

# Printout

into   
Irish National Teachers' Organisation  
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

May 2013



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# School Closures & Amalgamations

In the month since the publication of the Draft Area Plans for the Primary Sector communities across the North have been coming to terms with the meaning of the proposed changes for their children and the communities in which they live. INTO has been out on the ground talking to the principals and teachers in all of the primary schools marked for closure or amalgamation in this first tranche of schools.

The Maintained Sector in particular appears to be moving to bring about the changes proposed in the area plans ahead of the other sectors. A number of communities have already got themselves organised to campaign to keep their schools open. Where these campaigns are supported by the principals and teachers, who are INTO members, INTO has been providing whatever support or advice we can.

The numbers are pretty stark if you take the 105 minimum pupil numbers as laid out in the Sustainable Schools Policy. However it appears that a more realistic number is now emerging with a consensus developing in the educational establishment that a four teacher school [84 pupils] is the minimum size going forward. This is much more realistic when you consider that in the WELB for example if you were to amalgamate or close all the schools below the 105 figure you

would be looking at almost 90 schools disappearing. This picture is reflected across all the ELB areas and is neither desirable nor practical.

INTO is of the view that every community deserves a school within reasonable and affordable travelling distance. We know that our primary sector is amongst the best in the world so access to a quality education is something that every community can have access to. Indeed it is the case that the majority of our primary schools are delivering such an education at present if the Chief Inspectors most recent report is to be believed.

INTO is concerned in the first instance to protect the jobs of those principals and teachers whose schools face closure and amalgamation. We have worked extremely hard over the past year to develop a Schools Reorganisation Agreement to provide such protection. We expect the Agreement to be concluded very soon in time to protect those teaching in the schools now at risk.

The Department of Education and the Minister have been careful to try and focus the debate on the future of the primary sector away from school closures by pointing out that they are about ensuring a quality education for our children in schools which will be sustainable into the future. To date they are struggling to con-

vince communities that this is the case. However the Minister has signalled in both word and deed that he will consider alternative proposals to those contained in the published Draft Area Plans.

The reaction of the Department to the alternative proposal that has emerged in the village of Moy Co. Tyrone is such an example and it is a positive signal to those communities campaigning to keep their schools open that if they have another proposal that is not in the Draft Area Plan then it will be considered. It is interesting that those drawing up the draft area plans had not considered some of these solutions in the first instance.

For INTO our task is to continue to give our members in those schools effected the best representation we can. We will do that by working with the principals and teachers directly liaising with the Employers and Department. Where our members are actively engaged in campaigns to keep schools open we will provide them with advice and support within our limited means.

Area Planning is here to stay what we are now witnessing is the beginning of a process that will see the educational estate reshaped. INTO is determined to ensure that no teacher loses their job because while the number of school may very well decline the children formerly attending those schools still require to be taught. As it stands we already have too many children being taught in large classes and area planning does provide an opportunity for the Department of Education to address that issue. INTO will be continually reminding them of this.



**GERRY MURPHY,**  
*Northern Secretary*

## Assaults on Teachers

**By now every teacher should have received the leaflet on assaults and violence in schools. It is important that you read the leaflet and keep it safe. If you haven't received a copy then please contact the Northern office and we can have these sent to your school.**

**INTO would also encourage members to:**

- ✘ **Discuss the current school policies on tackling violence and ensure that they are adequate;**
- ✘ **Record and report all incidents or assaults or violence towards teachers are reported and recorded;**
- ✘ **That risk assessment take place following any serious assaults or violence; and that**
- ✘ **INTO members are encouraged and supported by the Governors to record and report assaults and violence without fear.**



*Left to Right: Shane McCurdy Chief Executive NEELB, John O'Dowd Minister for Education, Mark Langhammer NI Director ATL, Tony Carlin Senior Official INTO.*

# INTO takes action when employers get it wrong

Over the past seven years, INTO has enjoyed a 100% success rate in independent appeals against redundancy. This may be, in part, because INTO only presents appeals in cases where we believe the employer (Board of Governors) has acted wrongly and/or unfairly and where we have supporting evidence of this but, ultimately, the winning or losing of an independent appeal depends on how well (or badly) the case is presented.

The INTO has presented successful appeals in the primary, secondary and voluntary grammar sectors.

## Representations to Governors

When a teacher is selected for compulsory redundancy, s/he has the right to make representations to the Board of Governors. There are only two substantive reasons for appealing a decision to declare a teacher compulsorily redundant;

1. That the correct procedure was not used in determining the redundancy; and / or
2. That, in using the procedure, it was incorrectly applied so as to wrongly select the appellant for redundancy.

INTO will advise a teacher to avail of this opportunity if INTO believes that it can demonstrate that the Governors have not followed the agreed procedure properly or that they have acted unfairly, in the selection of the particular teacher for redundancy.

If an appeals panel accepts that the incorrect procedure was used then the redundancy is automatically unfair. However if the agreed procedure has been used but not operated or applied properly, then the appeal panel will find the redundancy unsafe on this point.

This second point has been the basis on which the majority of redundancy appeals have been successful. In some cases the cavalier approach of some schools to the selection process has brought stern rebuke from independent appeal panel members.

The teacher, accompanied by an INTO official, will attend a meeting with the Appeals Panel of the Board of Governors and state why s/he believes that the initial redundancy selection panel acted improperly or unfairly.

The INTO official will present INTO's view of the handling (or mishandling) of the

redundancy selection. The teacher will subsequently receive a letter from the Panel, usually rejecting the representations that the teacher and INTO official have made, and upholding the decision of the initial selection panel. (We have actually had one case where we were successful at this stage and the appeals panel overturned the decision of its fellow governors.)

It is at this point that INTO must decide whether there is a reasonable chance of securing success in an appeal to an independent appeals panel, constituted by the Labour Relations Agency.

So far, all cases that we have decided to submit to an independent appeal have been successful.

To win an independent appeal, the teacher must convince an independent panel that the governors have acted unlawfully or unfairly.

## Independent Appeal

The Labour Relations Agency will set up the independent panel of three people, to hear the appeal. The three people will consist of an employer representative, a trade union representative and an independent chair, who has a legal background.

The job of the independent panel is twofold.

It must decide firstly whether the governors have properly followed and applied the agreed procedure for handling teacher redundancies. It is on this count that INTO has won the vast majority of its appeals.

If INTO can prove that the governors failed to consult with INTO in a meaningful manner, for example, by failing to provide requested information on the school finances, the curriculum audit, the staffing audit etc or that the governors failed to explore properly the potential redeployment of staff to obviate redundancy, the panel will uphold the appeal.

If the panel finds that the governors adhered properly to the procedure, it proceeds to its second role, which is to consider whether the governors, in selecting the particular teacher, acted fairly.

In one case last year, involving a voluntary grammar school, the independent panel found that the governors had not only breached the agreed procedure, but had also treated the teacher unfairly throughout the process.

The INTO official will present the teacher's case to the tribunal and, usually, the employing authority, CCMS, ELB or Chair of Governors will present the 'defence' case for the employer.

If the independent panel finds in the teacher's favour and upholds the appeal, the governors have to decide whether or not to start the whole redundancy process over again.

Decisions of Independent Appeals Panels, are usually handed down in July or August, by which time it is often too late for the governors to begin the entire process again.

