

intouch



Time for action

InTouch sits down with Mary Robinson to discuss climate justice



Primary teachers deserve better

Budget 2020 showed our government planning for the worst while hoping for the best early last month. Since then, ongoing Brexit discussions continue to create huge uncertainty for all of us in Ireland. Despite this economic uncertainty we must knuckle down and work to ensure that the education system is capable of meeting the challenges ahead. It is obvious from their failure to meaningfully address INTO's staffing, funding and school leadership priorities that

so much to the system throughout the recession, must not be taken for granted. The lack of promotional opportunities is demoralising for the profession and makes it impossible for school leaders to share their heavy loads. The workload burden on teaching principals cannot be carried without adequate release time for administration. The failure of the current government to provide additional supports to schools dealing with a high prevalence of educational disadvantage is unforgivable.

INTO met other stakeholders and fellow education unions within days of the budget emerging. We are determined to work closely with all of the partners in education to ensure that education becomes a priority for the next government. While government spending plans for public services in 2020 are lacking any ambition, we must ensure that the next government's plans for spending on public services and public servants from 2021 are completely different. By next summer we will have a new government and we hope to have negotiated a new public service pay agreement. Existing and aspiring public representatives must be left in no doubt. Our school leaders must be paid fairly and treated fairly. Teachers who entered the profession from 2011 to 2014 must be paid equally with those who began in 2010. Every teacher must receive pay rises and promotional opportunities. And our most necessitous pupils who come from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds must be given a fair start in primary education.

The good will of our members, who have given so much to the system throughout the recession, must not be taken for granted

the government believes that our system is fit for purpose. We who work in the system know the real truth – Irish primary schools will still have the largest class sizes in the Eurozone in September 2020. Irish primary school leaders have been told by government to carry on alone, without the support of assistant principals or the time for administrative work. Expenditure on Irish primary education remains towards the bottom of the European league and children with additional needs are not provided with therapeutic and care supports vital for full inclusion. Most worryingly, our DEIS schools have been completely ignored by government in recent years. The only class sizes this government hasn't reduced are those in DEIS band one schools.

Budget 2020 has left many INTO members who worked tirelessly lobbying politicians for months, seething with anger. Members have made it clear at their branch meetings that they want INTO to demonstrate to government that the good will of our members, who have given

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INTO General Secretary

intouch



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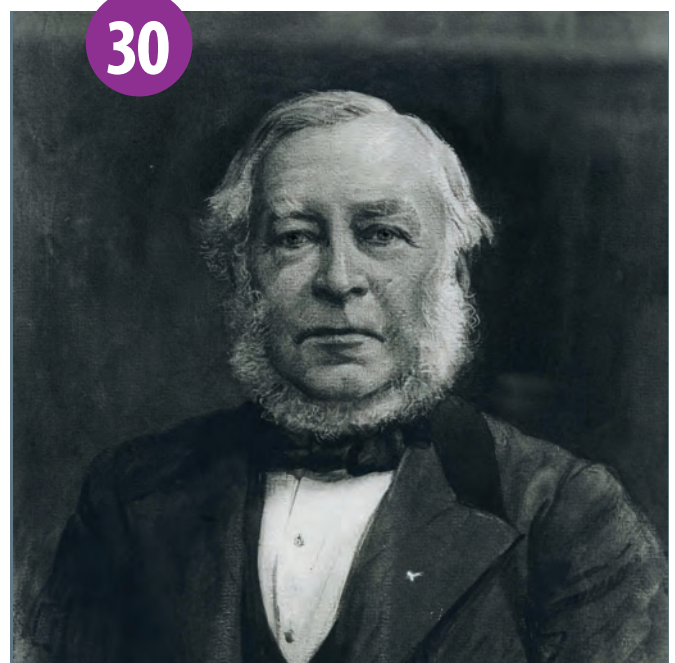
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Contents

7 News

- 9 Changes to INTO committees
- 10 President's dinner
- 13 Footsteps to end poverty entries
- 17 Tidy Town winners
- 19 Launch of online music archive
- Sign petition for affordable housing



53

21 Incredible Edibles

23 Retirements

- 24 Féilte
- 27 DCU Alumni Awards
- INSPA photography competition

34 Heritage in Schools

- 35 Sion Mills pupils for climate action
- 38 Wellbeing

41 Trade Union Voices

43 Advice

- 45 Some Irish faces of WWI
- 48 Developmental Language Disorder
- 50 Christmas in Spain
- 51 Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST)

52 Cumann na mBunscol

- 53 Inclusion in physical education
- 54 European schools
- 55 Winter poems
- 57 Gaeilge



50

58 Reviews

61 Finishing Touches



51



34

10

things you should know

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1 Mary Robinson discusses climate change. Page 32</p> <p>2 Flat-rate expenses are being abolished. Page 9</p> <p>3 Job sharing and teacher exchange registers open at end of November. Page 7</p> <p>4 Coverage of the Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference. Page 14</p> <p>5 Guide to writing motions for Congress. Page 39</p> | <p>6 Job vacancies in INTO Head Office. Page 28</p> <p>7 It's 200 years since Vere Foster's birth. Page 30</p> <p>8 Vere Foster medal winners. Page 13</p> <p>9 Focus on DEIS - The Challenger Programme. Page 47</p> <p>10 Register for member-only content on INTO website. Page 19</p> |
|--|---|



INTO's chosen Christmas charity

In lieu of sending Christmas cards this year, INTO will donate €2,000 to the Neurofibromatosis Association of Ireland (NF Ireland).

NF is a condition that causes tumors to form in the nervous system, with potential complications, including hearing and vision problems, and

possible learning disabilities. 50% of new diagnoses occur without any other member of the family having NF. This means that potentially any baby is at risk of developing NF, although the condition affects only about 1 in 2,500 of the population. The association provides a comprehensive range of supports to

assist patients and their families including a 24-hour helpline, literature, and genetic counselling services. Its primary aim is to inform sufferers and their families, letting them know they are not alone with the condition. More information about neurofibromatosis and the work of this charity is available on www.nfaireland.ie.

Seeking a job-share or a temporary reassignment?

Please be advised the closing date to apply to your school for temporary reassignment and job-share is 1 February (as per *Circular 0054/2019*).

From late November INTO members will be able to avail of a new, free job-share and temporary reassignment register in the staffing and appointments section of our website. These registers will give members an opportunity to seek potential partners for job-share/temporary reassignment for the 2020-2021 school year.

Members will have autonomy over their own adverts.

Adverts will not be accepted by phone or by email, but you will have control of placing, editing and

deleting your own advert on the website at any time.

Members will need to log in to the website to place their adverts.

Please note that the INTO has no role in matching or approving job-share and temporary reassignment arrangements and the registers will simply be there as a tool if you wish to use them. Teachers are free to make arrangements using alternative sources.

The job-share scheme is outlined in chapter 8 and the temporary re-assignment scheme is detailed in chapter 9 of DES *Circular 0054/2019* https://www.into.ie/app/uploads/2019/08/clo054_2019.pdf.

Standardised tests

The INTO Education team would like to talk to schools that administer tests twice a year

The INTO, in collaboration with CARPE (DCU), have carried out a research project on standardised testing in primary schools. The report is available on the INTO website. According to the data, standardised tests are administered both in summer and in the autumn in a small number of schools. The INTO would like to explore further the reasoning behind such school policies and their impact on practice and on pupil learning. If your school has a policy of administering standardised tests in both summer and autumn (not necessarily to the same children) please contact Deirbhile Nic Craith or Aoife Mullen at education@into.ie We would be interested in hearing from you. Mile buíochas.

The LGBT+ Inclusive School – Equality Conference

The INTO Equality Conference will take place in Whites Hotel in Wexford on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 February. The theme of this year's conference is 'The LGBT+ Inclusive School'.

The conference will explore LGBT+ teachers' workplace experiences in our schools and the awareness of non-LGBT+ teachers of their colleagues' issues. It will also explore the implementation of the *Anti-bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* with regard to homophobic and transphobic bullying, how to support children and teachers with gender variance and who are transitioning between genders, as well as how to normalise LGBT+ as an identity through the primary curriculum.

To support the conference, the INTO Equality Committee, in collaboration with the INTO LGBT+ Teachers' Group, will be disseminating an online survey on the above considerations to all members with emails on the INTO membership database. This survey will issue in early December. We would encourage all members to engage with the survey and complete it so as to allow INTO a reliable profile of LGBT+ considerations in our primary schools.

If you have any queries about the conference please contact the INTO Equality Officer, Alison Gilliland, at alisong@into.ie or the secretary of the INTO LGBT+ Teachers' Group, Sean Hegarty, at intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com.

Flat rate expenses to be abolished from January

Claim your allowances for previous years if you haven't already done so.

Have you claimed your allowances back to 2015?

The Revenue Commissioners have set out their intention to abolish flat-rate expense allowance for teachers from 1 January 2020. After that date, the only expense claimable by teachers will be in respect of the yearly registration fee with the Teaching Council.

The amount of the allowance being abolished stands at €518 per annum for a

full-time teacher and €608 for a principal teacher.

Attempts to preserve the allowance

The INTO submitted a detailed document to Revenue setting out the usage and importance of this allowance for teachers in light of the severe underfunding of primary schools. In addition, the INTO attended two meetings with the Revenue Commissioners as part of an ICTU delegation about the apparently selective approach of Revenue in this matter. Despite these efforts, however, it is clear that the Revenue Commissioners are pressing ahead to effectively abolish flat-

rate allowances, having originally (in late 2018) deferred this for one year.

Claim your allowances

As with tax allowances generally, where a person has not claimed their teachers' flat-rate tax expense, they are entitled to do so for the previous four years. If you have not claimed your allowance in that period you should act now.

The deadline to claim for the year 2015 is 31 December of this year.

While the abolition of this expense allowance is deplorable, it is important that all members should claim their entitlement while this is still available.

Long awaited supply panel pilot commences

On 4 November, the pilot supply panel, announced by the Minister for Education at INTO Congress, commenced operation in six areas. Six base schools in Artane, Terenure, Leixlip, Navan, Athenry and Cork have employed up to three fixed-term teachers to provide cover for substitutable absences, of up to four weeks' duration, in a cluster of schools. The principals of the base schools have been cooperating with each other, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and the INTO to establish good practice for the pilot.

One example of such cooperation has been to find and use an app to allow schools in the cluster to book substitutes on a first-come-first-served basis, including booking subs for pre-planned absences.

The DES has devised a simple reporting system which will generate data on how the substitutes are utilised and which will

feed into a review of the pilot in advance of the next school year. Remaining vacancies for supply panel teachers in some base schools will be readvertised later this term with a view to having the full pilot up and running in 2020.

The INTO has welcomed the commencement of the pilot as a first step towards the creation of a nationwide supply panel system, which would ensure a proper system of substitution to operate and provide secure employment for substitute teachers.

It is regrettable that the DES was not ready to commence the pilot on 1 September, which would have enabled a smoother start and generated better data for the pilot. However, the huge effort put in by the pilot schools and the enthusiasm which has been shown by them and the cluster schools involved is to be commended.

INTO responds to draft guidelines on reduced timetables

The INTO led the charge in responding to the Department of Education and Skills' draft guidelines on the use of reduced timetables.

