

# intouch

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**Disgracefully, this year  
thousands of homeless  
children will travel to  
school from hotels,  
B&Bs and other  
emergency  
accommodation,  
failed by a State  
and a society  
whose sentimental  
public utterances  
are not matched by  
effective actions.**

*The Irish Times, 1 September 2017*

**into** 

Irish National Teachers' Organisation  
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

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# Keeping InTouch

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



GENERAL SECRETARY'S COMMENT

## *Homelessness is an educational issue too!*

After the banking crisis, the housing crisis now defines Irish society. Ceding control of the housing market entirely to the private sector is another policy decision that has utterly failed. The state has a responsibility to vindicate the right of every citizen to a home and shelter.

A first step would be the declaration of a housing emergency and the building of a national consensus to deliver a solution to this crisis, one that would see an increase in social housing stock by no less than 10,000 per annum over the next five years.

The crisis is impacting on the living standards of working people and putting untold pressure on incomes, with 27% of disposable income going on rent in some areas. Many members are acutely affected, especially those on lower salaries attempting to get on the property ladder, an issue the INTO continues to highlight.

Measures to penalise land hoarders that are holding Irish society to ransom are required. Local authorities should be charged with the compulsory purchase of land for homes.

The vacant site levy should be doubled.

The particular impact of homelessness on children is featured in this edition (pages 14/15). The lack of a proper and stable home impacts on access to education and can undermine children's entire education.

Despite the fact that almost 3,000 children are in emergency homeless accommodation with their parents there has been no response from the DES. Schoolchildren who are homeless struggle in school and their teachers struggle to help them to cope. Three years into the family homeless crisis there has been no support for hard-pressed teachers, no advice, no guidance and no additional resources.

A part of the overall government response to the housing crisis would be for the Minister for Education and Skills to recognise homelessness as an educational crisis and support schools dealing with its effects.

*Sheila Nunan*

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# Letters



## Mini Sevens

Dear Editor,  
Our daughter, Niamh Rice, played in the INTO Mini Sevens on All-Ireland Football Final Day in front of 82,000 people, and was treated like a star.

She had an amazing day and an experience she will never forget. It was a proud day for us, her parents, her entire family, club, school and community.

I want to thank each and every person that helped make this wonderful day happen for our children.

It is a wonderful testament of the

voluntary work of the GAA and an organisation we are lucky to be associated with.

Just over 22 years ago, I first kicked a Gaelic football. I am now 43 and still play with the ladies senior team in Rostrevor.

I will try my best to listen to the advice of INTO President, John Boyle, and keep playing until I'm 50 – I will just hope the legs will keep going until then!  
With sincerest thanks again,  
*Tracey Rice,*  
*Rostrevor, Co Down*

## Gaeltacht fees for student teachers

Dear Editor,  
Although we are not yet full INTO members, we wish to bring to the attention of primary teachers the issue of Gaeltacht fees for student teachers.

Since 2012, due to cutbacks, students have had to pay for attendance at two, two-week periods in an Irish college.

Although we believe it is necessary for students to attend these courses, the price, which is around €1,400 per student, is too much. This does not include transport costs and living expenses. Students also miss out on wages from part-time jobs over these two week periods, and in some cases, lose those jobs.

For an average student to save for one Gaeltacht placement, they would have to work two eight-hour shifts every weekend for ten weeks and save all earnings.

Up until 2012, the cost of the fees was subsidised by the government. In total, these subsidies cost less than €1 million per year. We want government to reinstate these subsidies, as many students are suffering under the burden of these expenses.

We ask teachers to support this campaign.

*Student Representatives,*  
*Froebel Department of Early Childhood*  
*and Primary Education*

Tell us what you think



*InTouch* welcomes your letters. Have your say about something you have read in *InTouch* or want to communicate with other INTO members.  
€50 voucher draw each month for letter writers.  
Email: [editor@into.ie](mailto:editor@into.ie) or write to: The Editor, *InTouch*,

INTO, Vere Foster House, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.  
Mark all such communications '*InTouch* Letters' and give a contact telephone number and your INTO membership number for verification. Long letters may be edited.

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

## Restoration of posts of responsibility "only a start"

Circular 0063/2017 is the first structured restoration of posts of responsibility (PORs) to schools since the moratorium on filling posts was introduced in March 2009.

The circular reflects the allocation of monies in the 2017 Budget, following INTO lobbying, to fill over 1,200 POR positions in primary schools. This represents only a portion of the PORs lost since 2009 and the INTO believes it is an inadequate response to school needs which must be augmented in Budget 2018. Members are asked to assist in lobbying their TDs to stand up for primary education in the Budget, including restoration of more PORs, by emailing through the link on the INTO website.

The start of restoration of AP posts is being implemented by the introduction of 'minimum thresholds' of posts for various categories of school size (see table below). These allow a school which

has fallen below a threshold to fill PORs up to that threshold. The INTO will demand the adjustment of these thresholds in the next school year in order to restore schools to a POR level commensurate with that which applied prior to the moratorium. The thresholds approach is designed to ensure schools which had the greatest loss of PORs are prioritised for initial restoration.

Features of the circular include items agreed in negotiations which culminated in September 2016 and included restoration of a qualification payment to all teachers including newer entrants who graduated since 2012. Among these terms of the circular are:

- ✎ the renaming of posts as AP1 and AP2 (to replace the previous AP and special duties post titles);
- ✎ a phased commencement of filling deputy principal posts via open competition, starting with very large

schools in 2017/18;

- ✎ the re-instatement of the provision for 'acting post holders' in the absence of postholders;
- ✎ revised selection criteria and marking scheme;
- ✎ a refocusing on a team approach to school leadership and a greater flexibility to review POR-related responsibilities, following consultation at school level.

There is no change to the remuneration level of PORs; AP1s at €8,520 and AP2s at €3,769; future general adjustments to pay levels will also apply to these allowances.

The INTO views the filling of these posts as only a start to restoration and will continue to demand a greater and more appropriate level of posts in primary schools. The posts restored through this circular are to be filled with immediate effect. Circular 0063/2017 is available on the INTO website.

<p>Members should note that the allocation of posts is effective from 14 September, the date of the circular.</p> <p>Allocations are based on the number of authorised teaching posts sanctioned in the previous school year.</p> <p>The allocation for a school is a minimum threshold for the number of posts in a schools.</p> <p>Schools that have in excess of the thresholds retain existing posts. Schools that fall below the thresholds can fill vacancies as they arise to the level of the appropriate threshold.</p> <p>*A mainstream class teacher in a two teacher school may be paid an APII allowance (Circular 0063/2017 Part 16).</p>	Authorised teaching posts	Principal	Deputy Principal	AP I Posts	AP II Posts	Authorised teaching posts	Principal	Deputy Principal	AP I Posts	AP II Posts
	1	1	0	0	0	24	1	1	1	3
	*2	1	0	0	0	25	1	1	1	3
	3	1	1	0	0	26	1	1	1	3
	4	1	1	0	1	27	1	1	1	3
	5	1	1	0	1	28	1	1	1	3
	6	1	1	0	1	29	1	1	1	3
	7	1	1	0	1	30	1	1	1	4
	8	1	1	0	1	31	1	1	1	4
	9	1	1	0	1	32	1	1	1	4
	10	1	1	0	1	33	1	1	1	4
	11	1	1	0	1	34	1	1	1	4
	12	1	1	0	1	35	1	1	1	5
	13	1	1	0	1	36	1	1	1	5
	14	1	1	0	1	37	1	1	1	5
	15	1	1	0	2	38	1	1	1	6
	16	1	1	0	2	39	1	1	1	6
	17	1	1	0	2	40	1	1	2	6
	18	1	1	1	2	41	1	1	2	6
	19	1	1	1	2	42	1	1	2	7
	20	1	1	1	2	43	1	1	2	7
	21	1	1	1	2	44	1	1	3	7
	22	1	1	1	3	45	1	1	3	7
	23	1	1	1	3	46+	1	1	3	8

# ICTU accepts Public Service Stability Agreement 2018-2020

The Public Services Committee of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions voted last month by a margin of 80 per cent to 20 per cent to accept the Public Service Stability Agreement (2018 – 2020). The aggregate ballot of the PSC paves the way for the implementation of the agreement covering 300,000 public servants.

The agreement was backed by SIPTU, IMPACT and INMO as well as by unions representing doctors, civil servants and IFUT which represents university teachers. The INTO voted against acceptance of the agreement as did the TUI and UNITE.

In July this year, INTO members voted to reject the agreement. The CEC had recommended rejection of the terms of the agreement on the basis that it did not progress the issue of pay equality imposed by government on new entrant teachers.

Speaking after the vote, Sheila Nunan, general secretary of the INTO and

president of ICTU said she recognised that there is now an agreement in place but pay inequality is clearly an issue for teachers.

"Teachers voted to reject the agreement, not because of what's in it, but because of what's not in it," she said. "It fails to address pay inequality."

She said the INTO executive would meet to consider the outcome of the vote and that every option would be explored.

Ms Nunan called for an immediate commencement of an engagement to resolve the pay equality issue and provide a clear pathway for pay equality within a defined timeframe. She said that there was strong support for the resolution of this issue among all unions at the meeting of the PSC.

The Public Service Stability Agreement provides for pay restoration totalling 5.75% between 2018 and 2020 and a

reduction in the so called pension levy. The agreement also preserves the value of public service pensions.

## Main provisions of the Public Sector Stability Agreement

1 January 2018:	1% pay adjustment
1 October 2018:	1% pay adjustment
1 January 2019:	Pension levy threshold up from €28,750 to €32,000 (worth €325 p.a.)
1 January 2019:	1% pay adjustment for those earning less than €30,000
1 September 2019:	1.75% pay adjustment
1 January 2020:	Pension levy threshold increased to €34,500 (worth €250 p.a.)
1 January 2020:	0.5% pay increase for those earning less than €32,000
1 October 2020:	2% pay adjustment.

## Budget 2018 email campaign

In advance of Budget 2018 on 10 October, INTO members can email their own TDs using a link on the INTO website to make the case for primary education. The CEC urges all members to use this facility to let TDs know what the key issues for primary teachers are.

It takes less than a minute to complete. Select your constituency and the TDs you wish to email, fill in your details (needed to confirm to TDs that you are a registered voter) and send the email.

A prepared email is then sent to the TDs you selected.

The email asks TDs to ensure there is provision in Budget 2018 to:

- ✎ reduce class sizes in primary schools towards the EU average;
- ✎ restore lost promoted posts and increase administration time for teaching principals;
- ✎ fully fund school running costs;
- ✎ tackle education disadvantage; and
- ✎ plan teacher supply properly.

To send the email please visit [www.into.ie/ROI/Budget2018](http://www.into.ie/ROI/Budget2018).

Please note that, while the email campaign raises the issue of pay equality and principals' benchmarking in order to keep it on TDs' agendas, it puts these issues in the context of the recent pay agreement rather than in the context of Budget 2018.



# Advice on dealing with assaults

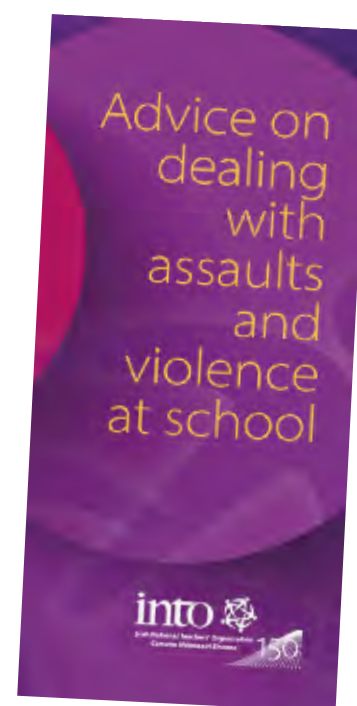
Assault and violence against teachers is an issue of concern for INTO members across the island of Ireland. INTO Congress has heard harrowing stories of teachers who are injured in the course of their work. This month sees the launch of two important initiatives to assist teachers in preventing and dealing with assaults and violence.

## Leaflet on assaults

The INTO is proud to launch a new leaflet for schools and teachers. This leaflet has been developed on an all-island basis, by a small working group made up of two practicing teachers, Rosena Jordan, INTO ex-president and Caroline Mc Carthy,

INTO Northern Committee, along with INTO officials; Deirdre O'Connor, INTO Assistant General Secretary and Tommy Mc Glone, Senior Official in Northern Office. They reviewed available material and drew on the experience of Caroline in the special education sector in Northern Ireland, as well as the experience of the officials dealing with queries on this matter. Rosena reflected the experiences of teachers who she met in her year as INTO president, visiting schools all over Ireland.

The leaflet gives advice and guidance to schools in seeking to prevent assaults, and emphasises that assault is an issue for schools as employers, not just a personal



issue for a teacher. It also gives practical advice on what to do if an assault occurs.

## Assault leave circular published

### Additional leave scheme to be piloted

Following lengthy negotiations, a scheme providing leave of absence following assault for teachers has been agreed between the DES, school management and teachers. This scheme is separate from the illness leave scheme.

Having an assault leave provision has been a demand of INTO Congress for a number of years and the issue has been pursued by INTO officials with the DES over a number of years.

This scheme will be in place for an initial two years on a pilot basis. Circular 61/2017 provides for:

- ✦ A recording of incidents of assault.
- ✦ Assault leave to be available where there is a medically certified physical injury requiring absence from work.
- ✦ Provision for up to three months' assault leave at full pay in a

rolling four-year period (with an extension to six months on full pay in exceptional circumstances).

- ✦ Substitute cover for assault-related absences.
- ✦ A teacher's sick leave record not being affected by such absences.

### How can a teacher apply for assault leave?

An application form (attached at Appendix A of Circular 61/2017) must be completed by the teacher concerned and by the employer and forwarded by the employer to the Department/ETB within a week of the incident occurring.

The full circular is available on the INTO website. Schools should also note Circular 62/2017, which details the scheme for leave of absence following assault for special needs assistants.

# Data breach on INTO Learning website

Last month, the INTO Learning website ([www.intolearning.ie](http://www.intolearning.ie)) was subject to a breach that resulted in unauthorised access to the system. As a result, some members' personal data (not financial information) may have been compromised. The breach potentially affected members who signed up for INTO summer courses, principals' seminars and/or retirement planning seminars.

No credit card payment details were compromised in this breach. Course payments are processed separately via a secure third party processing facility.

However, some personal data relating to registration for courses may have been compromised. While we have no evidence to suggest this data was in fact stolen, the data was potentially at risk and thus potentially accessible to the third party behind the breach.

The initial investigation into the breach has identified the use of the server as a base to send spam messages. The evidence suggests that this was the primary, if not only, goal of the breach.

We have taken down the INTO Learning website and are awaiting a full report on the attack. We suggest that members

treat any unusual emails or requests for further information with caution.

While the potential risk posed by this incident is low, please be assured that we are treating it very seriously. We have contacted members involved to alert them about this breach. We have informed the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner of the breach and are taking advice and direction from them. We have also notified the Gardai.

We will keep members informed on developments. In the meantime, members requiring further information on this matter should contact [info@into.ie](mailto:info@into.ie).



# Children and

The shortages in residential housing, in addition to increased demand, has resulted in large numbers of families becoming homeless and being placed in emergency accommodation. Emergency accommodation, while providing a literal form of 'a roof over one's head', does not provide families with the privacy, freedom or sense of security that is associated with home ownership or stable renting.

Homelessness can have drastic effects on educational, as well as future life outcomes for children. International studies have highlighted some of the psychological impacts homelessness has on children including feelings of loss, isolation, anxiety and suppressed emotional development, as well as academic implications such as poor performance in literacy and numeracy. These factors can impact the child's life experiences including their experiences of schooling.

## Research findings

This research, conducted as part of the MSc programme in Children and Youth Studies in University College Dublin, focused on the impacts of homelessness on primary school children's education in Dublin. The study summarised the issues faced by children who were living in emergency accommodation as a result of homelessness and documented teacher perspectives on their social adjustment, physical and psychological wellbeing and their academic achievement. A number of issues emerged with regard to school-going children living in emergency accommodation or dealing with homelessness:

### Structural instability

#### Poor school attendance and frequent lateness

#### Disengagement with the curriculum and learning

#### Compromised social/peer interactions

Poor attendance and lateness were particularly problematic in that many of the supports that were put in place in schools to tackle other issues, e.g. poor

academic performance, could not be properly applied when the child was absent.

Some relationships regarding the overarching impact of poor attendance are outlined below.



The interconnectivity of these relationships suggests that issues with one area can easily impact on others. For example, poor attendance can impact on engagement with learning and lack of engagement may result in poor performance. Poor performance may then present with withdrawal and embarrassment and thus impact on social interactions with peers, and so on.



Some of the issues that emerged, including poor attendance, are discussed in more detail with reference to the interviews with teachers.

## Structural instability

The teachers frequently reported that the child was lacking a structure or routine in their lives due to their living situation. Uncertainty over accommodation resulted in high stress as families were unsure how long they would be in emergency accommodation, some families staying in hotels for up to three years. Many families would be unsure of where they would stay day-to-day. Uncertainty about accommodation was described as distressing for children with regard to simple practices such as home time; "they're concerned about who's collecting them, how they're actually

going to be transported home. You know sometimes they don't know where they're going." (*Behaviour support teacher*). This lack of routine and rootlessness for the students was viewed as being detrimental to the child's wellbeing in school by the teachers and was believed to contribute to the child's feeling of insecurity and instability.

## Attendance and punctuality

School attendance was described as being significantly affected when the child was living in emergency accommodation or staying with friends or extended family members. While some teachers described how their schools had reports of "94% attendance" or "attendance rates up to 80%" despite social disadvantages in the community, the children who had been placed in emergency accommodation were failing to attend school or were frequently late for school. Due to limitations with transport from their accommodation to school, the majority of families had difficulty with attendance and punctuality. Lateness, in particular, coincided with the schools' timetabling of certain subjects taking place at the same time each morning, resulting in the children missing lessons regularly; "...they're not getting the basics... they're not getting the starting point of say the multiplications or whatever and then they're kind of struggling later." (*Home school community liaison teacher* [HSCL]). Missing lessons in the morning and lateness was described by teachers as impacting on the child's entire school-day; "...their day is kind of thrown off because they've missed the morning routine." (*HSCL teacher*). It was also noted that being late meant that children were missing the 'adjustment period' and were subsequently "not ready to start learning." (*Behaviour support teacher*).

## Disengagement with learning

Some children were described as losing confidence with regard to schoolwork as they had missed so many lessons. This led to what was described as a "vicious cycle" and that the child would "lose the will" to participate in school (*deputy principal*). When discussing families who were

# homelessness

housed after spending time in emergency accommodation, children faced disruption in that they may have had to move school if their new house was far away from the school. This not only impacted the children with regard to continuous learning and maintaining friendships, but also school student numbers.

Tiredness in school was also frequently mentioned in the interviews with teachers. The teachers ascribed this tiredness to the conditions in the emergency accommodation, mainly due to the fact that hotels were likely to host functions such as parties and weddings. Tiredness was believed to affect the child's concentration for school, both in social participation and academic learning. Hunger was also a concern expressed by some of the teachers due to the lack of kitchen facilities in emergency accommodation. This was regarded by teachers as impacting on the child's school day as they were not ready to learn when they were; "coming into school hungry." (*HSCL teacher*).

Missed lessons over time meant that the children were missing out on large parts of the curriculum, especially with regard to the academic structure of the school day. For example, one class teacher described how one child did not take part in any Irish lessons due to lateness, as Irish was usually scheduled for the morning. Similarly, one deputy principal described how the literacy-based initiative 'Power Hour' was done from the beginning of the day, which was often missed by children

travelling from emergency accommodation. Children with learning difficulties in particular were thought to be struggling as they often missed their designated learning support or resource hours. It was suggested that, due to missed school time, the children were "playing catch up with every other child in the class".

## Social interactions

Accommodation limitations, for example resident curfews or restrictions on visitors, was highlighted as impacting the child's social experiences in school as the child missed on certain childhood rituals of friendship including play dates and birthday parties.

Some children were described as being affected by differences between themselves and their peers due to their living situation especially as the children got older. The child's 'social awareness' (*HSCL teacher*) was described as being increased when the child was living in emergency accommodation. For example, older children were aware that they were not wearing a uniform as their accommodation lacked laundry facilities. It was also suggested that the older children were fearful of others finding out about their living situation.

