

intouch

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President backs global goals campaign

into 

Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

150

Keeping InTouch

{ *Interactive dialogue with members, and key news items* }



Teachers and global citizenship

Teachers have always worked together to challenge injustice, tackle disadvantage and eliminate inequalities.

As teacher trade unionists at local and national level, recognising that education has the power to transform lives, we demand fairer funding for education and measures to tackle education disadvantage. As part of the wider family of trade unions we campaign at a national level for, among other things, decent work, a living wage and a home for every family.

In an increasingly connected and interdependent world we work with trade unions in other countries and like-minded organisations to tackle global issues. Through this work we are able to promote human rights and challenge abuses such as child labour. We are able to work collectively to reduce extreme poverty and tackle climate change.

A key part of this work is pursuing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. These 17 global goals, set by the United Nations, are an agenda for change for every nation on earth. As creators of the future teachers

play a vital role in building support for this work.

The posters that accompany this magazine are designed to support this work. We thank President Michael D. Higgins for his strong support for this work by teachers.

The INTO's Global Citizenship School supports schools in learning about and acting upon global issues. Every action that results from such lessons, no matter how small or local, in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals contributes towards a more just, equitable and sustainable world for all.

This classroom work complements the voluntary work of INTO members in other countries every summer, some of which is supported by the union.

Building empathy with fellow humans in troubled parts of the globe has always been part of a teacher's role. Sadly, it has never been more necessary.

Sheila Nunan

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Maud Gonne;
a life-size photograph by Alfred Werner, 1893.

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Teachers and global citizenship

INTO and President Higgins supporting Global Goals

This issue of InTouch includes a Global Schoolroom poster for every school. The poster has been developed by the INTO Global Solidarity Network and was launched by President Michael D. Higgins in Áras an Uachtaráin in December. Please display in a prominent place in your school. An A4 poster is also enclosed for every member for use in their classroom. See the general secretary's comment on page 3 for more details.



Pictured on this month's cover are President Michael D. Higgins, John O'Brien, Senior Official, INTO, and Deborah Sheeran, St Bridget's BNS, Killester, Dublin 5 (an INTO Global Citizenship School).

Important notice regarding crèche and senior camp at Congress 2018

INTO has a tradition of supporting the involvement of parents of young children in INTO activities including Annual Congress. The CEC is committed to continuing such support.

However, new and stringent TUSLA regulations make it very difficult to implement that support through provision of crèche facilities at the Congress venue.

We are unable, due to these regulations, to provide crèche facilities at Congress for children aged 2 ½ years or younger. New regulations in respect of children between the ages of 2 ½ and 4 ½

mean we are, at this point, uncertain whether these children can be accommodated as this is dependent on the outcome of an application process (which we have under way) with TUSLA, and with the National Vetting Bureau via Early Childhood Ireland.

The Senior Camp will be available for children aged 5 to 12 years and will take place in the Aquila Club in the INEC, Killarney.

Delegates who need to book a place for their child/ children must complete the booking form and pay a refundable deposit of €55 per child by Friday 2 March

2018. The booking form and further information is available on the INTO website under the 'Congress 2018' tab. Places are limited, and bookings will be accepted on a first come first served basis.

INTO will provide further information on this matter in the form of a notice to branch secretaries and on the INTO website as soon as possible.

The CEC will decide at its early February meeting how INTO will support parents of younger children who are Congress delegates and information on this will also be provided to branch secretaries and via our website.

Tell us what you think



InTouch welcomes your letters. Have your say about something you have read in *InTouch* or want to communicate with other INTO members.
€50 voucher draw each month for letter writers. Last month's winner was Rosaleen O'Halloran.

Email: editor@into.ie or write to: The Editor, *InTouch*, INTO, Vere Foster House, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1. Mark all such communications 'InTouch Letters' and give a contact telephone number and your INTO membership number for verification. Long letters may be edited.

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« The Irish National Teachers' Organisation ... who's who, what's new, and what's happening »

Salary uplift from 1 January 2018

Summary

Since 1 January, there have been a number of changes to teachers' salaries:

- ✎ Scale salaries have been restored by 1% for all teachers.
- ✎ Pay reductions imposed under HRA for teachers earning more than €65K have been reversed.
- ✎ All post 1 January 2011 entrants have been merged onto a new common scale which includes the value of an honours degree allowance. All post January 2012 entrants and 2011 entrants with a pass degree will see a pay uplift.
- ✎ The €1,000 pay increase from 1 April 2017 will now be subsumed into the pay scale.
- ✎ USC rates have been reduced and the standard rate income tax band has increased.

January 2018 payslips

The first payslip of 2018, issued on Thursday, 11 January, only reflected the above changes for eight of the 14 days in the pay period. The full effect of uplifts to salary were reflected in the payslip of Thursday, 25 January.

Scale salaries increased by 1% for all teachers

The payslip of 11 January 2018 reflected the 1% restoration to scale salary being applied to eight of the 14 days in that pay period. The following payslip of 25 January reflected the full restoration.

Reversal of pay reductions imposed under HRA for teachers earning more than €65K

The payslip of 11 January 2018 continued to feature the headings of 'HRA Deductions', as the cuts still applied to six days of that pay period, from the 26-31 December 2017. The following payslip of 25 January 2018 reflected the full restoration of these cuts and accordingly, the 'HRA Deductions' headings on the left-hand side of a teacher's payslip were removed from this date.

All post-1 January 2011 entrants have been merged onto a new common scale, which includes the value of an honours degree allowance.

As agreed under LRA and the new entrant pay agreement of September 2016, the full restoration of the honours

degree allowance for 2012 entrants is reflected in the revised salary scale for post 1 January 2011 entrants to teaching.

From 1 January 2018, there is a single scale for all post 1 January 2011 entrants, with the honours primary degree allowance amount (€4,918) now fully included in the scale.

There is scale equivalence between pre- and post-1 January 2011 scales when the honours allowance is taken into account but a length of scale difference remains to be addressed.

Post 2012 entrants will see an increase due to the implementation of the second phase in the restoration of the honours degree allowance. 2011 entrants with a pass degree will see an increase due to the value of an honours degree allowance being included at each point of the new scale.

The €1,000 pay increase from 1 April 2017 will now be subsumed into the pay scale.

The €1,000 pay restoration of 1 April 2017, negotiated under LRA, will be incorporated into the scale from 1 January 2018. The corresponding heading on teachers' payslips of 'Pay Increase 1/4/17' was removed completely from payslips from 25 January 2018. It was displayed on the payslip of 11 January 2018 as the pay period included six days, 26-31 December, from 2017.

USC rates have been reduced and the standard rate income tax band has increased

The standard rate income tax band has increased from €33,800 to €34,500. This means that anyone earning under €34,500 will be charged the standard rate of tax, while those earning over it will see a slight reduction to their tax.

The 2.5% USC rate will reduce to 2% and the ceiling for this rate will increase from €18,722 to €19,372. The 5% rate of USC will reduce to 4.75%.

These two changes will result in an increase in net pay for teachers.

Salary Scales from 1 January 2018

| Scale Point | Teachers who entered teaching before 1 Jan 2011 | Teachers who entered teaching on or after 1 Jan 2011 |
|-------------|---|--|
| 1 | €34,143 | €35,958 |
| 2 | €34,910 | €37,430 |
| 3 | €35,989 | €39,110 |
| 4 | €37,072 | €39,877 |
| 5 | €38,751 | €40,957 |
| 6 | €39,839 | €42,261 |
| 7 | €40,926 | €43,725 |
| 8 | €43,664 | €45,200 |
| 9 | €45,032 | €46,432 |
| 10 | €46,666 | €48,632 |
| 11 | €48,292 | €49,999 |
| 12 | €49,930 | €51,633 |
| 13 | €51,300 | €53,259 |
| 14 | €53,114 | €54,898 |
| 15 | €53,114 | €56,267 |
| 16 | €53,114 | €58,081 |
| 17 | €55,615 | €58,081 |
| 18 | €55,615 | €58,081 |
| 19 | €55,615 | €60,582 |
| 20 | €55,615 | €60,582 |
| 21 | €58,919 | €60,582 |
| 22 | €58,919 | €60,582 |
| 23 | €58,919 | €63,887 |
| 24 | €58,919 | €63,887 |
| 25 | €62,571 | €63,887 |
| 26 | €62,571 | €63,887 |
| 27 | €62,571 | €67,538 |

Note: Qualification allowances continue to be paid to this cohort of teachers as appropriate.

Note: Honours Primary Degree allowance is included in scale.

Deadline for retrospective vetting extended

In November, the DES published Circular 0072/2017 reminding schools of their statutory obligations under section 21 of the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 (the Vetting Act) in respect of the retrospective vetting of teaching staff, non-teaching staff and others who have not previously been Garda vetted and who undertake relevant work or activities with children or vulnerable persons.

Since its publication in November 2017, the Minister for Justice and Equality signed new regulations extending the deadline for retrospective vetting to 30 April 2018.

At present, 98.5% of the 98,000 teachers on the register have been vetted. During 2017, the Teaching

Council facilitated the vetting of more than 30,500 of the 32,000 registered teachers who had not been previously vetted through the Council.

Teachers who have yet to comply are advised to complete the vetting application process immediately in order to be eligible to renew their registration on their renewal date.

There is a requirement to be vetted for both employment and registration purposes. Teachers who are not vetted will not have registration renewed. Teachers who are not registered with the Council cannot receive a state funded salary.

Teachers who have been previously vetted through the Council are exempt from the retrospective vetting requirement. Registered teachers can

check their vetting status by logging on to the 'My Registration' section of the Teaching Council website at www.teachingcouncil.ie.

DES Circular 0016/2017 sets out the statutory requirements for the retrospective vetting of teaching staff.

Teachers with a registration renewal date before 30 April 2018 should note, however, that in order to be eligible to renew their registration they will need to have been vetted through the Teaching Council before their renewal date.

The requirements for vetting under Circular 0031/2016 will continue to apply for all teachers who are changing employment.

Please see www.into.ie/ROI/InfoforTeachers/GardaVetting for more information.

Sting in the tail of minor works announcement *INTO condemns threat to minor works funding*

After much uncertainty for schools in December following calls by the INTO for the payment of minor repairs funding, the DES announced that the grant would be paid.

Primary schools received a flat rate grant of €5,500 plus €18.50 per mainstream pupil and €74 per special needs pupil in a special school or special class.

Announcing the payment of the funding, the Minister stated he was aware of "the importance of the Minor Works grant to schools". He paid tribute to the "excellent work done by boards of management and school principals in using the Minor Works Grant effectively to improve school infrastructure and upgrade the furniture and equipment available for teaching and learning".

However, he then announced that it would be late in 2018

or January 2019 before the DES would be in a position to determine the prospects of a 2018/2019 Minor Works Grant.

Questioned on the matter the following day in the Dáil, the Minister stated that it was unlikely that the DES "will be in a position to pay a minor works grant during calendar year 2018 and it will probably have to be paid early in 2019".

The INTO has condemned the decision, saying schools needed the funding for a variety of purposes in addition to improving school buildings and grounds. INTO general secretary, Sheila Nunan, said the funding was needed to repair or replace inadequate heating or lighting, buy new furniture or PE equipment and increasingly to purchase or repair IT related equipment.

Directive on SSE lifted to ensure pay restoration

To ensure the continuity of pay uplifts (part payment on 11 January and full uplift on 25 January), and subsequent payments, to continue INTO participation in the new entrant pay process, and to honour the September 2016 agreement fully restoring

qualification payments to teachers who started since February 2012, the CEC decided at its January meeting to lift the directive on SSE.

The decision, effective from 19 February 2018, ensures that all members receive the benefit of pay restoration

measures. Further advice will be provided to members about resumption of the SSE process.

The CEC also reiterated the union's determination to pursue additional posts of responsibility and to intensify discussions with the DES on workload.



Competition

Different families, same love

Exciting competition to celebrate the diversity of people and families in Ireland and address homophobic and transphobic bullying in primary schools!

Join INTO LGBT in creating a positive school climate that fosters respect and acceptance of all family structures.

How to enter

Competition entries, like our families, can take many forms so you and your students can choose to create individual, class, or school projects based on the theme 'Different Families, Same Love'.

Entries will be judged on creativity,

originality and relevance to the inclusive theme of 'Different Families, Same Love'.

Categories

- ✳ Junior infants to second class
- ✳ Third class to sixth class
- ✳ Whole school

Tá fáilte faoi leith roimh iarratais ó Ghaelscoileanna agus scoileanna Gaeltachta.

Entries from special schools are also welcome.

Deadline for submissions is 30 March 2018 with prizes awarded in early May to



coincide with International Family Equality Day and International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

For inspiration, lesson resources and to download an entry form, visit www.into.ie/lgbt/Competition.

Health and safety legislation

Briefings for safety representatives

The INTO, ASTI and TUI are co-operating on a pilot project to increase awareness of health and safety legislation, including the role of safety representatives, in schools.

Four seminars will take place in February and March 2018. These seminars are open to safety representatives in schools who are members of any of the three unions, to other members with a particular interest in health and safety, and to officers of local branches.

The details of the upcoming seminars (from 5-7 p.m. in each case) are as follows;
Tuesday 20 February: Crowne Plaza, Blanchardstown, Dublin (register by Friday 16 February).

Tuesday 6 March: Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny (register by Friday 2 March).

Thursday 8 March: Hodson Bay Hotel, Athlone (register by Monday 5 March).

Tuesday 13 March: Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo (register by Friday 9 March.)

Each seminar will commence at 5 p.m. and will include input from speakers with specialist expertise in health and safety. A buffet dinner will be served at 7 p.m.

Participant registration is essential. To register, please email Georgina Glackin (gglackin@into.ie) stating your union and if you have any specific dietary requirements.

Branch and District Officers' Conference

A Branch and District Officers' Conference was held on Saturday 13 January in Croke Park, Dublin, to update INTO officers on current issues.

Among the issues considered were: pay equality, staffing/teacher supply; the recent pay uplift, the lifting of the directive on SSE, child protection guidelines, education and professional issues and lobbying TDs.

Issue 5 of Irish Teachers' Journal launched

The INTO recently launched the fifth edition of the *Irish Teachers' Journal*, which includes articles on such diverse topics as: discipline policy in primary schools; distributed leadership; CPD; the pluralist imperatives of education; and dánta o thraidisiún fileata na Gaeilge ar théamaí teagaisc agus foghlama. A copy of the *Journal* was sent to all schools in December. The INTO is now delighted to issue a call for articles for the sixth edition of the *Journal*.

The purpose of the journal is to stimulate teacher thought and creativity through discussions and reflections on current issues in education. It also aims to



Pictured at the launch of the Irish Teachers' Journal in December were Claire Garvey, Administrative Officer; Deirbhle Nic Craith, Director of Education and Research and John Boyle, INTO President.

provide a platform for teachers who have engaged in research to bring their findings to a wider audience by having their articles published. Traditionally, many teachers engage in further study and the INTO hopes that these teachers, and others, will submit articles to the *Journal* to be read and appreciated by their colleagues.

Articles for consideration (5,000 – 7,000 words) should be submitted in electronic form to Claire Garvey (cgarvey@into.ie) not later than Friday 6 April, 2018. Full author guidelines are available on the INTO website www.into.ie

Our time as INTO interns

Since we began working in Head Office in September, the days have been a blur of exciting opportunities and learning experiences. Aoife, Michael and I share a bright office in number 35 Parnell Square that is a hive of activity. We are 'Team Intern'! We have been welcomed, encouraged and supported since day one. INTO colleagues are always available to guide and advise us and there is a friendly and supportive atmosphere in the office. This has allowed us to get straight down to the business of answering queries, meeting members and getting involved in projects.

Aoife and Michael have been working in the Conditions of Employment section answering queries on leave, panels, pensions and much more. Aoife has also worked on the Recruitment and Retention Plan for the INTO submission to the Public Service Stability Agreement talks and has been presenting at panel information sessions around the country, including on



INTO interns Michael McConigley, Ciara Sotscheck and Aoife Mullen.

Facebook Live. Michael has been dedicated to planning events to celebrate 150 years of INTO, including a charity cycle for Focus Ireland and producing an historical video on the INTO. Michael has also been involved in working for pay equality.

I have been working primarily in the Legal, Industrial Relations and Leadership section, which has been very

interesting and rewarding. I speak daily with members on the queryline, offering advice around parental complaints, staff relations difficulties, managing children's behaviour, contracts and more. I have travelled all over the country with officials; meeting members, attending board of management hearings and meeting legal counsel. Working in LIR, I have seen at first-hand the expert advice and support the INTO provides for members going through a difficult time in their career.

Together we have had the opportunity to visit the colleges of education to speak to students, attend media training in radio interview skills and we have each been assigned to a national committee. We have learned so much this year that will really stand to us in our teaching careers going forward. We wholeheartedly recommend the internship programme to any teacher. You will have a fantastic year!

Written by CIARA SOTSCHECK



150

Exciting opportunity to work in INTO Head Office

Two fixed-term positions as paid interns for 2018/2019

The INTO invites applications for two positions as paid interns for the school year 2018/2019. Persons appointed will be located for work purposes in INTO Head Office (35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1).

These positions will be filled by secondment from teaching, subject to securing board approval.

Persons appointed will work normal office hours, Monday to Friday, for the school year 2018-2019. They will be subject to INTO Head Office conditions and relevant staff policies. The appointees will continue to be paid their normal DES salary and to accrue pensionable service as teachers, and will receive an additional allowance subject to a maximum combined amount.

A full statement of conditions of employment is available on request: email gglackin@into.ie

INTO is seeking members who:

- ✦ are enthusiastic about INTO and its services;
- ✦ have an interest, and ideally involvement at school/branch level, in INTO;
- ✦ seek more experience of INTO and its operation;
- ✦ have excellent oral, written, communication and interpersonal skills;
- ✦ are trustworthy and appreciate the confidentiality associated with handling issues for INTO members;
- ✦ have good IT skills;
- ✦ have high standards and vision for INTO and for education.

