

Printout



Irish National Teachers' Organisation
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

February 2010

TEACHERS BEFORE BANKERS

Join us at Northern Conference 26-27 February



Kevin Smyth Northern Committee Chair

INDIAN ADVENTURE



Breda O'Driscoll, Holy Family Primary School, Belfast, selected to go to India as part of The Global Classroom, courtesy of Adelaide Insurance.



Locals in beautiful Silichar.

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Education Funding

Gavin Boyd and Shane McCurdys' addresses to the recent INTO/UTU Leadership Conference [see page 6] are available on the www.esait.org.uk website. Key statements included: £90 million cut to education budget 2010/11;

Role to support teachers achieve better results for pupils;
Need to shift balance of resources from the centre to schools;
The conundrum of children's educational experience;
Support for leadership development at all levels;
ESA will not interfere with principals running their schools;

Shane McCurdy ESAIT stated that the education budget 2009/10 was £2 billion but only £1.1 billion goes to schools. So ESAIT has a job to do shifting a good part of that £0.9 billion towards schools. Where does it get spent now?

There remains a clear disparity which needs to be addressed between primary and post-primary schools in this year's budgets e.g:

St Colman's College Newry	£3,688,406
St Colman's Abbey PS Newry	£724,431
St Catherine's College Armagh	£4,450,532
Mount St Catherine's Ps Armagh	£607,722
Methodist College Belfast	£7,917,745
St Brides' PS Belfast	£2,174,490
St Patrick's Academy Dungannon	£6,179,932
St Patrick's PS Dungannon	£2,188, 148



Education Minister Caitriona Ruane has guaranteed to protect frontline services.

Teachers' Pay Scales 2009/2010

Main Pay Scale Salary Point 1 Sept 2009		Leadership Group Salary Point 1 Sept 2009			
M1	21,101	1	36,617	23	62,919
M2	22,771	2	37,536	24	64,479
M3	24,601	3	38,473	25	66,082
M4	26,494	4	39,432	26	67,716
M5	28,582	5	40,413	27	69,393
M6	30,841	6	41,425	28	71,116
		7	42,541	29	72,876
UPPER PAY SCALE		8	43,523	30	74,690
UPS1	33,411	9	44,610	31	76,537
UPS2	34,649	10	45,755	32	78,439
UPS3	35,929	11	46,943	33	80,388
		12	48,025	34	82,375
TEACHING ALLOWANCES		13	49,226	35	84,422
TA1	1,806	14	50,452	36	86,513
TA2	3,649	15	51,710	37	88,663
TA3	6,266	16	53,083	38	90,858
TA4	8,631	17	54,304	39	93,072
TA5	11,648	18	55,669	40	95,395
		19	57,049	41	97,778
SEN1	1,956	20	58,463	42	100,227
SEN2	3,865	21	59,910	43	102,734
		22	61,397		

Getting help...

Members can contact their Northern Committee Representative as below:

AREA	NAME	Home/Mobile	School No.
CEC 1	Mary Cahillane	07522100726	9060 1294
CEC 2	Tony Lappin	3833 6334	—
BFC	Patrick McAllister	9445 2728	3884 0825
NEELB Primary	Mark McTaggart	9028 7449	2826 0444
NEELB Post-Primary	Barney Magill	9077 7742	9084 8433
SEELB Primary	Kevin Smyth*	9020 1571	9038 1455
SEELB Post-Primary	John McAnulty	9060 1555	4483 0311
BELB Primary (1)	Gerry Murphy	3753 9591	9023 8773
BELB Primary (2)	Eddie Keenan	9059 2401	9035 1023
BELB Post-Primary	Des McDonagh	9084 9797	9080 8050
SELB Primary (1)	Mary Dorman	8774 1229	8676 3151
SELB Primary (2)	Mary Hughes	3755 1136	3753 1284
SELB Post-Primary	Jim Magee	3026 8178	4175 3366
WELB Primary (1)	Charlie Glenn	7134 1578	7135 1830
WELB Primary (2)	Rita Fox	8076 1647	8224 5628
WELB Post-Primary	Ann Marie Conway	8076 0996	8224 2717

Vere Foster House, Northern Office, is open from 9.00am – 1.00pm and from 1.45pm – 5.00pm, Monday to Thursday and to 4.00pm on a Friday.

Telephone: 028 9038 1455 Fax: 028 9066 2803 Email: infoni@into.ie

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Where Family Counts

75
YEARS

EBS

ANNUAL INTO/EBS Handwriting Competition

INTO and EBS are delighted to launch the Annual INTO/EBS handwriting competition. The entry is open to all schools in the age categories specified and entries will be judged on style, flair, neatness and layout of the handwriting.

