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Irish
National
Teachers'
Organization

Cumann
Múinteoirí
Éireann

April 2007

INCAS: Industrial Action

The Department of Education is planning a replacement of the eleven plus test. The new test will be based on the Interactive Computer Assessment System [INCAS] that is currently being piloted in only 35 primary schools in Northern Ireland.

An Education Order in January 2007 made the use of INCAs statutory for P5 teachers from October 2007. Primary 5 teachers will have to use the computer tests to assess pupils in English and Mathematics. They will be required to share the outcomes of the tests with parents before the end of the Autumn term.

INTO does not accept that any test, which has been subject of such little

trialling, and has potential teacher workload concerns, can or should be introduced this October. INCAS results are likely to be used to continue the selection at 11 which is so injurious to the welfare and achievement of children.

INTO has already told the Department and the Education spokespersons of the NI political parties that any such development will lead to INTO balloting its members for industrial action against the tests. INTO will now undertake a sample indicative ballot of members in schools this term.

Counselling for Teachers

INTO has learned that the Education and Library Boards provide access to independent confidential welfare and counselling services for teachers. This is an important development.

It is a 24-hour completely confidential service.

So to paraphrase James Taylor...

*"If the sky above you should turn dark and full of clouds
And that old north wind should begin to blow
Keep your head together and call" ... 0500 127079*

INTO would welcome any feedback members have on this service - also on a confidential basis. INTO is raising this matter with the Department, the Education Boards and the embryonic Education and Services Authority [ESA] to ensure this service is marketed more effectively to teachers in crisis.

Mary Cahillane



The new Chair of Northern Committee is Mary Cahillane. Mary teaches in Poleglass and has served as District 1 representative on the

Northern Committee and on the Central Executive Committee for 6 years. Mary represents INTO on the Teachers' negotiating Committee and the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council.

Mary Hughes



The new Vice Chair of Northern Committee is Mary Hughes. Mary teaches in Keady and has represented the SELB area

on Northern Committee since 2001. Prior to that she was secretary of South Armagh Branch for ten years. Mary represented the NITC on the DE Review of Pre-School Education and currently represents INTO on the Women's Committee of ICTU.

Keates' NITC folly

For some reason Chris Keates of Nasuwt has got the knife out for the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council [NITC]. Quite why she finds it necessary to issue a High Court Writ against the NITC [of which her union is a member] and to make repeated, inaccurate and defamatory statements

about the NITC officers and INTO from her Birmingham bulwark, remains a mystery.

The successful NITC salary claim, seeking the end of the freeze on Management Allowances and their annual increase in line with the teachers' salaries, was unanimously

agreed by the 5 recognised teachers' unions - including her NASUWT!

Keates needs to withdraw her High Court case, with the appropriate apologies to the teachers of Northern Ireland and defamed parties, before she gets badly stung and wastes yet more of Nasuwt members' money.

Teaching Allowances and TLRs

Teaching and Learning Responsibility points (TLRs) were introduced in England and Wales in 2005 to replace Management Allowances. In order to make the transition to the new system schools had to totally remodel their existing staffing structures.

Schools in England and Wales are still experiencing huge difficulties in making the transition from MAs to TLRs and industrial relations are at an all time low with teachers in over a 300 schools having taken ballots for industrial or strike action to try and protect their salaries.

A Times Educational Supplement survey on TLRs in November 2006

found that teachers in primary, secondary and small schools in particular lost out substantially in their share of the TLR cake and that less money is going into teachers' pockets.

Early indications of the new regime show that the total being paid out in TLRs is significantly less than what was paid out in MAs and this is despite the 3-year safeguarding until the end of 2008.

Principals and governors are using the new structure to slash salary bills and the transfer has not been easy for teachers and schools. The National Union of Teachers has been leading a fire fighting campaign in schools

across England and Wales to ensure that teachers are treated fairly when their schools transfer from Management Allowances to a reduced number of TLRs.

Over 49% of teachers in Northern Ireland have Management Allowances. If a new system of TLRs were introduced we would face a pay time bomb and many teachers in primary and secondary schools, would face substantial salary cuts. The INTO is determined to fight any proposals or plans that would seek to introduce TLRs to Northern Ireland.

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES TO BE REVIEWED



Tony Carlin

INTO recently met officers of the CCMS to discuss concerns relating to the advertising of teaching posts and the operation

of the recruitment and selection procedure for teachers and Principals. This emanated from concerns from prospective teachers that to obtain employment in a Catholic school they must, in addition to holding a recognised teaching qualification, be also able to positively demonstrate a

commitment to the Catholic ethos of the school.

As a result INTO has secured an agreement that the insertion of the phraseology requiring prospective teachers to demonstrate *"commitment to the religious and pastoral development of a Catholic school"* was an error and will not be used in the advertising of future teaching positions again.

CCMS have assured INTO that such a commitment will only be used in respect of leadership positions of Principal and Vice Principal. The assessment of this criterion will be through appropriate questioning at interview. INTO has obtained assurances from CCMS that no prospective candidate should have a

concern that matters relating to their personal life will be considered in any interview process or appointment. CCMS has assured INTO that if panels were to attempt to consider such factors the independent assessors and management officer would intervene immediately.

INTO has also raised other matters about the overall recruitment process. These included:

- The type and use of references;
- The use of management allowances as a criterion for appointment to Principal positions;
- The use of the PQH qualification;
- The training of recruitment panels.

As a result of these representations, INTO, has been invited to contribute to a review of the recruitment and selection procedure which is aimed at the transfer of teaching positions from CCMS to the Education and Skills Authority (ESA) in April 2008.