The responsibilities will include working directly with sections within INTO, as assigned, assisting with members' queries and cases, attending meetings and preparing papers as required, researching specific issues and such other duties as may be assigned by the General Secretary.

To apply, please forward:

- ✦ a copy of your CV;
- ✦ a cover letter (2 pages max) outlining your interest in INTO and how you believe you could contribute to/benefit from working with our Head Office team;
- ✦ names and contact details of two referees (with note of how each person knows you).

Your application, including the above material, should be sent to Internships, Office of the Deputy General Secretary, INTO, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, or by email entitled 'Internships' to gglackin@into.ie

All applications must be received not later than **5 p.m. on Wednesday, 21 February 2018**. It is anticipated that a short-listing and interview process will take place with interviews scheduled for **12 and 14 March, 2018**. All applicants will be advised of the outcome.

Where your INTO subscription goes

Part 5 in our series on how INTO members' subscription is spent

INTO Contingencies and Legal Fund

The INTO Contingencies and Legal Fund amounts to €0.86 per fortnight (6.4%) of the membership subscription. This is the main fund to meet costs associated with both legal cases and industrial action, North and South.

Under Rule, this fund is used to provide strike pay where the CEC instructs members to take strike action, to pay expenditure arising from campaigns (including advertising and lobbying), and to meet major expenditure arising from legal cases.

In the audited accounts for 2016 (the 2017 accounts process will not be completed until Annual Congress at Easter), total expenditure under the Contingencies and Legal Fund was €304,165. The largest items were legal expenses of €170,000 and campaign expenses of €124,518.

How does the INTO incur legal costs?

In the day to day work of the INTO, legal advice may be required on a wide range of matters (e.g. contracts, once-off legal consultations for members, INTO property matters etc.). Such regular or lower cost legal advices are funded through the General Fund. However, the INTO pays for major legal expenditure out of the Contingencies and Legal Fund. Such expenditure includes actions to vindicate members' rights or to defend members, where costs are likely to exceed €10,000 in any case.

There is a strict process to decide on cases where members seek INTO support in a legal action. An application must come before a joint meeting of the Executive (CEC) and Benefit Funds Committee (BFC). This must be approved by a two-thirds majority. Where approval is given, there are stringent conditions associated with continuing support and these are set out for the member or members concerned.

Cost variations

The capacity to assist members to vindicate their rights at law is a valuable benefit of INTO membership in both jurisdictions on the island, but one to be utilised only where necessary and where, based on legal advice, there is a reasonable prospect of success.

Expenditure on supporting cases through legal representation can vary greatly from year to year. For example, the €170,000 spend for 2016 is very low compared with almost €800,000 in 2015, and the end-year figure for 2017 is anticipated to be closer to the 2015 outcome, rather than the lower figure for 2016.

The next article in this series will look at grants from INTO (through the General, Benevolent, Solidarity and Political funds), and how/when such grants are paid.

Comhar Linn AGM



Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union is a financial co-operative which is owned, controlled and resourced by INTO members and their families. The Credit Union provides financial services for INTO members mutual benefit. Visit www.comharlinnintocu.ie for more information.

Pictured at the recent Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union AGM were members of the Board and Board Oversight Committee:

Sheila Nunan, John Tuohy, John Carr, Jimmy O'Neill, Dymphna Mulkerrins, John Boyle (INTO President), Kathy McHugh, Helen Synnott and Ultan MacMathúna.

INTO AVC Plan Annual Report

The INTO has received from the Trustee (Irish Life Trustee Services Limited) the annual report for the year ended 31 March 2017 of the INTO AVC Plan. Cornmarket will provide a synopsis of this report in the annual benefit statement documentation issued to members.

The detailed report runs to over 70 pages. Irish Life as Trustee and Registered Administrator has provided the report which shows the scheme assets and membership; the scheme at 31 March 2017 had 9,946 active members with a further 5,502 deferred members. The annual report includes the investment manager's report, an independent audit report, and the accounts.

A full copy of the annual Report is available (in soft copy) by emailing gglackin@into.ie.

Teacher unions pursue pay equality



Close co-operation between the three teacher unions on a range of issues continues, particularly on the issue of pay equality.

Pictured at a recent meeting in INTO Head Office were: Back l to r: Kieran Christie, ASTI General Secretary; Ger Curtin, ASTI President; John MacGabhann, TUI General Secretary. Seated l to r: John Boyle, INTO President; Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary and Joanne Irwin, TUI President.

PPP firm goes into liquidation

Carillion, a UK company involved in the delivery of schools under the Public Private Partnership (PPP) programme, went into liquidation in January.

The INTO noted that only one primary school was directly affected by the liquidation of the firm.

The union said the DES should take every action necessary to make sure that the school project was not disadvantaged in any way by the collapse of Carillion.

The INTO said it had long held

doubts about the value for money of Public Private Partnerships in the area of school buildings.

In 2004 the Comptroller and Auditor General criticised the use of PPPs for building schools saying that, on average, this method was significantly more expensive than direct government funding of school buildings. The INTO said this incident should serve as a warning and a halt should be called to the use of PPPs for school buildings.

Gerry O'Sullivan RIP

Gerry O'Sullivan, St Nessian's NS, Mungret, Limerick, passed away last December. A member of the INTO for over 40 years he was, from 2006, District 13 representative on the



INTO Education Committee. In this role he had a particular interest in small schools and in the importance of the school community. He is survived by his wife Bridie and children Christine and Shane.



Visiting Teacher Service celebrates 50 years

The VTS recently celebrated its 50th anniversary.

INTO president, John Boyle, paid tribute to the teachers involved in the service saying: "There is no doubt that visiting teachers can hold their heads high as they have focussed on the capabilities and expanded the possibilities for thousands of young people in Ireland in the last 50 years."

Events to mark INTO 150

In 1868, a number of local teacher associations came together to form the INTO. To mark 'INTO 150', among events agreed to date are:

- ✎ Launch of INTO history *Kindling the Flame*.
- ✎ Scholarship: INTO/DCU PhD Scholarship at the Institute of Education DCU.
- ✎ Bursaries: INTO Education Research Bursaries increased to €3,000 each.
- ✎ Cycle: 'INTO 150' Cycle (150 km) on Saturday, 21 April 2018.
- ✎ Stamp: An Post commemorative stamp, March 2018.
- ✎ Commemorative journal: Copy of first issue of *Irish Teachers' Journal* (1868) to delegates to INTO Congress.
- ✎ Vere Foster: Refurbishment of Vere Foster (first INTO president) grave in Belfast.
- ✎ Early childhood: 14 June 2018 – joint seminar on Early Childhood Education (with Early Childhood Ireland).

A more detailed list is available on the

INTO website. Further events will be added when confirmed.

Districts and branches are invited to propose/organise events to augment the above. Please email any planned event details to INTO150@into.ie



Kindling the Flame – INTO history launched



Pictured at the launch of *Kindling the Flame* were Noel Ward, Deputy General Secretary; Diarmaid Ferriter, Professor of Modern Irish History at UCD; Niamh Puirseil, historian and author of the history of the INTO; Sheila Nunan, General Secretary; John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus of Education, NUI, Maynooth and John Boyle, INTO President.

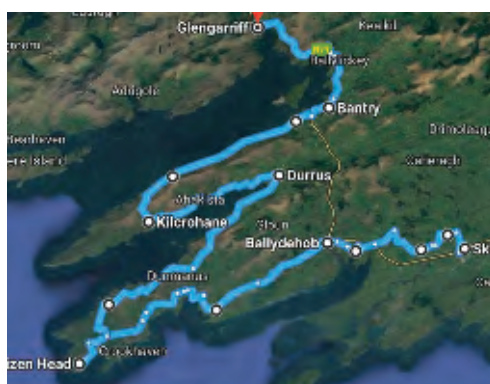
INTO 150 charity cycle

Do you want a fitness goal for 2018? Do you have a 'bike to work' lying in the shed? Do you want to raise money for charity? If you answered 'yes' to the any of these read on.

As part of INTO 150 celebrations an INTO members' 150km cycle for charity will take place on 21 April 2018 in west Cork and raise funds for Focus Ireland. The cycle from Skibbereen to Glengarriff via Mizen Head and Sheep's Head will be part of the Wild Atlantic Way Cycle run by RunWild.ie for Fáilte Ireland

The route

Leaving Skibbereen at 8.30 a.m. (or 9.30 for the advanced cyclists), you will spin south west through the picturesque towns and villages of Ballydehob, Schull, Goleen and Barleycove. From Mizen Head, it's up the northern flank of the peninsula with exceptional views towards Durrus. Then it's on to Kilcrohane and the challenging 2km Sheep's Head climb. Catch your breath at Fionn MacCumhail's seat, before beginning the long descent into Bantry and the final 17 km to Glengarriff.



The charity

Every day, INTO members teach children who are homeless. Congress 2017 heard a submission from Focus Ireland and condemned the ongoing homelessness crisis. When registered, you will be sent an Everydayhero 'Team' fundraising online link so you can then raise money for Focus. This 'Team' fundraising page will show how much money our group has raised so far.

Registration

Registration for the event is €75 and will include a unique INTO 150 cycling jersey, a shower cycling jacket, lunch, roadside

water fruit and energy bars, a goody bag, experienced motorbike marshals and a bike mechanic. A massage service is available both before and after the cycle. For anybody staying in Skibbereen, there will be a free bus transfer for you and your bicycle.

A unique registration link is available on the INTO website. INTO members and family members are welcome to register.

Training plans

Most cyclists would say 150 km is a tough goal, but with adequate training, it is achievable. A private Facebook group 'INTO 150 cycle forum' will include a weekly training plan and helpful videos for all those registered. The link will be sent to members who register. Members of the forum will be able to give updates on their own training and encourage others towards the 150 km goal. Weekly training plans will also be sent to those registered by e-mail.

For further information, queries or questions, please e-mail mmcconigley@into.ie
Register on <https://wildatlanticwaycyclesportif.ie/tour-option/into-stage-2-skibbereen-glengarriff/>

Vere Foster medal winners

The INTO Congress of 1956, held in Belfast, decided to organise a suitable memorial as a tribute to the memory of Vere Foster. The memorial takes the form of a Vere



Foster medal, and is generally awarded by the INTO to the student obtaining the highest mark in Teaching Practice and/or Curriculum areas of Education. Other recent Vere Foster Medal

winners were pictured in the December 2017 *InTouch*

St Mary's University College, Belfast



Dorothy McGinley with Ruairi Mooney, Vice-President of St Mary's Students' Union who accepted the Vere Foster medal on behalf of the recipient Ryan Farrell.

Marino Institute of Education



Left: Kayla Robinson, MIE Vere Foster recipient, pictured with Professor Anne O'Gara, President, MIE; Dr Gene Mehigan, Director of Postgraduate Studies, MIE and Dr Seán Delaney, Registrar, MIE. Right: Professor Anne O'Gara and John Boyle, INTO President, present April Dowdall with the Vere Foster medal. Photos: Richard Gavin Photography.



Hibernia College



Left: John Boyle, President, INTO, presenting the Vere Foster medal to Megan O'Reilly, Hibernia College.

Right: Aoife Bambray, Hibernia College, receiving her Vere Foster medal from INTO President, John Boyle. Photos: Iain White, Fennell Photography.



Retirements

Pictures from branch and district functions to honour retiring members



Wexford

Back row (left to right): Melissa Sinnott, Branch Organiser; Miriam Lenihan, retiree; Mary Egan Byrne, retiree; Pat Hackett, retiree; Pauline Duggan, retiree; Claire Byrne, Branch Chairperson. Front row (left to right): Brigid Scully, retiree; Mary Cullen, retiree; John Boyle, INTO President; Anne McGarry, retiree; Claire Doyle, retiree.



Limerick East

Back Row (left to right): Majella Sutton, Branch Secretary; Mary Richardson, Branch Chairperson; Anne Horan, CEC Rep. Front row (left to right): Maureen O'Donnell, retiree, Knockaine NS; John Boyle, INTO President and Mary McInnes, retiree, St Vincent's NS.



Kinsale

Pictured standing (left to right): Darren Kiely, Branch Secretary; John Boyle, INTO President; Carmel Healy, Branch Chairperson; John Driscoll, CEC Rep. Seated (left to right): Mary Hurley; Gerardine O'Connor; Eileen O'Regan; Noreen Daly and Anne McCarthy.



Donegal

Pictured at a Donegal Branch function for retiring members were (left to right): Danielle McNulty, Branch Secretary; Anita Gallagher, retiree; John Boyle, INTO President; Michael Weed, CEC Rep; Mary Donovan, retiree and Paula Muldoon, Branch Chairperson.



District 9

John Boyle, INTO President, is pictured at a recent District 9 function for retiring members.



Northern News

(News from the world of education and trade unionism in Northern Ireland)

Working in the Republic of Ireland

In order to work in ROI, NI teachers must be registered with the Teaching Council (ROI). This process, which includes vetting, can take a number of months, so teachers planning to work in ROI should begin the registration process in advance. The INTO will meet with the Teaching Council in the coming weeks to identify how registration could be expedited for teachers from NI.

Requirement to register

All teachers working in ROI must register with the Teaching Council in order to be paid. INTO members registered with GTCNI are entitled to have their qualifications recognised in all other EU member states. This recognition may be granted subject to conditions, including making good any shortfalls. The Teaching Council is the competent authority in ROI for assessing applications from people who qualified as teachers in other EU/EEA jurisdictions.

Application for recognition of qualifications

Teachers who hold QTS from another jurisdiction must apply to the Teaching Council to have their qualifications recognised. The application form is comprehensive, and will not be processed unless it is accompanied by all of the required documentation. Application, including Teaching Council Membership, costs €290. The assessment and registration process may take up to 12 weeks, depending on the time of year. Where an applicant falls short of the required qualifications for registration in ROI, they may be registered on condition that they rectify the shortfall(s) within a specified period, usually not exceeding three years from the date of registration.

Where an applicant for registration as a primary teacher has completed a programme of teacher education outside Ireland, an Irish Language Requirement

(ILR) condition normally applies to his/her registration (an exception to this is teachers who have completed the bilingual BEd course in St Mary's University College). The applicant can either complete an aptitude test (SCG – An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge) or an adaptation period (OCG – Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge), which confirms the applicant's competence to teach the Irish language, as well as a range of primary school curricular subjects through the medium of Irish. Conditional registration is granted to those in the process of completing this requirement. A maximum period of three years is permitted to satisfy this condition.

Where an applicant for registration as a post-primary teacher has completed a programme of teacher education outside of ROI, they are required to gain a knowledge and understanding of the history and structure of the Irish education system. They can do this by successfully completing an aptitude test (facilitated twice yearly by the Teaching Council) or an adaptation period in the history and structure of the Irish education system.

Vetting

It is a requirement under the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Acts 2012 to 2016 (NVB Act) that individuals who work with children and vulnerable persons be vetted by the National Vetting Bureau (the NVB).

The Teaching Council is the authorised body for administering vetting for teachers in Ireland and is required to assess the vetting disclosure for suitability for registration. The school is required to receive and assess the vetting disclosure for employment purposes.

As part of the registration process, teachers are required to apply for a vetting disclosure from the National

Vetting Bureau. Applicants for registration who have lived in the north are not required to provide police clearance for NI, as the National Vetting Bureau will liaise with the PSNI.

Applicants should ensure that they include postal codes for all NI addresses or their application will be rejected by the NVB. They should also allow extra time for their application to be processed, as applications with NI addresses can take about four weeks longer than those without.

The vetting disclosure will be provided to the teacher via Digitary, the Teaching Council's online method allowing teachers to view and share their vetting result document. The disclosure must then be shared with employers as teachers take up employment.

Eligibility for employment/rate of pay

Teachers recognised under Route 1 (primary), including those with conditional registration, are eligible to take up most teaching posts in primary and special schools. In order to be appointed as a principal, a teacher must be fully recognised and, for larger schools, must have five years' teaching experience, including two years in ROI.

A teacher registered with the Teaching Council will be paid at the qualified rate if they are working in a sector in which they are recognised. This will be either incremental salary (permanent/fixed term posts or non-casual subbing) or the qualified rate for casual subbing (current primary daily rate €165.96 + holiday pay for a teacher taking up their first appointment).

Teachers registered under Route 2 (post-primary) are not generally recognised in the primary sector and are paid at the unqualified rate. An exception to this is in special schools, which have a proportion of pupils of post-primary age.

Brexit. So what?

The recent 'agreement' in relation to the border, citizens' rights and the separation bill have done nothing only to fuel the speculation that withdrawal from the EU means different things to different groups, with little or no comprehension of what the finality of it will look like.

Claim and counter-claim is the order of the day, while discussions limp on.

The interests of small communities in the border areas of Northern Ireland are not being heard as the political stalemate continues. The game of political point scoring seems to dominate, while in the north governance is slowly grinding to a halt due to a lack of political leadership or vision.

The reality for a small primary school on the border in west Fermanagh is that Brexit was a reality 20, 30 and 40 years ago.

The same scene can be played out in any rural primary or secondary level school along the border.

A troubled past with cratered roads, periodic episodes of the 'troubles', isolationism and globalisation has left this area decimated economically with poor infrastructure and a rapidly declining population. In the 80s, our school boasted a vibrant pupil enrolment of 150. Today it hovers around the mid-90s. That is a 40% decrease in around 30 years.

There are four primary schools within a six mile radius and none of them meet the sustainable schools threshold of 105 pupils in rural areas.