How does the competition work?

Entries should be written on a single A4 page, ruled or unruled. Information regarding each entrant (name, category, school address etc) should be appended to the reverse of each entry. No particular script or style is necessary and there is no set text. The focus is solely on handwriting so illustrations are not required. Only pen or pencil **should** be used – no calligraphy pens allowed.

In Category 5 teachers are asked to nominate a child who is receiving Special Education provision and who is deserving of recognition for the exceptional effort and progress made in the area of handwriting. This category is now called the 'Special Recognition Award for Achievement in Handwriting'. The length of the handwriting piece submitted is at the teacher's discretion. A short citation (no more than 50 words), written by the teacher, should accompany each piece stating the reason for nomination.

Categories

1. P1-up to 20 words
2. P2 and P3 classes – up to 30

words

3. P4 and P5 classes – up to 50 words
4. P6 and P7 classes – up to 100 words
5. Special Recognition Award for Achievement in Handwriting

Children's Prizes

In categories 1-4, there are wonderful prizes like Art Sets, Gift Vouchers and Board Games for first, second and third places. Three prizes of equal value will be awarded in category 5.

Timescale

Northern Ireland entries should be submitted to Jan Saunders at Vere Foster House, Northern Office, 23 College Gardens, Belfast, BT9 6BS by Friday 26th March 2010, providing the name, address and Education and Library Board. The date and time of the prize giving will be sent out with the result of the competition.

School Prizes

There is a national draw for a Prim Ed/promethean voucher worth 2000 euro for all schools that enter the competition. Each school will also be entered in a draw for 100 euro vouchers. The National Prizegiving ceremony will take place on Saturday 24th April 2010, EBS office, 2 Burlington Road, Dublin 4.

The Northern Ireland Area Co-ordinator is Eddie Keenan Northern Committee.

If you have any queries please contact Jan Saunders in Northern Office on 028 90 381455.

Travelling Expenses

Teacher travelling on school duties, are paid the JNC casual users' rate which from 1 April 2009 is:

Per mile 1st 8500

451-999cc	42.9
1000-1119cc	47.7
1200-1450cc	60.1

Coming Soon

Tax Free bikes for school!

Benefits:

25% saving on a new bike and safety equipment:-
 Pay monthly and save income tax and National Insurance.
 Get any make and model from a choice of local bike shops.

This is under discussion in the Teachers' Negotiating Committee.

More news soon.

75
YEARS

EBS



Where Family Counts

INTO WEBSITE

HAVE YOU ACCESSED THE MEMBERS' ONLY AREA YET?

In order to access the Members' only area of the INTO website you must first register.

To do this go to www.into.ie, click on Northern Ireland then click on Members' Area and First Time login and follow the instructions. (See overleaf for further details).

For subsequent logins you simply enter your membership number and password.

From the Members' Area you can also view and edit your membership details - simply click on the **My Details** button.

For assistance with any aspect of the Members' area, email support@into.ie or call **01 804 7700** and ask for the Membership Section.

Please remember to quote your INTO Membership Number for all communications with INTO Head Office.

Logging on to the Members' Area for the First Time:

1. Go to www.INTO.ie and choose your region, i.e. ROI or NI. Click on "Members Area". This is the top blue button on the right hand side.
2. Choose First Time Login and you will see the screen below:
3. Enter your Date of Birth, Teacher Number, School DENI Number and Surname.
4. Your Username is your INTO membership number which can be found on your INTO membership card.
5. Create a Password.

When choosing a password, choose something cryptic to make

it difficult to guess e.g. use alphanumeric characters and symbols.

Try not to choose something obvious like the name of your partner, children or school.

6. Terms & Conditions - Click on the Terms & Conditions link and read them carefully. You must accept these to proceed. Once they are read click Yes to accept.
7. Choose Submit.

Subsequent Logins

1. Enter your Membership Number (Username) and Password from the steps above.
2. Click the Login button.

Forgotten Your Password

Click on the "Forgotten Password" Link, fill in your Teacher Number and email address and click on Submit. Your password will be emailed to you.



General Secretary Sheila Nunan

Following last term's ballot, Noel Ward has been elected as General Treasurer/Deputy General Secretary. He commences his new role this February. Sheila Nunan together with Noel will formally take over as the full-time INTO leadership team after Easter Congress.

A native of Abbeyfeale, Noel qualified with the final 'NT' cohort from St Patrick's College and subsequently graduated, to Masters level, from UCD. Involved in INTO from his first post in Dublin, Noel's main teaching career was in Scoil Maelruain, Tallaght, and he became the founding Secretary of Tallaght Branch in 1982.