In our response we highlighted that we support the policy of inclusive education and have been to the fore in calling for support and resources for schools to enable them to meet the needs of all pupils. However, there are some children enrolled in our schools who have needs that are not currently being met, due to insufficient support and/or inappropriate resources. In such circumstances a shortened school day may be considered.

In all cases of shortened school days, the INTO's position is that such an arrangement is designed to be temporary and is part of a process of inclusion or re-inclusion. The decision to implement a shortened school day/reduced timetable must always be taken with agreement from the pupil's parents.

While the INTO welcomed guidance for schools on the use of reduced timetables, we emphasised that it is important that, in introducing such guidance, schools are not overburdened with unnecessary bureaucratic demands for recording and reporting.

INTO committee changes

Two of the INTO's national committees, the Equality Committee and the Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee (PDC), will come to the end of their three-year terms at Congress in April.

Every branch, at its AGM, will nominate a candidate for each of these committees. A member can only be nominated if they have given notice in writing of intention to be a candidate to the INTO general secretary not later than 17.00 on the first working day of December preceding.

Candidates seeking election to the PDC must be proposed by at least one principals' forum at the fora AGMs in November.

President's dinner

Some snapshots from the District 15 dinner to honour INTO President Feargal Brougham



Primary schools take action on UN Eradicate Poverty Day

On 17 October schools from Galway to Bantry and over to Dublin put their creativity to work to highlight the need to do more to eradicate the scourge of poverty. The INTO Global Citizenship School

invited schools to join the UN Eradicate Poverty Campaign, promoted in Ireland through #FootstepsToEradicatePoverty.

Below are some examples of the creative footsteps pupils made.



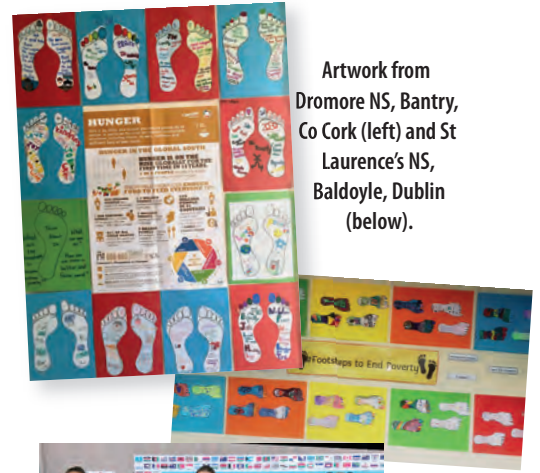
Left and below, pupils from Ballbriggan ETNS show their artwork.



Pupils from Kilglas NS, Galway, raise awareness.



Dublin schools Our Lady Queen of Apostles, Clondalkin (left), and Our Lady of Victories, Ballymun (right), get involved to eradicate poverty.



Artwork from Dromore NS, Bantry, Co Cork (left) and St Laurence's NS, Baldoyle, Dublin (below).



Vere Foster medal winners

Vere Foster Medal

The INTO Congress of 1956, held in Belfast decided to organise a suitable memorial as a tribute to the memory of Vere Foster. Captain McCune-Reid, President of the INTO at the time, acted as secretary to the committee which undertook this task. He prepared and published an interesting and informative account of Foster's life and work.

The memorial takes the form of a Vere Foster medal, and is generally awarded by the INTO, to the student obtaining the highest mark in Teaching Practice and/or Curriculum areas of Education.



Sterling Silver, Gold Plated, Hall Marked

Vere Foster 1819 – 1900

First President of the Irish National Teachers' Organisation

Vere Foster was born in Copenhagen of an Irish-born father. He worked in the UK Diplomatic Corps but left to help the victims of the great Famine on his brother's estate in Ardee, Co Louth.

Concerned by reports of the terrible conditions for those using emigrant ships, Foster campaigned in the USA and Britain for improved conditions for passengers. He helped to found and became the first President of the INTO, travelling throughout the country campaigning for the maintenance and improvement of national schools.

Foster is also known for the popular 'Vere Foster National School Writing Books'. He died in Belfast on 21 December 1900.



Pictured above left is MIC student Marita Ni Chonnaibh, Barna, Galway, presented with the Bonn Vere Foster Award, by Fergal Brougham, INTO President.

Above right is MIC student Eileen Murphy, Macroom, Cork, who was presented with the Bonn Vere Foster Award, by Mary Magner, INTO Vice President. Eileen was also the recipient of the College Gold Medal and awarded the Peader Cremin Fellowship.

Photos: Don Moloney Photography.



Pictured left is Jenny Galbraith, Church of Ireland Centre, DCU institute of Education, being presented with the Bonn Vere Foster award by Deirdre O'Connor, INTO Assistant General Secretary.

Workload challenge dominates

The 2019 INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference brought together more than 300 delegates in Tullamore at the end of September. The theme of this year's conference was 'managing workload', which aimed to provide delegates with an opportunity to discuss and share meaningful strategies to effectively manage the workload they face in schools.

Over the course of the conference, delegates were given the opportunity to attend a series of workshops relating to this theme. Delegates also listened to inspiring and informative addresses from President Feargal Brougham, Assistant General Secretary Deirdre O'Connor, General Secretary John Boyle, Brendan

McHale (PDST) and this year's keynote speaker Viv Grant.

Michelle Keane and Ger O'Donoghue from the INTO Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee outlined the findings of the first phase of the INTO's research on workload, based on focus groups carried out among principals and deputy principals in the last school year. Six delegates also shared their strategies for managing workload as part of the opening session.

Over the weekend, delegates engaged with fellow principals and deputy principals, sharing their experiences dealing with a wide range of school management issues. Several school leaders revealed how they have adapted

their work to meet the challenges which arise, as workload pressures have exponentially increased in recent years. Topics discussed included the management of ASD units and the importance of distributed leadership.



Delegates enjoying the wine reception, sponsored by Comhar Linn

Workload Issues Identified	Local Solutions	System solutions
Managing Special Education		SEN management post More special school places Placement of children with SEN to be tracked and reviewed Joined up thinking in relation to SEN Support for SEN – teachers, SNAs, facilities, withdrawal rooms, SLT, OT, Psychological
Managing contacts with outside agencies		Release time for teaching principals
Board of Management issues	Make BOM responsible for finances	Centralised system for finance support Re-evaluation of BOM system
Recruitment, retention and management of staff	Shared IT person between schools	Central HR support
Dealing with new initiatives/policies/ curriculum eg Child protection and GDPR	Sharing school policies Cluster meetings for support/ release days Saying NO	Centralised advice re GDPR/Child Protection Templates Consistency from DES Inspectors
Building/Summer Works/ Emergency Works		Centralised system for school buildings
Balancing teaching / leading learning and administration	Delegation / A good ISM team A committed and supportive staff / Good relationships at school level Cluster schools for IT support Good use of Croke Park hours	More time for collaboration
Documentation and paperwork		Templates to accompany circulars
Lack of posts of responsibility		Restore posts
Lack of substitution		Creation of supply panels
Managing interruptions		Proper secretarial support

Principals' Conference



Keynote speaker, Viv Grant.



College classmates reunite! Eleven members of the St Pat's class of 1986 met at the Principals' and Deputy Principals' Conference.

On Saturday morning, delegates attended a diverse mixture of workshops focusing on topics ranging from effective communication, dealing with the media, digital tech as a tool for managing workload and responding to challenging behaviour, to name a few.

Addressing delegates, General Secretary John Boyle acknowledged the extraordinary role of our school leaders throughout what has been a challenging and pressurised decade for the profession. He commended the work of school leaders and outlined the important responsibility the union has in addressing the challenges in our current climate and in the coming years. Speaking in advance of the Budget, the

general secretary called for the restoration of posts of responsibility, an increase in capitation and a minimum of one leadership and management day a week for teaching principals. This would serve to provide principal teachers with the time, space and support they need to effectively and efficiently manage the teaching and learning in their schools.

This year's keynote speaker was Viv Grant, an executive coach for school leaders and an expert in her field. An author, consultant and speaker, Viv specialises in supporting the emotional and psychological well-being of school leaders. Viv spoke about her experience of being appointed to her first head teacher position in a challenging school and



emphasised the importance of emotional resilience and coping skills in what is an increasingly demanding role.

Viv also tasked attendees with asking what they wanted to achieve from the year ahead, and to question each other on why that mattered to them. There was a great buzz from delegates in the hall as they took up this challenge and it was a great way of focusing minds and giving delegates the chance for some introspection.



Pictured at the conference were Clare Geoghegan, Prim-Ed marketing manager; INTO President Feargal Brougham, Michelle Keane, chair of the Principals' and Deputy Principals' Committee and Tony Holland, Prim-Ed sales manager.



Queen of the Universe NS, Carlow, are South East winners of Tidy Towns School Award 2019

They share how they achieved their great success

We are very proud of our local area and appreciate the value our children add to their community.

Our school's surrounding environment is full of concrete, tarmacadam and other hard landscape components. Our vision is to make our community, our school and the surrounding environment visually stimulating and to make a softer-landscape so that our children, our community and all the wildlife can benefit more from their environment.

Outdoor classroom with pollination beds

The creation of the new outdoor classroom incorporating extensive planting of perennial plants required major community cohesion. The children planted bulbs and plants into our new pollinator beds. The beds include sensory planting to facilitate their use by children with autism.

A local farmer gave us the timber for seats and a storytelling chair. Bagenalstown Improvement Group (BIG) coordinated getting these prepared for installation. TÚS (a community work placement scheme) personnel installed the seats into the new outdoor classroom and a parent helped to finish the timber seats.

The TÚS personnel prepared the pollination flower beds incorporating extensive planting guided by *The All*



Ireland Pollinator Friendly Planting Code and other publications from The National Biodiversity Centre.

Through Heritage in Schools, author Caroline Busher delivered two days of biodiversity-inspired storytelling and creative writing workshops outside to the whole school. Throughout the year we shared our actions through our school Twitter account @qofuns, through our school newsletters and via local media.

Our garden is not perfect, we have plenty of weeds in our beds, for example, but our garden will constantly evolve and improve. We do not aspire to have a manicured, neat garden but a thriving, living and changing habitat in our school.

Willow horse project

Through Heritage in Schools, Beth

Murphy worked with a number of our classes to create some items crafted from willow such as fish and Christmas trees. This led to Beth working with our 6th class to create a living sculpture of a Clydesdale canal horse on the banks of the river Barrow. It is now a community focal point and a legacy for our children and school.

The 6th class pupils contributed towards the creation and installation of the willow sculpture, with their parents also joining in.

Our projects are a tremendous success and assisted in spreading our impact and influence across our local area.

TOMMY COX, Queen of the Universe NS, Bagenalstown, Co Carlow.

New GOAL award encourages pupils to take action on climate change

Climate change and the need for action has become a critical global issue, and one which young people all over Ireland are engaged in and passionate about.

There is a real understanding now that climate change is having a massive effect on the planet and its people.

As a humanitarian aid agency, GOAL is aware of the challenges the global community is facing into the future. It also believes that hearing about these challenges can be overwhelming and frightening for children.

GOAL is passionate that young people believe a sustainable and fair future is achievable, and equipping them with the tools to help contribute to this future.

Through our development education programme, we support understanding of and reflection on global issues, raise awareness about global and local solutions, and support young people in taking actions for a sustainable and fair future.