So why has there been an impact on numbers and a general population decline? People coming to St Martin's PS comment on the stunning scenery of west Fermanagh on their journey to Garrison. Visitors share their new realisation that Northern Ireland actually stretches this far west, with many saying they didn't know what lay beyond Enniskillen. Well beyond Enniskillen lies a few small villages, a poor road network and a poorer industrial infrastructure, all encapsulated in a pastoral idyll increasingly devoid of people.

Many local teenagers, having completed their formal schooling, leave to go to university in Belfast, Derry, across Ireland and to the UK. Having completed university, there is no rush



... while Brexit may be dominating the political and news agenda, it means little to a school community in west Fermanagh

back to Fermanagh as there are few jobs. The high-tech industries or the service industries are not here and prospects are very few and far between. Those interested in raising a family and/or enjoying a career need to look elsewhere.

A generation has been lost from this area and the impact is being felt on schools, on GAA clubs, in parish and in community life. Families rarely move to the area and, therefore, there is a huge impact on pupil numbers in schools. From year to year there is no certainty as to the numbers that will come through our doors in September.

Of course, this has an impact on school budgets maintaining a continual climate of uncertainty around the future of the school and the jobs of teachers and support staff.

When promoting the school and showcasing what we do, we are competing with the other schools looking for the same children. Funding schools on the basis of pupil numbers is the root of so many of our systemic evils.

The political progress of the last 20 years has done nothing to alleviate the situation. It has failed to address properly the level of deprivation or provide an economic stimulus for this area.

Brexit will have little effect as there is little to trade here across the border and fewer people to travel across it, whether it be hard or soft. Promises that the UK will find its own way in the world have little impact on people here and neither

does the promise of a reborn Stormont heralding a golden dawn. For too long the rhetoric has been played out with promises made and broken.

Children often mention Brexit and to them it is a word with little meaning. For our part, we are charged with maximising the educational opportunities for them and ensuring that they take their place amongst the best in Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, the UK and the world.

St Martin's PS may be placed at the new frontier of the European Union but we will ensure that certainty, safety and opportunity are the order of the day in a rapidly changing landscape. So, while Brexit may be dominating the political and news agenda, it means little to a school community in west Fermanagh fighting for survival whilst struggling to provide the best for the children we teach and care for.

The Brexiteers are not alone in recklessly tampering with our children's future. Those making decisions based on formulas and budget projections might care to take a drive through beautiful west Fermanagh and see that we have schools and communities worth saving. We will survive a Brexit but maybe not the funding shortfalls of an overblown bureaucracy.

BRIAN MCGRATH is currently on secondment as acting principal of St Ronan's PS, Lisnaskea. He was formerly principal in St Martin's PS, Garrison, Co. Fermanagh.

Belfast launch of INTO book *Kindling the Flame*



Kindling the Flame by Dr Niamh Puirseil, telling the story of INTO over 150 years, was launched just before Christmas in Belfast.

Speaking at the launch, INTO president John Boyle said that, despite the bombing of the INTO Northern Office during a raid by the Luftwaffe during World War 2, enough recorded material survived to allow Niamh Puirseil to complete two chapters of the book on the INTO's work in



At the launch of *Kindling the Flame* in the INTO's Northern Office were John Boyle, INTO President; Niamh Puirseil, historian and author; Dorothy McGinley, CEC District 2 and Dr Eamonn Phoenix, political historian

Northern Ireland since 1922. He said it was the first time that a comprehensive chronicle of the union's work in Northern

Ireland has been published.

"The British government announced an inquiry into national education in Ireland with a commission to begin in February 1868", said Mr Boyle. "When it became apparent that the commissioners would not have any dealings with teachers, the Dublin Association, which had been established five years previously, decided to go outside the teaching body for an advocate who would be free to speak on their behalf, without fear of sanction."

Dr Eamonn Phoenix noted the book celebrated the struggles of the INTO including "the struggle of women to overcome the marriage bans north and south". Dr Phoenix said that the book is "a marvellous read for anybody concerned with education, with teaching... and I recommend it to you".

The book is available on Amazon and from Dubray Books at www.dubraybooks.ie. Price: €24.99.

Reflections on a West Bank visit

Dorothy McGinley, chairperson of INTO Northern Committee, reflects on a visit to the West Bank as part of a delegation invited by Trade Union Friends of Palestine. The visit was part of ongoing links forged with various unions and human rights groups in the region.

At the most basic level, the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is about who gets what and how it's controlled. It's a controversial and complicated conflict in a place full of paradoxes and contradictions. This piece is not about history or politics. It's about what I witnessed of the traumatised children, the destruction of schools and control of what's taught.

Mass traumatised of Palestinian children

Each year, 500-700 Palestinian children between 12-17 years are detained and prosecuted in military courts. They can be given up to ten years in prison for alleged throwing of stones at soldiers or insulting the honour of a soldier. When arrested, they have no access to lawyers or parents. Many children often confess to something they didn't do as it then allows a lawyer in.



The result is usually a collective punishment – a fine, a sentence and the family home demolished.

Destruction of schools

Israeli authorities continue to demolish Palestinian schools citing lack of planning permission. Many of these schools are brand new buildings, paid for by the EU. What threat do these schools pose for Israeli authorities? What do they hope to achieve by denying education to thousands of children?

Imposition of an Israeli curriculum in East Jerusalem

Israeli authorities continuously attempt to impose an Israeli curriculum in Palestinian schools in East Jerusalem, threatening to withdraw financial support from schools refusing to teach it. This is a further violation of rights which along with a dilapidated infrastructure has led to students unwilling to complete their education.

This account is only a snapshot, which I hope will raise awareness of daily reality for Palestinian children. I believe it's a human rights issue. Do we, as teachers, let the issue go with passive acceptance? Is it our problem or not?

The INTO has a well-established Global Solidarity Network which focuses and campaigns against victimisation, harassment and violation of human rights. Global social responsibility should be part of INTO 150.

DOROTHY MCGINLEY is District 2 CEC representative and chairperson of Northern Committee.

Read a full account of Dorothy's visit to Palestine on the INTO website at www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/InTouch/FullLengthArticles/



Filling posts of responsibility in schools

As part of the September 2016 agreement on new entrant pay and related commitments, the INTO agreed to review the procedure for appointments to promoted posts. Budget 2017 provided funding for a limited restoration of posts from September 2017.

The full detail of the changes introduced are in Circular 0063/2017.

Teachers holding posts will continue to hold these. However names have changed. What was originally called an 'A' post is now an Assistant Principal I (API) post and what was previously known as a special duties, or 'B' post is now called an Assistant Principal II (APII) post.

How can we tell if we have promoted posts to fill?

Circular 0063/2017 sets out thresholds for promoted posts, below which you cannot fall, based on authorised teaching posts in your school. Authorised teaching posts include the principal, mainstream teachers, special education teachers, home school community liaison teachers and other authorised posts.

If your school falls below your allocated threshold for API or APII posts, you can fill the posts up to the threshold.

The two thresholds operate independently so, for example, if you are above your threshold for APII posts but fall below it for API posts, you can still fill API posts up to the threshold.

Filling a promoted post

The following is the staged approach to filling a post of responsibility.

1. Consultation

The first step is to engage in a consultation process between the principal, deputy principal, teaching staff and, later, the board of management/ETB to determine (i) the leadership and management needs and priorities of the schools; (ii) the roles

and responsibilities that need to be performed, taking into account the needs and priorities that have been identified and (iii) how these roles and responsibilities will be distributed among the available in-school management posts.

2. Advertising

Following the consultation process, an advertisement for the post should be placed in a prominent position within the school so that all teachers have access to it. In addition to this, notice of the vacancy should be sent (by post or email) to any teachers on leave. The notice should stay on the school noticeboard for five school days. The notice should:

- Include the level of the post (API, APII or deputy principal).
- State that the successful candidate will become part of the leadership and management team of the school.
- Outline the roles and responsibilities of the post and state that these roles and responsibilities are subject to change.
- Specify where the application should be sent, whether a CV is required and how the application should be submitted.
- Give the closing date for applications, which shouldn't be less than ten days from the last day of posting the notice.

3. Interview

The interview board will be made up of the principal, the chairperson of the board of management and an independent assessor chosen from a list approved by the INTO and management bodies. A list of the independent assessors approved for this purpose is available from your local INTO central executive committee (CEC) representative or by contacting your local management body, for example, the local diocesan office. All applicants must be interviewed for internal competitions. For external deputy principal competitions shortlisting may apply.

4. Marking

Marking for API, APII and deputy principal positions filled through internal competition will be based on the following four competencies, with each being allocated equal weighting of 25 marks:

- Leading learning and teaching.
- Managing the organisation.
- Leading school development.
- Developing leadership capacity.

Applicants should demonstrate their capacity in these areas with relevant examples from their professional, education and life experience.

5. Appointment

Notice of the proposed appointee should be placed on the school notice board and unsuccessful interviewees have ten days, including the day the notice was posted, to appeal the board of management/ETB's decision. Once the appeal process has expired, the successful teacher can be appointed.

One of our promoted post holders is retiring this year, can we fill her post?

Only if the loss of that post puts you below the threshold set out in Circular 0063/2017.

What about deputy principal positions?

If your school has 24 or more teachers, or no internal candidates for the position, then the post should be filled through open competition and in accordance with Appendix E of the *Governance Manual for Primary Schools* (the only difference being that the principal should be on the interview board).

Otherwise, the deputy principal post should be filled through the same procedures as API and APII posts using the procedures outlined above.

Open competition for deputy principal positions will be phased into all schools between now and the 2022/2023 school year.

New Child Protection

Circular 81/2017

New Child Protection Procedures for schools have been developed to reflect changes to the law and the CFA/Tusla document titled *Children First: National Guidance for the Protection and Welfare of Children 2017*.

The new procedures became effective from 11 December 2017 (Circular 81/2017) apart from the requirement to prepare and display a written Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) which must be done before 11 March 2018. From that date the requirement to have a CSS replaces the previous requirement to have a Child Protection Policy.

The 2017 procedures stipulate that all boards of management are required to formally adopt and implement these revised procedures as part of the school's CSS.

2017 Procedures: main provisions

For the most part, the new 2017 procedures build on and/or continue the existing 2011 procedures. Key provisions include:

- ✎ The obligation on every school to prepare and publish its own CSS before 11 March 2018.
- ✎ A new threshold and definition of 'harm' as laid down in the Children First Act, 2015.
- ✎ The continued requirement to report any reasonable concern of abuse or neglect.
- ✎ Prescribing that every registered teacher is now a 'mandated person' for reporting instances of 'harm'.
- ✎ The retention of the role of DLP and deputy DLP with some variations in the case of mandated reports.
- ✎ New oversight arrangements – including record keeping and reports to parents and BOMs.
- ✎ Retention of the right to seek advice about whether or not to make a report to Tusla and about the type of report.
- ✎ A new Child Protection and Welfare Report Form.
- ✎ Continued emphasis on confidentiality in child protection matters and a legislative prohibition on the disclosure



of information to third parties.

- ✎ A statutory requirement to assist Tusla in its assessment and investigation of reports.

Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS)

All schools must prepare and display a written CSS prior to 11 March 2018 showing their compliance with the 2017 Procedures.

The aim of the CSS is to ensure, in so far as practicable, that children are safe from harm while attending the school and/or participating in school activities.

In this context 'harm' is as defined in the Children First Act, 2015 and not a general health and safety risk and the school is required to complete a risk assessment of harm/potential harm as part of the CSS. However, the 2017 procedures acknowledge that schools already have a range of policies, procedures and practices in place to mitigate instances of risk to pupils.

In order to assist in the development of the CSS, the 2017 procedures contain three templates to be used by schools:

- ✎ A Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Template.
- ✎ A Child Safeguarding Statement (CSS) Template (i.e. the basis of the CSS).
- ✎ A template checklist for review of the CSS.

As part of a risk assessment, a school is required to examine its range of activities to establish whether there are any practices that have the potential to put a child at risk. This exercise will involve making a judgement based, for example, on considerations of past experience, current practice and whether appropriate policies and procedures are in place to minimise the risk of harm to pupils and/or identify measures necessary to respond to situations as may arise.

Whilst the risk assessment process should – in so far as possible – be completed in advance of publication of the CSS, it can and should be updated thereafter as the need arises and when additional procedures are put in place or changes made to existing procedures.

The CSS template requires the school to insert its name, the names of the DLP and deputy DLP. It must be co-signed by the chairperson of the board of management and the principal. Copies should be provided to school personnel and, on request, to parents and Tusla. It should also be displayed in a prominent place in the school and reviewed annually using the template provided.

'Harm' under the Children First Act, 2015

The 2017 procedures continue to cite the four areas of abuse as a basis for reporting a concern – neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. The obligation on teachers to report a reasonable concern or allegation of abuse or neglect to the DLP and, if necessary, to Tusla is continued.

In addition, however, the 2017 procedures contain the threshold of 'harm' to be applied to any abuse concerns. 'Harm' in relation to a child means "assault, ill-treatment or neglect of the child in a manner that seriously affects or is likely to seriously affect the child's health, development or welfare, or sexual abuse of the child". Further clarification is contained in the 2017 procedures.

There might/will be overlap between abuse and harm. However, the 2017

Procedures

procedures mean that these concepts must be given separate consideration by school personnel. The obligation to report a reasonable concern of abuse runs parallel with the mandatory obligation to report a concern of 'harm' and the DLP is entitled to seek advice from Tusla about this – i.e. about whether or not the concern reaches the threshold of 'harm' and about whether or not to make a referral to Tusla.

Teachers and reporting

Teachers and DLPs have no role in assessing or proving any concerns of abuse or harm. In a case where a risk to a child is at or above the threshold of 'harm', a mandated person – which is now every registered teacher – must report the matter to Tusla.

The teacher should liaise with the DLP and jointly consider whether the concern is at or above the defined threshold of 'harm'. If so decided, then a joint report from the teacher and DLP can be made to Tusla. This fulfils a teacher's obligations in respect of a concern of 'harm' and ensures that the DLP is aware of all reports to Tusla.

However, it remains the prerogative of any teacher to make an individual report about a concern of 'harm' as a mandated person or to report a concern of abuse in circumstances where the DLP has decided not to do so.

The DLP

The BOM must designate a senior full-time member of the teaching staff, normally the principal teacher, as the DLP. Similarly, BOMs must designate a deputy DLP. These names should be included in the CSS.

The DLP is the point of contact for the CSS and must ensure that the reporting arrangements of the 2017 procedures are

followed correctly.

School personnel are required to report concerns of abuse or neglect to the DLP. The DLP will jointly consider with a teacher whether a reasonable ground for concern exists and/or whether the concern is at or above the defined

Where a DLP has doubt about whether a concern is at or above the defined threshold of 'harm' – after consulting with Tusla – the DLP must take the 'harm' threshold as the default position.

All concerns or allegations of abuse or harm and the follow up actions should be recorded by the DLP and retained. The DLP must observe confidentiality in this regard and relevant files/records assigned a unique code or serial number to facilitate this.

Consultation on these procedures

In 2016, the DES convened a working group of the stakeholders in education at primary and post-primary level – which included management bodies, parents and teacher representatives. There was consensus among all the partners that teachers are demonstrably and whole-heartedly committed to child protection and to compliance with revised policies and best practice in this area.

Supports and training

However, there was also a strongly articulated consensus that teachers and schools must be fully resourced and supported in the implementation of these new procedures – including whole staff, face-to-face training and that online training of itself, is not sufficient.

The INTO notes the provision of two separate half-day closures for schools during the 2017/18 school year and the involvement of the PDST to provide support and guidance to schools. At the time of writing, we understand that the PDST is due to publish online supports for schools in this area in February 2018 and to commence the roll out of one full-day seminars in education centres for DLPs and deputy DLPs.



More detailed information and a complete Q and A is available on the INTO website

threshold of 'harm'. In the latter case, the DLP will make a joint report with the teacher to Tusla.

The DLP is entitled to seek advice from Tusla about whether a report should be submitted as a concern of abuse, or as a mandated report about 'harm' or at all. The DLP shall act in accordance with the advice of Tusla.

INTO health insurance comparison service

Tailored arrangements for INTO members

This year the INTO is again offering members a free Health Insurance Comparison Service. This service, provided by Cornmarket, will help members to find the best health insurance cover at the most competitive price.

With over 325 plans available across the market, there are significant potential savings to be made and, with new plans introduced into the market each year, it pays to shop around.

For 2018, the insurers are reducing the costs of some of their health insurance plans and including some additional benefits to make plans more appealing to customers. On the other hand, the insurers are also increasing prices across specific plans with effect from 1 January 2018.

Therefore, if you have been on the same plan for a number of years, you should review your cover to ensure you are getting a quote for the policy that provides you with benefits that match your needs at the right price.

If you are considering switching your provider or plan, the process is very easy. You do not have to re-serve waiting periods and there will be no break in your health insurance cover.

The comparison process does not take long. Your advisor or insurer will explain any changes in cover, answer any questions you may have and provide supporting documentation.

What preferential rates are available for INTO members?

Currently, a number of special arrangements and discounts have been negotiated for INTO members with the insurers providing health insurance in Ireland. These are as follows:

- ✎ **Irish Life Health** will be offering an exclusive 10% discount on the following best-selling plans: Health Plan 16.1, Befit 1, Befit 3 and Best Smart. These discounts are only available through Cornmarket. All of these plans include outpatient cover, which allows members to claim back expenses on GP, dentist, physio, consultant and alternative practitioner visits.
- ✎ **Laya Healthcare** is offering 10% discounts on the Precision, Control and Empower schemes. These discounts are not available online so members have to phone in and quote the Group ID 27272.
- ✎ **VHI Healthcare** will continue to offer a

10% discount on the Teacher & Teacher Plan Select.

- ✎ **Decare Dental** is Ireland's only specialist dental insurer who is making their corporate dental plans available to all INTO members.

The above discounts are subject to change.