He subsequently served on the CEC (1988-1995) and was succeeded as District 8 Representative by Sheila Nunan when he went to work as a government Programme Manager in 1995. Noel has worked as a Senior Official and Equality Officer at head office since 2002, and for a period on secondment to the second Benchmarking Body, which reported in 2008.

In the ballot outcome shortly before Christmas, Noel was elected General Treasurer on the first count. The result was John Boyle: 2,178 votes (19.38%), Deirdre O'Connor: 1,803 (16.04%), and Noel Ward: 7,259 (64.58%).

New INTO Leadership

The INTO General Secretary is Sheila Nunan. She replaces John Carr when he retires. Sheila She is the first woman to lead the INTO.

Born in Newbridge, Co Kildare, Sheila now lives in Glencullen, Co Dublin. She is a former teacher and principal teacher in Tallaght and in Bray, Co Wicklow, and was a full time official of the union for three years.

Sheila attended primary and secondary school in Holy Family School, Newbridge, and then completed a degree in Politics and Sociology in UCD in 1978. The following year she received a post-graduate Diploma in Education from St Patrick's College of Education in Drumcondra. She was elected President of the union in 2005 and was formerly a member of the CEC.

"This year will be challenging for INTO members and their families."



Noel Ward General Treasurer

Northern Conference Preview

Northern Conference will be held in the City Hotel Derry on 25th/26th February 2010. It will determine the policy and action of INTO in Northern Ireland over the next year which is likely to be difficult. The issues are obvious – workload. 12 years on from when DE said they would tackle teacher workload, it is obvious that few, if any, DE policies are workload proofed. The DE Circulars on workload have been meaningless.

The INTO 'Enough is Enough' campaign has made some minor progress but opinion is hardening that INTO needs to take the lead in making a difference to teachers' working lives. Our close relationship with the UTU will help as will the determination of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council to prioritise negotiations on: PPA; 1 year's teaching employment for NQTs; admin time for nursery principals and agreed realistic guidelines on cover for absent colleagues.

Westminster politicians increasingly hint that our 2.3% salary increase due in September 2010 as part of an agreed 3 year deal may not be paid. A pay freeze is mooted for the public sector. It is extremely unlikely that INTO members will sacrifice their salaries to subsidise bankers' bonuses or politicians' perks. Sammy Wilson's stealthy cuts of the education budget may be a harbinger of things to come. It's time



Northern Conference Delegates

for teachers to stand up and take determined action in protection of pupils' education and our jobs.

It's not all doom and gloom at Northern Conference. Branch delegates have their say. Sheila Crowley, Secretary of the INTO LGB group is a star attraction. Northern Committee Chair Kevin Smyth will launch the INTO Review of Education Funding policy document. Is the education budget been spent wisely? INTO thinks not. Are schools funded sufficiently. INTO thinks not.

All INTO members who are not branch or district delegates are welcome to attend Northern Conference as observers. But most important get to your branch meeting and make your voice heard.

School funding

Kevin Smyth is leading a discussion on education funding at Northern Conference. INTO is advocating a radical change away from Local Management of Schools [LMS] to the Scottish Delegated Schools' Management [DSM] model.

INTO is also seeking a significant increase in the slice of the education budget that goes to schools. Currently schools receive less than 60% while administration, bureaucracy and other services swallow a disproportionate amount of the annual budget. In Montgomery County USA, schools receive 95% of the education budget. INTO is calling on Education Minister Caitriona Ruane MLA to bring forward as a matter of urgency the Fundamental Review of School Funding and to ensure that – despite the proposed cuts to education funding – steps are taken to increase the Aggregated Schools' Budget [ASB] share to 80%.

Finally, a reminder to all schools holding large surpluses. The Permanent Secretary has already warned schools about this dangerous practice. INTO has the details on the surpluses. Governors need to employ a teacher or two. There are plenty of them looking for full-time teaching posts. Pupils will be the major benefactor. The bad practice of employing young NQTs on temporary or worse day to day contracts must be ended. All teachers should be employed on permanent full-time or part-time contracts.



Mary Hughes, Tony Carlin and Peter Bunting (ICTU)



Leadership Conference



Gavin Boyd Chief Executive, ESAIT in full flight watched by Kevin Smyth, Lexie Scott and Shane McCurdy. His speech is available at www.esait.co.uk

INTO and UTU jointly organised a conference for school leaders on 21st January 2010, in the Island Centre, Lisburn. The main topics for discussion were the implications for schools of the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority and the way forward for Special Educational Needs.

The hugely popular conference, which was oversubscribed, gave over 100 school principals and vice-principals the opportunity to discuss important issues, which affect their schools and the chance to question those who are in positions of influence in relation to these matters.