The result usually has been that the teacher has been kept in post, for a further year at least.

Two schools, in which INTO successfully challenged compulsory redundancy decisions, subsequently attempted to challenge the decisions of the Independent Appeals Panel but found, to their dismay, that the decisions were binding in law.

The stress of appealing a redundancy can be significant for the teacher involved. However, INTO will support and address the member's concerns, throughout the process.

Regrettably, INTO continues to express concern, through the agreed negotiating arrangements, that particular schools seem unable to operate a redundancy selection process which is fair and unbiased. While this continues, INTO will continue robustly to challenge these decisions and will highlight these practices in all circumstances, including independent appeals.



**BRENDAN HARRON,**  
*Senior Official*



# Public Sector Sickness levels

A recent Audit Committee report into sickness levels in the public sector showed that currently sickness absence is running at 10.1%. The cost of sickness absence across the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the health and education sectors was estimated at £149 million in 2010-11 – £30 million for the Civil Service, £73 million for health trusts and £46 million for the education sector. Within education, teachers' sickness absence has fallen from 9.25 days per teacher in 2006-07 to 7.27 days in 2010-11. Absences reduced further in 2011-12 to 7.22 days.

Long-term sickness accounts for the majority of sickness absence in all sectors – around



**TONY CARLIN,**  
*Senior Official*

70% of days lost due to sickness absence in the Civil Service, 66% in health and social care trusts and 60% of teachers' sickness absence. In addition, mental health issues are recognised as the main cause of long term sickness absence in each of the sectors and have a significant impact on overall sickness absence levels.

Delving into the report one interesting statistic is that over 50% of all workers took no sick leave at all. The media reaction to this fact was that the remainder of the workforce were malingers. This is a comment that INTO cannot support or endorse. Examining the calls to the Northern Office we too frequently find that mem-

bers are very reluctant to take sick leave, are worried about the impact their absence will have on the children and frequently are in a rush to return to school even when their doctor advises the contrary. The reasons for sickness absence apart from minor ailments are excessive workload and being unable to cope with the demands being made on them. No group is immune to these and the calls reflect the impact that these factors are having on teachers, principals and vice principals.

INTO has led the demands for an active teacher health and wellbeing strategy. For too long the current strategy has been a paper based report that has no short, medium or long term direction or resources. This has to change if we are to address the factors that make teachers fall ill. We must also move away from focusing on the headline statistics and begin to realise that sickness will only be addressed when we treat the symptoms and not the statistic.

## ESA – moving on

As we wait for the Assembly to make a decision on the current draft Education Bill, INTO has been moving ahead to ensure that teachers will not suffer any detriment as a consequence of moving to a new employer. In this article we detail some of the work that has been going on to ensure that INTO's significant influence prevails in the areas of importance to our members.

## Education Bill

INTO has met with and written to MLAs and political parties as well as members of the Education Committee to put forward proposed amendments to the bill as well as raising concerns over the issue of the definition of the employer.

This lobbying will continue to persuade the political parties of the need to ensure the bill is fit for purpose.

## Draft schemes of Management and Appointment

INTO has met with DE officials to highlight concerns particularly around the schemes of appointment. As a result of these exchanges the schemes are being redrafted to be issued to schools in May for comment.

# Industrial Relations matters

INTO has led these discussions within NITC and now within ESAIT. Over the next weeks and months we will be engaged in active negotiations with the ESA implementation team to ensure that the TUPE letters that will be issued to all teachers when ESA is established will be acceptable to INTO.

In addition negotiations will begin to ensure that current policies and procedures which have not been reviewed will be updated before ESA is established. If this does not happen the current policy would be transferred and teachers may lose out

because it has not been changed.

After this then all policies will need to be amended to take cognisance of the fact that ESA will become the employer.

For most individuals there will be no observable difference but these changes are essential particularly when a teacher relies on a policy or procedure to raise a claim.

The final aspect of the discussions with ESA revolves around the development of new negotiating arrangements.

It is expected that the new

negotiating arrangements will involve some elements of negotiating with educational support workers on issues of common concern. INTO has made clear that we would however expect that the majority of teachers' terms and conditions would be only discussed with recognised teaching unions.

In addition, INTO has tabled papers on a revised trade union facilities agreement and improved time off for INTO representatives. We view these essential to ensuring that the new industrial relations work effectively.

# Mary Dorman and President visit St Mary's PS Killesher

On a sunny Thursday afternoon in April, the President of the INTO and the Chairperson of the Northern Committee came to visit our school; St. Mary's PS, Killesher. Our school is situated in South Fermanagh, 4 miles from the Cavan border. Currently, there are 82 pupils attending this school.

Our motto is Love, Learn and Grow. The circle of our logo represents togetherness in our community and parish. The dove means peace and is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The three children holding hands represents friendship and that everyone looks out for each other.

To begin the visit, the guests went to see P1-P4 in their classrooms. Some pupils recited poems and talked about their experiences.

Afterwards they visited P5, P6 and P7 and the classes performed some superb poetry which pupils were preparing for the local Feis.

Next, two pupils from P6 and P7 sang as a duet; The Streets of London. The other pupils supported them by singing the chorus.



Left to Right  
Megan Baxter, Eugene Dolan (Principal), Anne Fay (INTO President), Mary Dorman (NC Chair), Conan McGrath

After that some pupils played a melody of traditional Irish tunes on the fiddles and tin whistles. A modern song by a well known band, "One Direction" was also performed.

Later on, there was a performance of Irish dancing which the visitors were amazed by.

To conclude the entertainment, the class sang more songs accompanied by the principal and two pupils on guitar.

A question and answer session took place before a presentation was made to mark the occasion. Before leaving, the President's chain was tried on for size by many of the pupils. They thanked us very much and praised our school for entertaining them. We were very honoured to have Anne and Mary with us.

Shared writing by PUPILS IN P6/7

## Funny Exam Answers

As we approach the examination season it is perhaps some light relief to look at some of the responses given by students that didn't quite make the grade.

### English

- ✎ "Monotony means being married to the same person for all your life."
- ✎ Use the word "judicious" in a sentence to show you understand its meaning – "Hands that judicious can be as soft as your face ..."

### Science

- Q. What is artificial respiration commonly known as?  
A. The Kiss of Death
- Q. What are steroids?  
A. Things for keeping the carpet on the stairs
- Q. What is a common treatment

for a badly bleeding nose?  
A. Circumcision

- ✎ "A major disease associated with smoking is premature death."
- ✎ "Artificial insemination is when the farmer does it to the cow instead of the bull."
- ✎ "Cows produce large amounts of methane, so the problem could be solved by fitting them with catalytic converters."
- ✎ "The process of flirtation makes water safe to drink because it removes large pollutants like grit, sand, dead sheep and canoeists."
- ✎ "A super-saturated solution is one that holds more than it can hold."
- ✎ "The body consists of three parts – the brainium, the borax and the abominable

cavity. The brainium contains the brain, the borax contains the heart and lungs, and the abominable cavity contains the bowels, of which there are five – a, e, i, o and u."

- ✎ "Momentum: What you give a person when they are going away."
- ✎ "The alimentary canal is located in the northern part of Indiana."
- ✎ "The skeleton is what is left after the insides have been taken out and the outsides have been taken off. The purpose of the skeleton is something to hitch meat to."