The advisors in Cornmarket's Health Insurance Comparison Service will explain the different plans and discounts available to INTO members. In one phone call, their health insurance experts will shop around for you and find the most suitable plan for you based on your needs and budget. If you decide to set up your health insurance plan through Cornmarket, a broker fee will apply in certain circumstances. Last year, 96% of INTO members surveyed stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with this service (Source, Cornmarket 2017).

Remember, it pays to shop around

Further details on the above offers can be found by contacting Cornmarket on (01) 408 6214 or by contacting the insurers directly. You can also visit www.intohealthinsurance.ie for more information.

Information correct as of 3 January 2018. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. A member of the Irish Life Group Ltd. which is part of the Great-West Lifeco Group of companies. Telephone calls may be recorded for quality control and training purposes.

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Best in Europe

International survey shows reading skills of Irish pupils are top class

The 2016 PIRLS (the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) report published in December showed the Republic of Ireland's primary school children to be the best in Europe for reading skills.

PIRLS is an international study which examines 50 countries every five years and reports on the reading achievement of pupils in fourth class.

Pupils in Northern Ireland significantly outperformed 41 of the 49 other participating countries in reading. The average score for reading in the north is statistically similar to the Republic of Ireland.

Among the key findings in the Republic of Ireland were:

- ✎ No country in Europe is better than Ireland for reading skills at primary level.
- ✎ Irish pupils' overall reading achievement score has improved by 15 points since 2011.
- ✎ The gender gap in Ireland is smaller than that the gap internationally and has narrowed significantly since 2011.
- ✎ Since 2011, the number of pupils in Ireland with only basic reading skills has dropped significantly.
- ✎ The percentage of Irish pupils who have advanced reading skills rose from 16% in 2011 to 21% in 2016, which is much higher than the international average.

Northern Ireland's performance in reading has remained stable from 2011 to 2016, with no significant difference in the overall average score.

Key findings include:

- ✎ The gap between boys and girls has increased slightly since 2011.
- ✎ Over a fifth of pupils (22 per cent) reached the 'Advanced International

Mean country reading scores 2016

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Russian Federation | 581 |
| Singapore | 576 |
| Hong Kong SAR | 569 |
| Ireland | 567 |
| Finland | 566 |
| Poland | 565 |
| Northern Ireland | 565 |
| Norway (Grade 5) | 559 |
| Chinese Taipei | 559 |
| England | 559 |
| Latvia | 558 |
| Sweden | 555 |
| Hungary | 554 |
| Bulgaria | 552 |
| United States | 549 |

Benchmark' in reading, the third highest percentage internationally and a significant increase compared with 2011.

- ✎ Only three per cent of pupils in Northern Ireland failed to reach the 'Low International Benchmark'.
- ✎ There was a significant increase in the percentage of pupils in Northern Ireland reaching the 'Advanced International Benchmark' in PIRLS 2016 compared with 2011 (22 per cent in 2016; 19 per cent in 2011).

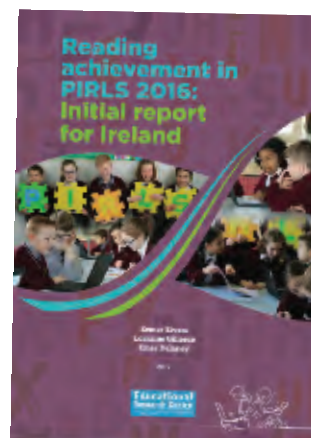
- ✎ A relatively wide spread of attainment for reading between the highest and the lowest attainers.

Fourteen countries, including Ireland, also took part in a new component (ePIRLS), which assesses reading in an online environment. Pupils in the Republic also performed exceptionally well on this test.

Commenting on the report in the Republic of Ireland, the general secretary of the INTO, Sheila Nunan, said the results were down to the tremendous professional work of primary teachers. She said that, since 2011, Irish children have been taught by a fully qualified professional teaching workforce that has driven this improvement.

"However," said Ms Nunan, "there is now a significant shortage of teachers and a rise in the number of people with no qualifications in Irish classrooms. The INTO is putting the Minister and the Department of Education and Skills on notice. These results cannot be sustained without a fully qualified workforce."

Ms Nunan said pay inequality was driving teacher emigration and fuelling a teacher shortage here. "This crisis must be resolved if Ireland is to remain top of the European class."



Read Ireland's national report on PIRLS and ePIRLS 2016 at www.erc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/PIRLS-2016_initial-report-IRL.pdf

Consultation on curriculum structure and time



The NCCA has published details of consultations on the primary curriculum and submissions received at www.ncca.ie/en/primary/primary-developments. Themes which emerged across the consultation included:

Curriculum structure

1. Support for a single curriculum stage encompassing the two preschool years and the two infant classes.
2. Broad agreement for a more integrated curriculum structure for infant classes.
3. Strong support for subjects continuing to hold an important position in the primary school curriculum but less consensus on when subjects should emerge.
4. Greater support for the three-stage model using Aistear-like themes in preschool and infant classes (stage 1), broad curriculum areas from first to fourth class (stage 2) and subjects in fifth and sixth classes (stage 3).

5. Practical challenges of implementing a two- or three-stage incremental model in multi-grade classrooms.

Time

1. Support for changing how time is allocated across the curriculum.
2. Strong support for schools having greater flexibility to decide how time is allocated.
3. General agreement for two new categories of time allocation – Minimum State Curriculum Time and Flexible Time.
4. Concerns that some subjects may lose out in a redeveloped primary curriculum. The full report details other ideas and insights on wider educational issues raised during the consultation.

Where to next?

The consultation findings give important directions for the next phase of work in redeveloping the primary curriculum.

The NCCA will

- work directly with schools to learn from their ideas, their experiences and creative work with the curriculum;
- draw on research on key aspects of a curriculum such as its purpose, values and priorities, curriculum integration and pedagogies;
- host a series of seminars with schools to tease out ideas for redeveloping the curriculum;
- work with the education partners through NCCA committees.

Updates on the work including the short research papers and work with schools, will be available at www.ncca.ie/en/primary/primary-developments.



Requirement for all schools to submit a School Attendance Strategy

The rate of absenteeism for approximately one in eight students is of concern. In the most recent *Tusla Annual Attendance Report for the School Year 2015/2016* information provided by schools indicates that, on average, 59,900 students miss school each day (32,600 primary and 27,300 post-primary). This equates to a loss of 11 school days for a primary school student from the required 183-day school year and 13 days for a post-primary student from the 167-day school year.

While occasional absences from school may not impact negatively on a student's educational outcomes, missing a significant number of days will undoubtedly impact negatively. In 2015/2016 it is concerning that 12.3% of primary students (68,000) and 14.9% (51,400) of post-primary school students missed in excess of 20 school days.

The Education Welfare Act, 2000 (Section 22) sets out a requirement for schools to develop a Statement of Strategy for School Attendance:

"The board of management of a recognised school shall, after consultation with the principal of, teachers teaching at, parents of students registered at, and the educational welfare officer assigned functions in relation to, that school, prepare and submit to the board a statement of the strategies and measures it proposes to adopt for the purposes of fostering an appreciation of learning among students attending that school and encouraging regular attendance at school on the part of such students (hereafter in this section referred to as a 'statement of strategy')."

Tusla Educational Welfare Services (EWS) developed a set of guidelines for schools to assist in preparing attendance strategies. These guidelines, developed in conjunction with education partners, were completed in autumn 2015 and circulated to all schools in early 2016. An outline strategy template is also available and copies of both the guidelines and the template can be accessed online at: www.tusla.ie/

services/educational-welfare-services/school-attendance-strategies/

As of 31 December 2017 just over 57% of all schools had returned copies of their attendance strategy. The return rate from primary schools was 66%. Tusla EWS would like to thank all the schools that have returned strategies and again remind those that are yet to return strategies to do so as soon as possible.

Completed strategies should preferably be returned by email to: attendancestrategies@tusla.ie or by post to Noel Kelly, Director, Educational Welfare Services, Tusla, Brunel Building, Heuston South Quarter, Dublin 8.

References

- www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/Statistical-Reports/retention-rates-of-pupils-in-second-level-schools-2010-entry-cohort.pdf
- www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/School_Attendance_Data_2015-16.pdf
- www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2000/act/22/section/22/enacted/en/html



Leitrim leads the way in hurling promotion

Micheál Ó Muirheartaigh had a distinctive voice and a unique turn of phrase during a career as a commentator that lasted over 60 years. On one memorable occasion during a hurling game involving Cork, he referred to Seán Óg Ó hAilpín with the words: "His father's from Fermanagh, his mother from Fiji, neither a hurling stronghold". Well, Leitrim may not be seen as a hurling stronghold but all that may be about to change. Micheál MacThiarnáin takes up the story. A teacher in St Brigid's NS, Drumcong, he is cathaoirleach of Cumann na mBunscol in Leitrim.



Micheál MacThiarnáin (Liatroim) who has spearheaded the hurling drive in Leitrim schools

THE PROBLEM

This year in Leitrim, we decided to run a hurling initiative due to the small number of schools registering interest in hurling competitions (three schools out of 38). Feedback from schools suggested that the lack of hurling coaching available from the County Board and the cost of hurling equipment were factors affecting the uptake of hurling in the schools.



Hurling equipment ready to be dispatched to schools in Leitrim.

THE PLAN

We met with Martin Fogarty and Michael Carroll who are hugely involved with hurling development nationally and in Connacht respectively. Martin is national hurling development manager. Prior to that, Martin was principal of Foroda NS, Castlecomer, Co Kilkenny. Equipment (200 helmets, 200 hurls, and 200 sliotars) was bought and we made up six packs containing 30 of each. Each pack also contains the *Hurling Fun-Do* information pack which contains fun, easy-to-do skills and drills.

These kits will be sent to six schools for six-week 'sessions'. During this session, a hurling coach will visit the teachers once in the school to help them devise a six-week programme. This is designed to help make the school self-sufficient and not reliant on hurling coaches. We believe that everyone can be a hurling coach. After the session is over, all six schools will

come together and have a blitz, giving the children a chance to use their newly-learned skills, with other children who are at the same level as themselves, in a fun, non-competitive way. Schools do not pay to borrow these kits but have the option to buy them after the six weeks, should they choose to do so.

There will be three sessions between January and June 2018 and, with five sessions planned for the 2018-19 school year, we will have every school in the county trying hurling for six weeks for free; a feat we were told was impossible due to the lack of resources available in the county.

The seeds of a hurling revolution have been planted in Leitrim, thanks to the vision and can-do spirit of a small group of enthusiasts.

Leitrim schools can register their interest at cnmb.leitrim@gaa.ie or follow @cnmbleitrim on Twitter.



Getting in the swing in Leitrim

Cornmarket Cumann na mBunscol Awards 2018

The 2018 Cornmarket Cumann na mBunscol Awards will take place in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny, on Friday, 9 March.

"Once again, there is something to interest schools of all types, large, small, urban, rural, and we have tweaked the list of categories to respond to the feedback we get from teachers and Cumann na mBunscol activists", says Bernadette Ryan, chairperson of Allianz Cumann na mBunscol.

This year's awards attracted a very large number of entries. INTO president, John Boyle, will be among the invited guests on the night. Jim Fennelly, who



represents Cumann na mBunscol on Central Council and is principal of Church Hill NS, Cuffe's Grange, Co Kilkenny, has left no stone unturned to ensure that a

great weekend lies in store.

The National AGM of Cumann na mBunscol will take place the following morning at 11 a.m.

2017 prize winners Scoil Ursula from Sligo with past INTO president, Rosena Jordan, and Bernadette Ryan, Cumann na mBunscol, at the 2017 Cornmarket Awards.

SNA support

2018 guidelines, application forms and deadlines

The NCSE has published guidelines and application forms for schools for the 2018/19 school year. Applications for access to SNA support for pupils should be submitted using the application forms available on ncse.ie/guidelines-and-application-forms-for-schools-for-20182019

The NCSE aims to respond in May 2018 to valid applications for access to SNA support received by 28 February. SENOs will continue to process applications which are received after 28 February in the order in which the applications have been received.

Key dates

28 Feb 2018: Deadline date for receipt of applications for access to SNA support.

May 2018: Publication of SNA allocations on the NCSE website.

Sept 2018: Schools to confirm to their local SENOs that students allocated access to SNA support are attending school using

the Confirmation of Attendance form (NCSE Form 6).

Key dates for existing and new special classes

23 Feb 2018: Schools are asked to confirm in writing with their SENOs if they will be opening a special class in September 2018.

21 Mar 2018: Schools to submit notification of enrolment of students in special classes using NCSE Form 7 together with the required professional report(s) supporting the placement. Schools must provide professional reports which state the student's diagnosed disability and indicates the student's complex or severe learning needs that require the support of a special class setting.

17 April 2018: Deadline date for receipt of application forms for school transport in order to meet the DES date for Transport applications i.e. 27 April 2018.

For more information visit www.ncse.ie

Leargas celebrates 30 years of Erasmus



Glenda Mc Keown, Our Lady of Fatima Special School, Wexford, who was presented with an award for an e-twinning project at the Léargas Forum in Dublin Castle.

A Forum in December marked the 30th anniversary of the Erasmus programme by recognising the remarkable work done under the Erasmus and Erasmus+ programmes.

In his opening speech Léargas executive director Jim Mullin stated that it was now more important than ever for programmes such as Erasmus to encourage and support the values of European democracy and citizenship.

Erasmus+ applicants are encouraged to consider how their projects can connect to Europe's rich and diverse cultural heritage.

At the Forum a number of primary schools were presented with awards for their excellent eTwinning projects. These included:

- English NS, Galway.
- Gaelscoil de hÍde, Roscommon.
- Our Lady of Fatima Special School, Wexford.
- Scoil Mhuire Lourdes, Carrigaline Boys, Cork.
- St Michael's BNS, Galway.
- St Patrick's NS, Bruree, Limerick.

For more information on Erasmus+ visit www.leargas.ie or email clientservices@leargas.ie

Training for principals, chairpersons and independent assessors



Late last year and early this year a series of training seminars for interview board members required to implement the provisions of Circular 63/2017 (revised Leadership and Management circular) was organised by the INTO and CPSMA.

The seminars designed for principals,

chairpersons and independent assessors drew large attendances throughout the country.

Pictured are Ann McMahon, Margaret Bernard and Brother James Dormer who recently attended a joint INTO/CPSMA seminar in Limerick.

The BIG GROW aims to get 43,000 primary school pupils growing their own food

Primary schools across the country can apply now for a free Big Grow pack to be delivered to their school via innocentbiggrow.com. This year the pupils will learn how to grow peas, cress and spinach. Each Big Grow pack includes enough soil, growing pots, seeds for a class of 30 along with an expert food growing kit devised by GIY plus details on how to cook and eat the produce that each child has grown.

Studies show that children who grow their own food are more likely to eat fruits and vegetables and show higher levels of knowledge about nutrition. The children not only learn the science of growing, they also experience the joy of growing and eating their own food. GIY calls this 'Food Empathy', which is a deeper connection with food and is proven to lead to a healthier life long-term.

Once schools are registered they can keep a growing blog online and, every school that does receives a Big Grow certificate. The most engaged or the 'Best' Big Grow school will win a trip to Bloom for their class, a trip to Dublin Zoo and €500 worth of gardening equipment for the school; the winning school will be presented with their prizes at Bloom 2018.

Two runners up prizes of a €300 and a €200 GIY voucher are also up for grabs.

Visit innocentbiggrow.com to register for a free innocent & GIY Big Grow pack, sowing cups, compost, a teacher's

resource booklet which includes lots of fun and educational activities which complement the school curriculum, a wallchart to map weekly growing successes, veggie stickers and a Star Grower Badge for those top growers.



Helping to launch the national Big Grow initiative were Anna LeBlanc and Mia Steining from Senior Infants at St Sylvester's Infant School in Malahide, Dublin with INTO president John Boyle, school principal Sharon Dunne, Matthew Gavin from innocent Drinks and Founder of GIY Michael Kelly. The GIY and innocent Drinks Big Grow project enables school children across Ireland to grow their own food in the classroom this spring
PHOTO: Mark Stedman

Féilte 2018

The Teaching Council has announced that Féilte 2018 will take place in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, on Saturday, 6 October 2018.

Féilte is the Teaching Council's annual Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching

Excellence which celebrates the work of teachers. It gives teachers the opportunity to share this work with each other and with the wider public.

Further details on www.teachingcouncil.ie soon.

Congress report highlights rise in CEO pay and a widening pay gap

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has warned of "a growing wage gap that will inevitably lead to a rise in wider inequality" following publication of its annual survey of executive pay levels in the private sector *Because We're Worth It: The Truth About CEO Pay in Ireland*.

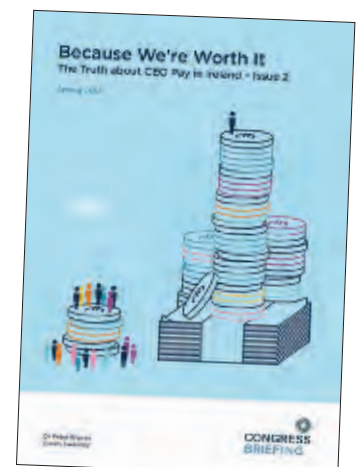
The annual survey – first published in 2017 – examines the remuneration for chief executives in 20 of the largest companies listed on the Irish Stock Exchange, along with CEO pay at the 12 largest commercial state companies.

The latest study has exposed extraordinary

pay differentials between top CEO pay and average earnings. In some instances, the study shows that it would take people on average earnings up to 270 years to earn what the CEO of some companies make in one year.

The report also reveals pay increases for some chief executives of up to 100%, between 2015 and 2016 and along with a near doubling of cash bonuses for some.

Download from www.ictu.ie/download/pdf/because_were_worth_it_ceo_pay_survey.pdf



Tips for planning holiday trips



Are you dreaming of escaping the cold Irish winter to a sunnier destination? Or maybe a city break is top of your to-do list for 2018. Whatever your plans, the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has some travel tips to help you when planning your trip.