Guest speakers included Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive designate of ESA; Shane McCurdy, who will be responsible for school funding within ESA and Gillian Boyd, the ETI inspector with responsibility for teacher training in SEN. The conference was chaired by Kevin Smyth, Chair, INTO and Lexie Scott, President, UTU.



Participants at Leadership Conference.



Mary Dorman, Kevin Smyth and Gillian Boyd ETI

CAPACITY BUILDING and SPECIAL NEEDS



Mary Dorman Northern Committee

The new Capacity Building programme proposed by the SEN and Inclusion Review consultation document is welcome and very much needed. The Review acknowledges the skills of teachers in our schools. This is a pool of talent and skills that should be accessed. The Review recognises the importance of training all of the schools workforce and Boards of Governors. Effective and knowledgeable leadership is crucial to ensuring the spirit and the letter of the enhanced CoP is implemented. These new training arrangements are an additional cost; current practise training classroom assistants places a burden upon schools and individual teachers. Teachers are already very much aware of the increasingly complex demands that pupils experiencing special educational needs present on a daily basis.

Teachers should have a statutory right to access the support and training that their work demands. Current practise relies too heavily on the goodwill of teachers. Many teachers interested in the area of SEN have had to pay for much of their own training. In addition many teachers have forfeited their lunchtimes and lesson planning time to enhance their SEN skills or the skills of their colleagues.

It is anticipated that the additional training programmes will help

sharpen the focus of teachers on progress and outcomes. A truly effective programme would need to involve a professional development programme to run alongside a training programme. The focus upon progress and outcomes should not overshadow the need to develop truly inclusive practise that is effective. Programmes and courses should build upon best practise not replace proven practise for the sake of it. The Review anticipates that the training in the main is provided in situ. It would be important that the need not the location should dictate delivery. Effective professional development should be developed through evidence based research and build upon the teaching competencies advocated by GTCNI.

INTO would recommend three strands of training for teachers

- Regionally developed initiatives developed in conjunction with GTCNI and ITT service providers.- these courses should be used to develop pedagogy and
- School based inset that reflects the circumstances and needs of the school. – this should help develop techniques and strategies, could include opportunities for practising teachers to share their strategies and knowledge

- Individual teacher led support- this could help individual teachers address their own needs- this could be opportunities to observe more experienced colleague or to access more specific areas eg develop a working knowledge of the PECs programme.

INTO cautions against processes that involve cascade training as it has been demonstrated to be ineffective. Teachers have had many different types of INSET training days over recent years. The quality of delivery, content and impact upon teaching and learning need to be effectively evaluated after teachers have had time to assimilate it into their own practise. Training should be delivered with due consideration of teacher workload.

One of the major concerns for teachers is the provision of training in isolation. Awareness raising is important and valid however teachers need to be able to access support and advice on a reactive as well as a proactive basis. One way to provide this could be having a readily accessible resource online that could help address the needs in a more timely way- resources and advice like that contained on the SCOTENS web site www.scotens.org could be integrated into the c2k system.

INTO/UTU CLASS

Smaller Classes will improve learning potential: say INTO and UTU



Crowded Out?

Classes in Northern Ireland are too large — support the INTO / UTU Campaign for Smaller Classes



Smaller class sizes in Northern Ireland will improve learning potential for children, leading educationalists claimed today.

The INTO and UTU have unveiled their ground-breaking joint campaign CrowdedOut? tackling what they believe is one of the fundamental flaws in Northern Ireland's educational system.

UK class sizes are among the biggest in the world, behind only Turkey, Brazil and Chile. Within the UK Northern Ireland classes top the league - some with over 35 pupils.

INTO and UTU are also highlighting the disparity in pupil teacher ratios (PTR) as a result of class size.

In Scotland, the PTR in primary schools is 16.0; 15.9 in the Republic of Ireland while in Northern Ireland it is 20.4.

"The findings from studies are clear about the immediate effects of small classes on student achievement," says County Antrim principal Lexie Scott, President of the UTU.

"Effective use of assessment has been shown to provide up to

eight extra months of educational development per classroom per year, according to research conducted by the Institute of Education, University of London.

"Class size is surely one of the most straightforward ways in which to improve achievement because it's relatively easy to implement and does not require changes in teaching or curricula.

"We want to get teachers talking in staffrooms across Northern Ireland and parents at the school gate backing this campaign."

While the unions affirmed their members' support of the Revised Curriculum now taught in schools, they suggested it was disingenuous to expect improved exam outcomes while large class sizes undermined one its central tenets.

"The Revised Curriculum's emphasis on active participation by the pupils in their own learning and on individualised learning cannot be adequately achieved in many instances because of class size," said Mr Scott.

