

January 2021

Applying the lessons of 2020, protecting teachers

INTO was not alone in breathing a collective sigh of relief as 2020 finally came to an end. 2021 brings with it the fervent hope that you, your families and the young people in your care will never again be forced to endure a year like 2020.

However, the pandemic has not gone away just yet, and it is likely, even with the arrival of the vaccine, that things will take some time to properly settle back into anything like what we knew before. It therefore remains vitally important you continue to take every precaution to protect yourselves, your loved ones and the children and young people in your care. We must all continue to limit our contacts with people, keep up the hand washing routine, wear face coverings and maintain social distancing.

We are all aware that for the teaching profession out there on the frontline this is difficult and INTO is maintaining the pressure on the Department of Education, the employing authorities and the public health bodies to ensure you are protected, in so far as is possible,

from the inherent risks associated with keeping schools open. It is inevitable

we will continue to see outbreaks of the Covid-19 virus in schools and it seems very likely that a third surge in infections will occur in the early months of this year.

The risks teachers are being exposed to are on a par with those of our colleagues in the health and other public services who interface directly with the public and it is only right therefore that the teaching profession along with our support colleagues are prioritised for vaccination. This is something INTO will

continue to demand on your behalf. Even the Minister, Mr Weir, must understand that if his stubborn approach to keeping schools open at any cost and what appears to be a pathological determination to run with public examinations is to be delivered upon, vaccination for teachers and their co-workers in education must be a priority.

The vaccine will eventually see Covid-19 reduced to levels which allow for a more familiar level of functioning

across society and education. What it will not do is address, for many, the mental trauma they have endured over this prolonged period of risk and uncertainty. INTO is acutely aware of the need for improved support for our members in the areas of well-being and mental health. Indeed, our current Chairperson of the Northern Committee, Caroline McCarthy, has made it a priority for her year in charge. This reflects the awareness the Northern Committee has had of this issue dating from a long time before Covid-19 was visited upon us and has led to Teacher Health and Well-Being becoming one of the priority areas subject to review arising from the pay deal concluded last year.

INTO is determined that the experience we have all gained, living with and managing through Covid-19, will inform how teachers' working lives are adjusted in the interests of their health and well-being going forward. We give notice, now, to DE and the employing bodies that this is a subject we will be engaging with them on in every area of work and remind them when their systems were overwhelmed in March and April of 2019, it was teachers who saved the day. Teachers are the best resource they have, and we will see they are protected.



Gerry Murphy
Northern Secretary

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Grab a cuppa...

... of whatever you fancy, sit back and take some time for us to help you

Where do I start? Where do any of us start? Recent changes in the virus have seen our work and home lives impacted again in recent weeks. A potential way out of this is being tantalisingly brought closer but it is not here yet. Dealing with any situation doesn't have to be done in huge strides sometimes it doesn't even have to be successful but it does in current times need to be safe and, importantly, manageable.

Time is a precious commodity, now more than ever, as we are torn between work and family duties. It is important to find the time to take stock of what you are managing and what you need to seek

additional support for – it is a strength to ask for help, not a weakness, and if that simple reminder encourages you to take that step, jobs a good 'un!

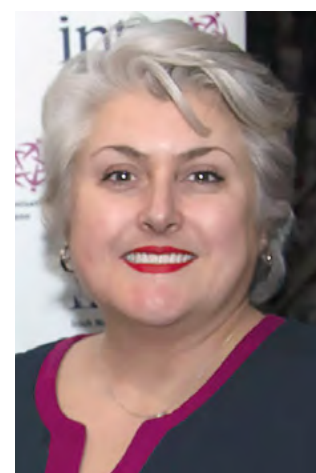
Little that is happening around us is what we would plan or choose and that makes it even more important for every one of us to find the space in our heads and lives where we can feel content and some sense of release, for me it's music (listening not playing despite a number of attempts – we all have our limits). This addition of *Printout* not only shares information on issues that impact our working lives (advice about terms and conditions, wellbeing and INTO updates) it also sees the launch of the art competition. This year we have broadened

the categories, please check it out.

Now more than any other time it is imperative that everyone of us keeps up to date with the guidance that is available from DE & EA. The officials and administrative staff in Northern Office have focused on making sure that information is available for all through the website this includes covid specific issues: working from home advice, supporting children in schools, and information that applies now and into the post covid future; managing workload, events, previous editions of printout and much more. If you have a logon check in and access what is there. If you haven't a logon email info@into.ie. Some members have called for an app to be available, this is being looked at but for ease of access a shortcut on your phone could achieve the same.

The opportunity to be Chair of the Northern Committee is an honour and a challenge and it's hard to believe it's only been 5 months. Most important to me has been hearing and representing the voice of INTO members. I have attended as many branch meetings as I can thanks to the virtual world we live in and have appreciated the welcome and the sense of comradery at them all. If you have yet to attend a branch meeting take the plunge, feel the support of colleagues.

I hope you take time to read *Printout* this month and if you have missed previous articles they are all available again on the website, here are a few suggestions.



CAROLINE MCCARTHY,
Northern Committee Chairperson

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Directed Time Budgets

Rather than presenting Directed Time Budget training as workshops around the branches and districts as would be normal, Covid-19 meant that INTO plans were stymied and so it was forced to roll up its IT sleeves and embark on two webinars.

The first of two, well attended webinars, was on 4th November and was primarily for school reps. The second, on the 5th November, was for ordinary members, including principals. An extended invitation was issued to management and the other teacher unions and individuals from both of these additional groups did take up our offer.

The webinars were deemed essential because of what can only be described as frustration on the part of our complete membership. Most had complained that the EA had not provided meaningful, relevant training with a clear understanding of how a time budget should be drawn up. This frustration added to a delay in having individually agreed time budgets. It must be remembered that INTO insisted on time budgets being included as an essential aspect of the 2020 pay agreement given the introduction of 10% of a teacher's directed time being left for planning, preparation and assessment and the fact that most teachers did not have a time budget which is something that employing authorities and school managements should have already had in place.

This was the background for the INTO webinar training which settled on titling the training 'getting it right'. It was explained in the introduction that for time budgets to be done in a meaningful fashion then they really needed to be done right.

The webinar went through different directed time budgets from the start to the finish and presented the information from the viewpoint of someone who was a total newcomer to DTBs.

Before actually looking at the construction of a Directed Time Budget, Caroline surveyed the attendees to find



Facts

1. Directed time begins from the moment teachers are directed to be in school.
2. Morning break is included in Directed Time because you can be directed to cover.
3. Lunch is not included in Directed Time. (30 mins between 12pm -2pm)
4. A teacher shall not be required to undertake mid-day supervision.
5. Timetabled travel within a split campus is Directed Time.
6. An available teacher may only be called upon to provide cover within their max. teaching hours in any one week.
7. All teaching allowance duties are contained within the DTB 1265 hrs.
8. All teachers must be allocated 10% PPA within the their DTB.
9. A teacher cannot be directed to take pupils on overnight trips.

out how many had actually agreed a time budget with their principal and also audited their understanding of a time budget. Surprisingly, the result from the poll was that 84% of the attendees did not have an agreed time budget and 56% had a poor understanding of Directed Time Budgets.

During the webinar the whole of the Workload Agreement, including the recent amendments, were discussed and the implications around a time budget were examined in relation to starting and finishing times, supervision, contact time, duties, breaks, registration, PPA, SEN requirements and much more.

As part of the presentation different slides and templates were provided. Before we looked at the actual time budgets the slide on facts generated quite a bit of discussion. We presented nine facts (see above) and

explained each of them. Many attendees were unaware that morning break was included in their directed time. Some were of the impression that they were only credited for the time they actually supervised during break. Similarly, some teachers were unaware that the duties

associated with teaching allowances were contained in a directed time budget.

The webinar also provided two templates which Caroline and I explained in step-by-step detail. We had decided to follow the published model exemplar which formed the fourth Appendix to the TNC Workload Agreement from 2011. The time budgets exemplar was representative of a primary, Key Stage 1 teacher, with one managerial allowance and the second was representative of a post-primary teacher with two managerial allowances. Both are included here in this article and are available along with the webinar on the INTO website.

At the beginning of the webinar Caroline explained to the attendees that she hoped that by the end of the presentation they would have more confidence with DTBs, and this was realised with the results of the final survey where 84% of attendees stated their understanding was either good or improved. Also, at the end of the webinar no one ticked the box to say they had a poor understanding of directed time budgets.