### Geography

- ✎ "The equator is a menagerie lion running around the earth through Africa."
- ✎ "The moon is a planet just like the earth, only it is

even deader"

- ✎ "Planet: A body of earth surrounded by sky."
- ✎ "The tides are a fight between the Earth and Moon. All water tends towards the moon, because there is no water in the moon, and nature abhors a vacuum. I forget where the sun joins in this fight."
- ✎ "A fossil is an extinct animal. The older it is, the more extinct it is."

### History

- Q. What is Britain's highest award for valour in war?  
A. Nelson's Column

### RE

- Q. What's a Hindu?  
A. It lays eggs
- ✎ "Christians go on pilgrimage to Lord's."

# Inaugural INTO Art

The membership of INTO boasts a wide range of talents that are not always afforded the spotlight within the working day. Amongst the many attributes of our membership is a wealth of artistic talent. It was with this in mind and the development of an art collection for Northern Office that the Inaugural INTO Art Competition was launched in October 2012.

Members from across the North were invited to submit a maximum of 3, original, 2 dimensional works completed in the past 5 years. The entries submitted were considered by a selection panel constituted from within the INTO and the professional art world. A cash prize of £800 was presented to the winner.

The panel was impressed with the variety of techniques and subject matter on display. After considerable deliberation two pieces, a highly commended entry, "Sligo" by Patrick O'Connor and an overall winner were chosen. A gift of the painting "Sligo" was presented, by tradition, to the outgoing Northern Committee Chairperson, Mary Dorman, in appreciation of the work undertaken in her year as Chair. "Madame Butterfly" by Caroline Sadlier was also acquired by INTO for Northern Office.

As winner of the inaugural art competition "Castlewellan Forest" by Magdalena Beldowska becomes the initial acquisition in INTO's art collection for Northern Office (currently expanding from number 23 through to number 24 College Gardens). The aim is to build up a collection of works by members to reflect and showcase the talent of our teachers.

Magdalena Beldowska, a member of Belfast branch, teaches in Holy Rosary Primary School. The winning picture was painted in oils on board and can be seen on permanent display at Northern Office. Magdalena explained something of the inspiration behind her work, "I specialise in oil painting. I like to experiment with colours to create images of warmth, sunlight and shadow. This art competition has given me an opportunity to show that even in a busy life there is always time to be inspired by the simple beauty of the world".

Following the success of the 2013 competition it is expected that the 2014 competition will be launched in the autumn of 2013 at the beginning of the new school year. Hopefully the summer break will provide the time and inspiration for all the artists out there! Please follow our Latest News section on the INTO

website for updates or contact Northern Office for further details. It could be your

work hanging in this new and exciting collection.



*The competition winner, Magdalena Beldowska, being congratulated by Gerry Murphy, Northern Secretary*



*The panel: Mary Dorman, Northern Committee Chairperson, Denise Elliott, Head of Art Stranmillis University College, Julian Friers, Academician and past President of the Royal Ulster Academy, Anne Fay, President, and Gerry Murphy – Northern Secretary*



**Sligo, Patrick O'Connor (South Derry Branch), Acrylic, 90cms x 72cms x 9cms**



**Escape Through Bluebells, John Cahill (Belfast Branch), Oil on canvas, 18ins x 22ins x 1in**



# Competition 2013



Blues Guitar Player, Caroline Sadlier, 77cms x 60cms x 4cms, Pastels



Madame Butterfly, Caroline Sadlier, 68cms x 56cms x 4cms, Watercolour



Life Study, Charles Glenn (Derry City Branch), 31cms x 42cms x 2.5cms, Charcoal and crayon



Devil's Mountain, County Galway, Charles Glenn (Derry City Branch), 43cms x 31cms x 2.5cms, Acrylic on canvas



Miss Marple, Caroline Sadlier, 68cms x 56cms x 4cms, Watercolour



Moy, Patrick O'Connor (South Derry Branch), Acrylic, 90cms x 90cms x 2cms



Still Life With Lemon, Magdalena Beldowska (Belfast Branch), 61cms x 46cms x 1.5cms, Oil on canvas.



Anahorish Cow, John Cahill (Belfast Branch), Oil on canvas, 36ins x 28ins x 1/2ins



Left: Lavender Field, Charles Glenn (Derry City Branch), 31cms x 43cms x 2.5cms, Acrylic on canvas.

Bottom left: Exposure, Magdalena Beldowska (Belfast Branch), 48cms x 62cms x 1.5cms, Charcoal on paper

Below: The Craic (at the Crescent), John Cahill (Belfast Branch), 19ins x 23ins x 1ins, Oil on canvas



WINNER OF INTO ART COMPETITION 2013  
Castlewellan Forest, Magdalena Beldowska (Belfast Branch), 45cms x 44cms x 1.5cms, Oil on board

# Inspections

INTO has been involved in recent discussions between the NITC (Northern Ireland Teachers' Council) and the ETI. The ETI are in the process of reviewing their procedures and meetings have been arranged to discuss these reviews and potential changes to the inspection process over the next 12 months.

To assist in these discussions INTO and NITC are currently finalising a questionnaire for members following an inspection. We would ask all members to complete the questionnaire, which will be available on the INTO website or from the office. The questionnaires are confidential but the information supplied will help inform the discussions with the ETI. So, if you have had a recent inspection please complete the questionnaire. It has been kept intentionally short to facilitate completion within a few minutes. This is an opportunity to share your views with us and ultimately the ETI in a confidential manner.



NUALA O'DONNELL,  
Senior Official

# Notice for school leaders

Following a successful consultative conference for INTO school leaders INTO is now setting up forums for INTO principals and vice-principals to discuss issues pertaining particularly to school leaders. There will be an initial meeting early in the Autumn term, and members will receive information on the date and venue at the start of the new school year. It is hoped that these meetings will be a mechanism for INTO to raise issues affecting school leaders and to affect real change for schools. Look out for the notice of the meeting and come along to make your voice heard.

There will also be an INTO/UTU joint Leadership conference in November looking at issues surrounding area planning and shared education. Further information will be sent to members next term.

This term there is a joint INTO/UTU joint seminar on tackling violence and cyber bullying. Please join us on Thursday 30 May 2013 from 2-4pm in the Hilton Hotel Templepatrick. Tea/coffee will be available from 1.30pm.

## Keeping Your INTO Membership Up to Date

Membership	Description
Permanent	Teachers serving in a permanent or temporary (1 year or more) capacity.
Substitute	Teachers serving in a substitute (daily basis)/part-time capacity.
Grammar: Permanent/Full Time	Teachers serving in a permanent, temporary (1 year or more) capacity specifically in a voluntary grammar school.
Grammar: Part Time/Substitute	Teachers serving in a substitute (daily basis) capacity specifically in a voluntary grammar school.
Newly Qualified	Newly qualified teachers who have graduated within the last 12 months.
External Educational	Teachers working in CCEA, CCMS, ELBs, RTU etc.
Career Break	For teachers on Career Break to retain membership of the INTO and ensure entitlement to the same services and benefits as ordinary members.
Unpaid Maternity Leave	For teachers on unpaid maternity leave to retain membership of the INTO and ensure entitlement to the same services and benefits as ordinary members.
Unpaid Sick Leave	For teachers on unpaid sick leave to retain membership of the INTO and ensure entitlement to the same services and benefits as ordinary members.
Associate	Persons who were qualified teachers and members of the Organisation but who cease to be practising teachers may become associate members. Eligible for INTO information, services, publications and other benefits with the exception of death benefits. Members who have retired on pension retain the right to attend, speak and vote at Branch meetings but no longer have "the right to contest Branch, District or national elections, or to act as delegates of the Branch" (Rule 76C).
Student	Open to anyone who is training to be a teacher.