"In order to fulfil the requirements of this curriculum there must be an urgent review. Currently some children are being taught in classes of 35 or more, with one child in eight in a class of over 30."

Kevin Smyth, Chair of the INTO agreed: "Teachers and children must be able to interact at a personal level. Greater teaching and learning can take place in smaller classes as the teacher can spend more time facilitating learning rather than managing the class.

"Parents too know instinctively that it will benefit their child to be in a class where there is a high level of pupil teacher contact and interaction."

He also said the Cambridge Review, the most up-to-date and independent review of primary education, called for a full review

CLASS SIZE CAMPAIGN

of current and projected primary school staffing.

“It also makes a plea for fairer funding and the elimination of the primary / secondary differential. In our schools at present a primary school pupil receives £2,044 as opposed to £3,300 rising to £4,286 for a post primary pupil, a differential which obviously also affects the number of teachers a school can afford,” he said.

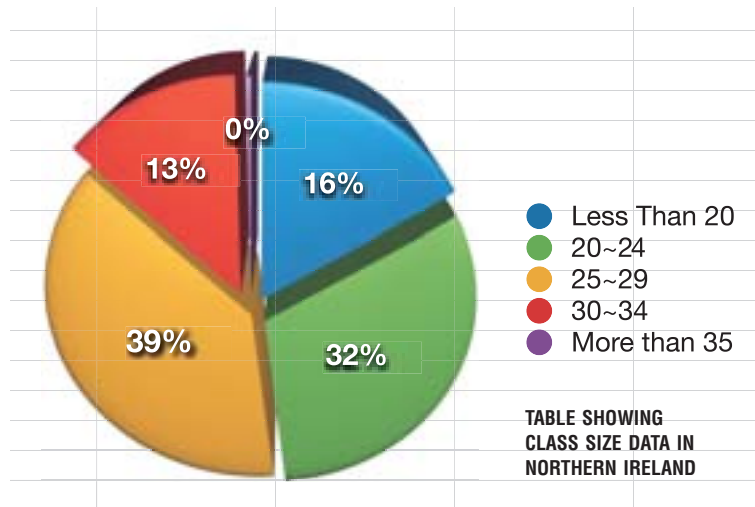
The unions want to see class sizes in the Foundation and Key Stage One no greater than 18 and in Key Stage Two, 24.

Such a policy, they believe, would also solve the problem faced by newly-qualified teachers who can't get jobs here.

Mr Scott highlighted the fact that, according to the General Teaching Council, the UK has 7,000 registered teachers who are not in full-time employment.

“This is a very valuable resource. The skills of these mainly young teachers should be utilised to improve the quality of education in our schools,” he said.

“The employment of more teachers in order to reduce class size should be a priority of the Education Workforce Review which is due to begin soon.”



INTO / UTU demands

Teachers' unions demand that class size should be no greater than:

- 18 in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
- 24 in Key Stage 2
- 20 in Key Stage 3



COUNTRY	PRIMARY CLASS SIZES	COUNTRY	PRIMARY CLASS SIZES
AUSTRIA	20.1	LUXEMBOURG	15.6
BELGIUM (FR.)	20.3	NETHERLANDS	22.2
CZECH REPUBLIC	20.6	POLAND	20.6
DENMARK	19.8	PORTUGAL	16.0
FRANCE	22.3	SLOVAKIA	19.9
GERMANY	22.0	SPAIN	19.3
GREECE	18.1	SWITZERLAND	19.3
HUNGARY	20.3	UNITED KINGDOM	26.0
ITALY	18.3		
		EU Average	20.0

PEOPLE ON THE MOVE



Sean Hogan, Chair ESAIT

Education Minister Caitriona Ruane has appointed Sean Hogan as Chair of the Education and Skills' Authority [ESA]. For a 3 day week in ESA he gets £33,000. The minister said the appointment was 'a significant step' in her reforms.

Sean T Hogan's day job is Managing Partner of STH Management Solutions, Newry which for a few bob will sell you powerpoint sides and the like on doing a successful interview, time management and improving your presentational skills amongst other necessities.

Regional Development Minister Conor Murphy reappointed Sean to the Board of the Warrenpoint Harbour Authority in 2008. Mr Hogan was described then as a Masters' Graduate in Organisational Management from QUB.

A seasoned quango holder, in addition to his ESA £33,000 post, Sean T holds or has held a number of public appointments.

These include:

Chair of the Agri-Food & Bio-Science Institute NI at £24,000 per year;
Commissioner with the Southern Health Commissioning Group
Board member Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company at £12,000 per year;
Warrenpoint Harbour Authority at £6,945 per year;

The indefatigable Sean T is also a member of the Institute of Directors as well as being Chair of the 'Chairs' Forum' described as being '*...an influential group of Chairs of public bodies in NI and the only association of its type in the UK.*'

Mr Paul Sweeney was appointed Permanent Secretary in the Department of Education in February 2010.

