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Scéal Eile winners

Career break advice

Budget lobby begins

Keeping InTouch

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



General Secretary Designate's Comment

Budget 2020 must deliver

Following our annual Congress, the INTO leadership team moved quickly into action, seeking to deliver on the motions passed at Congress. Budget 2020 is firmly in our sights and we have clear goals for government investment to support primary education. Working hand in hand with our members, we need to deliver a robust campaign across the country if we are to secure the funding needed to lower class sizes, support our school leaders and adequately fund our schools.

We need to reduce class sizes. Irish primary school classes are the largest in the Eurozone, five above the EU average of 20. We need to ensure that class size reductions start in 2020. We have costed our proposal and believe a modest investment of €4.5 million in 2020 would set us on the right course.

We need to support our school leaders. Increases in workload burdens are making the roles of school leaders impossible to carry out. We need to secure a minimum of one leadership and management day per week for teaching principals and we need to restore promoted posts. Delivering one day per week and implementing the second phase of the restoration of posts of responsibility would

require an investment of €5.2 million in Budget 2020.

We need to fund our schools. Members didn't become teachers so they could be the best fundraisers in their schools. Capitation grants were cut by €30 per pupil in the recession. Full restoration is urgently needed to fund basic costs and an investment of €4.2 million in the forthcoming budget would restore funding levels to pre-recession levels.

As members will be aware, alongside our budget campaign we are engaged in a process with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to secure an end to our long-running pay inequality campaign and to settle the debt owed to primary school principals and deputy principals. We are optimistic that these injustices will end once and for all in the next public service pay deal.

Across the country, INTO is training lobbyists to engage with local and national politicians and ensure our voice is heard. We will be ramping up our campaign in the coming months and I'm asking every single member to play their part and ensure we invest for the best in primary education.

John Boyle.

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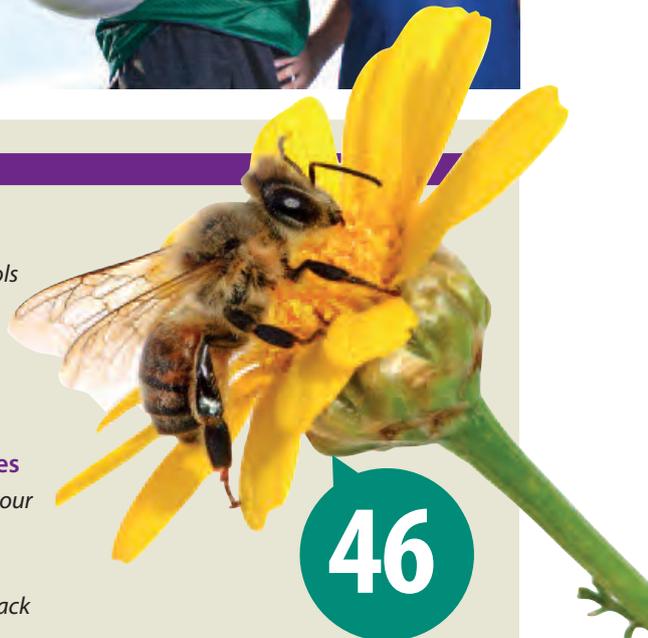
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INTO Apps



InTouch



Leave



INTO Conference

InTouch App

InTouch magazine has been available for a number of years in digital format on the INTO website. You can now also read the digital edition on your mobile device through the *InTouch* app.

Download the *InTouch* app from Google Play or the App Store. Search for 'INTO *InTouch*'.

Enter the username and password within the app to unlock current and back issues of the magazine. Find the username and password in the Members' Area of the INTO website.

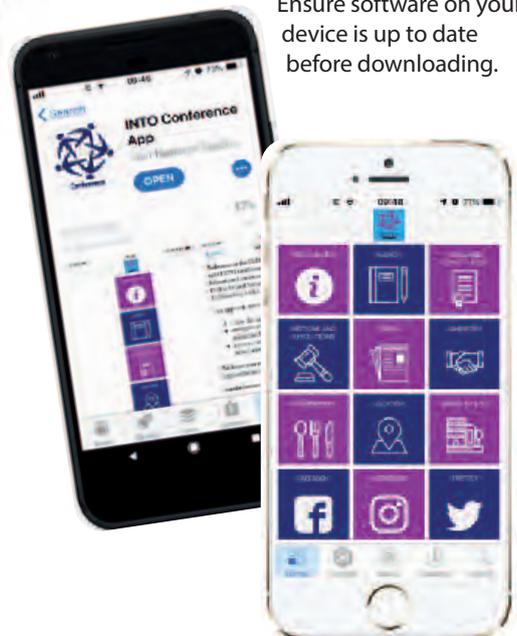


INTO Conference App

An app has been developed for use by delegates at INTO conferences including Congress. This app will allow you to: view the conference agenda; navigate your way to the venue using the location and maps section; and receive reminders of key events and news alerts during the event.

Download from the App Store and Google Play. Search for 'INTO Conference'.

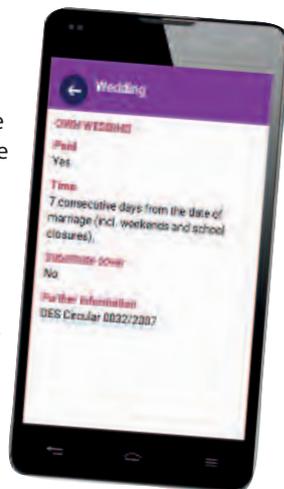
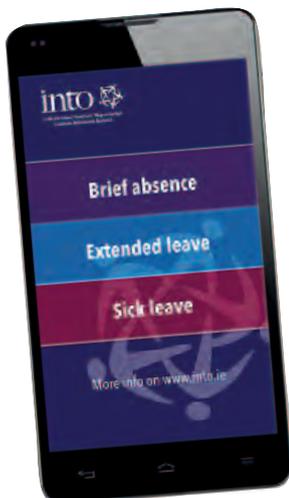
Ensure software on your device is up to date before downloading.



INTO Leave App

This app for INTO members allows you to check your entitlement to leave in seconds. It contains information on brief absences, extended leave and sick leave.

Download from the App Store and Google Play. Search for 'INTO guide to teachers leave'. Ensure software on your iPhone or Android device is up-to-date before downloading.



10 things you should know

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

INTO to launch new database

Make sure your email address is up to date so you can register for new members' portal

INTO is in the final stages of implementing our new membership database and members' portal. The members' portal is a secure area that members will log into via the INTO website to view and update their personal details and to view INTO web content that is exclusive to INTO members. This project, when complete, will help to improve the service that we offer to our members.

The new members' portal will be launched in conjunction with the new INTO website at the beginning of the school year in September 2019.

Due to the nature of the work required for this project, the existing members' area of the INTO website will not be available for July and August. Members currently access this area of the website at www.into.ie/ROI/MembersArea/. The full INTO website which contains all the latest news, useful information and links will still be available to you throughout the summer.

Potential delays

As a consequence of staff being engaged, during the month of June 2019, in detailed design and

intensive training work for the new system there may be delays in responding to member queries. We will try to keep these delays to a minimum and will use all available resources to do this.

Registering for the new members' portal

In order to access the new members' portal members will need to register on the new site. We will be in touch, via email, in August with a link to enable members to do this. To assist with this process and to ensure that you will receive the link, we would be grateful if you would ensure that INTO has your correct email address by either:

1. Accessing the existing members' area before the end of June 2019 to check and update your email address; or
2. Emailing the membership section at support@into.ie with your preferred email address.

The September *InTouch* will contain detailed information on how to access the new members' portal and what new services you can expect to find there.

Upcoming principals' and deputy principals' conference

Keynote speaker announced.
Call for school leaders to share their top tips

The INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee (PDC) are delighted to announce that the noted speaker and writer, Viv Grant, will be the keynote speaker at the INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Consultative Conference. The conference will take place in the Tullamore Court Hotel on 27 and 28 September. The theme of the conference is 'Managing workload', and Viv will speak on the theme of "Wellbeing and keeping connected to what matters most in school leadership". You can find Viv at integritycoaching.co.uk and on social media.

The PDC are also seeking the input and expertise of practising school leaders for the conference. We would like to invite any school leaders who have undertaken research to participate in a Researchmeet, which will take place on Saturday 28th. There will also be a Principalmeet for any school leader who would like to share an experience, project or experience. Researchmeet and Principalmeet are based on the Teachmeet format. If you would like to participate, please contact Síne Friel at sfriel@into.ie.

Finally, we would also like to hear from school leaders about the tips and hacks that have made a real difference to their workload. We would like to give six principals/deputy principals an opportunity to share their top tip with the conference. If you would like to participate, contact your local PDC representative or Deirdre O'Connor at doconnor@into.ie.

During the conference, there will be opportunities for delegates to attend workshops relevant to their work. There will also be discussion groups to consult with delegates on the issue of workload and how INTO can best assist members in this area.

Delegates for the conference have been selected by local principals' and deputy principals' fora, and will receive further details in the run up to the conference.

Bringing home the medals

Well done to the relay team from INTO Head Office that recently took part in the Belfast City Marathon. The team was made up of Síne Friel, Jane Dowdall, Noel Ward, Deirdre O'Connor and Mandy Drury.



INTO educational research grants – applications open

Deadline for applications is Friday 27 September 2019

The INTO Bursary Scheme for members will be continued for 2019. Up to six bursaries will be awarded with prizes of €3,000 for doctorate level and €1,500 for masters level/ other. Bursaries are open to all INTO members. Any project which has been approved as a research endeavour by a recognised third level institute will be considered for grant purposes.

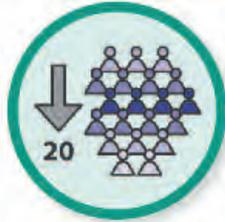
Applications must be sent on the relevant application form, which is available on the INTO website at www.bit.ly/INTOBursary

All applications received by the closing date will be examined by an independent assessor who will make recommendations on the applications. Bursaries will be awarded at a ceremony at this year's INTO Consultative Conference on Education which takes place on Friday, 15 November 2019, in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny.

A full list of terms and conditions is available at www.bit.ly/Bursaryterms

Lobbying is now underway ahead of Budget 2020

The INTO has started lobbying on education issues ahead of Budget 2020 (which will be announced in October). As in previous years, the INTO will lobby at local (constituency) and national levels. Throughout May, lobbying training was held around the country. The INTO's main asks for Budget 2020 are as follows:



Reduce Class Size

Ireland's classes, with an average of 25 pupils, are 5 above the European Union average of 20 pupils per class. INTO is calling on the government to ensure that classes sizes are cut in Budget 2020.

In particular, DEIS schools have not had any reduction in class size in recent years and the appointment and retention figures for smaller schools have risen since 2010.



Support Leadership

Workload burdens are making school leadership increasingly impossible. Over 4,500 assistant principal posts were lost in the moratorium. While 1,300 of these were restored in Budget 2017, none were restored in Budget 2018 or Budget 2019.

The INTO is demanding one leadership and management day per week for teaching principals and the restoration of promoted posts.



Fund Our Schools

Capitation grants were cut by €30 in the recession and capitation funding at primary level remains much lower than capitation funding at post-primary level. Per-pupil spending at primary level in Ireland is substantially below OECD and EU averages. INTO is calling for the restoration of capitation to the pre-2011 level of €200 per pupil.

Cost (reduce class size by one)	Cost (one day per week and phase 2 of post restoration)	Cost (restore fully to pre-cut level)
2020: €4.5m	2020: €5.2m	2020: €4.2m
Full year: €13.5m	Full year: €15.5m	Full year: €12.5m

Happy Pride month!



It's that time of the year again when pride is in the air and INTO takes a moment to show our support for LGBT+ teachers in primary schools across the country. INTO will be donning our pride logo to coincide with Dublin Pride and the INTO LGBT+ Teachers' Group annual awards for the ground-breaking national competition – Different Families, Same Love.

Attending Dublin Pride?

This year's Dublin Pride parade will take place on Saturday, 29 June. The parade will commence from the Garden of Remembrance on Parnell Square from midday. If you would like to join the INTO group, follow them on social media (@INTOlgbt) or email intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com. Participants will be meeting at the Teachers' Club on Parnell Square at 12 noon.

Is it a parade or a march?

It's both. It's a celebration of diversity and inclusion, a celebration of LGBTQ+ people and families and their friends and families and allies. It's an opportunity to showcase all the wonderful community and advocacy groups and their supporters that work every day to make life better for the LGBT+ community, to celebrate their victories and highlight the work they are still doing. It's also a protest march, a march to protest the inequalities that still exist in Irish society and the even greater oppression and persecution that LGBTQ+ people experience across the globe.

At its very heart though, it is something more than all of that, it is a march of solidarity. It is a day to celebrate, a day to mourn those we have lost and a day to show a new generation of LGBT+ people that they are valued and cherished and most of all, they are not alone.

INTO co-authors report on standardised testing with DCU

The Irish National Teachers' Organisation and the Centre for Assessment Research, Policy and Practice in Education (CARPE) at DCU have carried out an in-depth study on the use of standardised tests in mathematics and English reading in Irish primary schools.

The research is the first large-scale investigation of Irish primary teachers' use of, beliefs about and attitudes to the tests, with the views of 1564 respondents recorded.

The research suggests that, while standardised tests bring value over and above other assessments and ultimately provide information which is essential in broadening the focus of decision making about teaching and learning within classrooms and across schools, unintended negative consequences can also result from their use.

Many respondents expressed very strong views on the form and content of current tests as well as on how and when they were administered. Many agreed that standardised test results should be reported to parents, but others expressed uncertainty about whether or not parents understood the meaning of test scores.

The research makes a number of policy



Members of the steering committee and authors of the report pictured with Anne Looney, executive dean of the Institute of Education, DCU, and John Boyle, INTO general secretary designate, who launched the report

recommendations, some of which include:

- changing the timing of the test from summer to autumn to alleviate the pressure felt by teachers and pupils;
- discontinuing the reporting of standardised tests as individual numbers on report cards. Instead, test scores should be communicated in writing as part of a narrative text that describes pupil performance, interprets

it in light of other assessments and acknowledges the imprecise nature of all standardised test scores;

- ensuring rigorous validity studies of all standardised tests in use in Irish primary schools to ensure that the tests remain relevant and their impact on teaching and learning understood.

You can read the full findings of the research at www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/.

Interns mark May Day at Áras

To mark May Day, which is also Labour Day, a day to celebrate workers' rights, President Higgins and his wife Sabina hosted an event in Áras an Uachtaráin to celebrate youth activism.

The president expressed his hope that the event would help stimulate the national conversation we need on how we can achieve an enhanced participation and transformation within Irish society, igniting debate amongst young people on the future shape of our workplaces and of the wider culture in which they will operate.

President Higgins said, "young people and their active participation will be integral to the writing of this next chapter of our nation's story." He spoke passionately about reassuring evidence that there is, on this island, a real will amongst young citizens to achieve equality and to become consciously involved in directing change both at

home and across our wider global society, acknowledging recent actions of Irish schoolchildren who raised their voices in union with teenagers across the world to protest inaction on climate change.

President Higgins explained that if we are to achieve the transformations that are

now urgently required, "we need the engagement of young citizens unafraid to question the status quo, to reject the easy option of going with the flow"; to ask the difficult questions that will change the tenor of a discussion while also valuing the capacity to listen to alternative opinions.



Portlaoise branch gives the gift of books

Portlaoise branch donates books to local hospital

To mark the 150th anniversary of the INTO, the Portlaoise branch decided to make a donation to the paediatric ward of the Midlands Regional Hospital, Portlaoise. This donation was in the form of books for the library in the ward. Over €500-worth of books were sourced from local bookstore, Allbooks & News, and their generosity ensured the actual value of the donation was almost twice this. Having seen many of their own children require the expertise of the paediatric ward over the years, not to mention the many schoolchildren under their care over that time, branch members were only too happy to make this donation as part of the anniversary celebrations of the organisation. Branch Chairperson Deirdre Fleming and Secretary Darach Kennedy made the donation on behalf of members and the staff of the paediatric ward were very appreciative of this wonderful gesture.



Motivating principals in District 7

Motivational speaker, Enda O’Doherty, addresses principals in District 7

As part of our work in developing principal and deputy principals’ fora support, and engagement for school leaders, I was supported by our INTO District 7 (Longford, Westmeath, Offaly, Kildare, Meath) committee to organise a motivational and social event for 2019.

Having the success of organising a talk by Mr Gerry Duffy behind us two years ago, we stuck to the same successful formula – try to find a new fresh speaker who would inspire, uplift and entertain a group of principals and deputy principals who were overworked, tired and underappreciated. When driving my kids to a camogie match one Saturday morning I happened to hear such an individual being interviewed on Bobby Kerr’s *Back to Business* and set the wheels in motion.

In Mullingar Park Hotel on Thursday, 4 April I had the delight of introducing Mr



Enda O’Doherty to the gathered school leaders. They all sat in relaxed anticipation following the lovely social gathering for hot food at the bottom of the room.