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As I see it



Frank Bunting,
Northern
Secretary

LMS

In a period of unprecedented change, the one constant remains the inequitable and discredited school funding mechanism of Local Management of Schools. Teachers' salaries should not be a factor within

schools' budgets and the historic under-funding of primary education must now be addressed.

MSA

Gavin Boyd, Chief Executive Designate, Education and Skills Authority, has expressed surprise at INTO opposition to Maximised School Autonomy (MSA). But this English model is really unfit for a

small schools' area like Northern Ireland. INTO believes the administrative workload and bureaucracy should be taken out of schools so that principals and teachers can concentrate on teaching and learning. Employing over a thousand bursars in schools is simply throwing good money after bad.

PAY PARITY

Teaching Allowances replaced Management Allowances with effect from 1 September 2006. Teaching Allowances are now permanent and are increased in line with the salary increase for teachers. Teachers' Pay will now increase by 2.5% on September 1st 2007 in line with pay parity in England and Wales.

Notwithstanding the fact that all the teachers' unions agreed the pay claim above, 2 unions NASUWT and ATL, sought to prevent teachers getting their back pay in December 2006. However, INTO and the majority of teachers' unions insisted on teachers getting paid

their salary increase rather than leave it in the DE coffers.

SCHOOL RATIONALISATION

This last month has seen a spate of school closures and amalgamations mostly based on the Bain school enrolment minimum figures. Big is not always beautiful and INTO is determined to challenge all future school rationalisation. There should only be rationalisation where it is clearly in the interest of pupils and teachers.

Teaching in a Time of Change

Our Education Minister needs to give a guarantee on teacher numbers in Northern Ireland projected forward for 10 years. A big welcome to Catriona Ruane, our new Education Minister. INTO looks forward to working with her and the re-established Assembly Education Committee. Teaching in a time of change requires job security.

Frank Bunting


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EQUALITY CONFERENCE REPORT



Patricia O'Farrell and Tony Carlin attend INTO's Equality Conference

The INTO Equality Conference was held in March 2007 in Tullamore. The theme was *Tackling Workplace Bullying: Dignity in the Workplace*.

The Conference was opened by the Minister for Labour Affairs, Tony Killeen TD and Mr. John Carr. The Equality Committee presented a paper on workplace bullying and keynote speaker Jacinta Kitt spoke on "Tackling Bullying and Harassment".

Other contributors included: Senator Joe O'Toole, Senator David Norris and Sheila Crowley, Chair of the INTO LGBT group. Patricia O'Farrell and Tony Carlin, Senior Official delivered a major session on the topic of "Moving On" from a bullying situation in school.

Tony Carlin said: "The conference reaffirmed the INTO view that bullies and bullying behaviour have no place in our schools or education system. INTO is fully committed to tackling the issue of the bullied teacher."

Sexual Orientation – The Hidden Bully

Ms Sheila Crowley, Chair of the INTO LGBT group spoke of her treatment as a lesbian teacher and how she had had to hide her sexual orientation from her school and colleagues in order to protect herself and her partner. Sheila outlined how she had been treated when her picture appeared in a recent issue of *Intouch* as the Chair of the INTO LGBT group. She spoke of the overt and covert prejudice that exists in schools towards teachers who are not heterosexual.

INTO is the only teachers' union in Ireland to establish a support group for teachers who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. The group meets regularly in Head Office. INTO recognises the sensitivities surrounding teachers' sexual orientations. The role of the group is to:

- Study equality legislation regarding the inadequate protection for gay teachers;
- Study and tackle homophobia among students and in staff rooms;
- Examining support for parents of LGBT children; and

- Prepare publications on LGBT teachers' in Irish schools.

The group meets approximately once per term and any INTO member who wishing to find out more about the group, its programme of meetings and how INTO can support LGBT teachers can contact head office or email the secretary at lgbt@into.ie.

Civic Leaders' Comments Endorse INTO Strategy

The conference saw the launch of a report from the Equality Committee in which political, community and education leaders wrote about workplace bullying and protecting dignity at work. At Northern Conference, delegates heard that calls to Northern Office regarding bullying of principals and teachers had more than doubled and had significantly contributed to teacher absence.

INTO asked a range of political leaders, educationalists, industrialists and other civic leaders to indicate why they considered adult bullying to be unacceptable.

Respondents included:

Professor Richard Barnett, University of Ulster

"We realize the incredibly negative impact that bullying and harassment can have, not only on the individuals concerned but also on the organisation itself. It is therefore in everyone's best interests that we have effective procedures for resolving complaints to the satisfaction of all parties."

Donal Flanagan, Chief Executive CCMS

"We place high value on teachers as the single most important resource available to the children educated in our schools and, as such, we seek to provide a positive environment where the dignity of each and every individual is recognised and valued in keeping with a vision and ethos for a Catholic education".

Sir Reg Empey MLA, Ulster Unionist Party

"Studies have shown that an employee who is the victim of workplace bullying will have their work rate and effectiveness cut by at least 50% - and at least 1 in 8 employees endure such bullying. Add to this the £12 billion cost of stress and stress-related illness associated with bullying, and its economic significance is clear."

Maria Eagle MP, Education Minister

"The Northern Ireland Civil Service is committed to creating and sustaining an environment where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, free from any form of inappropriate behaviour, and one in which all employees can give of their best."

It is vitally important that staff have the confidence to challenge such behaviour without fear of ridicule or reprisals and policies and procedures have been put in place to achieve this."