The feedback from both webinars has been very positive and has achieved what we had planned – to deliver clear and concise guidance and ensure that there is a consistent understanding. For those of you that may wish to listen again to the webinar training, it is available at INTO website – <https://www.into.ie/ni/help-advice/rights-conditions/working-time-professional-duties/directed-time-budgets/>



Tommy McGlone
Senior Official

Directed Time Budgets

Webinar Questions and answers

Throughout the two days of webinar demonstration, Tommy and I were presented with questions by the attendees. We have committed to answering all questions and have shared them on the Directed Time Budgets webpage. We have selected some examples to share with you. You can see all questions/answers, along with the webinar, PowerPoint, templates (Irish & English version) <https://www.into.ie/ni/help-advice/rights-conditions/working-time-professional-duties/directed-time-budgets/>

I have heard talk about 1265 hours what does this mean to me as a teacher?

Full time teachers are contracted to work 195 days in the year up to a maximum of 1265 hours and **all tasks/duties are to be included in the 1265 hours.**

Part-time teachers work pro-rata of the 1265hrs/195 days.

Could you differentiate between directed time and teaching, cover etc. Are things like registration counted?

Every minute from the time a teacher is directed to be in school until the end of the school day, with the exception of a teacher's lunch which is unpaid, is included in a directed time budget.

A Registration period must also be included in the directed time budget and if a teacher is required to deliver learning or pastoral work, this period of time is considered to be class contact time.

If a school has a timetabled registration period which lasts no longer than five minutes, and the teacher is expected to do nothing more than call a roll, then this dedicated five-minute registration period should be deemed as supervision.

If the timetabled registration period is longer than five minutes and a teacher is required to carry out any duty that

could be described as pastoral then this period, irrespective of its length, is considered to be contact time and is included as part of a teacher's 23½ hours contact time.

Our post-primary template simply states the maximum teaching cover time that a teacher can be asked to do is 23½

hours. Time calculations can be done on the minimum of a weekly basis; daily calculations should be avoided.

If a teacher's responsibilities and duties identify that the contact and cover time needs to be reduced this would be reflected in the first section of the post-primary directed time budget on the INTO template.

How much of your directed time can be included at home, on a normal week not COVID related?

A normal week, i.e. non-COVID times, should not have any time directed at home. The purpose of an individual directed time budget is that work-life and home-life have a distinct separation.

During COVID – specifically under the current Executive guidance where

'workers should be working from home wherever possible' careful consideration of this directive should be given but we would reiterate directed time must not exceed 1265 hours within the 195 days.

Is marking included in the directed time hours?

Yes, marking is included within the directed time 1265 hours.

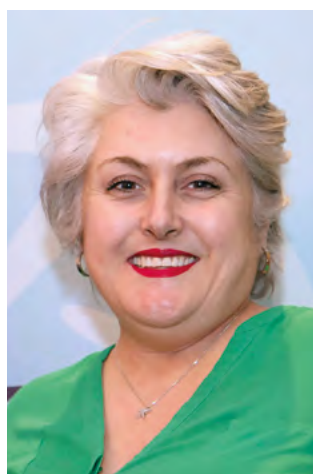
What if there is no time budget in my school?

It is a requirement for Boards of Governors/principal to provide you with an agreed individual time budget. Speak to your principal and request a time for discussion about your individual time budget. If an agreement cannot be reached contact your INTO representative who will advise you on the way forward.

What advice do you give if a principal is attempting to use a "generic" time budget and applying this to ALL staff?

Directed Time Budgets are to be individually agreed and must allocate time to the tasks and duties specific to each individual teacher – there may be some aspects that are generic e.g., times of day, parents' meetings etc.

If a principal develops a generic time budget this does not meet the requirements of TNC 2020/1



CAROLINE MCCARTHY,
Northern Committee Chairperson

into
Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Comann Múinteoirí Éireann

What does a time budget look like?

Example Primary school (KS1, TA)

Category	Time	Minutes	Hours	Total
Directed Time				
Directed time to school	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Teaching Time to lesson	8:15am - 12:00pm	225	3.75	195
Planning Time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Teaching Time to lesson	12:15pm - 1:00pm	45	0.75	195
Unpaid Time				
Unpaid time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	1:00pm - 2:00pm	60	1.00	195
Unpaid time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	2:00pm - 3:00pm	60	1.00	195
Unpaid time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	3:00pm - 4:00pm	60	1.00	195
Other Time				
Other time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	1:00pm - 2:00pm	60	1.00	195
Other time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	2:00pm - 3:00pm	60	1.00	195
Other time from lunch to 1:00pm (1 hour)	3:00pm - 4:00pm	60	1.00	195
Registration Time				
Registration time	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Registration time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Registration time	1:00pm - 1:15pm	15	0.25	195
Registration time	3:00pm - 3:15pm	15	0.25	195
Supervision Time				
Supervision time	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Supervision time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Supervision time	1:00pm - 1:15pm	15	0.25	195
Supervision time	3:00pm - 3:15pm	15	0.25	195
Marking Time				
Marking time	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Marking time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Marking time	1:00pm - 1:15pm	15	0.25	195
Marking time	3:00pm - 3:15pm	15	0.25	195
Other Time				
Other time	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Other time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Other time	1:00pm - 1:15pm	15	0.25	195
Other time	3:00pm - 3:15pm	15	0.25	195
Total Time				
Total time	8:00am - 8:15am	15	0.25	195
Total time	12:00pm - 12:15pm	15	0.25	195
Total time	1:00pm - 1:15pm	15	0.25	195
Total time	3:00pm - 3:15pm	15	0.25	195

Be aware:

- When drawing up a DTB Principals should limit whole staff meetings to 1hr so that all the rest of a teacher's duties, including PPA, can be facilitated within the 1265hrs.
- The multiple of 190 days or 38 weeks is determined by the number of exceptional closure days utilised by Principals and the individual release time.
- Contact time is specified through a timetable not a DTB.

Agreement. The school rep should refer the principal to TNC 2020/1 and inform the principal that members will require an individual time budget following individual consultation.

When meeting with the principal to agree the time budget, should we have our own draft prepared beforehand?

Yes, this should help as a starting point. INTO would certainly advise that a teacher has clearly planned and outlined how long they believe they require for activities and would advise teachers to carry out an audit of how long it takes them to carry out their duties to inform the discussion that they have with the principal. If enough time is not allocated to carry out duties within the 1265 then simply, they should not be done.

Teachers should consider each aspect of the directed time budget template and refer to the check list for example report writing, x pupil no., managerial/teaching allowance duties etc.

What is contingency time?

Every time budget must include contingency time to allow for unexpected issues. The Workload Agreement recommends contingency time “to ensure there is flexibility to account for situations that may arise and can be included in the school budget”.

Does a school union rep include this time in their time budget? Can you remind me please of the hours per year for union rep?

Yes.

- 3-30 members: 1 period of 30 minutes per week of contact time
- 31 – 60 members: 2 periods of 30 minutes deducted from their contact time
- Over 60 members: 3 periods per week
- 2 days leave in each 2 years

https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2019/07/1.3.5.2.1_Facilities-YourRights.pdf

What is lunch entitlement?

Primary and post primary teachers are entitled to a minimum of 30 minutes lunch break between the hours of 12-2pm.

Nursery teachers are entitled to 30 minutes lunch break between the hours of 12-2.30pm.



Teachers are not paid for their lunch break (unless employed under a separate contract) and so this time is their own and if they wish can leave the school premises.

Should the use of PPA time be left up to individual teachers?

Generally, PPA time is something that is determined by a teacher. Teachers generally know what they need to do. However, teachers are legally (Teachers' Terms & Conditions 1987) under the direction of the principal for 1265 hours. PPA is time that is there for teachers to carry out their planning, preparation and assessment and principals should endeavour to ensure that teachers can avail of this time without interruption. There may be some smaller collaborative meetings, departmental etc associated with the planning element of PPA.

Is there any direction for SENCOs under the new workload agreement? Will ring-fenced non-contact time for SENCOs be a reasonable expectation when figuring out a time-budget?

The duties of a SENCO must be included in the directed time budget. If for instance a SENCO in a particularly large school required 10 hours per week to fully complete all the tasks expected, then when this 10 hours is added to the three PPA hours per week the teaching time would need to be reduced so that the SENCO is not working in excess of their contractual hours. This is an extreme example, but it is to simply make the point that all duties must be accounted for in a time budget.