## Future implications

Homelessness at this current scale is significantly affecting educational participation for children. Disengagement in primary school level not only creates

challenges for basic literacy and numeracy, but it can also impact on the child's confidence and positive experience of school in both academic and social spheres. As documented in this study, it was clear that teachers believed learning difficulties in this regard may result in school drop-out which, ultimately, will hinder future career outcomes and opportunities. It was clear that teachers in this study were distressed by the situation in which these children found themselves. While some teachers made every attempt to support the student, for example changing the time-tabling of resource hours for children coming into school late, it was evident that the teachers were frustrated that children were dealing with homelessness, especially when the teachers were aware that there were vacant houses in the area.

The child's emotional wellbeing for school is important for aspects of academic performance and achievement as well as social interactions. However, it has been made apparent in this study that children living in homeless accommodation have some difficulties maintaining equilibrium of wellbeing. This disequilibrium may ultimately widen the inequality gap in education between those who have access to secure housing and those who do not.

**Eimear Murphy, currently on a career break from Gaelscoil Mhuscraí, Blarney, Co Cork**



## Resolution on homelessness adopted at INTO Annual Congress 2017

**into**  
Irish National Teachers' Organisation  
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

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### Congress:

- a. deplores the facts that:
  - (i) over 2,500 children are currently homeless in Ireland;
  - (ii) approximately 1,500 children are currently housed in direct provision centres;
  - (iii) over 1,500 Traveller families currently live in overcrowded or unsafe conditions;
  - (iv) many thousands of families are in danger of being made homeless;
- b. believes that lack of a proper and stable home impacts severely on the ability of children to access education and learning;
- c. calls for immediate investment in social housing to ensure that all the children in our schools and their families have access to adequate housing; and
- d. instructs the CEC to enter an ongoing campaign to engage with other trade unions and active groupings in achieving the eradication of homelessness.

# INTO Consultative Conference on Education 2017

This year, the annual INTO Consultative Conference on Education will take place in the Mount Errigal Hotel, Letterkenny, on Friday 17 and Saturday 18 November. The conference will focus on the theme of 'ICT in Education – Policy, Practice and Pedagogy'.

Please note that, as in other years, this is a delegate-only conference and only those members nominated by their branch and district as delegates can attend. If you are interested, make sure you attend your local branch meeting to put your name forward.

## New interns start work in Head Office



September saw the arrival of three new interns to INTO Head Office. Michael McConigley, Curragh Branch, Ciara Sotscheck, Dublin North Bay and Aoife Mullen, Ardee Branch, are participating in the programme for 2017/18.

## Are you considering becoming an INTO staff rep?

Many staffs at this time of year decide on who will be their INTO staff representative for the next school year. In some cases there may be an election among interested staff members. Staff reps can put themselves forward to continue on in the role.

As a staff rep, you have three key responsibilities:

1. Recruiting members.

2. Informing members.  
3. Supporting members.

If you would like to know more about this role the INTO has a free online module on **The Role of the Staff Rep** that you can access to check out the role, responsibilities and supports.

If you would like to log onto the module please email [tut@into.ie](mailto:tut@into.ie) and we will forward the details to you.

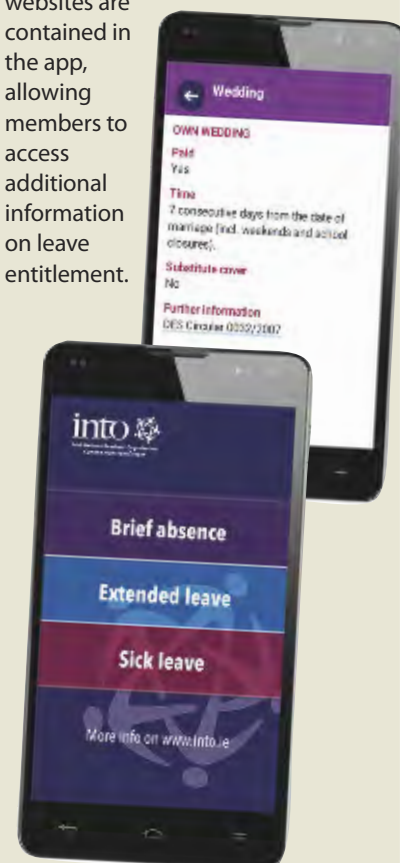
## Check your leave entitlement in seconds

Download the INTO Guide to Teachers' Leave app

INTO members can check entitlement to leave in seconds through the INTO Guide to Teachers' Leave app. The app contains information on brief absences, extended leave and sick leave. It outlines whether or not the leave is paid or unpaid, whether substitute cover is allowed, how to apply for leave and much more.

Download from iTunes and Google Play. Search for 'INTO guide to teachers leave', ensuring software on iPhones or Android devices is up-to-date before downloading.

Links to relevant circulars and websites are contained in the app, allowing members to access additional information on leave entitlement.



# Where your INTO subscription goes

## 2

### The General Fund

The General Fund is the main operational fund of INTO. The salaries and pension contributions in respect of employees, conference costs, travel and subsistence expenses for committee members are paid out of it, along with a range of other costs including the running and maintenance of the Dublin and Belfast offices.

Subscription allocation to, and spending through, the General Fund is greater by far than in the case of any other of the INTO funds. This is even more concentrated in the case of the Northern Ireland subscription, since certain INTO funds are administered from Head Office for the whole island.

Currently, the General Fund:

- ◆ comprises 43% of membership subscription in the Republic of Ireland;
- ◆ contains 72% of the Northern Ireland subscription rate; and
- ◆ in 2016, accounted for over 45% of all INTO spending (€5.31 million spent through the General Fund, of total spending of €11.71 million).

#### Spending from the General Fund

By far the biggest amount of spending goes on salaries, social insurance, and employer pension contributions in respect of over 60 persons on the

INTO payroll, North and South. Such spending amounted to €4.2 million in the General Fund in 2016.

Apart from salaries and pensions, there were half a dozen other categories of spending where allocations from the General Fund ran into six figures. These were: national committee expenses (€500,000), affiliation and delegate fees (€217,000), legal expenses (€187,000), conferences and seminars (€145,000), Annual Congress (€142,000), and telephone, printing and postage (€136,000).

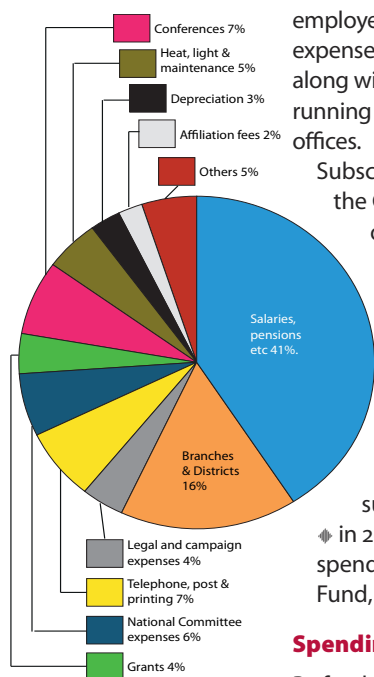
While the General Fund has the biggest spending overall, a number of headings of INTO spending recur across other funds. An example is legal expenses where there is an additional six figure item in the 2016 accounts under the Contingencies and Legal Fund.

#### Overview

Each of the other INTO funds will be dealt with in future articles, it is useful at this stage to give an overview (see pie chart) of the main categories of INTO spending across all funds, and not just the General Fund.

In the 2016 audited accounts, total INTO spending came to €11.7 million. This is set out across its categories in the pie chart with this article.

*The next article will deal with the second largest slice of the pie in this chart which refers to INTO funds for local use at branches and districts.*



INTO Spending 2016:  
Main Categories

## Your INTO membership renewal

### Notice for substitute and temporary (fixed-term) teachers

Each year, the INTO deals with a number of teachers who believe they are members and are surprised to find their membership has lapsed. The following reminders about membership renewal should help ensure you retain your rights.

#### Substitute teachers

Substitute teachers join the INTO for one school year at a time. Membership dates from the time of joining (usually anytime from 1 September to 31 August of the following year – e.g. if a teacher joins the INTO as a substitute in October 2017 that membership expires on 31 August 2018).

Substitute teachers pay an INTO subscription directly (it is not deducted from salary), so it is necessary to renew membership for each school year.

To join, go to [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie), click on 'Join the INTO', followed by 'Join Online', and complete the substitute application form.

#### Temporary/fixed-term teachers

Where a teacher transitions to a fixed-term/temporary contract, it is necessary to sign a form to provide for deduction of INTO subscription from salary. A member should be in the correct category of INTO membership to benefit from advice and services (e.g. a person who joins as a substitute member in September but gets a temporary position in November for the remainder of the school year is not covered by substitute

membership. When that teacher joins with deduction from salary we will refund the substitute subscription if this happens before 1 January 2018).

Once in a temporary/fixed-term position, teachers join as ordinary members of the INTO; it is not necessary after that to renew membership while in either a fixed-term or a permanent (CID) contract.

To join, go to [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie), click on 'Join the INTO', followed by 'Join Online', and complete the temporary/fixed-term application form.

#### Membership rates

The INTO operates a strongly discounted rate for substitute teachers. This discounted rate is €85 per annum. Substitute teachers who have qualified in the previous three years have a special rate of €25 per annum. The €25 applies to joiners in 2017 who qualified as teachers in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

Temporary (fixed-term) and permanent teachers are paid on incremental scales and a common subscription of €13.35 (deducted each fortnight) applies. However, on first joining through deduction from salary, teachers on temporary/permanent contracts have three months' free membership before deductions commence.

If you have any queries regarding membership please contact our Membership Section by emailing [ccunningham@into.ie](mailto:ccunningham@into.ie).

# INTO meets DES on school accommodation

The INTO met with officials from the Planning and Building unit of the DES in September. Among the items discussed were the issue of fire safety audits which had been carried out in five recently-constructed primary schools under the Department's 'rapid build' programme, and which had identified cases of non-compliance with fire safety standards. The audits had been carried out in 2016, but the reports were first published last month. The DES confirmed that all necessary remedial works in the affected schools were close to completion. The DES further confirmed that it intends to commission fire safety audits of a representative sample of up to 25 schools constructed over the last 20

years. The DES has published a public tender notice for the purposes of commissioning the audits.

Other items discussed included the School Building Programme, additional accommodation grants and the prefabricated replacement initiative. The DES stated its commitment to the delivery of the 2016-2021 construction programme. The INTO sought an assurance that the Minor Works Grant would be paid in 2017 and emphasised the importance of this source of income to schools. However, the DES would only confirm the grant would issue if funding is available and information regarding the grant will be available later this year, after Budget 2018 is announced.

The Summer Works Scheme was also discussed. The scheme was applied on a multi-annual basis for the years 2016 and 2017, and the DES confirmed that close to 800 applications were approved over the two years, which represents approximately 50% of the total number of applications received. Over the course of 2016-2017, approximately €80 million was spent on works under the SWS. The DES stated that it is currently giving consideration to the matter of the applications submitted which have not been approved to date. The INTO emphasised the importance of ensuring that adequate funding continues to be made available to schools to carry out necessary works during the summer holidays.

## Vetting template joint agreement

CPSMA has prepared a template Joint Agreement for use by schools in the context of transition year students, coaches and student teachers.

The agreement provides that the person in question will present their vetting disclosure to the school prior to commencing the placement or coaching. The agreement also includes a statutory declaration which should be signed by the person being placed.

For more information see [www.cpsma.ie](http://www.cpsma.ie).

## INTO Equality Committee to examine gender pay gap



**The INTO Equality Committee met in Head Office last month. The committee discussed potential themes for the coming year. A presentation on taking an equality case was made to the committee by ICTU.**

**A representative from IMPACT trade union gave a presentation on the gender pay gap. The committee agreed to support this campaign and make a submission to the Department of Justice and Equality's public consultation on the gender pay gap.**

# *INTO president and vice-president visit Inis Mór*

The first 'branch meeting' of the new school year took place in Inis Mór on Friday 1 September. This year's meeting had great significance, as the INTO had recently made a submission to the Oireachtas about island schools. The members from the four Aran Island schools were delighted that their former CEC representative, Joe Killeen, INTO Vice-President, attended as well as John Boyle, INTO President. Ní raibh an t-uachtarán agus an leas-uachtarán ar an oileán le chéile ariamh roimhe.

## **More resources for island schools**

Those in attendance welcomed the provision in Budget 2017 for one-teacher island schools, negotiated by the INTO. As of September 2017, where a school is the only primary school on an island, it can appoint a second teacher, regardless of pupil numbers. This concession led to the appointment of additional teachers on Tory Island and Inishturk. The INTO also negotiated a reduction in the retention figure for the second teacher enabling some island schools to retain posts.

The president advised members that the INTO is calling for the immediate restoration of the 2011 staffing schedule for two, three and four teacher schools of 12, 49 and 81 respectively for both appointment and retention of staff.

Members were also told the INTO was



Pictured at meeting on Inis Mór Island were; back row l to r: Michael Gallagher, Orla Mhic Aogáin, Fiona Uí Dhioráin, Áine Seoighe, Aisling Durrane, Caitríona Ní Bhuachalla, Front row l to r: Joe Killeen, Vice-President, Rita Uí Chonghaile, Mairéad Ní Fhlaithearta, Aisling Ní Fhlaithearta. Right: John Boyle, INTO President

calling for: the re-instatement of the island and gaeltacht allowances, an increase in funding for island schools, all island schools to be included in the DEIS Scheme and that rural co-ordinator posts be reinstated, dedicated professional development courses for teachers on the islands and special training for members

of boards of managements of island schools. The members fully endorsed the INTO's demand for the re-establishment of supply panels to cover teacher absences, the provision of one principal release day per week and the payment of the outstanding benchmarking award to principals and deputy principals.

## **Free education and equal pay for equal work**

INTO president John Boyle addressed the Peadar O'Donnell Conference 'Islands on the Edge' on Aranmore Island.

He took the opportunity to publicly call for targeted supports for island schools. While serving as principal teacher of Aranmore No. 1 NS between 1914 and 1917, Peadar was secretary of the Donegal Branch of INTO. He proposed two resolutions at the branch AGM 100 years ago calling for free education for children up to the age of 15 and for equal pay for female and male teachers. Peadar's trade union work, his campaigns on behalf of emigrants and small farmers, his involvement in the battle against the slums – all of these led to real and fundamental improvements in the lot of many ordinary people. His private generosity benefited many; his encouragement and ability to empower and inspire transformed the lives of

countless writers and activists; and it is impossible to know how many people were influenced by his journalism and literature to view the world in a different way.

John Boyle said that he had no doubt that were Peadar still alive he would be to the forefront campaigning against the underfunding of primary schools. He told the audience that the recent draconian cut of £58 per pupil to school funding in Northern Ireland went against everything Peadar stood for and demanded that it be rescinded immediately.

He also called on the Irish Government to provide a short-term plan for the delivery of pay equality for INTO members.

"It took 60 years for Peadar O'Donnell's dream of gender pay equality to become a reality. INTO members have now waited six years. We are not prepared to wait any longer," he said.



John Boyle, INTO President, addressing delegates at the Peadar O'Donnell Conference on Aranmore Island

# Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) rolled out at primary level

The DES has published Circular 0060/2017, which sets out the arrangements for the roll-out and operation of the Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) at primary level.

The FSSU will provide advice and support to schools on financial governance matters, including standardising arrangements for compliance with the accounting requirements under Section 18 of the Education Act 1998. The role of the FSSU includes:

- Provision of advice and support to schools on financial governance matters including compliance requirements.
- Development of templates for use by schools in relation to financial matters, including a standardised national template for annual school accounts.
- Acting as a central repository for receipt

of annual school accounts prepared by an external accountant/auditor.

- Carrying out such audits as may be required.
- Preparation of an annual report for the DES.
- Liaison with the DES in relation to financial matters pertaining to schools.
- Submission of financial information to the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA) which will satisfy reporting obligations placed on schools by the Charities Act 2009.
- Provision of statistical information to the Central Statistics Office in relation to its requirements for financial information in respect of the school system.

The FSSU will be an important source of advice and support for primary schools

on financial governance matters primarily provided via online and telephone support. During the 2017/18 school year, the FSSU will focus on the provision of advice and support as part of preparations for the phased introduction of the standardised national template for annual school accounts.

The school year 2018/19 will be the first year for annual school accounts to be prepared using the standardised national template. This will be the required format for schools to fulfil obligations under Section 18 of the Education Act, 1998.

From February 2020, and annually thereafter, schools will be required to submit annual school accounts to the FSSU (six months after the end of the school year).

See [www.fssu.ie](http://www.fssu.ie) for further information.

## Capturing voices at EECERA conference



The INTO attended the 27th EECERA Annual Conference in Bologna in late August. The conference is the largest and most significant early years' research conference in Europe and the 2017 theme explored 'Early Childhood Education Beyond the Crisis: Social Justice, Solidarity and Children's Rights'. The INTO was represented by John Boyle (INTO President), Deirbhile Nic Craith (Director of Education and Research) and Maeve Mc Cafferty (Education Official). The

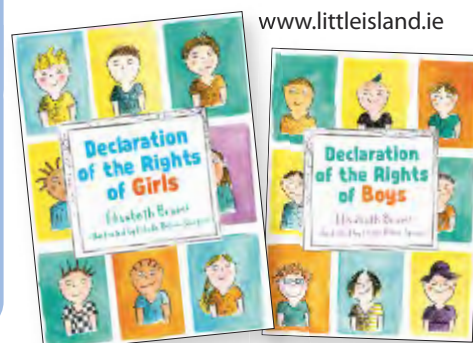
INTO presented a paper on 'Hearing the Teacher's Voice' informed by recent consultations with members on the NCCA proposals on curriculum structure and time allocation in the primary school. Photo: Nicola Firth, University of Huddersfield; Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO Director of Education and Research; Liv Ingrid Aske Haberg, Volda University College Norway; Samantha Mc Mahon, University of Huddersfield and Maeve Mc Cafferty, INTO Official, who presented 'Capturing The Voice Of All Practitioners' at the 27th EECERA Conference in Bologna in August.

## Declaration of the Rights of Boys/Girls

*Declaration of the Rights of Boys and Girls* is a funny, quirkily illustrated and heartwarming list of girls' and boys' rights, presented as a flipbook to be read from either end. This is a book for those who believe in gender equality, self-expression and the right to be who we are and – with playful colour illustrations throughout – is an entertaining and inspiring experience for readers aged 4 and over.

Endorsed by Amnesty International, the book debunks received ideas and stereotypes and reminds us how important it is to value equality for all.

Author: Élisabeth Bami, illustrator: Estelle Billon-Spagnol. Cost €15; ISBN 978-1-910411-27-8. Published by Little Island who have prepared a short 'book guide' for use in schools. More information at [www.littleisland.ie](http://www.littleisland.ie)



# ICTU Ninth Global Solidarity School



Pictured with Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary and ICTU President, is the INTO delegation that attended the ICTU Global Solidarity Summer School in Wexford in August. Approximately 80 delegates from all ICTU affiliates, North and South, attended the summer school.

In picture are (l to r): Dorothy McGinley, CEC Representative, District 2; Rosena Jordan, INTO President 2016/17; John O'Brien, INTO Senior Official; Maurice Hurley, retired teacher and Una Ni Riain, Dublin City North.

## Job-sharing and leave in lieu of public holidays

The DES issued the *Terms and Conditions of Employment* web-book in June 2017. Chapter two of the web-book deals with statutory annual leave/public holiday entitlements for teachers. It restates the position of the DES on annual leave and public holiday entitlements for teachers on leave, including the provision that leave in lieu of annual leave/public holidays which fall while a teacher is on other leave (e.g. maternity leave, sick leave etc) is to be taken during school closures. The INTO has not agreed to this approach, and has challenged it under the Maternity Protection and Employment Equality

Acts. An outcome of these claims, which were initiated in 2013, is still awaited. The INTO objected to the inclusion of this chapter in the *Terms and Conditions* web-book, but it was included by the DES.

The chapter extended the provision to two areas which had previously been treated differently. The first of these is carer's leave. In this case, it significantly improved the provision for teachers who return from carer's leave before the summer, as these teachers had previously had pay deducted for holidays. However, the inclusion of teachers on job-sharing has resulted in these teachers being unable to claim a

day's pay or leave in lieu of a public holiday in line with the clarification issued on Circular 123/2006. The online claims system has been modified so that it will not accept the leave in lieu, and the DES has ceased making payments in lieu.

The INTO has strongly objected to the extension of this unfair interpretation of leave entitlements to job-sharers, and will continue to pursue this matter with the DES. Teachers who have outstanding claims for payments accrued prior to the issuing of the web-book should ensure that their board processes these claims with the DES.