As educators, teachers are in a unique position to take the lead on climate change discussions with children and introduce them to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. If achieved, the Global Goals have the power to end poverty, fight inequality, stop climate change and protect our oceans, flora and fauna by 2030.

The new GOAL Changemakers Award is a very positive way to engage pupils in

this discussion. The award encourages primary classes ranging from 3rd – 6th to learn more about the UN's Global Goals and share the local, everyday actions they are taking to help achieve them.

Through the award, GOAL wants to celebrate, broadcast and share your classes' impactful ideas with all participating schools and the Irish public.

Register your interest on www.goalglobal.org/goalchangemakers to receive the award pack full of resources to help your class begin your journey as GOAL changemakers. It includes curriculum-linked lesson plans, a step-by-step guide, posters, information on our inspiring jury and exciting prizes.

Membership Plus Shopping Cards

a great way to save with big brands

With Membership Plus Shopping Cards, you can continue to save when shopping with big-brand retailers such as Arnotts, B&Q or Caffé Nero. Whether you are simply picking up your coffee on

the go or deciding where to purchase your new fridge-freezer, order a Membership Plus Shopping Card to make huge savings - even on top of sales happening in-store!

Significant savings add up over time ...

The majority of shopping cards are reloadable meaning you can save each time you top up, and an increasing number are now available as digital codes for added convenience.

Venue	Discount	Example Purchase	RRP	You Pay	You save
Arnotts	7%	Fridge-Freezer	€499.99	€464.99	€35.00
B&Q	2%	Garden Shed	€275.00	€269.50	€5.50
Caffé Nero	8%	3 large lattes	€13.50	€12.42	€1.08
Foot Locker	7%	New trainers	€110.00	€102.30	€7.70
Goldsmiths	6%	Pendant necklace	€89.50	€84.13	€5.37
Specsavers	4.5%	Designer spectacles	€90.00	€85.95	€4.05
Ticketmaster	7%	Concert tickets for 4	€210.00	€195.30	€14.70
Topshop	7%	New winter coat	€65.00	€60.45	€4.55




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www.membershipplus.ie

Dusty Bluebells music archive launched in Holy Cross School, Dundrum

Among the many wonderful sound collections in the Irish Traditional Music Archive's (ITMA) care, is a set of reel-to-reel recordings of children's songs and rhymes in English and Irish, made by the renowned collector and researcher Hugh Shields (1929-2008). Capturing the voices and sounds of street and home during the 1960s and 1970s in Ireland, they are a unique insight into pastimes and traditional song in that period.

Aided by his wife Lisa, Hugh Shields noted in handwriting, in a large hardback book, the rhymes and songs he had collected in Ireland. He indexed and documented them, and provided rough musical notations for many of the tunes. Hugh planned to publish the songs and music, and the project was reimagined on several occasions. New recordings were added along the way, publishers ceased trading, and, in the end, the project was put aside.

Now in 2019, in association with Lisa Shields, ITMA has developed a new digital platform for Hugh and Lisa's work. The



Above: Pupils from Holy Cross School entertain guests at the launch.

Right: Minister for Arts, Heritage and An Ghaeltacht, Josepha Madigan TD, launches 'Dusty Bluebells'.



Hugh's intended publication and research notes, and Lisa Shields' original pen-and-ink drawings. The material has been grouped to tell the story of how the collection was made, and to share the voices and songs of a past generation.

This fabulous collection was launched in Holy Cross School, Dundrum, Dublin 14, by Minister for Arts, Heritage and An Ghaeltacht, Josepha Madigan TD. The children of the school, along with Triona and Maighréad Ní Dhomhnaill, entertained invited guests and the school community. Children from the school, way back in the 60s and 70s, were among those recorded by Prof Shields for this project. What a wonderful full circle to have children from the school in 2019 singing the same songs today!

The original recordings are available on the ITMA website and are a wonderful resource for any school to explore rhymes and songs which are as enjoyable today as they were over 50 years ago.

online exhibition *Dusty Bluebells* (www.itma.ie/dustybluebells) features over 170 sound recordings,

Registered on the new INTO website yet?

The new INTO website went live in September. Visit www.into.ie to check it out. The website has been designed with our members in mind. It has a refreshed design which is quick and easy to navigate, and there are plenty of exciting new features to assist members in finding the information they need.

All members have to register using a bespoke link sent via email in order to view member-only content.

In September, the INTO sent an email to all members with information about

how to register. If you have not yet registered you will have received another such email this week. If you have not received this email, please let us know by emailing info@into.ie with your Teaching Council number or payroll number and your date of birth, and we will send you the link.

Once you have registered, you will be able to access all areas of the INTO website by logging in with your email address and new password.

When you log in for the first time,

please check your personal details and make sure that we have the right contact details for you, including the correct school roll number. If you have moved to a new school recently, you can update your roll number by clicking on the 'My School' button.



Members asked to sign EU citizen's initiative on affordable housing

Europe is stuck in a housing crisis. More than 80 million people are overburdened with their housing costs. Employees are being driven out of the cities by rising rents. Austerity policies, the EU's fiscal framework and the EU's state aid laws restrict cities far too much in their efforts to create affordable housing. Short-term leases to tourists via online platforms additionally shorten the access to living space for the local population.

The INTO is supporting an EU-wide call

for signatures to get this issue on the European agenda. The EU citizen's initiative – Housing for all – is fighting for affordable housing in Europe.

The INTO is calling on European legislators to improve the legal and financial framework for affordable social housing, in particular to implement the following legal changes:

- ✎ easier access for all to affordable, public and social housing;
- ✎ not applying the Maastricht criteria to

- public investment in affordable, public and social housing;
- ✎ better access to EU funding for public and non-profit housing developers;
- ✎ social, competition-based rules for short-term rentals; and
- ✎ the compilation of statistics on housing needs in Europe on local level.

To sign the petition, keep an eye on your Tuesday email newsletter from the INTO.



Additional paid parent's leave announced

INTO welcomes the announcement of two additional weeks of paid parent's leave, which is available to parents of babies born on or after 1 November 2019.

Although the Department of Education and Skills has not yet published a circular outlining the specific terms governing the scheme, it is INTO's understanding that this leave will be available to both parents,

as two weeks of paid leave, which must be taken before the child's first birthday.

Some press reports have described this additional leave as an extension to maternity and paternity leave. Although many parents will use their paid parent's leave immediately following their maternity or paternity leave, this is a separate leave entitlement and subject to

a separate application process. Eligible teachers who have already applied for their statutory maternity or paternity leave will still be able to apply for their paid parent's leave.

The relevant circular and application form will be published on the INTO website as soon as they become available.

St Oliver Plunkett NS wins Incredible Edibles prize

On Friday, 11 October, Agri Aware, Ireland's agri-food educational body were joined by third and fourth class pupils of St Oliver Plunkett NS, Killina, Co Kildare, at the National Botanic Gardens, Dublin, where they were crowned winners of the 2019 Incredible Edibles project. The lucky pupils in Dominic Tyrrell's class were treated to a day of learning about all things gardening with a planting workshop, a tour of the native Irish plants, Viking house and the infamous palm glasshouse!

The Incredible Edibles project, undertaken by some 1,300 schools in 2019, aims to educate and empower children with knowledge of the full farm to fork journey, with schools receiving a free kit containing all the must have tools to start their very own school garden.



Pictured at the Botanical Gardens, Glasnevin, is 3rd and 4th class of St Oliver Plunkett's NS, winners of Agri Aware's 2019 Incredible Edibles project, with teacher and principal, Dominic Tyrrell, and Agri Aware Project Manager, Kalyn Arias. The school received a sun bubble greenhouse for their own school garden as part of their prize.

curriculum-linked educational resources.

From compost to seed potatoes, the pack also includes a host of accompanying



Students from St Oliver Plunkett's enjoy the National Botanical Gardens as part of their Agri Aware Incredible Edibles prize.

The initiative is supported by the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Health and Children, through the Healthy Ireland framework, the Department of Agriculture, Bord Bia and the horticulture industry.



INTO cases on maternity leave upheld

The Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) issued determinations in late October in nine appeals brought by INTO members in relation to the 2013 decision of the Department of Education and Skills (DES) to stop holidays in lieu for teachers on maternity leave (*Circular 09/2013*). The cases were brought under the Maternity Protection Acts, and the EAT found that the circular contravenes Section 22(4) of the Act and the

Pregnancy Directive (92/85/EEC).

INTO welcomes the decision of the EAT, which upheld the teachers' appeals against a decision which we have always believed was unjust, and which removed a valued entitlement for teachers on maternity leave. It had been hoped that the decision would be implemented but we are now aware that the DES intends to challenge it through the High Court. On this basis, there will be no immediate or

imminent change to teachers' leave entitlements.

The CEC considered the outcome of the cases at its November meeting, and expressed the INTO's gratitude to the nine claimants, whom we have supported, and who have argued for seven long years in opposition to this policy. We will be seeking further legal advice on their behalf in relation to how to proceed with this matter.

Retirements



Cairbre Lair

Left to Right: Emma Dineen, INTO President 2015/16; Louisa O'Brien, branch secretary; Siobhán Desmond, Ahiohill NS; Catherine McCarthy, Scoil Mhuire Naíonáin; Edward Moloney, Canovee NS; Mary Burke, Scoil Phadraig Naofa, Dunmanway; Collete Walsh, St Mary's, Enniskeane; Gráinne Ní Shúilleabháin, branch chairperson and John Driscoll, CEC representative.



Monaghan

Back row L to R: Catherine Flanagan, CEC representative; Séamus Grundy, branch chairperson and Niamh Harris, branch secretary. Front row L to R: Retirees Joanne Deery; Martina Carney; Feargal Brougham, INTO President; Evelyn Timoney Conaty and Geraldine Mhic Chearúin.



Arklow

Back row L to R: Páidí Ó Flabháin; Gerry Browne, CEC representative; Majella Kinsella; Ciarán Byrne; Nuala Beattie and Chloe Ormonde Cummins, branch secretary. Front row L to R: Mary Steacy, Mary O'Toole, Catherine Woodbyrne and Christine Doyle.



Ballybay

Left to Right: Catherine Flanagan, CEC representative; Rosena Jordan, INTO President 2016/17; Margaret McCluskey, retired deputy principal of Scoil Éanna and her husband Ned McCluskey; Aislinn MacKinney, branch secretary and Adrian Kelly, branch chair. Photo Jimmy Walsh.

Curragh Branch

The photo includes members of the Curragh branch committee, Curragh branch retirees, Carmel Browne, CEC representative and, Feargal Brougham, INTO President.



Learning from others –

Festival and teaching are words that rarely occur in the same sentence. As a múinteoir, September tends to be a 'heads-down' type of month where we 'get back into the swing of things', establish routines and set the tone for the year ahead. It can all be a little serious...

This is where *Féilte* steps in to provide some light relief. For the uninitiated, the Teaching Council's festival of education provides a national platform for all the partners in education to discuss, examine and share innovative practice. It celebrates all that is good about teaching and learning, with a side of music, food, and sult.

Despite very real and grave concerns about class size, leadership support and funding expressed in staffrooms throughout the country, there is still a palpable desire and commitment to bring quality teaching into the classroom, evident in the numbers who made their way to NUI Galway for the weekend.

"Bring the learning home", instructed the ever eloquent and philosophical Tomás Ó'Ruairc, director of the Teaching Council, as he brought proceedings to a close. These words resonated with me as I drove home. How many conferences, workshops or seminars have I attended, and yet have failed to successfully implement the exciting 'take homes' discovered on the day? More than I care to remember, is the honest answer.