Gerry Adams MP, President, Sinn Féin

"Bullying poisons the workplace and can even destroy lives. This is equally true for general forms of bullying and for the more specific forms of sexist, homophobic, racist and sectarian harassment. The devastating effect on individual workers cannot be underestimated and I am told that it contributes to the high rate of suicide in our country. Workplace bullying definitely constitutes a health and safety risk and therefore anti-bullying policies and procedures should be mandatory in every workplace safety statement in Ireland".

Peter Hain MP Secretary of State

"Bullying in any situation is acceptable. Harassment or bullying in the workplace hits people at their core – and that is enough reason for tackling it. As leaders, we need to make clear that bullying behaviour won't be tolerated; as employers, we need to make sure the right support mechanisms, policies and procedures are in place to help promote dignity at work and effectively handle complaints."

Mark Durkan, MP MLA and Leader of the SDLP

"Every year in Northern Ireland, the Labour Relations Agency deals with more than 9,000 cases of workplace bullying. While this figure is shockingly high, the true story, in all likelihood, is even worse with many more cases going unreported". Mr Durkan concluded: "I commend INTO for shining a light on this crucial issue. It puts it up – not just to employers – but to all of us to ensure workers' rights are fully and properly upheld."

Tony Carlin, Senior Official, said that the report sent out two important messages to all those who were being bullied or were attempting to resolve a bullying situation – firstly that bullying costs and secondly that bullying must be dealt with firmly and decisively.

This report is opportune as it comes at a time when INTO is witnessing a two to three fold increase in reports of alleged bullying in schools. INTO would encourage teachers to obtain a copy of this report."

The conference proceedings and report is available on the INTO website, www.into.ie.

Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time (PPA)



Brendan Harron

The Curran Inquiry into teachers' salaries and conditions of service recommended that PPA time be introduced for teachers in Northern Ireland. Government has stated that there is no money to pay for its introduction. The upshot is that teachers in Northern Ireland are being denied what is recognised in the rest of the UK as an essential element of a teacher's job. INTO has striven to have PPA time introduced here. Brendan Harron, senior official INTO says the time has come for teachers to demand their entitlement.

What is PPA time?

PPA time is time set aside for teachers, during their timetabled teaching day, to allow them to carry out planning, preparation and assessment activities. Its purpose is to relieve some of the existing workload pressures on teachers by providing time during the school day for teachers to plan, prepare and assess work. This will reduce the amount of time spent on such vital work during evenings and at weekends.

Are all teachers entitled to PPA time?

In England and Wales, all teachers who have a teaching timetable are entitled to a minimum of 10% of their timetabled teaching time for planning, preparation and assessment.

The position of substitute/temporary teachers depends on the nature and duration of their engagement. Temporary teachers whose work includes preparation, planning and assessment of the classes which they take, should receive PPA time on the same basis as permanent teachers.

The teaching timetable of a Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) should not exceed 90% of the time during which a teacher, without management responsibilities, who has already successfully completed induction, could be expected to teach. NQTs will additionally be entitled to PPA time as 10% of this reduced timetable.

Part-time teachers are entitled to a minimum of 10% of their timetabled teaching time for PPA in the same way as their full time colleagues.

How much PPA time will I receive?

PPA time must be set as a minimum of 10% of a teacher's timetabled teaching time. The time spent teaching would be reduced accordingly. The way in which PPA is implemented will vary between schools and, in particular, between primary and secondary schools.

Primary Schools

Apart from other forms of directed time, such as morning assemblies, primary school teachers generally spend the whole week teaching particular classes. If you fall into this category, you will be entitled to a minimum of 10% of the time you spend teaching your class, as PPA time. In most cases this entitlement will correspond to approximately 2.5 hours or half a day per week.

Secondary Schools

Many teachers in secondary schools already receive non-contact time, even if they have no additional responsibilities. This may equate to exactly 10% of the time spent teaching or it may be more, or less, than this figure. If, for example, you teach for 20 hours a week and currently receive two hours' non-contact time per week for planning, preparation or assessment, then this time simply becomes your PPA time allocation. If you teach for 20 hours a week and currently receive fewer than two hours per week non-contact time, that time would have to be increased to at least two hours to meet the PPA time entitlement, and your current 20 hours teaching would be reduced accordingly. If, however, you already receive more than two hours per week specifically for planning, preparation and assessment you must not have your entitlement reduced.

Can my principal direct me to remain on the school premises during my PPA time?

PPA time counts towards the 1265 hours of 'directed time'. Principals can direct teachers to remain on the school premises during school sessions. INTO would expect, however, expect head teachers to agree reasonable requests to carry out work on planning, preparation and assessment outside school if this was appropriate.

How should PPA time be allocated?

It should be provided as part of your normal timetable, during the time when pupils are taught, not during other forms of directed time. It must not be bolted on before or after pupil sessions. It must be allocated in blocks of no less than 30 minutes.

Part-time teachers with limited teaching commitments, for example, several hours a week, should be given the opportunity to take their PPA time on a fortnightly rather than a weekly basis. Such teachers may wish to request to take their PPA time at even longer intervals, if this results in a more usable 'block' of time.

Can I be called upon to provide cover for absent colleagues during my PPA time?

No, PPA time is protected and cannot be encroached upon by any obligation to provide cover for absent colleagues.

How should PPA time be made available to teachers?

PPA time should, in general, be made available through the employment of more qualified teachers. It should not lead to any worsening of the quality of education provided to pupils. In schools in England and Wales, enrichment afternoons, whereby teachers receive their PPA time while children are offered a variety of 'enrichment activities', such as music, art or sport, are used. They are introduced within the existing timetabled teaching week. Teachers cannot be asked to relinquish their PPA time in order to supervise *enrichment afternoons*.

