. The resource includes good practice guidelines for creating an inclusive school where every person feels valued, respected and cherished. There is also a useful glossary for the teacher that explains related terms in a class appropriate manner. The poster is easy to navigate and comes with online resources to assist teachers in teaching the lesson ideas, www.into.ie/lgbt/EducationalResources. These include English and Irish versions of the poster for interactive whiteboards, animated presentations of the poster, a list of books to promote inclusion in classrooms, and further useful websites.

Don’t forget to take your copy of ‘Different Families, Same Love’, hang it in your classroom, put it on your school noticeboard, share it with your colleagues and school community. The INTO LGBT Teachers’ Group would love to hear teacher feedback at intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com after you have used the poster in your classroom.

Pictured at the launch of ‘Different Families, Same Love’ in the DES, L to R: Ann Marie Lillis, Chairperson, INTO LGBT Group; Margaret Burke, Ciara Fagan, Minister Jan O’Sullivan, TD; Cecelia Gavigan, Roisin Ward, Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary.

When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you’re not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium as if you looked in the mirror and saw nothing.

Adrienne Rich

LGBT people and families. This proactive approach serves as an additional preventative strategy to combat homophobic and transphobic bullying and supports teachers in translating the anti-bullying procedures from policy to practice. Students, teachers and other staff members are thus empowered to celebrate difference and challenge prejudice.

The poster is suitable for all classes in primary school, from junior infants to 6th class. Key questions and age-appropriate lesson ideas linked to the SPHE curriculum are laid out by class level. The resource includes good practice guidelines for creating an inclusive school where every person feels valued, respected and cherished. There is also a useful glossary for the teacher that explains related terms in a class appropriate manner. The poster is easy to navigate and comes with online resources to assist teachers in teaching the lesson ideas, www.into.ie/lgbt/EducationalResources. These include English and Irish versions of the poster for interactive whiteboards, animated presentations of the poster, a list of books to promote inclusion in classrooms, and further useful websites.

Don’t forget to take your copy of ‘Different Families, Same Love’, hang it in your classroom, put it on your school noticeboard, share it with your colleagues and school community.

The INTO LGBT Teachers’ Group would love to hear teacher feedback at intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com after you have used the poster in your classroom.
INTO produces diversity packs for national schools

The resource pack, under the heading ‘Different Families, Same Love’, contains lesson ideas, advice and posters for display in the classroom. It was produced by the INTO’s LGBT teachers’ group.

Minister for Education, Jan O’Sullivan, said the resource would be invaluable in creating “inclusive classrooms” and countering homophobic and transphobic bullying. She said the posters would “send out a clear message to the LGBT children and LGBT-headed families of our society that they are welcome and cherished in our schools.”

The INTO said the poster would help redress the lack of representation of children from different family structures in classroom life.

“Children hearing their teacher describe LGBT people and families in a positive way will be a huge step towards preventing homophobic and transphobic bullying in our schools,” said INTO General Secretary, Sheila Nunan.

The Irish Times, 21 Oct 2015

Reverse cuts to disability teaching hours, demands union

“Any attempt to use the new system to cut back resources to children with special needs will be firmly resisted,” INTO General Secretary, Sheila Nunan, said. “In the first place, schools will want to see a reversal of the 15 per cent cut in special education teaching hours in recent years and a lifting of the ban on promotions in schools,” she said.

Irish Examiner, 16 Sep 2015

INTO calls for extra funds for primary schools

The INTO has called for further investment in primary education. State funding for school running costs at primary is 92 cent per pupil per day while second level schools get almost double, €1.77 for each student. The INTO argues that primary classrooms must be opened, heated, cleaned and maintained for a month longer, but are expected to do this with just half the funding. The union is also calling for a reduction in class sizes.

Evening Echo, 10 Sep 2015

Why next month’s Budget must deliver smaller primary classes – Emma Dineen, INTO President.

In next month’s Budget the minister will have a chance to turn rhetoric into reality. The minister is right on this issue (something not often heard from a trade union leader). I hope she manages to convince her cabinet colleagues that class sizes do matter, especially when it comes to young children. We spend the first few school years learning to read and the rest of our lives reading to learn. Children that have a good reading level by the age of eight will continue to achieve well in school. The reasons are simple. In smaller classes, teachers can help children who are struggling and give them enough time. They can spot children who have difficulties faster and do something about it. They can work with parents as well as children and, as we know, parental support and influence is a key factor in educational outcomes.

Irish Independent, 9 Sep 2015

Parents pay for schools’ upkeep

An INTO spokesman said, “Primary schools are underfunded and are only able to keep the doors open and the lights on with fundraising or contributions from parents. Failure to pay the minor repair grant will push schools further into debt and increase pressures on hard-pressed parents to fund their children’s education. Reliance on charity and local fundraising for essentials is not acceptable”.

Irish Daily Mail, 7 Sep 2015

Substitute teacher was paid €61,300 last year

A spokesman for the INTO said yesterday that it is “highly likely that the payment of €61,299 to a substitute teacher at primary included a significant payment for arrears”. He said, “Most substitutes at primary level are recently qualified teachers seeking longer term employment. The INTO has pressed schools to prioritise this group of teachers when looking for substitutes.” He added, “On average primary teachers take five days absence from schools because of illness. INTO case work files indicate that roughly half of teachers on long-term sick leave are dealing with cancer diagnoses, treatment or recovery.” The spokesman pointed out that “substitution payments at primary level mainly involve the payment of substitutes for teachers on maternity leave and sick leave. Substitution costs arise because children need to be taught on days a regular teacher is unavailable.”

Irish Examiner, 4 Sep 2015

Teachers told to ignore JobBridge positions

Primary teachers looking for work this autumn have been advised to ignore positions advertised under the Government’s JobBridge scheme. The INTO advice describes the scheme as “exploitative” with no guarantee of future work. The union, which issued a directive to its members in 2011 not to take part in JobBridge, said applicant teachers who joined the scheme would not be offered the standard pay rate for a teacher. The jobs advertised would not count towards permanent employment or pensions, the union pointed out. “Recently qualified graduates who have yet to get regular work should be extremely cautious about joining this scheme,” said General Secretary, Sheila Nunan. Ms Nunan said there were fewer teaching graduates this year and an increase in employment opportunities.

The Irish Times, 22 Aug 2015

Teachers shared pension lump sums of €136m last year as 11 got more than €150,000

A spokesman for the INTO said: “Larger pension payments in 2014 were due to larger numbers retiring last year. There has been no change to pension calculations.” He said that those retiring had paid pension contributions all their working lives and pointed out that the larger lump-sum gratuities “were very much outlying figures”.

Irish Independent, 6 Aug 2015

In the media

Some of the wide range of topics on which INTO commented in recent weeks
Retirements

Pictures from branch and district functions to honour retiring members

**Edenderry**
Back row, L to R: Josephine Byrne, Branch Secretary; Marjorie Murin, RIP; Marian O’Donoghue, Bernie Nally, Mary Brereton, Branch Vice Chair; Carol Fingleton, Branch Organiser and Padraig Carney, Branch Chair. Front row, L to R: Irene Chambers, Emma Dineen, INTO President and Fionnuala Doyle.

**Gort**
Back row, L to R: Marion Fahy, Chairperson; Mary Grehan, Colette Rhattigan, Joe Killeen, CEC Rep; Maria Long, Ann Comyn and Patricia Lee. Front row, L to R: Mareella Jordan, Brigid Kelly, Anne Costello, Paula Cummins, Phil Glynn, Rena Brown and Michael Brown. Missing from photo are: Deirdre Lowery, Helen Hallinan, Pius Murray and Áine O’Regan, retirees; and Marie Clune, Organisation Committee.

**Kilkenny South**
Back row, L to R: Donal Power, Branch Chairperson; Sarah Hammann, Branch Secretary; Sean McMahon, President 2014/15 and Joe McKeown, CEC Rep. Front row, L to R: Marie Haberlin, St Senan’s BNS, Kilmacow, Co Kilkenny; Brid Larkin, Our Lady of Good Counsel NS, Ferrybank, Waterford; Katherine Grant, Slieverue NS, Slieverue, Co Kilkenny; Frankie Kirwan, Glenmore NS, Glenmore, Co Kilkenny.

**District 12**
L to R: Michael Harte, Branch Chairman; David O’Brien, Scoil na mBuachailli, Clonakilty; Patrick French, Lisavaird NS; Robert Allen, Branch Secretary and John Driscoll, CEC Rep.

**District 14**
Pictured at a recent retirement function held in the Gresham Hotel, Dublin, are Brendan O’Sullivan, INTO President 2013/14 and Pat Crowe, CEC Rep, alongside retirees from District 14.

**District 15**
Retirees pictured at the recent District 15 retirement function.
TEN REASONS TO JOIN THE INTO

The INTO has produced a leaflet for newly qualified teachers to highlight the importance of being a union member. Entitled ‘Ten reasons to be part of the INTO’, the leaflet is available from INTO staff representatives in every school. Staff representatives can advise on how to join the INTO and will have copies of INTO membership forms. Teachers may also join online on www.into.ie

Are you newly qualified?

- Join INTO and let your voice be heard where it matters. Make contribution to the improvement of teaching conditions and education standards.

- Be part of the union which has secured every significant improvement for the teachers over the years – from redeployment to ensuring that only qualified teachers work in schools.

---

Advice, Support and Legal Backing

*INTO: One of Ireland’s largest and longest-established teachers’ unions, representing over 40,000 teachers across the island.*

Have Your Voice Heard

INTO from ground up - activities on democratic principles. Annual Congress is the governing body. INTO ballots members on major decisions, holds motions to key roles, and runs a range of consultative events: e.g. Youth Conference, Principals'/Deputy Principals' Conference, and Equality Conference.

Pay and Conditions

INTO campaigns for professional salaries and conditions of service. Over challenging years since 2008, INTO won greater security for fixed-term teachers, fought off attempts to raise class sizes generally, and negotiated a start of pay equalisation and participation.

Advice and Financial Support in Hard Times

INTO’s benevolent fund supports members or their families in cases of redundancy or financial hardship. Benefit Funds Committee (BFC) members are available to advise in these situations.

Better Together

Joining INTO means you are part of Ireland’s largest and longest-established teachers’ union, representing over 40,000 teachers across the island.

Salary Protection, Insurance, Credit Union, Discounts

You can protect earnings against the risk of serious illness through the INTO Salary Protection Scheme. INTO also has a credit union, approved AVC and car insurance schemes and a membership discount card, Membership Plus.

Campaigning on Issues that Matter to You

Member campaigns such as “Room to Bloom” and “Shed appeal for Primary Education” have secured thousands of additional teaching jobs despite tight budget conditions.

Supporting you as a Professional

INTO supports members through CPD programmes. Teaching Matters: a monthly Irish Teachers’ Journal, annual Education Conference and provision of study bursaries.

INTO Network

Support networks for LGBT+ teachers and for Separated Teachers are global. INTO also has a Global Solidarity Network for teachers interested in global education/union issues.

Up to date Information

You have access to accurate information via the INTO website, weekly e-zines, the INTO magazine and through your local branches and representatives. INTO’s elected Central Executive Committee (CEC) members, all full-time teachers.

INTO Networks

Support networks for LGBT+ teachers and for Separated Teachers are global. INTO has a Global Solidarity Network for teachers interested in global education/union issues.

Retirement Function

Pictured at a special retirement function to honour a number of key INTO activists in District 14 in Club na Máinteoirí were, l to r: Gregor Kerr, Deirdre Kirwan, Jimmy Brennan, Valerie Monaghan, Brendan O’Sullivan, Sally Shiels, Niall Smyth and Pat Crowe.
About seven years ago, the Department of Education established a programme to teach modern languages to primary children between the ages of five to eight years old. Known as the Primary Modern Languages Programme (PMLP) it originally employed a handful of staff designated as tutors.

The number of tutors employed rose to 83 and they were employed to deliver modern language teaching in a set number of schools. The cost of the service was around £900,000 per year and the actual cost per pupil was costed at 75p per pupil per session. The tutors were welcomed by the schools they visited, the children enjoyed the language teaching and the parents regularly commented on the confidence it gave their children. It was a success story all round.