The 9 reviews and the SEN regulations and Code of Practice will further address the workload that SENCOs have been balancing.

Is there a directed time budget for principals & vice principals?

Currently no, but this should not mean that the workload of a principal or vice principal is not managed. It is important to remember the following points:

- A healthy work life balance is important to all. Boards of Governors have a duty of care to the health and wellbeing of all in the school, including the school leaders.
- While principal's do not have the same contractual entitlement to 1265 hours currently, they are protected from excessive working hours under the terms of the European Working Time Directive, imperfect as that may be. So, while teaching unions and management are working toward the outcome of the review of principals' workloads, principals and vice principals should be reminding whoever needs reminding that 48-hour weeks, 11 hours between finishing and starting again applies.
- Currently there is not a directed time budget agreement for principals, or vice principals. This is an area of focus for the INTO as they go into the reviews with management side and teaching unions as agreed within the Pay and Workload Agreement 2020.

While it is not yet part of a formal agreed Directed Time Budget, INTO would advise all principals to take control of what is a manageable workload. The current demands of COVID must dictate a business-critical only approach. INTO have written to employing bodies to ask that they demonstrate support for principals with regard to this.

INTO supports all principal and vice principal members.

DoF Consultation on Public Sector Pension Schemes – INTO response

Changes to the Transitional Arrangements to the 2015 Schemes

The Department of Finance issued a Consultation on Public Sector Pension Schemes: Changes to the Transitional Arrangements to the 2015 Schemes, in August 2020. INTO responded to the consultation on behalf of members and also posted the response on the INTO website in advance of the closing date in November 2020 for members to view when preparing their own responses which INTO encouraged them to do.

The Department of Finance (DoF) was consulting on proposals to fix age related discrimination identified in the transitional arrangements of the 2015 public service pension reforms arising from recent legal cases.

The consultation explained that under both proposals affected individuals would receive a choice of which pension scheme they

would prefer to be in for the period in which the discrimination took place; this is between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The consultation was seeking views on **when** members should be given that choice.



NUALA O'DONNELL
Senior Official

The proposals set out that this will either be shortly after implementation (i.e. from 2022 onwards) stated as Immediate Choice Underpin or when individuals reach retirement, Deferred Choice Underpin. Further details of both options including the advantages and disadvantages of both were set out in the consultation.

Overall INTO favoured the Deferred Choice Underpin (DCU) as this offered the potential for members to examine the differences between the two schemes at the point of retirement when it is most relevant to them. The DCU also ensures

members will have access to the pertinent information from DE in relation to service/ amount accrued in each scheme and time to access independent Financial advice which will be crucial at this stage. Independent Financial advice would simply not be available for all 130,000 public sector workers in the immediate choice.

There are many factors to be taken into account by members when making the choice of which pension scheme they would prefer to be in for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 and clear accurate information on all aspects of the choices available are critical.

It is obvious that there will be administrative costs arising from the proposed changes whether in the Deferred or Immediate choice options. There may also be costs arising from the choice the member makes. INTO in its response made was adamant that no costs should apply to members or the NITPS as a result of remedying the mistake the Government made in introducing a scheme which has been found to be discriminatory.



INTO favoured the Deferred Choice Underpin ... this offered the potential for members to examine the differences between the two schemes at the point of retirement when it is most relevant to them.

Managing Teacher Wellbeing

In the current educational environment, where schools are trying to increase student attainment with a diminishing budget, teacher wellbeing may be overlooked as a 'nice to have' rather than as essential.

But, from an organisational perspective, wellbeing is strongly related to work stress, a key player in employee absence. Demotivated staff are often disengaged, do not enjoy their jobs and eventually leave.

Many teachers feel overworked, under-appreciated and stressed. Many teachers' work-life balance is non-existent, their relationships outside of work are suffering, and their passion for the profession is waning.

It's therefore never been more important to focus on and ensure the wellbeing of teaching staff. As well as greater staff retention levels, less sick leave, and lower supply teacher costs, research has shown that a teacher's happiness levels has a knock on effect for students.

Why does teacher wellbeing matter?

A teacher with low health and wellbeing, experiencing high levels of stress or who is ill at work, will not perform to the best of their ability.

This could be as a result of different factors. For example, a teacher with low health and wellbeing may lack the energy required to deliver a lesson which effectively pushes children to succeed. Additionally, a teacher who is struggling to cope with stress is more likely to be absent from work.

Teachers are one of the many factors that may be associated with a student's educational attainment. Other factors are the student's home and family life, the school as a whole, their peers and the classes they are placed in.

Research has shown that having a good teacher has a big difference on student exam results. A teacher with high job satisfaction, positive morale and who is healthy should be more likely to teach lessons which are creative, challenging and effective, leading to students doing better in exams.

What has an impact on wellbeing?

Past research has identified the main factors influencing good quality of work such as, leaders who support employees, developing staff skills and rewarding staff, relationships based on trust and measuring staff wellbeing. With specific regard to staff wellbeing, if schools measured staff wellbeing on an annual basis using their own survey which allowed staff to answer questions anonymously and without fear of reprisals and also dealt directly with the concerns raised, the staffroom would be a happier place. Even consider a suggestion box in the staff room so that teachers can provide feedback throughout the year. We do it for pupils!

A wellbeing survey should consider including questions such as those below and ask staff to scale how happy they are on a scale of 1-5 (where appropriate). Using a scale helps make the results quantifiable:

- Do you feel stressed at work?
- Do you feel adequately supported at work?
- Do you feel equipped to manage your workload?

- Where/who do you turn to if there is something wrong?
- Would you like the opportunity to have counselling?
- What do you enjoy about your job?
- What do you not like?

The results of the wellbeing survey should be shared with staff and the

governors. Anonymity must be maintained, but staff should be consulted on the findings and given the chance to suggest improvements to the school culture and environment.

There are many issues which can affect staff wellbeing and the best way forward is to find out what they are and try to deal with them. For example, with regard to workload, the survey may well highlight constant emails and WhatsApp group messages being received at weekends as a

cause of major stress for staff. Obviously, a solution would be to have a ban on sending messages at the weekend. Or the survey may highlight that staff feel the need for more administrative or technical support. To even get a response which explains why it may not be possible or that it is being dealt with can alleviate the stress for staff.

It is essential that the effort of the staff to complete the survey and give feedback is not wasted. Concrete action to reduce stress, support employees and provide ongoing opportunities for reflection and further suggestions is essential.

Managing teacher wellbeing properly is a win win result for all in education.



Paul Groogan
Trade Union Official

A teacher with high job satisfaction, positive morale and who is healthy should be more likely to teach lessons

which are creative, challenging and effective, leading to students doing better in exams.

PAUSE *for the* MENOPAUSE

Not just for those of us of a certain age!

The menopause will impact the lives of us all, whether we identify as he, she, or they. It does not matter that you are personally not affected, it will affect those around us in both our personal and working life – simply put it is not just ‘her’ issue it happens to ‘him’ and it happens to ‘them’ at any stage of life.

Even saying the word Menopause or happening on a discussion about it creates a reaction. It may be one of relief, ridicule, embarrassment but if we are honest rarely one of understanding, the reason being, like so many aspects of our lives, it falls into the taboo category. One of those topics your granny never discussed, a hushed matter and that is why we need to tackle it as individuals, as colleagues, as school leaders.

The symptoms of the menopause are too often under recognised, undervalued and not taken seriously. The commonly known and accepted symptoms of hot flushes, tiredness, poor memory, disturbed sleep pattern, sleepiness, weight gain only paint part of the picture for some. The psychological symptoms include loss of self-confidence, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression and as these may be hard to recognise, they are not talked about and individuals may not seek help. Throwing open the conversation and the support in the work environment will hopefully start to change this pattern.

An ICTU survey found 49% of respondents said that the menopause had been treated as a joke in their workplace, 28% said that the menopause had been treated negatively. The LRA, Equality Commission and the ICTU are drafting guidance because it is needed. Northern Conference 2020 passed a motion:

Conference acknowledges that a significant majority of the teaching profession are female and are therefore

likely to go through the menopause at some stage in their teaching career.

Conference calls on Northern Committee:

- 1. To negotiate with management on a range of measures, including an agreed policy on supporting menopause in the workplace; and**
- 2. To undertake a campaign on menopause in the workplace which focuses on supporting teachers.**

So, it is my role as Chairperson to strive to get it rolling. This article is just the start. INTO have planned a workshop in early 2021, open to all, linking with ICTU, EANI and hopefully research from the University of Ulster.