Do I have to set or mark work, or deal with pupils' misbehaviour which occurs during my PPA sessions?

It is essential that the introduction of PPA does not trigger additional workload for teachers. Teachers receiving PPA should not be burdened with planning and marking work being undertaken by pupils during that time. Teachers should not be expected to deal with immediate discipline problems which arise during these sessions, since this would negate the intended workload reduction.

REDUNDANCIES

With changes in anti-discriminatory legislation the policy, procedure and practice for handling redundancies in schools will be reviewed.

What is a Board of Governors required to do in a redundancy situation?

A Board of Governors has a statutory duty to disclose in writing to INTO the following information concerning proposals for redundancies so that they can play a constructive part in the consultation process:

- The reasons for the proposals;
- The numbers and descriptions of employees whom it is proposed to dismiss as redundant;
- The total number of employees of any such description employed at the establishment in question;
- The proposed method of selecting the employees who may be dismissed;
- The proposed method of carrying out the dismissals, with due regard to any agreed procedure, including the period over which the dismissals are to take effect; and
- The proposed method of calculating the amount of any redundancy payments which the employer proposes to make (other than those required by statute).

The Board of Governors must allow time for meaningful consultation to take place. Such consultation must include consultation about ways of:

- Avoiding the dismissals;
- Reducing the numbers of employees to be dismissed; and
- Mitigating the consequences of the dismissals.

This consultation must be undertaken by the Governors with a view to reaching agreement with the INTO representatives.

INTO advises members and representatives to scrutinise letters of redundancy carefully and to advise their Northern Committee representative of any concerns relating to the criteria to be applied or the process being used.

Ready Reckoner for Calculating Number of Weeks' Statutory Redundancy Payments

		Service (Years)																			
Age		2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
17*	1																				
18	1	1½																			
19	1	1½	2																		
20	1	1½	2	2½	-																
21	1	1½	2	2½	3	-															
22	1	1½	2	2½	3	3½	-														
23	1½	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	-													
24	2	2½	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	-												
25	2	3	3½	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	-											
26	2	3	4	4½	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	-										
27	2	3	4	5	5½	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	-									
28	2	3	4	5	6	6½	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	-								
29	2	3	4	5	6	7	7½	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	-							
30	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	8½	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	-						
31	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	9½	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	-					
32	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	10½	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	-				
33	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	11½	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	-			
34	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12½	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	-		
35	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	13½	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½		
36	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	14½	15	15½	16	16½	17		
37	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	15½	16	16½	17	17½		
38	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	16½	17	17½	18		
39	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	17½	18	18½		
40	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	18½	19		
41	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	19½		
42	2½	3½	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½		
43	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
44	3	4½	5½	6½	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½		
45	3	4½	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22		
46	3	4½	6	7½	8½	9½	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½		
47	3	4½	6	7½	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
48	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	11½	12½	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½		
49	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24		
50	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	14½	15½	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½		
51	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25		
52	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	17½	18½	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½		
53	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26		
54	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	20½	21½	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½		
55	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22	23	24	25	26	27		
56	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	23½	24½	25½	26½	27½		
57	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25	26	27	28		
58	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	26½	27½	28½		
59	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28	29		
60	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	29½		
61+	3	4½	6	7½	9	10½	12	13½	15	16½	18	19½	21	22½	24	25½	27	28½	30		

Review of PRC

Two reviews will take place this year on Premature Retirement Compensation [PRC] for teachers - one in Northern Ireland and a wider UK review. The Northern Ireland Review commences in April and will report in December 2007. Any recommendations will be subject to negotiation with the NITC teacher unions but are likely to be implemented from 1 April 2008, in time for the proposed establishment of the Education and Skills Authority[ESA].

The key item under review is 'Hard Charging.' This relates to how a school making the recommendation for a voluntary redundancy and the funding authority [ESA] will pay for the enhanced costs of the premature retirement compensation package.

Members will be kept updated with any developments in this area.

'Enough is Enough' campaign

The INTO campaign against work overload and bureaucracy continues. Check the website www.into.ie for details. The latest inclusion in the campaign is the Attendance Procedure. This is out of date and overdue for review. Members are advised not to attend 'Return to work' interviews nor references to occupational health doctors or psychiatrists. The employing authorities recommending the latter are more in need of a spell on the couch than hard-pressed teachers.

NORTHERN COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON GERRY MURPHY'S ADDRESS TO NORTHERN CONFERENCE 2007

Change

Never before in the history of education in Northern Ireland have teachers and administrators found themselves in the eye of such a "perfect storm of change".



Gerry Murphy

We are facing the introduction of:

- A new statutory curriculum;
- The implementation of an entitlement curriculum;
- Post primary review and the political football which selection has become;
- The potential of major infrastructural change in the schools estate;
- The Sir George Bain report on the introduction of "area based planning" for A Shared Future and
- The Review of Public Administration and the establishment of one employing authority for education under the Education and Skills Authority.

All of these represent significant challenges for teachers, support staff



Brendan Harron, Senior Official with John Carr, General Secretary

and all involved in education. Teachers do not reject change; we are not what Harold Wilson described as the "architects of decay" however we would remind our education partners of the quotation from the Novelist Ellen Glasgow:

"All change is not growth, as all movement is not forward".

Academic Selection

Selection has blighted the education of generations of children in Northern Ireland. From its inception INTO has opposed this "transfer merry-go-round". It was with the deepest disappointment that INTO noted that the Education Order 2006 was to be amended on the basis of a side-deal between the Prime Minister and the Democratic Unionist Party undoing the courageous and farsighted decision taken by the last locally elected Education Minister. The issue of children's transfer to post primary schools being "morphed" into a "political football" is a new low even for politics in the Six Counties.