That all changed in March 2015.

**Service asked**

That month, the tutors were called to a meeting and told that due to budget cutbacks, the service was being axed. They were given a letter telling them they would have no work after 31 March 2015 and if they were owed any money it would be sent to them. A number of tutors contacted the INTO and we made contact with the Education Authority demanding a meeting. Silence!

On three separate occasions the INTO asked for a meeting to discuss our members’ rights. The representative of the EA repeated that these individuals were tutors and not teachers and consequently they did not propose to consult with us. The INTO was left with no option but to lodge legal proceedings and with the assistance of our legal representatives we organised group, when faced with the wind down of the service. Tutors were to continue to be paid until negotiations were complete. Tutors would be offered alternative employment if they wished. Otherwise a package based on redundancy, holiday and notice pay would be developed and agreed.

In the next months, the INTO held meetings of our membership and regular emails were sent to advise of developments and answer group and individual queries. In addition, negotiations with EA on the package to be offered were continuing. In September 2015, the INTO advised our members in the PMLP service that agreement had been reached and that the Organisation was recommending the offer. The package consisted of a redundancy payment based on one month for each year of service, notice pay based on one week for each year of service and holiday pay based on 12% of all the hours they had worked since commencing the service. It was agreed that pensions would also be dealt with but separately to this process. In mid-September, the INTO organise for tutors to attend the Northern Office, to confirm their individual acceptance of their personal offer and to withdraw their tribunal claim.

**Payment**

The average payment made was around £5,000 (£6,800), with a few tutors who had recently joined the service receiving over £15,000 ($20,500). An estimate of the total monies paid to date by EA is in excess of £330,000 (£450,000) and this figure excludes the pension costs for lost service and benefits. When the cost of pensions is added to the overall settlement costs, we expect this figure to almost double.

**What happens next?**

The monies owed will be paid to our members over the next four to eight weeks and negotiations will commence on the matter of pensions. The demand for the service continues and many tutors expect to find employment either on a personal basis with individual schools; while others have been asked to deliver the programme under other funding initiatives. In addition, the INTO has created 63 ambassadors who, when they visit schools, will tell those who see no benefit in belonging to a trade union how they were helped by the INTO.

**What lessons has the INTO learnt?**

The tutors were a group of individuals who were professionally very close. They were well organised and they looked after each other when they were in schools. However, they did not know how to cope when their world was turned upside down. The INTO filled that breach with advice and representation and importantly to the membership – action! We took their cases forward, individually and collectively. The Northern Office also developed an email group specifically for the tutors that allowed individual and collective responses to queries and questions and allowed the INTO to demonstrate to representatives of EA that INTO meant business. Ultimately, through our members were advised correctly and that the course of action was an agreed one; then the INTO was able to demonstrate success based on a well prepared case.

The final lesson is that even the best organised group, when faced with the unknown, can fall apart and that it is only when an organisation with the reputation and expertise of the INTO steps forward to provide leadership, advice and direction that failure is cast aside and success becomes a reality.

TONY CARLIN, Senior Official, Northern Office.
Reform of sorts at last

In 2007 the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) was proposed. The intention was to create a single body which would take over the roles, responsibilities, assets and liabilities of the five Education and Library Boards, (ELBs), the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS), the Staff Commission and the Youth Council. The new body would “build on the work of the eight education bodies, the ESA will reduce unnecessary expenditure on bureaucracy; will help disseminate good practice in our schools; will facilitate the advancement of shared education and will ultimately lead to improved educational outcomes for all children”. In short, the whole way the education system in the North would be radically shook up and re-organised.

Having missed a series of deadlines, including its expected implementation in April 2013, in 2014 the Minister of Education at Stormont, John O’Dowd, tired of flogging a politically dead horse put forward legislation to combine the five ELBs into one and on 1 April 2015, the Education Authority became operational.

While the establishment of the new Education Authority is to be welcomed, it is not as far reaching in the reform of education envisaged, and supported by the INTO in the original ESA bill. In fact, far from reducing the sectoral nature of education in the North, it has expanded it. CCMS, Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta (Irish medium) and Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education all remain, with the addition of a body to oversee the controlled sector. This will have the effect of further complicating the decision making process in education here.

The establishment of this new authority will have an effect on the structures of the INTO in the North, because the present Rule 35 of the constitution of the INTO defines district one and two in relation to the former education and Library Board areas.

The electoral areas of the members of the INTO Northern Committee in Rule 50 are also defined by these same Board areas.

It will therefore be necessary to bring forward an emergency rule change at Congress 2016 to rectify this, to allow this organisation to function within the rules and constitution of the INTO.

MARK MCTAGGART,
Northern Committee.

ANGER OVER ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS DEEPPENS

INTO calls meetings of school leaders

The INTO has called a series of emergency meetings with school leaders over a deepening row with the Department of Education regarding the arrangements for assessing the educational progress of children. These meetings have been called on foot of correspondence sent to school governors from DE regarding the new assessment arrangements.

The Northern Secretary, Gerry Murphy, said the letter from the DE had ignited the fury of school leaders who support the view that the proposed assessment arrangements are not fit for purpose. “Governors should not be used by the DE to bolster a flawed assessment system in which their principals have no confidence,” said Mr Murphy. He said since the letter was issued INTO Northern Office was inundated with phone calls from school leaders who feel that their professional judgement has been ignored by Department of Education officials on this issue.

Mr Murphy described the assessment arrangements as educationally flawed and impracticable. He questioned why the minister was determined to impose a flawed model on the school system. “The INTO had been working with DE officials on a way forward,” he said. “Yet suddenly these talks stopped.” He said school leaders were demanding the discussions be resumed and that the assessment arrangements eventually agreed are fit for purpose and enjoy the confidence of the entire education community.

INTO’s position is determined by the following motion that was passed at Northern Conference 2013:

‘Conference condemns CCEA and the Department of Education for the introduction of a cross-curricular skills based assessment which is not fit for purpose.

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to initiate a boycott of the cross-curricular assessment arrangements until such time as they are teacher-friendly, work-load proofed and fit for purpose, in line with INTO policy.

Conference further calls on Northern Committee to boycott the introduction of assessing using ICT until the issues surrounding numeracy and communication have been resolved.’

GERRY MURPHY, Northern Secretary.
Global Schoolroom

this summer...
make it count!

This summer, join Global Schoolroom and spend the month of July in remote Northeast India sharing your educational experience with your Indian teacher counterparts. Help improve teaching standards and enjoy a truly fascinating and rewarding professional, personal and cultural experience while using your teaching skills to make a real difference.

If you would like to apply to become a teacher educator in India this summer please log onto www.globalschoolroom.net and download an application form, email us at: info@globalschoolroom.net, write to us at The Volunteering Department, Global Schoolroom, 10 Lissadel Crescent, Malahide, Co. Dublin, Ireland or call us at +353 1 845 6901.

Places are limited to 30 volunteers and selection of candidates will be based on your application form and an interview. Successful applicants must be prepared to attend six weekend training days during the spring and must also agree to raise a minimum of €3,000 towards the cost of the trip.

WIN €1,000 IRISH LIFE BURSARY
Volunteers will entered into a draw for 3 Irish Life Bursaries each worth €1,000.

WIN €1,000 SPORTS KIT FOR YOUR SCHOOL THANKS TO CORNMARKET!
All schools from which volunteers apply will be in with a chance to win €1,000 worth of sports kit kindly sponsored by Cornmarket.
INTO advice

Principals’ seminars – education and the law

Following the success of the series of principals’ seminars organised before the summer, the INTO has decided to offer further opportunities for principals to attend. The focus of this series is education and the law. The seminar looks at how the law impacts on teacher employment, and on issues such as enrolment, behaviour and discipline and the school’s duty of care. A session on current issues relating to teacher terms and conditions will also be included in each seminar. Over 250 principals have already attended this seminar, and the feedback from participants has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Dates and venues**
14 October – Charleville Park Hotel
11 November – Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone
25 November – Radisson Blu, Letterkenny
2 December – INTO Learning Centre

**Booking**
Bookings can only be made online and require a €40 deposit which is refundable on attendance at the seminar. Registration is open by logging onto www.intolearning.ie/upcoming-training-events

Please note that places are limited and will be offered on a first come first served basis.

**Participant comments**
Feedback from previous seminars:
“Very well presented. Excellent facilitators and great information re new circulars.”
“This was my first time attending an INTO seminar and I found it extremely helpful. Thank you.”

---

Branch officers’ training seminars

The focus of this autumn’s training will be organising and providing branch-based training for staff reps and new members. The key aim in moving to this new approach is to facilitate building and maintaining closer relationships between branch officers, staff reps and members, with a particular focus on new members. District training organisers and district secretaries will also attend the training seminar and together officers’ will be afforded time to plan and prepare for this new approach.

To date training for branch officers has taken place in districts 8, 9, 14 and 15 in the INTO Learning Centre Dublin and in districts 3, 4 and 6 in the Landmark Hotel, Carrick on Shannon.

The remaining seminars will take place in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DISTRICTS</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>VENUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 – 11</td>
<td>Fri 9 Oct</td>
<td>Newpark, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12, 13, 16</td>
<td>Fri 16 Oct</td>
<td>Charleville Park Hotel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 7</td>
<td>Wed 14 Oct</td>
<td>Mullingar Park Hotel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All officers were notified by email and given details of how to register their place online. If you have not received notification about the training and how to register online, please contact tut@into.ie for the details.
Thinking of buying a car?

Buying a car is a big investment and many people find the process a challenge. Whether you are buying a brand new car or second hand one, there are many things to think about before you take the plunge. According to the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, almost 30% of queries to their consumerhelp helpline relate to buying a car.

To help you make the right decision, the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission has come up with a few questions to consider before you buy.

1 WHAT'S YOUR BUDGET?
Think about how much you can afford to spend on a new car. If you are a first-time buyer it may be easier to estimate as you do not have a trade-in. If you are trading-in your existing car, you need to consider the 'cost of changing', i.e. subtracting the value of your trade-in from the price of a new car. Think about the running costs of whatever car you choose such as the cost of insurance, tax, NCT, fuel, repairs and servicing and also if the car is suitable for your needs.

2 HOW ARE YOU GOING TO PAY FOR THE CAR?
Saving up for a car is the cheapest option as you do not have to pay interest on a loan. If you're thinking of taking out a personal loan from your bank or credit union, work out what you will be repaying each month. You can compare regular savings accounts and personal loan rates from the different providers on www.consumerhelp.ie. A good rule of thumb is that if you require finance for more than three years to pay for a car, it may be too expensive for your budget.

3 ARE YOU THINKING OF USING A HIRE PURCHASE/PERSONAL CONTRACT PLAN (PCP)?
A garage may offer you a hire purchase agreement or PCP as a way of paying for your car. The main difference between using a personal loan and a PCP contract is that with a personal loan you borrow the money, pay for your car, and own it immediately. With a PCP or hire purchase agreement, you don't own the car, you are hiring it for a period of time, typically three to five years. You only own it when you make the final payment. This is important because if you were to run into financial difficulty during your PCP or hire purchase agreement, unlike a personal loan, you cannot sell the car to pay off your debt.

4 HAVE YOU DONE YOUR RESEARCH?
Look at the price of cars in dealer showrooms, magazines, newspapers and on websites so you know the average price for the type of car you want. If you are trading in your car, get to know how much your trade-in is worth by looking at similar models for sale.

5 DO YOU KNOW WHAT RIGHTS YOU HAVE IF YOU BUY FROM A TRADER COMPARED TO A PRIVATE SELLER?
If you buy from a dealer you have the option of car finance arrangements, a warranty and you have some protection under consumer law if things go wrong. If you buy privately, you do not have the same consumer rights as buying from a dealer because the person selling the car is not acting as a business.

6 HAVE YOU THOROUGHLY CHECKED THE CONDITION OF THE CAR?
There are a few basic things that you can look out for when you are thinking of buying a car. For instance, checking the outside of the car for any visible signs of damage such as scrapes, dents, rust and leaks and checking the mileage on the odometer, if it seems low compared to the condition of the car investigate it further. There is lots more information on car clocking and what to look out for when buying a car on www.consumerhelp.ie. You will also find a car purchase checklist to help you make sure you have the important checks covered.