## In print

### Ireland "strong despite spend"

INTO general secretary Sheila Nunan said the main reason Ireland was one of few countries spending less per student in 2013 than before the economic crisis started in 2008 was due to the pay issue. She said starting salaries for Irish teachers which were once higher than the OECD average have fallen below it, showing the extent of new entrants' pay cuts and the need to address pay inequality for teachers. "The report shows that despite new Irish teachers being underpaid, they are among the most productive. They teach more pupils than teachers in other countries," said Ms Nunan.

*Irish Examiner, 13 Sept 2017*

### Schools' cash fury

...The report examines the state of education around the world, using the 35 members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)... Annual expenditure per student in Ireland is also lower than the OECD average for pre-primary and primary education at around \$6,600 (€5,511) and \$8,000 (€6,680) respectively, based on data from 2014... Sheila Nunan, general secretary of the INTO, said Irish primary schools fare badly when it comes to funding relative to other levels of education.

*The Irish Sun, 13 Sept 2017*

### State's second-level education rate among highest in OECD

Hundreds of Irish teachers are being lured abroad by lucrative posts in the Middle East where they can earn almost double their current salaries... Teach and Explore boss Eoin Bolger said: "The demand for places is crazy. We could have up to 1,000 teachers looking to go..." However, the INTO's Peter Mullan said a recruitment drive like this would leave the Irish education sector at crisis point. He said: "I have an email which just landed this morning about a school in Cork that has three vacancies but couldn't get someone to fill them. Irish teachers are very much in demand because there is global recognition of the quality of Irish teacher education. One international report actually said that we were the best in the world. Rents in urban areas are a significant barrier to employment. I would

call on the Government to restore pay for new entrants to pre-cut levels, they have to begin paying equally for equal work. There is certainly a teacher shortage in Ireland at the moment and if that figure were to leave the market at the end of this school year, it would only exacerbate things..."

*The Irish Times, 12 Sept 2017*

### Ireland's spend on students is well below the international average – and primary schools fare worst of all

Ireland's spend on students is well below the international average – and primary schools fare worst of all, according to a new report from the international think-tank the OECD.... INTO general secretary Sheila Nunan strongly criticised what she called the unfair funding of Irish primary education... She said the OECD report showed most countries spending more per student in 2013 than they did at the start of the crisis in 2008 but Ireland was an exception and was spending less.

*Irish Independent, 12 Sept 2017*

### New school term 'will highlight effects of homelessness'

Adverse psychological and educational outcomes may affect those in B&Bs and hotels.... Writing in this week's issue of the union's magazine *InTouch*, INTO assistant general secretary Peter Mullan highlighted the effects of homelessness on education and encouraged teachers to bring the issue to the attention of the minister in advance of October's budget.

*The Irish Times, 5 Sept 2017*

### 1,800 school children are homeless'

INTO president John Boyle said his members have witnessed children who are struggling with a lack of sleep and healthy food, and having nowhere to do their homework.

*Irish Daily Mail, 5 Sept 2017*

### Teachers' union backs campaign demanding more supports for homeless children

Homelessness is having a significant impact on children's schooling, the Education Minister has been warned today... The INTO and Focus Ireland are calling on the public to contact the minister with their concerns.

*Irish Examiner, 4 Sept 2017*

### The Irish schools discouraging children to have one best friend – just like Prince George's school

Carmel Hume, principal of Terenure Presentation Primary School in Dublin, an all-girls school, says that when dealing with girls, you would try to discourage the 'best friend' scenario which can start in junior infants.

*Irish Independent, 13 Sept 2017*

### Call for 25 schools to be examined for fire breaches builder

Teachers and parents are demanding sweeping reviews of schools built in the last 10 years after the safety of thousands of pupils was questioned after a Department of Education audit. The INTO has called for a review of 25 schools across the country to be extended to include every new school and building similar to the five schools where fire safety standards have been breached... INTO assistant general secretary Peter Mullan said examining a sample section of schools built since 2008 was not enough. "There should be no compromise of the health and safety of pupils or staff," he said.

*Irish Independent, 3 Sept 2017*

## On the airwaves

### Traveller children losing out as report finds primary schools most under-funded

A new report by the OECD this week reveals that the lowest spending per pupil in Ireland is at primary level. Speaking to Ocean FM News today, Vincent Duffy, the Sligo/Mayo rep for the Irish National Teachers' Organisation says the INTO will lobby the government again ahead of next month's budget.

*Ocean FM – News, 13 Sept 2017*

### Homelessness is having a significant impact on children's schooling

Interview with Peter Mullan, Assistant General Secretary, INTO, on the impact of homelessness on children's education

*The Michael Reade show – LMFM, 5 Sept 2017*

# INTO Retirement Planning Seminars – the ongoing journey!

For most people, retirement is a watershed moment, equal to, if not more important than, perhaps, the first day in employment, marriage, purchase of a house or birth of a first-born child. Some will have taken stock of the potential changes in our lives, arising from retirement, for some time in advance. Many others will not see a need for this or maybe won't have the time to do it.

Retirement is said to be the point where a person stops employment completely. This may have been the case in the past. However, over time, this scenario has changed dramatically for many. Important questions can arise in terms of what to do after retirement. Some may prefer to take that long-dreamt of world cruise but, if your plans involve some sort of gainful employment, there are considerations to be aware of.

Whichever category you see yourself in, it remains a fact that retirement is something that should be approached with confidence, having prepared both financially and personally for the changes that it will bring to individuals and families.

The INTO has been providing retirement planning information and advice for many years and this year is no exception. Starting in October 2017, there are currently five retirement planning seminars planned, four in Dublin at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Santry, and this year's venue outside Dublin will be at The Park Hotel, Sligo. Full



Deirdre O'Connor, INTO Assistant General Secretary, addressing participants at a recent retirement planning seminar

booking details for these seminars are available on the INTO website. The seminars begin on a Friday morning at 10.00 a.m. and continue until Saturday at lunchtime. Partners are welcome to attend and substitute cover is available for your attendance on the Friday. The INTO recommends that members should begin planning for retirement about two or three years in advance of retirement date.

On Friday morning the seminar usually starts with a session on the benefits available from and procedures associated with the Teachers' Pension Scheme. Also included that morning are sessions from a

tax expert and a presentation from the Retired Teachers' Association of Ireland. After lunch, the psychological aspects of retirement are considered, plus legal matters relevant to both pre- and post-retirement. The day usually concludes on a convivial note, with a short wine reception, sponsored by Comhar Linn.

Saturday morning starts with the important topics of savings and investments, provided by financial experts. The final session is always extremely popular and deals with healthy eating and lifestyles, equally important to both imminent retirees and those who might not be retiring for some time.

## *Comments from members who have attended some recent seminars:*

"Fantastic seminar.... I am now confident in facing the future, equipped with the invaluable information imparted over the last two days..."

"I will be recommending this seminar to all my colleagues who are contemplating retirement in the near future... It should be compulsory!"

"Well organised seminar... Great to meet colleagues who are also contemplating retirement and knowing that the INTO will support us on our journey."

For full details of relevant dates and to register online, please see the INTO website.

## *Training opportunity – Managing the transition to the new SEN model*

The INTO is currently running a stand-alone online module on 'Managing the Transition to the New SEN Model'. This module seeks to support special education teachers and school principals in managing the transition to the new SEN module.

The module is very detailed and comprehensive and covers both technical and practical details of the new SEN model. It provides an overview of learning support and resource provision heretofore, a detailed dissection of the new module, a detailed briefing on the NEPS Continuum of Support and Student Support Files/Plans as referenced in the circular and the guidelines and details of what has changed and what has remained the same with regard to special education needs provision. Various templates, including a draft SEN policy to encompass the new model, are included.

Further details on <http://moodle.intolearning.ie>

## *District training organisers review meeting*



A review meeting took place with the district training organisers in INTO Head Office on Thursday, 15 September. District training organisers support branch officers to organise local staff rep and new member training. The meeting discussed funding for training events and materials for the year ahead. Organisers also shared good practice from events held during the 2016/2017 school year.

# Retirements

Pictures from branch and district functions to honour retiring members



## Mountrath

Back row l to r: Brigid Bennett, Branch Chairperson; Rosena Jordan, INTO President 2016/17; Teresa McDonnell, Branch Secretary.

Front row l to r: Gráinne Molloy, Scoil Bhride Mountrath; Mary Delaney, Clough NS; Helen Collier, Scoil Bhride Mountrath.

## North West Clare

Retirees: Denise Reynolds, Liscannor NS; Mary Fitzgerald, Kilrush NS; Seán McMahon, Mullagh NS and INTO President 2014/15; Mary McNamara, Kilshanny NS; Mary Egan, Cloonanaha NS; Mary Whelan, Lisdoonvarna NS; Bridget Crawford, Lisdoonvarna NS; Clare Howley, Doolin NS; Joan Laffan, Miltown Malbay NS; with Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary; John Boyle, INTO President; Joe Killeen, INTO Vice President; Brendan Horan, CEC and officers from North and West Clare.



## Athy

Athy Branch INTO held a retirement function in March to honour recently retired members. Pictured l to r: Mary Gorman, Carmel Dunne, Brendan Dunne, Pádraig Ashe, Anthony Crowe, Éilis Walsh and Audrey McGahey



## Galway

Back row l to r: Dermot Cleary, Joan Reidy, Joanne O'Flaherty, Patricia Carton, Mary Lillis, Brian Hynes, Íar Uachtaráin; Órla Mhic Aogáin, Rúnaí and Tommy Greally, CEC Representative.

Front row l to r: Pauline Kilroy, Danny Whelan, Rosena Jordan, Uachtarán INTO 2016/17; Rita Conneely, Branch Chairperson and Breda Dolan.

# More flexibility in use of 'Croke Park' hours

Reminder to members about negotiated changes from September 2017

INTO members are reminded that the union has negotiated greater flexibility in the usage of 'Croke Park' hours. From this school year, the DES has agreed with the INTO that up to 10 hours may be made available for planning and development work other than on a whole school basis. Circular 42/2016 has full details of this agreement.

At the time of their introduction from February 2011, the only provision was for use of the 36 'Croke Park' hours as a full staff. However, usage of five of the hours on an 'other than a whole-school' basis was negotiated for the 2014/15 school year. Under the terms of the Lansdowne Road Agreement (LRA), this was increased to eight hours for the

school year 2016-17.

The cap on the amount of time which may be made available for planning and development work, other than on a whole-school basis, has been raised to 10 hours for the current school year, 2017-18.

See the FAQ section on the INTO website for more information on the use of 'Croke Park' hours.

## INTO meets students union representatives



Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary, is pictured with (l to r): Billy Hedigan, Vice President and Lee Dillon, President, Mary I, Limerick; Lauren Fitzgibbon, President, Marino Institute of Education; Aisling Byrne, John Redmond and Mairéad Malone, student reps, Froebel, Maynooth University; Matt Davey, Vice President for Education and Placement, DCU Students' Union.

Last month, the INTO met with student teacher representatives of DCU, Froebel College, Maynooth, Marino Institute of Education and Mary Immaculate College of Education, Limerick.

Among the issues discussed were the INTO campaign on pay equality, Budget 2018, Gaeltacht costs and teaching practice costs incurred by student teachers, projected employment

prospects and the current teacher shortage, third-level funding, induction/Droichead, *InTouch* magazine for student teachers and other INTO supports for student unions.

Student representatives were advised to remind their members that final year students should register with the Teaching Council in the new year to be in a position to take up substitute work.

The students expressed concern about the cost of Gaeltacht placements. A letter on this issue is published in this edition. They argued that the expense of this and the increased time on school placement was making it more difficult for student teachers. They argued that graduation from a college of education should be about ability to teach rather than ability to pay.



# Northern News

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

## Common Funding Scheme

One of the major differences in the education systems in the two jurisdictions across the island of Ireland is that schools in the north of Ireland have fully delegated budgets.

School budgets are decided through the Common Funding Scheme. According to the document, *Common Funding Scheme 2016-17*, the Common Funding Scheme was developed in accordance with the following key principles:

- ✦ Sustainable schools should be funded according to the relative need of their pupils, and in a way that enables the effects of social disadvantage to be substantially reduced.
- ✦ Sustainable schools should be funded on a consistent and fair basis, taking full account of the needs of pupils.
- ✦ The formula should support schools in delivering the curriculum.
- ✦ The formula should underpin and reinforce wider education policy and objectives.
- ✦ The formula should be as transparent and comprehensible as possible and predictable in its outcome.

Unfortunately, it would appear that these principles have changed somewhat for 2017-18. The budget that maintained and controlled schools receive at the start of each financial year is determined through the common funding formulae. This formulae takes account of a number of factors including:

- ✦ age weighted pupil units (AWPU) factor;
- ✦ premises factor;
- ✦ targeting social need (TSN);
- ✦ primary principals' release time factor.

When all the factors have been taken into account then the school is allocated a budget, which is expected to sustain a school for a 12 month period from 1 April through to the following 31 March. The school must then prepare two budget plans each year in line with the available funding. One is a three-year plan, the

second a one-year plan. Schools are expected to arrive at a plan which stays within the money given.

From the school budget, all the wages for teachers, classroom assistants, auxiliary staff and ancillary staff must be paid, including the employer's contributions. A teacher at the top of the teaching scale will cost the school budget approximately £45,000. In most schools, more than 90% of the budget is taken up with funding wages. On top of this, schools must pay electricity bills, water charges, ground maintenance, pupil resources, cleaning materials and a host of other bills.

For the past number of years, schools have received only indicative budgets with which to plan, and these have not arrived until long after the date that they are needed. As the financial year differs from the school year, the financial plan is devised on a 5/12th 7/12th split, to reflect the school year. This is further complicated by the fact that any pay settlement is made in October.

The common funding formulae does not take account of any increases in expenditure which are beyond a school's control. So, for example, there is no adjustment to reflect any wage increase for teachers or other staff. Any inflation rise is not included.

This has the effect that, in reality, a school can expect to lose up to 4% of the school budget before any actual spending has taken place.

On top of that, this year schools have been informed through the press on 30 August, after most staff had returned to work, that the actual allocation per pupil in the primary sector had reduced from £2,061.21 in 2016/17 to £2,004.71 for 2017/18. When weighting is considered, the value of each post-primary pupil is calculated at £3,464.48 this year, compared to £3,489.76 in 2016/17.

If you take a school of 100 pupils, this amounts to a budgetary cut of £5,600 out

of a total budget of approximately £380,000. That, on top of a projected cut of 15,200 through inflation and wage increases, would result in a loss of £20,800 from the budget. When you consider that a newly qualified teacher receives an annual salary of £22,243 this has a major effect on the number of teaching staff that would be available to the school, causing redundancies and increase in class size.

If you take a primary school of 550 pupils with a budget of £1,770,00, the cut in the pupil aspect alone amounts to £30,800 and £70,800 in other cuts. A budget cut of £101,000 will have a devastating effect on educational provision within a school of this size, with potentially three redundancies. Again, the knock-on effect will include a substantial increase in class size, less provision for pupils with special needs, greater workload on other teaching staff and a negative impact on overall curriculum provision.

As part of the funding of schools, individual schools have, in the past, been given the facility to allow a surplus of not more than £75,000 to build up over the three-year financial plans. This has allowed schools to plan and prepare for future budget shortfalls, such as falling enrolments. This year, when schools have brought forward their financial plans, they have been informed that the surpluses that they have carefully grown through sound financial management, are no longer available to their school. Schools have instead been told that they can only spend the monies allocated to them for 2017/18 through the common funding formula.

This has had the effect of moving schools that were projected to either break even, or to carry a small surplus, now having plans rejected as the school will face a budget deficit. Again such deficits will lead to staff redundancies and ultimately negative impacts on the life chance of the young people they serve.

# Assaults

## *Knowing how to react*

Accompanying this edition of *InTouch* is a new leaflet giving advice to INTO members, both north and south, in relation to assaults against teachers in schools. The publication of the leaflet is a direct response by the union to a general lack of knowledge or information in relation to these types of incidents faced daily by teachers. The following cases exemplify clearly the issues involved.

One such teacher reluctantly contacted the INTO Northern Office and explained that he had a pupil who had a history of physical violence from early school years. In the final year of the child's primary school, the pupil's greater physical strength coupled with a violent temper had made him a serious risk to both the staff and the other pupils. During the school year, the pupil deliberately struck the teacher with such force that the teacher suffered severe facial injuries. He was forced to

Regrettably, these are not isolated cases but events that the INTO has seen increase sharply, especially in early years.

leave school to seek medical assistance and dental surgery. As a result the teacher was initially absent from school for just over two weeks.

Upon his return, he later explained that he felt very uncomfortable teaching this pupil. He felt this way because, during his absence, his colleagues had told him that the child was still being aggressive and that the school had not taken any other substantive action other than to invite a parent into the school for a meeting. The teacher felt that the school viewed the incident as a simply 'one off'.

Because of this, the teacher's return to work was only for a short period. He explained to INTO that he had lost his

confidence and questioned his own ability to teach and manage a class.

The initial incident of assault actually ended up with the teacher not being able to return to school until the start of the new school year, at which point the aggressive pupil had left the school to move to a post-primary setting.

When he spoke to the INTO, he said, "The impact of this on my family was beyond calculation. I was just a physical presence with really no engagement with my own children for about 10 months."

Similarly, another teacher employed in a special school with young adults sent the INTO photographs of the bruises, nips and bite marks received during the course of a week whilst attempting to carry out teaching work. The teacher concerned contacted the INTO to find out her rights in relation to sick leave.

She felt that she couldn't complain about the children because the culture at the school was that the children's behaviour was viewed as normal and run of the mill and teachers should not "demonise the children; they don't really know what they're doing."

She was shocked to find out from the INTO that her injuries were considered the result of assaults that should have been recorded by the school and assured that, with the INTO's insistence, the management of the school would no longer view these assaults as normal and would work with the INTO to help provide a safe and secure working environment for all teachers at the school.

Regrettably, these are not isolated cases but events that the INTO has seen increase sharply,



especially in early years. In light of this, the INTO has, once again, taken the proactive step in making sure that all teachers understand that this type of behaviour is totally unacceptable and cannot be allowed to be treated as ordinary and part of a teacher's day.

Likewise, abuse on school premises by adults, which is likely to be non-physical in nature, must be addressed as firmly and clearly by the school as it would a physical assault because, after a verbal assault, a teacher may be left shaken, feeling vulnerable and lacking the confidence to continue their role as a teacher.

The enclosed leaflet for members will empower teachers carrying out their roles as educators. It gives the important information in relation to identifying what constitutes an assault, measures that should be taken in order to prevent violence in schools and practical advice for all teachers who find themselves in hazardous situations.

# School leadership in Northern Ireland

The education system in Northern Ireland consists of different types of grant-aided schools under the control of various management bodies, which are also the employers of principals and teachers. The sectors include controlled schools (employed by the Education Authority, formerly the Education and Library Boards) and Catholic maintained schools (employed by the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools – CCMS).

Teaching staff are employed directly by boards of governors in voluntary grammar schools, integrated schools, Irish medium schools (Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta) and private schools.

Principals and vice-principals are paid through a leadership pay scale (L1-L43) rather than the main pay scale for teachers. Each school has its own leadership range dependant on the size of the school. Principals have a seven point range and vice-principals a five point range.

Movement along the range is dependent on a principal or vice-principal successfully meeting performance review and staff development targets set each year with the school's board of governors.

Governors delegate the day-to-day

running of the school to the principal. Aspects such as the raising of school standards, pastoral care, school ethos, safeguarding links with parents and the community, financial management and after-school activities are implemented by the principal, assisted by the vice-principal and members of school leadership teams. The principal reports to the governors on at least a termly basis and all aspects of recruitment, legal issues, pupil performance and budget are referred to the governors at these meetings.

The roles and responsibilities of principals and vice-principals are set out in the *Jordanstown Agreement*. The roles and responsibilities of the principal and vice-principal should be clearly understood by each other through agreement about what will serve the context and priorities of each individual school.

All of these sectors use slightly different methods in their recruitment procedures for principal and vice-principal posts. However, all the sectors must follow human resource legislation.

One aspect of recruitment common to all posts is that there should be an open, publicly advertised appointment process.

The current process within CCMS schools for recruiting principals and vice-principals involves an open and public advertisement, previously advertised in newspapers but, nowadays, advertised on the CCMS website. The intention of the process is to ensure that internal and external candidates can apply for any post and that everyone is given a fair and equitable chance of being appointed. The process is based on merit, qualifications, knowledge and experience, skills and personal qualities, as set out in the personnel specification which the candidates are scored and ranked against.

Once appointed, the principal and vice-principal are legally obliged to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the posts, as outlined in their job descriptions.