However, it is incumbent on those of us who believe in and aim to cultivate the concept of lifelong learning, to discover how we can enhance our teaching and improve outcomes for the pupils in our care.

This is when professional reflection comes to the fore. Teachers need the opportunity to pause, take a breath, audit and analyse their practice to identify what is going well and what is simply ineffective.

Féilte acted as a catalyst for this teacher's professional reflection. It is not necessarily a specific programme, an interesting resource or a new intervention that we bring back to school from professional development events. It can

We are moving from the isolationist or self-sufficient 'lone ranger' style of teaching ... to a profession that enthusiastically celebrates both the process and fruits of collaboration

be a heartfelt belief, a humane and inclusive approach or a nugget of distilled wisdom that motivates us to evolve.

From listening to the passionate and informed voices of fellow teachers, two interconnected elements emerged as integral to the core of effective teaching that are worth thinking about.

1. The importance of collaboration

The theme for this year's festival was: Education 360: Learning from Others. It permeated the labyrinth of showcases, workshops and keynote addresses on offer. Thankfully, we are moving from the isolationist or self-sufficient 'lone ranger' style of teaching, that once dominated our schools, to a profession that enthusiastically celebrates both the process and fruits of collaboration. Often the tone in which practice is shared can determine how successfully this is utilised by others after it radiates from the source. What struck me about why forums such as the LeadershipMeet, TeachMeet, and StudentMeet proved so popular and informative, was the collegial way in which they were facilitated. These 'Meets' enabled meaningful discussion on topics that were relevant to the audience. Whether you were a newly qualified teacher engaged in the Droichead process or a teaching principal battling an unprecedented workload, there was someone on hand to empathise and offer a perspective through the lens of experience.

"I usually learn from people who disagree with me", remarked Dr Finn Ó'Murchú of MIC Thurles during his presentation on inclusive education.

Collaboration can require us to have professional conversations that challenge our existing perspective. These conversations become easier over time in a culture that welcomes, encourages and respects a diversity of opinion. Our openness to debate and to interrogate evidence-based research and methodologies is intrinsic to the guiding vision that

reflecting on Féilte

propels our schools forward.

The inspiring ideas, initiatives, resources and programmes that are scribbled down in notebooks during professional development events need additional support to flourish in schools. This is where management can show leadership by fostering a school culture that welcomes and facilitates the sharing of creative ideas in a supportive and devolved manner.

For those looking to collaborate on
Teacher well-being must be front and centre, alongside pupil wellbeing, if we are to sustain a vibrant, enthusiastic and eager workforce.

areas of interest outside of your immediate school environment, technology has made this easier than ever before. The Teachers' Research Exchange (T-REX), which created a lot of interest via the ResearchMeet, is a free service that enables teachers to exchange ideas, learn from each other and find potential collaborators for specific research projects. This vibrant online community shares learning resources, researcher stories and publications via its

treasure chest feature on the website.

When an opportunity to collaborate arises, it offers the chance to connect with colleagues, develop relationships and strengthen our concept of community. Community and the traditional spirit of Meitheal were reiterated by many speakers during the festivities, as key features of wellbeing.

2. The centrality of teacher wellbeing

Occupational stress within primary teaching has been comprehensively researched¹. There is no getting away from the fact we work in a pressurised profession. The relentless level of multitasking required as we teach, assess, differentiate, counsel and support, alongside the requirement to stay abreast of curriculum developments, policy changes and the rapid evolution of technology can be overwhelming for even the most committed.

Therefore, it was both reassuring and inspiring to hear Professor Andy Hargreaves, leading educationalist, share his wisdom on this topic. Hargreaves described how some education systems can get "cagey" when the discussion turns to how they can support adults and their wellbeing. Should the focus remain solely on pupils?

"There is no student wellbeing without teacher wellbeing," counters Hargreaves. Teacher wellbeing must be front and centre, alongside pupil wellbeing, if we

¹Darmody, M., Smyth, E. (2011), *Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress among Primary School Teachers and School Principals in Ireland*. ESRI/The Teaching Council. Dublin: ESRI.

are to sustain a vibrant, enthusiastic and eager workforce. Hargreaves spoke passionately about teacher wellbeing as a cornerstone of human dignity within the sphere of public service, and therefore it must be supported by all stakeholders in Irish education. To foster resilience in our pupils, we need to focus on sustaining ourselves whilst modelling an ability to cope with challenges and adversity.

Teachers must be knowledgeable of the supports that are available to them. Again, The Teaching Council has led the way here, creating awareness with its involvement in the Wellbeing for Teachers and Learners Group and annual conference. The Tabhair Aire Duit Féin section of the council's website also details a range of personal, financial and professional supports available to teachers including the Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme. Prevention is always better than cure and that is why the PDST Teacher Wellbeing and Staff Wellbeing workshops are worth your attention, as they equip teachers with the skills to replenish our reservoirs of wellbeing. These workshops explore concepts that promote positive mental health including self-care, gratitude, mindfulness, physical exercise, meditation and nutrition, which can be filtered into our daily routines and practice.

Féilte promotes the collective self-esteem of our profession by shining a light on a cognitive, behavioural and emotional practice that although demanding, provides an opportunity to engage in fulfilling work that makes a difference to society. The energy and optimism of the festival instils a sense of hope for the future of Irish education. As it returns to the capital city next year, strongly consider attending.



AARON PURCELL is a freelance education writer and teaches in Rush NS, Co Dublin. You can contact him at aapurcell@tcd.ie.



2019 DCU Alumni Awards

St Pat's graduates Enda Kenny and Pat O'Keefe recognised for their contributions to Irish society

The annual DCU Alumni Awards took place on Friday, 14 June at the Helix at DCU. The Alumni Awards for Outstanding Achievement were presented and the 2019 alumni wall of awardees was unveiled.

The completion of the DCU Incorporation programme in 2016 now means the alumni office at DCU is supporting and providing engaging activities for the graduates of St Patrick's College. In the past two years, graduates of St Pat's have been recognised at the alumni awards and have attended class-

based reunions on the St Patrick's campus (classes of 1978 and 1969).

The alumni awards honour graduates who, through their exceptional ability and leadership, have achieved excellence in their chosen fields. Their accomplishments across many aspects of society are a source of great pride to DCU and an inspiration to present and future generations of students.

Enda Kenny, former Taoiseach, teacher and graduate of St Patrick's College (1970), was recognised with an Outstanding Achievement Award for Leadership. Enda

also took part in a fireside chat with Professor Gary Murphy from the School of Law and Government at DCU.

Pat O'Keefe, two time graduate of St Patrick's College (1966 and 1970) was recognised for his commitment to transforming special education in Ireland.

The alumni wall awardees have their photographs and biographies placed on a special wall in the library to inspire current students.

For further information or queries relating to reunion events please contact alumni@dcu.ie.



(L-R) Shay Walsh, Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny, Lindsay Peat, and Sr Orla Treacy



(L-R) Anne and Pat O'Keefe

Take part in this year's photography awards

INTO President Feargal Brougham will be among the judges for this year's Irish National School Photography Awards (INSPA).

INSPA are looking for students and teachers to get creative and integrate the camera into their school day.

INSPA and ReCreate want you to encourage your students to explore your classrooms, corridors, and schoolyards, applying the techniques of photography to create innovative images that question notions of waste, reuse and the environment.

They are specifically looking for fun images that incorporate the theme 'second life' and focus on the wonders of waste using photographic techniques to transform spaces or give a new lease of life to familiar objects.

To help you integrate the camera into the

classroom and generate discussion around the theme, look at sample photos on the INSPA website, visit the tips section and then start a conversation in your classroom. You can also find lesson plans on teaching the basics of photography to children.

Open to all primary schools in the Republic of Ireland, the deadline for entries is 21 January 2020. www.inspa.ie.

Prizes

Overall winner

- ✦ Free entry to the Amber Springs Easter train experience for the winner and their classmates.
- ✦ Two night stay at Amber Springs for the principal of the winning school.
- ✦ One night stay at Amber Springs for the teacher of the winning class.
- ✦ One year ReCreate membership for the winning school.

- ✦ One Instax Mini LiPlay plus film for the winning school.
- ✦ Winning student will be invited onto the 2020/21 INSPA Judging Panel.

Category winners

- ✦ INSTAX Mini 9 camera for the winner and winning school plus film and accessory kit.
- ✦ One night stay for four at Farina in the Amber Springs.

Finalists and category winners

- ✦ INSPA certificate for their achievement.
- ✦ Framed copy of their photograph.
- ✦ #INSPAsmiles school photography fundraising day at their school.



Vacancies in INTO Head Office, Dublin

Director of operations & finance (assistant general secretary level)

The director of operations and finance in INTO Head Office will have a strategic role, developing, managing, and playing a lead role in implementing, an organisational strategy for operations and finance in INTO.

The successful candidate will form part of the INTO Head Office senior management team. The successful candidate will have a high-level strategic role in managing the affairs of the organisation, subject to the directions and overall management of the general secretary.

The director of operations and finance will work closely with the deputy general secretary and northern secretary and report directly to the deputy general secretary/general treasurer.

This key strategic role will involve:

- Corporate services including ICT;
- Finance, including supervision of accounting systems for income/ expenditure

- Investments and related policies
- Supervision of HR/office management North and South
- Payroll and pensions functions
- Data governance
- Risk management including organisation insurance arrangements
- Management of procurement of INTO services
- Property projects
- Such other operational functions as the general secretary might assign

The person will have:

- A strong academic background and appropriate professional experience.
- Proven success in writing in a variety of media with the ability to convey complex information in a user-friendly way.
- Strong analytical, reporting and project management skills and ability to work on own initiative.
- A serious commitment to positioning INTO as a good practice leader in all

areas of the role

- A thorough understanding of current issues in education and industrial relations.
- Ability to manage a diverse team and to collaborate across the organisation.
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills.
- Experience of external and internal communications management.
- A results-driven approach with evidence of being innovative, energetic and flexible in advancing strategy

A detailed job description is available at www.into.ie/2019/11/20/job-vacancies/ Interviews will be held during the week of 16 December 2019. Letter of application (max 2 pages) and curriculum vitae, together with the names and contact details of two referees, should be submitted by email only by 12.00p.m. on Friday 6 December 2019 to gen.sec@into.ie

General terms and conditions are available on request from rwarren@into.ie.

Director of communications (assistant general secretary level)

The director of communications will have a strategic role, developing, managing and implementing an organisational communications strategy for INTO.

The successful candidate will form part of the INTO Head Office senior management team and will have a high-level strategic role in managing the affairs of the organisation, subject to the directions and overall management of the general secretary.

The director of communications will work closely with the general secretary and northern secretary and report directly to the general secretary.

This key strategic role will involve:

- Management of the Communications Section
- Strategic leadership – setting the communications strategy for the INTO, North and South, and strategic goals for major INTO events including Northern Conference and Annual Congress
- Provision of communications advice and counsel to senior leadership team members

- Major project management in all areas/platforms of INTO communications development
- Developing, driving and monitoring INTO's online presence across a range of platforms and generating content for online communication
- Promoting a positive image of the INTO and the teaching profession locally and nationally
- Managing all communication aspects of major INTO events
- Managing personnel assigned in the communications section to ensure successful delivery of objectives
- Critical incident support for school leaders
- Such other duties as may be assigned from time to time by the general secretary

The person will have:

- A strong academic background and appropriate professional experience.
- Proven success in writing in a variety of media with the ability to convey complex information in a user-friendly way.