### INTO AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

More than ever we require up to date information at our fingertips. Northern Office is therefore requesting members submit their current email and mobile contacts. INTO already has a smart phone site, email and text communications are the next stage in our communications strategy to keep you informed. Please fill in the short reply slip (right) and return by post, or email to [infoni@into.ie](mailto:infoni@into.ie), or fax to 02890 66 28 03. Did you know you can use the MEMBERS AREA of the INTO website to update your details? You will need your INTO membership number to log in.



**MEMBERSHIP DETAILS UPDATE**

NAME .....

SCHOOL .....

..... POSTCODE .....

MEMBERSHIP NO. ....

TEACHER REF .....

HOME ADDRESS .....

..... POSTCODE .....

EMAIL .....

MOBILE NO. ....

## Attention School Reps!

Please contact Northern Office at [infoni@into.ie](mailto:infoni@into.ie) with your email address or update personally through the members area on the INTO website.

*Up to date email addresses help us to keep you fully informed*





# Cumann na mBunscol Finals

At the Ulster Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Finals held at Cookstown, it was a very jubilant St Patrick's Armagh who lifted the title in the camogie. In the final, they overcame a difficult opponent in the girls from Woodland NS in Letterkenny.

In the Boys' Football Final, the trophy was lifted by Sacred Heart, Rock. The Tyrone champions just edged the Final against Antrim Allianz Cumann na mBunscol representatives St Bride's in what was a very close battle.

A big thank you to Tyrone Allianz Cuman na mBunscol for organising the competitions.



*Right: The victorious St Patrick's PS, Armagh.*



*Ulster Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Chairman Mickey Quinn presenting the Camogie trophy to the winning captain of St Patrick's PS, Armagh.*



*Ulster Allianz Cumann na mBunscol Chairman Mickey Quinn presenting the Football trophy to the winning captain of Sacred Heart, Rock, Tyrone.*



*Runner-up Woodland NS, Letterkenny, Donegal.*



*Right: The victorious Sacred Heart PS, Rock.*



*Left: Runner-up St Bride's PS from Belfast.*



# Northern Conference



Northern Conference travelled to the City of Derry for Conference this year. The conference was well attended by guests from other unions, the employers and other educational stakeholders. The most important attendees were of course our school reps and branch and district activists.

Conference was welcomed by Mayor Kevin Campbell to Derry City. As a teaching union that works on a daily basis to ensure that all our pupils have the opportunity to experience a broad curriculum that includes the creative and performing arts it was particularly appropriate to hold our Northern Conference in Derry during its year as City of Culture.

The Minister for Education John O'Dowd told conference that he continues to focus upon raising standards and closing the gaps in achievement between our highest and lowest performing pupils. He recognised that we have a teaching workforce that is highly qualified, talented, motivated and committed to raising standards. He reiterated his desire to work with INTO to progress the talks that were initiated last year. The Minister responded

to the concerns that current assessment arrangements using computer based assessments were not fit for purpose. He said that 'If they (CBAs) do not do what it says on the tin then I will put them back on the shelf.' The Minister also took part in a question and answer session with delegates.

Mary Dorman Chair of Northern Committee outlined the work that had been undertaken on behalf of members since Conference last year. There have been a series of meetings

with the main political parties and a significant increase in lobbying MLAs. This was particularly effective during the first



*Seen at the INTO Conference, left to right: Nichola Pearce, Adelaide Insurance Services, retired teacher Bridget Lyons representing Global Schoolroom and INTO's Nuala O'Donnell. Adelaide are giving INTO teachers the chance to WIN a FREE trip with Global Schoolroom and participate in a worthwhile cause. To enter this prize draw please visit [globalschoolroom.net](http://globalschoolroom.net)*



term with regard to assessment arrangements. A Leadership Conference held during the year highlighted the additional burdens the assessment and other accountability processes were placing on our principal and vice principal members.

Gerry Murphy Northern Secretary outlined how the industrial action last year had generated a talks process that allowed the issues important to INTO to be moved up the agenda in DE. Current

discussions have included – School Closures Agreement to secure rights for teachers in the event of a school closure, reorganisation etc, Unsatisfactory Principals and Teachers procedures that are more effective at supporting teachers. Work is ongoing to develop a scheme for investing in the teaching workforce that will



## Outworkings of Conference

In response to the motions passed at Conference INTO have

- ✦ brought a pay claim to the NITC for 10% to reflect the impact of the pay freeze and pension changes.
- ✦ issued a bulletin to schools boycotting all of the new assessment arrangements as they are burdensome and

not fit for purpose.

- ✦ continued to lobby employers, politicians to seek to mitigate the changes to the pension arrangements within a Northern Ireland context.
- ✦ continued to work with DE and others to develop a scheme that will invest in the teaching profession.

- ✦ established an SEN subcommittee and an SEN conference is arranged for 1st June.
- ✦ established a sub committee to monitor and review the progress of the education bill and work to ensure that negotiating rights and arrangements are secured with the establishment of ESA.



# Northern Conference



allow older teachers who wish to retire a mechanism to exit the profession and secure an opportunity for a recently qualified graduate to secure a permanent post. INTO President Anne Fay addressed conference and congratulated teachers for the results attained in the TIMMS and PIRLS. She committed to continue to

work to ensure that INTO retains its focus as an all island organisation. Work continues to ensure that the needs of members in the north are serviced equally as well as the members in the rest of the island. Additional information in next terms INTO diary will reflect this commitment.

Conference was addressed by John Dixon Assistant Secretary, NUT. John informed delegates and guests about the impact on schools that the policies of the government in Westminster were pursuing. The increase in academies was disrupting centrally based negotiations and leading to variable terms and





conditions of service for teachers. NUT, EIS, UTU and INTO continue to work collectively together to share expertise and assist members transferring between jurisdictions.

Conference did provide the opportunity to renew acquaintances and recognise the contributions of long established members.

INTO pins were presented to members who have given many years of dedicated service to individual members in times of need and to the organisation as a whole. The deserving recipients were Terry Pattison, South Armagh Branch, Mona Kelly, Rita Fox and Pat Morris, Tyrone Central Branch, John O’Hea, Lisburn

Branch and Peter McNulty, Stabane Branch. The efforts and endurance of the Frank Bunting Project Maracyclists were also recognised. The team cycled over 340 miles in the Belfast to Ballydavid or Bust event. The Frank Bunting Project raised over £30,000 for the Friends of the Cancer Centre.



*Terry Pattison  
South Armagh  
& Anne Fay,  
President*



*Pat Morris,  
Tyrone Central  
Branch & Anne  
Fay, President*



*Mona Kelly,  
Tyrone Central  
Branch & Anne  
Fay, President*

### Receiving the INTO Pin

*John O'Hea,  
Lisburn Branch  
& Anne Fay,  
President*



*Rita Fox,  
Tyrone Central  
Branch & Anne  
Fay, President*



*Peter McNulty,  
Strabane Branch  
& Anne Fay,  
President*







**The wine draw**



NORTHERN IRLAND TEACHERS' COUNCIL / OST TEACHERS' GROUP

# LET'S TIE UP HOMOPHOBIA!

Wear Your School Tie With Pride!!!