7 HAVE YOU INVESTIGATED THE HISTORY OF THE CAR?
You can ask the seller to check the history of the car for you or visit websites such as www.cartell.ie, www.motorcheck.ie or www.mywheels.ie and get the information for a small fee. This will show previous recorded odometer readings, insurance claims, if the car has been used as a taxi, and details of any crashes. All Society of Irish Motor Industry (SIMI) dealers have access to a car history check service. Also, make sure you check that the car is not under any existing hire purchase or PCP agreement. Hire Purchase Information Ltd keeps records of cars subject to hire purchase agreements, so check if they have details of the car you are looking at.
Newly qualified teachers (NQTs) frequently ask what criteria are used in the inspection of the work of teachers for probationary and registration purposes in primary schools?

There are four key areas to consider:
- Planning, preparation and recording of progress.
- Classroom management and organisation.
- Quality of teaching across the curriculum areas.
- Quality of pupils’ learning in curriculum areas.

In this article we will explore the criteria for planning, preparation and recording of progress.

Planning, preparation and recording of progress

A NQT must show engagement with long and short-term planning in line with school policies and The Primary School Curriculum.

Timetable
You must develop an adequate class timetable referenced to the specified minimum weekly time framework in the Primary School Curriculum and the recommendations included in Circular 56/2011. It is important to link with the school plan when drawing up your timetable. Discuss with the principal and/or mentor how the school is facilitating additional time for literacy and numeracy.

Objective
You need to provide clear and suitable teaching and learning objectives with due regard to the Primary School Curriculum and the school plan. Keep your learning objectives specific, realistic, attainable, measurable and relevant to the class you are teaching. The key words here are clear and suitable – if the learning objectives are clear and suitable then your teaching and the children’s learning will be focused.

Resources
You need an appropriate range of resources. This does not mean making resources for every lesson, but rather being efficient in sourcing effective resources in the school or from other teachers or making appropriate, sustainable resources which can be used throughout the year. The key word here is appropriate – only have the resources which are essential and which will enhance the teaching and learning in the context of your class.

Differentiation
Plan for differences in pupil abilities, backgrounds and learning style. See differentiation strategies across the curriculum in the Long-Term Planning Guidelines, in the planning section of www.teacherinduction.ie. The examples included are for illustrative purposes only and should be replaced with examples relevant to the children in your own class.

Progress records
Maintain good quality progress records. “Assessment is the gathering, recording, interpreting, using and reporting of information about a child’s progress and achievement in developing knowledge, skills and attitudes.” A good reference is Appendix G: Assessment methods across the curriculum in the Long-Term Planning Guidelines, in the planning section of www.teacherinduction.ie. The examples again are for illustrative purposes only and should be replaced with examples relevant to the pupils in your own class.
A Balanced Approach to Literacy Development in the Early Years

The National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) is committed to promoting best practice in the teaching of literacy skills. As part of the National Literacy Strategy, NEPS have developed a new online resource for use by teachers in Irish primary schools.

A Balanced Approach to Literacy Development in the Early Years draws on international research, evidence based practice and samples of that practice in Irish primary schools to give a coherent and comprehensive guide to teachers. This is a resource that can be used by class teachers working with children from junior infants to first class. It may also be helpful to schools who have identified the need to improve reading standards as part of the school self-evaluation process. Some schools may also like to use the resource to support the work of a professional learning community focusing on literacy.

A Balanced Approach uses the analogy of The Literacy Tree and all the elements of literacy teaching and learning are incorporated into this accessible new framework.

It addresses the following elements:

**THE NEED FOR A BALANCED APPROACH**
- Preventing reading failure, evidence-based practice, introducing the balanced approach, framework of the balanced approach, time for reading.

**ESSENTIALS FOR READING**
- Access to books, oral language experiences, reading at home, motivation.

**LEARNING TO RECOGNISE WORDS**
- Phonological awareness, phonics (alphabetic knowledge), sight words, word reading strategies.

**MEANINGFUL READING**
- Vocabulary, comprehension, fluency.

**WRITTEN COMMUNICATION**
- Handwriting, spelling, meaningful writing.

**ASSESSMENT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**
- The assessment plan, assessment for learning, assessment of learning.

**RICH READING EXPERIENCES**
- The gradual release of responsibility, interactive read aloud, shared reading, guided reading, oral reading from just-right texts, independent reading.

**TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**
- Quality of teaching, professional development for teachers.

This resource is freely available on the DES website or the NEPS resources webpage.

### RAISE READING STANDARDS JUNIOR INFANTS TO FIRST CLASS
- New online resource
- Free to download
- Addresses targets in school self-evaluation
- Facilitates the work of a professional learning community
- Each sections contains:
  - Summary of research evidence
  - Easy-to read explanations
  - Short video clips of best practice in action
  - Teachers and children in Irish classrooms
  - Supporting resources and materials
  - Suggestions for developing practice

---

**Technology Enhancing Education for All:**

**UCC’s disability support service**

Free training in assistive technology (AT)

UCC’s Assistive Technology Outreach Programme offers training in AT to school pupils in 5th and 6th class in the UCC catchment area who have learning difficulties/disabilities and to their parents, teachers and SNAs. Parents of younger learners are also welcome to attend to explore the technology that might suit their child’s needs.

Primary teachers are welcome to book and attend the free training for educators. Student and parent training sessions are run on Wednesday and Friday afternoons (2.30 p.m. – 4.30 p.m.). Training is offered to teachers on Friday mornings however if this is problematic teachers and SNAs can attend the Wednesday and Friday afternoon sessions but please be aware that these are training sessions focussed on students and parents.

For those who cannot come to UCC to attend the hands-on training sessions we are running hour-long webinars to give an overview of the relevant technologies. You can engage with the webinars from your school or from home. We also have a video gallery on AT and related topics to support the needs of students and educators getting to grips with technology in education: www.ucc.ie/en/dss/callouts/resources/videos/

While the AT Outreach Programme is principally funded for second level schools it endeavours to promote awareness and use of AT in primary education. In May and June there is increased availability to primary schools and school visits for presentations, demonstrations and hands on training are also possible.

Please visit our website to see the calendars of information evenings, training sessions and webinars: www.ucc.ie/en/dss/atoutreach/

**Contact**

Deirdre Madden, Assistive Technology Outreach Co-ordinator, Disability Support Service, UCC. Email: deirdre.madden@ucc.ie
Web: www.ucc.ie/en/dss/atoutreach/
A decade of European collaboration
Happy 10th birthday to eTwinning

Over 1,400 schools across Europe, including over a thousand in Ireland, have participated in eTwinning since its inception in 2005 and as a result have formed partnerships and designed projects with schools in various EU countries. These projects have ranged from short, basic projects to in-depth, award-winning ICT projects.

What is eTwinning?
eTwinning is now a part of the Erasmus+ European programme for education, training, youth and sport. It offers a safe and free online platform for schools to communicate, collaborate and develop projects with schools across Europe. The use of ICT is an intrinsic element in this collaboration and eTwinning provides support, tools and services for schools who participate.

National links
Irish schools have now the added option of twinning with an Irish school(s) and this new pilot initiative is great for teachers and schools new to eTwinning. Teachers can now form projects with other Irish schools and bring added confidence and experience into future projects with a wider European remit. What a great way to contact previous schools, past colleagues or friends teaching across the country and maybe use the next year’s 1916 centenary celebrations as an inspiration!

Getting involved – finding partners and the basics of eTwinning

eTwinning portal
The eTwinning portal is the main meeting point and workspace for projects. The portal provides online tools for teachers to find partners and to set up projects. Here you will find all the information a teacher will need from project kits and examples of best practice to on-going CPD opportunities available to eTwinners. The next step is to pre-register your school and you are then well on the way to being an eTwinner!

Key websites – www.leargas.ie and www.etwinning.net for portal access
Once a school is fully registered teachers can then start to search for potential partners for their eTwinning project. They can look to join an established project or join with other eTwinners in establishing a new project. Teachers can also initiate their own project idea which other eTwinners may be interested in.

eTwinning desktop and twinspace
Once registered, you can login to your desktop to get in touch with other eTwinners, exchange ideas, learn together and plan future collaborative activities. You can choose a specific curriculum area or topics for your project to tie in with your classroom work. Once you have chosen a project and all partners are established, then the work can begin using the specific project twinspace with its various collaborative tools.

Update
The eTwinning desktop, the place where collaboration starts, has been completely redeveloped and will be relaunched during the week of 21 September. It will be renamed ‘eTwinning Live’, because the new platform will improve the networking aspect and help you keep track of what’s going on in the entire community.

Tips
The project can be as long or short as the partners agree on but it would be advisable for a ‘new’ eTwinner to start with a short and simple project which blends in with work being done in the classroom e.g. Christmas celebrations.

The value of eTwinning
eTwinning can be easily assimilated into everyday teaching and learning across the various curriculum areas.

Children are enthused and engaged by such innovative approaches to learning. They are often given a leading role in developing the project and this ownership of learning can boost self-esteem and confidence.

Schools get to link with schools across Ireland and Europe which enables children to appreciate their own background and culture while realising that they are also citizens of Europe and part of a larger, diverse EU community.

CPD opportunities
eTwinning offers teachers a range of free on-going CPD opportunities incorporating examples of best practice and involving experts in specific areas of ICT and education. These range from short, intensive learning events to learning groups, online seminars and professional development workshops (PDWs). Currently there is an online eTwinning course available through your desktop after you register. This covers the basics of eTwinning from finding a partner school to using twinspace and is facilitated by an eTwinning ambassador.

New term resolution!
We are always looking for more Irish schools to join eTwinning and to experience the many opportunities eTwinning brings to schools, pupils and teachers. You can join anytime but September/October is an ideal time to start so join up now! Details of your local eTwinning ambassador is available on Leargas.ie and we are there to help you with any questions or queries.

PETER KANE is a primary teacher in County Galway and is also an ambassador for eTwinning.

INTOUCH 31 OCTOBER 2015
New boards of management in December
Governance manual for primary schools published

A new governance manual for primary schools published this week sets out the various rules regarding the composition and operation of boards of management. It will come into effect following elections for appointments to new boards of management that will take up office from December 1. The Constitution of Boards and Rules of Procedure 2011 continues to apply to existing boards up to 30 November 2015.

A new element included in the manual is provision to allow schools to operate a shared governance arrangement on a voluntary and pilot basis during the forthcoming four year term.

Commenting on the publication Sheila Nunan, General Secretary, said the state owed a huge debt of gratitude to boards of management for the voluntary work done in managing primary schools. “Twenty-five percent of boards are made up of primary teachers and principals whose expertise and professionalism is essential to the successful running of boards,” she said.

**Principals and boards**
Ms Nunan singled out principal teachers in particular for their role in school management. She said principals are regularly asked to do more than their fair share when it comes to school management. “This cannot continue,” she said. “It is up to the Department and school patrons to ensure that training is provided for every new board so that the demanding workload can be shared effectively. The days of expecting principal teachers to do it all are gone.”

She also said teaching principals were entitled to time free from classroom teaching to carry out their leadership role and she called for this to be increased to one day a week in the next budget. In larger schools principals need the support of an in-school management team, she said. “The ban on promotion in schools has to be lifted if schools are to tackle issues like special needs, ICT, literacy and numeracy effectively.”

**Election of new boards**
The procedures set out in the manual for the election of new boards must now be activated. This process can take up to nine weeks to complete depending on the option chosen for the election of the parents’ nominees or where the selection proceeds without recourse to an election. Under this timeframe each new board shall assume office from December 1, 2015. The term of all outgoing boards shall expire on 30 November 2015. Ten copies of the manual will be distributed to each primary school in the coming weeks. A hardcopy must be provided to each person appointed to the new board of management and the remaining two copies must be provided to the Parents’ Association.