Mr Sweeney was formerly Permanent Secretary in the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure from 2006. He was Deputy Secretary in the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister with responsibility for a range of issues including oversight of the Reinvestment and Reform Initiative.

A native of Derry, Paul joined the Northern Ireland Senior Civil Service in 1998.



Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education

ADIEU



Mary Hughes

Northern Committee salutes Mary Hughes, Southern Education and Library Board Primary Representative and Tony Lappin District 2 CEC Representative for the dedicated service to INTO members over many years. Mary is retiring to the classroom and Tony has retired.

Mary Hughes will be replaced by Cathy Crozier as Northern Committee Representative. Charlie Glenn has been elected District 2 CEC Representative and will replace Tony Lappin.



Tony Lappin



Charlie Glenn

UPDATE:

Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC)

Pensions

The consultation on the Equality Impact Assessment on the Department of Education's proposed PRC Severance Pay arrangements closed on 31 January 2010. It is anticipated that Regulations bringing these into place in Northern Ireland will come into effect - local politicians being able to get their act together before 1 April.

For a breakdown of what the new pensions' PRC arrangements may look like and the INTO response to the consultation check the website www.into.ie

School Closures'

DE is refusing to sign up to a written agreement. They argue that they will huff until NITC signs up to changes they wish to make to the Reorganisation Regulations-even though these are non-existent!

Teachers in school closure situations, when redeployed are entitled to claim for travelling expenses for the journey to their new school [where relevant] and a Reorganisation Allowance should they lose on being deployed from the closing school.

Teacher Abuse

A 37 page booklet containing guidance for teachers who have been assaulted or abused by adults is about to be circulated by the Teachers' Negotiating Committee [TNC] A desk top survey is also going out. It's a lotta workload.

NITC key priorities 2010 for TNC

The 5 teacher unions - ATL, INTO, NAHT, NASUWT & UTU have identified key priorities for salaries and conditions of service for 2010. They are:

Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time [PPA] 10% for all teachers, particularly primary;
Administrative time for nursery school principals;
Clear guidance on cover for absent colleagues, particularly in post-primary;
Guaranteed teaching year for all NQTs coming out of university college.

REVIEW

MANSELL, MOVIES, MUSIC

The XX album 'The XX' is interesting R&B. The XX are 3 20 year olds from London. The music is sparse but benefits from volume and repetition. It is one of the more interesting arrivals on the music scene.

A 'New Yorker' reviewer wrote: The songs on "xx" are as intimate as pop gets. These are songs to be sung inches from someone's ear, preferably with the lights off. The music is all closeups. I am impressed that the band has been able to convert so many people with their live shows, because the songs on the album feel to me like the love letters of Tamina in Milan Kundera's "The Book of Laughter and Forgetting"—letters that were so intimate that what gave them their "meaning and worth" was that they were intended "for her alone. **5 stars**

Hot Chip were founded in 2000 by graduates of the same sixth form College at Elliott School in Putney, London. Their fourth album 'One Life Stand' is now released and worth a listen. Readers will recall 'The Warning' the band's second album. NME named one song from it 'Over and over' as the best single of 2006. **5 stars**

Vampire Weekend's 2nd album 'Contra.' This American Indie band topped the Billboard chart with this latest offering. Great sound. Paul Simon-esque but the music has many influences including American synth-pop, reggae, ska, calypso and African pop. Recently Vampire Weekend played a number of free venues in London. Interested? Check out their acoustic Paris gig at la blogotheque's 'Les soirees de poche' series www.blogotheque.net/vampireweekend,5275. **5 stars**

J D Salinger's recent death highlights again his 'Catcher in the Rye! Can it be true that this was written in 1951? **Mega**

The 'Mo' biopic Doesn't seem Mo Mowlam died as long ago as 2005. Such a vibrant figure. Diagnosed with an astrocytoma (grade 3 brain tumour) in 1997 as the Labour Party prepared to take office, Mo trashes Peter Mendelson, Gerry Adams, David Trimble as she attempts to find peace. Julie Walters, playing Mo, is outstanding. Award winning performance. **4 stars**

Henning Mankell's Kurt Wallander Swedish thrillers are all the rage. Wallander, the existential detective, has had a recent BBC run and is played by our own Kenneth Branagh. Interesting. Dour. A Boxing Day Swedish Wallander production had one Radio 5 listener reacting for Leonard Cohen '...for a bit of light relief' **4 stars**

Movies

Un prophète Another QFT mastershow. The film details the prison career of Malik el Djebena, a 19 year old man of North African origin but estranged from the Muslim community. Multi-layered powerful film. Not to be missed. About power, survival and so much more. **4 stars**

A Serious Man This hilarious movie from the Coen Brothers features Larry Gopnik, a physics professor in a mid-western town in 1967 whose wife has just told him she is leaving him. It's about life, Judaism and a lot more. It's funny in a familiar way - especially those of us who remember John McGahern's Catholic Ireland. **4 stars**

REVISED CURRICULUM

This year sees the final roll out of the revised curriculum. By September 2010, all pupils will be experiencing the new approaches and methodologies, adopted by teachers over the past three years.