In the following 90 minutes, he did not fail to deliver for all who attended. His own professional background in education was relevant and familiar to us all as he understands the pressures and

also the joys of the job we do. His own personal story of overcoming tough times to then follow a path of inspiration and support of others is warm, sincere and thought provoking. It is safe to say he entertained us greatly but also strengthened each one of us in different ways. We each took away something different from his presentation.

It was a lovely evening where, for once, we didn’t come away with a to-do list of compliance or a deep-lying worry over some oversight in our schools.

I would like to thank Enda O’Doherty for his amazing words and insight into life and we are the better for meeting him. Thanks to District 7 for their support of the event but most importantly to those school leaders who attended and came away energised and inspired.

NIALL CROFTON, secretary of Offaly Principals’ and Deputy Principals’ Forum

10th annual Vere Foster Lecture held in Belfast

On the 200th anniversary of the birth of the first INTO president, Vere Foster, and to mark 100 years of the Ulster Teachers’ Union (UTU), the INTO and the UTU held a joint event in Belfast.

The event examined the legacy of Vere Foster (in particular his role in organising teachers) for both the INTO and the UTU, the developments which gave rise to the establishment of the Ulster Teachers’ Union in the context of the political tensions on

the island of Ireland a century ago, and the broader role of the labour movement in the campaigns for home rule/independence and the opposing campaign to maintain the union with Britain.

Speakers at the event included INTO Deputy General Secretary Noel Ward; UTU General Secretary Jacquie White; Former UTU President Lexi Scott and Historian Jimmy McDermott. The event was chaired by INTO Northern Secretary Gerry Murphy.



Winners of Scéal Eile writing competition

The national awards ceremony for this year's INTO and An Post schools' writing competition, Scéal Eile, took place in the GPO on 8 May. The competition is rooted in children's love of books and is part of the An Post Education Awards, in its 35th year promoting literacy and learning for generations of Irish students.

Scéal Eile saw students from all levels

revisiting their all-time favourite books with the task of creating their own alternative storyline or ending. Students from junior infants right through to sixth year took their favourite stories and best-loved characters on a whole new adventure, creating a direction they've always wanted to see in their favourite books.

Speaking at the national awards ceremony, David McRedmond, CEO An Post, said "We are delighted to bring creative writing to children and to schools around the country as part of our work on promoting literacy. Through our sponsorship of the Irish Book Awards we are championing Irish authors and today, with the help of two of help of two of Ireland's most inspiring children's authors, Sarah (Webb) and David (Rudden), we are investing in future generations by encouraging reading, writing and books for children of all ages."

INTO President Feargal Brougham welcomed Scéal Eile, "We are delighted that An Post is once again supporting the power of reading and writing in schools, whilst introducing a fun creative twist. An Post and INTO are very proud to work together and promote literacy through creativity and competition."

The Scéal Eile competition is run in association with the An Post Irish Book Awards, (www.irishbookawards.ie) linking the power of creative writing with the importance of reading for child development. Handwriting is also a key focus for teachers and has emphasis within the competition.



Dave Rudden (author of *Knights of the Borrowed Dark*) and Sarah Webb (author of *Blazing A Trail – Irish Women Who Changed the World*) with competition winners. Both authors were nominated in the children's author category of the An Post Irish Book Awards with Sarah Webb winning the category in 2018.



Winners

- Junior Infant: Ava Harney, Ballinamere NS, Co Offaly.
- Second class: Menahal Fatima Naqui, Castletown Girls School, Co Louth.
- Fourth class: Ella Sweeney, SN Naomh Breandán, Co Galway.
- Sixth class: Jamie Kinsella, Co Gorey Educate Together NS, Co Wexford.
- Special Award: Jasmine McDonnell, All Saints NS, Co Westmeath.



An Post/INTO Scéal Eile competition winners with family, teachers, An Post CEO David McRedmond and INTO President Feargal Brougham



Global threats to education

Dennis Sinyolo, senior co-ordinator with Education International (EI), spoke at INTO Congress in Galway about teaching and education in an international context. *InTouch* shares an abridged version of his speech here.

In 2015, the United Nations reaffirmed its commitment to the right to education by including education as a standalone goal in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Through Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on quality education, our governments committed to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all. This includes a commitment to universal access to quality early childhood education, free primary and secondary education and affordable tertiary education for all.

Despite this commitment, UNESCO data shows that 262 million children and adolescents of primary and secondary school age are still out of school.

The problem of privatisation

Instead of joining hands with governments and mobilizing resources to achieve quality public education for all, we see attempts by proponents of privatisation and commercialisation of education to change the global education discourse in ways that threaten to undermine the achievement of this goal.

Instead of supporting the strengthening of public education systems, they argue that private schools provide the necessary choice and competition required to drive up quality.

We see incessant attempts to replace the word 'free' with 'affordable'. Instead of talking about free primary and secondary education, the privatisers talk about affordable primary and secondary education.

Privatisation knows no boundaries and takes many different forms. In countries such as India and Uganda, we have seen the mushrooming of the so-called 'low-cost' private schools, including international school chains; while in England and the US, we have witnessed the spread of academies and charter schools, where the so-called 'failing' public schools are handing over to private management. Such schools have 'flexible working arrangements', which simply means less protections and more precarious work for teachers.

Colleagues, if public schools are failing, the solution is not to abandon, but to strengthen them. Public schools are

inclusive and sustainable, and the greatest equaliser of opportunities.

Outcomes vs inputs

We also see a shift in the global education discourse, from quality education for all to learning outcomes for all. The proponents of this discourse argue that we need to make a shift from access and inputs to outputs and outcomes. Positive as it may sound, in reality this means only focusing on narrow, measurable learning outcomes, quite often in literacy and numeracy.

Of course, literacy and numeracy are important, but education goes far beyond the ability to read, write and count.

Focusing only on what is measured misses the point by leaving out higher order skills, competences, capabilities and values such as problem-solving, creativity, adaptability, tolerance and global citizenship. In instances where schools and teachers are forced to teach to the test, the curriculum is narrowed, leaving little room for those subjects or learning areas that are not tested. No wonder such important aspects of the curriculum as climate change and sustainable development are often pushed to the periphery.

Olympic approach to education

Focusing on competition rather than collaboration is what I call the Olympic approach. At the Olympic games, each athlete and each country tries to be at the top of the medal table, while those who are at the bottom are considered not so capable. The Olympic games produce winners and losers. That's not how our education systems ought to function. Our education systems should be about winners and winners! Every child, every student everywhere, should be supported to flourish and to achieve their maximum potential.

The status of teachers

Colleagues, teaching is a profession. Results from EI's survey on the status of teachers worldwide, published last year, show that the image and status of our once illustrious profession remains low in many parts of the world. There are those who claim that anyone can teach – just get high school leavers or university graduates, give them six weeks' training and deploy them in disadvantaged schools and they will deliver. [Programmes that do this] perpetuate disadvantage, deprofessionalise our profession and make it a stepping stone to something else.

But we can change all this by putting pressure on governments to invest more in quality education and teachers. This requires expanding and strengthening initial teacher education; ensuring that all newly recruited teachers go through effective induction and mentorship programmes, and that all teachers have access to life-long and life wide learning opportunities. As the 1966 *ILO/UNESCO Recommendation Concerning the Status of Teachers* clearly states, all teachers must be trained in universities or equivalent institutions and have access to free continuous professional development throughout their career.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that we as educators and unions should continue to take the lead, not just in defending quality public education for all and teaching as a profession, but also in defining the future of our profession and the education systems in which we work. This, we can achieve by working and fighting together.



DENNIS SINYOLO, senior co-ordinator, Education International. You can watch the full speech at www.vimeo.com/332436553. Have an opinion on this speech? Share your views on social media with #INTODiscuss

New appointments in INTO Head Office



David O'Sullivan

David O'Sullivan, a native of Birr, Co Offaly, was recently appointed as assistant general secretary in the Legal and Industrial Relations (LIR) section in INTO. Since 2015, he served as senior official in the section where he has advised, assisted and represented members in a wide range of fora including at boards of management, fitness to teach hearings, Tusla and the Workplace Relations Commission. He regularly presents at principals' seminars, officer training, conferences, branches, districts and principals' and deputy principals' fora. He represents the organisation on a number of committees including the review of the *Governance Manual for Primary Schools*, Education and Training Board of Ireland (ETBI), and the Board of Management Steering Group. He also attends and inputs to briefings of stakeholders on a range of matters.

He has previously been involved in the structures of the INTO at branch, district and national level. He has served as District 9 (South Dublin City and West County Dublin) secretary, organiser in Dublin West branch and as a representative on the Equality Committee for District 9. This year he assisted the work of the task force on participation.

Prior to joining INTO as an official in 2013, he served as a teacher for 12 years. During that time he was a special duties post holder and served as teachers'



Maria McHenry

representative on the board of management.

David's qualifications include a BEd (UL, 1999), MA (ITB, 2007), Post Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership (NUIM, 2010), Advanced Diploma in Applied Employment Law (Kings Inns, 2017) and an Advanced Diploma in Law and Education (Kings Inns, 2018).

Maria McHenry has been appointed as senior official in the Legal and Industrial Relations (LIR) section. Maria served as official in LIR, representing members in a wide range of fora, from boards of management to the superior courts. Maria has been advising on various matters, including parental complaints, child protection, staff relations, grievance procedures, bullying/harassment, disciplinary procedures, employment equality, Teaching Council investigations, and data protection. Maria has engaged positively with INTO membership through the delivery of presentations at principals' seminars, branch officers' training, principals and deputy principals' fora, and at national committee and branch level.

Prior to joining the INTO, Maria qualified as a barrister and was called to the Bar in 2011. Maria spent seven years working on behalf of the Ombudsman for Children's Office, carrying out quasi-judicial statutory examinations and investigations of complaints. In addition



Claire Garvey

to teaching experience at both primary and post-primary level, Maria has served successive terms on boards of management. Maria has extensive experience working with schools and has a strong commitment to education.

Maria's qualifications include a Bachelor of Civil Law (University College Dublin), Barrister-at-Law Degree (Honourable Society of King's Inns), Diploma in Education Law (Law Society of Ireland) and a Professional Certificate in Ombudsman and Complaints Handling Practice (Queen Margaret University). Recently, Maria completed a Diploma in Professional Regulation Law (University College Dublin).

Claire Garvey has been appointed as the new official in the General Secretary's Office.

A native of Cork, Claire has worked in INTO Head Office since 1997, initially in the Professional Development Unit (now INTO Learning), and latterly in the Education and Research section. She has worked closely with the Education Committee, co-ordinating research, the organisation of the annual Education Conference and the biennial Special Education Conference, and the publication of the Irish Teachers' Journal. Claire has a BA in European Studies (UL) and a Masters in European Social Policy Analysis (NUI Maynooth).

INTO Interns 2019/20



Sheila Murphy

Sheila Murphy takes up the position of INTO official and will be based in the Legal and Industrial Relations section (LIR).

Sheila has been a teacher in St Maelruain's SNS in Tallaght for the past 13 years. As well as her BEd degree, Sheila also holds a Postgraduate Diploma and Masters of Education from UCD. She has been an active member of INTO, working at both branch and district level for a number of years. Sheila was involved in district training, lobbying, facilitating at youth conferences, curriculum reform, and held the office of cathaoirleach of Tallaght branch.

Sheila joined the head office staff in 2018, gaining experience representing and advocating on behalf of members in both the Legal and Industrial Relations and Conditions of Employment sections. She was also involved in the recent task force on participation.



Muireann Foynes

Muireann Foynes is originally from Cork and qualified as a primary teacher from Mary I in 2008. She taught in West Cork before moving to Dublin to accept a position in Ballyfermot. Muireann then took up her current role teaching in St Paul's JNS in Ayrfield.

Muireann holds an Advanced Diploma in Law and Education from Kings' Inns and recently completed a Certificate in Data Protection Practice with the Law Society. She has been staff representative in her school since 2016 and is an active member of Dublin North East branch in District 15 (North County Dublin). She is also on her local branch committee.

In her spare time she is a dedicated Munster and Ireland rugby supporter and attends as many matches as she can. She also enjoys music, baking and podcasts.



Lisa Gallagher

Lisa Gallagher is originally from Galway.

Lisa completed an undergraduate degree in psychology and Irish in NUI Galway in 2011 and graduated from St Patrick's College in 2013 with a Postgraduate Degree in Education.

Lisa is currently completing a Masters of Education in NUI, Galway. She began her teaching career in Scoil Éinde BNS in Salthill, where she has taught for the past six years.

Lisa is a member of Galway branch and has been an active member of both Galway Branch Committee and District 6 (Galway, Roscommon) Committee for the past two years. Lisa is also an INTO lobbyist for Galway West. Outside of teaching, she enjoys running and yoga.

Continuing internship

TJ Clare, who was appointed intern for the 2018/19 school year, will continue his internship for another year with the Legal and Industrial Relations section in Head Office.

TJ is a member of the Dublin North City branch, he served as branch secretary, district secretary and district development coordinator. Over the past few years he has been INTO lobbyist for the Dublin West constituency.



Snapshots from INTO Congress

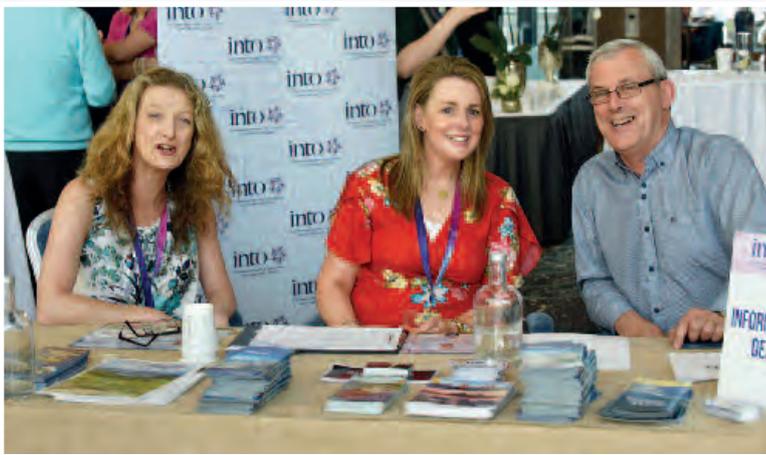
The last issue of InTouch shared coverage of the INTO Congress in Galway. Here are a few more snapshots from the three-day event.



Members of the local organising committee who did great work in ensuring Congress in Galway was a great success



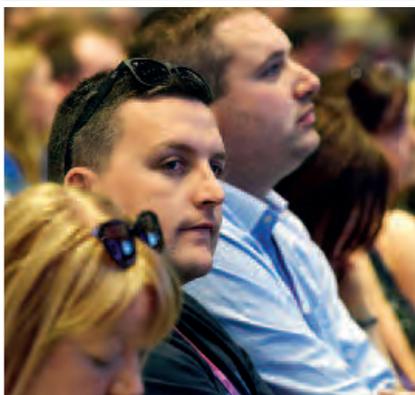
Mayor of Galway, Niall McNeilis, welcomed delegates to Galway



INTO Assistant General Secretary Anne McElduff and INTO General Secretary Sheila Nunan were presented with gifts to mark their retirement from the INTO



Minister for Education and Skills Joe McHugh met with INTO delegates from District 3 (Donegal, Leitrim)



INTO Learning Summer Programme 2019

INTO Learning is offering eight online courses and one face-to-face summer school. Registration for these courses is open on www.moodle.intolearning.ie. Further details on all courses at www.bit.ly/INTOSummerProgramme

Moving from mainstream to LS/RT

This online course will enable participants gain an understanding of the role of the special education teacher (formerly LS/RT) particularly for those teachers moving to this role for the first time. The course will also explore the current system, a variety of learning difficulties, diagnostic and screening tests as well as good practice in supplementary teaching.

ICT in SESE and STEM

This course explores the use of ICT to enhance teaching and learning in the areas of Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE) and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). It will provide a hands-on experience of online resources for science, history, geography, maths and basic programming.

Maths problem-solving: a process, not a product!

This course focuses on a process-led approach to maths problem-solving across all class levels. It includes an exploration of mathematical language, maths thinking and problem-solving strategies.

Learning through play

This course explores the concept of learning through play including the pedagogy of play, the role of the teacher and the benefits and challenges of play in the classroom. The course will include videos of play as a pedagogy in action in Irish classrooms.

Tá an scoil samhraidh Cumarsáid, Comhluadar & Craic ar siúl Dé Luain 1 – Dé hAoine 5 Iúil le costas €100.

For this course, participants can register online or using an application form downloadable on the INTO website.

Cumarsáid, Comhluadar & Craic

Tá an scoil samhraidh seo dírithe ar mhúinteoirí bunscoile atá ag iarraidh feabhas a chur ar a gcumas labhartha agus dá réir ar a gcumas chun an teanga a theagasc nó teagasc tríd an teanga ag gach leibhéal sa bhunscoil. Beidh ceardlanna/gníomhaíochtaí ar ábhair éagsúla mar shampla: amhránaíocht agus filíocht. Beidh siúlóidí agus turas ar oileán chomh maith le h-imeachtaí oíche.