- Strong analytical, reporting and project management skills and ability to work on own initiative.
- Strong social media skills.
- A thorough understanding of current issues in education and industrial relations.
- Ability to manage a diverse team and to collaborate across the organisation.
- Excellent communication, presentation and interpersonal skills.
- Experience of external and internal communications management.
- A results-driven approach with evidence of being innovative, energetic and flexible in advancing strategy

A detailed job description is available at www.into.ie/2019/11/20/job-vacancies/ Interviews will be held during the week of 16 December 2019. Letter of application (max 2 pages) and curriculum vitae, together with the names and contact details of two referees, should be submitted by email only by 12.00p.m. on Friday 6 December 2019 to: gen.sec@into.ie.

General terms and conditions are available on request from rwarren@into.ie.

Senior official – human resources

The duties of the senior official (human resources) will be in the deputy general secretary/general treasurer's section and s/he will be accountable to and report to the assistant general secretary for operations and finance and to the deputy general secretary. The post involves senior responsibilities across the four main areas of human resource management (recruitment/selection, performance management, IR/employee relations, compensation/benefits). The successful candidate will also have responsibility for human resource management at INTO Northern Office in Belfast. Other duties may be assigned by the general secretary and duties may be altered from time to time.

Initial duties and responsibilities:

- Strategic management of all aspects of the HR function
- Workforce planning and employment (recruitment and selection)
- Performance management to include probation process
- Human resource development (training & development)

- Total rewards (compensation & benefits)
- Policy formulation/development in areas of HR and the INTO Employee Handbook
- Employee and labour relations
- Maintaining an up-to-date knowledge of key legislation affecting conditions of employment and industrial relations to advise senior management and CEC
- Managing personnel assigned to their area of responsibility to ensure successful delivery of objectives at individual and team level
- Such other duties as may be assigned by the general secretary

The successful candidate will have:

- A HR or equivalent business degree and be CIPD qualified.
- At least five years' relevant professional experience with three of these at HRBP level.
- A comprehensive knowledge of the INTO to drive the delivery of INTO key priorities.
- A thorough understanding of current issues in education and industrial

relations.

- Experience and expertise in handling contractual and workplace relations issues.
- Excellent communication, interpersonal and collaborative skills and an ability to build, maintain and influence a wide range of stakeholders.
- High standards of research, policy development and project management skills.
- A results-driven approach with evidence of being innovative, energetic and flexible in advancing strategy.

A detailed job description is available at www.into.ie/2019/11/20/job-vacancies/ Interviews will be held during the week of 2 December 2019. A letter of application (maximum 2 pages) and curriculum vitae, together with the names and contact details of two referees, should be submitted by email only to: gen.sec@into.ie by 12.00 p.m. on Friday 29 November 2019.

General terms and conditions are available on request from rwarren@into.ie.

Official – legal & industrial relations

The successful candidate must have a third level qualification and a minimum of five years' relevant professional and practical experience. Relevant knowledge and experience of the law and/or industrial relations will be an advantage. The successful candidate will also be expected to have knowledge of the INTO and the education system.

Initial duties and responsibilities:

The successful candidate will initially be assigned to INTO's Legal and Industrial Relations Department. He/she will report and be accountable to the relevant senior official and/or assistant general secretary under the overall direction of the INTO's general secretary. Initial duties and responsibilities will include:

- Dealing with and managing casework within the department's policies and management structures
- Representing INTO members individually and collectively in a range of forums – including at board of management meetings, Workplace Relations Commission and such other forums as may be required
- Researching, preparing, drafting and editing submissions and correspondence/

- emails to a very high standard
- Advising INTO members on legal, employment and trade union matters including by telephone and at meetings and responding to queries via telephone, email etc
- Such administrative duties – including filing – as may be necessary for effective organisation of work
- Representing members and/or the INTO with other agencies or organisations
- Designing and delivering modules for INTO training
- Carrying out any such other projects, tasks and duties as may be assigned by the relevant assistant general secretary under the overall direction of the general secretary.

The successful candidate will have:

- Excellent work ethic, capacity to act on own initiative within overall line management structure, and a positive 'can do' attitude and approach to work
- Excellent interpersonal skills including commitment to work effectively and co-operatively in a team environment within head office management structures

- Capacity and willingness to provide a quality service to INTO members and contribute to the progress of INTO objectives, policies and services
- Excellent oral communication skills
- Excellent drafting and editing skills
- Proficient IT and research skills
- Project management skills
- Strong organisational and time management skills
- Willingness to work flexibly including when required/requested outside of normal working hours
- Capacity and willingness to work across all departments of the office if so assigned by the general secretary
- Capacity and willingness to engage in ongoing upskilling and CPD.

A detailed job description is available at www.into.ie/2019/11/20/job-vacancies/ Interviews will be held during the week of 2 December 2019. A letter of application (maximum 2 pages) and curriculum vitae, together with the names and contact details of two referees, should be submitted by email only to: gen.sec@into.ie by 12.00 p.m. on Friday 29 November 2019. General terms and conditions are available on request from rwarren@into.ie.

Vere Foster's impact on

2019 is the bicentenary of the birth of Vere Foster, the first president of the INTO. Former INTO General Secretary, John Carr, shares some insight into the man and his philanthropic work to improve education.

Vere Foster (1819-1900) was one of the most remarkable and unifying figures in the history of post-famine Ireland. A member of the Anglo-Irish aristocracy, whose Irish family estate was at Glyde Court, Tallanstown, Co Louth, he sacrificed position, wealth and even personal friendship in his quest to alleviate the suffering and hardship of the most needy and deserving of Ireland's poor.

Born in Copenhagen on 25 April 1819 where his father, Sir Augustus Foster, was serving as British Minister Plenipotentiary to Denmark, Vere joined the diplomatic service. But the human devastation that he encountered during a visit to Ireland to investigate the plight of a poverty-stricken tenant on the Foster Glyde Court estate convinced him to retire from the diplomatic service and, in his own words, '...to take up my residence in Ireland, in the hope of making myself useful by falling in with any practicable scheme for giving increased employment to the people and for providing against similar destitution in the future.'

Vere Foster saw education as conferring the supreme benefits on the poor of Ireland and during his numerous pedestrian tours throughout Ireland he availed of opportunities to visit schools, many of which were dilapidated hovels.

School Buildings

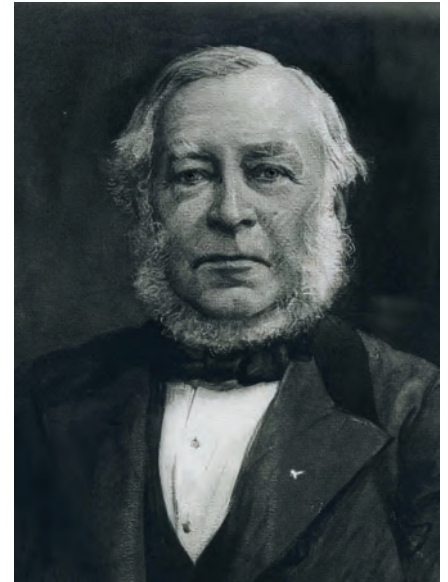
He lodged at public houses along the way or sometimes partook of the teacher's humble hospitality. If he found a schoolhouse closed or the teacher absent, he would quietly note down the school's dimensions, paste his card on the door and move on. Sometimes he wrote to the teachers directly, other times, he would simply insert notices in local newspapers inviting school managers to furnish him with estimates of the cost of providing windows, slated roofs and wooden floors, seating and teaching equipment and in some cases, grant aiding the construction of new schools and, importantly for the

time, the erection of suitable dwellings for teachers. Despite initial misgivings, Foster's achievements were eventually acknowledged with gratitude in the Inspectors' Report of 1859 as 'more commensurate with the scope of a national effort, or a parliamentary grant, than the resources of one person'. Over two thousand schools benefited from Foster's philanthropic patronage at an average cost of £10 per school.

Status of Teachers

From his experience of visiting schools, he recognised that improving the position of teachers and securing for the public sufficient guarantees of the efficacy of their teaching were essential components in the development of a national education system. It is worth noting that teachers at the time were rated less important than the cook or the coachman at the 'Big House' and were subject to instant dismissal at the whim of school managers without recompense or redress. Attendances at fairs, markets or meetings, often including meetings of teacher associations, were strictly forbidden as were letters from teachers to the press. Small wonder that only sporadic attempts were made by teachers to organise for mutual protection. So, an advocate for raising the status of teachers was, therefore, greeted with suspicion and caution by the education and church authorities.

Foster raised the desirability of establishing a Teachers' Journal at a conference in Belfast in 1867 'as a means of improving the status of teachers, and of increasing the efficiency of teaching' and when approached by members of the Dublin Association to produce a pamphlet on the appalling conditions endured by teachers, he suggested the establishment of a journal instead. He used the inaugural edition of the Irish Teachers' Journal, which appeared on 1 January 1868, as an opportunity to outline

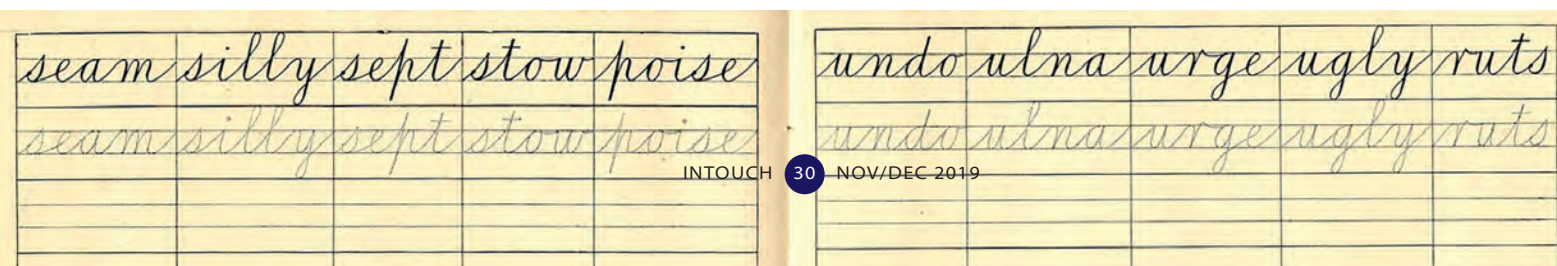


Teachers at the time were rated less important than the cook or the coachman at the 'Big House' and were subject to instant dismissal at the whim of school managers.

his views on how to progress the position of teachers and to improve teaching.

Teachers' Salaries

Foster suggested that teachers in Ireland, who were only earning one third of the salaries of their English counterparts, should be brought up to the same level of payments and similarly should be provided with teachers' residences. Controversially, though, he advocated the introduction of a local school taxation



education

system 'raised according to the means of the people' as well as a local contribution to aid teachers' salaries as the best way forward for teachers in Ireland ... not a tax on income but only on capital, so as properly to fall most heavily on the rich, and yet only in proportion to their means – not in place of, but in addition to Parliamentary grants.' These proposals would, according to Foster, lead to 'increased superintendence' of schools and the local democratisation of the managerial system, proposals which were later rejected by teachers due to a lack of trust in the generosity of the local gentry and the prevailing levels of poverty within communities which could not sustain the grant-aiding of teachers' salaries. Foster also advocated perennial issues like teachers' housing; monthly rather than quarterly payment for teachers; pensions and retirement arrangements.