The INTO LGBT Teachers' Group invites members, teachers, students and supporters to wear their school tie to the Pride parade - We're about to tie up the homophobic!

**Belfast Pride Parade Saturday 6 July 2013**  
 Meet at Customs House Square, Parade to start at 12 noon.  
 See [www.belfastpride.com](http://www.belfastpride.com)

# INTO GOLF EVENT

**ANNUAL TEE OFF COMING SOON...**  
**FOR FURTHER DETAILS PLEASE CONTACT**  
 AIDEN MCCRORY, BELFAST BRANCH - [AMCCRORY@YAHOO.COM](mailto:AMCCRORY@YAHOO.COM)

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1 Can my classroom assistant cover my class while I take the choir?

A classroom assistant should only be used to cover a class in an emergency. Such cover should only be for the purposes of supervision.

Classroom assistants should not be permitted to undertake any teaching activity while the teacher is absent. A timetabled activity, such as choir, would not be an emergency.

An emergency situation would be one when it is unforeseen that the assigned teacher would not be available. The teacher is responsible for the conduct of his or her classroom. Any issues arising while a classroom assistant is "in charge" could have repercussions for the teacher if an issue arises or a complaint was received.

## 2 The Principal has published the holiday list for next year without consulting the staff. Do I have a right to be consulted?

A principal should consult with staff about the holiday arrangements. The Principal should consider the results of these consultations when drawing up a final holiday list. The final decision on the holiday list will rest with the Board of Governors. The lists should be confirmed as early as possible to allow staff to make arrangements.

## 3 My principal wants to move me to P7. Can he do that?

The Principal of a school is responsible for the allocation of teaching duties including class allocations based upon the needs of the school. In accordance with the Jordanstown Agreement, a Principal is required at least once a year to consult with a teacher regarding the nature and types of activities which they wish them to carry out in the incoming year. Best practice

would indicate that any changes follow professional dialogue with those affected.

The changes should reflect the skills and aptitudes of staff and that appropriate time, resources and support are provided to any member of staff who is required to change curricular provision or classroom.

The teacher should also feel that their views on classroom allocation are being actively considered in any discussions with the Principal and that alternatives where possible are discussed.

## 4 My principal has said that the ETI will want to see my daily notes. Do I have to share them with the ETI?

Teachers are only required to prepare annual schemes of work and termly or six weekly planners. Weekly/daily or other notes are the teachers own and cannot be required by anyone, including ETI.

## 5 Do I have to report this year's levels of progression to parents?

The INTO bulletin quite deliberately uses the words "boycott of all aspects ..." so that there is no room for doubt.

It means that members are instructed to have nothing whatsoever to do with the new arrangements i.e. we do not use the levels of progression in our assessments, we do not meet to discuss or to agree levels of progression for pieces of pupil work, we do not report to parents using levels of progression.

Members are to revert to the old, tried and tested assessment methods in which they have professional confidence, as the best means of assessing pupils and reporting to parents.

This boycott will last until such times as CCEA and DE make the methods of assessment and reporting manageable and of value to pupils, parents and teachers. It is in their hands as to how long this will take. Any proposed future assessment landscape, in order to be acceptable to INTO, will have to look very different from the current one.

## 6 Can a principal issue me with a verbal warning?

A verbal warning is a formal disciplinary penalty and can only be issued by a principal following the clear use of the disciplinary procedure. A verbal warning cannot be issued 'off the cuff'. A principal can only issue a verbal warning with the authority of the governors. The verbal warning should be communicated to the individual in accordance with the disciplinary procedure stating what it was issued for and when it will expire.

## 7 As a Principal, can INTO represent me in a dispute with an INTO member of staff?

Disputes between INTO members of staff do occur. Both parties can have access to INTO advice and representation, where appropriate. This can be provided by different individual Northern Committee Members/Senior Officials. There are times when it is not appropriate for any teacher union to represent a principal, i.e. when they are acting in their management capacity and are being advised by their BoG/Employing Authority.

## 8 I have been an INTO member as a classroom teacher. Can INTO still meet my needs as a school principal?

INTO has members from all sectors and at all levels. We actively recruit principals and members of senior management teams to help promote positive industrial relations and to ensure fair terms and conditions for all teachers. We recognise some of the unique pressures and challenges that face many of our school leaders and we are establishing Principals and Vice Principals Fora following our successful Leadership conferences. Principals have representation throughout the organisation including on the Northern Committee and on the National Principal and Deputy Principals Committee. INTO



# Dear Minister for Education

is proud that we can provide quality advice, support and representation to all members including Principals and Vice Principals and can deliver a professional service that meets their needs.

## 9 The SENCo is to observe my classroom teaching in the area of SEN in addition to the PRSD observations. I do not think this is beneficial to my teaching. What should I do?

Formal classroom observation should occur within the process school self evaluation. It should always be underpinned by professionalism, integrity and courtesy.

Arrangements should normally be agreed with both parties and when agreement is not reached then the observation should not occur. Any period of observation should not exceed half an hour. The focus of the observation should be the objectives of the lesson. The teacher should be given feedback which should be supportive and developmental.

Peer Observation, Mentoring, coaching and Curriculum coordinator visits should be for the purpose of professional development. These visits should be by agreement and should not involve judgments of teacher performance.

## 10 Am I entitled to time to carry out my role as Head of Department?

The principal must discuss with each teacher the hours that he/she requires for the particular duties/responsibilities that they have to carry out, including Head of Department duties. During this discussion the parties should discuss the detail of the post and should seek to agree a time allocation for these duties to be performed. This would be the teacher's individual time budget. Although PPA time is not a statutory right here (yet), the Workload Agreement encourages principals to make every effort to allocate PPA time to teachers (Section 5.1 & 5.2).

As we approach the end of another very busy year many schools are trying to find some time to reflect upon the strengths and issues of the year past and the opportunities and challenges that may arise in the year to come. I am sure your Department will be doing likewise. INTO would like to provide you with some of our thoughts and reflections in the area of assessment.

We welcome the considered review undertaken by DE in response to the uncertainty generated by Michael Gove. As teachers we need any changes to be effectively developed and implemented with time frames that reflect school and pupil commitments. Our pupils require a suite of qualifications that reflect their diversity of aptitudes and talents. They need qualifications that are flexible and support them in their journey to Higher Education, further training or the world of work. The qualifications must be valued by parents, recognised by universities and meet the needs of employers regionally and internationally.

This year the valued process of Assessment for Learning has been undermined by two of the Department of Education's policies that focus upon measuring attainment- CCAs and CBAs.

The introduction of two new and separate systems of Computer Based Assessments (CBAs) this year was always going to be challenging. NINA and NILA replicated all the errors and complications of INCAS. INTO urged CCEA and DE to recognise that the CBAs were not fit for purpose. The fact that they were introduced without a proper effective large scale pilot ensured that teachers would end up completing the 'snagging list' that a project as large as this generates. You did agree to pause the process. History would indicate that the process should have been abandoned. We would urge you to recognise that CBAs did not 'do what it says on the tin'. You must therefore re-

turn them to the shelf.