So as a start a workplace checklist:

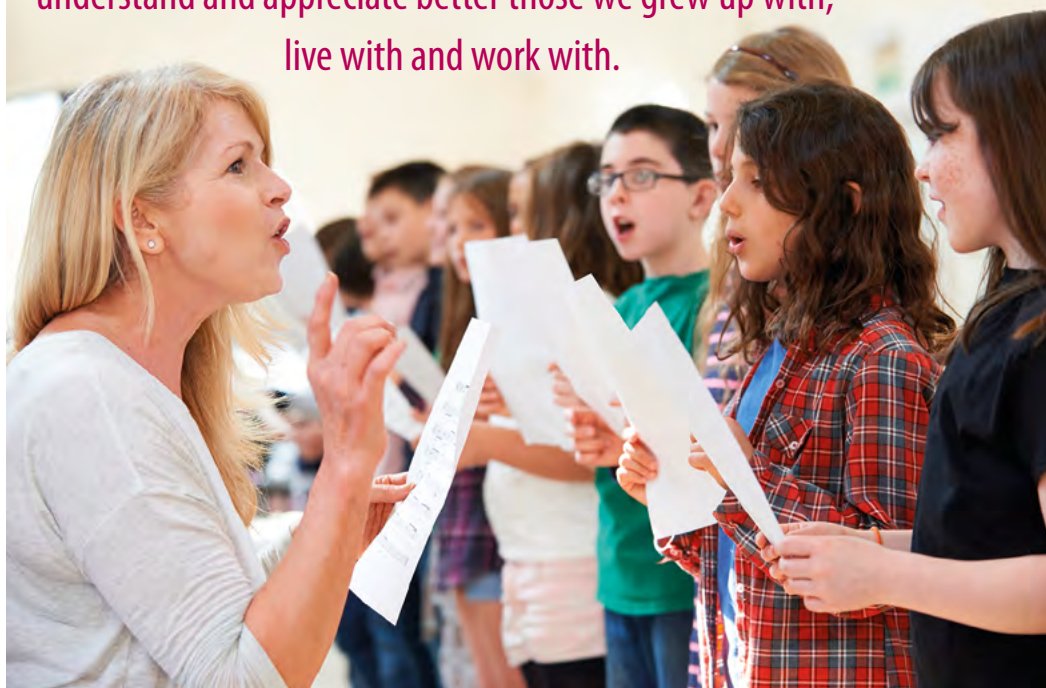
We should all be able to:

- **Work through the menopause in a supportive environment**
- **Control room temperature**
- **Take bathroom breaks when needed**
- **Expect understanding from colleagues and managers, including reasonable adjustments.**

Taking time to understand the impact the menopause can have both physically and emotionally helps individuals manage their own experience, helps us understand and appreciate better those we grew up with, live with and work with.

CAROLINE MCCARTHY, Northern Committee Chairperson

Taking time to understand the impact the menopause ... helps individuals manage their own experience, helps us understand and appreciate better those we grew up with, live with and work with.





into

Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

Art Competition

2021

Did Lockdown help you realise your love of art again?

Have you created work during lockdown, have you found art a way to maintain your well-being, do you have an idea you can bring to completion for this year's competition?



A love of art is something many of us have and some have only just discovered. If there was one benefit to be found during lockdown it was that art can be enjoyed safely and brings significant benefits for creators and viewers. All forms of media, mainstream & social, have seen a surge in art inspiration over recent months. INTO has supported an art competition for 8 years and in this its 9th year we hope to see it grow and reflect the emotions that you have experienced.

In 2013 Magdalena Beldowska-Breen, Belfast Branch, was the winner of the INTO Art Competition in its inaugural year.

Since 2013 members have gone on to participate, support and of course win the annual competition.

The competition has changed over the years to include in 2018 both a winning photograph (Tanya McCrory, Tyrone Central branch) and a winning painting (Siobhan Dillon, South Antrim Branch).

In 2018 we were marking INTO's 150th anniversary year. 2020 will be remembered as exceptional for very different reasons.

With this in mind, 2021's Competition aims to reflect the experience of members in a time of lockdown, isolation, those challenges in school and at home never faced before but also the support we have shown each other, how we have connected in new ways using new technology and the resilience and resourcefulness of teachers, staff and our young people all across the education sector.

In past years entrants have been bold and generous enough to share with us their skills and as a result Northern Office can display proudly a collection

of art that is entirely the work of its members.

Previously entrants have had the choice of a theme or a medium; this year the brief is only that it should be possible for INTO to display your work in Northern Office.

Northern Office is calling on INTO members who quilt, who sculpt, who work in collage, who etch, who sketch - if you are creative and have art to share please do. In this spirit of anticipation, that 2021's competition hopes to attract an unprecedented variety of works and media, several outstanding pieces will be identified rather than one single winning entry.

As much as art is a creative process it is also about engagement. The creators who share their art afford a chance for us to see things in a different way, to feel soothed or stimulated as their work affects each viewer.

Growing from this idea of access and engagement INTO plans to create a virtual art gallery in the members' area of the website so that all members can view all the art in Northern Office at any time.

Application details for the 2021 INTO Art Competition can be found on the INTO website. The Art Competition is open to INTO members in NI. For further details please email info@into.ie.

2021's Competition aims to reflect the experience of members in a time of lockdown ... but also the support we have shown each other, how we have connected in new ways using new technology and the resilience and resourcefulness of teachers, staff and our young people



INTO Position on the continuation of public examinations for the academic year 2020/21 and commentary

INTO recently went on record in support of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People, Koula Yiasouma's call for the scrapping of public examinations in Northern Ireland for this academic year.

This call was based on a consideration of the current context and the foreseeable future disruption to schooling for the duration of this academic year and the negative impact that continuing with plans for examinations is having on the learners themselves. It is not difficult to conclude, to paraphrase from our own trade union lexicon, that detriment to learners is also detriment to teachers.

It is widely accepted that further contingencies have been and are being considered by CCEA. Sharing and discussion of these contingencies in an open forum with the relevant stakeholders, including the Trade Unions, is essential.

In the absence of full knowledge of these contingency plans, INTO's initial call has been and continues to be for an end to examinations for this year to be replaced by a combination of existing controlled assessment/coursework where available alongside CCEA produced and provided 'Staged Assessments' taken during identified windows of the remainder of the school year and assessed externally by

CCEA appointed examiners as per the normal arrangements for assessment of examinations. We differ here from the NAHT call for internally assessed and moderated assessments.

The benefits of this are:

- a clear and deliverable method of delivering quality assured assessments
- paid work for those teachers and others who undertake external marking for CCEA, most of whom are teachers and members of our unions
- clarity for centres, teachers and learners and the removal of the perceived need to gather 'banks of evidence'
- safeguard against additional and excessive workload
- reduction of stress for all concerned.

INTO does not believe that the detail of this is a matter for the trade unions to work out. Our task is to call for solutions that safeguard our members conditions which in turn will benefit their students. We should be consulted alongside other stakeholders but to seek to assume

any responsibility for developing proposals which, inevitably, will involve compromise and come under immense

political pressure and pressure applied by sectional interests within education, would leave the teaching unions open to valid criticism should the system prove unfit for purpose, burdensome on our members and detrimental to students.

The Minister of Education's latest proposals around examinations do not go far enough in addressing the already well-rehearsed concerns of INTO members around examinations. There appears to be a 'carry on regardless' attitude in

play. In trying to protect examinations at all costs it appears that the Minister does not particularly care if he devalues them beyond recognition and there is little evidence to suggest that the mental health impact on young people as identified by the children and young peoples' commissioner has any bearing on the decisions coming from DE.



KEVIN DALY

Trade Union Official



Understanding Life in Lockdown for Autistic Young People



'The beach goes out a bit so you can't really see what's at the end, this is like my current situation and the world's current situation, we don't know what's at the end and we don't know what's coming for us and what's coming for me. I don't really know what's at the end of the road. It's uncertain.' *Darach, research advisor*

By June 2020, children and young people across Northern Ireland had experienced three months of lockdown. Remote learning had been sprung upon teachers and children alike in mid-March with neither group prepared for the challenges of online platforms such as Google Classroom and Seesaw. Children with additional educational needs including autistic children and young people, usually surrounded by support teams of classroom assistants and support teachers were faced with months of online learning, largely alone. Coupled with their own individual barriers to education and without the support of their key educational people, March to June 2020 became one of the most uniquely challenging terms ever for

autistic learners.