Irish National Teachers' Association (INTA)

Foster urged the establishment of a multiplicity of teacher associations and, when the various associations came together to form the Irish National Teachers' Association (INTA) in August and December 1868, Foster was invited to become their first president, a position he held for a period of five years. As president he used his social capital to gain access to various Government departments including leading deputations to the chief secretary, the lord lieutenant and to Prime Minister Gladstone. When requested by the assistant chief commissioner to make a submission to the Powis Commission in 1869, Foster did not conceive himself to be a competent direct witness but readily acknowledged that he could be a medium for obtaining relevant information from teachers. Having surveyed the various secretaries of the associations, he collated the evidence and submitted the teachers' perspectives in a

published document to the commission for consideration, thus enacting his vision of how a fledgling organisation could affect policy advocacy.

Standard of Teaching – Foster's Copybooks

Countless numbers of inspectors were also critical of the standard of penmanship in schools. Foster moved decisively in 1864 and, having consulted widely with educationalists and inspectors, developed a new revolutionary style of penmanship for use in schools. Within a year his first writing copybooks were being sold to schools at a cost of one penny (or in some cases a halfpenny) so as to be within the grasp of the poorest child. At the height of production over four million copies were being sold annually. He also offered to supply schools with ink and pencils and had inkwells manufactured to his own design. The underlying message of his project was contained in the motto 'A nation's greatness depends on the education of its people' which surrounded a crowned harp on the cover of all his copybooks.

Standard of Teaching – Payment by Results

Foster was concerned with the standards of teaching that he witnessed during his school visits ... 'In some districts' he wrote 'there are miserable teachers, many of whom are not worth a farthing a year; on the other hand, there are many excellent teachers, doing their best who are wretchedly and miserably paid'. But his suggestion for improving the standard of teaching through the payment by results system proposed by the Powis Commission put him at odds with teachers who were genuinely concerned that such a reward system, with its

emphasis on school attendances and pupil performance in the 3Rs, would accelerate school closures due to the irregularity of

attendances, and promote cramming and 'mechanical drudgery quite incompatible with the true spirit and aims of education'. Foster persisted in his views, however, claiming that the old salary system did not detect 'bad teaching' and moreover, that the interests of the best teachers, especially women teachers whom he regarded, by and large, as better teachers of young children, were being overlooked by associations and deputations of teachers. However, in 1878, in correspondence to the *Northern Whig*, Foster admitted his change of mind on the subject of payment by results versus fixed salaries and acknowledged that he may have been 'almost alone in advocating increase to teachers' income' in this way and that the 'united representations of ten thousand teachers would carry more weight with Government than his single advocacy of views opposed to theirs'.

Vere Foster resigned from the presidency of the National Teachers' Association in November 1873.

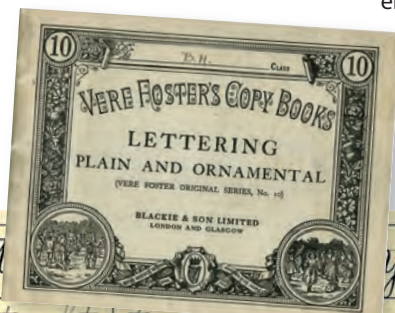
Conclusion

The last word belongs Vice President Michael Doyle (1914), who had been INTO General Secretary (1910-1913):

"In the early years of the National Teachers' agitation Mr. Vere Foster was the guiding spirit at the helm; and by his great exertions and sacrifices in promoting penmanship and the various branches of drawing in the schools, and his magnificent grants for their structured improvement, there is no doubt but he was eminently conducive to the progress then made. He was a powerful and consistent advocate with the Commissioners and the Government, and when he retired in 1872 from the Presidency, the Irish Teachers lost a true and zealous friend and counsellor."



JOHN CARR is a former general secretary of the INTO and chairs the Vere Foster Trust.



'Get angry and be active'

How would you describe 'climate justice'?

I would describe it as a way of responding to what I now call a 'climate crisis', because it is a crisis, by recognising the injustices of that crisis. The first injustice is that it is going to impact much more on younger people who, of course, haven't been responsible and who look to adults to take the necessary measures that we must take over the next 11 years.

It impacts on the poorest countries and the poorest communities, even in richer countries. But also, as children have now reminded us with their 'Fridays for Future', there's a huge intergenerational injustice, and I think that's something that teachers need to take very seriously.

On a personal level, how can we play our part?

We all need to take three steps. The first step is to make climate change personal in your life. That means do something you weren't doing before. It may be that you change your eating habits. I'm not trying to push in any particular direction on that. I have personally become a pescatarian, which means I don't eat meat, but others may decide to eat less meat. Also, I use public transport now whenever possible. Do something personal.

The second step is to get angry and to be active. Be angry at those with more responsibility who are not taking it seriously – governments at all levels, not just government at the national level but government at the city level and the town level too. We all need to be doing more and we need to be accountable for doing more. Get active in supporting those who are trying to help.

There are all kinds of organisations in Ireland, Trócaire, for example, or the World Wildlife Fund, that do great work on climate justice.

The third thing, and I think this is the most important, is to imagine this world that we need to hurry towards because we need to be motivated to want this world. This world will be much healthier, and we know that because we won't have the pollution of fossil fuel that is polluting both air and water.



It's important now for teachers to begin to prepare young children, and especially at primary level, for the world they will live in



It will also be a much fairer world. I think about the inequalities in our world, even in terms of access to energy. We have a world of about 7.8 billion people and over a billion never switched the switch for electricity. They light their homes with kerosene and candles, and these are dangerous. It's much harder for children to study in the evening or to do their homework. But off-grid gadgets exist now. Lights, units, mini-systems and solar panels that can be put on any rooftop.

What we need, I believe, is a 'moonshot approach' to this, like when John F. Kennedy said, "We will put a man on the moon". It was impossible when he said it and it was done in eight years. We need to set a target of getting to everybody, not just the billion who never switched the switch for electricity, but the 2.3 billion who cook on dirty stoves or open fires. Of course, they are mainly women and they ingest smoke that kills millions every year.

The relevance of that was brought home to me very recently in Castlebar in Turlough House, the national museum there, where there was an exhibition about rural electrification and the impact on women. It showed how it brought women's life out of the drudgery. That word drudgery was mentioned a lot, even by some of the older women who had, before that, lived lives of drudgery. Then they got a washing machine or an electric ring to cook on. The difference that made.

Inset: Climate activists protest at the COP21 UN climate summit in Paris. Shutterstock

It's can be a tough subject to broach with children. What advice would you give to primary school teachers?

I think it is important that children are encouraged to think about climate change, not in a negative, despairing way, but to think about what they can do in the footsteps of those who are already calling for attention.

The most important thing is to do it in a positive way with hope. I'm concerned that there is very significant climate anxiety now among young people. Young women have said to me, and enough of them have said it for me to really worry, "I don't intend to have children." That's terrible. That's a really sad situation to find yourself in.

I have six grandchildren, the eldest being fifteen and the youngest being two. I think a lot about the world they will have. They will be in their thirties and forties in 2050.

I recall that I sat in on a classroom down in the Delta which is affected by any sea-level rise. About 20 million people would probably have to move. It's a very dense population. I saw a play by kids and there was a tall boy aged about nine, who was the tree, and then the children blew the wind around and the tree fell and they were acting out what would happen when the hurricane came as if it would almost inevitably come.

It is important now for teachers to begin to prepare young children and especially at primary level, for the world they will increasingly live in.

You have regularly spoken about coming to climate justice later than others. What was the catalyst?

During my seven years as President of Ireland, I did talk about the environment a bit, but I never linked to the science behind climate change. When I was serving as UN high commissioner for human rights, I had a big portfolio, giving leadership on human rights, on gender, on rights of people with disabilities, rights of indigenous peoples. I knew there was another part of the UN dealing with climate change and I never made the connection.

As high commissioner for human rights, I was frustrated that we didn't care enough about the rights that matter

enormously. Basic rights like food and safe water and health and education and shelter. I decided to support African countries in promoting those rights.

I would come across communities and women who would say, "We just don't know what's happened. Is God punishing us? Everything has changed for the worse. We don't know when to sow because the last time we sowed, we had a long period of drought and then flash flooding, it was destroyed."

I visited Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, former President of Liberia. She would say to me, "Mary, when I was growing up here in this country, we had two rainy seasons that came predictably within a few days, at most a week. Now, I don't know when the rainy season will come. I don't know for how long. I can't even mend my roads."

I went to a couple of small island state conferences, including one in Fiji, a meeting of small island states before Paris, and I saw how desperate they were to make sure that the text would include, "We must stay at or below 1.5 degrees Celsius." They actually couldn't go back from Paris without that being agreed, and in the marches out in the streets in Paris, we had this mantra, "1.5 to stay alive."

What I was seeing was the acute reality from about 2004 on, in the countries that I was visiting, in particular in Africa, and the indifference or denial in the parts of the world that were most responsible.

How do we ensure a just transition is secured?

That is a core principle of climate justice. We are not taking seriously the implications of having to move out of fossil fuel quickly. The fact that this means that the workers who have built up the industry and the industrial base of our societies and give us the economies that we have are at risk of being discarded.

It's happening in America, very sadly. President Trump purports to be supportive of coal and talks about clean coal, et cetera, but coal mines, as you probably know, are shutting and they're shutting in a disastrous way, just throwing the workers out.

I was in Germany recently where they have a Coal Commission and they have decided they have to get out of coal but

they are not doing it nearly quickly enough and they are not putting up anything like the resources for pensions or re-skilling or the retraining of workers in the coal industry. By contrast, Spain has put up quite a lot of money, I think 230 million initially, to begin to stop any new coal and start phasing out in a way that reflects the just transition.

Pauline Dube from Botswana, who was at the meeting in Korea where they concluded the report on staying at 1.5 degrees, started to speak about the problem of developed countries. She said, "I have such empathy for developed countries because they have these huge grids and they have all these workers and fossil fuels and they're going to have to deal with this so quickly. I have such empathy for their problem. In Botswana, we have a problem of getting access to energy in rural areas, but it is doable. We know what we are doing, we are trying to get it. To have all those workers and I have such empathy." I had never heard that before and she's absolutely right. That is where a huge problem lies.

Are you optimistic about the future?

I usually like to tell the story of the wisdom of Archbishop Tutu. We were on a panel together in New York. When Archbishop Tutu is in front of young people, he tells them how much he loves them. He believes in them. His hands are going all over the place. We were being moderated by a journalist who turned to Archbishop Tutu and said, very sharply, "Archbishop Tutu, why are you such an optimist?"

He looked at her and he shook his head and he said, "Oh, no, deary. I'm not an optimist, I am a prisoner of hope."

MARY ROBINSON was interviewed by DAVID GEARY, INTO's head of communications.



Birds, change, and making a difference

Hands up who's seen a bird today? That's a regular opening gambit on my Heritage in Schools wildlife visits. Invariably the children's arms shoot skyward and, with a gentle nudge, those of the teachers and SNAs follow.