Into this overburdened and confused system the DENI introduced Cross Curricular Skills Assessments (CCAs). The new Levels of Progression aim to more effectively reflect the new skills based curriculum. INTO and the other teachers unions worked with CCEA and DE to try and ensure that the end product was effective, fit for purpose and workload proofed. INTO warned CCEA and DENI that the proposals as piloted

last year (2011-2012) were not fit for purpose and placed an unreasonable burden on schools and teachers. The number of assessment pieces continues to be excessive (approx 120 pieces for a class of 30 pupils). External moderation places an unreasonable burden upon teachers and does not generate improvement in teaching and learning.

INTO continues to have grave concerns about the new assess-

ment arrangements and due to direct lobbying from our members including our principal forum and a recent Northern Conference Motion we have directed members to withdraw from the new arrangements. INTO is concerned that this overbearing system of assessment and moderation will undermine the skills based curriculum and reduce the breadth of the curriculum. INTO condemns the use of pupil assessments as a system check by DENI. It is not best practice to link a system check to the individual assessment of pupils.

A summer assignment for DE might be to develop a system check that does not interfere with the work of schools and more importantly it should not impact negatively upon the experiences of pupils in the classroom.

Yours sincerely  
Mary Dorman  
Chair of Northern Committee



MARY DORMAN, Northern  
Committee Chairperson



# Shared Education

## The Future is bright . . . the future is Shared!

'Sharing' is a life skill we encourage in our children from an early age. We advocate the positive outcomes of working with others against going it alone.

Yet for generations schools have stood alone content to protect their own individuality and in an era of 'open enrolment' often in clear competition with each other for the ever precious pupil numbers.

In the Fermanagh area along with two other projects in Northern Ireland a programme was developed to try and break these 'silos' apart and create a network of collaborative working relationships between schools on a cross sectoral and/or a cross border basis. The programme though funded by Atlantic Philanthropies and the International Fund for Ireland was led for the most part in Fermanagh by a community based group, Fermanagh Trust.

The Trust initially invited schools to develop partnerships with schools in close proximity to each other and then to develop a programme across a school year of sixty shared hours of work.

In the Belleek area a partnership was developed with Belleek Controlled Primary School, Corry and St John the Baptist PS, Roscor. This was by no means a new arrangement as for many years previously the schools had enjoyed a strong working relationship through the EMU and Schools Community Relations programme.

From the outset though this programme was different. The staff were fully involved from the beginning in the planning of the pro-



*Above: Gemma Doherty, Music.*

*Right: Kevin Beattie, ICT.*

*Below: Outdoor Play Programme.*



gramme to meet their schools' particular needs. The 'shared hours' commitment meant that unlike previous links the need was created to bring the pupils together on a more regular basis often creating a weekly session in which pupils would work together at each others schools.

We felt that as two small rural schools we needed to develop the programme fur-

## Area Based Planning – A shared approach

ther. We started working in the first year with just the KS2 P6/7 pupils but as the year progressed we felt it was important to start the process at the beginning levels of school and build friendships from Foundation Stage right the way through school. This could significantly impact on the curricular provision within both schools. So our work began on an Outdoor Play programme for KS1 and a Shared History and Culture project for KS2.

The key difference for us was the allocation of time for teachers to get together on a professional basis to plan and support each other through the process and share expertise and resources across both of the schools. We included time for monthly staff meetings and governor briefings as part of our partnership building. To include families and the wider community we organised a range of parental workshops to support the various programmes and a series of celebration events that everyone was welcome to attend. All of these elements have strengthened the idea and ethos behind 'Shared education' within our two schools.

The climate for change has increased the pace of work we are following now. As a result of the Sustainable Schools Policy, Common Formula Funding Review, the Area Planning Process and the Ministerial Advisory Groups recommendations on Shared education our school community finds itself seriously considering a shared model of education for the future.

In the past year we have released teachers from within the partner schools as 'Shared Teachers' to work across a wider cluster of schools to share expertise and quality specialist teaching through ICT, SEN support and Music. We now acknowledge the expertise existing within our own schools and the need to share good practice amongst a greater number of school communities.

Where do we go from here? ... Well for us a local area solution lies in developing a shared school structure, we are currently working at joint governor level to produce a development proposal in response to the Area Planning document.

For the 'Roscorry Shared Education Partnership' the future is bright ... the future is Shared!

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**MISS MARIE O'SHEA**, *Principal, St John the Baptist, Roscor*

The end of June sees the closing of the first stage of the Primary Area Based Planning process. The Education and Library Boards have published their draft plans and are now asking for responses from schools, parents, communities and stakeholders. This process reflects the Post-Primary review.

Two key objectives for the review are that the plans:

- ✦ identify realistic, innovative and creative solutions to address need, including opportunities for shared schooling on a cross-sectoral basis;
- ✦ maximise the use and sharing of the existing schools estate;

The Minister on a number of occasions has stated that he welcomes and will not turn away "innovative shared solutions". The report from the Ministerial Advisory Group into the Advancement of Shared Education supports the body of evidence demonstrating that when schools work together on a cross-sectoral basis there are clear educational, economic and societal outcomes. The report contains clear recommendations, the first of which is placing a statutory duty on the Department and ESA to "encourage and facilitate shared education".

We are at a crossroads in the future of both primary and post-primary education. Are we going to continue working within our sectoral silos and treat schools as islands or are we going to reflect the wider move towards greater collaboration between schools? Collaboration is necessary because it has clear educational benefits. Collaboration in Northern Ireland is necessary because it brings our schools closer together and supports the education of our pupils together.

The Area Based Planning process is a vital part of the choice we are making. In many rural communities towns have two schools, one maintained and one controlled. Individually many of these fall below the viability thresholds. However collaboratively they can provide a shared solution that meets viability, sustainability, educational and societal criteria.

The Sharing Education Programme has been working with schools since 2007. The programme works with schools to encourage and develop collaborative models that bring pupils together in shared classes with common educational needs at the heart. The rationale being that schools, pupils and

parents need to value the shared activity for its educational as well as the community cohesion outcomes. Sharing needs to address the core business of schools – education.

Projects managed by Queen's University Belfast, The Fermanagh Trust and the PIEE project in the NEELB have worked with schools from all sectors and pupils from P1 to KS5. Allowing teachers to be innovative in their programme design and challenging schools to address logistical problems has resulted in a diverse mix of delivery. It is now time for the Department to take these models and implement them across all policy areas. There is no part of the school estate that cannot benefit from collaboration – from literacy and numeracy at KS1 to Double Award Science at KS5, from dealing with controversial issues in the classroom to policies addressing attendance issues.

We would call on all schools to take part in the Area Based Planning process consultation, whatever their current viability status. The ELBs and sectoral bodies need to take shared education seriously as the method of delivery. The default for our education must be collaboration, true area based planning must take into account all of the schools in an area not divide them by sector. The Sharing Education Programme is running workshops at the end of May for primary school principals and teachers to discuss the role of sharing and collaboration within the Area Based Planning process. Further information can be found at [www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk](http://www.schoolsworkingtogether.co.uk).

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**MARK BAKER** is Programme Manager for the Sharing Education Programme in the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast.