All online courses will run from Monday, 1 July to Monday, 22 July and cost €35

Global Citizenship Schools: justice, sustainability, equality and human rights

This course explores the concepts of justice, sustainability and equality at a local, national and global level through the lens of human rights. It seeks to enhance teachers' confidence and competence when teaching global citizenship and supports INTO Global Citizenship School.

Literacy through the arts

This exciting new course explores how a school's discrete literacy programme can be supported and extended using the arts: drama, visual and musical arts. The approach integrates best practice in literacy pedagogy into arts lessons. It will also explore bringing a story to the stage from a creative writing and oral language development perspective including video footage of the process. **NEW**

Leadership and wellbeing

This course explores the concept of school leadership and leading wellbeing in our schools. Participants not only gain an understanding of leadership styles but also an understanding of current wellbeing policies and strategies, of workplace stress and of skills and communication approaches to support, enhance and lead wellbeing across the school. **NEW**

Our environment, our lives!

This course will equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively teach pupils about pertinent environmental issues. The course will explore the concepts of environmental auditing, biodiversity and interdependence, climate change and climate justice, environmental sustainability, and how positive proactive attitudes can be developed. **NEW**

Retirements

Pictures from branch and district functions to honour retiring members



Arklow

Left to right: John Boyle, INTO general secretary designate; Catherine Woodbyrne; Sheila Nunan, INTO general secretary; Mary Steacy and Donncha McGinley, branch secretary.



Rosses

Back row L to R: Emily Bonar, branch secretary; Pat Connaghan; Áine McGinley, CEC representative; Michael Weed, former CEC representative and Hugh Gallagher, chairperson. Front row L to R: Bernie Ní Dhuibhir; John Boyle, INTO general secretary designate and Brid Monaghan.



Mountbellew

Back row L to R: Joe Killeen, INTO president 2018/19; Carmel Greally, chairperson; Tom Flahive, branch secretary and Tommy Greally, CEC representative. Front row L to R: Anne Hynes; Mary O'Sullivan; Noreen Donnellan and Geraldine Briggs.



Kilkenny

Left to right: Sean Murphy; Liz Reade, branch organiser; Margaret Murphy; Marie Manning, chairperson; Margaret Carroll and Margaret Walsh. Photo: Tom Brett.



Galway

Back row L to R: Máire Kelly; Deirdre Timlin; Mary Costelloe; Henrietta Broderick; Bridie McNamara; Geraldine Mulgannon and Mary Cunningham. Front row L to R: Teresa Carleton; Orla Mhic Aogáin, branch secretary; Máire Browne; Joe Killeen, INTO president 2018/19; Mary Divilly; Peig Uí Dhonnchadha and Tommy Greally, CEC representative.



Ballaghadereen – Kilmovee

Back row L to R: Laura McMahon, branch secretary; Vincent Duffy, CEC representative and Kathleen McCann, branch chairperson. Front row L to R: Maria Mulligan; Patricia Conway; Pat Collins; Denise Deery and Sinead Mangan.



Ballyhaunis – Claremorris

Back row L to R: Anne Gallagher, branch secretary; Maura Joyce, chairperson and Siobhán Geraghty, chairperson. Front row L to R: Nora Kelly, Ger Conroy; Mairéad Uí Raghallaigh and Anne Shannon.



Cahir

Left to right: Louise Tobin, chairperson; Liz Morrissey; Sheila Nunan, INTO general secretary; Anna Sampson; Olive Heffernan and Brendan Horan, CEC representative.



Athlone – Moate

Back row L to R: Helen O'Toole, branch secretary; Anne O'Sullivan, chairperson; Carmel Browne, CEC representative; Joe Killeen, INTO president 2018/19; Dolores Killian, branch vice-chairperson and Niamh Keenan, branch organiser. Front row L to R: Darina Dolan; Tina Connelly; Noreen Gallagher; Mary O'Neill; Therese Lonergan and Bernie Finn.



Dún Laoghaire

Left to right: Rosario Kealy; Irene Healy; Jeanne Salter; Georgina Darling; Catherine Shanahan; Anne Moore; Marion Murphy; Sheila Nunan, INTO general secretary; Donncha McGinley, branch secretary and John Boyle, INTO general secretary designate.

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From booking a sunny resort to finding a **country cottage getaway**, sorting the **airport car parking** to treating yourself to an airport lounge, choosing the perfect **rental car** to making sure you have the perfect **holiday clothing** – Membership Plus brings you plenty of savings, just in time for some extra holiday spending money!

Visit the **Membership Plus website**, or download the Membership Plus mobile app, to view our Hotel & Travel partners including Butlins, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, Eurocamp, Forest Holidays, Haven, Holiday Extras, Jurys Inn, Maldron Hotels, Original Irish Hotels, Select Hotels of Ireland and many more.

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adventure is out there...

Start your journey with world-wide discounts from *membership plus*



www.membershipplus.ie

Deputy principals: interested in developing your leadership skills?

Deputy principal summer course (Tánaiste) 1 – 5 July 2019

Tánaiste is a FREE leadership summer course designed specifically for deputy principals and acting deputy principals and provided by the PDST.

The course provides opportunities for deputy principals to explore their leadership role in order to enhance teaching and learning in their school, to

reflect on best practice and to share experience with other deputy principals. All resources have been designed to reflect the deputy principal role. The venues this year are Blackrock Education Centre (EC), Co. Wexford EC, Kildare EC, Cork ESC, Kilkenny EC, West Cork EC, Donegal EC, Mayo EC, Carrick on

Shannon EC, Galway EC, Clare EC, Limerick EC, Drumcondra EC, Navan EC and Monaghan EC.

To apply for Tánaiste please contact the individual education centres listed above.



Show Racism the Red Card

Free education pack available to schools

The anti-racism charity Show Racism the Red Card, has launched a new education pack. The education pack is available to primary and secondary schools, youth groups and sports clubs throughout Ireland. It contains online resources and an accompanying video featuring high-profile sports people.

The pack was developed with support from the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration at the Department of Justice and Equality, as well as the Irish National Teachers' Organisation, the Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland, the Teachers' Union of Ireland and the Football Association of Ireland.

The aim of Show Racism the Red Card is to harness the high profile of sportspeople to combat racism. You can get further information at www.theredcard.ie.

Top right: INTO's John O'Brien speaking at the launch of Show Racism the Red Card education pack
Right: Lord Mayor of Dublin Niall Ring



#Friends

Pupils release video to promote positive mental health

Pupils from primary schools in Donegal have released a single called '#Friends' to promote positive mental health. Pupils from Scoil Cholmcille, Drumoghill and Scoil Mhuire, Ramelton, took part in workshops on friendship, resilience, tolerance and understanding of differences/preferences through Blue Ribbons Arts.

The music video was launched on Monday, 13 May and can be watched at youtu.be/kIYgYpWdfT8.

One Good Idea

Kilkenny primary school wins award for their energy-saving idea

Burnchurch National School in Kilkenny were named primary winners of the SEAI One Good Idea competition, for their campaign encouraging their community to reduce, repair, reuse and repurpose their t-shirts. They promoted the circular economy for greener fashion to save energy, minimise waste and make the most of natural resources.

The SEAI One Good Idea Competition encourages

pupils to create innovative campaigns that make a big difference to how we use energy in our daily lives. This year, over 200 campaigns were developed by young people all over Ireland.

The primary runner up was St Clare's Primary School, Dublin with their 'Scooter Train' and Corpus Christi Primary School in Limerick was highly-commended with their idea 'The Veggies.'



Pupils from Corpus Christi Primary School, Limerick. Photo: Keith Arkin

Irish teachers making a difference in Sri Lanka

Every year teachers from Ireland travel as part of a team to work in Sambodhi Home for the Disabled in Sri Lanka, creating an unforgettable camp experience for the residents (old & young) that live there. Nadia O'Shea, an Irish teacher who has settled and is currently working in Sri Lanka has coordinated these camps voluntarily since 2013.

What is Sambodhi Home

Sambodhi Home for the Disabled cares for 47 individuals ranging in age from 7 to 75 near Galle on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. The residents here experience physical and/or intellectual disability. Founded in 1964, Sambodhi Home is a private home which largely depends on the generosity of the local and visiting community. Nadia works voluntarily as a private individual (not an NGO) with Sambodhi Home and employs five local project staff who ensure



there are activities running throughout the year.

What happens during the volunteer camps?

Volunteers are utilized to increase the level of one-to-one support and care for the residents at Sambodhi Home. Volunteers can expect to assist residents and project staff on excursions to the beach, temple, park and other nearby attractions. They join the residents in daily art workshops and exercise programs. Volunteers are always supported on site by Nadia and the project staff, all of whom are fluent in English.

What makes our volunteering programs special?

There is no middle man or agencies involved. This means that volunteer funds

don't get lost in translation. Nadia runs the camps voluntarily and ensures that volunteers see how their money is spent while they are in Sri Lanka. The camps only support projects which have a direct and clear impact on the daily lives of the residents. As a professionally trained teacher, Nadia knows exactly how to utilize her fellow teachers' professional skills to bring the most positive and rewarding experience for all.

How can I join?

Currently there is a group of teachers travelling this summer and we are still open to additional volunteers who may wish to join this group. If you are keen to travel to Sri Lanka or be put on our mailing list, please get in touch.

Expressions of interest can be sent to Nadia O'Shea: nadiaooshea@gmail.com
For more information about all our projects, interested volunteers can visit our website: www.sambodhihome.com.

NADIA O'SHEA, Sambodhi Home, Sri Lanka



Young entrepreneurs from Gaelscoil Durlas Eile, Tipperary with RTE's Miriam O'Callaghan

Award: Genius Product

Product name: Mama-G's Sting Solution Kit
Colour-coded plasters containing customised remedies for different types of stings
Teacher: Cranait Fahy
School: St Anthony's NS, Ballinlough, Co Cork

Award: Financial Wizards

Product name: Beat the Quiz Master
A fun and colourful quiz book for adults and children
Teacher: Aidan Burke
School: Scoil na Mbairthre, Tuam, Galway

Award: Creative Pioneers

Product name: Detail Bracelets
Bracelets that store important medical information using QR codes.
Teacher: Ellen Costigan
School: Scoil Bheinín Naofa Cailíní, Duleek, Co Meath

Award: Community Champions

Product name: Chatterboxes
Creative and witty cards to encourage conversation and reduce the overuse of phones and tablets
Teacher: Cathryn Girvan
School: St Mary's Primary School, Dungannon, Tyrone

Primary School Entrepreneurs

Five and a half thousand children from thirty counties took part in the Junior Entrepreneur Programme All Ireland Showcase Day at the RDS recently.

The classroom projects that they displayed have created an astonishing profit of €198,000 from sales of €320,000 since the start of the year.

The most profitable winner was a 308-page quiz book called Beat the Quiz Master by Scoil na Mbairthre in Tuam, Co Galway which included 3,000 questions for children and adults. This mammoth publishing task created a profit of €8,799 from €12,000 in sales.

Award: Change Agents

Product: Re-Wrappers
Attractive and eco-friendly reusable food wrappings
Teacher: Aileen O'Connor
School: An Spioraid Naomh Cailíní, Bishopstown, Cork

Award: Class of the Year

Product: GalackTyco Trading Cards
Teacher: Fiona Santry
School: Castlemartyr NS, Castlemartyr, Cork

Award: Top Teams

Product: Get Up and Go – Bí ag Bogadh
An activity-based bilingual board game designed to improve fitness
Teacher: Eibhlín Ní Chuinneagáin

School: Gaelscoil Durlas Eile, Durlas, Tipperary

Award: Marketing Gurus

Product name: Coffee Scrub
Lavender-scented hand and body scrub made from recycled coffee
Teacher: Alan Walsh
School: Naomh Padraig Mixed, Baile Haol, Kilkenny

Award: Star Submission

Product name: Presidents of Ireland ruler
A ruler featuring images of every President of Ireland
Teacher: Elaine Lyons
School: Shountrade NS, Adare, Limerick

Ballaghkeen NS is Water School of the Year



Pupils from Ballaghkeen NS with Yvonne Harris, Head of Customer Operation at Irish Water
Photo: Maxwell Photography

Ballaghkeen National School in Wexford were the primary school winners of Ireland's Water Schools of the Year, for their hard work on the Green Schools - Water theme.

Ballaghkeen National School embraced the Water theme with actions such as installing water filters and butts; regulating tap pressure; replacing faulty taps; and adding basins to all sinks. Through awareness measures that included the wider community and multiple action days

the school managed to reduce their, already low, water usage from 8.87 litres per person per day to 5.96 litres.

At the ceremony, pupils also won prizes for their artwork in this year's Green Schools Irish Water Poster Competition.

Water Schools of the Year Primary

- Southern Region: Ballaghkeen NS – Wexford (Overall national winner)
- Eastern Midlands Region: St. Brigid's NS

- (Cortown NS) - Kells, Co. Meath
- Dublin Region: Hedgestown NS – Fingal County Council
- Western Region: Latnamard NS - Monaghan

Green-Schools Irish Water Poster Competition

Junior Primary Category (Infants – 2nd Class)

- Eastern Midlands: Aaron O'Neill, Gaelscoil na Mí
- Dublin: Julia Millo, Scoil Mhuire Lakelands, Dublin
- Southern: Eoghan O'Connell, Baltydaniel NS, Cork
- Western: Lucy McDermott, Irishtown NS (Overall winner in age category)

Senior Primary Category (3rd – 6th Class)

- Eastern Midlands: Niall Murray, Gaelscoil an Bhradáin Feasa, Meath
- Dublin: Alex Burns, St. Attracta's Senior National School
- Southern: William Stokes, Baltydaniel National School (Overall winner in age category)
- Western: Grace McDermott, Irishtown National School, Mayo

Special Category

- Raymond Eke, St. Mary's Special School, Rochestown, Cork

Get your kit on for Goal Jersey Day 2019

Irish humanitarian agency GOAL is appealing to teachers and students alike to get their kit on as part of Jersey Day on 11 October.

Every year Jersey Day captures the hearts and imaginations of all those in the classroom when team colours are worn with pride.

This year GOAL hopes to raise more funds than ever for its overseas programmes in 13 countries in Africa, the Middle East and Central America. GOAL provides emergency response, health screening, nutrition education and sustainable livelihoods to millions of the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

Recently, GOAL responded to the devastation caused by Cyclone Idai in Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Malawi. The Irish public dug deep and were extremely generous with their donations for this emergency and GOAL

is grateful for the continued support from schools nationwide.

Supporting GOAL isn't just about providing a band aid solution to problems such as drought. It provides important safety nets for vulnerable communities and pathways to sustainable change. It recognises that every person, no matter where they are born, deserves an equal chance to succeed.

Each year, GOAL receives incredible support from schools in every corner of the country for Jersey Day and is hoping for even greater participation again this year.

Schools who participate in both Jersey Day and GOAL's Development Education Programme are eligible for the GOAL Humanitarian School Award. For more information please visit

www.goalglobal.org/ghsa.

Register for GOAL Jersey Day at jerseyday.org or see ad on page 36

ALAN VARD, national campaigns manager, GOAL Ireland





Your Move!

Another successful chess jamboree

On Friday, 11 April, over 170 children from ten schools in Dublin and Wicklow took part in a hugely enjoyable 'Chess Jamboree'. The event was organised by the chess-in-education charity 'Moves for Life' and sponsored by Comhar Linn and CPL Recruitment. Many of the children, parents and teachers who attended had little knowledge of chess to begin with but they were guided through a series of mini games and now know how much fun chess can be. Social skills were encouraged (and rewarded with bouncy balls!) throughout the morning. Good listening was particularly evident as April Cronin (Irish chess international and former primary principal) taught the mini games and introduced the children to some strategic thinking. Many other jamborees sponsored by Comhar Linn and CPL have been held in schools up and down the country during this academic year, and more are planned for next year, especially during National Chess Month 2019 in November. Moves for Life has also run several courses for teachers in the education centres. For jamborees in your school or to express interest in a course, please email mfl@movesforlife.ie. For more information see the website www.movesforlife.ie.



INTO General Secretary Designate John Boyle, Comhar Linn's Brendan Kelly and April Cronin (in her chess shirt!) at the jamboree





Five All-Irelands in a row for Letterkenny school

The Scoil Mhuire Gan Smál, Letterkenny fifth and sixth class sportshall athletics team won the All-Ireland final on Wednesday, 27 March in Athlone. This makes it an incredible five years in a row that a team from the school has won the Sportshall Athletics All-Ireland Final. Congratulations to the team and their coach Miss Eimhear Bradley!