At a recent meeting of PMB, Inspectors reported that this year has seen teachers embrace the revised curriculum and methodologies much more enthusiastically than hitherto. Overall, the inspectors have found that the implementation has been a success and that the learning experience for pupils has been enhanced.

ETI has agreed that, following the completion of the roll out this year, it will take time for the new

arrangements to become embedded. Accordingly, the school years 2010/11 and 2011/12 will be viewed as a period of embedment of the revised arrangements and Inspectors will be cognisant of this. From September 2012, ETI will expect all schools/teachers to be delivering the revised curriculum and assessment arrangements.

Assessment

PMB emphasis this year will be on the training of teachers for the revised assessment arrangements. The Education Minister will announce shortly the DE policy on assessment, including the use of levels of progression to report on



Brendan Harron Senior Official INTO

pupil attainment. INTO has already demanded that the quality of training for assessment is of a much higher quality than the early training for the revised curriculum.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

On 1st October 2009, the Department of Education introduced new, statutory regulations in relation to reporting to parents. The regulations revoke the transitional arrangements that have been in place since 2007. Schools must now provide a report to parents, by 30th June each year.

Annual Reports

Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4: schools are required to provide parents with an assessment of their child's progress in relation to:

- Communication (taking account of their achievement in the Language & Literacy area of learning);
- Using Mathematics (taking account of their achievement in the Mathematics and Numeracy area of learning); and
- Brief particulars of the child's achievement in:
 - o Each of the areas of learning relevant to pupils in the key stage concerned;
 - o Using ICT;
 - o Other Skills (Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities)²

- o Religious Education (optional);
- o The pupil's interests and strengths;

If a school wishes to incorporate the "Other Skills" into its reporting of the areas of learning, it may do so provided that they are specifically covered and that it is clear to parents which part of the teacher comments relate to thinking skills and personal capabilities. Similarly, schools continue to have the flexibility to include additional information (for example, outcomes from class tests) if parents find this useful.

Where a pupil achieves a qualification, award or certificate, including a credit towards a qualification, this must be included in the report.

Sixth Form: Schools are required to provide parents with:

- Information on any qualification, award or certificate, including a credit towards a qualification, achieved by the pupil. (This information should also set out the name of the qualification, award or certificate, the highest result and the year achieved.); and

- Brief particulars of the pupil's achievement in any area of learning or activity which forms part of his or her curriculum.

Format of Reports

DE has decided not to prescribe a specific format for the annual reports to parents. Schools must, however, report consistently, in line with legal requirements, and ensure that reports provide clear and meaningful information for parents about their child's progress.

DE circular 2009/15 instructs schools, when determining the format of their reports, to have regard to teacher workload and to avoid unnecessary bureaucracy or complexity.

When completing the annual report, schools can choose whether to use an electronic report writing tool or not. It is also a matter of school choice whether to use the comment banks that have been prepared to support the revised curriculum - these are optional. CCEA and C2k (and, from its establishment, ESA) will continue to provide helpdesk support and training, including online support materials.

REDUNDANCY CONSULTATION

A revised redundancy procedure for teachers in schools has now been agreed and is available on the INTO website. One question often asked is *'Do you always have to consult in a redundancy dismissal even if there is a collective redundancy policy?'*

The duty to collectively consult arises from the Employment Rights Order 1996 when an employer proposes to dismiss as redundant employees at one establishment within a period of 90 days or less. The duty is to consult appropriate representatives of the 'affected' employees - which may include other employees who will not be dismissed. Appropriate representatives include Trade Union representatives and representatives directly elected by the affected employees. The maximum penalty for failure to collectively consult is 90 days pay per employee.

The statutory dismissal procedures do not apply in collective redundancy situations but that does not absolve an employer from following a fair redundancy process in relation to individual employees. This is governed by the principles of fairness developed in case law whereby consultation with a trade union over selection criteria did not of itself release the employer from considering with each employee on an individual basis their potential selection for redundancy.