# Outstanding nursery

St. Luke's Nursery School in Twinbrook was recently inspected by the Education and Training Inspectorate on 7th February 2013. In the areas inspected both the quality of education provided by this Nursery School and the quality of the pastoral care were found to be outstanding.

The Nursery School was praised for the quality of the children's achievements, as well as their independence, motivation and engagement in their learning.

The report states:

"A key strength of the provision is the excellent quality of the staff interaction with the children to promote all aspects of their learning and development".

The Inspectors commented on the staff's high expectations of the children as well as their promotion of a sense of fun throughout all their play.

Parental partnership was also highlighted as the school has made excellent progress in developing good links and encouraging high involvement in their children's learning and development.

Both indoor and outdoor activities were praised promoting healthy lifestyles:

"The Nursery School gives excellent attention to promoting healthy eating and physical activity".

The Inspectors were also impressed

by the excellent working relationships at all levels:

"The caring, respectful and inclusive ethos contributes very effectively to the children's well-being, social skills and excellent behaviour".

In summing up the Inspectors wrote of the highly appreciative and extensive written comments from the Parents and Governors of the School. These indicated

- ✦ appreciation of the very caring and highly professional approach taken by the staff,
- ✦ the high quality of the leadership,
- ✦ the excellent educational experience being provided,
- ✦ the progress made by the children and
- ✦ the value added by the Nursery School to the local community.

The Staff, Governors and Parents are extremely proud of the children and St. Luke's Nursery School and had a big party on 1st March 2013 to celebrate all their achievements.



## INTO Schools Concerts at the William Kennedy International Piping Festival

Southern Area Branches of INTO along with Northern Office have agreed to sponsor a series of schools concerts at the William Kennedy Piping Festival in Armagh this coming November. The Festival is run by the Armagh Pipers Club, a long established voluntary organisation which promotes traditional Irish music with a particular focus on the Uilleann Pipes. The club is currently thriving in terms of membership with over 200 active pupils from across every county in the North and significant numbers from counties Monaghan, Cavan and Louth, learning and playing a variety of instruments.

The club will be well known to many INTO members who have connections to the Club as parents of members, tutors or indeed as past members themselves. Foremost among them Eamonn Curran, prominent club member and renowned pipe maker, is a former INTO Branch Secretary for the Monaghan area and teaching principal in the Knockatallon.

The William Kennedy Festival,

named after the famous Armagh piper and pipe maker, has become internationally renowned attracting top musicians from across the globe such as Liam O'Flynn, Donal Lunny, Fred Morrison, Karen Casey and Lunasa among many others.

son, Karen Casey and Lunasa among many others.

INTO is, for the first time, sponsoring two days of Schools Concerts which will reach out to well over 800 pupils and

their teachers from a number of different schools in the Southern Area and beyond. The concerts feature various International Pipers as well as local Uilleann Pipers and are an excellent introduction to the rich musical and cultural heritage of South Ulster and beyond for the many pupils who will attend the event.

Speaking on behalf of the William Kennedy Festival Organisers Grainne Vallely, Festival Coordinator said "We are thrilled to have the INTO on board to help us reach out to the pupils from across all sectors of education. The Pipers Club and the Festival Organisers would like to extend their thanks to the various Branches of INTO, members of your Union and the Northern Committee for their sponsorship."

The festival runs from the 14th to the 17th November 2013 and for those who have not been before it is a great opportunity to hear world class music and to visit one of Ireland's most historic and beautiful cities.



Far left of picture is Brian Vallely, Director of Armagh Pipers Club and the William Kennedy Piping Festival. Far right Kevin Daly – Northern Committee



# Learning some of what I don't know

**Some Challenges and Possibilities in Collaborating with Teachers in Schools in Lahore, Pakistan, from the Brief Experience of Northern Irish Primary School Teacher, Siobhan McCaffrey**

My uncle, Columban missionary, Fr Pat McCaffrey, died suddenly in Pakistan in May 2010. Along with my brother, I came to Pakistan the following Christmas to visit his grave. I decided to return again in November 2011, so this is my second visit. This time, even though I speak no Urdu, I did not want to be just a tourist so looked for the opportunity to work with teachers and children in local schools in a Columban run parish in Lahore. I have been working in the schools for just over three weeks and the following attempts to describe and evaluate this experience.

I approached the principal of one of the parish schools and asked her how I might contribute. She asked me to explain the basics of English grammar to the teachers, and also work with some of the older classes in the school. So, I spent the first week preparing a one day seminar on the topic for 30 teachers.

I had not come prepared with resources or equipment so initially presumed I would have to do everything with blackboard and chalk. However I discovered the school had a data projector and I was able to use the internet connection in the Columban house to download resources. The topic of the seminar was basic grammar, handwriting and phonics. In Ireland I only teach up to eight year olds so felt a little out of my depth preparing to work with older students, much less with teachers.

I soon realised that my own understanding of English grammar is inadequate, in that I am unfamiliar with many technical details. For example, I was unaware that there are a number of kinds of past tense e.g. past perfect, past perfect progressive, past perfect continuous, and presumed the tenses were simply, past, present and future. The teachers began asking me questions about the various kinds of past tense and I was at sea. I knew what was correct because of how it sounded but could not explain why something was correct or incorrect. One combination of verbs that puzzled my Pakistani friends and stumped me when asked for an explanation was the association of have and had in a phrase such as: "I have had a good time." The teachers said to me: "have' is present tense and 'had' is past tense, so how can they stand together?" I did not know how to answer using the technical language they needed.



*Siobhan and class, and inset, with woman and children in Matli*

Some teachers seemed to have a very good technical understanding of English even though they may not be fluent speakers. That challenged me and I soon realised that to do more work in this line I would need to update my knowledge of English grammar. A weakness in the English language learning system in Pakistan that seems to have been in place here for many years is the tendency to emphasise an appreciation and understanding of the technicalities of the language to the detriment of fostering the ability to speak it. Colloquialisms and regional developments are hardly taken into account.

Overall the seminar went well but I had little feedback from participants during the first part so I wondered whether or not I was communicating with them but things warmed up later in the day. Subsequently, during some afternoon sessions, I worked through the content of the seminar with a smaller group of secondary school teachers and it went very well as many of them have quite good English and were keen to further improve it.

I also received a request to teach story writing but did not get around to it due to other requests from the teachers. However I did wonder how I might tackle such a task, given the limited vocabulary of the teachers and also their inadequate understanding of how to say things in fluent English.

I did visit other schools in the parish but felt that our communication was



poor. I feel that, in order to communicate via English, participants need a certain level of proficiency that in fact some did not have, especially in the schools where English is not the medium of instruction. Even where English is the medium school texts are often in both English and Urdu and teachers frequently resort to Urdu to ensure that students understand the topic of the class.

For me, it was more rewarding to work in the school where English is the medium of instruction. Communication was clearly better and we managed to generate a level of enthusiasm throughout the class period, so I knew the participants understood what was being discussed.

In the classrooms I did some work on English conversation and grammar. I found that students seemed to be caught into learning material by rote without necessarily understanding the content. However, I did have some conversations with students aged from 12 to 15 years in

which they responded quite well. This worked especially well when their teacher was present in the classroom to support the students whenever we reached a blockage to mutual understanding. In other cases where the teacher simply translated between students and me I don't think anything was achieved. In such instances, maybe the students did not know enough English or have any confidence in what they did know to even begin to converse.