The principal and the vice-principal should agree on how best they work together, at a leadership level, for the good of the other staff, children, parents, ethos and standards of the school. The leadership and management of the school are accountable to the Board of Governors and to the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI).

## Northern Committee meet



INTO President, John Boyle, attended the Northern Committee meeting in Belfast last month.

**As part of the  
'Decade of  
Centenaries'  
(2012-2022)  
commemorations,  
schools across  
Ireland are invited  
to enter  
the fifth annual  
Schools' History  
Competition.**

**See full details on  
page 63.**

# Incoming Chair *Dorothy McGinley*

It was at a branch meeting in the back room of a back street bar in Tyrone that I first encountered the INTO. That was 15 years ago!

Little did I think back then that, today, I would have the privilege of chairing the Northern Committee!

I remember that night very clearly. Two former Northern Committee rep colleagues were present. Their contribution in knowledge, commitment and tenacity in working for teachers' rights and wellbeing made a lasting impression on me, they clearly demonstrated the strength and enormous value of the INTO.

I'm originally from the breathtakingly beautiful Donegal Gaeltacht. My years of travelling have afforded me a varied wealth of teaching and educational experiences.

My first teaching appointment in the North coincided with my interest in the INTO. I became school rep in Sionmills Primary School and, subsequently, became more actively involved when I became secretary of Strabane Branch. I represented District 2 on the Education Committee and enjoyed the contributions on educational matters which I was able to bring to my colleagues in the Republic.

However, it's the activism and engagement of members in the branches that I visit as CEC rep for the vibrant and dynamic District 2 that I relish.

I take on the role as Northern chair for



2017-18 at a time of extraordinary change across the educational landscape, in a backdrop of continuing education budget reductions, pay freezes and in an ever increasing landscape of measurability and accountability. Our officials and negotiators indeed have challenging times ahead! Nonetheless, it will be a privilege to serve all members in districts 1 and 2 and I look forward to visiting branches across the North to hear members' views and vision for the year ahead.

I have a particular interest in ongoing

educational issues, global education, CPD and in teacher education. I have been fortunate to work for three consecutive summers with Global Schoolroom Teacher Education in India and Africa. These experiences have further cemented for me the importance of increasing the awareness of connections between people and contributing to an understanding of global interdependence.

I am encouraged by the work the INTO continues to do in terms of global solidarity, trade union development training and, as chair, I will be actively encouraging more schools to become involved in the INTO Global Citizenship School, which supports schools in learning about and acting upon global issues, human rights and responsibilities.

There is no doubt that, over the course of the decade, there has been progressive erosion in teacher employment, and getting a job as a teacher is an ever increasing challenge. The resolutions passed instructed both Northern Conference and Congress to develop a teacher exchange scheme that will allow movement of teachers between schools in recognition of the changing needs of teachers and education. Exploration has already begun and now I look forward to assisting officials further this process.

The year ahead will be busy! It certainly will be an eventful one, that's for sure!



Northern Committee meeting chaired by Dorothy McGinley.

# BFC – working for members

The Benefit Funds Committee (BFC) consists of five elected representatives, one for each of five electoral divisions, (see page 33) together with the general secretary and the general treasurer. Elected representatives for 2016-2018 are:

Division 1	Paddy McAllister	Leas Cathaoirleach
Division 2	Feargal Brougham	
Division 3	Anne Kennelly	Cathaoirleach
Division 4	Bob Allen	
Division 5	Jerry Clifford	

## Operation of the Committee

The Benefit Funds Committee (BFC) meets regularly and also meets with various INTO officials and with representatives from the Department of Social Protection, Cornmarket and Comhar Linn. The BFC also meets in joint session with the CEC, as required by rule, to consider requests for legal assistance.

Support is provided by the committee to INTO members, and their dependants, in accordance with the INTO rules.

Assistance and advice is given to members on a wide range of issues including sick leave, processing of disability applications, voluntary retirement, social welfare, health services and medical insurance.

Last year, financial benefits were paid from the Benevolent Fund to members under the following headings:

- ✦ Grants on the death of members or their spouses.
- ✦ Benevolent Fund grants to disability and other hardship cases.
- ✦ Spouses' and Orphans' Annual Grant (to pre 1968 dependants).
- ✦ Legal expenses as set out in Rule 109, Rule 118 and Rule 121.

Last year grants totalling €94,000 were made arising from the death of members or their spouses in the Republic of Ireland. £8,815.05 was paid arising from the death of members or their spouses in Northern Ireland. On the death of a member of the INTO, or on the death of the spouse of a member, a grant is paid to the next of



Members of the BFC with John Boyle, INTO President. Pictured are back l to r: Paddy McAllister, Division 1; Jerry Clifford, Division 5 and Bob Allen, Division 4. Front row l to r: Anne Kennelly, Division 3; John Boyle, President and Feargal Brougham, Division 2.

kin, on completion of the appropriate form.

In addition, Benevolent Grants totalling €87,453.55 were paid to members in the Republic of Ireland and £7,524.49 to Northern members.

Financial assistance was granted following careful consideration of the circumstances of each individual case.

Contact details for the BFC are available in the INTO Member's Diary.

## Make a will

**The Benefit Funds Committee recommends that all members make a will.**

## Think ahead

The Hospice Foundation is involved in a project called *Think Ahead*. This is a public awareness initiative aimed at guiding people in discussing and recording their care preferences in the event of an accident or other emergency, serious illness or death – when they may well be unable to speak for themselves. Wishes can be recorded on a *Think Ahead* form which can be downloaded from [www.thinkahead.ie](http://www.thinkahead.ie). Information on services available in the North is on [www.nihospice.org](http://www.nihospice.org).

## Private health insurance

The Health Insurance Authority is the regulatory body for private health insurance in the ROI. The Benefit Funds Committee recommends contacting the HIA if considering private health insurance. Further information is available from the Health Insurance Authority ([www.hia.ie](http://www.hia.ie)).

In January 2015, the INTO launched a

specific service for members offering advice on health insurance products. See [www.intohealthinsurance.ie](http://www.intohealthinsurance.ie) or call 01 408 6217. If you decide to set up your health insurance plan through Cornmarket, a fee may apply.

There are several health insurance providers in the North. The INTO does not endorse any specific one.



# INTO Advice

*( INTO advice for members on issues of importance )*

## Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension

This is a social insurance payment for widows, widowers and surviving civil partners. It is not means tested. Entitlement, therefore, is not affected by other income you may have such as earnings or an occupational pension. Entitlement is based on the number of paid PRSI contributions. Applications should be made on claim form WCP 1, which is available from any post office or from the Widow's, Widower's or Surviving Civil Partner's (Contributory) Pension Section at (071) 9157 100 /1890 500 000 or [www.welfare.ie](http://www.welfare.ie). Full details of how to claim this entitlement in the north is on [www.moneyadvice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadvice.org.uk).

## INTO membership

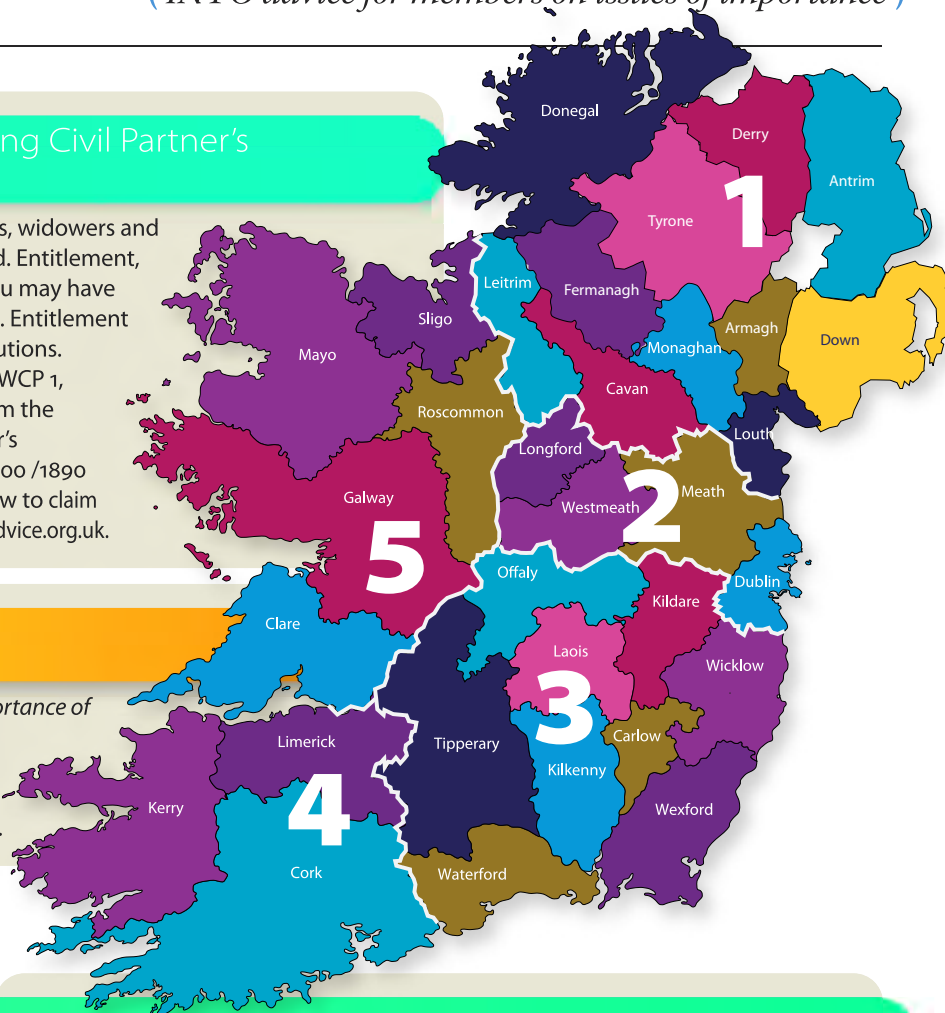
*The Benefit Funds Committee stresses the importance of maintaining INTO membership while a member is on unpaid leave/career break etc. Failure to maintain membership will result in the withdrawal of entitlement to INTO benefits.*

## Salary Protection Scheme

**The Benefit Funds Committee recommends that members give serious consideration to the security provided through joining the INTO Income Protection Scheme. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd operate a Salary Protection Scheme, endorsed by the INTO, which is tailored to the illness leave conditions of teachers. There are several such schemes in the North but none are endorsed by the INTO.**

## Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner's Grant

**The Widowed or Surviving Civil Partner's Grant is a once-off payment to widows, widowers or surviving civil partners with dependent children. This grant of €6,000 is designed to assist with the income support needs in the immediate aftermath of bereavement. Further information is available from the Widow(er)s Pension Section at (071) 9157 100/1890 500 000 or [welfare.ie](http://welfare.ie). See [www.moneyadvice.org.uk](http://www.moneyadvice.org.uk) for advice on Bereavement Support payment.**



## MC1 and MC2 Forms (for claiming illness/injury benefit) (ROI)

This procedure relates to teachers appointed since April 1995 or who otherwise are PRSI Class A payers. An MC1 form must be submitted to Primary Payroll of the DES if you are out sick for more than six consecutive days (excluding Sunday). An MC2 (inter certificate) form must be submitted to Primary Payroll for each continuing week of absence after the first week. An MC2 (final certificate) form must be submitted to Primary Payroll when you are considered fit to resume work. In the

event that you do not follow the above procedure, arrangements may be made by the DES to recoup from your salary an amount equivalent to the total benefits that would have been transmitted to the DES in respect of that absence.

### OLCS and MC1/MC2 Forms

Care must be taken when completing the OLCS that information is entered correctly. The school must ensure that the MC1 and MC2 forms are returned directly to Primary Payroll.

## Independent financial advice

It is important that members make informed decisions regarding their financial affairs. Independent advice is available from the Competition and

Consumer Protection Commission ([www.consumerhelp.ie](http://www.consumerhelp.ie)) in the ROI or from the Money Advice Services in the North.



## New OECD report puts spotlight on teacher salaries, class size and gender equality

The release of the 2017 edition of the OECD's *Education at a Glance* contains data supporting teacher union arguments across the world that teacher salaries remain stagnant and that class size does have an impact on learning outcomes.

The report, released on 12 September, provides an up-to-date compilation of existing OECD data from all of its studies, including PISA and TALIS, and it draws on all of the data available to it including external sources. It does not contain original research, but it provides a useful bank of statistics for teacher unions to use to compare education systems across the globe.

In the Republic of Ireland, the report shows primary schools faring badly when it comes to funding relative to other levels of education, a point highlighted by the INTO when reacting to the report.

Sheila Nunan strongly criticised what she called the "unfair funding" of Irish primary education highlighted in the report, which showed lowest spending at primary level. For every €8 spent on a primary pupil, €11 is spent at second level and €14 at third level.

Ms Nunan said the report clearly shows that primary education is the Cinderella of the education system when it comes to funding. "It is unacceptable that other levels of education are better funded," she said. "This blatant inequity must be addressed in Budget 2018."

The OECD report shows most countries spending more per student than at start of the crisis in 2008. The Republic of Ireland is an exception. *Education at a Glance* shows spending in Ireland has fallen against comparable EU countries in recent years.

Ms Nunan said the main reason for this was that starting salaries for teachers are now below the OECD average from a point where Irish teachers had a salary advantage over counterparts in other countries. She said this showed the extent of the cuts to new entrant pay imposed by government in recent years and the

need to address pay inequality in the teaching profession.

The report shows that, despite new Irish teachers being underpaid, they are among the most productive. They teach more pupils than teachers in other countries. The average class size in Irish primary schools is 25 compared to the EU average of 20 pupils per class.

Irish primary teachers teach more hours than teachers in other countries. Irish primary teachers teach for 915 hours per year compared to EU 22 average of 767 hours.

### Global picture

Many of the trends evident in Ireland are to be found across the globe. The damaging effect on teacher supply and morale of enforced pay freezes and pay cuts is shockingly evident. The OECD makes clear that low teachers' pay is damaging the prospects of future generations by discouraging young people from entering the profession. The report outlines that, due to low levels of compensation, the profession has become increasingly unattractive to students seeking careers. This situation is compounded by the fact that the teaching profession continues to age.

The current dilemma traces back to the delayed impact of the 2008 economic downturn. Teachers' salaries were either frozen or cut and the average was at its lowest in 2013. Although there has been a partial improvement in salaries in some countries, teachers' salaries have not been restored to their previous levels and do not have parity with other similar professions.

### Class size

The OECD recognises that there is "some evidence that smaller classes may benefit

specific groups of students, such as those from disadvantaged backgrounds". This represents a new, if partial, recognition by the OECD that class size does have an impact on educational outcomes.

### Gender equality

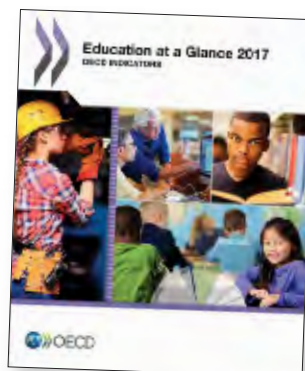
The report also contains some strong findings on continuing inequities in relation to gender. It emphasises how much further governments have to go in tackling gender equality. Despite the fact that women are more likely to complete degrees than men, tertiary educated men still have better labour market outcomes in terms of employment and salaries than women. One OECD conclusion is that; "Gender parity in graduation rates is still a distant dream for some fields of study, particularly upper secondary education."

### Disadvantaged students

There is a strong finding in *Education at a Glance* on the need for support for disadvantaged students. This includes children of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.

The report concludes that; "Parents' education level has a greater impact than age or gender on the likelihood of attaining a tertiary type A or an advanced research degree." Indeed, the EAG concludes that high levels of education may play a role in preventing depression. The OECD sees through the data that wellbeing and mental health are influenced by the educational experience of students. As with parents' qualifications, those from advantaged backgrounds who attain tertiary qualifications have lower incidences of depression.

The focus in the report on the impact of social disadvantage is welcome. Many governments are still failing disadvantaged children by not providing the right levels of support to their families and to schools.



# National School Photography Awards

## *Making memories*

This year sees the inauguration of the National School Photography Awards (INSPA). INSPA is a national children's photography competition which is open to all primary schools located in the Republic of Ireland. These awards are brought to you by Image Masters Photography in partnership with Dublin Zoo, The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and MummyPages.

The awards aim to encourage young creatives in primary education to engage with both digital technology and the creative process to create striking visual images. They hope to inspire and ignite passion in students, increase engagement with digital arts while, at the same time, subtly educating students about the importance of the creative process.

The awards are offering a range of fantastic prizes for finalists, winners and



their schools including; free entry to Dublin Zoo for the overall winner and their classmates, digital cameras for winners and their schools, framed photographs, certificates of achievement and school photography fundraising days in aid of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

This year's theme is 'Making Memories' which asks teachers and their students to integrate the camera into the school-day to generate

discussion and understanding around the idea of memory/ memories. All entries will be judged by a national panel including John Boyle, INTO President; Ronan Smith, Chair, ASI Irish Dementia Working Group; Aideen Howard, Director, The Ark, Dublin; Catherine Bowe, Visual Art Manager, Wexford Art Centre and Richard Carr, artist and school liaison.

### How to enter

Request your school access code at [www.inspa.ie](http://www.inspa.ie). Follow the account activation instructions and upload your students' entries.

The deadline for entries is midnight on Friday, 19 January 2018 so make sure you have activated your school account well in advance of this date.

## NUI Galway is looking for science enthusiasts and filmmakers of all ages

The science video competition, ReelLIFE SCIENCE, is open to all primary and secondary schools, community groups and clubs in Ireland

NUI Galway is challenging science enthusiasts and filmmakers of all ages to produce an engaging and educational short science video for this year's ReelLIFE SCIENCE competition. Videos can be produced on smartphones or cameras and can communicate any aspect of science. In previous years more than 7,000 people have participated.

Supported by the Science Foundation Ireland Discover programme, the Community Knowledge Initiative and the CÚRAM Centre for Research in Medical Devices, ReelLIFE SCIENCE will award more than €5,000 for the best science videos.

The winning videos will be selected by a panel of guest judges, including BT Young Scientist and Technologist of the Year 2017, Shane Curran from Terenure College Dublin; NASA Spacecraft systems engineer and aspiring astronaut, Amber Gell.

Closing date for submissions is Friday, 13 October and the best videos at each level (primary, secondary and community) will be announced during Science Week 2017. The winning filmmakers will be invited to attend a public screening and awards ceremony during the Galway Science and



Technology Festival on 26 November.

Previous years' winning videos and more information about the 2017 competition can be found at [www.reellifescience.com](http://www.reellifescience.com).



# Living the dream

## Thanks to the INTO Mini Sevens

The INTO Mini Sevens have been part and parcel of Big Match Day in Croke Park since 1987. Many illustrious players treasure the jersey they wore when they made their Croke Park debut in the Mini Sevens. Former Waterford hurler Dan

Shanahan said that playing in the Mini Sevens was the greatest thrill of his long and distinguished playing career.

Today, 30 years on, the thrill of lining out in a packed Croke Park is as special as ever for the young players of 2017.

Recently, Danielle Griffin from Glenbeigh NS in Co Kerry was chosen to referee the girls' football game on the occasion of the Kerry v Mayo semi-final. Danielle is sports-mad and has been fortunate to be coached by teacher Mary Jo Curran, one of the greatest ever exponents of ladies football.

See also page 7 (Letters).

Danielle Griffin pictured with John Boyle, INTO President, in Croke Park



Mountain Stage,  
Glenbeigh,  
Co. Kerry.

24<sup>th</sup> August, 2017

Dear Mr. Lyons,

My name is Danielle Griffin and I have been a student at Glenbeigh National School for the past 8 years. I like playing sports such as football, basketball, handball and spikeball and I really enjoyed being part of the school football team coached by Ms. Curran. All our dreams came through this year when we won the Allianz Cumann na mBunscol 4/5 Teacher Final against St. Finian's National School, Waterville having been beaten by them in the previous two years.

This was very special to me as I was about to leave National School but I never expected what happened next. I was offered the opportunity to referee in Croke Park in the INTO/GAA/Cumann na mBunscol RESPECT Exhibition Go Games on All-Ireland Football Semi-Final Day on Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> August.

It was a wonderful day from start to finish. Everyone was so kind and welcoming and went out of their way to make the day an unforgettable experience. Walking out onto the pitch at Croke Park in front of a crowd of 66,000 people was amazing and I really enjoyed my experience as referee. Kerry being represented at both Minor and Senior level on the day made it extra special as well as bringing my Mom to Croke Park for her 1<sup>st</sup> time!