From Letterkenny To Bella Italia

Woodland NS share their experiences of Erasmus+

A group of six teachers and special needs assistants from Woodland NS, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal have just returned from a visit to an Italian school as part of an Erasmus+ project which is entitled 'Appreciating our native culture and heritage with a focus on sport'. These European projects are partly managed by Léargas, a not-for-profit organisation wholly owned by the Department of Education and Skills.

This project will run until August 2020 and during this time teachers from Poland, Ireland, Greece, Croatia and Italy

will visit each other's countries and schools where they will exchange good practices on teaching and learning based on topics relating to the project title. As part of the Italian visit, pupils from all five countries were asked to design a logo, which could represent the project. Pupils from Letterkenny worked with their teachers to gather information about Ireland and about their European peers. Four entries from each country were shortlisted in the competition. The winning logo was designed by a twelve-year-old Italian child, whose design had

incorporated the links and bonds that have been established and strengthened between the five countries since the beginning of the project.

Woodland NS now plans to develop further links with these European partners through e-twinning, where ideas and good practices can be shared and exchanged on a continuous basis.

The European Commission is responsible for Erasmus+ policies and oversees the overall programme implementation.

RHONA HARKIN BLAKE, Woodland NS, Letterkenny

Michael O'Malley, Aisling Gallagher, Martina Harkin, Rhona Harkin Blake, Evelyn Roche and Charlotte O'Kane from Woodland NS receiving certificates of participation from the principal of Melvin Jones School.



Woodland NS representatives along with Angelo Annese, Mayor of Monopoli, Apulia.

Cork Cór Fhéile na Scol



Pictured is senior infants from Saint Patrick's Infants School, Gardiner Hill, Cork City singing their 'Weather' songs on the opening night of this year's Cork Cór Fhéile na Scol which ran for six nights in a packed Cork City Hall.

The Cór Fhéile is a non-competitive festival of music, song and dance. Hundreds of students from Cork city and county took part.

INTO Advice

{ INTO advice for members on issues of importance }

Know before you go

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission share advice for your holiday

MONEY MATTERS

At long last after months of saving and planning for that dream holiday in the sun, the time for take-off has finally arrived. Before you grab your roller case and sombrero, have you paused to think about what if something doesn't exactly go to plan?

The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) share their top consumer tips to help ensure your get-away is remembered for all the right reasons.

If you need to cancel at the last minute

One big mistake people often make is leaving travel insurance until the last minute. As soon as you book your holiday, be sure to book your insurance immediately.

If you need to cancel your holiday before you go, check the terms and conditions of your contract if you have a package holiday and check the details of your policy if you have travel insurance. It is also worth notifying the airline and hotel about your circumstances. You may not get a refund but it's worth seeing if they can do something to accommodate you, for example, vouchers towards another flight or agreeing to let you move your accommodation to another date that does suit.

If something is lost or stolen while you are on holiday

If the worst happens and you have something stolen you should notify the local police as soon as possible.

If you have travel insurance contact your insurer's emergency assistance line as soon as possible after the event. There may be certain steps you have to take to make a claim – for example in some cases you may need to get a fully translated police report within a certain timeframe so don't delay.

If your bank details or debit or credit cards are stolen, notify your bank immediately so they can be cancelled or a hold can be placed on them. You can find emergency contact numbers on their websites or ideally have these written down before you depart.

If someone falls ill, has an accident or worse!

Medical care for health issues or accidents is one of the most common problem-scenarios those on holidays face abroad and can be extremely expensive.

If you have health or travel insurance and you have an accident or fall ill when you are away, contact your insurance provider to see what you are covered for. Some policies may include the cost of an emergency return flight if a close relative of yours becomes seriously ill, injured or passes away while abroad but this will depend on the terms and conditions of your policy.

If you are an Irish resident and have a European Health Insurance Card, you are entitled to free or reduced cost state-provided healthcare when visiting a European Union country or Switzerland. However, medical costs in some countries can be very expensive and travel

insurance may still be necessary to reduce any additional expenses.

What if your holiday accommodation doesn't reach expectations?

If you have booked a package holiday report the problem to your local rep immediately, ask for a complaint form and keep copies of any documents you submit. The complaints procedure should be outlined in the contract from the travel agent.

They must compensate you if what you get is different to what was promised – for example, if there is no pool at the hotel when one was advertised – but they should be given the chance to fix the problem at no extra cost to you.

If you are not happy with their response you should gather evidence (e.g. photos) as you may want to make a further complaint when you return home. This should be done in writing within 28 days. If you are still not satisfied with the outcome and your claim doesn't exceed €2,000, the small claims procedure may be an option for you.

If you didn't book a package holiday you will need to make a complaint directly to the hotel or whoever you booked it through as soon as possible.

For more information visit the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission website at www.ccpc.ie.





Social media, a tool

Getting started, tips and tricks on content planning and creation, fun ideas to try

Social media can be a useful tool for schools and activists, not just to communicate important updates, but also as a way to engage with parents and members, promote the school or branch's achievements, build online groups, and connect with a wider audience. Social media is a free and easy way to get your message out, that only requires a little bit of planning, time and creativity. Read below for some top tips on how to get started on social media.

Make a plan

Make a clear plan with a couple of goals and objectives outlining what you would like to achieve. This will help structure the content you post, maintain consistency, and focus your efforts. Think about how you will use social media – will the account be passive and used to broadcast updates and important information, or do you want a more interactive account that builds an online community and encourages followers to engage?

Establish clear guidelines on the types of information that can be posted, who can post, and the types of images and videos that can be shared (for teachers this should reference the school's policy on taking and sharing photographs and

videos). INTO activists are welcome to share content generated on the union's channels (Twitter: @INTOnews, Facebook: INTOnews and Instagram: into_news).

Plan out your content using a social media calendar. Mark key dates during the school year and any planned events or activities. Use the calendar to draft posts and organise content throughout the year. This will help during busy times when social media is last on the to-do list! You can also use free online tools such as Hootsuite and Buffer to schedule posts in advance across multiple social media platforms.

Choose your platform carefully

There are many different social media platforms, all with their own unique selling points. Think carefully about which platforms would best suit your needs. Consider your target audience, the amount of resources you have available, and which platforms will help you to achieve your goals. Start with one or two platforms and build a good base before considering adding additional platforms. It is much better to have one engaging, up-to-date social media account than three or four poorly managed accounts.

Review and refine

Make sure the content you are putting out is helping to achieve your goals. Check the analytics data to see which posts perform well, and what it is about those posts that make them successful – are they using photos or videos? Which hashtags did they use? Which accounts did they tag? Don't just keep doing the same thing if it isn't working!

Create a social media calendar – mark key dates during the school year and any planned events or activities

Give it time

Remember, social media can be a slow process. Getting it right takes time and effort. Don't get disheartened by low engagement rates. Give yourself time to properly develop your online presence. Schedule in periodic reviews to check in and see how each platform is performing.

Quality not quantity

Although regular posting is important to build an online profile, it is also important that the content you post is interesting, engaging and most importantly, relevant. Don't just post to fill the silence! Fewer, higher quality, engaging posts scheduled consistently are much better than frequent, poorly crafted posts sporadically posted.

Get to the point

Posts should be clear and to the point. Social media platforms such as Twitter have character limits which help to focus the message. Other platforms such as Facebook and Instagram allow for much longer messages. Just because you are able to post long messages, doesn't mean you should. Social media users often have short attention spans, they are bombarded with content, and will likely only read the first couple of sentences. Make sure any key information is at the beginning of the post and link to your

JANUARY Day of Education	FEBRUARY Safer Internet Day	MARCH World Book Day World Water Day St. Patrick's Day
APRIL Annual Congress World Health Day Easter Break	MAY Different Families, Same Love	JUNE Environment Day
JULY Day of Friendship Summer Break	AUGUST International Youth Day Summer Break	SEPTEMBER Back to school
OCTOBER World Teacher Day World Food Day	NOVEMBER Education Conference	DECEMBER Crossword Puzzle Day Christmas Break

Ideas to get started - activists

- Create awareness of your cause – create graphics with your key messages and simple illustrations, post these with a unique hashtag and a catchy tagline.**
- Create a Twitter poll to get feedback from your followers on specific aspects of your campaign. Ask them to vote on a particular subject, then generate a graphic sharing the results.**
- Start a conversation – ask your followers a question on Twitter. Ask them to post their responses using your hashtag, or as a comment on the original Tweet. Re-tweet the best responses to your page and collate them in a Twitter Moment.**

for activists and teachers

website for further information.

Be clear about what you want your followers to do. Do you want them to complete a survey? Watch a video? Read an article? Make sure that you clearly define your 'ask' and that you sign post how they can achieve this e.g. include a link directly to the page on your website. Don't make your follower work too hard – they will lose interest.

Be visual

A picture is worth a thousand words! Most people digest visual content better than text-based content. A visual representation also helps grab attention, and gets the gist of your message across quickly, before your follower scrolls past to the next post. Social media channels use different sized images. To make sure your image isn't cropped, use the correct size. Free online tools such as Canva have pre-made templates in the correct sizes for each social media channel.

Instagram uses square images 1080 px X 1080 px

Twitter uses rectangular images 1024 px X 512 px

Facebook uses a variety of image sizes 940 px X 788 px (for a post)

Use subtitles if you are sharing a video on

				
	~1.94 billion users	~328 million active users	~600 million active users	~467 million active users
	Engage with audience	Short frequent posts	Creative and visual	Good for businesses
	Takes time and commitment	Short tweet lifespan (18min)	Links not clickable	Less popular, text-based
	1-2 times/ per day	Multiple posts per day	1 time/ day	1 time/ week
	12-3pm	12-3pm, 5-6pm	8-9am, 5pm	7-8am, 12pm, 5-6pm

social media. Many people look at social media on their commute or in a public place – this means videos are often watched without audio. Subtitles help share the message of your video without sound.

Be creative

Social media is a creative and innovative place. The same rules that apply in more formal channels of communication, such as letters and e-mails don't always apply

online. Blocks of long text aren't as effective – break things up. Use shorter sentences and abbreviations (especially on Twitter where character count is key!). Add an emoji to distinguish between posts on different subjects. Incorporate hashtags and tag other accounts to get your message out there.

KIMBERLY KENDALL, INTO digital media and communications intern

Ideas to get started - schools

- ✦ Mark the first day at school – ask pupils to draw one thing they did over summer or one thing they want to learn this year on a post-it note. Video a time-lapse of pupils sticking their notes to the school hall. Collect them all up and review at the end of the year.
- ✦ Celebrate successes – create a digital gold star (a graphic image or GIF) and award it to students for outstanding work.
- ✦ Clearly brand important information so that it isn't missed by parents – either with a distinctive graphic design or an emoji.
- ✦ Class of the month – feature a different class each month – create a graphic with a photo of the class and a quote from their teacher about why they deserved the award.
- ✦ For a fun #ThrowbackThursday or #FlashbackFriday you could share a baby photo of one of the teachers – let your

followers guess who it is!

- ✦ Hold a competition – For example, you could ask your followers for help naming something – ask people to submit their ideas by email or direct message then create a poll using the most popular and appropriate responses.
- ✦ Share a short video – ask a teacher to film a quick 30 second video explaining a project they are working on with their class. Check back in at the end of the project and film/share photos of the student's work.
- ✦ Use social media to help teach students the importance of being careful about what they post online – share an image of something on social media asking your followers to share it to their social media account and comment below with where in the world they are based. Create a map showing where in the world that image was seen and shared. This helps to explain to

students how quickly and widely information can get passed around online.

- ✦ Choose a topic or cause you would like to focus on, this could coincide with a UN designated day on a similar theme. Ask a simple question to your students on that topic. E.g. "why do you think we should look after the environment?" – create a graphic for each response with the pupil's answer, first name, age and photo (if appropriate). You can schedule these throughout the month to promote the cause.
- ✦ Ask pupils to draw a picture of what they want to be when they grow up. Post the drawing with a quote from the pupil and their age. Tag local social media accounts linked to the profession, e.g. if a pupil wants to be a firefighter, tag @DubFireBrigade. Ask them to respond with a drawing or picture of themselves and a quote on their favourite thing about the job.

Five top tips for career break



For members planning to take a career break next year, please bear the following key points in mind.

Annual subscription with the INTO

1 INTO members taking career breaks for the 2019/20 school year can take out career break membership at a cost of €30 for the school year. This is relevant for teachers who avail of INTO member-only policies, such as the Cornmarket Salary Protection scheme, as you must remain an INTO member to maintain these policies. To avail of career break membership, you can send a cheque or postal order, along with your name, address and payroll number to the Membership Section, INTO, Vere Foster House, 35 Parnell Square West, Dublin 1. Alternatively, call Carmel at 01 8047780 to pay by card.

INTO members taking a career break, who plan to do substitute work, should not avail of career break membership, as an INTO subscription will be deducted automatically from their salary. Only this type of membership ensures you are covered for all INTO services.

If you are subbing, however, you should notify INTO's membership section to ensure that your correspondence, including your *InTouch* magazine, is sent to your home address, rather than your school. You can do this by emailing membership@into.ie.

Contact Cornmarket in relation to salary protection if you are a member of the scheme

2 Cornmarket offers teachers on career breaks options including:

- retention of full cover;
- partial cover;
- retention of the medical immunity provision (which applies on re-entry to teaching with SPS resumption, without need for a medical) while on career break.

A member's choice of a particular option should be arranged with Cornmarket in advance of going on career break. An alternative is to allow cover under the SPS to lapse entirely which will require a member to apply in full as a new applicant for SPS on resumption. Again, this may take a number of weeks.

It is necessary to retain INTO membership during career break to avail of these options.

Registration with the Teaching Council

3 Please ensure that you maintain registration with the Teaching Council. Even during a period of career break, it is recommended that a teacher keeps their name on the register, so that if offered a teaching job (substitute work), they can start as soon as possible. If a teacher allows their registration to lapse at any time, they will have to re-register in advance of starting work as a teacher

again, this may take a number of weeks.

Engaging in substitute work

4 Under the terms of the scheme, it is open to primary school teachers on career break to work as a substitute in Ireland for a maximum of 90 days in the school year. However, in light of an ongoing shortage of substitute teachers, this limit has been temporarily removed for the 2018/19 school year. Should this be the case next year, the INTO will inform members via our publications and social media channels.

Teachers on career break will move to their personal rate of pay after completing the first 40 days of subbing. Substitute work undertaken while on career break will not count towards increments.

Closing date for applications

5 Should you decide to request a further year of career break, ensure that your application is submitted to your school's board of management by 1 February 2020. Teachers intending to return from career break must also notify their employer by 1 February of their intention to return to work at the start of the following school year.

Teachers who have been on career break for more than two years will have to be screened by Occupational Health Services and deemed medically fit for teaching duties before returning to school.

≡ *Tips on health, wellness, travel and finance* ≡



Exploring Chengdu, China



I had always wanted to visit China. The name alone conjured up visions of megacities, the Great Wall, and a fascinating culture so different from my own. China is the world's most populous country with a population of 1.4 billion people which means there are a lot of cities to choose from. When I finally booked flights, it was the city of Chengdu that I chose to go to with my daughter instead of the more obvious tourist cities of Shanghai and Beijing. Chengdu is the capital of the Sichuan province in China and is famous for its pandas and spicy food. It is a vast, modern city with a population of 14 million. Truth be told, I had never heard of Chengdu but when I read about its pandas I was sold!

Pandas

China is the home of the panda bear. Wild pandas are found only in remote mountainous areas of central China. One of the main reasons that people come to Chengdu is to see the pandas at Chengdu's Giant Panda Breeding Research Base. It is located 20km north of the city centre. It is home to over 100

giant pandas and over 70 red pandas, which the base aims to release into the wild. They are housed in very large leafy enclosures. The base is open from 8am and this is the best time to go as the pandas are most active in the mornings and there are less people there at that time.



Sichuan food

We hired a fantastic guide to show us around during our time in Chengdu. Having a guide gave us

great insight into life in Chengdu and if, like me, you do not speak Mandarin it is a must do! Our guide took us to some local food markets and food streets to taste some world famous Sichuan food.

Sichuan food is a mix of spicy, sour, sweet and salty. We tried the famous mapo tofu, dan dan mian (wheat noodles with pork), sweet fried rice balls and many other deliciously spicy dishes.

People's Park

Another highlight of our time in Chengdu was visiting the People's Park. The People's Park is a public park and is the largest green area in central Chengdu. It features a lake, the gorgeous Heming tea house and several gardens. It is the absolutely perfect place for people watching. From dancing to match making, ear cleaning to fish feeding you can see it all in the People's Park.

China is a fascinating travel destination. It is a truly vast and diverse country with so much to offer. Chengdu was a great experience. It felt like jumping into China at the deep end. Our trip there was thoroughly enjoyable and we cannot wait to return one day.

Getting there

Flights to Chengdu from Dublin start from €400. A visa is required to travel to China. Tourist visas cost approximately €120.



TRISH MCCLUSKEY, travel blogger and teacher based in Galway. www.travelwithtrish.com

We will be busy at Foodoppi HQ this summer launching our new online CPD summer courses for primary school teachers on Mindful Eating, Making Science Fun and Food Education for SPHE. You can find out more at Foodoppi.com.