During this time, the School of Social Sciences, Education and Social Work at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) funded small-scale research projects in response to the impact of Covid-19. 4 autistic young people worked with Dr Bronagh Byrne and Dr Gillian O'Hagan from the Centre for Children's Rights at QUB designing the Life in Lockdown research study to illuminate just how autistic young people felt about their lives during the pandemic.

'My hopes for this project are that it assists autistic people during these rough times, and that teachers will take a few moments to read over it to get an insight into what young people's emotional states during the course of the past few months.' *Darach, research advisor*

Using Photovoice, a type of documentary photography, nine research participants used their smartphones to document aspects of their daily lives during lockdown on the basis of the three research questions designed by the autistic research advisors.

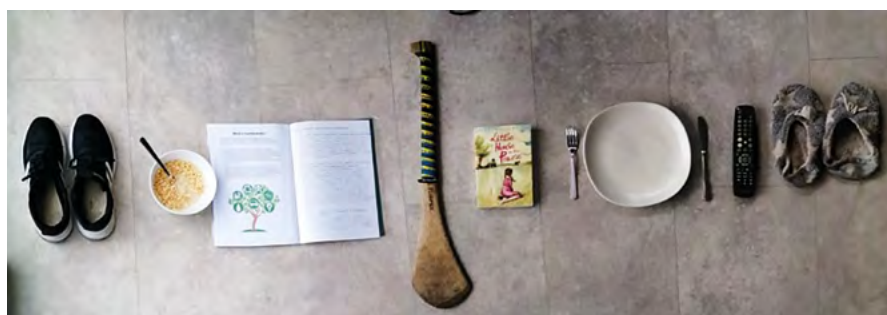
'The structure of other projects did not make it easy for the children with ASD to contribute. The way... Life in Lockdown... was set up was perfect and the feedback you got from the children was very insightful.' *Parent of research participant*

48 photographs were generated easily portraying the very essence of what it meant to be a young autistic person during lockdown in Northern Ireland. The research advisers analysed the photographs highlighting both the challenges and coping strategies adopted by this remarkable group of young people.

'The original project was that it was a genuinely therapeutic thing for me, and gave me a bit of an escape from Lockdown actually. I met a few new people while working on it who actually brightened up my days.' *Darach, research advisor*

The 6 themes identified would eventually be summarised into a research report concluding with three recommendations.

1. Future lockdown restrictions should aim to give specific considerations to autistic young people in terms of movement restrictions within wider family circles and prioritise appropriate face to face access to the services designed to support autistic young people.
2. Home-learning tasks should be meaningful, adding to learning in a systematic and scaffolded way, mindful of the fact that the pace of teaching new concepts online is a much slower process for autistic students than in the classroom.
3. Mental health wellbeing should be formally included as part of the school curriculum when home schooling/online learning is taking place and there should be discrete time for this included in the time budgets for each school day.



'When we had school at the start, I found it quite hard. I needed routine and I needed structure. I needed to know. I'm not the sort of person who can do school one day at 9am and then 4pm the next day. I need things to be the same and predictable. These are all the objects of my routine.' *Patricia, research advisor*

These recommendations were presented to the Education Committee of the Stormont Assembly in December 2020 by Bronagh and Gillian on behalf of the autistic research participants and advisers.

'There is not one cure for this, we need to look at things individually and figure out things for each different person.' Joe, research advisor

What makes this research so poignant is how the voices of these young people are heard not only through the enlightening discussions of their photos but are reiterated through the presentation of the themes and the message they have for the stakeholders involved in their education. In a climate where lip service is paid to terms like inclusion and



'I felt like my hand was tied by having to check all these different tasks on different platforms, some projects on MyMaths, some on google classroom, some as notifications, some as assignments. You don't know where to find work and teachers expected you to remember exactly what would happen and to check at different times. It actually would take so much time to look for your work [that] you wouldn't have very much time left to do it in the end' Sam, research advisor

reasonable adjustments, these young people have used their own personal experiences and expertise in autism to call upon those in power to do more for autistic children and young people in times of crisis such as this critical incident that is the Covid-19 pandemic. Put best by Eimhear, one of the research advisors:

'During a pandemic, you cannot leave people with autism without help, without support.' Eimhear, research advisor

The full research report on Life in Lockdown can be accessed at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/CentreforChildrensRights/Projects/>

Larry Magee 1924–2020

Former Chairperson of Northern Committee

Larry Magee passed away on the 26 December 2020, at the age of 96, having given 75 years as a committed and active member of INTO.

Larry started teaching in the late 1940s in Ballymena, moving to the Abbey PS in Newry, before taking up a post in St Peter's Junior PS, Lurgan, not far from his family home. His wife Una, also sadly deceased last year, was a teacher too and taught their six children in Silverwood PS before joining Larry in St Peter's PS Lurgan.

As a young teacher Larry joined INTO and became an active member alongside two future INTO Northern Secretaries, Al Mackle and Gerry Quigley, who later went on to become INTO General Secretary. These activists established a young teachers' grouping within the INTO, in which Larry played a pivotal role. Due to their endeavours the INTO achieved the removal of the marriage ban for female teachers in the mid 1950s. This was followed by gaining the recognition of teaching as a profession on a par with the



legal and medical professions a few years later. These were major achievements from which thousands of teachers have benefitted over

the decades since, including his children, Shane, Paul and Bronagh who followed in their parents' footsteps and became teachers and members of INTO. Two of Larry's grandchildren carry on the family tradition and are teaching today.

Throughout his years in the INTO Larry held various positions at School, Branch, District, Northern Committee and National Education Committee levels. As a committed trade unionist he led his North Armagh Branch to affiliate to its local Trades Union Council participating in rallies and marches demanding peace throughout the 1970s, '80s and '90s; and against the excesses of the Thatcher government.

The contribution that Larry Magee has made to INTO and to the teaching profession is immeasurable and we offer our sincere sympathy to his family and gratitude for the legacy he has left for all INTO members.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

Thinking about retirement? Read on!

INTO has been providing pre-retirement seminars for members for over 16 years through Platinum Financial.

Platinum Financial are a leading firm of Independent Financial Advisers and Wealth Managers with offices in Belfast and London, dedicated to delivering no-nonsense, helpful advice.

Prior to Covid 19 seminars were delivered to members in a number of venues across the North from November to May each year. This year, Platinum Financial, in consultation with INTO delivered a pilot webinar in June for a small number of participants. Following a few adjustments a series of webinars was announced with the first taking place on 21 October 2020 from 3.45 to 5.15pm. There were 95 teachers from INTO and UTU at the webinar, which was delivered by Philip Andrews, from Platinum Financial via Zoom. Jayne Grimason also from Platinum Financial, conducted a number of quick polls among the participants during the webinar, two of which asked attendees at the start and end of the presentation how well they felt they understood their pension and retirement entitlements. Amazingly the levels of understanding increased dramatically from the beginning to the end, with members saying in their feedback 'Thank you for the superb presentation, I now



feel I understand my retirement options more clearly,' and 'Thank you for making this available. I never understood the pension statements and now it is very clear. Well done!'

Other comments from members who attended the webinar included:

'Thank-you for an excellent webinar, which was very insightful and informative'.

'Thank you very much. You all had such patience for our requests. Very worthwhile session.'

'Thank you for your seminar yesterday. It clarified many points for me and also I found the quality of the presentation to be very good as was your link and early reminder system.'

Members also commented on the presentation being virtual and how some felt this enabled a greater participation in the webinar, using the chat function to ask questions, which Philip then addressed throughout the presentation.

'I felt very relaxed listening at home. I could hear everything. Very clearly and could read slides'

'Hearing a variety of questions. Sitting comfortably at home!'

'The audience were more likely to ask questions. It was nice not to have to drive a distance to a course. It was very informative but also informal.'

'Clear presentation. I liked that we could ask questions. Less threatening than sitting in a room full of people.'

These views will be considered in future planning of pre-retirement seminars/webinars post Covid, with potentially a mixture of virtual and face-to-face presentations to suit all preferences.

Further webinars are scheduled for:
Tuesday 19 January 2021

Thursday 25 February 2021

Wednesday 31 March 2021 from 3.45 to 5.15pm.