I would really like to thank you and everyone involved for giving me this wonderful opportunity. It was a privilege and a fantastic experience and has given me some very special memories to take with me as I move on to secondary school.

Gio raibh míle maith agat.

*Danielle*  
Danielle Griffin

## Ó Ghlúin go Glúin

When Galway won All-Ireland hurling titles in 1987 and 1988, Éanna Ryan was an elusive forward in the maroon jersey. Wind the clock forward 30 years and Éanna's son Joshua Ryan lined out in Croke Park in the Galway colours on All-Ireland Final Day. Joshua played in the INTO Mini Sevens. It was a day tinged with sadness for the Ryan family as Éanna was a clubmate of the late Tony Keady and their families were very close. Éanna and Tony lined out together with Killimordaly from a very young age.



Cumann na mBunscol uachtarán Liam Magee with Joshua and Éanna Ryan



INTO Mini Sevens co-ordinator Gerry O'Meara pictured with Fionn Keating McDermott and his parents Yvonne and Louis. Fionn is a pupil in St Colmcille's NS, Knocklyon and Yvonne is Assistant Chief Inspector in the DES

# An Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge agus an Fráma Tagartha Comónta

## An Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge and the Common European Framework of

### Cúlra

Sa bhliain 2001, d'fhoilsigh Comhairle na hEorpa *Fráma Tagartha Comónta Eorpach Do Theangacha* (FTCET). Bhí sé d'aithne ag an bhFTCET caighdeánú a dhéanamh ar na céimeanna éagsúla a bhíonn le tógáil ag foghlaimoir agus iad ag foghlaim teanga. Go bunúsach, aithníonn an FTCET sé leibhéal éagsúla agus léirítear iad de ghnáth i dtábla mar seo:

- C2 Úsáideoir Inniúil (Máistreacht)
- C1 Úsáideoir Inniúil (Inniúlacht)
- B2 Úsáideoir Neamhspleách (Idirmheánach Ard)
- B1 Úsáideoir Neamhspleách (Idirmheánach)
- A2 Úsáideoir Bunúsach (Bunleibhéal)
- A1 Úsáideoir Bunúsach (Tosaitheoir)

Ag gach leibhéal, bíonn ar an bhfoghlaimoir inniúlacht a bhaint amach de réir critéar ainmnithe ar leith don leibhéal sin i gcúig scil teanga – éisteacht, léitheoireacht, idirghníomhaíocht labhartha, táirgeadh labhartha agus scríbhneoireacht.

### Background

In 2001, the Council of Europe published the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). The aim of CEFR was to standardise the different steps that learners take when learning a language. Basically, the CEFR recognises six different levels and they are usually illustrated in table form as follows:

- C2 Proficient User (Mastery)
- C1 Proficient User (Proficiency)
- B2 Independent User (Vantage)
- B1 Independent User (Threshold)
- A2 Basic User (Elementary/Waystage)
- A1 Basic User (Beginner)

At each level, the learner is required to attain competence according to specific prescribed criteria for that level in five language skills – listening, reading, oral interaction, oral production and writing.

### Siollabas na Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge (SCG/OCG) agus an FTCET

Ó 2001, i leith, tá dearthóirí siollabais agus curaclaim tar éis úsáid a bhaint as an bhFTCET mar phointe tagartha agus iad ag cur siollabas le chéile. Ní haon eisceacht é Siollabas na Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge – is siollabas é atá bunaithe go ginearálta ar an bhFTCET. Déanann siollabas na Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge idirdhealú idir an Teanga Ghinearálta a bhíonn ag teastáil ó iarrthóirí agus an Teanga Ghairmiúil a bhíonn ag teastáil uathu. Maidir leis an nGaeilge Ghinearálta, is ar leibhéal B1 sa tábla thuas atá an cumas a éilítear ó iarrthóirí ar an gCáilíocht sa Ghaeilge. Ciallaíonn sé sin go n-éilítear neamhspleáchas ó iarrthóirí ina gcuid cumarsáide Gaeilge

ginearálta ag gnáth-ócáidí sóisialta agus pearsanta. Maidir leis an nGaeilge Ghairmiúil, is ar leibhéal B2 sa tábla thuas atá an cumas a éilítear ó iarrthóirí.

Ciallaíonn sé sin go bhfuil leibhéal níos airde Gaeilge á lorg ó iarrthóirí agus iad i gcumarsáid le páistí, le pobal na scoile agus nuair a bhíonn siad ag plé le hábhair a

bhaineann le gairm na múinteoireachta féin. Tá an bhéim sin ar ghairm na múinteoireachta le sonrú ar an measúnú a dhéanann an Cháilíocht sa Ghaeilge ar chumas an iarrthóra:

- 1) an Ghaeilge a úsáid go neamhfhoirmiúil leis na páistí mar theanga chaidrimh agus mar theanga bhainisteoireachta ranga;
- 2) gnáthcumarsáid (scríofa agus labhartha) a dhéanamh le daoine fásta

- ó phobal na scoile;
- 3) príomhghnéithe de ghramadach na Gaeilge a bhfuil tábhacht ar leith ag baint leo maidir le riachtanais an mhúinteora agus maidir le riachtanais na scoile a úsáid go cruinn;
- 4) plé le litríocht agus le cultúr na hÉireann trí mheán na Gaeilge agus feachtas teanga agus cultúir a chothú i bpáistí;
- 5) éisteacht le míreanna ina mbaintear úsáid as téarmaíocht na scoile agus as téarmaíocht ghairm na bunmhuínteoireachta;
- 6) Gaeilge a mhúineadh go héifeachtach, dearcadh dearfach i leith na Gaeilge a chothú i bpáistí agus scileanna a bhaineann le foghlaim teangacha a chothú i bpáistí.

### The Irish Language Requirement Syllabus and the CEFR

Since 2001, syllabus and curriculum designers have used the CEFR as a reference point in creating syllabi. The syllabus for the Irish Language Requirement is no exception and it is broadly based on the CEFR. The Irish Language Requirement Syllabus differentiates between the general language and the professional language that candidates require. With regard to general Irish, candidates are required to attain level B1. That means that they are expected to be able to communicate independently through Irish at ordinary social and personal occasions. With regard to professional Irish, candidates are required to attain level B2. That means that a higher level of Irish is expected from candidates in their communication with children, with the school community and in their discussion of subjects relating to the profession of teaching itself. That emphasis on the profession of teaching is evident in its assessment of the candidate's competence in:

- 1) using Irish informally with children as

## Tagairtí/References

Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta (2004). *An Scrúdú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge: Siollabas Teanga*. Baile Átha Cliath: An Roinn Oideachais agus Eolaíochta.

Mac Suibhne, A. and Whelton, M. (2009). *Sruth na Maoile: Ábhar Tacaíochta d'Oiriúnú le hAghaidh Cáilíochta sa Ghaeilge*. Baile Átha Cliath: Institiúid Oideachais Marino.

# Eorpach do Theangacha

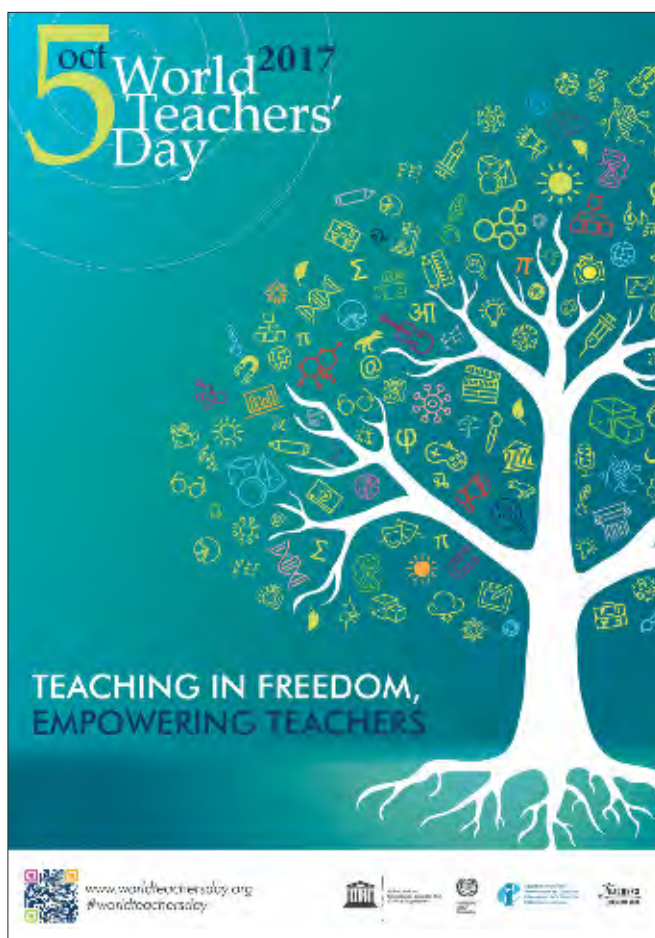
## Reference for Languages



An Associated College of The University of Dublin, Trinity College

- a socialising language and as a language of classroom management;
- 2) communicating (in writing and orally) with other adults from the school community;
- 3) accurately using the main aspects of Irish grammar that are of particular significance for the needs of the teacher and the school;
- 4) discussing Irish literature and culture through the medium of Irish and nurturing knowledge of language and culture in children;
- 5) listening to texts in which terminology specific to school and to the profession of teaching is used;
- 6) teaching Irish effectively, nurturing a positive attitude towards Irish in children and promoting skills in relation to learning language in children.

**PEADAR MAC GIOLLA BHRÍGHDE,**  
**AODÁN MAC SUIBHNE agus**  
**MARIE WHELTON (Institiúid**  
**Oideachais Marino).**



## Travel pass

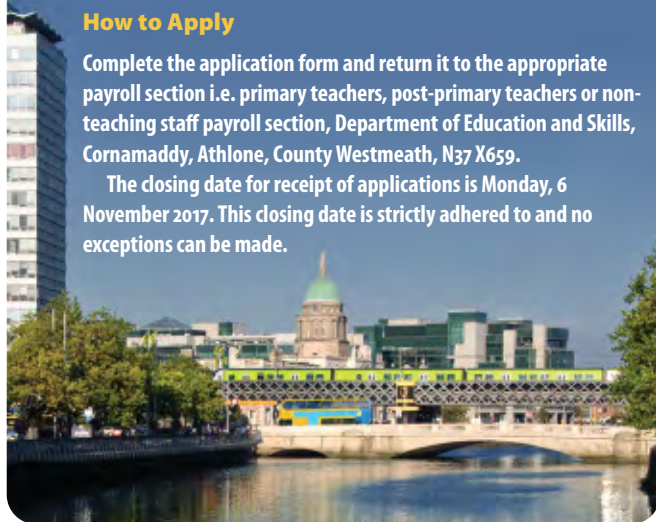
Closing date for receipt of applications is Monday, 6 November

The Travel Pass Scheme allows an employer (e.g. the DES) to incur the expense of providing an employee (e.g. a teacher) with an annual bus/rail pass, without the employee being liable for benefit-in-kind taxation. The cost of the travel pass is deducted from salary and the employee will not pay tax, PRSI, universal social charge or pension related deduction on the cost of the travel pass. The scheme becomes operational on 1 January each year. Details of the scheme are set out in Circular 0045/2015.

### How to Apply

Complete the application form and return it to the appropriate payroll section i.e. primary teachers, post-primary teachers or non-teaching staff payroll section, Department of Education and Skills, Cornamaddy, Athlone, County Westmeath, N37 X659.

The closing date for receipt of applications is Monday, 6 November 2017. This closing date is strictly adhered to and no exceptions can be made.



# Permission to wonder

*Dublin takes the lead in European schools project*

Dublin will be one of six cities across Europe to pioneer the use of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) in schools in an innovative project aimed at developing an EU-wide curriculum for the learning method. Operating in the US since 1995 and in 18 other countries in the interim, VTS aims to transform the way students think and learn by developing their critical thinking and communication skills through discussing what they see through looking at art.

The 'Permission to Wonder' project is the first European-focused VTS and, through it, a certified European training pathway for teachers in VTS across the EU will be developed. Following a 'train the trainers' model, the EU-funded project will instruct teachers from Dublin, the Netherlands, Finland, Denmark, Spain and Slovenia in VTS methodology. Once trained, they will teach others the method.

The Irish element of the project is being



Watch VTS in a primary classroom at <https://vimeo.com/127655342>.

led by Dublin City Council's Arts Office and LAB Gallery, who will partner with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane. Five schools across Dublin will develop their visual thinking skills. These will then be applied through visits to city art galleries to

discuss various art works. Four schools in the north east inner city are already practicing VTS – The Central Model Senior School and Larkin Community College, Dublin 1, St Vincent's Boys Junior School and St Mary's, Fairview in Dublin 3. More information at [www.dublincultureconnects.ie/permission-wonder-eu-lab](http://www.dublincultureconnects.ie/permission-wonder-eu-lab)

## My Learner ID – an innovative new series for schools

*My Learner ID* is a new, unique resource designed for learners from pre-school through to sixth class.

Designed by developmental and educational psychologist, Dr Suzanne Parkinson, *My Learner ID* nurtures the 'Who' and 'How' of learning. The series supports children on becoming learners, on articulating perspectives of themselves as learners and their worldview, their experiences of school and on the educative process.

Couched within a Personal Construct Psychology framework and a Strengths Perspective, *My Learner ID* tracks the voice of the child in their journey through education and on becoming a learner. The series addresses the 'how' of learning and encourages learners to reflect and develop key learner dispositions associated with effective learning. Attention, memory, organisation,



metacognition, mindsets and learning behaviours are explored in third to sixth class. Themes from *Aistear* are explored in the younger years.

This publication is timely in supporting key current policy documents. It supports 45 Statements of Highly Effective Practice

from the new framework for school self-evaluation (*Looking At Our Schools*, 2016). It offers a foundation block for Learner Support Files (*Supporting Pupils with SEN in Mainstream Schools: Guidelines for Primary Schools*, 2017) providing a holistic and balanced view of the learner, centred on the perspective and voice of the learner. The series also scaffolds teachers practice in their use of formative assessment methodologies by providing learners with opportunities to respond, assist cards and cubes, reflect cards,

Rubrics, self and peer assessment schedules. The series nurtures:

- Learner voice.
- Learner ownership and responsibility.
- Learner efficacy.
- Learner disposition.
- Tools for learning.
- Parental partnership.
- School self-evaluation.
- Formative assessment.
- A repository of learner experience over time.



Purposefully designed NOT to resemble any other book in the schoolbag, *My Learner ID* uses thematic illustrations of hot air balloons, climbing frames, graffiti walls and digital identities in upper primary to elicit, through open-ended prompts, the worldview of the learner.

*Mise mar Fhoghlaimeoir*, the Irish version of *My Learner ID* is being launched in Gaelsoileanna and Gaeltacht schools and is supported by COGG.

Information and continuing professional development sessions will run at various times across the year in teacher centres. More information can be accessed at: [www.mylearnerid.com](http://www.mylearnerid.com)



# Put Porto on your bucket list

While Reykjavik may have been on everyone's bucket list last year, Porto should be this year. Succulent seafood, inspiring architecture and great wine makes for a worthy weekend destination.

## Getting there

Flights departing Dublin for a long weekend come in under €200, if booked in advance. Check out Skyscanner's cheapest month option for the best deals.

Consider investing in a Porto Card for your weekend visit. €20 for a two day transport card also gives you discounted or free entry to many attractions including Casa da Musica. There is a cheaper €10 walker pass which does not include transport.

Upon arrival at Porto airport, follow signs for the metro to the city centre (every 20–30 mins and the journey takes about 30 mins). Don't forget to validate your ticket or face a fine.

Note that the metro runs from 6 a.m. until 12.34 a.m. and tickets are about €2.55. However, if your flight is before 6 a.m. or you arrive after midnight there are no night buses, and the metro ends at 12.34 a.m. so a taxi is your only option.

## Where to stay

I'm a big Airbnb fan so it is worth checking out the website for apartments to suit your budget. Prices around €50 per night and 3 or 4 star hotels around €80–100 a night. I really liked Miss'Opo with its minimalist, industrial style apartments. Miss'Opo is a guesthouse/bar and restaurant offering studio or two bed apartments from €170. Check availability on [www.missopo.com](http://www.missopo.com)

## What to eat and drink

Porto is famous for its delicious seafood dishes. Try the grilled sardines, cod cakes and baked cod dishes. When washed down with a light, refreshing white port

and tonic, how can you go wrong? I had heard about the famous custard tarts (pastel de nata) and the mixed opinions on where was best to try them. Seek out Nata Lisboa or Café Aquarela and let me know your verdict! Cantina 32 on Rua das Flores (make a reservation beforehand to avoid disappointment) is one to visit after a stroll down this beautifully upcycled street for some tapas or cheesecake – you choose. Porto is famous for port so pop a tasting on the list. The tasting lodges are right across the river. Taylor's have a sweet, little garden where you can sip port in the sunshine. There's also a patio with a restaurant too, so you can have lunch and admire the spectacular views over the city. Why not travel back in time to the Portuguese Belle Époque and have a cup of tea at Café Majestic. The café was founded in 1921 and is one of the most glamorous venues in the city. I know it's touristy, but still...

## What to see and do

You can take a short cruise down the Douro River aboard one of the typical 'rabelo barcos', which were once used to transport port wine. A cruise can cost from €15 depending on the route, duration and activities you want to do. Porto indulges its love of Baroque and Gothic art and architecture to the next level in lavish church interiors like Sao Francisco's Church. What is not covered in gold is made from marble! Beneath the flags of the cellar are thousands of human bones, stored to await Judgment Day. Wander the quaint, little medieval streets of Ribeira absorbing the friendly atmosphere this city has to offer.

For the Harry Potter fans amongst you check out Livraria Lello. This bookshop/library is one of the locations where JK Rowling apparently drew inspiration. It is seething with tourists and you need to buy tickets at the shop four doors



down to enter but, for that Instagram shot, get there early.

Visit the Palácio da Bolsa do Porto (stock exchange building) to get your ornate ceiling, magnificent art and décor fix. It is said to be one of the most beautiful buildings in Portugal. I would argue that the Sao Bento railway station is high on that list too. The azulejo tiles depicting Portugal's history is simply incredible. In fact, these blue tiles are dotted around the city and certainly add to the beauty and charm.

Not for the claustrophobic among you stands the Clerigos church. Climbing the 240 steps to the bell tower top affords views out over the city but be aware that the stairs are narrow and steep and there is no lift. The entry fee is €4 but tickets don't guarantee instant entry. You could still have to wait.

On a macabre note, there is a chapel to the uncanonised, unofficial Saint Maria Adelaide who lies in a glass coffin. Her reputation for performing miracles of healing, saving people from deadly diseases and helping them to find love has secured her place on the visited list.

This city has plenty to keep you occupied so keep it in mind as your finger hovers over the mouse while you contemplate your next destination.

**CIARA MCNALLY** teaches in Greystones, Co Wicklow. Check out Ciara's blog at [mysuitcasesdiaries.org](http://mysuitcasesdiaries.org) for more information.



# Five handy calculators to save you time and money



Maybe you are budgeting for a baby, getting married or planning an around the world trip! Whatever your circumstances, the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC) has a whistle-stop tour of some of its most popular calculators to help you save time, effort and money and win back some of your hard-earned cash.

## Begin with a budget

Budgeting strikes fear into the heart of many of us. But there is nothing to be afraid of. If you're a novice budgeter, use the budgeting calculator on [ccpc.ie](https://www.ccpc.ie). A handy tip before you start is to have some idea of what your regular expenses cost by looking through previous bank statements or recent bills. Then fill in the budget planner and see where you stand. If your income is more than your expenses then you have some extra money to save or spend. But don't stop there. As you now have an idea of where your money is going you might spot some expenses which you can reduce or get rid of. Be ruthless – look at areas such as subscriptions which you may be paying for but never actually use.

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/tools-and-calculators/budgeting-calculators/budget-planner/>

## Cut back on the everyday expenses

If you're still struggling to make your budget work, it might be a good idea to forensically examine what you are spending your money on each month. Here to help you is the CCPC spending calculator! It gives a breakdown for each spending category such as entertainment, transport, gifts and personal items so you can see how much you're spending and how much extra money you could have if you reduced your spending in some of these areas.

Ask yourself if some simple changes could lead to big savings? Maybe swap an evening out for a takeaway or gym membership for walking in Ireland's beautiful countryside? It's a great way to keep fit and fresh air doesn't cost anything!