Birds are everywhere. They're obvious, mobile and often vocal. We see and hear birds all the time, which makes them more noticeable than most wildlife.

In terms of biodiversity, birds are just a small component of our species mix (we've recorded 450 or so bird species in Ireland, compared to more than 11,400 species of insect, for example). Yet, because they're so visible, and we're so familiar with them, birds command a disproportionate degree of our attention.

When it comes to studying wildlife, that familiarity is a good thing.

Birds as natural indicators

The fact that birds are relatively easy to see means they are one of the most straightforward groups of living things to study. They are also good indicators of the overall state of the environment. The success of bird populations is inextricably

linked to the health of underlying ecosystems. Birds need food, they need a suitable habitat, they need clean water ... they need all sorts of things. By studying birds we can learn a lot about the rest of the natural world.

The increasing impact of climate change, pollution, intensification of agriculture and urbanisation are putting natural systems under intense pressure. The complex biological systems we rely on for our own survival are starting to break down. It's more important than ever that we collect relevant data, improve our understanding of the situation and then take informed action



to help turn things around.

Irish gardens: micro-havens for wildlife



Helping wildlife can start very close to home. As wild places have dwindled, Irish gardens have become an important refuge for wildlife. Once again, birds are the most noticeable wild visitors, and the way birds use our gardens tells us a lot about how gardens support wildlife. It also offers clues on how nature is faring beyond the garden wall.

Every winter, between 1 December and 28 February, Birdwatch Ireland runs its national Irish Garden Bird Survey. More than 1,000 Irish gardens participate each year, making this the charity's most popular citizen science project. It makes for an ideal school project over the winter months, introducing children to the concept of citizen science and demonstrating the value of simply getting involved.

The Irish Garden Bird Survey: how it works



Participating in the survey is easy. You simply count the birds visiting your school garden each week between December and February (don't worry – schools can skip the Christmas break) and record the highest number of each species seen. When you're done, submit your results by post or online. That's all there is to it!

You'll find more information about the



Top 10 Irish garden birds (Irish Garden Bird Survey 2017/18)

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Robin | 6. Great Tit |
| 2. Blackbird | 7. Coal Tit |
| 3. Blue Tit | 8. Goldfinch |
| 4. Chaffinch | 9. House Sparrow |
| 5. Magpie | 10. Wren |

Birdwatch Ireland Garden Bird Survey, and how your school can take part, at bit.ly/GardenBirdSurvey. If you need help getting started, why not talk to a local Heritage in Schools specialist and enlist some expert help via www.heritageinschools.ie?

Citizen science and Ireland's national biodiversity database

Ireland has its own body dedicated to recording Irish wildlife and biodiversity. The National Biodiversity Data Centre, based in Waterford, collects sightings and distribution data on all kinds of wildlife across Ireland. Data from Irish NGOs (like Birdwatch Ireland's Garden Bird Survey, and The Irish Whale and Dolphin Group's sightings scheme) as well as private individuals, organisations and schools are collated, verified and maintained in a nationwide biodiversity database.

You can browse the data and submit your own wildlife sightings online at records.biodiversityireland.ie.



CALVIN JONES is an author and freelance writer based on the West Cork coast. Calvin shares his passion for wildlife with children across County Cork as a heritage specialist with the

Heritage in Schools Scheme. The Heritage in Schools Scheme is coordinated by the Heritage Council. To find out more and to book a visit from a heritage expert visit www.heritageinschools.ie.

Subject

SESE (Geography)

Strand

Environmental awareness and care

Strand Unit

Environmental Awareness

“Vote for earth!” demand Tyrone pupils



Photos: Strabane Chronicle

The children in Sionmills PS, Tyrone had a very powerful and sobering message for the grown-ups in their lives when they mounted a climate change protest with a difference.

Addressing the Lord Mayor of Derry/Strabane District Council and politicians from across the North’s political spectrum the seven primary school children articulated their views in a most enlightening way, reminding them that, “grown-ups always say they love their children more than anything else ... but if you really love us that much then don’t steal our future!”

Inspired by the teenage environment activist Greta Thunberg, millions of young people took part in climate change protests around the world and the children in Sionmills PS added their voice to the movement as they burst onto the specially designed Amazon forest hall, bellowing out their message and carrying posters emblazoned with impassioned

slogans. The pupil’s intentions were clear from the get-go as they spoke directly to the politicians “there is no planet B”, “dinos thought they had time too”, “raise your voice not the sea level”, “the time is now!”

Time and time again the children, assisted by their suitably attired teacher, Dorothy McGinley, hammered home the message “it’s time to vote for the earth”.

The children used a combination of powerful images and drama to take the audience through the stark effects of climate change. They spoke about heatwaves, flooding, drought, forest fires, melting icecaps, plastics, animal extinction, and fish dying. They borrowed one of Down Syndrome Ireland’s catchphrases – OWLs; and explained that young people are the OWLs of the world as they observe, watch and listen to what is happening to the planet and they urged the politicians and the lawmakers in the audience to become OWLs as well.

Concluding, the children asked, “why

are you grown-ups acting like children?” “you need to fix this and fix it quickly!” “our campaign is for all of us to vote earth”. They pleaded with the audience by saying, “together young people can make a difference. We need to get grown-ups, politicians and world leaders to sit up and take notice – make them do something”.

The children’s enthusiasm and energy was electrifying and exhilarating throughout their high energy performance; taking real ownership of the message as they repeated it over and over again!

Then notching things up to the max for the final, the children delighted the audience with their climate change rap and fired their final point at the audience as they yelled, “we say climate, you say change ... climate change ... climate change ... climate change ...”

DOROTHY MCGINLEY, CEC representative, District 2

A mindful merry Christmas wish

As term one draws to a close you may feel like the marathon runner who is about to hit the wall knowing your seeping energy levels is in direct contrast to the manic energy levels of your pupils.

The business of teaching, learning, collaboration, and staff meetings continues, the never-ending to-do list piles up and the routines you worked so hard to put in place are crumbling around you as the holiday season approaches. The sounds of the Christmas carols seep into your blood, pieces of glitter shimmer everywhere and each day the hysteria heightens.

It's all part and parcel of the Christmas celebrations in schools and each year you are reminded that it is all worth it as you wave goodbye to your pupils, wishing them a safe and happy Christmas. It's a job well done as we know the concept of a happy Christmas is not a guarantee for some of our pupils. Having spread some sparkle and magic is one of the truly blessed parts of our job.

Rest and relaxation

Rest and relaxation are now ours for the taking. However, we have become so skilled at hiding our tiredness that even we can't tell when we need to rest. It's easy to tell when a baby, a small child or pupil is tired. They might cry, get super irritable or throw an almighty tantrum. As we get older, we learn to regulate our behaviour more, and we become better at hiding our tiredness. We may feel grumpy and annoyed, but we can function.

Teachers have big hearts and a deeply ingrained sense of purpose which transfers into family life so now that the holidays have arrived you may take it upon yourselves to immediately use holiday time as a way of investing in keeping the people, you love happy. When we rush without pausing we are in real danger of giving away so much that we don't have anything left over. Our bodies might be tired enough for rest, but our minds are still racing away, thinking and worrying about all the things we need to do.

Teacher holidays

Just like the pupils in our schools, our mood changes when we get tired. Whilst we're able to hold back from crying and



screaming, we express our weariness in other ways. For example, how many arguments with our partner/children/colleagues started because of tiredness?

Research shows that breaks for teachers are incredibly important so we need to use our holidays as an opportunity to recover from the considerable demands of the job and prevent burnout. Doing nothing and simply 'being' is in total opposition to our normal mode of 'doing' Thoughts about being lazy, not deserving the time out, needing to do other things first will surface but just remember these are all just thoughts.

Gift yourself permission to do nothing

We need to deliberately take time to rest, both physically and mentally. Apart from food and water, rest is our next most basic and essential need. We constantly give time, space and energy to support and care for our pupils and I am a big advocate of setting aside some time for you, to ease yourselves into a mindful Christmas.

Having a regular time to meditate, even 15 minutes a day, is useful, it gives us a chance to check in with how we're feeling. By paying more attention to how our bodies feel, we are more able to take positive action and be more present to those we love by relaxing and enjoying the festivities. Start now, there is no time like the present.

Go to the Calm website which is offering teachers free access to their Calm App www.calm.com/schools. You'll receive unlimited access to guided meditations and mindfulness exercises to help you incorporate mindfulness into your own personal life and into the classroom environment.

In the spirit of Christmas, I wish you rest, peace, happiness, joy and freedom to be you.



KAY MURPHY is a fully trained mindfulness teacher, has an MA in Leadership and Pastoral Care and a Diploma in Yoga for Kids. She teaches in Scoil Chiaráin, Glasnevin. Web:

www.aframeofmind.ie

You are invited to join Kay and other like-minded souls on the 14 December, 2019 for a day of Mindfulness Practice in the Margaret Aylward Centre, Glasnevin, D11 from 11.30am-3.30pm at a cost of €60. This is an opportunity for you to step out of the busy-ness, retreat and unwind in the build-up to the holiday season. To register your interest contact Kay by visiting www.aframeofmind.ie or phone 0851094553.

Get motion writing!

The Standing Orders Committee (SOC) are elected from members of the district committees in each of the 16 districts. The SOC prepares the agenda for Congress from motions submitted by branches, district committees, CEC, BFC, and NC. The SOC prepares order papers listing the business of Congress and the motions to be discussed.

INTO annual Congress is the governing body of the INTO and motions passed at Congress form the INTO Central Executive Committee's work plan. Therefore, if you want a voice in what that work should be or if you want to change an INTO policy get writing a motion to Congress!

A motion is a proposition submitted to INTO Congress for discussion and vote. It must be positive in its wording and declare an opinion or call for a course of action – or both. Technically, a motion:

- ✎ must ask Congress to declare an opinion or call for a course of action or both;
- ✎ should deal with one topic only;
- ✎ must be clear from whom the action, if any, is being demanded;
- ✎ must be clear and unambiguous in meaning and intention and must be worded accordingly;
- ✎ must be capable of implementation;
- ✎ should be brief and concise and should not contain argument;
- ✎ should not lead to a deterioration of conditions to other members.

The journey of a motion

1. Submitting your motion to your branch AGM

You need to submit your motion with your name and school as well as the name and school of a seconder to your motion to your branch secretary to allow sufficient time for all motions to be collated and circulated to branch members ahead of the January AGM meeting.

At the branch AGM, all motions are debated and either approved or rejected. The branch secretary submits all approved branch motions to the INTO

Standing Orders Committee. Each motion is categorized which is why motions should only deal with one topic.

2. Preliminary Agenda stage

The INTO Standing Orders Committee meets to read through and discuss each motion. All motions are then either ruled in or ruled out of order. Motions in order are published in the Annual Congress Preliminary Agenda. This Preliminary Agenda is circulated to all Congress delegates.

Branch delegates meet to discuss the Preliminary Agenda. At this stage amendments can be made to motions included in the Preliminary Agenda or an addendum can be added.

An amendment is a proposition to change the words of the motion as a whole, or to change certain words, or to add or delete words anywhere in the motion.

An addendum is a proposition to add words at the end of the motion.

At this stage, the branch must prioritise eight motions on the Preliminary Agenda – this prioritization allows the Standing Orders Committee to identify the most pressing issues for discussion at Congress.