---

**Teacher launches 10 part song-based documentary**

Peter Grogan, who teaches in Scoil an Duinnigh near Swords in Co Dublin, has had a lifelong love of music and song and has produced and presented his own singer/songwriter programme for more than 10 years on 103.2 Dublin City FM each Saturday at 12 noon – available online www.dublincityfm.ie

“The Song Recalls It All” is his new 10 part song-based radio documentary. Each programme includes information and background to the songs and Peter has interviewed the likes of Pete St John, Mick Hanly, Mickey McConnell and Jimmy McCarthy for this series.

“The Song Recalls It All” will be broadcast each Wednesday at 3 p.m. on 103.2 Dublin City FM starting on 30 September and running until 2 December.

---

**Sciath Na Scol Chorcrai AGM**

Pictured at Sciath na Scol Chorcrai AGM in Rochestown Park Hotel on September 2015 are: Back row, l to r: Jack Lynch, Dave Cashman, Celine Glackin, Sarah Clynch, Mark O’Driscoll, Seamus O’Connor, Liam Breathnach, Damien Horgan, Anthony McSweeney, Dave Collins. Front row, l to r: Mairead O’Callaghan, Gerry Walsh, Emma Dineen, Deaglan O’Dorgan and Tony Farrell.
A success story

November 2014, saw the launch of Wellness 365, health and wellbeing programme for INTO members and their partners. It focused on physical and mental health through exercise, diet and increasing mental resilience.

Wellness 365 bootcamp weekend

Following each seminar, attendees were invited to sign up for Wellness 365, a six week training programme devised to help them run 5k. Every member that signed up was automatically included in a draw for a chance of winning a place at the Wellness365 bootcamp weekend which took place in the Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone in June 2015.

A great weekend was had by all. The winners of the bootcamp weekend were: Aine Morgan, Laura Daly, Mary McCarthy, Elaine Campbell, Ellen Cagney, Anne O’Sullivan, Evelyn Hartigan, Ruth Moody, Fiona Corcoran and Mary O’Driscoll.

Thanks to everyone who attended and participated in Wellness 365.

Wellness 365 was brought to you by the INTO in partnership with Irish Life and Cornmarket.

Science video competition for all schools

Chris Hadfield to judge entries

Commander Chris Hadfield has been announced as guest judge for NUI Galway’s ReelLIFE SCIENCE 2015 competition. The University is challenging primary school students across Ireland to produce engaging and informative short videos communicating a scientific topic for this year’s competition.

ReelLIFE SCIENCE will award €3,000 directly to the winning schools for science promotion.

Speaking ahead of the competition, Commander Hadfield said: “I am very much looking forward to seeing the science videos that Irish students will be making! Discovery and creativity, turned loose by imagination. A great project that I am proud to be a part of.”

Primary school students can choose from ‘Science in Space’, ‘The Soil is Alive!’ and ‘Design your Future’, among others. **Closing date for submissions is Friday, 16 October.** The winning schools will be announced on Monday, 9 November during Science Week 2015, when they will be invited to attend a public screening and awards ceremony during the Galway Science and Technology Festival on 22 November.

In 2014, the ReelLIFE SCIENCE challenge was taken up by thousands of students in 24 counties around Ireland, producing hundreds of three minute science videos for the competition, in both English and Irish.

The 2014 primary school category winners were Sooey NS, Co Sligo.

Previous year’s videos and more information about the 2015 competition can be found at www.reellifescience.com.

For more information contact Dr Enda O’Connell, NCBES, NUI Galway, at enda.oconnell@nuigalway.ie or 091 495435.
On 30 August I represented my school, St Molua’s NS, Ardagh, and my county in the Cumann na mBunscol INTO/Respect Exhibition Go Games before the Dublin v Mayo All Ireland senior football semi-final in Croke Park.

The day began with a meeting of players, referees, organisers and parents. I was introduced to my fellow team mates on the Dublin team. I was delighted to get a Dublin kit! I was wondering how my Dad would take that being a Mayo man but he took it all in his stride! We then headed off to the Croke Park dressing room where we changed into our playing gear. We had photographs taken with both GAA and INTO Presidents.

We were then treated to a light meal of my favourite – chicken goujons! I could not wait for half time to run out onto the famous Croke Park pitch to play the game. It was a dream come true and a wonderful and memorable experience that I will never forget. We returned to the stand to watch the senior game together. I made new friends on the Dublin team and we have kept in contact via Snapchat! Thanks to my team mates in Ardagh for making it possible. Special thanks to Mr Kelleher, Principal of St Molua’s NS and the organisers Cumann na mBunscol, GAA and the INTO.

Luimneach Abu,
Daniel Geraghty.
A large, eye-catching black and white photograph of the first class of students to graduate from Mary Immaculate College in 1902, adorns the reception area of the college. The group of women, dressed in modest and austere clothing connect the late Victorian era to the present day. This was a pioneering group of teachers – some were already working as monitors in classrooms while others were new graduates of the profession.

The college does hold the names and examination results of each of the 25 students, however, it does not know to ‘which face each name belongs’. It is the purpose of the project to identify each of these graduates.

The attached numbered photograph shows each of the graduates. Perhaps at a quick glance, they all appear to look similar, however, on closer inspection each graduate has a different piece of jewellery, a different hairstyle, are different ages and all have a unique piece of lace detail on their dresses. Since this first class graduated in 1902, many generations of teachers have passed through the doors of Mary Immaculate College and continue to do so.

The project seeks the help of the teaching community and their friends in identifying the teachers in the photograph. Please contact Paul O’Brien: paul.obrien@mic.ul.ie with any information.

Paul recently completed his PhD at the college and works in the Academic Writing Centre where he teaches Academic Writing on both the B Ed and BA programmes. The project is supported by Professor Teresa O’Doherty, Dean of Education at Mary Immaculate College.

A large, eye-catching black and white photograph of the first class of students to graduate from Mary Immaculate College in 1902, adorns the reception area of the college. The group of women, dressed in modest and austere clothing connect the late Victorian era to the present day. This was a pioneering group of teachers – some were already working as monitors in classrooms while others were new graduates of the profession.

The college does hold the names and examination results of each of the 25 students, however, it does not know to ‘which face each name belongs’. It is the purpose of the project to identify each of these graduates.

The attached numbered photograph shows each of the graduates. Perhaps at a quick glance, they all appear to look similar, however, on closer inspection each graduate has a different piece of jewellery, a different hairstyle, are different ages and all have a unique piece of lace detail on their dresses. Since this first class graduated in 1902, many generations of teachers have passed through the doors of Mary Immaculate College and continue to do so.

The project seeks the help of the teaching community and their friends in identifying the teachers in the photograph. Please contact Paul O’Brien: paul.obrien@mic.ul.ie with any information.

Paul recently completed his PhD at the college and works in the Academic Writing Centre where he teaches Academic Writing on both the B Ed and BA programmes. The project is supported by Professor Teresa O’Doherty, Dean of Education at Mary Immaculate College.

**ACAE applications welcome**

The Association for Creativity and Arts in Education, ACAE, is currently accepting applications for the Creative Schools Award 2015/16

**The award**

Through this award, ACAE celebrates the wonderful work being done by teachers in schools throughout the country and recognises schools and teachers that use innovative and creative approaches to teaching and learning. This is an evidence based award that promotes process rather than product and looks to foster and reward creativity, the imagination and the arts.

**Projects**

Teachers who wish to participate will be asked to develop their own creative project with their class. Projects might be arts based, might incorporate other subject areas, or may be a project that centres on innovative approaches or methodologies in one or a number of curriculum areas.

**Registration for the Creative Schools Award 2015/16**

For further information on the award or to register interest in participating please contact skerr@dwec.ie. The deadline for registration is Friday, 9 October 2015.
6th Annual Clare and Limerick Education Centres’ Conference – call for papers

Reflective practitioners sharing the learning

The 6th Annual Clare and Limerick Education Centres’ Research Conference will be held in Clare Education Centre, Ennis, Co Clare on Saturday, 5 March 2016.

Submitting an abstract for consideration

Abstracts of 150–200 words (maximum) should include a title, field of study and your contact details. Researchers will be allowed a maximum of 20 minutes to deliver their papers on the day of the conference. Applications will be accepted on a first come basis.

It is hoped to publish the research papers in a research journal as has been done to date. Papers for publication (including the bibliography) must be less than 2,000 words.

Further enquiries by email only to: Pat Hanrahan: pat@clareed.ie; Dr Joe O’Connell, PhD: joe@lec.ie; Dr Kevin Haugh, PhD: kevinmhaugh@gmail.com

Coachford Branch presentation

A special presentation was given to Emma Dineen during her first meeting with Coachford Branch after becoming President of the INTO.

Pictured l to r: Fionnghuala O’Regan, Branch Secretary; Willie Hackett, Branch Chairperson; Emma Dineen, INTO President and John Driscoll, CEC Representative.

Head of Education in Dublin Zoo retires

Una Smyth was Head of Education in Dublin Zoo for 21 years during which time the department went from strength to strength. Una maintained strong links with the INTO through which Dublin Zoo inspired many primary teachers to engage pupils with the natural world.

The INTO recently marked Una’s retirement and thanked her for her work.

Pictured, l to r: Mary Bird Smyth, INTO; Una Smyth and Aileen Tennent, who takes over from Una as Head of Education in Dublin Zoo.
The idea behind the Blue Star Programme for primary schools is simple – to foster better understanding of the EU. Children of all ages are challenged to get creative and think about Europe by carrying out projects about four key elements: the history, geography, culture and creativity, and institutions of the EU. The programme also aims to foster a strong sense of awareness of the EU among its participants, with participating schools earning the prestigious Blue Flag.

The programme is designed to be as curriculum friendly as possible for teachers so it can fit in with lesson plans already in place.

The time, toil and talent teachers put in is breathtaking. To give you an idea, in one school I visited they put on a vast Eurovision style concert, while in another walls were covered with projects on great European composers and thinkers.

As I’ve sat in classrooms and been grilled by pupils on the EU, it’s clear that they enjoy the topic and huge effort has gone in to helping them understand what the EU is all about.

The programme is funded by the Government and the EU and there are lots of resources available from the European Movement Ireland, The European Parliament Offices in Ireland and www.bluestarprogramme.ie

Making orchestral music fun for children aged 8 to 12 with Musical Adventures

The RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra Musical Discovery Programme

Thinking of a trip to Dublin, a school tour day? Would you like to hear a full symphony orchestra live in a concert designed for children aged 8 to 12?

On Tuesday 3 and Monday 30 November at the National Concert Hall, the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra teams up with Tom Redmond, one of the UK’s leading music educationalists and presenters, for Musical Adventures, a guided orchestral concert presentation for children aged eight to 12 featuring excerpts from movies and ballets, the symphonic and operatic repertoire with influences from Shakespeare to Star Wars! The programme features an array of orchestral favourites including excerpts from Stravinsky’s Firebird, Grieg’s Peer Gynt, Ravel’s Mother Goose, Rossini’s William Tell Overture, Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony and John Williams’ Star Wars. Tickets are €10 per child with teachers going free. Gavin Maloney conducts.

Musical Adventures is all about capturing the imagination of children and teachers, experiencing the power of a live orchestra and introducing the individual instruments and instrument families. It’s about orchestras being fun, about participation and about guiding children and teachers through a live orchestral experience. Chanting, singing and storytelling all feature.

Ahead of the concerts, participating school groups will receive an audio file and score of the song Life is a Wonderful Thing by Mark and Helen Johnson to prepare in advance. “Brilliantly uplifting, feel good, smile inducing!” is how Tom Redmond describes it.

Learning in the classroom after the concerts is also a key part of Musical Adventures. Included in the ticket price will be takeaway programme notes for all children and teachers, and two lesson plans for teachers so that learning and musical discovery can continue in the classroom.

Tom Redmond is one of the UK’s leading educationalists working with orchestras. He is a professional orchestral musician, a BBC broadcaster and plays a major role in the BBC’s groundbreaking and hugely successful Ten Pieces project. He was also the orchestra consultant for the project’s ebook. Les Pratt, producer, BBC Radio 3 and Ten Pieces praises him as “a charismatic, engaging and amusing presenter who has the consummate knack of making classical music seem relevant to us all and who conveys information in a way which is neither onerous nor patronising.” In his hugely popular interactive concerts for schools with the Hallé, City of Birmingham Symphony and Ulster Orchestras, Tom has introduced classical music to over 100,000 young people and their families.