As this is our last issue before the summer holidays we wanted to share two of our favourite recipes, perfect for any end of term parties.

Wishing all our readers a lovely summer holiday break.

Scrumptious summer



Raspberry and fig meringues

Makes 6.

Summer fruits are delicious eaten in season, pairing them up with homemade meringues makes a dessert classic.

Ingredients

- ※ 2 large egg whites
- ※ Pinch of salt
- ※ 115g caster sugar
- ※ 250mls double cream
- ※ 2 tablespoons icing sugar
- ※ 2 punnets of raspberries
- ※ 3 ripe figs



Method

- 1 Preheat the oven to 110C/100C fan/gas ¼. Line a baking tray with baking paper or baking parchment.
- 2 Put the egg whites and pinch of salt into a large clean mixing bowl. Use an electric hand whisk and beat them on high speed for about two minutes until soft peaks form resembling a big fluffy cloud.
- 3 Continue whisking and start to add in the caster sugar, one tablespoon at a time. Keep beating for a few seconds between each addition of sugar. When ready, the mixture should be thick

and glossy. You should be able to turn it upside down and, if whisked properly, it should defy gravity and stay in the bowl.

- 4 Spoon the meringue mixture into a piping bag fitted with a star nozzle. Start by piping a dot in the centre of your meringue nest on the baking paper. Then, in one continuous motion, go around the dot twice to make a bigger circle 2 1/2 inches in diameter and then pipe around the outer circle twice to make the sides. Repeat this to make the remaining meringues, leaving plenty of space between them as the meringues expand as they cook.
- 5) Bake for 2 1/2 hours then turn off the oven and leave the meringue until the oven is completely cold.
- 6) Semi whip the cream. Wash the raspberries and figs. In a bowl add in 1/2 the raspberries and icing sugar then mash together with a fork. Fold the raspberry pulp into the cream. Fill the meringue nests with the raspberry cream. Then cut the figs in slices and arrange on top of the cream with the remaining raspberries.

Gorgeous green guacamole

This is a very fast and easy dip to make. The secret is using avocados that are perfectly ripe.



Ingredients

- ※ 3 avocados, very ripe
- ※ 1/2 small onion, finely diced
- ※ 1 large vine ripe tomato, diced
- ※ 2 tablespoons fresh coriander, chopped
- ※ 1/2 jalapeño pepper, seeds removed and finely diced – optional
- ※ 1 garlic cloves, minced
- ※ 1 fresh lime, juiced
- ※ Sea salt

Method

- 1 Cut the avocados in half. Remove the seed from an avocado by tapping the edge of a kitchen knife into the seed and twisting, the seed will pop out. Knock the knife on the edge of a counter and the seed will drop off. Then scoop all of the avocado flesh from the skin and put onto a large plate.
- 2 Pour the lime juice all over the avocado, using a fork to mash until it is very smooth. Then put into a mixing bowl.
- 3 Add in all the remaining ingredients, mix well and season to taste.
- 4 Serve with a variety of chopped vegetables, toasted flatbreads and nachos.

Tips

- Not a fan of raw onion? Soak the onion in cold water for 10 minutes and drain.
- If you happen to be part of the 14% of the population that doesn't like fresh coriander simply leave it out.
- For more heat add in the jalapeño pepper seeds.
- A pinch of ground cumin adds a subtle secret flavour of spice.
- Mix in sour cream for a creamier dip.

Storing

Guacamole oxidises, which means it turns brown. The lime juice helps to slow the process, but doesn't prevent it. Store in an airtight container. Use a piece of cling film to cover the entire surface top of the guacamole making sure it is actually touching the surface. Then put on a tight-fitting lid.

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 MSc in Food Product Design and Culinary Innovation and set up Ireland's premier children's



cooking 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.



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Teaching matters

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

The 20 Day Challenge

Dublin Home School Community Liaisons (HCSLs) use creative challenge to tackle poor attendance

The *20 Day Challenge* emerged in response to an identified need in the outer north Dublin Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) cluster. HSCL coordinators expressed concern about the number of children in the area with low attendance. An attendance focus group comprising of HSCL coordinators, School Completion Programme (SCP), Education Welfare Officers (EWOs) and principals met regularly throughout the 2017/18 academic year.

The *20 Day Challenge* was a key component of the response to this issue. From September to December 2018, it involved a cluster-wide art competition, entitled 'Every School Day Counts', as well as the development of a parents' leaflet, a professionals' guide and school resources (e.g. prizes, certificates, stickers, posters) to promote attendance in the school community. The *20 Day Challenge* ran from 21 January to 15 February 2019. Children and young people were encouraged to attend school every day, for these 20 school days, to successfully complete the challenge.

Results of 20 Day Challenge

Nineteen primary schools and seven post-primary schools took part. Across both primary and post-primary schools, children and young people attended school for an extra 7,000 school days during the *20 Day Challenge* time period, compared to the same period in 2018. 3,275 out of 5,336 local children and young people attended school every day. There

was, on average, a 7% increase in full attendance in primary schools, compared to the same time period in the previous year.

Positive changes

HSCL Coordinators noted many positive changes in their schools as a result of the *20 Day Challenge*. Generally, there was a heightened awareness amongst students, parents, teachers and boards of management about the importance of coming to school every day.

Furthermore, a number of schools are continuing to emphasise the importance of attendance. One school committed to running another challenge after Easter and another ran a weekly Easter egg raffle until Easter.

"It was very effective in promoting awareness about the importance of attendance in school and the wider community."

"Staff were happy to support it. They were delighted to have better attendance in the classes."

"There was a great sense of everyone working towards a common goal."

(HSCL coordinators)

Parents and students took active notice of their attendance, with one HSCL coordinator stating that the children are sorry it's now over. The winning posters from the art competition were displayed throughout the schools to remind students of importance of attendance. There was increased pressure on parents by their own children to be in school every day, with one HSCL coordinator noting that, "good habits have now been put in place by some families; for example setting alarm clocks earlier".

A number of parents reported that it was a great idea, with their children really getting on board and trying to be on time every day. One parent said that;

"I [parent] was sick one day and my son said he wanted to stay home and mind me but he had to go to school instead."

HSCL coordinators also reported that punctuality improved during the period of the *20 Day Challenge*, with families being much more aware of its importance. It was also noted that fewer children were leaving school early for appointments.

"There was great interest among students and it really motivated them. It got them to think about the importance of coming to school. It created a great atmosphere around the school and how much fun school can be."

(HSCL coordinator)



Pictured are HSCLs from participating schools along with AnneMarie McGovern and Noel Kelly, TUSLA Education Welfare Service.



Cumann na mBunscol

2019 Cornmarket Awards

Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglish, Co Tyrone and St Teresa's NS, Longford, won the Best Small School and Best Large School categories respectively at the 2019 Cornmarket Awards.

A trip to Croke Park for a class group from each school was their reward. Gemma Daly from Roan St Patrick's wrote an account of the day in Dublin:

Croke Park trip

Hello, I'm Gemma Daly, a primary 7 pupil in Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglish, Co Tyrone.

Our school won the Small School of the Year Award recently at the Cornmarket Awards ceremony in Co Sligo.

We won this award by putting together a portfolio showing our successes; what we do to promote the GAA in our school; the coaching in our school and the links with our club.

As part of our prize, we won a class trip to Croke Park. On the day of the trip we all got on a bus to Croke Park (it was two hours long). Once we got there we met our tour guide and we watched a 12 minute video about Croke Park and the GAA. Then we went on a tour of the stadium. We got to go into the changing rooms and get pictures with all the county jerseys. We went into the players' lounge and saw an amazing piece of art which changes colour showing both the losing and the winning team's colours. We got to go to the training rooms which the players use before the match. Next, we went out onto the stands and learned a bit of history about the stadium. We also



Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglish, Co Tyrone, were winners of the Best Small Schools Award.

A happy group from St Teresa's NS, Longford, during their trip to Croke Park



had our picture taken with the Sam Maguire and the Liam McCarthy cups.

After that, we got to play the interactive GAA games. It was so much fun! My favourite was the camogie game where you had to strike the sliotar against the target on the wall and then a device told you how fast you can hit the sliotar.

Croke Park provided us with some food. They gave us a bag with an apple, orange juice and sweets. They also gave us chicken and chips – it was so nice!

Finally, we got to meet John Horan (the GAA president) and he told us a bit about himself and the GAA.

I enjoyed the day very much; it was such a great experience. I loved every bit of the trip. A memory that will stay with me is coming out of the stadium onto the pitch, because I really hope I get to play camogie in Croke Park someday. I would love to bring the Sam Maguire back to Tyrone one day also.

On behalf of my school, I would like to thank Cumann na mBunscol for the award and for organising all of the games that we play.

GEMMA DALY, a pupil in Roan St Patrick's PS, Eglish, Co Tyrone.



Left: Ann Henry, Bohola NS, Co Mayo, won first prize in the Cumann na mBunscol quiz sponsored by Allianz at INTO Congress in Galway.

Right: Gráinne Ryan, Powerstown ETNS, Tyrellstown, Co Dublin, won second prize in the Cumann na mBunscol quiz at INTO Congress in Galway. Gráinne's dad, Tom, was a stalwart of Cumann na mBunscol in Dublin for many years.

Fidelma Sheridan, leas cathaoirleach, Cumann na mBunscol, presented both winners with their prize.

Thanks to Alan Black, Allianz, who donated the prizes.





All better, to the letter!

Writer Catherine Ann Cullen on using poetry in the classroom

“How much money do you make as a poet?” That’s the question I get asked most often by primary school pupils. “Just enough,” I always tell them. The top question from their teachers – “How can I use poetry in the classroom?” – has a longer answer.

For the past three years, I’ve been resident writer at St Joseph’s School in East Wall, Dublin. Almost every week, I visit other primary schools around the country too, under Poetry Ireland’s Writers in Schools scheme or through teachers who contact me directly. I write poems and songs for and with the children, and I try to foster their creativity individually and collectively with writing and art.

My latest book, *All Better!* is a version of a Latvian book of poems for children about being sick and recovering. Coping with illness, and understanding its effects, are among the strategies children learn to develop through the SPHE curriculum from third to sixth class. In infant classes, through the health and safety strand, children explore occasions when

medicines or pills are needed and the safety rules involved. Discussions on the latter can begin with a poem like *The Jellyleg Germ*:

*No way out of taking your medicine
Whether your name is Evans or Edison
With those bugs you must be firm
Or you’ll get caught by the Jellyleg Germ.*

The poem pokes gentle fun at germs and reassures children that they have the agency to frighten them away. Exploring illness topics with older children could begin with other poems such as *Owen’s Bone Blues* (about a broken leg) or *Ulta Ulrich Ultrasound*.

Poetry in the classroom can begin with any book, or none! Here are two of my favourite ways to introduce it:

- Write a class poem. A perfect theme is a class outing. Decide on a simple rhythm:

*On the bus to the water park
We kept singing “Baby Shark”.*

Or

*On the way to the zoo, it was pouring
with rain*

*A river was streaming down my
windowpane ...*

If your class is divided into groups, give each group a verse to write. One group can do four lines about the journey out, other groups can do aspects of the tour (activities, eating lunch, etc.) and the final group can do the journey home. Other simple themes for a poem could

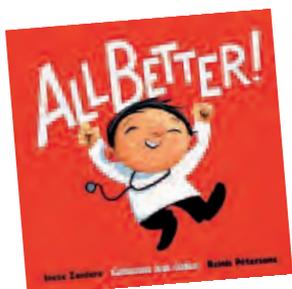
be your school, or the routine of the school day. Try to steer the children to end lines with words that rhyme easily, and once they have a line, you can write their suggested rhymes on the board. One-syllable words are ideal. When it’s finished, you can write the poem on the board or print it out to say together.

- Show the children an illustration from any poetry book, without reading the poem. Encourage each of them to write a poem about the picture – a few lines will do. No, it doesn’t have to rhyme. (They always ask!) You can choose poems that tie in with something they are studying: pyramids, dinosaurs, animals, or just let their imaginations run wild. In the end, read their poems and the original poem aloud, and display them together in the classroom.

For more ideas, see Poetry Ireland’s resource for primary schools, compiled by Enda Wyley: www.bit.ly/PoetryIreland and download the poetry kit for *Hopscotch in the Sky*, a whimsical collection by Lucinda Jacob, free whether you buy the book or not: www.bit.ly/hopscotchsky.

Get 20% off *All Better!* and free postage nationwide from the Little Island website www.littleisland.ie/books/all-better/ by using the coupon code ‘intouch’ at the checkout.

CATHERINE ANN CULLEN, Poetry Ireland Writers in Schools



All Better! (Little Island, 2019) by Inese Zandere (author) and Reinis Petersons (illustrator) is reimaged into English by Catherine Ann Cullen ISBN: 9781910411858 €10.00

Subject
English

Strand
Writing
Reading

Strand Unit

*Emotional and imaginative development through language
Competence and confidence in using language.*



Wild bees are the bee's knees

Positive action to promote environmental care

“We do not inherit the earth from our parents, we borrow it from our children.”

American Indian proverb

Our natural world is changing, our news programmes are full of the effects of global warming and the detrimental influences human behaviour is having on our environment. Never in our history have the actions of humans had such a devastating effect on the wider ecosystem. From climate change and habitat destruction to biodiversity decline and food chain disruption, it is clear that the impact will be long lasting. But, just as humans have had a negative effect, there are many actions that are being taken which can have positive outcomes for ecosystem rejuvenation.

Building bio-diverse ecosystems

School grounds are a great place for discovery at any time of the year. Apart from the benefit of being in the fresh air, under every leaf and in every rotting log rich biodiverse ecosystems are at work decomposing, recycling and rejuvenating the environment. Biodiversity in our ecosystems is considered to be an indicator of the health of our environment. We can help to promote biodiversity by providing natural ecosystems for native flora and fauna to breed, forage and survive in.

Nature is a rich source for scientific discovery, and understanding the world

around us through practical actions; observing the effects of seasonal change on plants and their relationship with insects, planting and monitoring vegetables in the garden, planting a wild flower garden in-and-around the school, building a bird table, creating a bug hotel, collecting dead insects, etc. By undertaking these actions, not only can we learn about the natural world, but, also, help create an environment where nature can flourish.

Encouraging bees in our school

Bees are the leading pollinator of flowering plants on planet Earth. In Ireland there are about 103 known species. We are very familiar with honey bees and bumble bees, which make up 10-15% of the species. Less is known about the 'wild' and 'solitary bees' that are the largest percentage of the population; they don't make honey; there is no queen; many of them do not have stingers; they don't live in hives; they pollinate up to 60% of all the native wildflowers. Schools can encourage wild bees by planting a native wildflower garden and providing natural habitats for wild and solitary bees to nest in.

By taking action as a whole school, all children can be engaged with the conservation projects

throughout their primary schooling lives and the school can add a valuable resource to the local community. Creating a bee-friendly environment is easy, creating a wild flower space within the grounds by leaving part of the grounds wild, or, providing nesting spaces and monitoring them for activity. If you prepare the grounds in September, by next May the wild flowers will be providing pollen and nectar for the wild bees in your locality. From September to October, wild bees are searching for places to build their nests; a hole in a stone wall; a rotting log; a mound of sand.

Younger children can observe the relationship between flowers, bees, pollination and the food we eat. Soft science skills can be introduced by creating inventories of nesting and feeding environments around the school grounds. Older children can develop scientific observation and recording skills. For keen observers, the National Biodiversity Data Centre have a range of species identification charts and an app that can assist in recording sightings.

P F JOSEPH CAMPBELL, Secret Life of Ireland's Bees is an environmental roadshow which aims to provide primary schools with the knowledge and resources to engage with bee conservation in the school grounds. Visit our website, www.secretlife.ie and discover how we can help turn your school into a biodiversity reserve.



Call for Entries to FÍS film awards competition

Primary schools all over Ireland are invited to submit a short film (no more than five minutes) across a broad range of subject areas including this year's special category: Dáil100.

Recently, the Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó'Feirgháil, welcomed students from Gardiner Street Primary School to Leinster House to mark the Houses of the Oireachtas' collaboration with the FÍS Film Project Awards 2019.

As part of the year-long commemoration of the sitting of the first Dáil in 1919, FÍS has introduced a special category in this year's competition called Dáil100. Students will be encouraged to commemorate the anniversary of the first Dáil, celebrate its legacy and educate themselves and others about parliamentary democracy.

"I am delighted that FÍS are collaborating with the Houses of the Oireachtas to promote training and participation in the film-making process," said the Ceann Comhairle. "The Oireachtas will commemorate the sitting of the first Dáil with a programme of events under the Dáil100 programme and our engagement with FÍS will allow primary school children to connect with their Parliament in a creative way whilst also teaching them vital skills."