INTO calls on all the political parties, after the election to deal with this issue in a statesperson like and expeditious manner.



Brendan Sadlier, Lisburn Branch

Bain

INTO organised a special consultative conference in January 2007 with Sir George Bain on the implications of his report for teachers and children. INTO does not accept the minimum thresholds of 125, 140 and 500 pupils for primary and post primary schools and regrets the ministerial rush to endorse these findings. However, area based planning in the context of "A Shared Future" is very much where our



Al Mackie, former Northern Secretary with Anne Madden, South Derry Branch

society should be moving and we welcome this development.

The Northern Committee emergency motion on Sir George Bain's report and the DE consultation document on "Sustainable Schools" gives us the opportunity to reflect and develop policy in this strategic area.

Bullying

A major success during the year was the revision of the "Bullying and Harassment Procedure: Dignity at Work". Regrettably, bullying is prevalent within both education and schools. We witness on a daily basis an abuse of power relationships, a lack of partnership and collaborative problem solving. The result is broken lives of teachers, ill health and teacher absence. Extraordinarily in some of the schools where the problems of bullying are greatest our inspectorate visit and publish reports on the outstanding levels of teaching and learning that go on these adverse circumstances.

This is of enormous credit to our members. However, bullying should not persist in schools for prolonged periods. Notwithstanding the revised bullying and harassment procedure INTO has found it necessary to ballot our members in some schools for industrial action and strike action.

**Bullies beware.
INTO will name and shame you.**

There is no place in teaching for irredeemable bullies. The sooner Boards of Governors act decisively on this the better it will be for all in education.

RESOLUTIONS PASSED AT NORTHERN CONFERENCE 2007

1. Conference strongly condemns the reckless nature with which the education of our children was used as a political tool by the British and Irish government in the negotiations that led to the Saint Andrews Agreement.

Northern Conference restates its policy that:

- INTO is totally opposed to academic selection at 11;
- Any retention of academic selection will render meaningless the whole Revised Curriculum at Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to:

- (i) Meet with political parties in the island of Ireland to ensure that educational principles rather than political expediency shape the Education of our children;



Des McDonagh, Northern Committee

- (ii) Seek to ensure, once and for all, the abolition of academic selection;
- (iii) Ballot the members for industrial action, up to and including strike action, should any form of academic selection continue past 2008; and



Don Campbell, Northern Committee

- (iv) Ballot for industrial action in the event of any attempt to use pupil profiles as selection instruments for post-primary transfer.
2. Conference recognises that the Curran Independent Enquiry into teachers' salaries and conditions of service provided an expert analysis for the contextualisation of the "National Agreement" into Northern Ireland and expresses its serious concern at the non-implementation of key recommendations on Planning, Preparation and Assessment (PPA) Time, relief for teaching principals and general workload, bureaucracy and teacher/principal work-life balance.



Eddie McArdle, GTC, Marian Matchett, Chief Inspector and John Miskelly, Chair Management Side

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to seek the speedy implementation of the Curran recommendations, particularly on Planning, Preparation and Assessment Time, which has been a statutory right for all teachers in England and Wales from 1 September 2005.

Conference authorises the Northern Committee to take all the

necessary steps to achieve the implementation of these recommendations and to seek the approval of the Central Executive Committee to hold a ballot for industrial action, up to and including strike action.



Frank Bunting addresses the Conference

3. Conference notes recent strategies and proposals from employing authorities for rationalisation of school provision in the primary and post primary sectors.

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to take immediate steps to:

- (i) Protect the teaching profession from unnecessary redundancies;
- (ii) Enter into dialogue with the Education Minister and the Employing Authorities on this matter;

Use this opportunity to utilise teacher numbers more effectively to reduce pupil teacher ratios; adequately resource the mainstreaming of children with Special Educational Needs in mainstream classes by providing employment opportunities for Newly Qualified Teachers.

4. Conference notes with concern the worrying increase in assaults on teachers and the increasing reports of violent and disruptive pupils in the classroom.

Conference urges Northern Committee to engage with the Health and Safety Executive to develop a range of policies and procedure for schools that will ensure that:

- (i) Assaults and accidents are properly recorded;
- (ii) Employers are made fully aware of their responsibilities in the area of teacher health and welfare;
- (iii) Support, counselling and welfare services are developed to support victims of assaults;
- (iv) Appropriate action is taken against the perpetrators of assaults on teaching staff; and
- (v) To ensure that directions are issued to all members faced with difficult and violent pupils, to ensure their safety, and that of pupils in their care.



Gerry Murphy presents the draw prize to Jean Anne Marnier

5. INTO congratulates the Department of Education for undertaking its professional review of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice as called for by Conference last year.

Conference demands:

- (i) That all new proposals are work-proofed to ensure that they reduce the levels of bureaucracy for teachers;
- (ii) The Department of Education and Employing Authorities provide teachers with access to suitable professional development to meet the increasingly complex needs of children in mainstream classes.

6. Conference views with grave concern the lack of adequate resources and training for the implementation of the Revised Curriculum in primary and post primary schools in Northern Ireland.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to demand that CCEA



Gordon Topping, NEELB, Kevin Smyth, Northern Committee

and DE provide as a matter of urgency:

- (i) Appropriate schemes of work and policies to support the implementation of the Revised Curriculum in September 2007;
- (ii) Adequate funding to provide the necessary resources;
- (iii) That all training takes into account the planning and management implications of composite classes especially in the Foundation Stage.