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/tools-and-calculators/spending-calculator/>

## Compare your financial products

If you were told that by taking five minutes to compare your mortgage with other options available on the market you could

potentially save thousands, would you be interested? Well then, meet the CCPC mortgage comparison which is customised for mortgage switchers. All you need to do is enter the market value of your house, your outstanding mortgage, how long is left and your current monthly repayments. The tool will show you the



difference between what you're paying now and what else is available in the market, per month and over the lifetime of your mortgage. Most importantly it will show you potential savings if you were to switch. The tool also allows you to compare rates if you're a first-time buyer or home mover too so give it a try and it might help you to save big.

As well as the mortgage comparison, the CCPC has a whole family of financial product comparisons; nine in total, featuring 533 products. The information is independent and always up-to-date. So, if you are thinking of opening or switching current accounts, taking out a loan or starting to save regularly, have a look at the other comparisons. They show you the risks, benefits, costs and terms and conditions of all of the available products from the different financial institutions.

This saves you trawling through multiple sites. Don't forget to check with your credit union to see what products they have available as well.

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/financial-comparisons/>

## Cut your credit card debt

Introducing the clearing your credit card calculator! This calculator is for you if you feel like your credit card debt is dragging you down. Use it to see how long it will take you to clear your debt and how much faster you could clear it if you were to increase your monthly repayments, saving you money in interest repayments.

For example, if you have credit card debt of €1,000 and the APR on your card is 17%, it will take you two years to clear your debt if you pay off €50 a month and you stop using the card completely. If you increase your repayments to €100 a month, you could clear your balance in 11 months. That would mean your credit card debt is gone and you have more money to spend on yourself – a win-win!!

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/tools-and-calculators/clearing-your-credit-card-calculator/>

## Budget planning for life's big events

Life's big events are usually happy occasions but managing the costs can be stressful. So if you're expecting a baby soon or tying the knot, the baby and wedding budget planners are worth a look. They ask you to work out your budget and then list expenses associated with each life event. This isn't a shopping list but helps you to focus on the areas that are important to you while keeping an eye on your overall budget. Being one step ahead of your expenses will give you a sense of control and allow you to focus on enjoying those big days.

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/tools-and-calculators/budgeting-calculators/wedding-budget-planner/>

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/tools-and-calculators/budgeting-calculators/baby-budget-planner/>

For more information visit the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission website at [www.ccpc.ie](http://www.ccpc.ie)

# Two ways with ... KALE



This month in Foodoppi HQ, we are on a health kick. With the change in the weather we want to give ourselves a natural health boost to keep us cold-free this winter. All hail the almighty kale, known as one of the healthiest greens on the planet. It is a filling, low-calorie food but also contains many of the vitamins you need for your everyday diet.

## Why eat kale?

✦ Kale is packed with vitamins A, C, and K, calcium, potassium, and many other minerals.

- ✦ Gram for gram, kale has more than twice the vitamin C found in an orange. This high vitamin C content is very helpful for the immune system, metabolism and healthy skin.
- ✦ Kale is also very high in vitamin K, which provides strong bones and helps to prevent heart disease.
- ✦ The combination of protein, iron, folate, and vitamin B6, all found in kale, can create serotonin and dopamine. These two chemicals interact in the brain and can also help elevate mood.
- ✦ Kale is filled with powerful antioxidants

- and a great anti-inflammatory food.
- ✦ It is great for cardiovascular support, eating more kale can help lower cholesterol levels.
- ✦ Kale is high in calcium, which aids in preventing bone loss, preventing osteoporosis and maintaining a healthy metabolism.
- ✦ Kale is filled with fibre and sulphur, both great for detoxifying your body, keeping your liver healthy, helps manage blood sugar and makes you feel full.

## Cold-fighting smoothie – kale, apple and kiwi smoothie

With its endless health benefits, this smoothie is a fast and easy way to eat kale. Made in under five minutes, it's perfect for breakfast on the go or as a mid-morning health boost. You can mix and match your favourite fruits to add into this.

### Ingredients

- 1/2 apple
- 1/2 banana
- 1 kiwi
- 1/2 lime juiced
- 2 tablespoons porridge oats
- 1 handful of curly kale
- 200mls orange juice

### Method

- 1 Remove the curly part of the kale from the ribs and stems as these tend to be very tough and bitter.
- 2 Wash under cold water.
- 3 Peel and chop the banana, kiwi and apple.
- 4 Put all the ingredients into a blender and blend until very smooth.



## Kale and potato frittata

This is a delicious, hassle-free lunch or snack. Makes: 12

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon sunflower oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 50g chopped curly kale
- 100g potato – about 1 medium size
- 4 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese (optional)
- Seasoning
- Butter for greasing
- Muffin tray – nonstick

### Method

- 1 Heat the oil in a nonstick frying pan. Then add the onions and cook on a low heat for five minutes until softened.
- 2 Remove the curly part of the kale from the ribs and stems. Then wash under cold water, roughly chop up and add to the onion. Cook for two minutes.
- 3 Peel and grate the potato.
- 4 Crack the eggs into a large bowl and lightly beat. Then season with salt and pepper. Stir in the onion, kale, potato and parmesan cheese.
- 5 Grease a muffin tray with butter.



Then divide the mixture between the 12 holes, about a heaped tablespoon for each hole.

6 Cook in a preheated oven for 15-20 minutes until golden brown and the frittata is set in the centre.

The frittatas can be eaten hot or cold. They can be eaten on their own or with a variety of foods. Here are a few ideas:

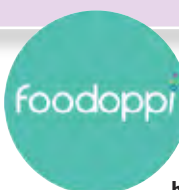
- ✦ Add a punch of protein – grilled salmon.
- ✦ Stretch it out – carrot ribbon and nigella seed salad.
- ✦ Dress it up – drizzle with cucumber yoghurt dip.
- ✦ More texture – throw in a handful of pomegranate seeds.
- ✦ Need your five a day? Add in asparagus, broccoli and sweetcorn.



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

AISLING LARKIN has a degree in

Education from Trinity, spent 10 years working in a DEIS school in inner city Dublin, has a first class M.Sc In Food Product Design and Culinary Innovation and set up Ireland's premier children's cookery school at the Cliff at Lyons a few years ago.



LOUISE LENNOX is a top chef and food broadcaster on TV and radio here in Ireland and has a background in nutrition and children's food media production. Aisling and Louise joined forces a few years ago and created Foodoppi.

# Teaching matters

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

## Scratch: thinking made visual

Coding is fast becoming a buzz word in education conversations. Although some teachers argue very convincingly that there is no place for coding in the already overcrowded primary curriculum, retired teacher Seamus O'Neill (co-author *Mathemagic*) is on a mission to demonstrate how coding can be used in primary schools as an extremely valuable teaching aid. Seamus has been an IT tutor with Navan Education Centre for almost 20 years. Since 2011, he has taught teachers how to code and, in 2012, he established Navan CoderDojo, with the support of NEC. With his passion for maths as a teacher and his love of coding, he has developed a unique way of bringing the fun and freedom of CoderDojo into the structured timetable of school.

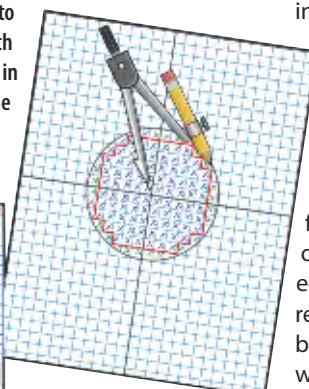
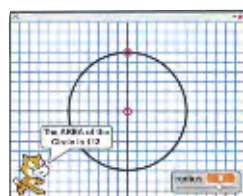
Scratch is by far the most popular coding language used by children in schools and computer clubs around the world, with over 24 million shared projects. For those not familiar with it, Scratch is a free, colourful, block-based coding language for young and old. In June 2017, Seamus was approached by the director of learning resources and research of the Scratch team at the MIT media lab in Boston for permission to add a component that Seamus had developed to the Scratch backdrops library. This is the first time a teacher in Ireland has had content included in the library. Using this component, it is now possible for teachers and students to use Scratch in ways not previously possible.

From his work on Scratch, Seamus has developed 'Ready-Steady-Code' vector grids. You can access these grids in two clicks if you visit Scratch online ([scratch.mit.edu](http://scratch.mit.edu)) and type 'vector grids' into the search box. You can see games, computer art, puzzles, mazes, geometry, patterns, Gaeilge and maths – projects that can be easily designed and coded on the grid backgrounds by children aged 9-16 years (from third class to junior cert). With Scratch you can also code



Example 1: Vector grids make the layout of this drag-and-drop flag quiz a lot easier. Layouts and their code can be used by 12-16 year olds as templates to create games and resources in any subject area.

Example 2: Here is a circle drawn in Scratch and a similar circle drawn in a copybook, just one example of the opportunity to correlate coding with written assignments in any subject across the curriculum.



music, story, animations, designs etc. The 'magic mix' of vector grids on the Scratch bitmap stage gives it much more functionality in school. They make it easier for children to complete assignments with short scripts of code – almost as easily as with a pencil on paper. In two clicks, the grids make Scratch resemble the squared paper of a sum copy or graph paper. Being able to code the area of a circle or other shape in Scratch and then correlate and verify it by a drawing in the copybook is not just engaging to children but is hugely beneficial in consolidating learning. Secondary students can, for example, easily code the trend of a graph.

Scratch code is more than a subject on the curriculum. It is thinking made visual – a tool that helps its users think computationally. 'Ready-Steady-Code' is about perceiving the world of computational thinking and coding in original, inspired and artistic ways, which nurture imagination, experimentation, exploration, innovation, the ability to question assumptions and synthesise information, in an environment which values the journey of discovery. **What** teachers teach has its requirements and obligations under the curriculum guidelines. **How** teachers teach has always been a matter for each individual teacher. 'Ready-Steady-Code', when seen as a tool or methodology, allows teachers to upskill in their own individual way.

Seamus's book, *Scratch with Ready-Steady-Code*, is packed full of short, easy exercises. There are also over 100 projects shared online at [scratch.mit.edu/users/readysteadycode](http://scratch.mit.edu/users/readysteadycode). Teachers can learn from the online examples and book or attend training courses in their local education centre. Alternatively, they can receive whole school training organised by the school or local cluster. The book will be launched during Maths/Code Week, which starts on 7 October. Enquiries for bulk orders can be made any time before that date.



*Scratch with Ready-Steady-Code*. Price €20, comes with two free wall charts, plus postage and packaging, payable through PayPal. Contact: [seamus@wean-dus.ie](mailto:seamus@wean-dus.ie).



# Giving a voice to the past

*Scoilnet Threads provides schools with an online space to share their local history projects – [scoilnet.ie/threads](http://scoilnet.ie/threads)*

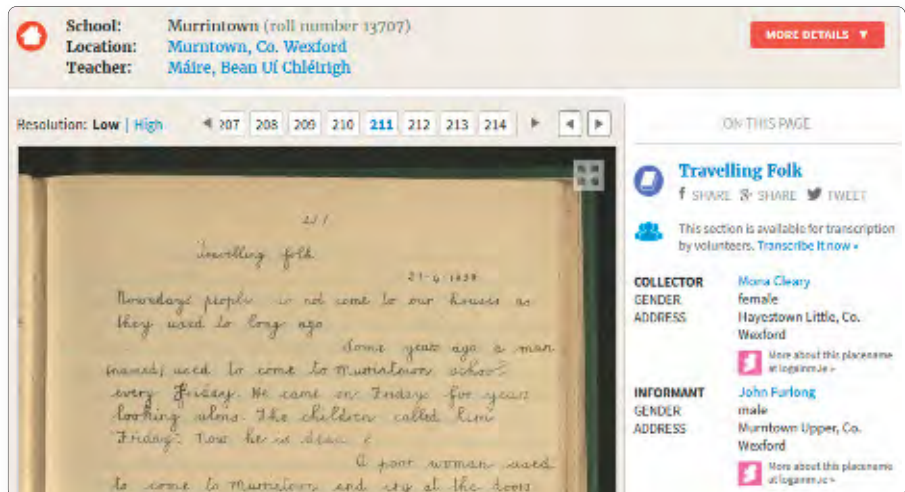
Irish people love to talk and everyone has a story to tell. The oral tradition, or Béaloideas, has always been very strong in our culture – as expressed eloquently in Irish folklore and through the Irish literary tradition. Collecting such stories forms an important role in creating a fabric of history. Telling history, though, is not just about recounting the story of famous and powerful people but also about giving a voice to the everyday memories of ordinary people in every corner of the country.

Scoilnet's new *Threads* initiative [www.scoilnet.ie/threads](http://www.scoilnet.ie/threads) is aimed at providing an online space for schools to store and share their pupils' oral history projects. It is all about encouraging students to become active oral historians and to engage in the collection of stories and history in their locality by gathering living people's testimony about their experiences and memories.

The idea for *Threads* has been inspired by the Schools Collection or the Bailiúchán na Scol project undertaken in the 1930s by the Irish Folklore Commission who collaborated with the Department of Education and the Irish National Teachers' Organisation. The project saw almost 50,000 school children collect and document folklore and local tradition, with approximately 740,000 pages compiled by pupils in around 5,000 primary schools between 1937 and 1939.

The entire collection is being digitised and available on the [duchas.ie](http://duchas.ie) website. From the screen caption above, the school, collector and informant are all named and, as you will see from the neatness of the handwriting, it is reasonable to expect that a lot of emphasis was put on this at the time and the collection was seen as important for the school.

In a sense *Threads* has taken the idea behind the 1930s initiative and has applied 21st century technology to it. The pupils who contributed to the Schools



Collection had pen and paper to record the folklore they gathered, while the pupils of today can enhance their research through a variety of digital and other means, and present their findings using a multitude of different formats – digital text, sound, video, animations and combinations of some or all of these formats.

*Threads* has a potentially broad application to the curriculum – while it is primarily history-centred for obvious reasons – it could also be used for project work covering aspects of 'locality' across many subjects, e.g. SESE, geography where the active exploration of all environments is a key characteristic of the curriculum. The 'Threads in the Curriculum' page on the website will help teachers frame the project in the curriculum for their classes.

The *Threads* website has three main sections around which there is detailed guidance:

- **Plan:** Choosing the topic; finding sources; connecting with the 1930s Schools Collection.
- **Do:** Researching the background; setting questions; doing an interview.
- **Submit:** Selecting a template; entering details; tagging your locality.

Once a project or story has been written,

the teacher can decide to upload it themselves or they can decide to allow the students to upload. In either case, the teacher must sign on with their Scoilnet account and, if they wish to add students they can do this from their own dashboard. Students will not be able to put a story live, though, until it is approved by the teacher.

A support video introducing the initiative was created and shown during summer courses run by PDST Technology in Education. It can be viewed at [www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/threads](http://www.pdsttechnologyineducation.ie/threads)

Remember, everyone has a story to tell!

## Acknowledgments

The idea for *Threads* was the inspiration of Seán Gallagher (teaching principal at Attymass NS in Co Mayo and former deputy director in the PDST). Further early-stage conceptual support given by: Professor Fionnuala Waldron, Brian Ruane and Peter Whelan (DCU Institute of Education); Críostóir Mac Cárthaigh (archivist at the UCD School of Irish, Celtic Studies and Folklore) and Kevin McCarthy (senior inspector of post-primary history at the DES).

Written by Patrick Coffey, PDST Technology in Education

## PDST Technology in Education

*Autumn online courses*

Short online courses on ICT in teaching, learning and assessment are available via [TeacherCPD.ie](http://TeacherCPD.ie) this autumn. All that's needed is a (free) personal Scoilnet account to enrol. Many courses are suitable for 'additional hours' (Croke Park hours), subject to school approval.



# Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington 1877-1946

**InTouch continues its series on the iconic figures of Irish history buried in Glasnevin Cemetery.**



FOUNDED IN 1888

**GLASNEVIN  
CEMETERY MUSEUM**

**This month's article remembers Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington.**

In 1922, women over the age of 21 were finally granted the right to vote in Ireland. This achievement was the outcome of decades of tireless campaigning by a dedicated few. One of the most prominent and influential suffragettes of this time was Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington, who was an ardent campaigner for not only the right to vote, but a strong supporter of socialism, nationalism and pacifism. This month, we remember the life and work of Hanna, a woman who witnessed and shaped a changing Ireland.

Born in May 1877 in Co Cork, Hanna Sheehy came from a prominent background. Her father was a Home Rule MP for South Galway and her mother was adamant that her daughters would receive as much education as was afforded to boys. Having won a scholarship, Hanna completed a BA in Languages and achieved a first-class honours MA in Modern Languages. In 1902, she joined the Irishwomen's Suffrage and Local Government Association. Whilst at university, she became involved in many of the causes in which she would remain prominent throughout her life.

In 1903, Hanna married Francis Skeffington. They wore their university gowns to be wed and, in a gesture of equality, adopted one another's surname. Her new husband was a committed suffragette also and resigned as registrar of UCD in protest at the ban on female admissions. In 1908, the Irish Women's Franchise League, a woman's suffrage society, was founded. Hanna was elected secretary and Francis was a very active associate member (men were not admitted as full members). In 1909, the Sheehy-Skeffington's only child, Owen, was born. Hanna chaired a large meeting addressed by Emily Pankhurst in Rathmines in 1910 and also visited England to support suffragette rallies. In 1912, the IWFL launched a weekly newspaper, *The Irish Citizen*, promoting the League's views.

During the increased poverty of the



Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington with her husband, Francis.

Copyright: © National Museum of Ireland, image capture by Eneclann.

1913 Lockout, Hanna assisted in the soup kitchen at Liberty Hall. She was arrested in 1913 after being accused of striking a policeman during a separate protest. According to reports, it had been Hanna who was violently seized by the man in question. However, when the charge was later heard in court the policeman claimed he was still in much pain and the gathering spectators couldn't control their laughter as he towered in height above Hanna. She was imprisoned, embarked on a hunger strike and was released five days later.

As the 1916 Easter Rising developed, parts of Dublin descended into chaos. Francis was arrested on Tuesday of Easter Week as he attempted to stop widespread looting. He was taken to Portobello Barracks for questioning and, the following day, he was shot dead without trial. Hanna had to wait until Friday to hear this devastating news and later refused the compensation offer of £10,000 from the British Army. In an attempt to publicise the treatment of her husband and the cause of Irish independence, Hanna toured America from 1916-18. She spoke at 250 meetings and managed to secure an audience with President Woodrow Wilson, to whom she gave a copy of the 1916 Proclamation.

On her return home, Hanna joined Sinn Féin and was elected to the Executive of

the Party. During the War of Independence she served as a judge in the Republican courts and later rejected the Treaty. However, as a pacifist, she was strongly opposed to the Civil War and raised funds for families affected by the violence. Initially a supporter of Fianna Fáil, Hanna later withdrew support and campaigned against the status of women in the 1937 Irish Constitution. At the age of 66 she unsuccessfully stood as an independent candidate in the general election. Hanna's final public political activism was in the INTO Strike of 1946, which lasted over six months. At various points throughout her life, she had been employed as a teacher and began her career in Eccles Street, Dublin.

Hanna dedicated her life to the pursuit of equality. She died from heart failure in her late 60s and was buried alongside Francis at Glasnevin Cemetery. The headstone reads 'Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington Feminist, Republican, Socialist'. After the burial of their son Owen, the following was added to describe the Sheehy-Skeffingtons, 'who like them sought truth/taught reason and knew compassion'.

**MICHELLE O'CONNOR, Education Officer and Teacher Liaison at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, Finglas Road, Dublin 11. Web: [glasnevincemetery.ie](http://glasnevincemetery.ie). Tel: 018826550. Email: [museum@glasnevintrust.ie](mailto:museum@glasnevintrust.ie).**

# Engaging account of a remarkable public policy experiment

The establishment of the national school system in 1831 was a remarkable public policy experiment. It was also a very successful one. Two years later in 1833, there were over 750 schools with more than 100,000 pupils on roll. By 1900, less than 70 years later, there were 8,684 schools with 770,622.

This extraordinary expansion could not have happened without the Herculean efforts of teachers, managers, administrators, parents and pupils.

A new book by Patrick F O Donovan adds to our understanding of the development of the national school system and manages to do so in a readable and very engaging way.

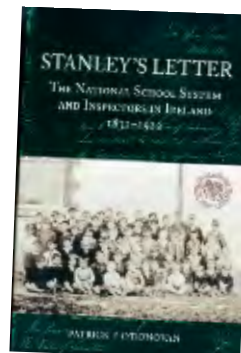
The author uses the prism of the inspectorate and its role as the key link between the Commissioners of National Education at the centre of the new system and teachers and managers at local level. In this way, he is able to make use of a vast legacy of documentation that illuminates the lived experience of national schools in the context of the social, economic and cultural conditions of the time. The pages of this book are filled with a mix of first-hand accounts that are humorous, tragic, bloody minded and enlightening.