Bernadette Meagher, FÍS Manager, added: "The Institute of Art, Design and



Pupils from Gardiner Street Primary School at Leinster House

Technology (IADT) and FÍS project partners, the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) are delighted to be part of the Houses of the Oireachtas' year-long celebration and commemoration of 100 years of Dáil Éireann. We look forward to receiving entries from Ireland's youngest film makers through the FÍS primary schools' initiative where they have the opportunity to mark the centenary in an

imaginative and creative way."

Rules, guidelines and entry details are available at www.fisfilmproject.ie.

Deadline for entries is Friday, 28 June 2019, and the shortlisted entries will be celebrated at the annual FÍS Film Awards ceremony in the Helix Theatre, DCU in November.

BERNADETTE MEAGHER, The Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT)

Everything you need is in your kitchen

Get your free *Kitchen Chemistry* resource pack



The National University of Ireland, Galway (NUI Galway) produced a resource pack called **Kitchen Chemistry for primary teachers** to carry out quick and easy experiments. The resource pack is freely available in English and Irish at www.bit.ly/sciencehooks

The pack provides: six videos, a simple explanation of the science, extension activities, and worksheets for early, middle and upper years.

A printable teacher resource pack accompanies the resources and contains worksheets for the pupils.

Oh so slimy Explore the science of stringy and slimy slime. A great sensory experiment.

Cabbage magic Investigate an amazing colour-changing liquid that can indicate whether a solution is an acid or a base.

Tie dye milk Demonstrate the scientific principle of surface tension.

Kitchen quicksand Exhibit the properties of a solid and a liquid using cornstarch and water.

Sink or swim Show the principles of density in a colourful way. Designed to appeal to visual learners.

Colours of the rainbow Recognise the variety of colours that are found in a coloured marker. All you need are coloured markers, a glass, water, filter paper and a teaspoon.



AOIFE MCDONNELL, project officer, PDST Technology in Education

Mark Howard looks closely at our left-handed learners

As a left-handed learner/teacher, I have always been interested in laterality. My grandmother was one of so many forced to change from left to right-handed in her youth. Having completed the Graduate Diploma in Additional Educational Needs at UCD in 2017, I decided to carry on with the masters, focusing on the teaching and learning of hand-writing and fine motor skills to left-handed pupils in Irish primary schools.

Background to study

The Latin derivative sinister is connected to the left, harm and evil. The opposite dexter, is associated, with the right, skill and aptitude. *InGaeilge, nuair a fhéachaimid ar an bhfocal 'ciotóg', tá sé ana-chosúil leis an bhfocal ciotach nó 'clumsy' mar a deirfeá i mBéarla.*

I would occasionally ask teachers I met how many left-handed pupils were in their classes. Some stated the figure, some might say, "Three, I think," others did not know. Could these answers have nation-wide commonality?

When I suggested my thesis idea to my supervisor Dr Catherine Merrigan, she stated that there was little research on left-handed pupils in the Irish context. There has been extensive research in Europe, Australia and the USA. Research in Estonia shows approximately 9% of the surveyed pupils were left handed (the

average would generally be 10%). Of the teachers surveyed, 46% felt that they did not have the expertise to teach left-handed pupils effectively. Another study showed that pupils can spend up to 60% of the school day on written tasks. Could this mean that left-handed pupils are being left to their own devices to resolve an issue with acquiring and developing hand-writing skills?

I collected data on a national and local

I would occasionally ask teachers I met how many left-handed pupils were in their classes. Some stated the figure, some might say, "Three, I think," others did not know.

level. A control and intervention group were used to record change. Surveyed teachers (sincere thanks to you all!) received their teacher education in one of

the Irish Colleges of Education from 1975 to 2018, with one trained in the UK. Regarding training received in the teaching of fine motor and hand-writing skills, 43% said none, 23% said very little and 33% said it was integrated into other subjects. Some classes had 25% of pupils who were left handed, far more than the average 10%. 67% of the teachers had to check how many left-handed pupils they had. 47% of teachers never raised pupils' laterality with parents at parent/teacher meetings. One teacher indicated a pupil used one hand in school and the other hand at home. This only came to light from one such meeting.

Regarding traits of left-handed pupils, 17% of teachers said they were generally untidy, 23% said they were creative and artistic, 13% said they had poor fine motor skills, 20% said they had poor handwriting. When asked if left-handed pupils needed support with handwriting, 80% said yes but made no suggestion how support could be given, 13% said it was not necessary to give support. When teaching handwriting, 30% of teachers used whole class teaching, feeling there was no time or it was not necessary to allocate tuition to left-handed learners. Of the teachers who did allocate specific time to left-handed pupils, this worked out at 3% of a week's tuition. 70% of teachers had never participated in CPD in

handwriting skills and felt they had little expertise in teaching left-handed pupils. 33% of the teachers felt that they were not confident in teaching left-handed learners and some of these teachers were left-handed themselves.

The crunch question in my opinion was: is left-handed laterality an additional need? 13% said yes and 87% said no even though many teachers noted how they felt left handers often produce untidy work, are disorganised or even may have language processing and/or developmental coordination disorder.

The six week intervention

A six week intervention (samples of which you can find in the boxes) produced noticeable improvements in dexterity, pencil/pen grip, page orientation, seating position, accuracy in letter formation and layout of the pupils' work. The group was very enthusiastic and engaged fully during the sessions. These changes/improvements naturally need to be scaffolded by the class and special education teachers long after the direct intervention has occurred. Does every school include a section in the school hand-writing policy dedicated to the teaching and learning of left-handed pupils?

The National Handwriting Association UK in 2018 described handwriting as "language by hand". Writing is an extremely difficult skill to master, involving linguistic, cognitive, perceptual and motor components, all of which have to be coordinated. How much more difficult then, for the pupil with opposite laterality to 90% of class mates or indeed teachers?

Dual laterality should not be confused with being ambidextrous. Many left handers write with the left hand but may open a jar or use a scissors with the right. Left handers may learn to manage using the right hand for certain tasks because left-handed equipment is not available or they do not wish to ask for it. Dual laterality should not be forced. There is evidence to suggest that learning challenges may occur in pupils with dual laterality as opposed to definite left or right dominance. In this age of inclusivity, basic equipment such as scissors are

available which can be used by all so that there is no need for a pupil to ask for a "different scissors".

Sample gross motor interventions

- jogging laps,
- standing broad jumps,
- development of balance with bean bags,
- beam balance and walks,
- throwing and catching,
- racquet and ball and shuttle cock and racquet,
- left to right games.

Sample fine motor interventions

- stacking,
- using tongs,
- tweezers,
- bead lacing,
- clothes pegs as tools to pick up small objects,
- joining and pulling,
- tracing,
- repeat pattern,
- left to right patterns,
- graded Theraputty.

Handwriting schemes

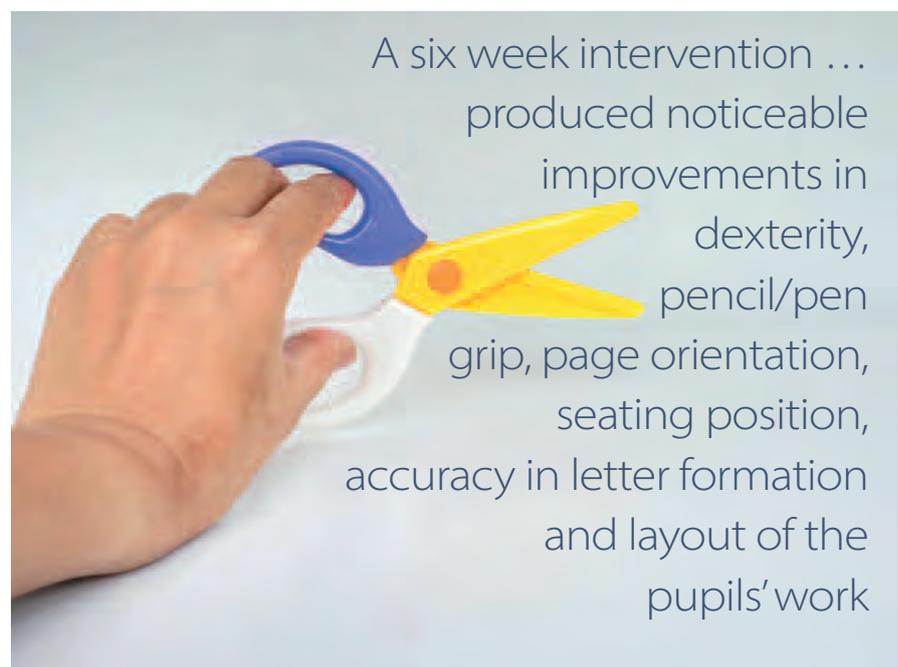
Of the schemes that exist, "Left-handed writing skills" (Stewart/Stewart/Chevalier) has been found to be particularly useful. There are indicators on the work sheets so that the writer is seated correctly without twisting in an unnecessarily uncomfortable position. Essentially, the writer is encouraged to keep the writing hand below the line. This is vital. There is no need for any left-handed person to drag the writing hand across the written word or to hook the hand above the writing line. I say this from personal experience.

The importance of developing confidence in hand written communication cannot be over-emphasised. This affects all aspects of learning and develops self-esteem.

Handwriting should develop in conjunction with keyboard skills.

Needless to say, many left-handed people have excellent handwriting, are wonderful orators, are extremely talented in so many spheres be it sport, entertainment, business or government but as teachers, it is our duty to make sure we are assisting all our pupils and not unwittingly overlooking any who may need support which could make a long-term difference.

MARK HOWARD is a special education teacher in Delgany NS.





Wild Teaching Paul O'Donnell tells us how to bring the outdoors into the classroom

This lesson for June has been adapted from *Wild Teaching*. Learn about elderbushes, foraging and using your foraged elderflower to make cordial.

Fun facts

- Elder bushes are fast growing plants found all over Ireland, often on roadsides and in hedges.
- They produce white flowers in June and black berries in August and September.
- Elderflower cordial is very popular in Scandinavian countries. You can buy it in the food section of IKEA.
- In Irish folklore the elder was linked to fairy folk. An elder cradle was an invitation for the fairies to take the baby away with them.

What you need

Thirty elderflower heads picked the morning of the activity, three litres of boiling water, 900g caster sugar, citric acid (get in a pharmacy), two oranges, two lemons, saucepan, gas ring or electric

hob, mixing bowl, sharp knife, cloth and sterilised bottles.

Lesson Content

1. Before making the cordial take the pupils on a walk to identify elder plants and check for ripe flower heads.
2. Write the recipe and elder facts on a mobile board for the pupils to take down while getting some pupils up to help with each step of the process.
3. Pour the boiling water over the sugar in a large mixing bowl.
4. Get pupils to carefully cut up the oranges and lemons.
5. Stir well and add the citric acid, oranges, lemons and then the flower heads.

6. Leave in a cool place for 24 hours.
7. Strain through some cloth and put in a sterilised bottle.
8. Dilute with water and have a taste test to see how many pupils out of the class like it.

Web links

www.bit.ly/2WTLLil for a video on how to make the drink.

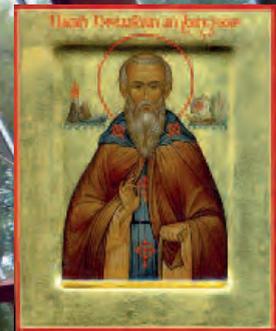


PAUL O'DONNELL is the author of *Wild Teaching*, a book of cross-curricular lessons for every week of the school year.
 – Matching sets of native Irish living things.
 – All planning notes included.
 €10 including post and packaging. To order a copy please email heritage@meathcoco.ie.

Subject
Science

Strand
Living things, materials

Strand Unit
Plant life, materials and change



St Brendan's voyage

You can travel through the centuries, from the Bronze Age to the modern day, at Craggaunowen in Co Clare. Jean Wallace shares some of the rich history of this attraction.

Craggaunowen is Ireland's original award winning pre-historic park. On site you will find crannógs, ringforts, an Iron Age road, a medieval castle and even some wild boar. However, the most intriguing inhabitant of Craggaunowen is not a person nor an animal – but a boat!

In the 6th Century, legend tells that St Brendan and his fellow missionaries climbed aboard their currach and set sail for 'The Land of the Promised Saints' – or America as we call it today! On their journey, they supposedly beached on a strange island that turned out to be a whale; passed a floating crystal column that may well have been an iceberg; and even passed a serpent spewing fire that some scholars believe could have been a volcano erupting in Iceland.

Some people question if a boat

made of oxskin and tied together with ropes could make it across the Atlantic but Tim Severin was determined to prove them wrong. In 1976, a team of expert boatmakers built a replica of St Brendan's 6th century vessel and, with Mr Severin at the helm, they set sail for America. The journey was long and exhausting. They met plenty of whales and even had their hull pierced by sharp ice. Two of the quick thinking sailors hung over the edge of the boat in the freezing water to sew a leather patch over the breach and seal it with grease. In June 1977 the heroic crew made it to the shores of Newfoundland thus proving that this legendary voyage could have taken place in a boat made of leather and with very little shelter.

Whether or not Brendan really did attempt to sail to the New World we

will never know for sure, but you can learn all about how Tim Severin proved it was possible right here in Craggaunowen. It is also quite likely these brave monks would have grown up in buildings just like those you will find at Craggaunowen.

Integration opportunities

- Music – Listen and respond to the Brendan voyage story
- Visual Arts – Create artistic work inspired by this story
- Drama – Explore the feelings, knowledge and ideas associated with the Brendan voyage

JEAN WALLACE, Shannon Heritage. To arrange a visit to Craggaunowen or any of Shannon Heritage's attractions, contact jean.wallace@shannonheritage.com or 061 711226

Subject
SESE (History)

Strand
Story

Strand Unit
Myths and legends

Coding in the classroom

Overview of the NCCA Coding in Primary Schools Initiative

It can be difficult at times to remember back to what life was like prior to the World Wide Web and smart phones. It's often said today's children are digital natives growing up in a world in which they have ready access to information. In July 2016, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) was asked by the then Minister for Education and Skills to consider how coding and computational thinking might be integrated in to the primary curriculum. In responding to the request, the NCCA highlighted the importance of working with schools to identify current practice in this area. From this, the Coding in Primary Schools initiative emerged and has involved the NCCA working closely with 40 schools across the country over the last two school years. The initiative had two phases each of which is described below.

Phase 1

Phase 1 began in September 2017 and involved working with teachers already using coding in their classrooms. Following an open call for schools to participate, fifteen were selected representing a range of school types including: urban DEIS, rural DEIS, scoil sa Ghaeltacht, Gaelscoil, school with special classes, small rural and large urban. It was also important to include teachers working in SEN settings and in multi-grade and single-grade classrooms.

Phase 1 focused mainly on finding out about the teachers' and their schools' practices in relation to coding. These 'classroom stories' helped to explore questions such as:

- what types of coding experiences are teachers providing?

- where in the primary curriculum is this work happening?
 - why did the teacher/school start work on coding?
 - what are the benefits and challenges?
- You can read some of the 'classroom stories' on the NCCA website by clicking on 'Find out more about Phase 1' at www.bit.ly/NCCACoding. Here you'll also find examples of activities such as coding BeeBots to retell stories, programming model drawbridges with Lego Wedo 2.0 and using Scratch code to



compose music. The schools' work in phase 1 helped to shape the design and plans for phase 2 of the initiative.

Phase 2

The second phase involved working with teachers who had little or no prior experience of teaching coding in their classrooms, and took place between May 2018 and February 2019. Twenty-five schools were selected and, as in phase 1, they represented a wide range of class levels and types of schools. The work provided an opportunity for principals, teachers, parents and children to share their thoughts on the place of coding and digital technology in the curriculum. As one teacher commented; "We are living in a world that is dominated by technology, as teachers it is our responsibility to try and prepare our students for their future."

Teachers were invited to try out a variety of resources as recommended from phase 1 and had opportunities to experiment with different approaches including play, unplugged and plugged

activities, and cross-curriculum integration. One teacher noted; "coding naturally lends itself to maths and science but would also work very well in literacy, art, geography and music". When talking about *Aistear*, another teacher mentioned; "the construction table with coding was the most anticipated station each week!"

Through collaboration with the PDST Technology in Education Team, teachers were offered ongoing professional development and support. One teacher reflected; "I felt the PDST training we received was excellent. The sessions gave me great ideas of ways in which I could incorporate unplugged and plugged lessons into my teaching".

Parents and children also shared their reflections on the initiative and classroom activities. The children enjoyed the collaborative and challenging aspects of the work, while parents strongly identified the need for digital technology to be a part of a primary curriculum.

Next steps

Over the coming months, the NCCA will share schools' experiences from phase 2 including examples of the types of activities and resources that teachers found useful. For schools interested in finding out more, keep an eye on www.bit.ly/NCCACoding. Findings from the initiative will also help to shape the ongoing review and redevelopment of the primary curriculum.

The NCCA thanks the teachers, principals, children and parents in the 40 schools which took part in the initiative.