Susan McNamee, Tyrone Central Branch

7. Northern Conference supports in principle the development of the Pupil Profile.

Conference demands:

- (i) Northern Committee scrutinise and rigorously examine any proposals in relation to composition and use of Pupil Profiles, particularly with a view to ensuring that such profiles are not used as a selection tool further increasing teachers' bureaucratic workload;
- (ii) Pupil Profiles be viewed as a formative and qualitative report of a child's progress and not as a summative report

- used to place pupils in a particular school;
- (iii) The process of developing a Pupil Profile should be both meaningful and manageable for teachers; and
- (iv) Additional resources, in terms of time, training and computer equipment be available to teachers in order for them to produce the Pupil Profile.



Des McDonagh, Northern Committee, John Dickson, DE, La Verne Montgomery, Mark Mawhiney, DE and Des Rainey

8. Conference requests Northern Committee to lobby for the implementation of Curran Part 2, Paragraph 78 which recommends that a support scheme should be introduced to assist all unemployed teachers in their first year after qualification to have a guaranteed full time teaching post for a minimum of a year.



9. Conference condemns the haphazard manner in which the Extended Schools Project was introduced, and the inconsistency in the manner in which it has been administered by the ELBs.

Conference notes the danger of division and resentment this project may cause teachers.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to work to ensure



Dennis and Noreen Bohane with General Treasurer Sheila Nunan

equity and fairness in the administration of this project in all schools.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to ensure that members are informed that they are not obliged to undertake any non-contractual duties or associated duties with the extended schools provision.

10. Conference notes with concern the lack of funding offered for EAL Services in both Primary and Post-Primary schools.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to seek adequate funding for EAL services across both sectors.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to urgently meet with DENI with a view to training teachers (as a part of CPD) to deal with the growing numbers of pupils without English as a mother tongue.

11. Conference notes with concern the increasing problems for teachers in primary and post primary schools associated with the increasing number of children with learning, behavioural and/or emotional difficulties.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to:

- (i) Prepare a report on this matter for Northern Conference 2008;
- (ii) Make representations to Education and Library Boards to recruit additional Educational Psychologists, so

that teachers are not placed in the onerous position of having to decide which children with similar learning, behavioural or emotional difficulties have priority; and

- (iii) Make representations to the Department of Education and employing authorities whereby schools will have additional support/resources to deal with these children when they assault pupils or teachers as under the Special Educational Needs Disability Order (SENDO), the normal disciplinary procedures of schools may not apply.



Daisy et al

12. Conference instructs Northern Committee to press DENI and the Education Minister to take the opportunity of falling rolls and the spare capacity of teachers to make a real decrease in class sizes.

13. Conference instructs Northern Committee to press for:
- (i) Adequate funding and resources for teachers in small schools;
 - (ii) That funding be ring-fenced to enable teaching Principals to have sufficient non-teaching time out of class, on a weekly basis, to deal with their management duties, as recommended in Curran 2.



John Carr, General Secretary

Conference notes:

The implementation of the Planning and Assessment component of the Revised Curriculum explicitly requires the extensive use of ICT by teachers; and that the current provision of computer hardware is in no way adequate to meet such increased use.

Conference calls upon the Department of Education to increase computer hardware provision in schools in line with the additional requirements of the Revised NI Curriculum.

15. Conference restates its concerns about the unacceptable / workload and administrative requirements associated with Early Professional Development (EPD) for Newly Qualified Teachers and teacher tutors in schools.

Conference calls for these concerns to be taken up with the Education Minister and for a report on this matter to be provided to Northern Conference 2008.



The President, Denis Bohane, addresses Conference IMG

16. Conference notes with concern the lack of focus and commitment in the Education Minister's response in June 2006 to the Pre-School Education Consultation document.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to campaign for:

- (i) All pre-school settings to be teacher-led;
- (ii) Full-time Nursery places for all children to be provided in their pre-school year;
- (iii) Suitable educational provision to be made for 2-3 year olds;



Mary Cahillane, Barney Magill, Gerry Murphy, Mark McTaggart, Tony Carlin and Charlie Glenn in the Conference sunshine

- (iv) Application of a revised, workload proofed, SENDO Code of Practice in all pre-school settings.

17. Conference notes with concern the Strategic Review of Catholic Maintained Primary and Nursery Education Provision that is being undertaken by CCMS.

Conference demands that, as a matter of natural justice, the CCMS fully consult their partners in education ie the parents, teachers and the Teacher Unions, before any rationalisation of schools takes place and that confidential consultation with teacher unions should take place at all stages of the rationalisation process.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to monitor said review, and to campaign, to ensure that any such process is open and transparent.

18. Conference opposes the current Government strategy of deregulation and privatisation of public services.

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to organise a campaign of opposition to this strategy and to approach other teaching and public sector unions with a view to organising a common campaign on this matter.

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Mary Hughes, incoming Vice-Chair of Northern Committee

19. Conference opposes the current Government strategy of deregulation and privatisation of public services.

Conference calls on the Northern Committee to organise a campaign of opposition to this strategy and to approach other teaching and public sector unions with a view to organising a common campaign on this matter.

20. Conference condemns the continued practice of using promotional allowances as criteria in the selection process for Principals and Vice-Principals as it is discriminatory.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to ensure that this practice is discontinued.

21. Conference would like to highlight the insidious position schools in the SEELB region find themselves in with relation to the Draconian cuts forced on them by the government imposed Commissioners in particular Special Education schools which have borne the brunt of staff losses.



Mary presents Gerry with a gift

Conference requests that the Northern Committee meets with these Commissioners to strenuously convey the dismay the membership feel at this.