The two towering figures of more than half of this period of time, Patrick Keenan and William Starkie, are illuminated and evaluated. The detailed work of the

former in the organisation of the system including school design, furniture, curriculum and the teaching of Irish and teaching through Irish is well documented. Keenan had a particular sympathy for teachers on island schools recommending their salaries should be doubled for such service!

Some of the latter's jousts with the emerging and increasingly assertive INTO are well detailed in this book particularly the interaction at the adversarial Dill Committee of Inquiry into the regime of inspection. Catherine Mahon, the first female president of the INTO criticised "the degeneracy of the inspection staff into a force of educational police and the deterioration of inspectorial courtesy", which she concluded "was mainly a development of the new system of surprise inspection".

A different, but much lesser seen empathetic side to Starkie's personality appears occasionally in the pages of this book. On one occasion, having visited a country village school where it was always raining, his diary records that he asked, "What on earth has a man to console himself with in this village?" "Nothing but the bottle," was the response of his driver.



Starkie's opinions on the superior efficiency of women teachers, the variations in educational standards across different counties, the conditions of school buildings across the country and where in Ireland the highest intelligence was to be found add colour and humour to the text.

The changing political circumstances experienced by the country a century ago are shown through the reports of inspectors receiving death threats, another being removed from a school by six armed men as his methods were not acceptable and one who was ordered to leave Tipperary and later Antrim by the IRA. He finished up "confined to barracks" in Marlborough Street.

This book certainly merits being read by students of Irish educational history. It can also be recommended to a more general reader interested in the social, political and cultural development of the country. It manages to be at one and the same time a work of solid scholarly research penned in an accessible, readable and enjoyable narrative.

**Stanley's Letter: the national school system and inspectors in Ireland 1831-1922** by Patrick F O Donovan is available from [stanleysletter.com](http://stanleysletter.com). Price: €38.

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# Budding entrepreneurs in St Mary's Special School

An *InTouch* article on the Junior Entrepreneur Programme (JEP) caught my eye last year. After a little investigating, I decided to give it a shot with my class of senior students in St Mary's Special School, Navan. The JEP is designed for pupils at mainstream primary level and students in special schools. It was one of the best decisions in my 12 years of teaching in special and mainstream classrooms. The programme is easily one of the most enriching, exciting and educational programmes I have worked on. It also worked as an excellent teaching intervention for a dissertation as part of my studies for the Post-graduate Diploma in Inclusion and Special Education.

Sir Ken Robinson argues brilliantly that creativity is as important a skill as literacy for young people. (Listen to TED talk at [https://www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity](https://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity)). I wholeheartedly agree and the JEP gave us abundant opportunities to be creative over its 16 week timeframe. It brought the students along the path to create, establish and run a successful classroom enterprise. In so doing, they developed teamwork and problem solving skills, and it instilled an intrinsic motivation to learn through 'real-world' experiential learning. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience for the students, with each one seeing the results and rewards of their labours and teamwork. They all reported that it helped them to learn and grow in confidence. The teacher's role was simply to facilitate, provide some tools, the roadmap and guidance, whilst carefully getting out of their way. This allowed them to figure it out, create, innovate and have some serious fun in the process!

The support from the JEP team, based in Killorglin, Co Kerry, could not have been better. Within a week I knew we had hit on a special project as each student was responding, thinking and creating in their own unique styles. They were seeing their own ideas and entrepreneurial skills develop. They realised that there was a gap in the market and they could earn some good money in the process! A comprehensive teacher's guide gives the team everything they need to create a business idea and follow it through, turning it into a viable product and



Anthony and Jessica display their business board

The great strength of the JEP as a learning programme was in giving the students a roadmap, and all the resources and support to get their classroom business up and running.

bringing it to market.

Practically every area of the primary curriculum is integrated into the seven business stages lesson plans. In our own special school context, there were excellent learning opportunities in the areas of literacy and communication, mathematics, SPHE, visual arts, music and general life-skills such as the commitment of seeing a complex task through from start to finish over an extended time-frame.

Stage four, for example – the market research process – enabled the students to explore the potential of their 'big idea' from the earlier stages. They had voted to work in the pet and animal owners market, having identified it as a good growth area within the school community. Senior student, Jessica Sherrock, designed a play-toy for cats and

enjoyed the process of cultivating her creativity and being innovative. Anthony Clarke, the other student team leader, was delighted to put his well-honed woodwork skills to the test in the crafting of wooden pet name-plaques. They also used mathematics to graphically represent the gathered data from surveys about pets in the school community. They displayed their work at each stage on the JEP noticeboard on the school corridor.

The fun was in bringing all their 'blue-sky thinking' together as a team, producing their products

efficiently in time for the big showcase day in May, and making a healthy profit from all their hard work. All profits were then their own and they made a donation to help buy new resources for younger children in the school.

Another great aspect of the JEP was that it enabled collaboration with other teachers, special needs assistants and parents. I had never seen a project which was so beneficial for the school community to this extent. One early stage of the programme saw the students presenting their product ideas in a *Dragons' Den* style scenario. This was a great opportunity, not only for the students to hone their presentation skills but a very fruitful and fun process of team-building for staff members too. The teachers played a huge role in enabling the students to achieve their goals.

In February, the students received what was a masterclass in entrepreneurship from John Purdy of ERGO IT Solutions, who sponsors the JEP for the schools of Meath. He was impressed with their hard work and *Powerpoint* presentation.

The great strength of the JEP as a learning programme was in giving the students a roadmap, and all the resources and support to get their classroom business up and running. As Anthony Clarke, budding entrepreneur joked, "this time next year we'll be millionaires". If you are looking for an exciting and tremendously enriching challenge for your students this year then go straight to the JEP!

Find more information at [Juniorentrepreneurprogramme.ie](http://Juniorentrepreneurprogramme.ie)

JAMES LOWRY, St Mary's Special School, Navan.

# Give your yard a jump

The start of any new year is a busy time in schools. Time is spent getting to know new teachers, new classes and, inevitably, new circulars. Teachers are busy with long-term plans and helping classes settle in. Often, the principal and post holders are busy ensuring the most important school policies and procedures are set-up and supported for the forthcoming year.

Consequently, the yard can often find itself set-up with a supervision rota, and then left to run itself. However, the yard often compliments other areas of school-life and really deserves more attention. With some simple steps you can help develop a little more structure in the yard, with the aim of improving it for both staff and pupils alike. Yard should be a safe place where children get an active break from the structure of the classroom.

By using this framework of questions as a lens with which to reflect and direct simple actions (perhaps during a Croke Park hour), you will be able to jump start your yard for the rest of the year.

*How is your yard organised and is it the most effective way for children to be included, safe and active?*

Is the pupil/teacher ratio adequate? This depends on the age and behaviour of your cohort. How is your yard laid out? Are there areas for different class ranges? Are there places children cannot go because they would not be supervised? By reflecting on these points, some simple adjustments could improve how your yard functions.

*Are there clear rules and routines for yard?*

Do the children exit the building in an orderly fashion and wait in their lines? Are there specific rules that promote safety but are not too rigid which helps yard start calmly? Do you encourage responsibility as opposed to adherence to rules? Do you have staff designated to deal with first aid and toilet issues during the break? If there is an emergency, do all staff members know what to do or who to get? Do the children have opportunities to be praised for following the rules as opposed to just consequences for not following them? Could consequences be active like five jumping jacks or diversion such as sending children to other parts of

the yard? Are the rules consistently applied by all staff? Having the rules displayed in the yard and by exits will assist in keeping children mindful of them. Having the children's input into these rules every few years is a good idea to share responsibility for the yard between staff and pupils.

*Are there a variety of activities organised or provided for, to support children to play and be active?*

Do you have some games organised for children that can be set up and played easily? Do you cater for the varying abilities? Are there non-competitive games? Do you have soft balls, skipping ropes and hoops for children to use? Games like *Four Square* and *Switch* need very few materials, are easy to train the children for and easy to set up at break time (see [www.playworks.org](http://www.playworks.org)). Creating opportunities to play, for those unable to organise and manage games, reduces the opportunities for boredom, conflict and the issues that arise from them.

*Do you provide opportunities for curricular instruction to teach rules, skills and games for yard time?*

Rules and routines are revised at the beginning of the year and it's important to spend time on those applicable to the yard. It's also important to teach skills, especially around friendship, resilience and conflict resolution on yard. 'Friendship Week' or 'Yard Week' are a good way to focus and explicitly teach and re-teach these skills, embedding them into the school's calendar. Having an assembly about the yard is also a good way to engage the school on these skills through stories. In order for children to know how and what to play, training in and practice of an agreed menu of yard games during PE is important. Spreading the opportunities across the curriculum gives teachers and pupils ample scope to learn the variety of rules, skills and games needed for them to access a happy and safe yard each day.

*How do you promote and maintain a positive atmosphere on your yard?*

By promoting a positive atmosphere, staff can engage children and encourage them to reciprocate through their own actions.

Do you have rewards for positive behaviour such as immediate ways to praise like high fives or compliments? Do you have some simple slogans that you encourage the children to use and, in turn, you also use? Having these hanging on the walls outside or just beside each exit act as a prompt. Slogans such as 'Can I play please?' or 'I'm sorry, are you okay?' Have a 'Yard Week', where emphasis is put on fun activities, while revising yard rules and routines. Another simple way is to encourage children to high five each other during games whether they win or lose.

*Do you have a plan for wet breaks?*

On wet days, it's important that teachers have access to resources to give children their activity in class. *GoNoodle* offers many movement break ideas that will keep children energised when they have not been outside (see [www.gonoodle.com](http://www.gonoodle.com)). Equally, during the break instead of finishing work or watching something on the interactive whiteboard, older pupils could be assigned to younger classes and lead seat exercises and games.

*How do you include children with special educational needs or children with English as an additional language?*

Do you have friendship buddies to help children understand how games work? Maybe buddies could be on the look-out for children who seem lost or not engaged during yard, to help support them access games? Do you consider children who find it hard to make friends because of an educational need and encourage children to buddy up with them? Do teachers actively check in with these children after breaks every now and again?

*Do you have a simple and structured approach for dealing with issues arising from the yard and for keeping staff up-to-date on changing procedures?*

Generally, placing a staff member in charge of the yard means there is a go to person if there are any issues. Utilising email is a great way to keep the communications recorded but also enables issues to be collected and analysed for patterns. Having a yard meeting once a term, to discuss any of these issues and creating simple actions, will ensure yard

# start this term



Creating opportunities to play for those unable to organise and manage games, reduces the opportunities for boredom, conflict and the issues that arise from them.



procedures are up-to-date and are working for staff and pupils alike.

**S**preading the responsibility for the yard across the school from teachers on duty, classroom curricular instruction and whole-school activities can create a more integrated approach to yard. Embedding these practices into policies and procedures will also ensure consistency of approach and ensure that yard is included and covered as an important aspect of school life.

Placing your strategies accordingly in these policies is a suggestion and would help embed practices across the school. Ultimately, having a 'yard and activity policy' would be optimal but, in the interim, placing the various aspects of yard into other policies helps show how they integrate across the school.

- **Anti-bullying policy:** placing your yard strategies as class-based and school-based preventive measures ensures that yard behaviour has a forum for discussion when the policy is reviewed each year.
- **Code of behaviour policy:** having the rules and routines, as well as the positive approaches and consequences for following or not following them, allows parents, pupils and teachers to be very clear around their responsibilities.

- **Physical education policy:** using the games strand, special attention can be given to yard games the children can play during yard time. Timing this to coincide with the start of the year or 'Yard Week' will show their link to the yard. It also gives teachers the time and resources to help children play during yard time, as not all children know games or know how to organise them. Active Schools Week is another opportunity where emphasis can be placed on opportunities for exercise during yard time.
- **Healthy eating and activity policy:** healthy eating and activity come hand-in-hand and, as healthy eating policies are reviewed, adding the opportunities and information for activity in school is another way of promoting a positive yard experience.
- **SPHE policy:** Social skills can be taught through the strand 'Myself and Others' using the strand unit 'Relating to Others'. Friendship skills, safety and conflict resolution skills around bullying are emphasised through the *Stay Safe* programme. Lots of work is done on feelings, self-awareness and decision-making through SPHE, placing

the connection to the yard as part of these lessons giving them an added dimension which could enhance yard time for the pupils.

**W**ith greater emphasis being placed on health and wellbeing in schools and guidelines issued by the Department of Education and Skills in support of this, schools can enhance children's positive experiences and connectedness to school, by building resilience and life skills through structures and supports on the yard. By focusing attention on the yard, schools can help reduce bullying and conflict. This will encourage more activity and play, create a safer place for all and develop a more inclusive yard. Ultimately, yard should be a place of discovery, fun and opportunity and this needs to be planned for, just like in the classroom.

PAUL KNOX, Castaheany Educate Together NS.  
Twitter @Imperfect\_Teach

# Giant-Catcher Adventures

Giant-Catcher Adventures is a drama lesson for first and second primary classes (featuring Gerry/or Geri the Giant-Catcher to depict a hero/heroine). Duration: 40 minutes.

The drama aims to facilitate young children playing in role as giant catchers in a bid to develop their understanding of character motivation through narrative development. It also seeks to engage children in creative problem-solving and its expression through the art form of drama.

## Resources

- ✦ Music to accompany guided imagery (e.g. *Princess Bride* soundtrack or other action/adventure film score).
- ✦ Sample props (for differentiation purposes) – rope, netting.
- ✦ Role signifier (e.g. hat) for teacher role of king's courtier.

## Stimulus

'Wanted' poster (e.g. Hero wanted to rid the kingdom of two giants. Reward offered. Meeting in Town Hall at 4 p.m.).

## Introduction

To establish a fictional kingdom of olden times, the children are invited to participate in a context-building exercise. The teacher, in role as the king's courtier, welcomes and thanks all the giant-catchers of the land for joining him/her today in the tower of the king's castle overlooking the village. A reconnaissance mission has been called by the king, for giant-catchers to re-familiarise themselves with every aspect

of the kingdom in a bid to track down new troublesome giants. Suggestions offered from the children can be recorded pictorially on a map as desired, to create a shared visual representation of the kingdom, which can be referenced in future lessons also. Each child is invited to complete one of the following sentences. When one structure has been exhausted, the teacher can introduce the next: 'In the village I can see....', 'Near the village I can see....', 'Beyond the village I can see....'

"A reconnaissance mission has been called by the king, for giant-catchers to re-familiarise themselves with every aspect of the kingdom in a bid to track down new troublesome giants."

Note: It is worth spending some time at this stage. Teacher may need to scaffold the children to help with suggestions – perhaps clarify at first if everyone understands what a village is and what is so very special about 'ours'. Continue, for example, 'I heard there is a beautiful well/rose-garden/playground....' Children continue their suggestions, taking time

to talk about various features – would they play there, have picnics, etc? These can be recalled later on when describing the depredation the giants get up to. The exercise leads into the next strategy.

## Guided imagery (or teacher-in-role)

Children are invited to close their eyes and sit to take part in an imagined journey to a musical accompaniment. Using as many of the children's suggestions as possible, the teacher, as the king's courtier, narrates this short, guided imagery describing the context and features of the village 'where we have been safe from giants for a considerable time. But two quarrelling giants have been roaming the kingdom in recent days causing havoc, falling about; breaking things; causing earth tremors, etc.' Pause for children to imagine scenarios reported from the village to the king. These are of great worry to the king, who simply used to call on Gerry (Geri) the giant-catcher to overcome these problems. Alas, Gerry (Geri) is now old and frail and cannot move as quickly as s/he used to.

## Development

The 'Wanted' poster stimulus is presented for consideration in groups of three. Teacher might urge the children to try for the reward – I wonder what it will be? Children can discuss ideas for giant-catching and tools that may be of assistance. These ideas can be practised in small-group improvisation. Children play out their giant-catching ideas in their groups of three, showing how they could approach his capture. Ideas are shared amongst the class group and samples are showcased in shortened form as sequences.



### The meeting

Children, in role as villagers, are invited to attend the meeting facilitated by the king's courtier. The role of the courtier is to elicit reports of sightings of the giants, to get a sense of their nature and whereabouts and how best they might be approached (an example might be to relay sightings/accounts of the wayward giants. It will be stressed that the king would like evidence of the giants' capture as he wishes to receive them unharmed).

The nature of the reward can be elicited here also and agreed. If children seek advice or assistance from Gerry, this can be addressed through a message relayed or teacher-in-role, as preferred e.g. 'Gerry advises to separate the giants on catching them to prevent further trouble'.

The pre-prepared props can be referenced either as 'gifts' from Gerry. (The actual rope does not need to be used, children will happily mime).

Children decide on best approaches to take (combining several ideas from the group where possible). As the king has asked for evidence, we will present the stages undertaken in picture form to him. Children are invited to create a cartoon strip (Three or four 'pictures' or freeze frames) of the giant-catchers overcoming the problem. (Children can

be reminded to play mindful of existing classroom rules, if deemed necessary).

### Conclusion

The cartoon strips can be presented to the king's courtier who presents the reward, with the assistance of a child volunteer in role as king, praising the villagers for their efforts. Alternatively,

"The role of the courtier is to elicit reports of sightings of the giants, to get a sense of their nature and whereabouts and how best they might be approached."

the presentation of the reward ceremony could be brainstormed, improvised and/or scripted and played out by the class group, including a king's speech called out from the castle

balcony to trumpet blast. In this event, each child can take a role, including royals, giant-catchers, courtiers, jesters etc. Gerry (Geri) the giant catcher may also attend.

### Possible follow-up adventures

- ✦ Show/write/draw how the reward was used in the village.
- ✦ Depict new giant-catching adventures accompanied by Gerry/Geri in other towns or villagers – i.e:
  - New damage is discovered following a giant's party in a neighbouring kingdom and the villagers' advice is sought.
  - What happened next? Create a drama episode featuring disgruntled giants who have been captured in previous lesson. They protest their innocence and demand to have their side considered. (Perhaps it turns out that one of them has a bone to pick with a child called Jack who grew a massive beanstalk and climbed up to his castle and stole his golden hen, harp etc!).

TRÍONA STOKES, Vice-chairperson, Association of Drama in Education in Ireland. [www.adei.ie](http://www.adei.ie), @adeidrama

Fairytale Giant in Efteling Themepark, the Netherlands

# Leabhair phictiúrtha

*Insíonn pictiúr scéal le míle focal*

## Cití – An chailleach is aite ar domhan!

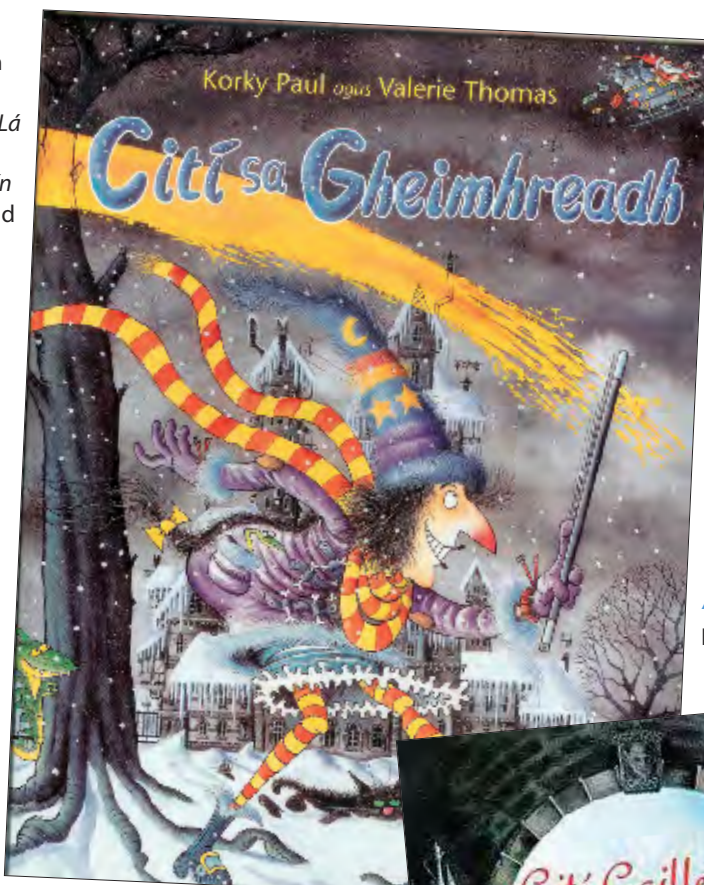
Agus Oíche Shamhna ag teannadh linn ba thráthúil leas a bhaint as sraith leabhar *Cití – Cití Cailleach, Lá Breithe Cití, Cití san Aer Arís, Cití sa Gheimhreadh* agus *Cití agus a Slaitín Draíochta*. Is leaganacha Gaeilge iad de leabhair ón tsraith iomráiteach Bhéarla *Winnie the Witch*, foilsithe ag an nGúm chun scileanna litearthachta a fhorbairt. Leanann tranglam, trína chéile, suaitheadh agus spraoi Cití agus a cat bocht Smúróg sna heachtraí greannmhara a bhaineann dóibh sna leabhair phictiúrtha ghreannmhara seo.