Please email info@into.ie to reserve your place.

These views will be considered in future planning of pre-retirement seminars/webinars post Covid, with potentially a mixture of virtual and face-to-face presentations to suit all preferences.



INTO engages with students – virtually!

At the beginning of the academic year, traditionally INTO, along with UTU and NEU would be invited to visit the Universities and Colleges of education to speak to the students and recruit them into joint membership of all three unions. In this aspect INTO, UTU and NEU have established a partnership approach which enables the students to free student membership and the opportunity to find out about the three unions as a student and then decide which union they wish to join upon graduation.

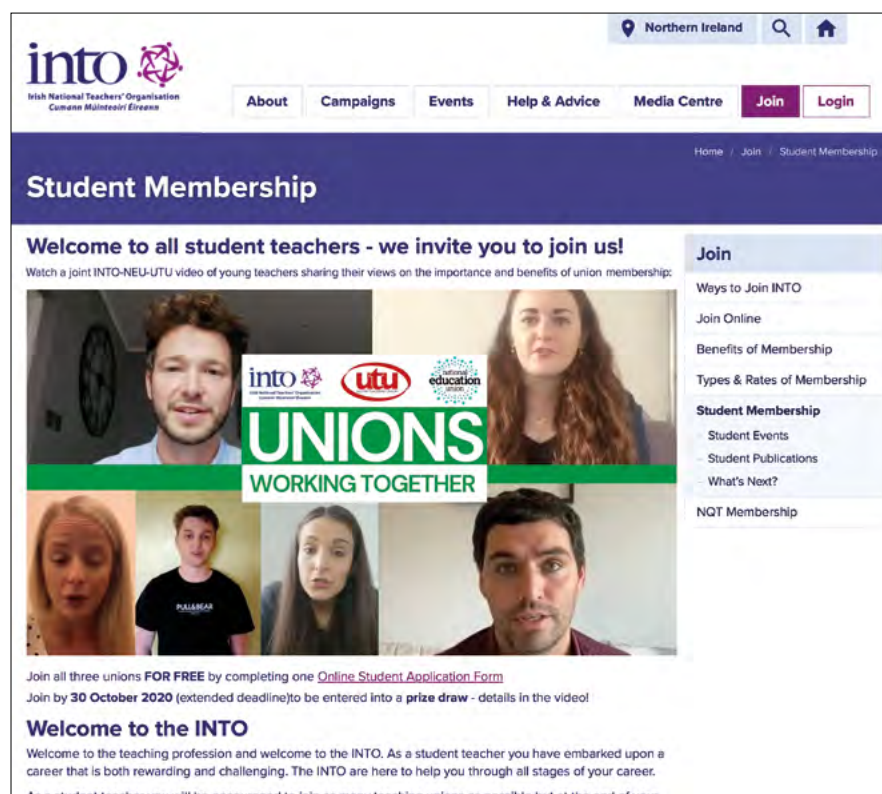
This year, not surprisingly was different, and with students attending college virtually, the interaction between the students and the unions moved to virtual too.

It was a very different experience from meeting the students on Freshers day and chatting to them or being swamped by students seeking to join up for their freebies! Instead representatives from each of the unions presented part of a joint presentation to faceless/voiceless students, which was a bit unnerving, especially where in one platform, my camera made me look like a spectre at the feast, which was almost appropriate as it was nearly Hallowe'en!

To encourage students to sign up, we produced a joint video, <https://www.into.ie/ni/join/students/> and posted this on

our websites, sending links to this and the online application form to the Colleges for distribution. All students who signed up were then entered into a draw for vouchers of £150 for 1st prize, £100 for

2nd prize and £50 for 3rd prize. The prize winners in each College/University were selected randomly and were then notified of their win and asked to provide a 'selfie' of them with their prize.



2nd prize winner, Alana Doyle, UU, and 3rd prize winner Adam Maginnis, QUB



Recruitment fairs

Student Prize Winners 2020

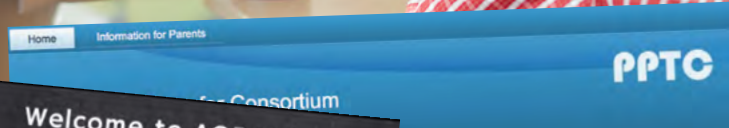
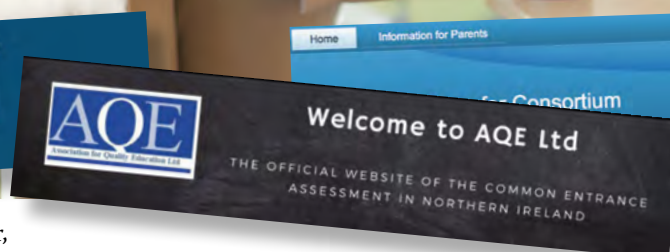
Due to COVID-19, usual recruitment fairs could not take place so students who joined using our new online application form before 31 October were entered into a prize draw for

One4All Vouchers:
1st prize £150
2nd prize £100
3rd prize £50
per college/university.

One4All Vouchers

ANON	Queen's University	1st Prize	£150
Alan Campbell	University of Ulster	1st Prize	£150
Niamh McNally	St. Mary's University College	1st Prize	£150
Shauneen Maguire	Stranmillis University College	1st Prize	£150
ANON	Queen's University	2nd Prize	£100
Alana Doyle	University of Ulster	2nd Prize	£100
Natasha McClory	St. Mary's University College	2nd Prize	£100
Rachael Hall	Stranmillis University College	2nd Prize	£100
Adam Maginnis	Queen's University	3rd Prize	£50
Anna Woods	University of Ulster	3rd Prize	£50
Lauren Gormley	St. Mary's University College	3rd Prize	£50
ANON	Stranmillis University College	3rd Prize	£50

Another Fine Mess



On 28th July 2020, Education Minister, Peter Weir, announced the appointment of an Expert Panel to examine and address the links between educational underachievement and social disadvantage.

The panel was established under the 'New Decade, New Approach' agreement which set out the requirement for an expert group "to examine and address links between persistent educational underachievement and socio-economic background."

While the Minister was lauded for moving forward on this, his decisions and actions following the announcement, in relation to the use of unregulated selection tests have totally undermined this panel.

Siobhan O'Neill, the Stormont Interim Mental Health Champion, on Radio Ulster, was scathing regarding the negative impact that the failings of the Minister may have had on the mental health and wellbeing of a large number of 10- and 11-year olds across the north. It was her contention that unregulated tests should be abandoned this school year, and also in November 2021.

Since schools closed in March 2020, INTO, along with other teaching unions and politicians from across the assembly and the Stormont Education

Committee, have been requesting that due to the current pandemic, the Minister, AQE, PPTC and the grammar schools should find an alternative to using academic selection.

These calls have been ignored, with the minister of education continually trotting out the mantra that he has no control over the use of such tests as they are coming from private companies. This is despite his department moving the date for the transfer procedure to be completed, and yet the executive have used their powers to close hair salons, pubs and other such private businesses due to the current pandemic.

On Tuesday 5th January 2021, both of the providers of the unregulated tests appeared to announce that this year's tests would be cancelled. By the time of the BBC's 6:30 evening news broadcast, the AQE group had reneged on this decision and announced that there will be a single test for pupils on Saturday 27th February 2021.

The fact that PPTC have agreed to

stick to their decision must be noted. However, while INTO has welcomed this decision, it is time to again visit the issue of academic selection. Had the minister taken a decision similar to the decision on GCSE and A level examinations, i.e. to cancel these unregulated tests, then time would have been available to have a proper, robust discussion in respect to how pupils can best transfer to post primary education that would be fair and equitable.

It is now more urgent than ever, given the

debacle around this year's procedure, that the use of academic selection as a criteria for transfer from primary to post-primary school be reviewed, as part of the major review of education that was announced last term. It is important that there is clarity for all in relation to this, as the continued uncertainty serves only to heighten the levels of stress and emotional wellbeing of the pupils, parents, teachers and principals involved.



Mark McTaggart
Assistant Northern Secretary

Health and Safety in Schools

INTO, recognising the significant and increased Health and safety issues for teachers returning to schools this term, worked with the ICTU to put together some online courses on Managing H&S during Covid-19. Consequently two accredited courses were run, one for INTO Health and Safety Reps and a second course for School Leaders. There were four modules consisting of:

- Covid-19 and the workplace.
- Relevant protection legislation.
- Understanding and carrying out risk assessments.
- Role of the Competent Person./ Rights, roles and functions of a H&S rep.