Newry Branch delegates were in fine form

Conference asks that the Northern Committee meet with the Chief Executive and the Commissioners and bring to their attention that the overspend in the SEELB budget is not as a result of special schools mismanaging their budgets but due to an actual need for the services provided, and that this need has not vanished.



Tony Lappin, CEC Sheila Nunan, General Treasurer and Gerry Ruddy

Emergency Motion

Conference notes the implications of the Bain Report for schools and teachers in Northern Ireland.

Conference notes:

- (i) The new concept of integrating schools;
- (ii) Area based planning for new school buildings;
- (iii) The need to implement "A Shared Future" in education;
- (iv) Proposals to improve and enhance the school's estate.

Conference is seriously concerned about the high thresholds proposed for primary schools – rural and urban, secondary schools and 6th forms.

Conference calls on Northern Committee to make a robust response to both the Bain Report and the Department of Education's consultation proposals on "Sustainable Schools" which will ensure:

- (a) Numerical thresholds are not a trigger for school review;
- (b) Abolition of Local Management of Schools;



Representatives of the Press including Peter Henshaw and Simon Doyle



INTO staff: Helen, Christine and Clare

- (c) New arrangements for school funding based on the Scottish model;
- (d) Clarification on the "maximised support autonomy" concept which must be work load proofed;
- (e) Guaranteed commitment from the Education Minister on teacher numbers to ensure the best education for our children.

FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Northern Office receives a high number of queries from members who would like to move to part-time or flexible working. A teacher does not have a legal right to move from a full-time to a part-time contract.

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS?

Part-Time working

A teacher can apply to the Board of Governors and request a move to part-time working. It is a good idea to discuss the matter with your principal in the first instance, as the Board of Governors will be influenced by the principal's views. You should make clear the reasons for your request. The decision is entirely a matter for the Board of Governors.

Job Sharing

Job sharing is a method of working where two teachers share one full-time post. A teacher can apply to be considered for a job sharing arrangement or two teachers can apply together for a job sharing arrangement. Job sharing is different from part-time work in that, although the hours worked by each teacher are part-time, together the teachers take joint responsibility for the full-time post and are regarded as a full-time unit. In assessing each application the Board of Governors will first consider:

- The needs of the school;
- The welfare and education needs of the pupils.

Temporary Variation of Contract

A teacher can request a temporary variation of contract for a specific period e.g. 12 months. Such arrangements are becoming increasingly common and usually operate for a 12-month period, with an option to extend it for a further 12 months.

Flexible Working

If you have a child under the age of six, or a disabled child under the age of 18, you have a statutory right to ask for flexible working arrangements and to have your request seriously considered. You could apply to work mornings/afternoons only, to work fixed/variable hours or to work only on certain days. If your employer rejects your request, they must demonstrate a clear business case for so doing.

Career Break

A permanent teacher, who has completed at least three year's service, can apply for a Career Break, which is a period of special leave of absence, without salary, for not less than one year and not more than three years. A Career Break will not normally be permitted for the purpose of taking alternative salaried employment.

This article was submitted by Mona Kelly, Secretary of Tyrone Central before Northern Conference 2007. She says they seldom table motions at Conference! Well this year Tyrone Central with its vibrancy, youth and professionalism showed us all how it's done. This year's award for being the best branch at conference goes to Tyrone Central.

I have been Secretary of Tyrone Central for the last 10 years and I think we have very enjoyable meetings, so I thought I would let the rest of you hear about us. We have around 300 members and although we seldom table motions at Conference we feel we are an active group. We usually have around 24 /30 members at every meeting and we always have a very pleasant gathering and a bit of fun. You may have gathered that I am now retired and only working part time so have more time to write to you.

TYRONE CENTRAL IN MOTION

Tables, chairs, drinks at the bar,
Notes from last term in the boot of the car!
McGurk's bar, near the Lidl store
Plenty of parking beside the front door.

We plan the meetings for 8 o'clock,
But Brendan Harron always gets a shock,
He drives from Derry with briefcase in hand,
His news from the office - typed up so grand.

But when he gets there prompt on time,
No-one but the barman— His accomplice in crime!!
Drinks dispensed but the crew are late,
Brendan won't mind – he will always wait.

Rita then appears with a few more on tow,
She'll not drive to Omagh at night - you know!!
Dressed up so smart and her boys are well fed,
Her notes all ready, the latest news in her head.

Then all progress to the bar for the tipple,
Pat Morris can always raise a ripple,
A laugh, smart answer and "Hellos" all said,
We all settle down and the minutes are read.

We don't go "through the chair" or stand to address,
No "order", "quiet please" or hecklers to repress,
Civilised chat with fun and a laugh,
We hear lots of stories from classrooms and staff.

Some ask questions and wonder in awe,
At new rules and plans and work schemes to draw,
Come 10 o'clock, sandwiches and tea are at hand,
We might have a tipple too –You do understand!!

Our meeting now over but the craic goes on,
Arthur closes at 12 – by then we are gone,
A late night was had but we have survived,
Tomorrow morning we won't need revived.

That's it –The term is all sorted out,
Conference and Congress were also talked about,
Delegates, bedrooms and travel all prepared,
Come March, then Easter we'll see how we fared.

Why don't you all come to our next night in town?
I bet you will laugh and there won't be a frown,
Interesting folk to meet, tales to relate,
You may even feel free to add to the debate.

I'll let you know with a letter or note,
They may come printed – definitely not wrote!!
Gather up some friends to come and join in,
Remember there's a bar with a tonic and gin!!