Booking a package holiday

A package holiday is defined as a pre-arranged holiday at an inclusive price, which must last more than 24 hours or include an overnight stay and is usually booked through a travel agent or tour operator. It must also include at least two of the following:

- Transport.
- Accommodation.
- A tourist service or activity (for instance golf or hill-walking).

When you book a package holiday you enter into a contract with the tour operator or travel agent. It is their responsibility to make sure that your holiday runs smoothly. They should give you a written copy of your contract before you travel, with information such as the cost, destination, length of the holiday, itineraries of any excursions, and details of how to complain if something goes wrong. They should also give you any other relevant information, such as vaccination and passport or visa requirements. By law, all package holiday providers in Ireland must have arrangements in place so that if they go out of business your money and booking are protected.

Organising your own trip

You don't have the same protection if you book each element of your trip separately yourself, so it's important to be aware of possible issues that could impact on you. For example, if you are travelling for a particular event and it's cancelled, because you booked each part of your trip separately you would have to sort out each element yourself. This may involve paying to reschedule flights or losing money if you have to cancel accommodation. However, you still have some protections, for example if your holiday involves a ferry or flight you have

rights if there is a delay or cancellation.

Avoiding accommodation scams

When you are researching your accommodation, watch out for potential rental accommodation scams. This is where scammers visit a genuine holiday website offering places for rent; copy the photos, addresses and other information from various listings and then use this to put up a fake listing of their own. This is a scam to get you to pay the full rental cost or a large deposit upfront. Try to make sure a listing is real before you make a booking.

Only use a secure method when paying for the rental property online, such as a credit card or Paypal. If you rent through a genuine holiday website make sure you pay through that site (research online if you aren't sure it is genuine). If the contact for the rental property asks you to email them directly or encourages you to leave the site promising a better deal, don't do it as this could be a scam.

Renting a car

If you choose to rent a car while abroad make sure to check the website for the company's terms and conditions. Also, have a look at their Frequently Asked Questions section. If you rent a car in a different country and something goes wrong it can sometimes be difficult to get a resolution due to the distance and

language barriers. So, it is important to research the company before booking. Make sure you have enough insurance to meet the company's requirements. Also, when you are booking all charges might not be included – some may be payable when you collect the car, such as costs for extras like child seats, additional drivers, extra insurance etc. You may also need to have a credit card in order to pay a security deposit when you collect the car.

Getting travel insurance

It's always a good idea to consider taking out travel insurance. It can cover you against damaged or delayed luggage, cancelled flights etc. If you book a package holiday, travel agents and tour operators may sell travel insurance as part of the package but you do not have to buy their insurance. You may get better value by buying your travel insurance separately, or by taking out an annual travel insurance policy if you travel a lot.

If you have private health insurance, check your policy to see if you have cover for illness and injury abroad before you buy travel insurance and check that the cover is enough for you.

For more tips on travel visit the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission website at www.ccpc.ie





Health kick from the humble carrot

We are into a whole new year and new term with so many possibilities for new beginnings.

This month brings with it fresher days,

brighter skies and a whole new outlook.

Carrots are our theme this month. With their vibrant orange colour, versatility and antioxidant qualities when converted to beta carotene in the body, the humble carrot is an ideal vegetable to kick start some healthy living this term.



Moroccan Carrot Hummus

Hummus is such a great recipe to know and this gently spiced Moroccan version is delicious. Perfect as a dip with some crunchy raw vegetables or spread on crackers with soup or even as a healthy alternative to mayo in a wrap. The earthy flavours of the chickpeas are beautifully matched to the gentle warmth of the spices. Ideal for a chilly lunch time.



Ingredients – basic hummus

- ✳ 1 tin chickpeas (drained and rinsed)
- ✳ 1 tsp lemon juice
- ✳ 1 clove garlic
- ✳ 1 tbsp peanut butter or tahini
- ✳ 50 mls sunflower oil
- ✳ Few drops of water if too thick

For Moroccan Carrot Hummus – add in

- ✳ 1 carrot
- ✳ 1/2 tsp harissa paste or:
 - ✳ 2 tsp cumin ✳ 1/4 tsp ginger
 - ✳ 1/2 tsp curry powder ✳ 1/4 tsp salt
 - ✳ 1/2 tsp paprika ✳ 2 tbsp olive oil
 - ✳ 1/4 tsp coriander

- 1 Peel and chop the carrots. Place on a sheet of tin foil on an oven tray.
- 2 Sprinkle with the olive oil and harissa paste/spices. Roast for 45 mins-1 hour until tender and soft.
- 3 Make the hummus – blitz all the ingredients together in a food processor.
- 4 Add in roasted carrots and blitz again. For a deeper flavour add another 1/2 tsp cumin and paprika here.
- 5 Transfer to a bowl, chill and, when ready, drizzle with olive oil and serve with crackers.

Carrot Cake Muffins

These carrot cake muffins are incredibly moist, healthier than most coffee shop versions and are super simple to make too. This healthier version of a classic is made using half wholemeal flour and half white flour and they have less sugar than traditional recipes.

They freeze well and are divine with the cream cheese icing and topped with some chopped nuts.

This recipe makes 12 small muffins – each one a perfect portion to serve with a quick cuppa.

Ingredients

- ✳ 100 g self-raising flour
- ✳ 100 g wholemeal flour
- ✳ 1 tsp baking powder
- ✳ 1/2 tsp cinnamon (optional)
- ✳ Zest and juice 1/2 orange
- ✳ 3 tbsp sunflower oil
- ✳ 80 g yogurt – orange or vanilla (full fat)
- ✳ 1 egg
- ✳ 6 tbsp (90 g) brown sugar
- ✳ Pinch salt
- ✳ 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ✳ 1 large carrot, grated

For the icing

- ✳ 200 g icing sugar
- ✳ 25 g full fat cream cheese
- ✳ 2 tbsp orange juice



Method

- 1 Line the muffin tin with papers and preheat the oven to 180°C.
- 2 Using a food processor or grater – grate the carrot.
- 3 In a bowl mix the dry ingredients – flour, baking powder, salt and sugar.
- 4 In a jug, mix together the wet ingredients – oil, juice and zest, vanilla, egg and yogurt.
- 5 Combine both and stir in the carrot.
- 6 Scoop into the muffin cases and bake for 25 mins until golden brown. Cool fully on a wire tray.
- 7 For the icing, combine the juice, cream cheese and icing sugar and smooth over the muffins when cool. Sprinkle muffins with some chopped nuts.

Foodoppi is a creative educational platform which takes an extraordinary approach to food and STEM education that has proven to be an effective way to foster positive relationships with food while exciting children about learning and gaining STEM skills.

AISLING LARKIN has a degree in Education from Trinity, spent 10 years working in a DEIS school in inner city Dublin, has a first class M.Sc in Food Product Design and Culinary Innovation and



set up Ireland's premier children's cookery school at the Cliff at Lyons a few years ago.

LOUISE LENNOX is a top chef and food broadcaster on TV and radio here in Ireland and has a background in nutrition and children's food

media production. Aisling and Louise joined forces a few years ago and created Foodoppi.



Why Seville?

Choose Seville for history and culture. Choose Seville for tapas. Choose Seville for sunshine and flamenco and wonder what has taken you so long to visit this stunning city. So many of us opt for the familiar in Madrid or Barcelona but this Spanish city has more than enough to keep you occupied for a weekend and, if it's good enough for Christopher Columbus, it's good enough for me.

History

Seville is the capital of Andalusia, the region from where Columbus set off for the New World, some 500+ years ago. The story goes that, after a falling out with the Spanish monarchy following his travels, Columbus swore he would not be buried on Spanish soil. The tomb in Seville cathedral, where Columbus' remains are reportedly held, is raised aloft by four figures, which means that, if he is in there, he's not on Spanish soil. Technically.

From ninth century Tartessian tribal settlers, to reigning Roman rulers, to the visibly influential Moorish conquerors and the Golden Age of New World trade, history is overflowing in this city.

There are walking tours of the Barrio de Santa Cruz in the evenings that fill you in on the reasons for the narrow streets and the city bumping right up to the walls of the royal palace, as well as showing off examples of the remains of Roman columns and tradesmen's mill wheels embedded into building walls. I bought a ticket at the visitor centre near the cathedral for €20, which included a night time walking tour of the barrio as well as 'skip the queue' and guide access to the Alcazar the next day.

The magnificent Alcazar is a must see. It displays Islamic architecture mixed with that of its following Christian rulers. A melting pot of tales.

Views

Check out the Torre Giralda for



Torre Giralda



The Alcazar

great views of the city. This tower is part of Seville cathedral, the third largest cathedral in Europe – maybe the world – and certainly the largest Gothic cathedral. The ascent over brick floored ramps makes climbing this tower a cinch. Sort of. It does get busy so try to get there as early as possible. It is worth noting that the cathedral is closed to tourists on Sundays as mass is in progress so the tower and church are only open from 2:30 p.m. Your €8 ticket for the cathedral includes the Giralda. If you are unfortunate to be there when opening times are restricted and you are on a schedule, try the Metropol Parasol for a cheaper, but nonetheless, stunning panoramic view. Take the lift to the roof for €3 and enjoy Seville from above.

Film locations

Seville is a popular spot for production companies to use as film locations for TV shows and movies. A quick 'Google' will reveal that *Star Wars* and *Game of Thrones* both used this city to illustrate other worlds and far-flung lands. It's easy to see why, as the Alcazar itself transported me to Morocco with its tiling and

architecture and it was used as the land of Dorne in the US drama *Game of Thrones*.

Bring your camera and indulge in some people watching in the squares by the cathedral before strolling to any number of delectable tapas spots around the city. A local favourite, which serves no frills plates and is often packed, is La Bodega de Santa Cruz. Look out for the columns outside that earned it the name 'Las Colomnas' for an immersive experience. Order at the bar elbow-to-elbow with the locals and make sure to try the salmorejo.

Flamenco

They say no visit to Andalusia is complete without a flamenco show and Los Gallos Tablao Flamenco is highly regarded. At €35 a ticket, you can also get tapas here if you wish and watch these talented dancers and musicians strut their stuff on stage in shows from 8:30 p.m. – 10 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. – midnight. For cheaper options check out Museo del Baile Flamenco or La Casa del Flamenco.

CIARA McNALLY teaches in Greystones, Co Wicklow. For more information on Seville visit Ciara's blog at www.mysuitcasesdiaries.org.



Teaching matters

Articles and opinions on primary teaching, with tips and ideas for the classroom

Maud Gonne MacBride 1866-1953



*'With beauty like a tightened bow, a kind
That is not natural in an age like this,
Being high and solitary and most stern?
Why, what could she have done, being
what she is?
Was there another Troy for her to burn?'*
W.B. Yeats *No Second Troy*

January marked the anniversary of the passing of the poet in 1939. Half a century earlier, the leading figure of the literary revival, co-founder of the Abbey Theatre, social and political commentator and one of Ireland's most prominent writers met the woman with whom he would remain inextricably linked, Maud Gonne MacBride.

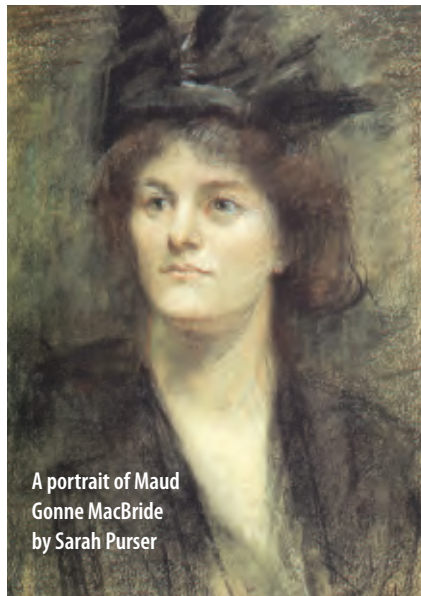
As his muse and greatest (yet unrequited) love, she inspired many of his most memorable works including *Cathleen ní Houlihan* and *He Wishes for the Cloths of Heaven*. She stated that her rejection of the poet was in fact a great act, as his frustration resulted in such revered writings. However, Maud Gonne MacBride was not just a central figure in the life of the poet, but also in a changing Ireland.

This article explores the life of this literary muse, political revolutionary and social campaigner, who is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Born near Surrey, Maud Gonne was the daughter of English parents; her father was of Irish descent. Motherless due to TB by the age of four, she arrived in Ireland as a teen when her father was re-posted in the army.

It is reported that, one evening on the way to a hunt ball in Co Donegal, she passed by the scene of an eviction. This harsh event prompted her into action as a social campaigner and her political interest grew through her meetings with the Fenian John O'Leary.

Her earliest actions included protests against tenant evictions in the 1890s and campaigning for the release of Irish political prisoners. She later toured



A portrait of Maud Gonne MacBride
by Sarah Purser

America and Europe to raise awareness of conditions in Ireland and the need for self-governance. This was also the period in which Yeats made the first of several marriage proposals.

As a woman, Maud was excluded from existing Nationalist organisations, and so she established Inghinidhe na hÉireann (later merging with Cumann na mBan). This organisation aimed for complete Irish independence, both culturally and politically, launched the first Irish women's newspaper, *Bean na hÉireann*, and supported the poverty-stricken of Dublin by distributing school dinners.

Maud married Major John MacBride in 1903 with whom she had a son, Séan; their marriage dissolved two years later. She remained in France at this time, where she raised Séan and her daughter from a previous relationship, Iseult. Iseult also served as a muse to Yeats and later received a proposal of marriage from the ageing poet when it became clear that Maud would never marry him.

Séan became active in Irish politics. He was IRA chief of staff, a government

minister, founder of Amnesty International and winner of the Lenin and Nobel Peace Prizes.

Along with other leaders of the Rising, John MacBride was executed in May 1916. Maud was not present in Dublin during the Rising but, on her return, she continued her involvement in political life.

She was arrested in 1918, along with Countess Markievicz, for being part of the 'German Plot'. Here it was alleged that many nationalists and members of Sinn Féin were in an anti-British alliance with Germany.

She opposed the Treaty and with others, such as Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, organised the Women's Prisoners' Defence League to help prisoners' families during the Civil War. Maud was later imprisoned for protesting against the Free-State and, whilst in Kilmainham, embarked on hunger strike. Throughout the years that followed, she continued to campaign for release of civil war prisoners.

In 1938, she published her memoir, *A Servant of the Queen*, and in later life stated that she was a "prisoner of old age, waiting for release".

The woman to whom Yeats wrote, "I have spread my dreams under your feet: Tread softly because you tread on my dreams", outlived many of her generation and died in 1953 aged 87.

MICHELLE O'CONNOR, Education Officer and Teacher Liaison at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, Finglas Road, Dublin 11.

This month's article illustrates the cross-curricular learning opportunities that are available at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, where narratives and experiences that are rich in literature and history can be explored. Glasnevin Cemetery Museum offers tours that are unique and tailored to students' interests.

Please contact the Education Department at glasnevincemetery.ie, tel: 01 8826550, email: education@glasnevintrust.ie to learn more.

INTO members might have noticed an almost life-size photograph of Maude Gonne MacBride in the Teachers' Club in Parnell Square. The photograph was taken by Alfred Werner, President of the Photographic Society of Ireland from 1896 to 1898. To secure this remarkable picture, Mr Werner had another PSI member, J.V. Robinson,

who was world-famous for designing photographic equipment, construct a special camera about the size of a small furniture van. To operate the camera, it was necessary for two people to enter the camera and move the glass negative into focus. The photograph won a premier award at the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893.

Safer Internet Day 2018

SHIELD ACTIVATED

Safer Internet Day (SID) is an EU wide initiative to promote a safer internet for all users, especially young people. Promoted in Ireland by the PDST Technology in Education and Webwise, it will be celebrated on **Tuesday, 6 February**. Over 70,000 young people across Ireland joined the celebrations last year. 2018 will be even bigger.

How can I get involved?

Step 1: Get connected with Safer Internet Day

Keep up to date with all the latest news and activities planned for Safer Internet Day 2018. Check out saferinternetday.ie or join us on social media.
Facebook: facebook.com/Webwise
Instagram: [WebwiseIreland](https://www.instagram.com/WebwiseIreland)
Twitter: [@Webwise_Ireland](https://twitter.com/Webwise_Ireland)

Step 2: Plan your activities for Safer Internet Day

There are lots of ideas available on www.saferinternetday.ie. Here are some activities to help get you started.

Activity 1 – Positive messages campaign

Counter cyber-bullying with a positive messages campaign. Create colourful anti-bullying posters or an uplifting thoughts noticeboard using the #Up2Us interactive poster making kit. The #Up2Us handbook, is available free to order or download at: www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources/.



Create a Positive Messages campaign using the UP2US Anti-Bullying Poster Kit.

Activity 2 – Do the check

From managing your online reputation to dealing with cyber-bullying, children can face many different online safety issues. Take some time out with your pupils to go through some safety tips. Our checklists are a great place to start – www.watchyourspace.ie/checklists/.

Activity 3 – The Granny Rule: which photos are ok to share?

Have young people take out their phones and have a look at the last photos they took with friends. Then have the students use the share or delete checklist (available in the #Up2Us handbook) to help decide if these photos should be shared publicly online. "If you wouldn't show a picture to your granny then it probably shouldn't be online!"

Step 3: Get parents involved

Webwise provide supports to help parents talk with confidence to their children about the benefits and risks of the online environment, including the *Parent's Guide to A Better Internet* available free to order or download at www.webwise.ie/parents/.

Step 4: Order your free teacher and parents' resources

Webwise has a number of primary school level resources which contain lesson plans, worksheets and animated videos that promote safe online communication and raise awareness of internet safety concerns.