The course is accredited by OCN at level 2 and learners had to complete a workbook and some additional independent learning. The two courses were very well received by those attending, which was a substantial commitment in their own time of four three hour sessions. The two ICTU tutors, Roisin Graham and Barbara Martin were excellent and answered all the questions the participants threw at them, with very helpful responses to current everyday issues facing schools in Covid. This was greatly appreciated by the participants as school leaders, in particular, highlighted difficulties in getting straight answers anywhere. The tutors were very ably assisted by Tony

Gallagher who organised and ran the virtual aspect of the course via Zoom and ensured it all went smoothly.

INTO also provided members with a webinar on stress management in recognition of the stresses in teaching generally and the increased stresses for all in the current climate. This webinar, also by ICTU tutor Roisin Graham, will be available soon on the INTO website.

The Role of INTO Health and safety Reps

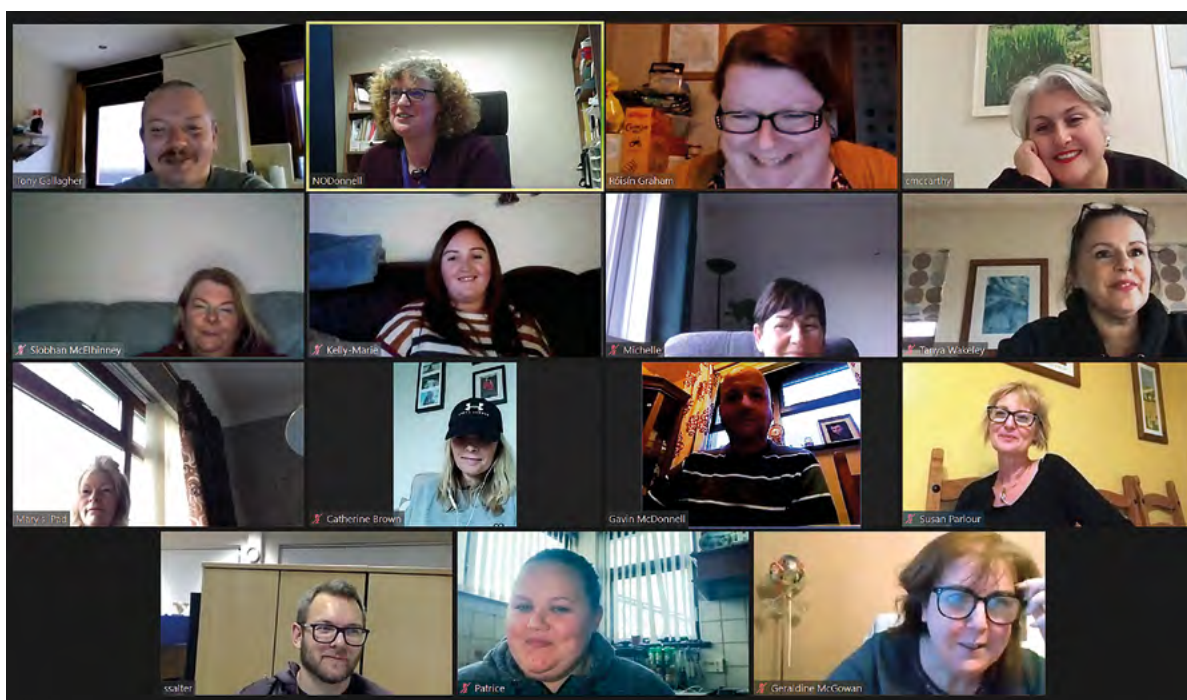
This term saw an increase in the number of members putting themselves forward as INTO Health and Safety Reps and as a result a number of questions have arisen, for those unable to attend the course, as to their role and responsibilities. The INTO section on the website for Health and Safety Reps is currently being updated but in the meantime here is some information for Reps and Principals.

The Role of the INTO Health and Safety Representative is to represent members on any issues that could reasonably affect their Health, Safety and Welfare. They have a legal right to:

- investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace (whether or not they are drawn to his/her attention by the employees he/she represents) and to examine the causes of accidents at the workplace;

- investigate complaints by any employee he/she represents relating to that employee's health, safety or welfare at work;
- make representations to the employer on matters arising out of sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) above;
- make representations to the employer on general matters affecting the health, safety or welfare at work of the employees at the workplace;
- carry out inspections in accordance with Regulations 5, 6 and 7 below;
- represent the employees he/she was appointed to represent in consultations at the workplace with inspectors of the Health and Safety Executive and of any other enforcing authority;
- receive information from inspectors in accordance with section 28(8) of the 1974 Act; and
- attend meetings of safety committees where he/she attends in his/her capacity as a safety representative in connection with any of the above functions; but, without prejudice to sections 7 and 8 of the 1974 Act, no function given to a safety representative by this paragraph shall be construed as imposing any duty on him/her.

Further information and training will be available on the INTO website in due course.



Listening to help others

Practical advice to help teach children with hearing loss/deafness

The coronavirus pandemic meant that we all had to respond to a different way of working to children and young people and their families and supporting schools, and staff providing teaching remotely. INTO recently met with the British Association for Teachers of the Deaf (BATOD) and learnt how deaf children are at a disadvantage when teaching is delivered online. We asked **Conor Mervyn**, a member of BATOD Committee and an EANI support teacher, to share some key points we can all benefit from.

Children with hearing loss may not be able to access all the auditory information from online teaching as a result of various levels of hearing loss. The impact upon emotional health and wellbeing if unable to access online sessions fully can result in isolation. Online learning can be difficult because children rely on accessing lip reading, facial patterns and gesture to support their listening and understanding in good listening environments. If this is hindered then their understanding can be limited. If the teacher camera is off, then pupils lose this vital support for their understanding of speech. The audio quality of online sessions may be poor on online platforms impacting on listening and understanding. There is also a delay between the audio and image on screen if relying on lip reading so this can result in frustration. Online platforms may have the ability to provide captioning but these are not always accurate and therefore what the speaker has said is not reflected in the captions. This causes confusion or communication breakdown. Pupils with hearing loss may also experience information overload from reading and processing spoken information. Additional processing time is required to fully understand what has been said when learning virtually as this is different from class based learning. It requires the deaf child to follow conversations on screen, to read and listen at the same time and sometimes to write and listen at the same time. As a whole online learning for children with a hearing loss could result in cognitive overload known as concentration fatigue or Zoom fatigue.

The key take home message for Teachers working with children supported by the Sensory Service is as follows to ensure accessibility of remote

learning if a blended learning approach is required:

- Seek advice from the Sensory Service on differentiation of home learning materials.
- Ensure close liaison with families, as appropriate, so that they are able to support their child's learning as much as possible.
- Ensure that children can take equipment home to use to access any remote learning opportunities.

Sensory Service Advice Sheets for education settings

The advice sheets for supporting remote learning and learning in school can be found on the Education Authority website; <https://www.eani.org.uk/information-for-educational-settings>

The Sensory Service continues to



develop online resources to provide advice and information (Deafness and Visual Impairment resources available) to schools and parents. Please refer to the Sensory Service page on the EA website; <https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/sensory-service>.

The Sensory Service created a resource to support pupil's post 16 transition signposting to support and providers for deaf children leaving school to post 16 settings on the EA website. (<https://www.eani.org.uk/services/pupil-support-services/transition>)

National Deaf Children's Society

NDCS provide useful information to schools, pupil support services and parents and regular blog updates. One such resource they have created is a deaf friendly remote learning checklist.

<https://www.ndcs.org.uk/blog/deaf-friendly-remote-learning-a-checklist>

[for-teachers/](#)

British Association for Teachers of the Deaf

BATOD represents the interests of Qualified Teachers of the Deaf (QToDs) and the children and young people they teach with a range of Government and other agencies. BATOD membership is not restricted to only Teachers of the Deaf. Communication Support Workers, Teaching Assistants, audiology technicians and college staff have also benefited as BATOD members.

<https://www.batod.org.uk/batod-update-in-relation-to-face-coverings-in-education-settings/>

Supporting Teachers with deafness/hearing loss

Many of the issues facing children with deafness and hearing loss would apply to teachers who have hearing loss and so the recommended advice strategies from the Sensory Service would be most helpful. Teachers with deafness and hearing loss could access support from the D/deaf Teachers of the Deaf website and Facebook group which is open to D/deaf teacher's working in mainstream settings, in teacher training, or working as a trainee or qualified teacher of the deaf. A group locally in Northern Ireland set up a Facebook support group (Teachers with Hearing Loss).