Concert dates are Tuesday, 3 November (10.30 a.m. and 12.15 p.m.) and Monday, 30 November (10.30 a.m., 12.15 p.m. and 2 p.m.). Concert duration is 65 minutes approximately. Tickets are €10 per child with teachers going free. Booking through the National Concert Hall on 01 417 0000 or www.nch.ie. Early booking is advised. Musical Adventures takes place as part of FORTE! The RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra Musical Discovery Programme.

Further information: Assumpta Lawless, Marketing and Communications Manager, RTÉ NSO, assumpta.lawless@rte.ie, direct line: 01 208 2769, mobile: 087 290 4168, or Niamh Ryan, Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator, RTÉ NSO, niamhryan@rte.ie, direct line: 01 208 2773, mobile: 087 410 0516.
ICT in teaching, learning and assessment

Not only are all primary and post-primary pupils now pupils of the Primary School Curriculum (1999), but many of our student teachers are members of that generation. This landmark curricular change has happened in parallel with unprecedented technological change.

In recent weeks, the education community was prompted into a debate about the merits of the use of ICT in teaching, learning and assessment with the release of the OECD report Students, computers and learning – making the connection. Headlines were made by extracting interpretations out of context but nonetheless there was a number of interesting observations. These observations detail some of the challenges we face in embedding ICT into teaching, learning and assessment.

New approaches and methodologies

“Another interpretation is that we have not yet become good enough at the kind of pedagogies that make the most of technology, that adding 21st century technologies to 20th century teaching practices will just dilute the effectiveness of teaching” Students, Computers and Learning – Making the Connection (OECD, 2015).

With new disruptive technologies come new approaches and methodologies for teaching, learning and assessment. Just because advances in technologies bring us more information than we require does not mean that we accept everything presented to us. We develop comprehension skills in skimming, scanning, determining importance, summarising and selecting the information we require. Some of these skills are being diluted through the convenience of search engines. Furthermore, commercial search engines create ‘filter bubbles’ in that the results returned by our searches are tailored for us based on our previous searches.

Teaching children how to search for information in one trusted source like Britannica School (available to all pupils and teachers at home and school through scoilnet.ie) is a safe place to start.

DuckDuckGo is a search engine that does not store previous searches. There is an option to filter searches according to region (i.e. Ireland). Previous searches are not tracked thus reducing ‘filter bubbles’.

Copy and paste answers

“If students use smartphones to copy and paste prefabricated answers to questions, it is unlikely to help them become smarter. If we want students to become smarter than a smartphone, we need to think harder about the pedagogies we are using to teach them.” Students, Computers and Learning – Making the Connection (OECD, 2015).

The teaching approaches of today are constructivist in orientation whereby the teacher facilitates discovery learning through carefully prepared learning experiences and finely tuned pedagogical skills. When we assign projects for children to research and report their findings, we teach them to find and select information effectively and ethically. The importance of citing sources of information is stressed and simply representing someone’s work as their own is neither beneficial nor acceptable. Of course, this does not simply apply to written text but also to images (still and video), sound files, video files, animations etc. Students should not be using technology just to consume information now it can be used to create new knowledge and collaborate with class members.

Technology enhanced teaching, learning and assessment

Taking a view of assessment as both formative and summative means that students can assess themselves and be assessed. Students become more effective learners by reflecting on the learning experience – what I found easy, what I struggled with, what I needed to do to increase my understanding etc. Collaborative learning processes and the increasing use of ePortfolios create both challenges and opportunities for the teachers and students of today.

ePortfolios are not just electronic folders of files – they are made up of three components:

1) Storage: folders of multimedia files we find, select, collate.
2) Workspace: Drafts of work with opportunities to provide feedback/comments and respond to same.
3) Showcase: Final projects are showcased.

“Technology can amplify great teaching, but great technology cannot replace poor teaching.” Students, Computers and Learning – Making the Connection (OECD, 2015).

The art of teaching cannot be lost in the midst of all these technological advances. The ability to differentiate instruction according to the needs of the student is at the core of effective teaching. Technology, no matter how expensive it is, used as a substitute for a book used in a transmission mode of instruction will not enhance learning.

See www.into.ie for details of PDST workshops and a call for ICT tutors.

Written by SEAN GALLAGHER, PDST Technology in Education, PDST.
As infants, we learn by discovery, it is a trait common to all living things on earth. Babies learn through investigating and exploring their environment making them natural explorers. In schools it is important to provide students with opportunities to develop this wonder and foster scientific enquiry as a key development skill.

At Dublin Zoo the opportunities to develop by discovery based learning are around every corner. In this issue we look at our elephant calves in the Kaziringa Forest Trail and investigate their development as they grow up so fast!

### Elephant development timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0–3 YRS</td>
<td>Birth, Weighting around 80kg, newborn elephants are similar in weight to an adult human.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1–5 YRS</td>
<td>First steps, After 20 to 30 minutes, the calf’s legs straighten out from being curled up in the womb and the calves quickly take their first steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0–3 YRS</td>
<td>Suckling, From 0 – 3 years, male calves grow faster and the size difference between the two sexes is evident in the first two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 YRS</td>
<td>Mastering the trunk, From 1 – 5 years, the calves master the use of their trunk, which contains thousands of muscles but no bones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3–5 YRS</td>
<td>Weaning, From 3 – 5 years, the calves continue to suckle until a sibling is born.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10–14 YRS</td>
<td>Sexual maturity, From 10 – 14 years, the male and female elephants reach sexual maturity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11+ YRS</td>
<td>Leave the herd, The male elephants leave the herd at 12 – 14 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20–50 YRS</td>
<td>Reproduction, A female elephant produces a calf every 5 to 6 years between the ages of 10 – 50 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ YRS</td>
<td>Ageing, Elephants can reach an age of 50 – 70 years old.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Kavi
- Born: 7.22am on 17 Jul 2014
- Mother: Yasmin
- Mass at birth: 80 kg
- Mass now: 700 kg
- Personality: Kavi is a brave little bull who likes to follow his father Upali.

### Ashoka
- Born: 6.24am on 19 Aug 2014
- Mother: Anak
- Mass at birth: 70 kg
- Mass now: 500 kg
- Personality: Ashoka started off shy but is getting braver and enjoys swimming with the other calves.

### Samiya
- Born: 11.45pm on 17 Sept 2014
- Mother: Bernhardine
- Mass at birth: 68 kg
- Mass now: 450 kg
- Personality: Samiya enjoys spending time with her mother Dina and sister Asha.

### CURRICULUM LINK – SCIENCE
Find out what physical similarities and differences young elephants have with toddlers.

### CURRICULUM LINK – ENGLISH
Why not write a diary entry of a day in the life of one of our elephant calves. Watch the elephants live here: [www.dublinzoo.ie/18/Elephants.aspx](http://www.dublinzoo.ie/18/Elephants.aspx)
Teaching matters

Anatomy of an Asian elephant

There are two kinds of elephant, the Asian elephant and the African elephant. Our three young elephants belong to an Asian herd. Here’s a look at the different functions of their physical features.

**SKIN**

The elephant’s skin is typically grey and can be quite thick, around 2 to 3 cm in places. The skin provides protection against bites and bumps and varying weather conditions. For added protection, elephants will frequently cover parts of their skin with mud or other matter, in the same way that humans apply sun cream or insect repellent.

**EARS**

The elephant’s ears release excess heat from the elephant’s body by means of a network of blood vessels called capillaries. The capillaries carry blood to the surface of the skin, allowing the blood to cool.

**TRUNK**

An elephant’s trunk is a fusion of the nose and upper lip which the elephant uses for breathing, drinking, making sounds to communicate and grasping and manipulating objects and food. The trunk contains thousands of muscles but not a single bone.

**FEET**

Elephant calves start walking soon after birth. The bones of an elephant’s foot are angled upwards, so that when elephants walk they are effectively walking on tiptoes. Elephants’ feet are circular and have a strong fatty pad underneath which acts as a shock absorber.

**TUSKS**

Some male Asian elephants grow tusks while females can only grow small tusks called ‘tushes’. Tusks are actually elongated teeth and are used to dig in the soil to search for water and roots as well as to strip the bark from trees and to move things out of the way. Elephants also use their tusks to defend themselves from attackers. Tusks are made of ivory, which is a hard substance that is highly valued and traded.

**MOUTH**

Elephant calves suckle with their mouth, not their trunk. They develop their first teeth at about six weeks. They develop second molars at two years which they use to grind food placed into their mouth using their trunk.

**Family farm news**

**BRING YOUR GARDEN INDOORS**

The dark evenings are coming and the weather calls for raincoats. It may not seem like the time to focus on the garden but it pays to keep it clean of weeds. Good plants to grow at this time are onions, garlic and leeks.

**How we can help?**

- Buy products such as shampoo, chocolate, cosmetics, washing detergents that use only certified sustainable palm oil.
- Never buy products made of ivory. This will help to discourage its trade.

**Conservation**

The number of elephants living in the wild is sadly falling. Some of the reasons why these elephants are declining is due to:
- The illegal trade of ivory from the elephants’ tusks.
- Reduced habitat size due to building of roads and industrial development.
- Deforestation as forests are cleared for farming.
- Climate change.

**CURRICULUM LINK - GEOGRAPHY**

Can you name and locate the countries in Asia?

**CURRICULUM LINK - ART**

Create an awareness poster to inform others about threats to the elephant species.

**CURRICULUM LINK - MATHS**

Measure the heights of emerging shoots daily. Older classes can learn how to graph their results.

**EDIBLES IN THE CLASSROOM**

Sow winter salad leaves or lettuce seeds for your sandwiches. Grow some herbs such as basil, chives, dill and parsley which will grow slowly ready for spring. Ensure they are placed in a sunny spot!

Tip: As autumn leaves build up why not add them to a compost heap or set up a leaf mould station in your school. The compost can be used in your garden in spring.

For further information on the programmes Dublin Zoo’s Discovery and Learning department offer, please contact Aileen Tennant, Discovery and Learning Manager at Dublin Zoo. Email education@dublinzoo.ie or telephone 01 4748932
I’ve had a varied career. As an army officer I was deployed to South Lebanon during the punitive Israeli offensive ‘Operation Grapes of Wrath’ in 1990. There, I witnessed the massacre of men, women and children in the villages and bothirns of the Irish area of operations. As UN peacekeepers, we acted as human shields between Hizbollah fighters and the Israeli military. We couldn’t stop all of the slaughter but our presence certainly saved thousands of lives.

I was particularly affected by the children as I had been a primary school teacher before joining the Defence Forces. I trained in Colaiste Mhuire from 1984 to 1987. I taught in Scoil Mhuire NS, Lucan, for two years until the winter of 1989. My memory of the classroom – 37 children of all abilities – is vivid. In particular, the warmth of that community in Woodview and Airlie Heights in Lucan. I also enjoyed the warmth and support of the older and wiser teachers and principal of the school. I certainly learned more from them, and from the children, than anyone ever learned from me.

I retired from the army in 2000 on the birth of my first child Darach. He's now doing his Junior Cert. I have three other children, Eoghan, 13; Ailbhe, 11 and Rossa 7. As such, I’ve gone from being teacher, to soldier, to parent – by far the toughest mission so far.

My second son, Eoghan has a rare neuro muscular disease – Pelizaeus Merzbacher Disease, or PMD. He had a normal labour and delivery. He reached all of his developmental milestones. However, at 18 months, he faltered. He developed a range of mysterious symptoms. Nystagmus in his eyes, a tremor in his little hands. Eventually, after all of the investigations, many of which were invasive and excruciatingly painful, Eoghan was diagnosed with PMD.

This was our introduction to disability. With all of the shock and trauma and grieving that goes with it. It was also our first introduction to the front line staff who deal with disability. Doctors, nurses, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech therapists. All of them wonderful. Engaging with Eoghan professionally, but also lovingly. Getting to know him. As a parent it was a revelation to watch the alchemy that exists between the vulnerable and the caring professions. It was also a revelation to see those front line professionals undermined by cutbacks and so-called austerity measures both during the Celtic Tiger and in the ‘crash’ and its aftermath. Equally heart-breaking, and mystifying, was the way in which my colleagues in journalism, print and broadcast alike, were so quick to demonise these same professional groups.