AGM in January is the next in line,
A buffet and snacks should go down just fine,
I'll try to get the notes out on time,
BUT

The agenda and minutes will NOT be in rhyme!!!

Mona Kelly
Tyrone Central Branch Secretary



Florence O'Kane, Rita Fox, Anne Quinn and Jarlath McElholm enjoying the company

School Reps Course:

- Monday 23 and Tuesday 24 April 2007 - Silverbirch Hotel, Omagh

Seminars for Principals and Vice-Principals:

Venue 1: MALONE LODGE HOTEL, BELFAST

Date: TUESDAY 1 MAY 2007
Time: 2.00PM – 4.00PM

Venue 2: CANAL COURT HOTEL, NEWRY

Date: WEDNESDAY 9 MAY 2007
Time: 2.00PM – 4.00PM

Venue 3: CITY HOTEL HOTEL, DERRY

Date: TUESDAY 15 MAY 2007
Time: 2.00PM – 4.00PM

Bain and Irish Medium Education

- Thursday 19 April 2007
Greenvale Hotel, Cookstown, 5.00 – 7.00pm

INTO Golf Competition

INTO District 1 & 2 Golf Competition will be held on:

Monday 2nd July 2007 in Newtownstewart Golf Club

Tee off time:
1.00 – 2.00pm

Competition:
Members
Retired Members
Visitors

£18.00 per person (includes meal)

All Welcome

For further information contact:

Barnet Magill 90 777742
Des McDonagh 90 849797
Tony Lappin 38 336334

NORTHERN COMMITTEE CONTACT DETAILS

AREA	NAME	HOME No.	SCHOOL No.
CEC 1	Mary Cahillane	9022 0349	-
CEC 2	Tony Lappin	3833 6334	9261 1732
BFC	Patrick McAllister	9445 2728	3884 0825
NEELB Primary	Don Campbell	2763 8472	2763 8318
NEELB Post-Primary	Barney Magill	9077 7742	9084 8433
SEELB Primary	Kevin Smyth	9020 1571	9030 1714
SEELB Post-Primary	John McNulty	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	Damien Walls	7126 9728	7128 5000

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NEW PENSION SCHEME



Frank Bunting, Northern Secretary

The Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) changed on 1 April 2007. This is as a result of agreement by the five teachers' unions and the Department of Education. The revised scheme aims to be more relevant to the needs of members and employers with important new flexibilities and some existing provisions removed.

Teachers' Pensions – New Flexibilities

A new phased retirement provisions allows members to draw up to 75% of their accrued benefits, while continuing to work in a reduced capacity. This "Winding Down scheme" was a key recommendations of the Curran Independent Enquiry into teachers' salaries and conditions of service.

While calculating the salary on which benefits will be paid, Teachers' Pensions will now take into account salary in the **ten** years leading up to retirement. This aims to support those members whose highest salary is not in the final years before retirement – such as those who want to move to a post of lower responsibility without affecting their pension.

The new scheme also allows employers to buy additional pension on behalf of employees. This will enable employers to support teachers in managing their

transition to retirement in a way that suits both parties.

Contribution Rates

- Member contribution 6.4%
- Employer contribution 14.1%

Employer contribution rates to the TPS increased on 1 January 2007 to 14.1% with member rates increasing to 6.4%.

Retirement Dates

From 1 April 2007, new entrants to the TPS will have Normal Pension Age (NPA) of 65 and will accrue benefits of a rate of **1/60th per year**. No automatic lump sum will be payable, although members will be able to commute annual pension into a lump sum at a rate of £1.00 of pension for £12.00 of lump sum.

Existing members will continue to accrue benefits at a rate of **1/80th per year**, plus a lump sum of 3/80ths. They will now have the option to commute annual pension into more lump sum up to a maximum of 25% of the fund value.

New Ill Health Retirement Arrangements

The criteria for being awarded ill health retirement pension is not changing. However, a 2-tier ill health arrangement is now in operation. This means that the level of benefits paid will now depend upon the seriousness of the member's condition.

- Partial Incapacity Benefits –

Members who are too ill to teach but may undertake other gainful employment outside of teaching will receive the immediate payment of their accrued benefits, but without the enhancement. This is known as Partial Incapacity Benefit (PIB).

- Total Incapacity Benefits –

Members who are too ill to undertake any gainful employment will receive immediate payment of their benefits plus an enhancement equal to half the prospective service up to the member's Normal Pension Age (NPA). This is known as Total Incapacity Benefit (TIB).

Here, for example, a 30-year old teacher with a NPA of 60, would receive 15 years enhancement on top of their accrued service.

Automatic Scheme Membership for Part-timers

From now on all new entrants to teaching, whether part-time or full-time, will automatically become members of the scheme unless they chose to opt out and complete the appropriate form. INTO strongly recommends that all teachers maintain their membership of the TPS.

Buying Additional Annual Pension

The arrangement which allowed members to buy Past and Current Added years is no longer available. All members in pensionable service are now able to buy amounts of additional annual pension to increase benefits payable at their NPA. Members are also allowed to take this additional pension earlier than NPA but this will be subject to an actuarial reduction.

Actuarial reductions are now available in Northern Ireland. They are financially punitive to members and INTO advises teachers **against** using this facility. The "Winding Down Scheme" provisions are more attractive and more teacher-friendly.

Members will be able to buy up to £5,000 of additional annual pension in multiples of £250. Employers can buy additional pension with a lump sum, although members can pay by a lump sum or by monthly salary deductions. Members can elect to buy either personal benefits only or personal and dependents' benefits. The cost of the additional pension will depend on a number of factors including sex and age. Illustrative costs will be available on the INTO website soon.



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