Primary based resources include *MySelfie*, a guide to cyberbullying and *Webwise Primary Teachers' Handbook*, an introduction to internet safety. These resources are all free to order or download at: www.webwise.ie/teachers/resources/



MySelfie and the Wider World Teaching Resource.

Step 5: Order your free Safer Internet Day wristbands

Go to www.saferinternetday.ie/schools/share-your-plans/ to share your plans for Safer Internet Day and receive your free Safer Internet Day wristbands and to get featured on our event map.

Step 6: Share your SID celebrations

Show your support for Safer Internet Day by taking a picture showing how you will celebrate Safer Internet Day 2018.

Share your Safer Internet Day photos using #BeInCtrl on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Win a gig in your school!

To celebrate Safer Internet Day 2018, Webwise are giving away a prize to one lucky school or youth group.

We are giving you the chance to win an exclusive gig from Sean and Conor Price in your school. Sean and Conor rose to fame on the latest season of *The X Factor*. This exclusive prize includes a meet and greet with the lads.



Sean and Conor Price perform on The X Factor.

All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning is share a photo of what you are doing for Safer Internet Day 2018 using the hashtag #BeInCtrl, or upload it to saferinternetday.ie

For more ideas and information visit: webwise.ie, saferinternetday.ie or watchyourspace.ie

Jane McGarrigle and Aideen O'Sullivan, Webwise.



How prepared are schools for the medical emergencies of asthma and anaphylaxis?

The number of children presenting in Irish primary schools with medical needs is on the rise. But how prepared are our schools to deal with potential medical emergencies? While we all hope we will never have to encounter them, how confident are primary teachers in their ability to deal with these if they were to occur? These were questions I set out to investigate in 2017.

A second factor behind this research was that, in October 2015, the Medicinal Products (Prescription and Control of Supply) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations 2015 were passed into law. This amendment to the law allows for certain organisations, including schools, to hold in stock their own supply of specific medications which could be administered to a student in an emergency situation by specifically trained members of staff. The medications in question include salbutamol for the treatment of an asthma attack, adrenaline pens for treatment of anaphylaxis and glucagon for the treatment of hypoglycaemia (severely low blood sugar) in diabetics.

At the time the research was conducted, no schools had yet registered with the HPRA (Health Products Regulatory Authority) to partake in this scheme and, at the end of 2017, a secondary school in Tipperary was the only school on the HPRA's register. This is completely unsurprising given that schools were never informed by the DES or Department of Health of this change of law.

I was curious to discover if teachers could envisage school policies changing

in light of this legislation, if they would be willing to take on the role of medicines administrator in their school and what reservations they would have regarding any related policy changes. For practical purposes, my investigations focused on the medical emergencies of asthma and anaphylaxis in particular.

More than 200 teachers in every county in the Republic of Ireland responded to a questionnaire. The majority were principals or deputy principals.

The results showed 39% and 23% of respondents had never received any form of training in the treatment of asthma and anaphylaxis respectively. Of the respondents who had a child in their class with asthma, 30% had never received training of any kind on this condition. Twelve percent of respondents teaching children with anaphylaxis had never received training, formal or informal, on anaphylaxis.

However, 77% of all respondents agreed that schools should have teachers that are formally trained in the administration of emergency medication for these conditions. Only 7% disagreed.

The average confidence level of all respondents in treating asthma was 51%, while the average confidence level of all respondents in treating anaphylaxis was 44%. There was no significant difference in confidence between those that had undergone formal versus informal training in responding to either of these emergencies, which does call into question the efficacy of formal training received.

Teachers in management roles were, on average, 8% more confident than

other teachers in responding to both emergencies. This could possibly be linked to the fact that principals and deputy principals reported being more familiar with their schools' emergency medicines administration policies than other teachers. (See Tables 1 and 2)

Table 1 – Average confidence in treating asthma with respect to role and training status

| | Overall confidence | Confidence of those that received any form of training | Confidence of those that never received training |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Totals | 51% | 62% | 33% |
| Principals/ Vice principals | 54% | 64% | 35% |
| Teachers | 46% | 59% | 31% |

Table 2 – Average confidence in treating anaphylaxis with respect to role and training status

| | Overall confidence | Confidence of those that received any form of training | Confidence of those that never received training |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|--|--|
| Totals | 44% | 52% | 18% |
| Principals/ Vice principals | 47% | 53% | 21% |
| Teachers | 39% | 49% | 16% |

With regards to the new legislation, 57% of respondents said they could envisage themselves taking on a role as an emergency medicines administrator in their school, with only a fifth of those questioned saying

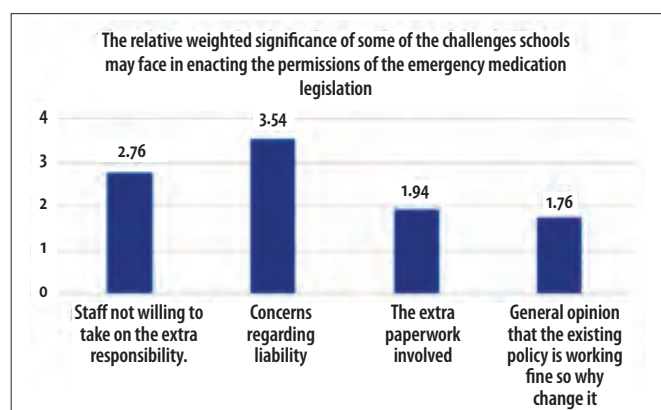


Figure 1 – Some challenges schools might face in enacting the permissions of the new emergency medicines legislation, showing perceived significance

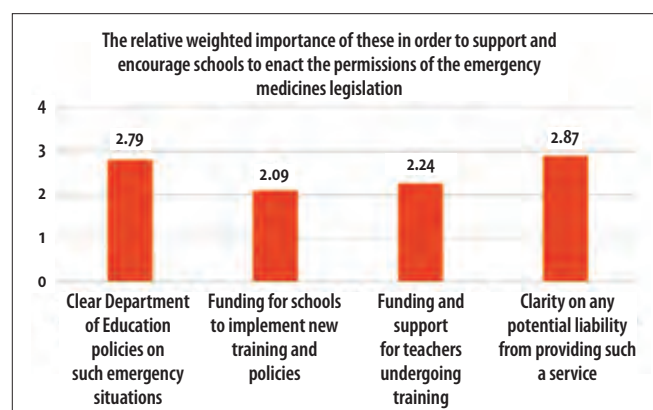


Figure 2 – Supports that may be important to encourage schools enact the permissions of the new emergency medicines legislation, showing perceived importance

that they definitely would not.

Several respondents commented that a teacher's role is to teach and not to administer medications, while others expressed their belief that it essential that these medications are available in schools, and that all staff should receive professional training on their administration for the purposes of student safety and inclusion.

In light of the 2015 legislation, 85% of those questioned believed that their schools' medicines administration policies would 'possibly' or 'definitely' change. However, these changes would not be without their challenges.

The main challenges schools may face in enacting the permissions of the legislation were identified as 'concerns regarding liability' and 'extra responsibility' (see figure 1). Others included:

- ✎ The extra paperwork involved.
- ✎ General opinion that the existing policy is working fine so why change it?
- ✎ Appropriate storage facilities for medications.
- ✎ Medication expiry dates.
- ✎ The cost of training and medication.
- ✎ Arrangements for when trained staff are absent.
- ✎ The burden of having to re-train regularly.
- ✎ The responsibility to care for the other students in their class during an emergency.

The main supports respondents felt schools would need were 'clarity on liability' and 'clear policies' (see figure 2). Others included the need for:

- ✎ Comprehensive training and ongoing support.
- ✎ Training with substitute cover provided free of charge.
- ✎ Safe storage facilities.
- ✎ Relevant medication to be supplied

for free to participating schools.

- ✎ Creation of a standard form/letter of indemnity for parents.

As part of the research, a policy review of 20 administration of medication policies was conducted. The policies of 20 randomly selected schools were chosen for the review. Some interesting trends were noted.

- ✎ 60% of policies stated that teachers should exercise the standard of care of a 'reasonable and prudent parent'.
- ✎ 60% stated that teachers should 'do no more than is obviously necessary to relieve extreme distress or prevent further and otherwise irreparable harm'.
- ✎ 35% stated that any staff member who is willing to administer medications should do so 'under strictly controlled guidelines in the belief that administration is safe'.

While these statements are often added in line with legal and union guidance, and do serve to ultimately protect teachers, they also raise some questions and so could potentially delay action when time is of the essence. For example, in an emergency situation, what would the exact actions be of a 'reasonable and prudent parent'? How do we know what is 'no more than obviously necessary' to 'relieve extreme distress'? How familiar are all staff with the 'strictly controlled guidelines' under which they must act?

Also of note in the policy review were the following statements:

- ✎ Only 30% of the policies stated that the board of management would make provisions for the administration of medication in the event of absence of the authorised person.
- ✎ 25% of policies put the responsibility on the parent to check each morning if the authorised teacher(s) are in school each morning.

It could be regarded as quite impractical to put the onus on parents to check this each morning. Moreover, the potential for absences of authorised staff highlights the importance of having as many staff members as possible trained in emergency medicines administration.

While a teacher's role is undoubtedly to teach, the students under our care are increasingly presenting with medical needs, which may, occasionally, result in medical emergencies during school hours. Although we all hope that we will never be in this unenviable position, we must equip ourselves to be able to respond promptly and effectively should such a situation arise.

Quick action is critical in these situations and the treatments available are safe and effective.

However, we need to increase teacher confidence in their ability to respond if needed through robust and regular training and support and clear, unambiguous school policies.

With regards to the 2015 legislation, by the school holding their own supply of these emergency medications, teachers would be assured of the availability, viability and location of these life-saving medications at all times, should they be needed. However, the concerns of teachers with regards to liability and the provision of both educational and financial support for schools engaging with the new legislation would have to be thoroughly addressed.

Perhaps this new legislation could be a catalyst to a review of medicines administration policies and related practices in Irish primary schools.

ELAINE O'DONOGHUE is a teacher in Scoil Ghobnatan, Mallow, and is also a community pharmacist. She received the Hibernia College Research Prize in 2017 for her work on this topic.

Globalisation

Since the seventies there has been a co-ordinated campaign to concentrate a large bulk of the wealth on the planet into the hands of a tiny majority. So successful has this campaign been that today the six richest people in the world have the same wealth as the poorest half of the world's population – 3,500,000,000 people. The top 1% have more money than the other 99%.

Is this financial inequality positive or negative for society? Joseph Stiglitz, in *The Price of Inequality* argues that the price we are paying is “an economic system that is less stable and less efficient, with less growth, and a democracy that has been put into peril”.

In his opinion, this inequality puts the fundamental rights that we enjoy as citizens in danger.

When we, as citizens, feel powerless in the face of this economic juggernaut, our natural instinct is to switch off and concentrate on the parts of our lives that we feel we can control. Thus we leave our very democracy in the hands of big business and vested interests.

So, what possibly could ordinary people do?

Government level

At government level, Ireland should nationalise at least one bank and ensure that its ethos is lender-friendly and tax compliant. This is not an unusual or radical step. Many of our European neighbours, such as Germany and France have large non-profit banks whose purpose is to lend money at realistic rates. An excellent blueprint is our credit union system.

Our government should take their commitments to our shared environment seriously. If not altered, the profit-at-all-costs markets will make our planet uninhabitable for most of its people in a few decades. The Paris Accord must be strengthened and compliance assured.

Individuals

Individuals as consumers need to continue to educate themselves as to the environmental and ethical effects of the products they purchase. For example, would a primary school teacher knowingly wear clothes that were manufactured by children or by workers employed in death traps? Can we continue to purchase vast quantities of food needlessly wrapped in plastics? Will we, as tax payers, consume vast quantities of coffee from vendors who blatantly avoid paying a fraction the taxes that they should?

Should workers ignore pension funds invested in the armaments industry or other unethical industries? Investments

Piketty argues that “the main force pushing toward reduction in inequality has always been the diffusion of knowledge and the diffusion of education.”

Ireland's record of educational equality is quite mixed and can be seen in our privately run pre-schools, underfunded primary schools, socially divided secondary schools and elitist universities. Funding to fully support lifelong learning, from cradle to grave, needs to be prioritised by legislators.

Land and property

In Ireland 90% of wealth is held in land and properties, thus fuelling inequality, homelessness and making it almost

impossible for workers earning the average industrial wage to buy a home. A land tax, levied on land, not property, would eliminate land hoarding and dramatically increase the incentive to use land efficiently. This would make more land available for development and substantially reverse the dereliction that afflicts our cities. This development should be carried out

primarily by the state to build houses for all.

Paying the price

Benefits from the global economic system in which we live are evident but come at a terrible price. Those who manufacture the cheap items we consume usually pay that price. The fragile environment we inhabit pays the price. Our increasingly unequal democratic system pays the price.

Sadly, we have learned that even we in the protected west are not immune from the ravages of greed. It is not too late to bring about the change we need through our democratic, financial, political, trade union and educational systems. Neo liberalism is failing 99% of the world's population. It is time for a change.

FEARGAL BROUGHAM, incoming INTO vice president



such as these can be ethically monitored. Ordinary citizens are increasingly pressuring companies into adopting more ethical practises. Fair trade, although not perfect, is an example of how we can shape the economic environment in which we live.

Globally

Think global, act local applies equally to countries. Before it is too late, nation states need to unite to force all tax havens (including Ireland) out of the global economic system.

Global trade deals, such as TTIP, must be citizen proofed to ensure that the rights of business don't trample on the right of citizens. Inter-state dispute systems must be transparent and open.

Education

Increased education funding can be part of the solution in making our society fairer.



A real writer

Children's writer John Quinn reflects on two decades of participation in the 'Writers in Schools' scheme

My first book was published over 25 years ago. It was a children's book, *The Summer of Lily and Esme*, the story of a shy introverted boy's relationship with two old ladies. It was well received and, in 1992, won the Bisto Children's Book of the Year Award. It was the beginning of a wonderful on-going adventure with my 'coming-of-age' book being published last year.

Seven of those books are children's fiction, ranging from a Viking adventure to the triumphs and trials of a diminutive spectacle-wearing girl who has a passion for Gaelic football and a dream to play in Croke Park.

A great boon of writing for children has been the privilege of participating in the 'Writers in Schools' scheme for nigh on 20 years. Through this wonderful scheme, funded by the Arts Council and administered by Poetry Ireland, writers for children are invited into the classroom to meet and talk with children, demystify the process of writing, help them realise the power of language and, hopefully, light a creative spark or two among them.

To date, over half a million children and their teachers have availed of the opportunity of having a writer in their classroom.

For me, the journey has been a constant source of delight. As a former teacher, I relish the opportunity to return to the classroom for a three-hour visit. Children challenge you with their innate curiosity; they charge you with their honesty. The writer in the classroom experience is a two-way stretch.

So what happens?

Each writer has his/her own approach, but over the years I have developed my own patter to bring the children with me in discovering what a writer is and what writing means.

First, you need to be a **sponge**. Absorb as much as you can into that amazing piece of machinery between your ears. How? Listen! Look! Watch! Read! Keep your eyes and ears open. Be observant. Be a sponge.

Next you need to be a **magpie** and

collect ideas and information. Where do you find those? From books, computers, teachers. So read, watch, ask! You also need to collect words. So read, read, read! It's not about big words – it's about finding the right word.

I read a little piece showing how I too am a good magpie. Where I live in Galway, hurling is the favourite game. A

Children challenge you with their innate curiosity; they charge you with their honesty. The writer in the classroom experience is a two-way stretch.

man once told me how he used to practise shooting when he was young and I used it in my novel *Duck and Swan* – the story of a boy (Duck) who runs away from a home in Dublin and ends up in Galway where he discovers hurling:

"Now," Tom said, straightening the ladder against the turf-rick, "take 20 paces back from here. What you have to do is take a shot and drive the sliotar under the bottom rung. Then between the first and second rungs and so on."

"Aw, come on," Duck protested.

"The only thing is, if you miss any one of them, you have to start at the bottom again!"

"You must be joking!"

"Go on, give it a try. It will sharpen up your shooting no end."

Duck shook his head and took a shot, just to please the old man. It was well wide of the mark.

"Come on now. Concentrate!" Tom said.

Duck gritted his teeth and tried again and again. He finally found the range.

"Up the ladder with you now!"

Duck gave a loud whoop as the very next shot sailed between the first and second rungs. However the next shot missed the ladder altogether and Duck had to start all over again.

(*Duck and Swan*)

The third thing you need to be is a **daydreamer** but not all the time! You have to listen to the teacher, read stuff, write stuff and learn. But it's good to daydream some of the time, using the wonderful gift of imagination. A ten second exhortation to go 'wherever you want' brings them anywhere and everywhere – Croke Park (captaining the county team), 'Chocolateland', the jungle, RDS (riding my pony to victory), outer space, Formula One driving, Anfield, in my granny's kitchen, at home with PJ Murphy, drawing in the bales...

You need **curiosity** which is a good thing. The day you learned the word 'why' was probably the greatest day of your life because, with this little word, you could find out lots of things.

And lastly, writers are **wonderful** people. They wonder at a lot. They suppose a lot. They think "What if ...?" I set a scene for the children.

"You're on the way home from school. An old lady comes out of the local shop, laden with bags of shopping. She lives out of town. It's raining. No-one offers her a lift Who is she? What has she got in the bags? Why will no-one offer her a lift? Imagine! Be wonderful. Make up your own story. Let yourself go."

Slowly the answers come. She's a witch (bags of ingredients for her brew!), a disguised bank robber/terrorist/alien, a catwoman (with 40 tins of cat food). Wonderful, indeed, but the most amazing suggestion came from a nine-year old boy:

"She's a widow who lives alone. She seems cranky because she chases away children who steal from her orchard, but she's not really cranky."