Early Childhood and Primary Team, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment





A Fenian's resting place

Glasnevin is the burial place of Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa and the scene of Patrick Pearse's famous speech.

In the image Patrick Pearse is to the right of Fr Michael O'Flanagan.

Glasnevin Cemetery is the final resting place of many key figures from Ireland's past, however the cemetery itself has also acted as a key site in Irish history. On 29 June 1915, the Fenian leader, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa died and his burial drew thousands of people to Glasnevin Cemetery. His funeral has been described by historian Roy Foster as, "one of the great mobilising events" of the time. Plans were at an early stage for a proposed rising in Ireland and O'Donovan Rossa's death in 1915 presented an opportunity for republicans, young and old, to gather in Dublin.

Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa was born in 1831 in Rosscarbery, Co Cork where he witnessed and survived the suffering of the Great Irish Famine. In 1856 he founded the *Phoenix National and Literary Society* whose aim was "the liberation of Ireland by force of arms". The Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB) was also established in the 1850s and O'Donovan Rossa was an early recruit. He was imprisoned for his activities with the Phoenix Society in 1858 but was released the following year. In 1865, however, O'Donovan Rossa was arrested once more. He was accused of plotting a Fenian uprising, placed on trial for 'high treason' and sentenced to penal servitude for life. He was successful in a by-election

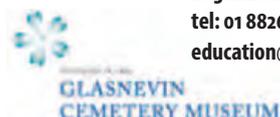
for Tipperary in 1869 and won a seat in the House of Commons but the result was deemed invalid as he was a convicted prisoner. After serving six years, O'Donovan Rossa, along with four other Fenians, was released under the agreement that he would not return to Ireland. He travelled to New York and became involved in the nationalist movement there. He did return to Ireland in later years and toured the country, informing audiences of his years in prison. He was protected by armed men to ensure that he was not arrested.

At the age of 84, O'Donovan Rossa died in St Vincent's Hospital, Staten Island. On hearing the news, IRB veteran, Thomas Clarke, sent a telegram stating "Send his body home at once". His funeral took place on 1 August 1915 and the funeral committee, organised by Clarke, featured the names of figures that would play a prominent role in the tumultuous years to follow. Some, such as Arthur Griffith, The O'Rahilly and Cathal Brugha, would be buried alongside O'Donovan Rossa within a decade. O'Donovan Rossa lay in state for several days in City Hall and on the day of his burial special trains ran to Dublin from all over the country. The funeral was very much a managed event overseen by Clarke and the IRB, and included the Irish Volunteers, the National Volunteers and

the Irish Citizen Army. It was reported that thousands of people lined the streets from the city to Glasnevin Cemetery, as thousands more walked in the funeral procession. The *Irish Times* stated that the funeral departed City Hall, reached College Green at three in the afternoon and did not reach Glasnevin until "nearing 6 o'clock".

Clarke made the decision to ask Patrick Pearse to deliver the graveside oration. Pearse was relatively unknown in 1915 but was chosen as part of the 'new generation'. Dressed in the uniform of the Irish Volunteers, he delivered one of the most famous speeches of the Republican movement which ended with the lines, "They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." In less than twelve months the Easter Rising would begin.

MICHELLE O'CONNOR, education officer and teacher liaison at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, Finglas Road, Dublin 11. To find out how a tour can be tailored to include such interesting narratives as the one above – please contact the Education Department at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, at glasnevinmuseum.ie, tel: 01 8826550, email: education@glasnevintrust.ie.





The self assessment tool that can support schools in planning for digital learning

Did you know that there are approximately 5.7 million teachers working in schools throughout the EU (as it currently exists)? They teach about 71 million students in a quarter of a million schools across the continent. In the broad context of:

- (a) 43% of Europeans lacking basic digital skills,
- (b) only 20-25% of students being taught by teachers who are confident with technology use and of
- (c) 90% of future jobs requiring digital skills,

the European Commission has adopted a Digital Education Action Plan which includes 11 priority actions to support technology use and digital competence development in education. One of these actions, falling under the heading of 'making better use of digital technology for teaching and learning', aims to support schools with the use of digital technologies for teaching and learning by:

- offering to any school in Europe the possibility of using SELFIE, a free, online self-reflection tool on the use of digital technologies;
- launching a mentoring scheme to scale up ICT-based innovative practice between schools at different stages of technology integration.

Part two of this action, peer-mentoring, will be developed in the coming year, but part one, the development of the SELFIE tool has been completed, subject to continuous refinement, and is now available to all schools in the EU.

What is SELFIE?

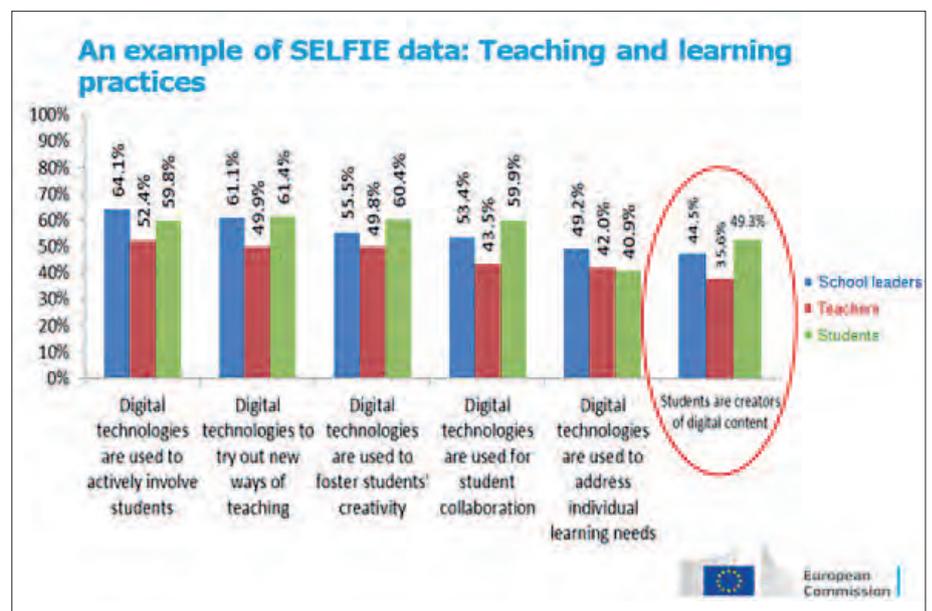
SELFIE (Self-reflection on Effective Learning by Fostering the use of Innovative Educational Technologies) is a free, online tool to help schools assess how they use digital technologies for

innovative and effective learning. With SELFIE, schools can take a snapshot of where they stand in their use of digital technologies, encompassing views of teachers, students and school leaders. This self-assessment process can help inform a dialogue within the school on potential areas for improvement. SELFIE also allows a school to monitor its progress over time. Through a series of questions for teachers, school leaders and students, SELFIE measures the way digital technologies are used for teaching and learning at your school. Questions for school leaders focus mainly on strategies and practices at school level related to the use of digital technologies. The questions for teachers are to mainly capture teaching practices and for students their experience and learning practices related to the use of digital technologies. Significantly, schools can customise the tool by adding questions that are appropriate to their context. The tool is currently available in the 24 official

languages of the European Union – including Gaeilge – with more languages to be added over time.

Using SELFIE to set priorities

SELFIE has been designed to help schools embed digital technologies into teaching, learning and student assessment. It can highlight what's working well, where improvement is needed and what the priorities should be. SELFIE gathers anonymously the views of students, teachers and school leaders on how technology is used in their school. This is done using short statements and questions and a simple 1-5 agreement scale. The SELFIE online tool looks at six different digital areas in education: leadership; professional development; teaching and learning practices, assessment practices; students digital competence; and infrastructure and equipment. Based on this input, the tool generates a report – a snapshot – of a school's strengths and weaknesses in



their use of digital technologies for teaching and learning. The more people in the school taking part, the more accurate the SELFIE of their school will be. The results and insights from the SELFIE exercise are for your school only and are not shared unless you choose to do so.

The findings can help you see where you are at any given time and, from there, start a conversation on technology use and develop an action plan for your school. SELFIE can then be used at a later stage to gauge progress and adapt the action plan.

The Irish context

In developing this tool the EU closely researched existing school self-assessment tools for digital learning and teaching in use all over the world. Indeed, one of those tools closely studied was the Irish eLearning Roadmap on which the Digital Schools of Distinction programme has been based. Following extensive testing – in 650 schools in 14 different countries, including Ireland – SELFIE has been painstakingly developed and fine-tuned and is now available for any school that wishes to use it to help assess their status on the digital usage spectrum and

SELFIE has been painstakingly developed and fine-tuned and is now available for any school that wishes to use it to help assess their status on the digital usage spectrum

to pinpoint specific targets to strive for as they move forward. One particular advantage of the tool is the capacity to copy and paste questions from other sources, such as the Digital Learning Framework or a WSE report for example, to include context-specific data in their report.

Currently, in Ireland, schools are in a far stronger position than in years gone by, when making progress on the technology front was fraught with difficulties and challenges, including lack of funding, inadequate connectivity speeds, large class sizes and the absence of a coherent and consistent vision from a department that itself was handicapped by inadequate resources. Although challenges remain, schools have certainty in relation to ongoing funding, Broadband speeds and CPD

opportunities are steadily improving. The publication of the *The Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020: Enhancing Teaching Learning and Assessment*, and, more recently, the *Digital Learning Framework* – which has been developed to assist schools in effectively embedding digital technologies into teaching and learning – provides clarity for school leaders and education providers in how to create a shared vision for how technology can best meet the needs of all learners. It is now a far more straight forward and achievable matter for schools to assess their current status, identify areas of strength and weakness and develop clear and specific targets to strive for in the months and years to come. A school, for instance, that is aiming to be awarded Digital School of Distinction status may find the SELFIE report provides valuable information in terms of plotting a way forward and formulating specific targets.

Use of the SELFIE tool in no way diminishes the centrality of the *Digital Learning Framework*. On the contrary, these frameworks complement each other and have much in common. Undoubtedly, if a school is to make significant progress in embedding digital learning and digital teaching, an excellent starting point is an honest and objective analysis of its current status, enabling the identification of clearly defined, attainable and measurable targets, i.e. self evaluation.

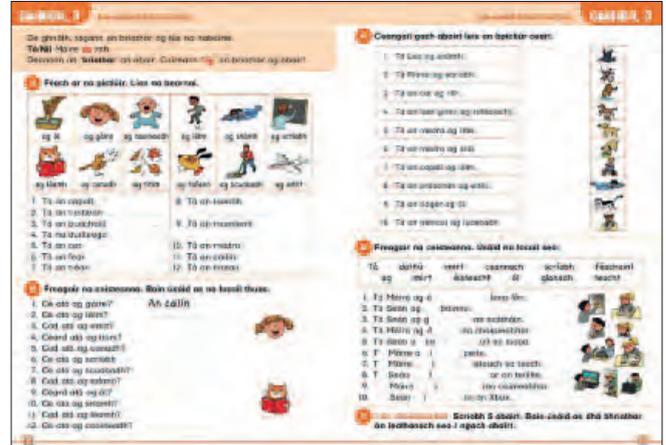
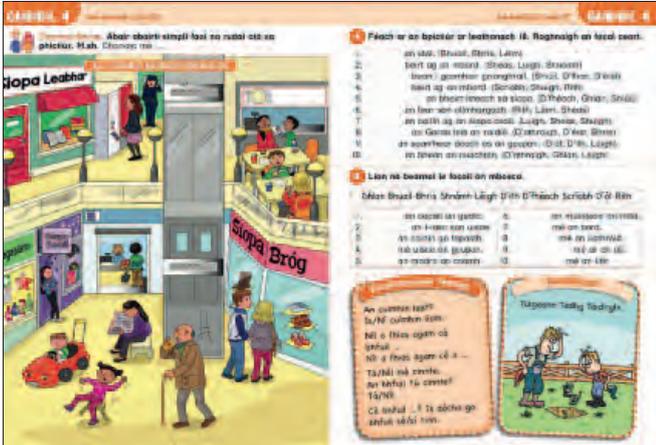
Key Resources

- www.bit.ly/DESDIGITAL – *Digital Strategy for Schools 2015-2020*
- www.bit.ly/PDSTPlanning – PDST Technology in Education, Planning Section
- www.bit.ly/DLFPprimary – *Digital Learning Framework for Primary Schools*
- www.bit.ly/selfieportal – SELFIE portal
- www.digitalschools.ie – Digital Schools of Distinction portal

ROBBIE O'LEARY recently retired from his role as principal of Sacred Heart SNS, Killinarden, Tallaght and continues to work promoting the use of digital technologies in education in Ireland and abroad.



Mo Lámhleabhar Gramadaí



B'fhiú do gach scoil leas a bhaint as an tsraith nua *Mo Lámhleabhar Gramadaí* do Rang 3 – Rang 6 ó www.educate.ie

Moltar go gcoimeádfadh páistí an leabhar mar leabhar tagartha agus moltar don mhúinteoir díriú ar phointe gramadaí in aghaidh na míosa. Clúdaítear na briathra rialta agus neamhrialta, aimsirí na mbriathra, an t-ainm briathartha, na tuisil, na réamhfhocail, ainmfhocail, uimhreacha agus a lán eile i gcomhthéacs nádúrtha sa tsraith chuimsitheach seo.

Tá i bhfad níos mó ná leabhar gramadaí i gceist leis an leabhar seo, mar go bhfuil comhtháthú cliste déanta ag na húdair Éamon Ó Braonáin, Flor Leen agus Art Ó Súilleabháin idir an ghramadach agus an contanam cumarsáide.

Déantar na rialacha gramadaí a mhíniú i slí atá soiléir agus gonta agus tugtar neart samplaí agus deiseanna do pháistí na patrúin éagsúla teanga a úsáid go cumarsáideach, tríd an teanga ó bhéal agus scríbhneoireacht.

Tá feidhmeanna teanga ar leith leagtha amach do gach mí sa scoilbhliain chomh maith le seanfhocail a bhfuil an bhrí a bhaineann leo léirithe i bpictiúir. Tá obair ealaíne ildaite, tarraingteach tríd síos sna leabhair a mhíniú cuid mhaith den teanga agus a mheallfaidh suim na bpáistí.

Tá nótaí breise (a thugann freagraí) don mhúinteoir agus noda teagaisc ar fáil ar www.EducatePlus.ie.

Is cinnte go bhfuil órchiste eolais, teanga agus cleachtaí sa tsraith seo a rachaidh chun tairbhe caighdeán na Gaeilge a fheabhsú agus a shaibhriú in aon scoil a bhainfidh leas as an gclár.

Úsáid sa rang

- Bain leas as an gCur Chuige Cumarsáideach chun an foclóir agus na feidhmeanna teanga/nathanna cainte atá molta i ngach caibidil a mhúineadh, a chleachtadh agus a dhaingniú.
- Déan tagairt do na rialacha ar leith nuair a thagann siad chun cinn le linn ceachtanna teanga ó bhéal agus spreag páistí leis na patrúin ar leith atá iontu a aithint ionas go sealbhóidh na páistí na struchtúir agus na rialacha go nádúrtha.
- Nuair a thugann na páistí na patrúin sna struchtúir cainte faoi deara, pléigh na rialacha do na míreanna éagsúla mar atá leagtha amach sna leabhair. Déan na cleachtaí a dhaingniú na rialacha.
- Oscail an leathanach leis na feidhmeanna teanga atá ag tús an leabhair gach maidin agus tabhair deis do na páistí babhta comhrá a bheith acu le páistí eile ag baint leasa as na nathanna cainte atá ar eolas acu. Spreag iad chun tabhairt faoi rólimirt agus seiftiú chun drámaí gairide a

chruthú agus na nathanna seo in úsáid acu.

- Tarraing aird na bpáistí ar na leathanaigh ag cúl an leabhair ina bhfuil na briathra leagtha amach go snasta i mboscaí eolais le samplaí úsáideacha a léiríonn na rialacha i slí atá sothuigte do pháistí.
- Bain leas as na pictiúir lipéadaithe a chuireann scafall ar fáil do na páistí chun iad a chur ag caint agus ag scríobh mar gheall ar na rudaí atá léirithe.
- Pléigh na seanfhocail atá i ngach caibidil. Tabhair deis do na páistí seanfhocail eile a roghnú agus iad a léiriú i bpictiúir iad féin.
- Féach ar na leathanaigh a léiríonn teachtaireachtaí téacs as Gaeilge. Pléigh na emojis atá in úsáid. Iarr ar pháistí scéalta gairide a chumadh le emojis amháin.

Ar fáil: www.educate.ie

Praghas: €3.95

MÁIRE NIC AN RÍ, Oifigeach Bunscoile, COGG.

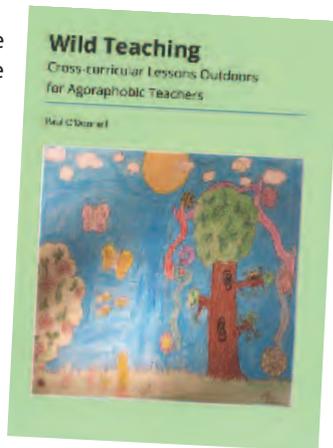


Reviews

The great outdoors!