Both students and teachers were in

general most welcoming but where they lacked confidence in their ability to communicate in English both seemed to hold back. I think I was able to contribute most effectively when the principal or teachers told me what they needed and I was given time to prepare something. If I had known before leaving Ireland what the schools might have expected from me I am sure I could have come here much better prepared.

The experience has moved me deeply. I have felt welcomed and included. So

many have so little and yet they readily show warm hospitality. The hardship of poverty, insecurity and discrimination as a minority group saddens me but I have found the Pakistanis to be so resilient and strong in the face of adversity. This visit has also made me feel grateful for having been born in western society where we have and take for granted a free education system, a free health care system, good service from public utilities and relatively comfortable way of life. At times I wonder whether we appreciate what we have.

## Following in Fr Pat's footsteps

My uncle, Columban missionary Fr Pat McCaffrey, died suddenly in Pakistan on May 18, 2010. His sudden and untimely death meant that no family members were able to attend his funeral. My brother Niall and I decided to make a pilgrimage to Pakistan over Christmas 2010.

We arrived into Karachi airport in the early hours of Sunday 19th December and were met by Fr Tomas King. He was to be our host, chauffeur, guide and interpreter, along with Annette Menzes, a good friend of Fr Pat's.

We travelled to the 'interior', rural Sind and visited a remote village, where we met Fr Dan O'Connor. Fr Dan was travelling around many of the rural Catholic families in the parish to celebrate Christmas Mass with them. Many of these families may only see a priest once a year due to the distance they live from the nearest town and the lack of suitable transport. We joined them as Mass was celebrated. We ate our evening meal with the family feeling very guilty. They seemed to have little enough to feed themselves without three extra mouths to feed. However, as is the custom, we, the visitors, were fed first and the family did not eat until we were finished. We spent the night with them, as their guests.

During Fr Pat's first appointment to Pakistan, he ministered in the parish of Matli in the Sindh Province (1984 to 1994). We visited Matli. Fr Pat had initiated a housing scheme on church land in the town. Parishioners from the outlying areas were allocated small plots of land on which they built their homes. We visited many of these homes. The compounds varied from sturdy brick constructions fronted by a brick wall, to the most basic of one room mud huts, fronted by walls made of sticks. Many of the people we met remembered Fr Pat with great affection and gratitude, as they had him to thank for their home. They were no longer bonded to a land owner. On a number of occasions they disappeared into their houses only to reappear with the memorial picture of Fr Pat which the Columban's had distributed among them. One such parishioner brought his picture out to us covered in clear plastic, in the house of another parishioner, we spotted the same picture pinned to the wall. Fr Pat's great legacy is in Matli. The high regard in which he was and continues to be held in by the parishioners was made most apparent when one lady said to us that 'he should have been buried in Matli.' He last ministered there 16 years earlier.

Another lady we met was Sister Annalisa Samuel. She had worked with Fr Pat in Matli during his ten

years there. She told us many stories about him, about his selflessness and how was always 'ready to be with the people'. She also told us how he 'was always busy building up the lives of his people, bringing them closer to God, taking the sick to hospital, educating the poor children and providing provisions for their needs,' and through all this, how 'he never cared for his health'.

When Fr Pat returned to Pakistan in 2009, he was appointed to Greentown Parish in Lahore. We travelled to Lahore on Christmas Eve and attended Midnight Mass in Township. Fr Pat had celebrated midnight mass here just one year previously. There, we met Fr Pat's colleague, Fr Liam O'Callaghan, who is



*Siobhan's uncle Sean McCaffrey, cousin Helen Cleary, Siobhan and Fr Liam O'Callaghan at Fr Pat's grave in Lahore.*

Parish Priest in Greentown. After Midnight Mass we were overwhelmed by the welcome we received. Everyone spoke so highly of Fr Pat and also of how deeply they missed him. On Christmas morning, we visited his grave, a beautiful spot under a mature tree behind the Church compound in Greentown. Two graves, side by side, Fr Pat's colleague, Fr Tommy O'Hanlon, from Co Kerry, died in Lahore, just 19 days after Fr Pat. It is very poignant to see the two graves side by side and it was also a very emotional experience for both of us, being the first family members to visit since his death. Pakistanis have a lovely practice of lighting candles and incense sticks on graves. We lit some of each and arranged them on both graves. It was very obvious to us that candles had been lit many

times on both graves, due to the many candle and incense stick stubs remaining. The graves are lovingly kept by the parishioners. Shrubs are planted around the graves and it was very clear to us that the graves are very well tended which is such a comfort, given how far away he is from his family. As we were there, a number of people stopped to pray and many told us that this graveyard is now 'a very holy place' due to both priests being buried there. It is not the custom for foreigners to be buried in local graveyards in Pakistan, but we, his family, were aware that Fr Pat's wishes were to 'die with his boots on' and be buried among the people he had dedicated his life to. We visited his grave for the final time on our last day in Lahore, just as the sun was beginning to set. Again, we lit candles and incense sticks and placed them on both graves. It was hard to walk away. What made it easier, for me at least, was that when we had arrived at the grave that evening, there was already a candle burning on Fr Pat's grave. He will not be forgotten in Greentown.

On our last day, we travelled to the town of Murree, a seven hour drive from Lahore, situated on the side of a steep hill, in the foothills of the Himalayan mountains. Murree was where Fr Pat died. He had been visiting lay missionaries there. He had left the convent around 6am to catch a bus to Rawalpindi. He was rushing to catch the bus when he died. The only person around was a street sweeper, considered the lowest of the low in Pakistan's caste system. When we met him, he told us how he had seen Fr Pat holding on to the rails outside the compound and then fall back onto the road. He went to his aid but was unable to help. He raised the alarm at the convent and the nuns came. When we met the street sweeper we took the opportunity to thank him for trying to help our uncle. He apologised for not being able to save him and explained that it was his moral duty to try, but that God had decided to take him and there was nothing he could do.

Our 'pilgrimage' to Pakistan has been an amazing, unforgettable experience. We have many, many memories to treasure; of a beautiful country, its resilient people and of the warm welcome we received. We have also come away with a deeper understanding of our uncle's calling and what it was that drew him back to Pakistan (he requested this, his final posting). A final word of thanks to all the Columbans in Pakistan who made us so welcome and went out of their way to ensure we truly were able to follow in Fr Pat's footsteps.



100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE

# 1913 DUBLIN LOCKOUT

COMMEMORATIVE LECTURE  
GUEST SPEAKERS PADRAIG YEATES  
AND ANN MATTHEWS  
THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2013  
SEAN HOLLYWOOD ARTS CENTRE  
NEWRY TIME: 7.30 PM

Newry Branch of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) are organising a commemorative lecture to mark the 100th anniversary of the 1913 Dublin Lockout.

The event takes place on Thursday 6th June at the Sean Hollywood Arts Centre at 7.30pm and features guest speaker, journalist and author Padraig Yeates, whose publications include *'Lockout: Dublin 1913'* and *'A City in Wartime: Dublin 1914-1918'*, and Ann Matthews, historian, author and lecturer at NUI Maynooth.

James Larkin, James Connolly and Newry man James Fearon



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