"That's good, but why has she so much shopping?"

He sits down, raises his hand five minutes later.

"Her husband has died and she misses him. She pretends he's still alive and cooks a beautiful meal and a cake to bring up to him in bed"

And finally, a torrent of questions from them.

Where did you get the idea for *Duck and Swan*? Do you ever get stuck? How long does it take to write a book? What's your favourite book? Do you make loads of money?

The last one gives me the chance to explain the 'Royalty' system but also to produce a now-tattered letter (typed) that I received from Brendan (age 12), many years ago:

"I have read your three books and really loved them. They were very visual. My

home-tuition teacher read them to me. Even though I am blind and have Spina Bifida, I really love books and yours are the greatest. I'd really like to meet you some time"

The poor lad, I thought. I really must visit him. I did – and how wrong I was. One of the happiest children I have ever met, full of chat and totally loved by his parents and his big sisters. If no-one else but Brendan had bought and read my books, wasn't it worth writing them and publishing them for him alone? The fact that a story of mine could give so much enjoyment to a blind boy in a wheelchair – what more satisfaction could I want? That's why I write – not for 'loads of money'.

'Writers in Schools' has taken me all over the 26 counties and there has been a welcome in every school – from teachers who welcome a different voice

and from the children who want to meet a 'real writer'.

The welcome is universal, from the huge urban school like St Mark's SNS in Springfield, Tallaght, with children representing close on 50 ethnic origins to the tiny rural school like Grange NS, a two-teacher school at a crossroads in Co Roscommon. And many more

In the end, it's all about being among schoolchildren – savouring their wonder, their innocence, their delight. Hopefully when I am gone, they will try hard to be sponges, magpies, daydreamers

And of course, it's about the teachers too – especially the enthusiastic 30-somethings who greet me with – "Oh! *Lily and Esme!* That was my favourite book as a child!"

JOHN QUINN. 'Writers in Schools' can be contacted at writersinschools@poetryireland.ie



Think of potatoes ... NOW!

This year, c. two million primary school children in the UK will take part in a very large school-based growing project called *Grow Your Own Potatoes* in order to get children acquainted with every aspect of this useful vegetable. See growyourownpotatoes.org.uk.

Wouldn't it be amazing if every school in Ireland got involved in something similar! A school garden is not necessary for growing potatoes. All a teacher requires is a small budget (c. €30) to buy some growing containers, compost or compost and soil and early seed potatoes.

Potatoes are wonderful. Cramped with vitamins and minerals such as vitamin C, thiamine, folic acid and potassium, eating them regularly ensures a balanced diet. Contrary to some beliefs, they are not high in fat.

When starting a school garden, it is often a good idea to grow potatoes with every class to generate confidence in growing. It is difficult to fail with this venture!

However, timing is everything. The potato year begins in late January/early February with the chitting of first earlies. Chitting potatoes at this time of year gives them a head-start and ensures a harvest in June.

Buy certified seed potatoes from the local garden centre or online – 2.5 kg is sufficient for one class. There are many varieties nowadays but it is hard to beat the tried and trusted Home Guard. However, it is worth trying out a variety in the school and comparing taste in June.

Open the bag immediately after purchase and place them with the side having most 'eyes' upwards in egg cartons. 'Eyes' are the buds or growing points on the tuber and from these sprouts grow. Place the egg cartons containing the seed potatoes in a part of

the classroom that is not near a radiator or getting full sun such as a window sill. Do nothing more with them until they are well-sprouted around mid-March. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-feb-seed-potatoes.html

Decide now what type of container you are going to use to grow the potatoes. If you have a raised bed, lay a 10cm deep mulch of school-made compost or manure or vegetable compost on top of it now and cover with black polythene. From now until March the earthworms will work on this, turning it into lovely fine humus and also feeding and aerating the soil in the process. This is the 'no-dig' gardening approach in action and it's becoming very fashionable!

If you don't have a raised bed you could use either strong hessian sacks or potato planters. Be forewarned! Thin, cheap hessian sacks are useless because they will rot. Excellent recycled sacks can be obtained from ReCreate in Ballymount, Dublin. Teachers can access a huge range of materials here for art and projects after payment of a small membership fee. See www.recreate.ie

Planters are available from garden centres, some hardware stores and online. See www.thegardenshop.ie or www.quickcrop.ie for examples, but shop around for best value! Planters and bags only take four seed potatoes so you will need approximately six for your 2.kg of seeds.

Around St Patrick's Day is the traditional time to sow early potatoes in Ireland. When you are ready, place small drainage stones or pieces of broken earthenware pots in the bottom of the planter or bag and fill to 10cm-15cm deep

with either multipurpose compost, multipurpose compost plus soil, school compost plus soil. To conserve bogs some growers always use peat-free, multi-purpose compost.

If you wish you could use the bags or planters to set up a fair test in the garden. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-mar-potato-growth.html for instructions on how to do this.

Place four potatoes on the growing medium and cover with roughly 10 cm of medium. Water and leave to drain before placing the containers in a sunny place.

If you are growing in a prepared raised bed sow the seeds with their sprouting end upwards in holes c. 10-5cm deep and 30 cm apart. (Use two sticks and twine to get a straight line). The rows should be 45cm apart. That means that you will manage to sow two rows (or c.12 seeds) in a conventional 2m x 1m bed. See www.schoolearthed.ie/paddys-school-garden/video-mar-early-potatoes.html for video on sowing and also www.quickcrop.ie/learning/video/potatoes.

When the potato stalks in the containers reach 10cm, fill around them with more of the growing medium and continue doing this until the medium is c. 5cm from the top of the container. This process is called 'earthing-up the potatoes' and ensures bigger yields and prevents potatoes from turning green which renders them poisonous. If you are using a bed, earth up around the stalks. This process will result in a V-shaped mound. If frost threatens in the meantime, cover the plants with fleece which can be obtained in a hardware store or garden centre.

Keep the plants watered but don't overwater. The growing medium should



Potatoes growing in Scoil Mochua, Celbridge, Co Kildare.



Sprouting potatoes.
Photo: Laura O'Hare.



Dig for potatoes in June.



be damp but not saturated in water.

When the flowers fade on the stalks in June, the potatoes can be lifted. See growyourownpotatoes.org.uk, www.potato.ie and www.bordbia.ie for excellent ideas on cooking the potatoes and also www.potato.ie/recipe-categories/new-potato-recipes. Have a potato party in the school! The former website has lots of background information on potatoes, lesson plans, worksheets, PowerPoints, recipes, videos etc.

When the potatoes are harvested, sunflowers or hardy annuals can be planted or sown in the empty bed in order to suppress weeds over the summer holidays. The sunflower plants should be grown indoors in May in biodegradable pots made from toilet roll or paper towel cardboard tubes.

Compost the stalks if your potatoes are disease-free.

PADDY MADDEN is a Heritage in Schools Specialist. See www.heritageinschools.ie. He currently lectures part-time in CICE and occasionally in Froebel. He is a co-founder of SEED. See www.schoolearthed.ie



Potato fair test, varying soil and weighing results



Results of potato growing fair-test 2014

| Growing medium | Grms |
|------------------------------|------|
| Soil sand peat-free compost | 1525 |
| Soil sand dung | 400 |
| Soil sand home-made compost | 1025 |
| Soil sand (control) | 250 |
| Soil sand peat-based compost | 1150 |



A nicer yard coat

An acrostic poem strikes a chord in January

The blow up Santa that Teacher forgot to put away is sagging in a corner. The tip of Teacher's nose is cold and her feet are freezing. Her classroom, unheated over the Christmas, is taking its time to warm up. Shivering, she scans the writing topics for January. Topic number one – A shopping list – reminds her of the consumer frenzy she indulged in over Christmas. It has left her somewhat fiscally challenged. Shopping lists are the last

thing she
wants

to think about right now. New Year resolutions? 2017's resolution to get her finances in order hasn't exactly worked out. An acrostic poem entitled January?

Moments later, the word January is up on the whiteboard. Every child has a pencil and all are engaged in the task in hand. Once again, Teacher is regretting September's promise to the children to match them poem for poem. Nibbling on a pencil from the 'borrow me' box on her table, she ponders.

'J' is for ... 'Jam'? Casting an eye over the poems nearest to her, she sees that she is not the only one considering the jam option. She pulls herself up. She is the educator here, the one responsible for ensuring that these young minds reach their potential. Her 'J' should be for something that will expand the children's vocabulary. Looking out the window for inspiration, a jet trail catches her eye. Jet ... jet ... and she has it ... j is for 'jettison'. It is a wonderful word, one calculated to enrich the children's language. (It is also, Teacher acknowledges grimly, what she must do with the credit card whose balance is robbing her of her night's sleep.)

'A' is for Teacher's eye falls on a holly patterned parcel at her feet. 'A' could be for the aromatherapy candles it contains. She remembered them only when she was halfway home for the Christmas. Now, placing them on her table, she lights them. The scent of jasmine fills the room, lifting her spirits. She is not the only one affected. A pleased whisper comes from the back of the classroom.

"They're the candles I gave teacher!" It feels good to know that she has raised a smile on one of the tired faces

before her. A second whisper follows the first: "Mam said I could give them to her because we didn't want them anymore".

Swiftly, Teacher moves on to the next line of her acrostic poem. N ... what is 'N' for?

"Teacher, will I write my family motto 'never give up' for my 'N'?" The query

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comes from Braden at the Botanic Gardens. (The inspector suggested that Teacher name her groups after significant Irish landmarks. Teacher is mad to get her diploma. Frankly, if the inspector had suggested that she change her own name to the Cliffs of Moher, she would have complied.) She was thrilled when Braden confided that he and his family had received an apartment after a year of living in a hotel room. Never give up. If Braden and his family could display such determination in their difficult circumstances, surely she can learn a lesson from them?

Instead of moaning about her debt

JANUARY

mountain, she must conquer it. Tus maith would be abandoning her kale and kefir smoothies habit. It cost her a fortune last year and to be honest, facing into the murky green liquid took all the fun out of break-time.

'U'.... Would it be cheating to take the easy way out and say that it's for 'U2', her daddy's favourite band? Or, Teacher nibbles on her pencil, 'U' could be for his other obsession.... Daddy is a staunch union man. Every time Teacher goes home, he asks if she's joined her union yet. Telling him that the latter is near the bottom of her to-do list is getting old. Besides, as Daddy keeps telling her... your union always has your back. Besides which, those conferences are meant to be great craic. That's it, so. 'U' is definitely for the union that she'll be joining this very day.

Teacher moves on to her next letter. Her spirits take a nose dive. Another 'A'. This time it has to be for 'Asia', where her college friends are heading this summer. Even if she does manage to get her debt mountain down to a hillock, she still can't see herself being able to join them. Instead, she'll be stuck down home in Spiddal playing sidekick to her mother's Bean an Tí. A summer of potato peeling and watching teenagers lose the run of themselves is all she has to look forward to.

"Teacher!" A cry interrupts her dreary thoughts. It's from Rula at the Mountains of Mourne. "Kylan said my backbone is taking up too much space." The arrangement of the classroom tables means that Kylan and Rula are sitting back to back. It has to be said that the space between their chairs is restricted enough.

"Nobody can have too much backbone," Teacher has barely uttered the words than their significance strikes her. More backbone is just what she needs. (That and a Lotto win). While she waits for her numbers to come up, she'll put buying a newer car on the long finger. And forget her fantasy of upgrading to a nicer yard

coat. Slash her expenses enough and she might not have to rely on the takeaway for her Asian flavours after all.

Meantime, 'R' is for ... a shudder runs through Teacher. She has it on good authority that a rodent is at large in the building. It's all Somebody's fault, of course. The same Somebody whose laminator usage sent the school's energy bills into orbit last year. The very Somebody who banjaxed the photocopier. The principal is adamant that Somebody's failure to keep their muesli in a rodent-proof box has led to this moment. Teacher glances at the ceiling tiles. The space above them is the warmest in the school and the caretaker

"Teacher!" A cry interrupts her dreary thoughts. It's from Rula at the Mountains of Mourne. "Kylan said my backbone is taking up too much space."

suspects that the rodent has taken up residence there. Teacher is afraid she'll lose it if the creature falls through the tiles on top of her. It's not an improbable scenario. Only last week, Aleesha at the Giant's Causeway discovered a rat sitting on her pillow. Resilience is the current watchword of educationalists. In fairness, Aleesha has displayed more resilience than all of the latter put together. Her description of how her da chased the rat

and of the new pillow her ma got her, contained not a hint of self-pity. Teacher castigates herself for her own lack of resilience. The rat is probably more frightened of her than she is of it. If it leaps out on top of her, so what? She'll deal with it. (For now, though, it'd be no harm to wear the cap that her granny knitted her. Resilience is all very well, but It'll be the brave rat that tangles with nana's stocking stitch).

Teacher is delighted to see that she has almost reached the end of her acrostic poem. All she needs now is something beginning with 'Y'. 'Y' is for ... not a yak. It's not going to be for yellow either. She has had enough of taking the easy way out. In a flash, it comes to her. 'Y' is for 'Years'. They will, her soon to retire colleague, Aileen, assures her, fly by. Before Teacher knows it, she'll be looking for something to wear to her own retirement do. If she doesn't want it to be sackcloth and ashes, she needs to take a very serious look at funding those golden years.

"Teacher," Braden appears at her elbow. "Remember what you told us before?"

There are times when Teacher thinks that the children don't listen to anything she says. Braden is evidence that her words have struck a chord. It is the kind of moment that reminds her why she became a teacher in the first place.

"Tell me." Teacher fixes her eyes on the small boy in front of her. Good listening. It's what she preaches and if Braden is anything to go by, her preaching is paying off.

"You told us not to put those pencils in our mouths." Braden points at the implement in her hand. "You said that everyone's chewed them. You should. ..."

Lose no time in going to the nearest doctor? Clapping a horrified hand over her mouth, Teacher waits for her pupil to finish his sentence.

"You should jettison them, Teacher."

MARY O'CALLAGHAN, St Mark's JNS, Tallaght, Dublin 24.

Cluichí Boird

Tá de bhuntáiste ag cluichí go mbaineann na páistí an oiread sin suilt agus spraoi astu, gur ar éigean a thugann siad faoi deara gur ag obair atá siad i rith an ama. Tugaimid cur síos anseo ar thrí chluiche nua-fhoilsithe.

Focal Fada: Cluiche Litrithe Gaeilge

Is í aidhm an chluiche ná na himreoirí a chur ag cumadh focal i suíomh iomaíoch ach spráíúil. Cluiche simplí le dhá phaca cártaí atá ann, ceann le tús-litreacha, agus ceann eile le litreacha deiridh. Faigheann gach imreoir cárta le litir tosaigh agus cárta eile le litir dheiridh agus ní mór an focal is faide a chruthú trí litreacha eile a chur eatarthu.



Úsáid sa rang

- ✎ Déan dhá bheart de na cártaí - beart de na tús-litreacha agus beart litreacha deiridh. Iompaigh an chéad chárta ó gach beart. Iompaigh an t-ORláiste uibhe le tús a chur leis an gcluiche. Scríobhann na páistí an oiread focal agus is féidir leo ag baint úsáide as an dá litir laistigh den teorainn ama. Mar shampla más é 'c' an tús-litir agus 'l' an litir dheiridh, d'fhéadfaí focail mar seo a scríobh - caol, cill, ciall, ciorcal agus mar sin de. Faigheann páistí 3 phointe ar fhocal le 3 litir, 4 phointe ar fhocal le 4 litir agus mar sin de. Buann an t-imreoir leis an scór is airde tar éis 10 mababhta.
- ✎ Tá ceithre chárta le níos mó ná litir

amháin orthu. Sa chás seo is féidir aon cheann de na litreacha a úsáid ag tús nó ag deireadh focal, pé ceann is cuí.

Líon an Bearna

10 gcárta atá sa chluiche Líon an Bearna le 23 focal scríofa ar gach aon cheann acu agus litir ar iarraidh ó gach focal. Caithfidh na himreoirí tíleanna maignéadacha de litreacha a úsáid leis na 'bearnaí' iontu a líonadh.

Úsáid sa rang

Bain leas as na cártaí chun deachtú reatha a imirt sa rang. Roinn na páistí i mbeirteanna. Fág cárta focal ag cúl an tseomra. Ní mór do pháiste amháin as



gach beirt dul go cúl an tseomra, focail ón gcárta a léamh go ciúin, dul ar ais chuig a suíochán agus na cinn a thugann siad chun cuimhne a dheachtú dá bpáirtí. Déanann siad rólanna a mhalartú ansin go dtí go mbíonn an bua ag an bpéire go mbíonn 23 focal acu ar dtús. Ní mór a chinntiú go mbíonn gach rud litrithe i gceart, mar sin caithfidh na páistí a

chinntiú nach bhfuil botúin acu tríd an litriú ceart a sheiceáil ar na cártaí.

Fios Feasa

Cluiche do cheathrar imreoirí nó do cheithre fhoireann atá in Fios Feasa. Is é an sprioc seit ceithre chárta, ceann an cúige, agus diosca amháin a bhailiú trí cheisteanna ar na contaetha agus ar



chúigí na hÉireann a fhreagairt. Clúdaítear go leor, leor réimsí den saol - spórt, stair agus ceol na hÉireann san áireamh - sna ceisteanna a bhfuil níos mó ná míle acu sa chluiche. Tá 24 ceist ar gach contae agus 32 ceist ar gach cúige.

Úsáid sa rang

Bain leas as an gcluiche chun scileanna tíreolaíochta na bpáistí a fhorbairt trí imscrúdú a dhéanamh ar eilimintí daonna agus nádúrtha ina dtír agus a dtimpeallacht féin.

Ar fáil: www.cluiche.ie, www.udar.ie.