Do not be put off by the title of this book. It is an absolute godsend for agoraphobes and non-agoraphobes alike who have a love of bringing the outdoors alive. *Wild Teaching – Cross-curricular Lessons Outdoors for Agoraphobic Teachers* is suitable not only for those in a rural setting but is also equally useful for those in an urban setting.

It is a beautiful resource for any class and includes a wealth of teaching ideas for all classes in primary school. Lessons are easily adapted for all ages and abilities. It is clearly laid out and many of the months are pictorially represented to introduce the features that are particular to the changing seasons. Cross curricular links for all lessons will aid the teacher in planning, and these detailed planning



notes can be easily incorporated into a teacher's yearly/fortnightly plans. There is also a Powerpoint presentation included which illustrates how to get the best use from the book, as well as website and online video links to support teaching and learning.

There are great ideas on getting started with the book for those who are

concerned about surviving in the outdoors with their class!

Commissioned and funded by Meath County Council and The Heritage Council. To order email heritage@meathcoco.ie. Cost: €10 including postage and packaging.

Reviewed by LORNA ROCHE, Blackrock, Co Dublin.

The Sleeping Giant – a forgotten Irish legend

Marie-Louise Fitzpatrick's take on a lesser-known legend is a handsome picture book with a charming story.

It begins long ago when druids roamed Ireland then moves onto modern times and centres around a giant who is an island. The portrayal of the island highlights 'continuity and change' so it may work as a history resource. In addition to this, there is a mention of Brendan the Navigator and the Great Irish Famine.

The story moves at a good pace and includes some challenging vocabulary suitable for learning and discussion in the first or second classroom.

The illustrations are bold and dynamic with plenty of Irish cultural references. For example, RTE and the bedtime national anthem, Funghi the Dolphin, the brisk Kerry tourist trade and a local trad session. Overall, this makes the

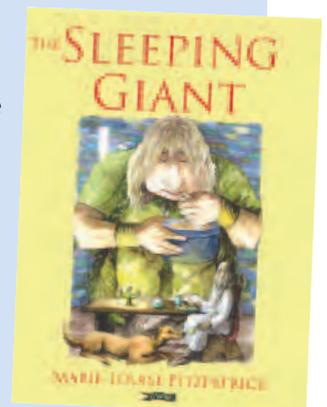
book a wonderful stimulus for oral language lessons.

Near the end of the book the giant meets a young girl called Ann who helps him fix his problem.

While her idea of the giant returning to the sea allows the story to come to an end and thus a resolution, it ends rather sadly since the community must say goodbye to the giant for good. This was identified to me by children from first class who, despite the poignancy, thoroughly enjoyed the book.

O'Brien Press. ISBN:9781788490895. Cost: €9.99.

Reviewed by STUART PURCELL, Co Dublin.



Daily English reading practice

180 Days of Reading is a series of seven workbooks, each targeting primary school classes from senior infants to sixth class.

Each workbook offers a page of daily English reading practice for every day of the school year and helps pupils to build their reading comprehension, fluency, vocabulary, and word study skills using daily practice activities.

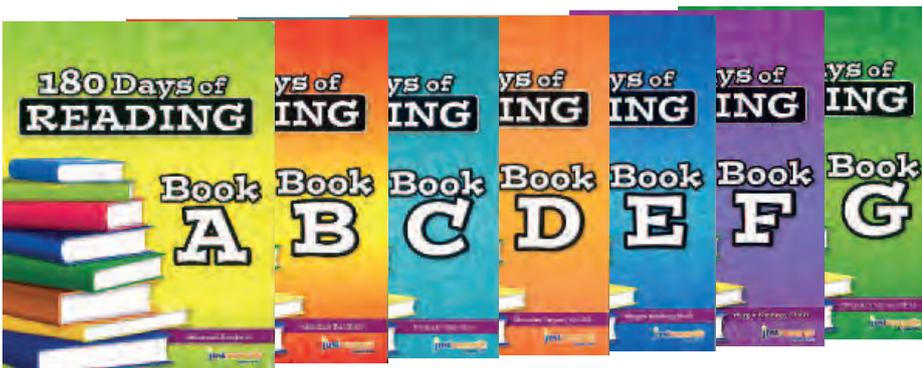
Days one to three cover a short piece of text with multiple choice comprehension questions. Day four is a longer text while day five is a writing task.

Class teachers are free to photocopy pages from the books for classroom use.

The series would work well from senior infants to sixth class, or for children accessing SET. One drawback of the books is that they are in black and white.

Just Rewards. Book A ISBN: 978-1-9997105-7-6, Book B ISBN: 978-1-9997105-8-3, Book C ISBN: 978-1-9997105-9-0, Book D ISBN: 978-1-9996350-0-8, Book E ISBN: 978-1-9996350-1-5, Book F ISBN: 978-1-9996350-2-2, Book G ISBN: 978-1-9996350-3-9. Cost: €24.99 each, available from www.justrewards.ie.

Reviewed by AILEEN HORKAN, Ballina, Co Mayo.



Finishing Touches

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

Noticeboard



President's dinner

The president's dinner, in honour of INTO President Feargal Brougham, will be held on 5 October 2019 in the Grand Hotel, Malahide.

If you would like to attend please contact Anita Hogan by emailing intodistrict15@into.ie for tickets.

Tickets cost €80



Carysfort Graduates 1979

A reunion will be held on Saturday, 19 October in the Tullamore Court.

Limited number of places available
Register your interest at carysfort79@gmail.com

Clarification

The drama lesson in last month's InTouch, 'The Hairy Toe', was submitted by Helen Hallissey. Helen is a teacher in Scoil Mhuire, Ballincollig, Co Cork and a member of the Association for Drama in Education Ireland (ADEI).



Global Citizenship summer course

New face-to-face, interactive and participative EPV-credited summer course* takes place in Club na Múinteoirí, in Dublin city centre from 1st to 5th July. Go to: www.into.ie (Global Citizenship School) for more information and registration. Cost is €35 (only) and includes lunch.

*An ONLINE Global Citizenship School Summer Course is also available. See "moodle.intolearning.ie" for details.



Cycle across America

Primary teacher and INTO member, Shane Maguire is cycling across America, from Oregon to New York, this summer to raise funds for the Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association. Shane teaches in Saint Attracta's Senior National School in Meadowbrook, Dublin 16. The 5000km cycle will begin on 24 June 2019 on the Pacific West Coast. Shane is self-funding the entire trip and every cent raised will go towards the provision of specialist medical equipment and home care assistance for people living with MND.

If any school or class would like to host a fundraising activity in support of this event, it would be greatly appreciated.

To donate, please go to the following link

https://www.idonate.ie/fundraiser/1378133_cycle-across-america-2019-for-imnda.html



Teaching water safety

Water Safety Ireland has created an educational resource for primary schools called PAWS (Primary Aquatics Water Safety). PAWS outlines water safety guidelines for children of every age and is available digitally to every school in the country.

PAWS teaches children how to be safe around water in homes, farms, pools, beaches and on our waterways, and is written and designed for different age groups.

The PAWS programme has been developed in partnership with The Educational Company of Ireland. Their platform is already used daily by many teachers all over the country – <http://paws.edco.ie/>.

English and Irish digital lesson books are available for each class band with interactive puzzles to match. The lessons can be delivered in just a few hours of class time and on completion each class can receive a Water Safety Ireland PAWS certificate free of charge – <http://iwspaws.com/>.

More digital resources are available on www.iws.ie in the Education section including water safety magazines, workbooks, posters and leaflets. Hard copy versions of these are available on request and free of charge from Water Safety Ireland headquarters – info@iws.ie.



Two pages with Comhar Linn prizewinners, crossword, resources for the classroom and useful links

Comhar Linn Draw winners

March Draw

Car – Toyota Yaris Hybrid

Jerry Coakley, Ballyheeda NS,
Ballinhassig, Co Cork.

Cash €2,000

Maureen Kinnerk, Kilrush, Co Clare.

Cash €1,000

Brigid Murray, Our Lady Immaculate
Junior School, Darndale, Dublin 17.

Brian Murray, Ballyconnell NS,
Ballyconnell, Co Cavan.

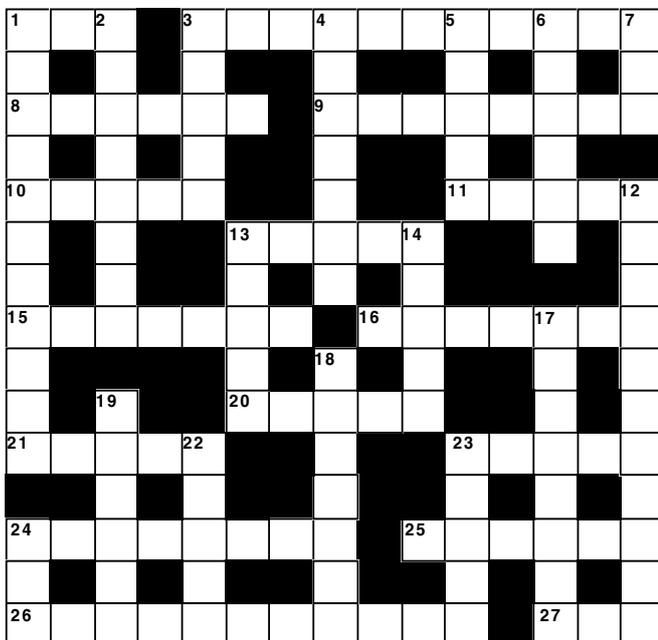
Mary Harrison, Kilcolgan, Co Galway.

Right: March 2019 car winner
Jerry Coakley



Comhar Linn Crossword no199

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 9th August 2019. Photocopied crosswords are not accepted.



ACROSS

1. Ms Ayres will appear quietly, before morning. (3)
- 3, 10a & 16a. Was it the Monkeys' Mardi Gras or the Foxes' Fastnacht that inspired Saint Saens to write this? (3,8,2,3,7)
8. May Con use such imperial units? (6)
9. Your standard play their part in the school concert? An affirmation of quality, that! (5,3)
10. See 3 across.
11. Left for a European city. (5)
13. Is it really high land, or is it just pretending? (5)
15. Ron's lit up part of his nose! (7)
16. See 3 across.
20. Get Daddy a friend that's popish. (5)
21. It's initially how our infants start to lift up. (5)
23. A thousand? Splendid! (5)
24. How can he outgun a French Calvinist? (8)
25. Desk found by a handsome chap around the Old City. (6)
26. For a second, the Lone Ranger's horse gets badly lamed! (6,5)
27. X marks the centre of Ostend. (3)

DOWN

1. Ho! To provide such a close race result! (5-6)
2. How has Sam eaten the sea cows? (7)
3. Subject of the article before me. (5)
4. Ms Chanel finds the fanatic some food. (7)
5. They may house birds in North-Eastern streets. (5)
6. A sailor in vile surroundings is capable of surviving. (6)
7. The entire auction? No, just one item. (3)
12. Spin a coin and veer into sleepless movement. (4,3,4)
13. Airship that makes a character hobble. (5)
14. The last part of a fish gets Capone. (5)
17. Jade can't possibly be this near! (8)
18. A letter from St Paul might advise that you sleep it off. (7)
19. A Roman writer is let right into the wake. (6)
22. Three got disorientated yonder. (5)
23. Thin oatmeal starts to go red under electric light. (5)
24. Some of the whiskey is not hers. (3)

NAME:

ADDRESS:

INTO Membership No.

To read the Crossword Competition Terms & Conditions and INTO's Data Privacy Policy please visit www.into.ie/ROI/Benefits/Competitions

Gordius – In Touch Crossword No. 198, April 2019 Solutions (winners names will be displayed in the next InTouch issue)

Across: 1. Carson City 6. Warm 10. Class dismissed 12. Consort 15. Altar 17. Avon 18. Raid 19. Corgi 21. Trainee 23. Angle 24. Made 25. Disc 26. Fungi 28. Awesome 33. Uncoupled 34. Savoy 35. Tory 36. Fahrenheit

Down: 1. Cock 2. Reasoning 3. Ousts 4. Coder 5. Test 7. Asset 8. Modernised 9. Finance 13. Omar 14. Tapioca 16. Breadfruit 20. Road movie 21. Tedious 22. Ease 27. Nicer 29. Wider 30. Susan 31. Plea 32. Eyot

Gordius – InTouch No. 197 winners names are: Cilian Murphy, Artane, Dublin 5 and Aodán Ó Cearbhaill, Gaoth Dobhair, Co Dhún na nGall.

Each month Children's Books Ireland recommend a book of the month for primary pupils



CBI recommended read – June

POG

Written by Pádraig Kenny. Chicken House Books, April 2019.
ISBN 9781911490395. Paperback, 280pp. €8.52

In a rickety old house on the edge of a living, breathing forest, the story unfolds. Thirteen-year-old Penny and eleven-year-old David have moved here from their sunny London home, in an effort to make a fresh start with their father. The family is grief stricken; their mother 'arrives' to the house late on moving day, in the form of ashes in a bronze urn which makes its home on the mantelpiece.



Enter Pog Lumpkin, small and furry, wearing a woollen jacket, waistcoat and belt. He is one of the First Folk, whose job it is to guard a portal into a sinister world full of nefarious creatures that lies behind the house's cellar door. He's been living in the attic for years, protecting the portal (called 'the Necessary') with his enchanted staff.

Despite meaning to stay invisible to humans, Pog reveals himself to the children and they become friends as he explains his mission. But Pog doesn't know that dark powers have awakened deep within the forest, by the gnarled tree that grows in the clearing. And David, the most vulnerable of the family, succumbs to intense evil as he's sucked into believing he can bring his mother back. Tension builds slowly over the chapters, rushing to a dramatic climax, filled with fantastical creatures.

Pádraig Kenny has invented a cast of vivid, unforgettable characters in this lyrical tale, and at the centre is the small family whose grief may finally be able to bloom into a green shoot of hope. Ages 8–12

CBI is the national children's books organisation of Ireland.

For further information and more reviews, visit www.childrensbooksireland.ie

InTouch competitions and draws

From time to time, the INTO runs competitions and draws for members via InTouch, our e-newsletter, website or social media. Only essential data required for the running of the competition is requested from members. The data collected is deleted once winners have been selected.

The full name and county of prize winners is published by the INTO. By entering the competition, it is assumed consent is given by members for publication of these details.

For more information on T&Cs for competitions visit the Benefits section of the INTO website.

scoilnet



Star site

Most viewed

The most viewed resources at the start of this month

- 1

ISLAM

<http://bit.ly/islamscoilnet>

PowerPoint presentation giving information on the Islamic religion including history, beliefs, traditions and customs.
- 2

GRAMADACH SCOILNET 02 - INNÉ: ONE SYLLABLE BROAD VERBS

<http://bit.ly/OneSyllableVerbs>

Irish grammar presentation that presents the rules in a clear way.
- 3

IRISH FAMINE COLLECTION

<http://bit.ly/IrishFamine/>

A collection of resources assembled by the Scoilnet team.
- 4

WHOLE CLASS MATHS GAME – CAPACITY

<http://bit.ly/mathscapacity>

Created by a Dublin-based primary teacher.
- 5

BACKGROUND TO WORLD WAR II

www.youtube.be/8KuzBYMLkH4

A five minute YouTube animation that gives the basic background to World War II.
- 6

THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PYJAMAS – DISCUSSION GUIDE

www.socialstudies.com/pdf/BVH119DVG.pdf

Explores themes such as humanity, innocence, prejudice and discrimination.
- 7

CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS

<http://bit.ly/columbusresource>

Teacher-created resources to help get students started on a class project – first/second class.
- 8

CREATIVE DRAMA LESSONS

www.childdrama.com/lessons.html

List of class activities sorted by age level covering the equivalent to infants all way up to sixth class.
- 9

STORY MAP TOOL

<http://bit.ly/storymaptool>

Interactive tool to create a story map for a narrative.
- 10

VERBS FLASH CARDS

www.weandus.ie/files/sraithpictiur.pdf

Ten pages of verbs with matching pictures to print and laminate on coloured or plain paper.



BALLYMONEY NS, BALLINEEN, CO CORK

www.ballymoneyns.com

Simple layout, easy to use navigation tabs and a photo slider showcasing the various events and achievements in the school.

ONES TO WATCH



THE PASSPORT INDEX

www.passportindex.org

Visitors can dive in the fascinating world of passports, explore their designs, sort them by country, region and even by colour.

HOW TO READ A WEATHER MAP

<http://bit.ly/readweather>

Highly visual guide to understanding and interpreting weather maps. Covers the symbols on a map, UV measurements, air pressure, extreme weather warnings and more.

RAINY CAFÉ

<https://rainycafe.com/>

An ambient noise generator that is supposed to increase creative cognition. Listeners have a choice between the sound of a busy café or that of heavy rain.