Underfunded, suffering from cutbacks and a slashing of support hours and SNA provision, the school community rallied around the weakest and most vulnerable of its members

In spite of austerity and cuts to services, Eoghan eventually progressed to the point where he could attend primary school. Eoghan was welcomed enthusiastically into St Mary’s BNS, Grotto Place, Booterstown. Eoghan’s teachers, my former colleagues, integrated Eoghan into the heart of the school. With their help and with learning support and his SNAs, Eoghan was able to realise his fullest potential. Not as a disabled boy with an assistance dog, but as a person, citizen and a beautiful young man.

St Mary’s operated as all national schools do. Underfunded, suffering from cutbacks and a slashing of support hours and SNA provision, the school community rallied around the weakest and most vulnerable of its members. Our politicians would do well to look to our primary schools and our teachers for an example as to how society ought to function. Schools are that place in Irish society where each individual is supported and encouraged as a person with a contribution to make to the overall community.

Instead, our political class, supported by an army of media advisers and press and information ‘experts’, have fostered a public discourse that constructs society simply as ‘economy’. Human beings are classified as ‘public sector’ or ‘private sector’, ‘pensioners’ or ‘social welfare recipients’. All classifications of person are set against one another in false narratives. Divide and conquer. Sadly, our media seem happy to collaborate with and extend such discourses. The net effect is a society in which the most vulnerable are left behind. Whether they be the disabled, homeless, or elderly in inappropriate care settings.

I am grateful to the introduction to civics and citizenship that I received as a primary school teacher. I am grateful to all the teachers, SNAs and other front line staff who allowed my son to blossom and grow as a person and citizen of this Republic. I despair of those who would seek to undermine or disparage the work of teachers and the teaching profession. Above all, I would ask our political leaders to immediately reverse all cuts to pupil teacher ratio, SNA provision and support hours.

As a public servant in uniform, I saw Irish citizenship at its best in the Middle East. I see the same citizenship in our national schools and classrooms across the state. To my former colleagues in teaching, I salute you and thank you for your public service. To our politicians, I urge you to reverse all cuts to the most valuable asset the state possesses – our children.

TOM CLONAN, Irish Times Security Analyst.
Ireland 2016 centenary programme is a wide-ranging programme of events to commemorate 1916, celebrate Ireland in 2016 and imagine Ireland in the future. All primary schools are invited to participate to the greatest extent possible.

Ireland 2016 – courses for teachers
This summer, the Education Centre Network delivered a course for teachers on 1916. The course will be available during autumn of 2015 in each of the six education centre regions. In addition, 84 two hour workshops will be delivered through the Education Centre Network.

Full details on www.ateci.ie

National flag for each school
A national flag will be presented by a member of the defence forces to every primary school. Schools will also receive a copy of the 1916 Proclamation in Irish and English and a booklet on respecting the flag. It is intended that schools will retain their flag and display it prominently on Proclamation Day, 15 March 2016. The PDST is developing a teaching resource on the national flag which will be hosted online on Scoilnet.

Proclamation for a new generation
Using the 1916 Proclamation as a foundation, primary schools are invited to write a new proclamation for 2016. The intention is that the new proclamation will reflect the values, ideals and aspirations of the generation of 2016. Schools may choose to write one proclamation for the whole school or have each class create its own proclamation.

A template for the proclamation will be available to download from Scoilnet (www.scoilnet.ie/proclamationtemplate). Each primary school is invited to upload one 2016 proclamation to a specially created area of Scoilnet: www.scoilnet/1916proclamation/primary. Uploading will be facilitated between 16 November 2015 and 13 February 2016. Each participating school will unveil its proclamation or proclamations to parents, pupils and teachers on Proclamation Day, 15 March 2016.

1916 ancestry project
Primary schools are invited to trace a family tree back to 1916. This can be a family tree of a student, group of students, past student, teacher, principal, a local community figure or anyone else considered appropriate. It is a matter for schools and teachers to determine which figures are appropriate for selection.

Students whose families originally came from outside of Ireland may wish to trace their family’s roots back to where they were living in 1916.

Competitions

History
Open to all primary schools across the island, there will be a specific category for projects on the 1916 Rising, as well as other categories on Ireland and the First World War, women’s history in Ireland in the revolutionary period, and a local/regional studies option. Letters to schools will issue in autumn 2015. Full details will be available to download at www.education.ie/historycompetition. The closing date is 4 March 2016.

Drama
Primary schools will be invited to write a short drama in Irish or English (up to 10 minutes) based on the events of 1916 and to submit a 60 second filmed extract and a synopsis of their play to a judging panel.

A shortlist of entries will be made available via RTÉ Swipe TV with an online public vote to decide the winners.

RTE and the Abbey Theatre will provide resource packs for teachers and children, including video and PDF tutorials online on Scoilnet, www.abbeytheatre.ie and www.rte.ie/swipetv.

The winning play will be performed to students family and friends at the Abbey Theatre and will be filmed by RTÉ for broadcast on Swipe TV.

Song
Primary pupils are invited to write a song celebrating the modern, multicultural Ireland of 2016. The finalists will perform in the National Concert Hall in May 2016.

Entries will be submitted in the form of audio/video upload, accompanied by the electronic application form (available with full details from the National Concert hall website, www.nch.ie/online/education

Art
The National Gallery of Ireland and the Education Centre Network will invite primary schools across the island to create a picture based on imagining the Ireland of 2116. Each school is invited to submit one entry to this competition.

An all-island judging panel will select overall winners and the works of regional winners will be professionally displayed in the National Gallery of Ireland in Autumn 2016.

Film
Primary schools will be invited to submit a short film based on any aspect of 1916 to the 2016 Fís Film Festival competition.

Full details will be on www.fisfilmproject.ie
Teaching matters

Me, Mollser tour for primary schools

The Abbey Theatre will provide performances of Me, Mollser to 5th and 6th classes in primary schools across the country. Visits will take place either directly in schools or in local arts venues.

Me, Mollser will retell The Plough and the Stars by Sean O’Casey, through the eyes of its youngest character, Mollser, as she guides us through her overcrowded Dublin tenement during the 1916 Rising.

Further information is available via email to memollser@abbeytheatre.ie

Education for Sustainable Development portal

Education for Sustainable Development is about the future sustainability of Ireland’s environment and society. It involves a focus on human rights, citizenship, equality and social justice. These were central themes to those behind the 1916 proclamation.

In order to ensure that there is a positive legacy from Ireland 2016 and in line with the National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development, the Department of Education and Skills is developing a new portal on the Scoilnet website.

An Claidheamh Soluis

Conradh na Gaeilge will be digitising An Claidheamh Soluis, the newspaper founded by Eoin MacNeill in 1899 and operated by Conradh na Gaeilge from 1900 to 1932.

Copies will be available on www.cnag.ie

1916 portraits and lives

Through a selection of 40 biographies from the Dictionary of Irish Biography, this publication tells the story of the Rising and its impact.

The DES is supporting the Royal Irish Academy to make it available free of charge as an ebook to schools during the Easter period in 2016 (17 March – 30 March). The Dictionary of Irish Biography online, comprising over 10,000 lives, is available to all pupils and teachers in every school in Ireland, via the ‘Dictionary of Irish Biography’ icon on Scoilnet.

RTÉ young people’s programmes

Thirty short films made specifically for RTÉjr and seven to 11 year olds will look at life in the early 1900s from the audience’s perspective. The films will be historically accurate, visually engaging and filmed in locations which evoke the period.

A reality documentary will be produced where a group of children forego facets of modern life to live as the offspring of poor families struggling to survive in 1916 tenement conditions. This will air around Children’s Day, 2 April 2016.

In addition to broadcast on RTÉ2 and RTÉjr, these programmes will be available across RTÉ’s range of apps and websites for young people.

Full details of all of the activities summarised above will be found on www.scoilnet.ie/ireland2016. More events, projects and resources relevant to schools are on the Ireland 2016 website, www.ireland.ie

Schools’ Collection 2016

Primary school students will be invited to gather local and family history/folklore from their community. Projects can be presented in a wide variety of formats, including written essays (images of handwritten work or word processed), artwork, video or audio files. The initiative is a digital age follow up to the Irish Folklore Commission Schools’ Collection, which collected material from 50,000 primary school children in the 1930s (see www.duchas.ie). The Schools’ Collection 2016 is supported by the DES, PDST, The Irish Independent, UCD Decade of Centenaries and the INTO.

1916 digital resource for schools

The aim of the project is to develop a website that shows the history of the 1916 Rising through a number of cultural objects. The DES is partnering with the National Gallery of Ireland, National Library of Ireland, National Archives, National Museum and the Abbey Theatre and will, by the end of 2015, produce lesson plans for schools that tell the story of 1916 through these cultural objects.

The project is also supported by PDST Technology in Education and Century Ireland. Century Ireland will have a dedicated 1916 website, www.rte.ie/centuryireland, giving day-by-day accounts of events of 1916 as they happened in real time.

Full details of the programme are on www.scoilnet.ie/ireland2016
‘Cycling is the closest we will ever get to flying’ – this quote from Irish comedian David O’Doherty was on my mind as I put my bike through its paces en route to the Electric Picnic last month. It was cold, grey and raining quite steadily as we took on the hills of south county Dublin with hours left to cycle. The cows we passed didn’t seem to mind the conditions, but was it all worth it?

I was participating for the second time in the Tour de Picnic, a charity fundraiser organised each year in conjunction with give2go.ie fundraisers. The event aims to raise money for children’s charities while also providing a healthier and less traffic congested route to the Electric Picnic. This year’s chosen charities were Childline, the Irish Youth Foundation and Special Olympics Ireland.

The cycle is 80km in total, from Tallaght in south Dublin to Stradbally, Co Laois. Participants on the day range from lycra-clad cycling club members to non-cyclists who have hired the bike and helmet for the day. This year I saw two men sharing a tandem bike and another cycling a wooden bike! It turned out to be a Woodelo, an Irish invention made out of ash in Tipperary.

Registration and starting times for the cycle this year were from 7 a.m. We were on the road just before 8 a.m. in a small group of around 20 cyclists including the Woodelo. This was an improvement on 2012 when we had to wait for a couple of hours so that everyone could start at the same time.

I was feeling a bit more prepared this year; on my first outing I had borrowed a bike from a friend and only managed a couple of training cycles. This time I had my own wheels and at least one 100km training cycle (through a thunderstorm!) as preparation.

Once out on the road, turns were signposted by helpers waving giant flags and cheering us all on while support vehicles buzzed along the route. I really felt that the flag wavers had a more difficult time than us – at least we could keep moving and stay warm!

There were two rest stops along the way with tea, fruit and sandwiches provided plus plenty of water. The first stop had a DJ playing music to keep our spirits up, while there was plenty of chat with the local sandwich makers at the second stop in Athy GAA club.

The camaraderie amongst participants is one of the most fun aspects of the day. Chatting to strangers over a ‘hang and cheese’ sambo while comparing the various hills and shared experiences is great craic and helped keep us motivated. The Tour de Picnic set up is a good one – they take your bag down for you and bring your bike back. We left our bags tagged on the truck in the morning and picked them up in a sunny field in Laois at the other end, while our bikes were loaded on to the same truck for the return journey. Matching tags on bag, bike and wrist ensure that all items are collected by the owner, while the wristband also acts as your ticket home on the bus. There’s nothing quite like walking past a queue of people straight onto your bus on the last morning!

Despite the bit of soft weather we had for the first part of the day there is nothing quite like the sense of freedom and achievement gained by arriving at a festival by bike. It certainly beats traffic jams! This event is well organised and it’s possible for those with little or no cycling experience to have a go, raise some money and attend one of Ireland’s biggest festivals at the end of it all.

MERRILYN CAMPBELL works in the IT section of INTO Head Office.
Celebrating 25 years of educational partnership – what have we learned?