Reviews

A colourful, comic-style history lesson

I remember stumbling on an animated presentation of the Easter Rising put together by John D. Ruddy a few years back and was thoroughly taken with its factual information, its concise delivery and its charming illustrations. *Manny Man Does Revolutionary Ireland 1916–1923* carries the same positives, in the form of a book.

It's a neat, hard-backed book that begins with the significant events that led to the 1916 Rising. From there, the focus is on the Revolution, spanning the years from 1916 until 1923. The interior is presented in vivid colour in both the illustrations and some of the text. The historic details are delivered in manageable two to three page vignettes that surround a single event or person.

The distinctive Manny Man character appears as the many patriots and players who were involved in the historic events of Ireland's past and the author has added direct speech, just like a comic. For me, this only added to the engagement of this attractive book.

This book would make a nice addition to the older section of a school's library or could work as a teaching resource for a history lesson or as a teacher's reference on the finer points of Ireland's revolutionary past.

Collins Press. ISBN: 9781848893337. Cost: €6.99.

Reviewed by **STUART PURCELL**, Donabate, Co Dublin.



Have fun exploring the Wild Atlantic Way

Since launched as a tourist trail in 2014, the Wild Atlantic Way has captured the imagination of the Irish people and tourists alike. This spectacular coastline stretches for 2,500 km along Ireland's dramatic western seaboard, making it the longest defined coastal route in the world.

My Ireland Activity Book; The Wild Atlantic Way is written by Natasha Mac a'Bháird and Alan Nolan, both of whom are successful children's authors. It presents

24 colourful pages of interesting facts, maps, photographs, word searches, activities, puzzles and colouring pages.

Sasha Seal and Gulliver Gull accompany the reader from Inishowen in the north, to Kinsale in the south. They create a fun and interesting journey, making this an ideal workbook for children, whether to amuse them with activities on long car journeys, or to educate them about geographical features, historic events and the folklore of this truly magnificent route.

This workbook is suitable for children in primary school. It will give them an overview and appreciation of the trail, whether as participants in exploration or as a fun activity and information source. It would be a useful addition to class libraries from first class upwards. Teachers may find it a useful starting point for a series of geography/history lessons or projects on the Wild Atlantic Way.

O'Brien Press. ISBN 978-184717-561-8. Cost: €7.99

Reviewed by **JULIE RYNG**, Co Cork.



An engaging pair of naughty characters

This is book two of the *Milo Adventures* series written by Irish author, Mary Arrigan. It is a story about Milo, a young boy, and his friend Shane and the mischief they get into. It is set in Ireland and centres around a spooky castle, scary Irish chieftains and Milo's teacher, Miss Lee.

It engaged me immediately. The font is big and friendly, has cute illustrations and the action takes off from the first sentence. The main characters are both infuriatingly naughty, yet I loved them both! The book is set in modern Ireland, which the children will love and will give the teacher scope for cross-curricular learning. I think this book would engage third and fourth class pupils.

O'Brien Press.
ISBN: 978-1-84717-561-8. Cost: €7.99.

Reviewed by **ROZZ LEWIS**, Portlaoise, Co Laois.



Finishing Touches

|| Resources for teachers, noticeboard of upcoming events and the Comhar Linn Crossword ||

Noticeboard



Copy date

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

The deadline for copy for the April issue is 20 March.

Please email copy to editor@into.ie



CESI conference

The 2018 annual conference of the Computers in Education Society of Ireland (CESI) will take place on 2/3 March 2018 at the DCU St Patrick's Campus, Dublin. The theme for this year's conference is 'Shaping Tomorrow Today'.

Friday evening's TeachMeet CESI will be followed by the keynotes, presentations, and workshops on Saturday.

For information or to register visit www.cesi.ie



TopClass podcasts

The OECD Directorate for Education and Skills is now podcasting.

TopClass, a podcast about global education, brings together OECD authors and researchers to explain and explore emerging education data, and deliver objective insights on education practices worldwide. Each episode focuses on a different issue that is shaping the landscape of education today.

So far, three episodes are available:

- What is 'neurodiversity' in the classroom and how should we respond to it?
- Listen to the teacher! The Teaching and Learning International survey.
- What collaborative problem solving can tell us about students' social skills.

The TopClass podcasts are available on SoundCloud and iTunes.



Reunion

Erin's Hope GFC (Dochas Eireann CLG) Dublin Senior Football Champions 1978 40th Anniversary Dinner in Tullamore Court Hotel on Saturday 14 April.

All past 'Hopes' and friends from St Pat's in the 70s are welcome to join in celebrating our historic victory.

Contact Benny Mc Ardle (0876862303) or Gerry Walsh (0868775540) for further details.



IPPEA Conference 2018

The theme of the IPPEA conference 2018 is 'Moving Forward: Physical Education for the Future' and takes place on Saturday 24 February in NUIG Kingfisher Sports Centre.

Games, Gymnastics, Athletics, Outdoor and Adventure Activities and Dance will be explored in practical workshops. Further information: www.irishprimarype.com. Conference rates: Current IPPEA members: €45. New members: €50. Students: €20. All rates include a light lunch and a year's membership of the IPPEA.



Development Education and Global Citizenship Workshops

INTO Global Citizenship Schools and INTO Learning are hosting a series of regional 'From Learning to Practice' Workshops as follows:

- Thurs, 8 February 4.30 – 6.30pm: INTO Learning, Parnell Sq, D1
- Wed, 21 February 6.30 – 8.30pm: Cork Education Centre
- Thurs, 22 February 6.30 – 8.30 pm: Galway Education Centre
- Thurs, 8 March 6.30 – 8.30pm: Carrick-on-Shannon Education Centre

The workshops will

- a) introduce teachers to INTO Global Citizenship Schools;
- b) support teachers in challenging stereotypes in their classrooms;
- c) allow teachers to participate in a research focus group exploring the teaching of development education/global citizenship education in primary schools.

If you are interested in attending and participating in the research please register at www.into.ie/ROI/GlobalCitizenshipSchool. A booking fee of €40 will be requested. This fee will be refunded post your attendance at the workshop. For further details please contact learninghelpdesk@into.ie



School placement

The INTO will be conducting research during February 2018 on the topic of School Placement. This will take the form of an online questionnaire. It would be appreciated if you receive an email inviting you to take part in this survey, that you would do so. If you have any questions on the survey, please email education@into.ie

Two pages with Comhar Linn prizewinners, Crossword, resources for the classroom ... from training courses to helpful hints and useful links

Comhar Linn Draw winners

November Draw

Car – Toyota Corolla

Amy Gallagher, Dundrum, Dublin 16.

Car – Toyota Yaris

Aileen Bennett, Kilcock, Co Meath.

Christmas Hampers

Valerie McDermott, SN An Chuil,
Muileann Cearr, Co na hIarmhí.

Louise O'Donnell, St Vincent's Inf NS,
Griffith Ave, Dublin 9.

Brian Hennessy, Scoil Íosagáin,
Farranree, Cork.

Eimear McGrath, Our Lady of Mercy
Senior PS, Military Rd, Waterford.

Siobhán McElgunn, Leitrim Mixed NS,
Leitrim Village, Co Leitrim.

Elizabeth Farrelly, Tirellan Heights NS,
Headford Rd, Galway.

Susan Hansberry, St Francis Xavier SNS,
Coolmine, Castleknock, Dublin 15.

Jennifer McGee, St Joseph's JNS,
Balcurris, Ballymun, Dublin 11.

Ann Byrne, St Vincent's Inf. NS,
Griffith Ave, D. 9.

Anne-Marie Brennan, SN Iosef Naofa,
Templemore, Co. Tipperary.

Deirdre Neary, Scoil Nano Nagle,
Bawnogue, Clondalkin, Dublin 22.

Denis Costello, Dundrum, Dublin 14.

Íde Nic Giolla Ruaidh,
Scoil Na gCeithre Máistrí,
Lios Uí Mhullain, Áth Luain, Co na
hIarmhí.

Caroline Griffin, Gaelscoil Moshíológ,
An Chraobhach, Guaire, Co Loch
Garman.

Thomas Harkin, Greencastle,
Co Donegal.

Anna Coveney, Scoil Bhride,
Crossmahon, Co Cork.

Bridget Quinton, Clonmel, Co Tipperary.
Susan Carroll, Holy Spirit BNS, Baile
Munna, Átha Cliath 11.

Brendan McHugh, SN Naomh Pádraig,
Castlebar, Co Mayo.

Maurice O'Donoghue, Templeogue,
Dublin 6.

Maria Downey, St Laurences NS, Athy,
Co Kildare.

Margaret O'Riordan, St Michael's
Special School, Glenmaroon,
Chapelizod, Dublin 20.

June Farrell, Holy Family GNS, Askea,
Carlow.

Noeleen Caverly, St Catherine's Infant
School, Cabra, Dublin 7.

Anne-Marie Woods, Swords Borough
NS, Church Rd., Swords, Co Dublin.

December Draw

Car – Toyota Corolla

Rose Sullivan, Drogheda, Co Louth.

Car – Toyota Yaris

Caroline Lodge, St Anne's SS,
Corrovorrin, Ennis, Co.Clare.

CASH €2,500.00

Mary Lavelle, Naas, Co Kildare.
Fiona Gearty, Eoin Baisde C Naoidh,
Seafeld Road West, Clontarf,
Dublin 3.

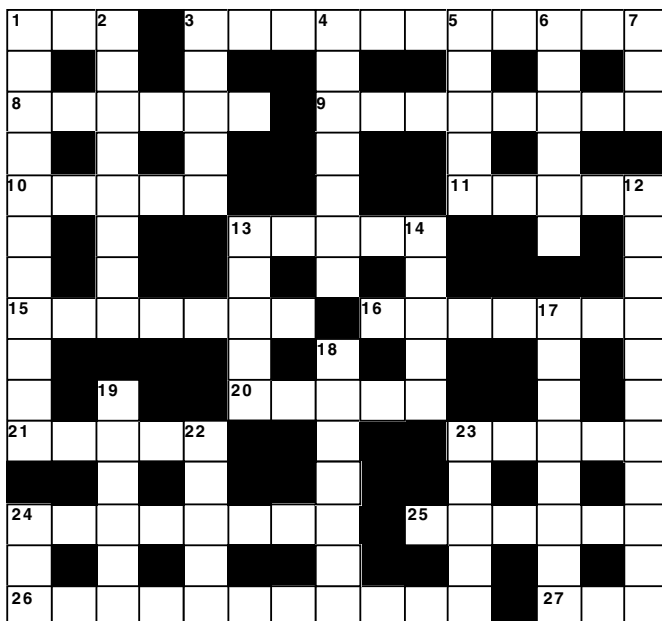
CASH €1,500.00

Pádraig Fahey, SN Cléireacháin,
Clérihan, Clonmel, Co Tipperary.
Maura Duffy, Our Lady of Victories
Infant NS, Ballymun Road,
Dublin 9.

Comhar Linn Crossword no 187

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 2nd March, 2018.



ACROSS

1. Weapon found at the front of a boat. (3)
3. Such a creature makes one stay in a religious group. (5,6)
8. Was Edward drunk? (6)
9. Landed on Eight, lad? Perhaps. (8)
10. Many smell of the brook. (5)
11. The smallest meadows, near the junction. (5)
13. Performing a dingo dissection. (5)
- 15 & 24a. All sides differ on what shape this is! (7,8)
- 16 & 3d. Break up the sealskin riot and get some meat. (7,5)
20. An aristocrat returns to find a novice? How amusing. (5)
21. A Pole leaves Geneva, straying to Israel's dry zone... (5)
23. ... left to ring an Iberian city. (5)
24. See 15 across.
25. Behold – in the wound is an overshoe! (6)
26. The minutes are flying by in such a holiday arrangement! (11)
27. Drink from 'The King and I'? Right. (3)

DOWN

1. Saw Becks win over a big white bird ... (7,4)
2. ... as I write about a climbing plant. (8)
3. See 16 across.
4. Arching awkwardly, to one's annoyance. (7)
5. Mr Farrage will raise a drink with the Spanish. (5)
6. Minor actors who add to the cost of a holiday? (6)
7. Fr Crilly has written a letter to the editor. (3)
12. Won't rebirth upset one's womb-mate? (4,7)
13. Had a meal with Diana and Edward. (5)
14. Interrogate in a cooker. (5)
17. That one passed out is obvious, love, – all right? (8)
18. Hold oneself back for Teddy? (7)
19. The game is up for such discrimination! (6)
22. Ms Williams is out of this world! (5)
23. Leapt, having lost the head, causing a crash. (5)
24. Trinidad and Tobago start identifying rubbish. (3)

Winners of Bumper Crossword no. 185: Michael McKinney, Lifford, Co. Donegal. Mary Mulligan, Griffith Ave, Dublin 9. Mary McNamara, Headford, Co. Galway. Michael Late, Beard, Cork. John Cryan, Clonsilla, Dublin 15

In Touch Bumper Christmas crossword 2017 Solutions
Across: 1. Archaeologist 7. Tardis 12. Blonde 14. Get ahead 16. Miner 17. Aloe vera 18. Oft 20. Hare 21. Entrust 23. Rekindle 26. Ice 27. Saturate 28. Ear 30. Tosh 31. Holy Orders 34. Emil 36. Gene pool 37. Tea chest 40. Joker 41. Parallel lines 44. Indolent 45. Newt 46. Path 48. Liar 49. Sew 52. Shepherd 53. Ale 55. Arrogant 57. Rustler

60. Coin 61. Tor 62. Fine 64. Apron 65. Gold leaf 69. Averse 70. Adeste Fideles

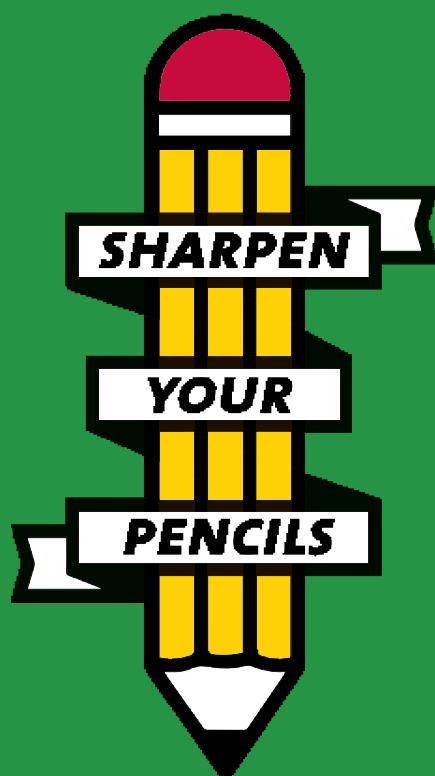
Down: 1. Ambrosia 2. Hun 3. Edel 4. Legend 5. Get the show on the road 6. Tie 8. Admit 9. Don Quixote 10. Sprite 11. Idle 13. Darker 15. Hark the Herald Angels Sing 19. Tree 22. Note 24. Nitrogen 25. Trait 29. Arena 32. Yet 35. Leonardo 38. Halve 41. Pop 42. Rotisserie 43. Leapt 47. Shoe 49. Skater 50. Watt 51. Defrosts 54. Armada 56. Raffle 59. Rage 63. Nori 66. Lea 68. Die

Winners of and solutions to Crossword No. 186 will be published in the next InTouch issue.

NAME:

ADDRESS:


INTO / An Post Handwriting Competition 2018




This year's An Post Handwriting Competition, in association with INTO, celebrates handwriting in an even bigger and better way, with lots of curriculum-based resources and activities to enjoy. The competition is open to all primary schools with great prizes awarded at regional and national level.

Watch out for the competition packs landing in your school in February 2018. Then check out anpostschoolbag.ie where you can download your writing templates and find lots of interactive resources.






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Star site



SCOIL NAOMH CHÓLMÁIN
www.ballindaggins.ie
Enniscorthy school with a simple easy to navigate website that is updated regularly.

ONES TO WATCH



PHET INTERACTIVE SIMULATIONS
phet.colorado.edu/en/simulations/category/by-level/elementary-school
Simulations dealing with balance, static electricity, light, circuits, vision, density, eating, exercise and other science topics.

BRIATHRA NA GAEILGE
itunes.apple.com/ie/app/briathra-na-gaeilge/id930872842?mt=8
Fun way to learn about verbs – available on iOS, iPhone and iPad.

ANNE FRANK ONLINE
annefrank.com
Who was Anne Frank and why should we remember her?

Top 10

The most viewed resources on Scoilnet for the first two weeks of January

- TOM CREAN COLLECTION**
scoilnet.ie/go-to-primary/theme-pages/history/tom-crean
Scoilnet's collection of resources on the Kerry explorer.
- FOUR SEASONS IN ONE YEAR**
resources.hwb.wales.gov.uk/VTC/seasons/eng/Introduction/default.htm
Interactive activities to find out about the seasons.
- BEAG NÓ MÓR?**
scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/12281/11918.pdf
San aonad seo tá acmhainní a bhaineann leis an téama Beag nó Mór.
- BIA – THEMEPAGE**
scoilnet.ie/go-to-primary/theme-pages/irish/bia
Scoilnet's collection of resources around the theme of food.
- SA BHAILE**
scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/11797/11428.pdf
Flashcards, display cards and activities on the theme of home.
- ORAL LANGUAGE**
scoilnet.ie/index.php?id=1061
Themepage of resources for all levels.
- ARGUMENTS AND INFORMAL DEBATES**
scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/23056/22779.pdf
PDST document with vocabulary appropriate for various levels of primary.
- GARDENING WITH CHILDREN**
bbc.co.uk/gardening/gardening_with_children
Guides written specifically for children.
- RAINN AGUS AMHRAIN**
resources.teachnet.ie/clane/2008/index.html
Songs and rhymes on curriculum topics.
- CÉ ME FÉIN?**
scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/22978/22701.pdf
Printable activity for the class.