Tá teach dubh, seomraí dubha agus cat dubh ag Cití agus ní féidir léi an cat a fheiceáil nuair a bhíonn a shúile dúnta. Cuireann sí dathanna eile ar Smúróg leis an slat draíochta ach ní mó ná sásta a bhíonn sé leis an gcuma áiféiseach a bhíonn air. Ní maith le Cití ná Smúróg an geimhreadh ach ní mar a shíltear a bhítear nuair a chroitheann sí a slat draíochta chun samhradh buí a chruthú. Éiríonn Cití bréan de bheith ag eitilt ar a scuab dhraíochta ach bíonn rí rá ann nuair a dhéanann sí gléasanna eile taistil as an scuab.

Tapaidh an deis comhrá a chur ar bun le páistí de gach aois faoin scéal agus faoi na pictiúir. Cuir béim go háirithe ar rudaí atá sna pictiúir ach nach bhfuil luaite sa téacs scríofa, trí cheisteanna éifeachtacha a chur. Ba chóir do na ceisteanna seo na páistí a chur ag smaoineamh agus iad a spreagadh le tuairimí tábhachtacha a roinnt agus a phlé.

### Úsáid sa rang

- ✎ Féach ar an gclúdach agus iarr ar na páistí ábhar an scéil a thuar le spéis a spreagadh. Déan iarracht teanga an scéil a mhealladh ón rang sa chomhrá.
- ✎ Léigh an scéal os ard do na páistí. Léirigh dea-nósanna léitheoireachta trí fhuaimniú, béim agus tuin chainte cheart a úsáid.
- ✎ Iarr ar na páistí an scéal a insint ó bhéal



teastáil uaithe a scríobh.

- ✎ Pléigh an obair ealaine sna leabhair - cad iad na teicnící a úsáideann an maisitheoir chun an teach agus a raibh ann a léiriú i ndath dubh nó chun an cat glas a aimsiú san fhéar glas.
- ✎ Dúisíonn Cití na hainmhithe ó chodladh an gheimhridh. Labhair faoi na gnásanna a bhaineann leis na séasúir ar leith.
- ✎ Iarr ar pháistí liosta aidiachtaí a dhéanann cur síos ar Chití a scríobh.

### Ar fáil:

I siopaí leabhar nó ar líne.

- le cabhair ó na pictiúir.
- ✎ Tá na seomraí agus chuile rud i dteach Chití dubh, fiafraigh de na páistí ar mhaith leo cónaí ina leithéid de theach. Pléigh na freagraí. Tarraing pictiúr den teach gur mhaith leo cónaí ann.
- ✎ Iarr ar na páistí féachaint ar na pictiúir agus fiafraigh díbh conas atá fhios acu gur cailleach í Cití. Pléigh na freagraí.
- ✎ Pléigh na buntáistí agus na míbhuntáistí a bhaineann le gléasanna éagsúla taistil.
- ✎ Pléigh cén fáth go raibh na héin ag gáire faoi Smúróg agus é ildaite, labhair faoi éagsúlacht agus an tábhacht a bhaineann le glacadh le difríochtaí.
- ✎ Tá leabhar orthaí ag Cití. Iarr ar na páistí liosta de na comhábhair a bheidh ag



# Reviews

## Improving literacy through team teaching

*Team TSI, A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Learning* is written by Máire Love and Fiona Dunne and published by the authors. This book examines the key elements of the 'Transactional Strategies Instruction' approach and integrates these with team teaching.

*Team TSI* developed from a teacher-led action research project looking at literacy improvement and team teaching. It presents a carefully structured, well-researched programme for developing literacy skills at the senior end of the primary school. This programme combines six elements – team teaching, reading comprehension strategies, collaborative learning, vocabulary, inquiry-led questioning and feedback

systems.

Reading comprehension strategies should be taught incrementally prior to setting up TSI. Many schools focused on the teaching of comprehension strategies as an initial action in their school improvement plan. This book suggests a way forward, once these strategies have been explicitly taught. It also introduces a concrete approach to team teaching which would provide an ideal foundation for teachers embarking on team teaching for the first time.

*Team TSI* supports the teacher in reflecting on his/her own practice. The



data gathered from the evaluation of TSI will also be very helpful in the wider school self-evaluation process.

The book itself is clearly put together and very accessible. It is supported by excellent online resource material. This book would be a very valuable resource to any teacher at the senior end of primary school.

*Team TSI, A Collaborative Approach to Literacy Learning* costs €40 and is available to purchase from [www.teamtsi.ie](http://www.teamtsi.ie).

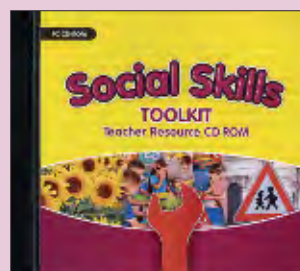
Reviewed by Órla Ryng, Glasheen, Co Cork.

## Resource for teaching social skills

The goal of *Social Skills Toolkit* computer program is to support teachers in improving the social skills of primary school children. The toolkit is categorised into five broad sections: senses, social sight vocabulary, comprehension development, social empathy and projects. Across all of these areas, the focus is on the enhancement of the children's language and the provision of activities that afford them opportunities to engage meaningfully with others.

It is felt that the provision of more

guidance for teachers would improve this resource. Furthermore, the reviewer found it difficult to navigate backwards and forwards between certain sections. However, despite these minor challenges, there is a comprehensive amount of visually appealing material available to both teachers and pupils on this CD Rom. The sight vocabulary is extensive and divided



into specific lessons. While there is an emphasis on the resource and learning support environments, it is clear that there is potential for use in mainstream classrooms too.

*Social Skills Toolkit* is available from

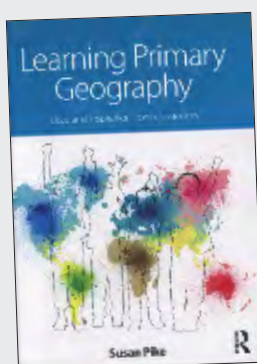
[www.aiseanna.com](http://www.aiseanna.com) at a cost of €95.

Reviewed by Duncan McCarthy, Middleton, Co Cork.

## Teaching geography – an excellent approach

We have all been there! September has arrived and with it a brand new class and a new set of books. You have just picked up the geography book, and you ask yourself the question, how do I get the children really animated about this subject. Fear not! *Learning Primary Geography*, by Susan Pike fills that void brilliantly.

This is a very practical book which covers all aspects of the curriculum from local field-trips to international geography.



The teacher can dip into any chapter s/he needs as necessary. The case studies are worthy of special mention. They are all well laid out and explained in great detail. They cover all age ranges in the school and are very easy to follow. The name of each school in which the case studies were carried out is given, along with the age-range of the pupils.

Good planning is at the core of all successful teaching. The book contains an excellent chapter on this aspect of a teacher's

work. The role of CPD is also stressed, and interestingly, it is done within the immediate school context. This writer has long held the view that all postgraduate courses for teachers should be closely linked with the classroom.

Excellent piece of work and well done.

Published by Routledge. ISBN 978-1138-922-976. Cost: €32. The book can be bought in Easons, or directly from Susan Pike, Geography Education, DCU Institute of Education, Dublin 9 for €20, including postage ([susan.pike@dcu.ie](mailto:susan.pike@dcu.ie)).

Reviewed by Dan Finnan, Tipperary Town, Co Tipperary.

# Finishing Touches

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

## Noticeboard



### Copy date

Copy you wish to have considered for publication in the November issue of *InTouch* should arrive in Head Office by 9 October.

The deadline for the December issue is 13 November.



### Cork Teachers' Golf Society

First outing of the new Golfing Year – Muskerry Golf Club

Friday 3 November

Tee: 11.30 – 1 pm.

New members particularly welcome.

For further information contact the secretary, Aidan Buckley at 085-7384756.



### World's largest lesson

Join teachers around Ireland and the world by teaching just one lesson about the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development by 17 Oct.

Simple lesson plans are available for all class levels on: [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie) (Global Citizenship School)

You may also take part in the 'International End Poverty' day of action on 17 October by having your class or school watch the live streaming of the 17 Global Goals mini-Boats of Hope launch on the River Liffey or organise some other local school activity to help end extreme poverty, save our beautiful planet and help humanity.

Please save following address for the live streaming of the event @ 11.17am on 17 Oct:  
[www.17october.ie/live](http://www.17october.ie/live)



### Engineers Week

#### Save the date

Engineers Week 2018 will take place from 24 February – 2 March 2018.

Organised by Engineers Ireland's STEPS programme, the aim of the week includes encouraging young people, their teachers and parents to explore the fun world of engineering. Last year, 786 events were organised involving 63,254 participants.

Primary schools can get involved by participating in challenges, visiting an event in their area or by requesting a volunteer engineer to visit their school. More information is available at [engineersweek.ie](http://engineersweek.ie)



### Tax and mortgage advice – Free seminars

Irish Tax Support and EDUC Mortgages provide professional advice and services to INTO members in the areas of Taxation and Mortgages.

FREE joint seminars for INTO members and their families will be held over the coming year. The following topics will be covered:

Tips on PAYE refunds  
Rental income  
Self-employment income  
31st October deadline  
Inheritance & gift tax

Tips on mortgage applications  
First time buyers  
Moving home  
Buy to lets  
Managing your mortgage better

Seminars will take place at 7 p.m. on the following dates:  
Thursday 19 October – Clarion Hotel, Liffey Valley, Dublin  
Thursday 23 November – Clayton Silver Springs Hotel, Cork  
Thursday 30 November – Clayton Hotel, Ballybrit, Galway

Seminars are free to INTO members and family, but advance booking is required. Please email [gglackin@into.ie](mailto:gglackin@into.ie) or ring (01) 8047745 and quote your INTO membership number or school roll number.



### Growing up in Ireland

Growing Up in Ireland is a national longitudinal study of children being led by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and funded by the Government. In early November, some teachers will be approached and requested to fill out an individual questionnaire on the selected Study Child.

There are over 8,000 Study Children in the study nationwide, so it is envisaged that most teachers will typically have one to three children to report on.

The co-operation of all teachers involved is greatly appreciated. The response to a similar request in 2013 was overwhelmingly supportive.

Two pages with Comhar Linn prizewinners, Crossword, resources for the classroom ...

## Comhar Linn draw winners – July and August 2017

### July 2017

#### Car – Toyota Corolla

Sinéad Cunnane, Scoil Pádraig Naofa, Bray, Co Wicklow.

#### Car – Toyota Yaris

Catherine Dowd, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16.

#### Cash – € 1,000

Helen Dunne, Baile Coireil NS, Mullingar, Co Westmeath.

#### Weekend for two plus two All-Ireland Football final Tickets

Máirín Uí Chonchubhair, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15.

#### Weekend for two plus two All-Ireland Hurling final Tickets

Gerard Fox, Whitehall, Dublin 9.



Sinéad Cunnane, Scoil Pádraig Naofa, Bray, who won a Toyota Corolla in the Comhar Linn July draw.

### August 2017

#### Car – Toyota Corolla

Colette Baynes, SN Aibhistin Naofa, Cluain Tuaiscirt, Béal Átha na Sluagh, Co na Gaillimhe.

#### Car – Toyota Yaris

Pauline O'Hara, Milltown Pass NS, Milltown Pass, Co Westmeath.

#### Cash – € 1,500

Jacqueline Cummins, St Bernadette's Junior NS, Quarryvale, Clodalkin, Dublin 22.

#### Weekends for two in Jury's Inn

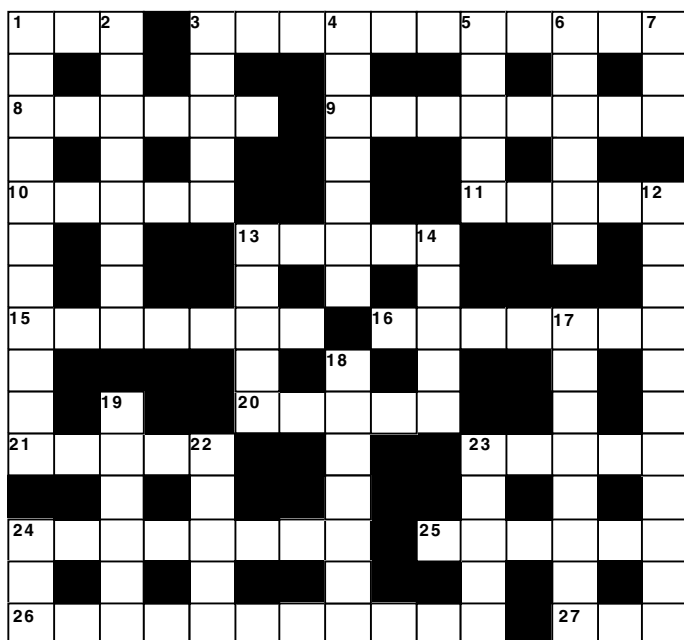
Mary Cleary, SN Chartaigh Naofa, Rahan, Tullamore, Co Offaly.

Geraldine Coughlin, Presentation Primary School, Clonmel, Co Tipperary.

# Comhar Linn Crossword no 184

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 27th October, 2017



#### ACROSS

1. An article in the Financial Times may make one blubber. (3)
3. Two birds? No, just one! (7,4)
8. As awarded to an Arctic international? (3,3)
9. A mathematical figure can be upsetting for Bruce, too. (4,4)
10. Go right to the outskirts of Glenfarne to find a ravine. (5)
11. Motorists have to pay them - that rings a bell! (5)
13. Boats - many a simple boat. (5)
15. Nuts lie around what's useful in the kitchen. (7)
16. After St. David's Day, one has a business degree to instrument. (7)
20. See 19 down.
21. They swim in the ocean beside Laois. (5)
23. The cold heart of a French illegal. (5)
24. Such an appraisal might make Eric quit. (8)
25. Redevelop Cadiz with love; it's in the stars! (6)
26. Are there masculine considerations to their becoming evildoers? (11)
27. Agreeable companion of Wynken and Blynken. (3)

#### DOWN

1. These places may provide entertaining rides, but only mediocre coffee, it seems. (11)
- 2 & 17d. Form a line in Greenwich as their imp remained distressed. (3,5,8)
3. Look at that sailor in the south-east! (5)
4. The cardinal is absent from the rearranged clarinet performance. (7)
5. Western warmth is good for cereal. (5)
6. In some L.A. pool, he's divine! (6)
7. Equipment that has potassium with it. (3)
12. Some radical test - it's so prudish! (6-5)
13. Youngster found by a Greek character near Longford. (5)
14. Swap some of ones' extra delphiniums. (5)
17. See 2 down.
18. Garda not patrolling her area? How quirky! (7)
- 19 & 20a. This English author might have needed a foil. (6,5)
22. Travel across water very loudly in this small boat. (5)
- 23.irate Christian symbol. (5)
24. Can any maestro initially appear so odd? (3)

NAME:  
ADDRESS:

#### In Touch No. 183 Solutions:

Across 1. Upholstery 6. Stag 10. Saner 11. Promotion 12. Cascade 15. Fakir 17. Yogi Bear 18. Oval 19. Surds 23. Ennui 24. Smut 25. Bind 26. Karol 28. Sheltie 33. Book token 34. Cider 36. Bewildered

Down 1. USSR 2. Hungarian goulash 3. Lyric 4. Tepid 5. Rook 7. Thick 8. Generosity 9. Dogfish 13. Afro 14. Eyelids 16. Doner kebab 20. Remainder 21. Giblets 22. Sole 27. Rioja 29. Hanoi 30. Laced 31. Skye 32. Prod

Winners of Crossword no. 183 will be announced in the next issue of InTouch magazine

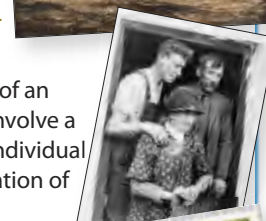
As part of the 'Decade of Centenaries' (2012-2022) commemorations, schools and students at all levels of primary and post-primary schools across Ireland are invited, in the 2017-18 school year, to enter the fifth annual schools' history competition. The selected themes have a particular link to events of a century ago across the island of Ireland.

This year, at both primary and post-primary levels, projects are invited under the following general headings:

A study of a particular historical event that affected your local or regional area in the 1912-1922 period.



A study of the Irish experience of the war from the perspective of an individual or group. This could involve a focus on a particular battle, an individual participant's story or a consideration of the entire 1914-1918 period.



A study of a particular individual/group/organisation/ movement striving to improve the quality of women's lives or involved in revolutionary activity in Ireland in the 1912-1922 period



A study of a political/revolutionary event from the 1912-1922 period, a particular aspect of the event, or an individual/group/organisation associated with it.

The deadline for receipt of completed projects is 23 March 2018 with the winners being announced, and prizes awarded, before the end of May 2018.

Projects must be submitted online to the following email address: [historyaward@mercierpress.ie](mailto:historyaward@mercierpress.ie). Each project must include a cover sheet at the front and a bibliography listing the sources consulted.

Full details, and the template cover sheet for projects, will be available to download at [www.education.ie/historycompetition](http://www.education.ie/historycompetition). Additional forms, posters and information sheets will also be available in your local education centres (list available at [www.ateci.ie](http://www.ateci.ie)), while answers to some commonly asked practical questions about submitting projects will be provided on Scoilnet ([www.scoilnet.ie](http://www.scoilnet.ie)) early in 2018.

**scoilnet**  
portal for Irish education  
larshulomh taidheachais na hÉireann

## ALLENWOOD GNS

[www.allenwoodgns.ie](http://www.allenwoodgns.ie)

Modern site with main navigation across the top in subtle grey colours. Packed full of information and up-to-date.

## ONES TO WATCH



**IRISH NEWSPAPER ARCHIVE**

[www.irishnewsarchive.com](http://www.irishnewsarchive.com)

*Free school access to the complete archive of 69 national and regional newspapers. Pre-made lesson activities on Scoilnet.*

**CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY OF  
MANCHESTER**

[childrensuniversity.manchester.ac.uk](http://childrensuniversity.manchester.ac.uk)

*Resources for multiple topics – most IWB-friendly.*

## ASK ABOUT IRELAND

askaboutireland.ie

*Material from public libraries  
and museums in Ireland.*

### Top 10

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

- 1 CÉ MÉ FÉIN?**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/22978/22701.pdf](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/22978/22701.pdf)  
*Printable worksheet about Mé Féin.*
- 2 MÉ FÉIN – PÓSTAER, LUASCHÁRTAÍ AGUS CARTAÍ GAELGE**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/12196/11833.pdf](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/12196/11833.pdf)  
*Printable coloured posters with Irish words and images.*
- 3 AG ÓRDÚ I MBIALANN**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/24398/24121.pptx](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/24398/24121.pptx)  
*PowerPoint presentation encouraging pupils to order breakfast from a menu.*
- 4 ORAL LANGUAGE SESSION – PHOTO PROMPTS**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/22839/22562.pdf](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/22839/22562.pdf)  
*Photographs to prompt discussion in whole-class or group settings.*
- 5 SCOILNET MAPS**  
[maps.scoilnet.ie](http://maps.scoilnet.ie)  
*Ordnance Survey Mapping for the Irish classroom.*
- 6 CONVERSATIONS – VOCABULARY LIST**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/23058/22781.pdf](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/23058/22781.pdf)  
*PDST resource for English classes.*
- 7 FICHE CEIST**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/16647/16324.docx](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/16647/16324.docx)  
*Teacher-shared resource with printable questions.*
- 8 RAINN AGUS AMHRAIN**  
[resources.teachnet.ie/clane/2008/index.html](http://resources.teachnet.ie/clane/2008/index.html)  
*Songs and rhymes based on curriculum topics.*
- 9 STORYTELLING AND ANECDOTES**  
[scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/23066/22789.pdf](http://scoilnet.ie/uploads/resources/23066/22789.pdf)  
*PDST resource for English classes*
- 10 SPEAKING AND DISCUSSING PROMPTS**  
[scoilnet.ie/index.php?id=1063](http://scoilnet.ie/index.php?id=1063)  
*Scoilnet collection around oral language.*