There is widespread agreement about the need for family and community involvement in education. Compelling research evidence in Ireland and elsewhere demonstrates that children are more successful in school, they like school better and stay in school longer when their families and schools work together to support their learning (Henderson et al., 2007). Teachers want the best for their students. They want families to influence, guide and assist their children to do their school work and they want to know how to work with parents in positive ways to improve student success. Families also want the best for their children. They want to communicate with teachers and find out how to help their children do their best. Students want to succeed in school. They need support, encouragement and guidance from their parents, teachers and other community members (Epstein, 2011).

There is less agreement on which involvement practices are most effective and on how to get most families involved. The challenge is not to ‘dictate’ involvement by telling parents what to do and expecting them to respond. Neither can educators simply presume that ‘good’ parents will become involved on their own and that those who don’t are uninterested or irresponsible. We know from research that partnership is a more successful approach whereby schools, families and communities work together to share information, guide students, solve problems and celebrate successes.

So what have we learned from 25 years experience of building educational partnerships within the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) scheme? Recent evaluations by the inspectorate in 44 DEIS schools observe that these schools “have paid particular attention to how they communicate with parents and how they involve them meaningfully in the life of the school” (DES 2015:34). Parents’ views of these schools and of education were also found to be increasingly positive.

At school level, HSCL coordinators work with teachers to develop awareness of family circumstances and to promote the concept of parental involvement in learning. They liaise with staff to plan, support and implement a range of activities in the classroom and the school. HSCL coordinators have also pioneered the creation of links and collaboration between schools and community agencies (e.g., local partnership companies, family support services, youth services). Local education committees comprised of educators, parents and community work collaboratively to address school-related issues prioritised by the members.

Most DEIS schools have a parents’ room that is used for parents to drop in informally or for courses and meetings. This affords parents the opportunity to engage with the coordinator, other parents or staff members in informal ways and to access information about the school. HSCL coordinators also visit homes to reach out to parents and to build bonds of trust and respect.

Courses and activities for parents usually begin with leisure-type, non-threatening activities in response to parents’ expressed interests (e.g. cookery, sport, gardening, mindfulness) that are enjoyable and positive experiences and help parents to meet and get to know the coordinator and each other. The aim is that parents would progress to activities with specific focus on children’s learning (e.g. maths for fun, science for fun, one book, school library, nutrition trail) and/or personal development courses (e.g. parenting, leadership skills). Some parents also complete FETAC accredited courses. Another aim is to engage parents in leadership roles and in policy making in schools (e.g., subcommittee on code of behaviour).

Educational partnership does not have to be threatening or demanding. There are many things that educators already do and many more simple practices that would be easy for schools to adopt. We are currently working with coordinators in schools around Ireland to identify good ideas and practical activities which will be published in a book in the near future. InTouch will also feature a number of articles this year to celebrate 25 years of Home School Community Liaison. Please feel free to contact us about your work.

Dr Sandra Ryan is lecturer in Education (Sociology and Educational Disadvantage) at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She teaches a course ‘Working with Families’ on the new B.Ed. degree. Email: sandra.ryan@mic.ul.ie

The author wishes to acknowledge the HSCL coordinators and other school staff who have so generously shared their work with us. Carol Lannin, Regional Coordinator, HSCL (2006-2013) and formerly Coordinator in St Vincent’s NS, Cork is co-author for the book. This work is part-funded by the TED Project, CDU and Mary Immaculate College.
Ballymun is Write Minded

The Write Minded literacy strategy in Ballymun is a ground-breaking partnership between the Ballymun Principals Network and youngballymun, a community change strategy to deliver measurably improved child outcomes. Write Minded is a multi-layered collaboration with primary school teachers, parents and children. Over 150 teachers in 11 DEIS primary schools and 1,000 parents are involved.

**Practice in action**

The strategy offers structured and sustained capacity development and planning supports to develop skills and approaches that are proven to contribute to improved literacy outcomes for children. There are four key components:

- **First Steps**: First Steps resources are aligned with DEIS and support effective literacy instruction. Write Minded builds capacity in First Steps through training, coaching and tailoring of the teaching resources to classroom needs; every primary school teacher in Ballymun is trained in using First Steps resources. First Steps tutors, in collaboration with Write Minded, support the implementation of First Steps in their schools.

- **Literacy capacity building**: Additional tailored capacity building in aspects of literacy instruction (e.g. spelling, vocabulary development, reading fluency) is provided in line with schools’ needs. The Write Minded team supports the application of new learning to classroom practices through collaborative planning with teachers and in-class modelling. Capacity building is supplemented with resources for teachers to support translation of theory to practice.

- **Whole school planning**: Whole-school literacy planning supports teachers in all classes to target the key areas that are known to improve children’s literacy. Whole school plans outline the specific literacy objectives by month along with suggestions of activities and practices to address these objectives in the classroom. Whole school plans are designed by the school principal, learning support resource team and First Steps tutors with input from other staff members, supported by Write Minded. Whole school plans are tailored to each school, incorporating learning from pupil literacy assessments and reflections on existing practice. The literacy focus of the whole-school plans are integrated into teachers’ ‘cúntas míosúil’ and curricular objectives.

- **Literacy initiatives**: Innovative, evidence-informed initiatives are delivered in classrooms, after school or at home to increase engagement in literacy learning including parental involvement (e.g. Storytime, Language towards Literacy, peer reading, paired reading, Story Sacks, vocabulary games, parent sessions on Jolly Phonics). Literacy initiatives are agreed with the principal, home school community liaison teacher and the classroom teacher and scheduled to fit the school timetable and children’s needs. For each initiative, a package of resources is available including leaflets, videos and books.

**Results**

Every year schools share standardised literacy test results with youngballymun for analysis and feedback, allowing data to inform planning and decision-making. For example, analysis of the data led to the establishment of a working group of third and fourth class teachers from across the schools to jointly develop responses to the particular literacy needs of this age group. Collective data sharing also enables the tracking of literacy attainment scores of successive groups of children as they progress through primary school. Findings from this data were presented at an event this year hosted by the Department of Education and Skills, the Ballymun Principals Network and youngballymun:

- 2007 baseline data shows high proportions of children reading below 10th percentile (35% in sixth class) and low numbers reading above 50th percentile (8% in sixth class).
- Comparing 2007 and 2014 data, reductions are evident in the proportion of pupils scoring at or below 10th percentile on the Micra T across all primary school classes (ranging from 35–67%).
- Comparing 2007 and 2014 data, increases are evident in the proportion of pupils scoring at or above the 50th percentile on the Micra T across all primary school classes (ranging from 48–442%).
- Between 2006 and 2014 there are year-on-year improvements in pupils’ mean Micra T scores for first, second, third and fourth class children. Visiting Ballymun, Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O’Sullivan, congratulated everyone on their significant and collaborative efforts. A full report of the event is available at the following link: bit.ly/1VkAeFJ
We had the best jobs in education, in 2004, working with the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP) advising teachers on how to implement the newly introduced curriculum in visual arts. At the same time we were busily producing resources such as lesson plans, thematic planning notes and the usual types of back up material for inclusion on the dedicated PCSP website that was being developed simultaneously.

As part of the new Digital Learning Partnership between Radio Telefís Éireann, RTÉ and the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE) the PCSP gave permission for three of us; myself, Gemma McGirr and Una Kelly, to work with the project to write the content for www.iamanartist.ie and to work with a team from RTÉ on the production. Exciting times in education indeed, and the answer to the comments we often heard that went “This is all great stuff, but we need you to show us how it works in the classroom!” I saw this as a great opportunity to put in place digital material that would support the implementation of the visual arts curriculum in schools. What was even more exciting was that RTÉ planned to broadcast our work and produced a DVD that would be distributed to all schools in the country, (in those days the actual website was viewed as a backup to this – things do change!)

Working within the NCTE, we set out the following objectives for the project:
- To provide teachers with videos that would explain the various skills and techniques of visual arts.
- To provide samples of art that teachers could use to look at and respond to with children.
- To enable teachers to link to the best websites available in visual arts.
- To assist teachers with both short term and long term planning for visual arts education.

Our first task therefore was to find schools that were willing to allow us to make the short films, to provide us with space and children of all ages to work with. In the end we chose to work with three schools in Kilkenny: a boys’ school and a girls’ school and the mixed gaelscoil that agreed to allow us to temporarily amalgamate both schools and classes for filming. The lesson plans were written – we organised and decorated a vacant classroom, agreed a filming schedule accumulated the necessary art materials and finally set off to live in the marble city for the few weeks of filming. The agreed schedule of lesson plans were of course designed to showcase the essential skills and techniques in each of the six curriculum strands, to allow for children to be the designers of their own work (process) and to create time and space for children to respond to their work through being interviewed about it. All parties agreed that these films would, following broadcast by RTÉ, be included as part of the proposed DVD production and ultimately feature on the new website. It was generally agreed that the project also needed sections that would address the following needs:
- Samples of art products, particularly from Irish artists that might be looked at and responded to in classrooms.
- Step by step illustrated outlines of many art techniques that might be explored.
- A glossary of art terms.
- Sample lesson plans.
- Sample thematic plans.
- Links to interesting websites.

We decided to let the children, as the artists, do all the talking. To complete the programmes the director created a mythical digital street featuring six unique art shops in which the artist, Ian McNinch, creates drawing, paintings, prints, pots, and constructions. In the meantime we went off to select images for the looking/responding sections, to write lesson plans, to design thematic plans, to create photographic technique outlines and to surf the web looking for great websites to link to.

Ultimately, after a few months work, the project came together. The short programmes were broadcast by RTÉ as part of their children’s programming, the DVD was completed and distributed to every school in the country by the PCSP and we went back to our advisory roles with a wonderful new resource that we could use in our training sessions, when we could get the technology to work of course!

For many years Gemma McGirr worked with the NCTE to keep the website that emerged from the project updated with new images and ideas. Unfortunately she passed away in 2014 and I have to continue developing the project with Sean Gallagher and Sharon McDonald.

We have just re-launched the website and hope to feature it at the Teaching
Teaching matters

story of a website

I am an artist at Halloween

Drawing
Try out the ‘Big Yawn’ self portrait activity in the drawing section of the site or adapt the lesson to get the children drawing self portraits of themselves in Halloween costume/make up.

Paint/colour
Link directly to the wonderful NGAkids art programme called BRUSHter in the ‘Let’s Play’ section of the site to create spooky digital paintings. Use Halloween poems featured in my previous InTouch articles on this seasonal topic as a stimulus for the children’s work.

Print
You will find two lessons on designing and making seasonal greeting cards using a variety of printing techniques in the lesson plan section of the site. Illustrated notes on both monoprinting and marbling are available in the ‘Can You’ section.

Clay
Look at and respond to images of African masks in the ‘Look and Respond’ section and find lesson plans for infants on strange creatures on alien creatures, for middle classes and on making clay masks for senior classes.

Construction
Find an outline of how to construct hand puppets in the ‘Can You’ section of the site and explore this technique to create your own Halloween themed puppets. Work with groups of children to create small puppet shows using the created puppets for your drama activity, thus linking your work in these two arts areas. Add music too of course! An integrated arts day might be interesting too.

Fabric and fibre
Link directly to the KINDER art site in the ‘Visit’ section to find a lesson plan on costume design and further links to other interesting inventing costume ideas. Or try exploring the use of plastic masks covered with plaster of paris bandaging in mask making, go to http://www.modroc.com/tips-on-using-modroc-modrock-plaster-of-paris-bandage-for-modelling/ for information on this material.

Council Féilte 2015 in the RDS this month. We have retained many features of the original website such as the original short film clips and the looking and responding samples. The glossaries, Gaeilge version and links have been updated and extra lesson plans have been uploaded to Scoilnet for later addition. A new Twitter feature has been added to facilitate teachers sharing news about local art events, exhibitions and opportunities.

So how can the project assist you with your teaching of the visual arts? Thinking about the Halloween season at the end of this month here are a few pointers to art work you might engage in with your class(es) taken from the website.