Employees will generally expect to be consulted individually on the reason for redundancy, how the selection criteria are to be applied to them, and suitable alternative employment. While collective consultation will go some way towards mitigating the risk of unfair dismissal claims, it will not eliminate the risk entirely and therefore it is always wise to consult on an individual basis.

INTO representatives should ensure that redundancy consultation is meaningful and that members are permitted to have an input and appraised on any developments impacting on the proposals to make one or more teachers redundant.

BULLYING – STILL AN ISSUE

Despite the development of an

agreed process and procedure for tackling adult bullying in schools, and the implementation of a joint declaration of protection and revised equal opportunities policy, INTO is concerned at reports of adult bullying of teachers in schools.

Teachers may contact INTO over a single issue, e.g. their salary or being referred to an occupational health physician. These issues do not constitute bullying. However it may emerge that this matter is the tip of the iceberg. The teacher may reveal how agreed policies and procedures are abused or used against them, how their workload is changed without consultation or how they are put down in respect of their work at staff meetings. These teachers, in some cases may be victims of bullying.

The more difficult stage of the process is to find out what if anything the teacher wishes to do about their situation. Some accept the situation and wish to do nothing. Others may challenge the behaviours. It is important that whatever route is determined they feel they are in control of the process. This can involve exercising the right to complain through a grievance or anti-bullying policy.

INTO continues to support members to resolve issues informally through processes such as mediation or conciliation or to pursue complaints using the Dignity at Work procedure.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

INTO has been critical of the lack of representative structures to manage health and safety issues for teachers. Recently, INTO secured agreement amongst the five teaching unions that such a structure is established under the auspices of the Teachers' Negotiating Committee (TNC).

The law requires that employees must be consulted in different situations and the different choices employers have to make.

Consulting employees about health and safety can result in:



Tony Carlin, Senior Official

- Healthier and safer workplaces – because employee input is valuable to identify hazards, assess risks and develop ways to control or remove risks;
- Better decisions about health and safety – because they are based on the input and experience of a range of people in the organisation;
- Stronger commitment to implementing decisions or actions;
- Greater co-operation and trust –
- Joint problem-solving.

Employers must consult with employees or their representatives on the following:

- The introduction of any measure which may substantially affect their health and safety at work, for example the introduction of new equipment or new systems of work (such as the speed of a process line and shift-work arrangements);
- Arrangements for getting competent people to help them comply with health and safety laws;
- The information they must give their employees on the risks and dangers arising from their work, measures to reduce or get rid of these risks and what employees should do if they are exposed to a risk;
- The planning and organisation of health and safety training; and
- The health and safety consequences of introducing new technology.

INTO will continue to press for agreed health and safety arrangements for all teachers.



Senac

Special Educational Needs Advice Centre

Telling a parent that their child is not doing well at school can be difficult, but finding enough time to explain the process and support a parent through the system can be even more difficult. Hearing that a child has been diagnosed with a learning difficulty, or is falling behind in learning can be very emotional for a parent. Parents often report to us that they feel overwhelmed and unable to take information in when things are first explained to them. Additionally we often hear the anger and frustration of parents who have children with disabilities as they try to navigate the system that can sometimes take so long to provide appropriate interventions. SENAC as a specialist independent advice and information service can help schools to forge positive relationships with parents and can be used as an additional resource by schools when advising parents on SEN provision for their child.

What we do

SENAC (Special Educational Needs Advice Centre) is a regional charity providing an impartial advice and advocacy service to parents of children with Special Educational Needs, up to the age of 19. We operate a confidential telephone advice line and offer a children's advocate to represent children and parents at school and Board level. SENAC can offer parents time to explain their situation, can go over what the school has explained but the parent was too overwhelmed to take in. SENAC can offer parents advice on wording of Statements, annual reviews, letter writing and

communication with schools and Boards. We offer a support service where our advocacy worker can accompany parents to meetings. SENAC works with parents to empower them to get the best possible outcome for their child. SENAC provides an information service for professionals who work with children and young people so that they can assist parents to access an appropriate education for their child.

Advice Line

SENAC's advice line is run by a team of trained, volunteer advisers who provide independent advice and information to parents/carers whose children have special educational needs. Our service to parents is free and confidential. The Advice Line is available on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. SENAC also offers information

sessions to parent groups, schools, community groups, voluntary organizations. If you would like to know more about arranging a session contact SENAC 028 9070 5654

What do parents say about us?

We recently surveyed parents who had used our service and this is a sample of what they said:

"SENAC has given me the confidence to deal with my concerns. Previous to their advice I was unaware of my parental representations and what rights my child had."... "The advice I was given was extremely invaluable..."

"I got excellent advice on how to get my son moved to SLD school where his needs are now being met. SENAC was so helpful to myself and my son. I could not have done this without SENAC's help"