Royal National Institute for the Deaf Employment Team

RNID Employment Team also provides support and advice to teachers with hearing loss in terms of reasonable adjustments in the workplace, recommendations for equipment and information about Access to Work.

Access to Work

If you are deaf or have hearing loss, Access to Work may be able to cover the cost of any communication support or assistive devices that you need to do your job. This could include, for example, a listening device or loop system to help you hear during meetings or communication support such as a sign language interpreter or speech to text captioning service.

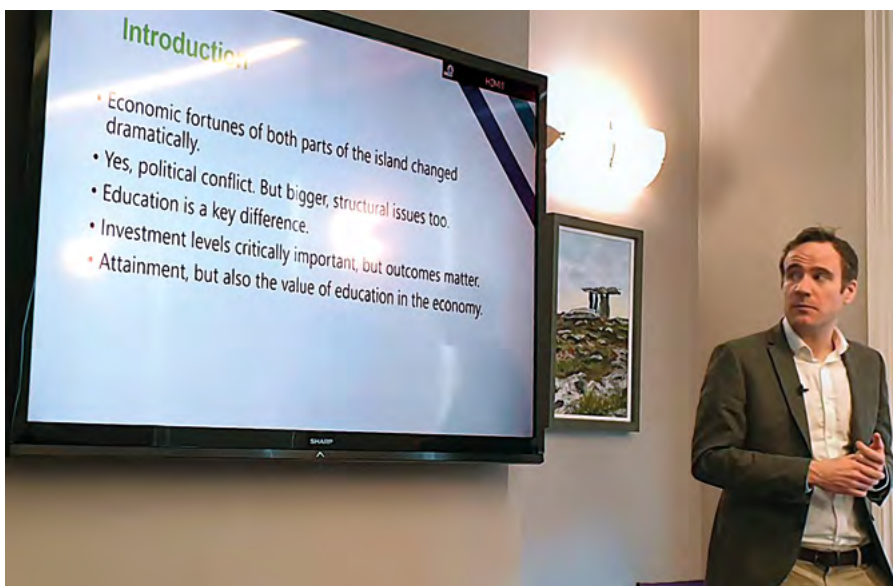
The 11th annual Vere Foster Lecture

Each year, INTO Northern Office holds a Vere Foster Lecture in memory of our first President.

This year's lecture was delivered by Paul MacFlynn, Co-Director NERI and is entitled "Mind the Gap – Education and the Economic Divide on the Island of Ireland":

Over the last 40 years, the economic dynamic on the island of Ireland has changed dramatically. Now Brexit has brought into sharp focus the fate of the all-island economy and the differing fortunes of both economies. Education is a key driver of economic growth and is fundamental to understanding the scale of the gap in outcomes that now exists on the island of Ireland. How we invest in education and how we reward education are two key questions that need to be examined. Learning lessons from the experience of both economies can lead to a more equitable and sustainable economy and society on the island of Ireland.

Paul Mac Flynn is Co-Director of the Nevin Economic Research Institute and is based in the Belfast office. In addition to managing the Belfast office he has



co-responsibility for the NERI's research programme and for its strategic direction.

He leads on the NERI's analysis of the Northern Ireland economy along with all research into the impact of the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union. Other research areas include regional productivity, the all-island economy and the future of work.

He is a graduate of University College

Dublin with a BA in Economics and Politics and the University of Bristol with an MSc in Economics and Public Policy, specialising in the economic impacts of political devolution in the UK.

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this year's lecture was pre-recorded with social distancing measures in place and is available to view on the INTO website www.into.ie/ni.

Northern Committee December meeting via Microsoft Teams



Meet Your Branch Secretary

Carina O'Hara, Strabane Branch Secretary

My name is Carina O'Hara and I am the Branch Secretary for the Strabane Branch. I am a P.5 teacher in St. Mary's Primary School, Strabane and I am also the School SENCo.

The role of Branch Secretary is a busy one and it has become even busier since March. Lots of email correspondence, virtual meetings to set up and talking to members via online platforms. The role has become more ICT challenging but rewarding all the same!



Siobhán McMullan, Secretary, North Antrim Branch and District 1

I teach Primary 5 in St Brigid's PS, Ballymoney, and have been active in the INTO since I began my teaching career in Dublin. I initially took on the role of Ballymena Branch Secretary before its amalgamation with Glens and North Antrim branches, with the new North Antrim Branch now covering schools from Carnlough to Dunloy to Rathlin Island. The role is a busy one and has brought new challenges in the last year – virtual branch/district meetings were not in the original job description! I enjoy the collegiality that comes with my involvement in the INTO – despite the hard work, there's always time for a bit of craic.



Martin Cullen, Lisburn Branch Secretary

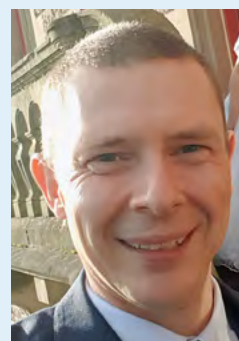
My name is Martin Cullen and I am Branch Secretary for Lisburn Branch. I teach in Holy Evangelists' PS in Twinbrook. I have taught in the Twinbrook estate for 32 years now, previously in St Mark's PS and after the amalgamation in H.E.P.S. I have been INTO rep in both schools and find the support you get as a member of the biggest union on the island comforting and find the role of Branch Secretary very rewarding. Although this year has had its own challenges with lack of face-to-face contact with members and colleagues.



Paul Kerr, Belfast Branch Secretary

My name is Paul Kerr and I am the secretary for the Belfast branch. I have been teaching history at St Louise's Comprehensive College on the Falls Road for 20 years.

I find my role in the branch very rewarding, working with like minded colleagues who share a passion for striving towards a better education for our young people. It is one that also presents ever changing challenges particularly given the year we have just experienced. I would encourage members to get involved in their branch. They are guaranteed a very warm welcome at branch meetings and conferences.



Upcoming Virtual Events

Youth Conference
Leadership Conference
Menopause Webinar
National SEN Conference

Further details will be made available on the INTO website – www.into.ie/NI

The Benefit Funds Committee (BFC)

Here to support our members!

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT FUNDS COMMITTEE?

It is a Committee within the structure of the INTO which oversees benevolent grants.

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE BENEFIT FUNDS COMMITTEE?

There are 6 members on the committee. One member from each of 5 separate divisions around Ireland plus the General Treasurer. Paddy McAllister represents the North plus a number of counties in the South.

WHAT GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?

Death Grants and Hardship Grants

WHAT DEATH GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?

A grant of 4000 Euros in the event of death of a member can be claimed. A 2000 Euro grant can be claimed in the event of the death of a member's spouse.

WHAT HARDSHIP GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE?

Each case is treated individually but grants may be available for members who fall into financial difficulties and where support may make a difference.

HOW CAN A GRANT BE CLAIMED OR APPLIED FOR?

Members should contact your BFC Representative, Paddy McAllister, email: pmcallister@into.ie

ARE GRANTS CONFIDENTIAL?

Yes all contacts are confidential.

HOW CAN MEMBERS OF THE INTO HELP THE WORK OF THE BFC?

Members can help by making the work of the BFC known among colleagues.

Members should contact Paddy McAllister if they know that a member of the INTO has passed away so that a death grant can be claimed.

Members should also encourage INTO colleagues to contact the BFC if they are experiencing severe financial difficulties.

INTO making a difference!

Printout

PRINTOUT is the Organisation's full colour magazine distributed to all members in the north.

PRINTOUT is also distributed to our education partners and students in our teacher training colleges.

PRINTOUT has a readership of approximately 8,000 members and is available on the INTO website.

PRINTOUT provides up-to-date information on professional and trade union issues.

PRINTOUT is published 3 times a year – Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term in line with the academic year.

Have you an event you would like to promote?

Are you involved in providing a service that may be of interest to our members?

If you are interested in writing an article or advertising in Printout please contact Christine McDonnell on 028 9038 1455 or email cmcdonnell@into.ie



Printout is published by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and distributed to members and educational institutions. Articles published in Printout are also available on our website www.into.ie.

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

While every care has been taken to

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