MICHAEL O’REILLY is a retired teacher who worked with both the NCCA and the PCSP on the design and implementation of the arts curricula. During his career he worked in a wide variety of schools and other educational settings, as class teacher, as a learning support teacher, as a designer and lecturer both in teacher training and in-career development, as an author of educational materials and as principal of a special school.
SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den churaclam nua Gaeilge. Tá sé bunaithe ar an gcur chuige cumarsáideach agus déantar comhtháthú ann ar na ceithre scil. Tá na háiseanna ar fad ar an suíomh ar fáil saor in aisce.

Comhthionscadal idir an Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, CCEA, COGG agus Foras na Gaeilge is ea foilsí intíonna nua nádúrtha chun a úsáideadh, de thoradh do na páistí an tionscadail a chur i bhfeidhm. Tá forleathan de cheist lena dhéanamh d’fhreastail na páistí an tionscadail seo.

Cúrsaí teagaisc

SÉIDEÁN SÍ

Is é príomhsprioc an tionscadail seo ná pacáiste comhtháite áiseanna a chur ar fáil a fhéachann le cúram a dhéanamh de gach uile ghné den c...
Reviews

Magic, mystery, time travel... and rugby

Book three in the Get Out and Play series throws the reader straight into the action. It begins with nine year old Oscar Rafferty and his Grandad Mick in hot pursuit of Titus Fortify, whose evil agenda includes the return of a bearded super villain known as the Supervisor. However, this is no ordinary battle of wits, as it includes magic, mystery, travelling through time... and rugby.

As the title suggests, the book hopes to highlight the importance of playing rugby and staying active. Indeed, in the middle of the story, the author provides a very good introduction to the rules of the game, including kicking off, running for a try and organising a scrum. Unfortunately, while rugby should play a central role, it actually feels like this rugby section sits unnaturally at the heart of an otherwise exciting narrative. As a reader, you find yourself more concerned about Titus Fortify and his plans for world domination.

The size and spacing of the text and Dillon's colourful illustrations make this a very accessible book for young independent readers. It also has some interesting rugby facts at the back of the book once the narrative has ended.


Reviewed by DUNCAN McCARTHY.

Captivating tales with a rich and colourful vocabulary

Nature's Secret Adventure is a delightful book which explores the countryside and some of our lesser known native species in three heart warming stories. The author Shane Casey is a biodiversity officer and he marries fact and fiction to create captivating tales about life around us. The story is enriched with enchanting illustrations by well known artist, Vincent Killowry.

This book would be an ideal class novel at 2nd or 3rd class level; themes of friendship, achieving greatness and seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary run through the stories. The rich and colourful vocabulary throughout provides many opportunities for further class work.

Nature's Secret Adventures is also a wonderful book through which to explore the theme of biodiversity as part of a Green Flag campaign.

Written in OpenDyslexic font on a cream background, it is suitable for dyslexic readers. Nature's Secret Adventures has been a huge hit in our school among pupils, teachers and parents.


Reviewed by Brid Finnegan, Knockerra NS, Co Clare.

Life, the universe, everything

As a big Douglas Adams fan, I was very excited to review this book by Ian Fletcroft and Britt Spencer. The cover is heavily influenced by Adams’ famous work, The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, so the book was more “useful than a towel” or worse than “Vogon Poetry”?

The Time Traveller’s Guide is actually a graphic novel where the reader’s guide is none other than Albert Einstein who runs through a history of the universe.

The book would be very suitable for any child with an interest in science and all about where the universe comes from.

It would particularly suit reluctant readers, as it is dotted with humour aside the facts. A strong 3rd class reader would have no problems with the book. This book is more than “mostly harmless”. It’s a great read that even an adult would enjoy.


Reviewed by SIMON LEWIS, Carlow Educate Together NS, Carlow.
INTO/STSG
Separated Teacher’s Support Group
upcoming events

NEXT MEETING
16–18 October 2015.
Venue: Enniskillen Hotel, Enniskillen.
Sat 17: Visit to the Marble Arch Caves.

REMEMBRANCE MASS FOR DECEASED AND BEREAVED MEMBERS
Venue: Teachers’ Club, Parnell Square. 7 November at 5.45 p.m.

AGM
Venue: Teachers’ Club, Parnell Square. Date: 14 Nov 2015 at 7 p.m.
Separated, divorced, widowed, lone parents from INTO, ASTI, TUI and IFUT welcome. Annual subscription €20.
For further information please contact: Trudy Carroll Miller: 0044 7931 609 315/042 938 3670 or secretary: Iselt Bourke at 085 239 4661 or 01 516 2069.

Cork Teachers Golf Society
First outing of new season – Muskerry Golf Club. Tuesday, 27 October. Tee 11 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.
New members most welcome. Website: homepage.eircom.net/~ctgs

St Pius X schools jubilee ball
A gala evening to celebrate 50 years of excellence in education.
Saturday, 14 November 2015 in The Ballsbridge Hotel.
Drinks reception/dinner/dancing ’til late. Tickets €65.
Available from school offices or piusxparents@gmail.com
Limited tickets available.

Global Citizenship Schools
National launch in Croke Park Hotel. Saturday, 10 October from 10.45 p.m. to 1 p.m.
Help your pupils become better global citizens.
Consider becoming a Global Citizenship School.
Short presentations/class videos information/debates/resources. Free admission and car parking.
More info: www.into.ie (Global Solidarity)
Contact: maurice@schooltoschool.ie to book a place.

Maths Week Ireland celebrates 10th birthday
The 10th Maths Week Ireland will take place between 10 and 18 October 2015.
Maths Week is a fun, all inclusive, all-island festival for the promotion of maths. It seeks to raise awareness, appreciation and understanding of maths as well as emphasising the importance of maths in the world of work and in everyday life.
This is the 10th annual Maths Week event to be held, with over 200,000 people participating in Maths Week Ireland 2014, making it the biggest festival of its kind in the world.
Throughout the week, a host of national and international mathematicians will demonstrate the interesting and fun elements of maths while entertaining people of all ages with an array of maths games, teasers, challenges and magic maths shows.
For more information, please visit www.mathsweek.ie or Twitter @mathsweek

St Vincent de Paul seeking volunteers
Have you a few hours to spare? Would you like to help out by volunteering? There are lots of ways you can get involved and help change someone’s life.
See www.svp.ie/get-involved/volunteer.aspx

Free education programme
Saint Patrick’s Cathedral in Dublin is currently offering a free education programme including guided tours and workshops. In 2015 the cathedral launched a new education space featuring activities such as brass rubbing and a large touch screen table. This space can also be booked by visiting school groups free of charge. For details go to www.stpatrickscathedral.ie

Copy Date
Copy you wish to have considered for publication in the November issue of InTouch should arrive in Head Office by 12 October 2015. The deadline for the December issue is 9 November 2015.
Winners of Comhar Linn draw August 2015

Car – Toyota Auris
Orla Deighan, Maria King Presentation Primary, Sexton Street, Limerick.

Cash – €1,500
Una Lawlor, Dún Droma, Baile Átha Cliath 14.

Weekend for two in Jury’s Inn
Máire Úi Bhraonáin, Gaelscoil an Bhradáin Feasa, Mill Road, Mornington, Co Meath.

Weekend for two in Jury’s Inn
Eugene Daly, Leap, Co Cork.

Comhar Linn Crossword no 166

A draw for 2 x €100 will be made from all correct entries.
Simply complete the crossword and send it to ‘InTouch Crossword’, INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, before Friday, 30 October.

ACROSS

1. Amazement at seeing instant homes rebuilt. (12)
7. Being hot, I am that guy! (3)
9. Duct by which Con leaves the nunnery. (4)
10. Addition to a building created by three cardinals in a chopper. (6)
11. This chap beheads ex-Taoiseach Brian. (4)
14. Considers it to be a Leinster river manuscript. (5)
15. Pub seen in Pueblo, California. (5)
16. Animal Home established by a cardinal in arid surroundings. (4)
18. Tolerate an article on a West Cork peninsula. (5)
21. To extinguish, please avail of this. (5)
22. African tribe found among urban Turks. (4)
23. Romantic assignations cause Father a setback. (5)
24. Up here, one gets hot and sick. (4)
25. This Passage Tomb location is kept by the widow Thackeray. (5)
26. Put your foot down on the corner of the envelope. (5)
29. The nobleman is not quite punctual. (4)
33. Spirited meeting with Lemass near Clare. (6)
34. Looked at some Cockney editors. (4)
36. The colour of ant pulp. (3)
37. Might one wear this type of coat to Bray? (6, 4)

DOWN

1. Grow older at the end of one’s marriage. (3)
2. This historic dictator got the bird, love. (4)
3. Being tidy, one may adjust the ante. (4)
4. Playboy writer. (5)
5. Most incomplete motto. (5)
6. What may be changed in melting. (4)
7. Look after your principal when the ceiling is set low! (4,4,4)
8. Might one wear this type of coat to Bray? (4)
9. The millinery menace of a bride or nun? (6, 6)
12. Scrutinised – but worked steadily. (5)
13. Quietly fibbed – but worked steadily. (5)
14. Charge for reassembling the bidet. (5)
17. Revives Magritte beside the borders of Wales. (6)
19. Might one ape so fabulous a Greek? (5)
20. Write a sailor a poem on accommodation. (5)
27. Small change makes Tom initially feeble. (5)
28. One is surrounded by my cash. (5)
30. Part of the rasher provided by part of a porker in Denmark. (4)
31. Cheese that’s an accident of fate? (4)
32. Might the magistrate be a king? (4)
35. Point to the foot of an amphibian. (3)

COMHAR LINN INTOUCH NO 165 SEPTEMBER 2015 SOLUTIONS

Across

Down

WINNERS OF CROSSWORD NO 165 will be announced in the next InTouch issue due to print deadlines preceding crossword deadlines.
Cool Apps for School

www.coolappsforschool.com

Cool Apps for School is a new website for Irish primary teachers that they can use to support the primary school curriculum. It is the brainchild of INTO member, Claire O'Sullivan, from Cork. The number of schools using tablets in the classroom is growing rapidly and this resource aims to help teachers and pupils get the best from their devices.

At the moment there are over 60 app reviews on the website and each and every one of the apps featured is recommended for use in Irish primary classrooms. Teachers can log on to www.coolappsforschool.com, select a group, search for apps by subject area and click the links to download apps instantly.

There is also a section of the website dedicated to apps which support students with special educational needs. Many apps that are included so far can be used across a range of class levels and curricular areas and could also be used at home to extend learning further.

There is also a ‘Tips for Tablets’ section of the website which offers advice to teachers and principals who may be thinking about purchasing tablets for their school.

Cool Apps for School also has a Facebook page and a Twitter account (@coolappsforsch) where teachers can find ideas for using apps in the classroom and enter competitions to win free app downloads.

1. MÉ FÉIN BINGO
   scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/12887/12524.docx
   Cluiche bingo bunaithe ar an téama darbh ainm Mé Féin.

2. MÉ FÉIN SCEAL
   scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/6230/6039.pdf
   Liosta de thearmaí a bheadh usáideach d’aisti a scríobh.

3. COUNTIES OF IRELAND
   toporopa.eu/en/uk_ireland_counties.html
   Can you place the 26 counties of the republic of Ireland?

4. RAINN AGUS AMHRAIN
   resources.teachnet.ie/clane/2008/index.html
   Songs and rhymes based on curriculum topics.

5. AN FÓMHAR
   ncte.ie/upload/scoilnet/An_Fomhar/
   Leabhar labhartha do Ranganna Naíonáin – Rang 2.

6. SALMON OF KNOWLEDGE
   resources.teachnet.ie/proleman/mark2/pages/readsalmon.htm
   Recounts the story from Irish mythology.

7. SEVEN DAYS IN IRISH HISTORY – THE 1916 RISING
   resources.teachnet.ie/dhorgan/2004/An account of the Rising. Teacher created resource.

8. WOODLANDS – WORLD WAR II
   resources.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/homework/britain.html
   Info on WWII from a UK primary school.

9. HANDWRITING PRACTICE
   handwritingpractice.net
   Create quick and effective handwriting worksheet.

10. RIVERS AND COASTS – WATER CYCLE
    bbc.co.uk/schools/riversandcoasts/water_cycle/rivers/index.shtml
    Animation explains the process of the water cycle.