3. Final Agenda and Order Papers

The Standing Orders Committee compiles the Final Agenda which consists of all motions, including amendments and addenda. The Committee also analyses all the motions that have been prioritized by branch delegates and draws up the Congress Order Papers – motions included on the Order Papers are scheduled to be debated at Annual Congress.

4. Annual Congress

When a motion comes up for debate at Annual Congress it must be proposed and

seconded to allow debate to commence on it. Delegates may speak in favour or against a motion before it is put to a vote. If the motion is passed by Congress then

the INTO Central Executive Committee will seek to achieve the action demanded in the motion. They will make a report on their work on the motion to the following year's Congress.

Key dates for this year's Congress

- ✎ Motion submissions open online on Monday, 6 January
- ✎ Motion submissions close at 5 pm on Wednesday, 5 February
- ✎ Preliminary Agenda available online by Monday, 9 March
- ✎ Amendments/Addenda and prioritised motions to be submitted by 5 pm on Monday, 16 March
- ✎ Annual Congress takes place in Cork on 13 – 15 April

Sample motion

The following is a motion which was passed at a previous Congress and is an example of a well-worded motion:

Congress deplores the totally inadequate funding of primary education and calls on the CEC to demand that:

- ✎ the reductions made over the past years to the school capitation grant be reversed in full immediately;
- ✎ the minor works grant and the summer works scheme be fully reinstated on the calendar of grants;
- ✎ every school receives a reasonable budget to provide for the maintenance, repair and replacement of school ICT equipment and that high speed broadband be made available to all primary schools.



Creating a more equal society

Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) General Secretary Patricia King reflects on the critical role of trade unions and the challenges that we face.

Creating a more equal society in which all work is decent, fulfilling and well paid remains the core mission of the trade union movement.

We can make solid progress towards realising that ambition by establishing a right to collective bargaining in Irish law.

In doing so we could secure several key rights, such as the right to organise and the right to undertake trade union activism without penalisation, the right of trade unions to access places of work and the right to time off to engage in representation activity and trade union training.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions will be campaigning vigorously for the adoption of an EU directive that would harmonise member state's laws on collective bargaining, thereby bringing Irish law into line with most other developed states.

Such a directive would overcome any lingering legal doubts around the constitutionality of any legislative initiative in this area.

At a global level, key institutions such as the OECD, World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have finally accepted the critical role that unions play in delivering greater equality and more inclusive growth.

Thus, the World Bank has declared that "it is clear unions and collective bargaining have an equalizing effect on earnings' distribution...", while the IMF points out that "the decline in unionisation is related to the rise of top income shares and less redistribution."

To date, successive Irish governments have committed to the principle of trade union rights in a range of international covenants and treaties, whilst successfully ignoring them in practice and resisting efforts to make them a reality.

It is our task to ensure these commitments are honoured in everyday life and every workplace and we can do so ensuring that worker's rights are the centre of political discourse in Ireland, north and south.



across the island, one that ensures we are all part of a sustainable, low carbon economy and can benefit from the new, decent green jobs and new opportunities that such a transition can deliver.

But we must also take the opportunity to fix our broken society and the corrosive damage done to our social fabric by the ever-worsening housing crisis.

The latest figures show that homeless figures have hit a new peak, including the highest number of children ever in emergency accommodation.

We see pop up soup kitchens at the GPO. Young men sleeping in cardboard boxes in Kildare Street. Families dumped in hotel rooms and so-called family hubs.

These are scenes more reminiscent of *Strumpet City* than the brash image that some of our leaders seek to project.

The crisis is a stain on the record of this government. Official housing policy has failed and should be abandoned.

Above all, we must reverse the disastrous decision to outsource housing provision to the private sector. In 1975, local authorities built 8,794 homes nationally. Last year they struggled to get past 800.

The right to housing and adequate shelter is a core human right, not a plaything of speculators.

This crisis will only be resolved when the state reasserts its central role in housing provision and distribution.

In the context of a looming Brexit threat, Congress is insisting that both governments live up to their obligations under the terms of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement. In reality, this means that we cannot tolerate a no-deal Brexit and, thankfully, that prospect has receded somewhat of late.

In addition, unions across the island and in Britain must redouble efforts to ensure Brexit will not result in a 'race to the bottom' in respect of workers' rights.

Perhaps the greatest single issue confronting humanity is the existential threat posed by climate change. In a recent address President Higgins challenged the trade union movement to support a new eco-social political economy which emphasises the finite nature of the earth's natural resources and the role that rich nations must play in responding to the climate crisis.

Such a paradigm would mean combining the concerns of domestic, international and intergenerational justice in a wholly new global equity framework.

Public servants will be to the fore in developing and delivering this change programme, which in our view must protect the lowest income families.

In this context, Congress has seized the opportunity to take a lead role in the development of a strategy for a 'just transition' for workers and communities

PATRICIA KING, ICTU General Secretary.





Understanding PCP car finance

Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union talks you through the potential pitfalls

It's not known how many cars are bought on hire purchase schemes known as Personal Contract Plans, or PCPs, as the Central Bank has only just started collating data, but if the UK or US is anything to go by, it could be as much as two in every three new cars.

The chances are, if you're envious of your neighbour's shiny new 192-reg in their driveway, most likely it's been bought via PCP.

Attractive interest rates, low repayments, easy-to-get loans and the lure of a brand new vehicle have all resulted in a phenomenal increase in hire finance.

In the UK, similar studies found that buyers were blind-sided by the car, at the expense of understanding the loan backing it. Admiral Insurance UK revealed that 34pc of respondents thought 'balloon payment' was a made up term, while 9pc thought it related to hiring a clown for a children's party. Just 27pc correctly identified it as the lump sum payable at the end of a car loan.

PCP: how it works

Essentially there are three elements to any contract: an upfront deposit (or trade-in), three years' of monthly payments and a final balloon payment (Guaranteed Minimum Future Value [GMFV], which is the bank's determination of how much the car will be worth after three years).

Most marques offer PCP finance on new cars. Many, including Renault and Volkswagen have their own banks while others use AIB or Bank of Ireland Finance.

How are interest rates so low?

It's to do with how the loan is structured. In credit unions, loans are generally unsecured. This means, that while the customer may default on payments, the lender cannot go out and seize assets in lieu. The interest rate charged reflects this. On a PCP, if you don't pay, the car can be taken off you (sometimes after just one

missed payment). Secured assets mean the bank always wins, and therefore, the interest charged can be as low as zero.

Example of PCP in action

Currently, Ford is offering PCP on its Kuga model. The normal retail price (if you pay by cheque) is €29,500.

Under a PCP, you pay €8,850 up front (30pc) – which may be part trade-in. For three years you pay €298.76 per month at 3.9% p.a. (€11,755.36) and after three years, you're given the offer of paying off the rest of the loan (€11,749.27), returning the car or rolling over the entire loan into a new deal. The entire exercise costs €32,354.

Around 70% of people opt for the third option. However, now they have no trade-in, and end up on permanent hire. That's perfectly fine, as long as they can continue the payments, and the GMFV holds its value.

What are the restrictions?

There is generally a mileage limit on PCP cars. This is to aid the GMFV. Drivers are only allowed clock up 15,000 or 20,000 kms per year, otherwise they are charged a penalty. Likewise they may have to meet certain service agreements.

What happens if you miss a payment?

You may get a couple of months' grace, but quickly the bank will move to seize the car. You will, in the first instance be asked to 'surrender' it. If you do, the car will be sold to pay the loan, but you will still owe any outstanding balance. It may also affect your credit rating.

If you have repaid less than one-third of the PCP price, the lender can take back the car without a court order. If you've paid more than one-third of the total due, a court order is needed, but you can be charged the legal fees.

Ending a PCP contract

Under the *Consumer Credit Act 1995* you

have the right to end a PCP contract at any time. The half rule limits your liability depending on how much of the loan you have already paid off.

If you have paid less than half of the total PCP price of the car (price + interest + charges), you can give the car back, and will only owe the difference between what you have paid, and half of the overall figure so you just pay the difference between the payments you have made to date and half the PCP price.

If you have paid more than half of the PCP price of the car and have not missed any payments, you can end the agreement and hand back the car.

Buying second hand PCPs

If a car under PCP finance is put on the market, the buyer may unsuspectingly be taking outstanding debt also. A survey by Cartell.ie found that 17.5% of cars were still 'in debt' on the second hand market. Many are put up for sale online to 'test' the GMFV value – in other words, the owner is seeing if they can get more for cash than originally offered by the garage. It means it's vital to check a car's financial history as well as its service history before buying.

In summary

All in all, if you cannot comfortably afford the repayments, and aren't jointly saving for the GMFV while making them, then perhaps buying a second-hand car from a reputable dealer – with a loan from your friendly credit union – is a better option.



SINEAD RYAN, Comhar Linn INTO Credit Union. If you're looking for a car loan, enquire with Comhar Linn today. Visit www.intocreditunion.ie for more details.



Comhar Linn
INTO Credit Union

Some Irish faces of World War I

World War I ended at 11 am on 11 November 1918. This day became known as Armistice Day – as an armistice (an agreement to stop fighting) was signed. The war began in 1914 and became known

as the ‘Great War’ because it was the greatest war in size and destruction when compared to other wars before it. It is estimated that at least 35,000 Irish soldiers died in this war and some historians

place this figure nearer to 50,000. People experienced this war in many different ways and the experiences of the people below provide only a glimpse into life during World War I.



May Noonan

Did you know that the role of women in society changed during World War I? Many men left their regular jobs to join the army and women had to take their place in jobs that were traditionally seen as being for men only. In Dublin, women worked at the national

munitions factory at Parkgate Street. May Noonan (standing second from left in the photograph) worked in the munitions factory until 1918. She died in 1985 and was buried at Glasnevin.

Mary and Charlie Martin

Mary Martin had 12 children. Her two eldest sons, Tommy and Charlie, enlisted as soldiers with the British Army. Mary's daughters, Marie and Ethel also volunteered for service and worked as nurses on the front. On 8 December 1915, Mary found out that her son Charlie had been wounded and was missing in action. She had no way to send letters to her son but she still wanted to communicate with him, so she began keeping a diary about the daily life of the family and addressed the entries to Charlie. Sadly Mary later discovered that Charlie had been killed in 1915. He was 20 years of age. Mary lived until 1955 and is buried in Glasnevin. The diary can be used as a primary source that provides information on what life was like for her family in Dublin in the 1900s. Mary also wrote about the Easter Rising in her diary when it broke out in April 1916. You can see the full diary at bit.ly/MartinDiary.

Private John Lee

On 2 November 1915, Private John Lee was injured at Gallipoli. He was removed to a hospital station and eventually returned home to Dublin and it was decided he was unable for further front-line service. Soon after this, he was diagnosed with tuberculosis, discharged from the army and died in January 1917. The census return for 1911 provides a lot of information about John's life including; his address, information about his family, education and his life in 1911. E.g. before he joined the army, John worked as a hairdresser.

Working as a historian - classroom activity

Research World War I and soldiers from the local area, your family, or even soldiers who were past pupils of your school. Teachers – below are some resources that you can use for researching local links to the war.

<http://bit.ly/IRLMemorialRecords> – You can use search Ireland's Memorial Records through Flanders' Fields Museum online. This database can be searched in many ways including by name or a soldier's place of birth.

www.cwgc.org – The database of the Commonwealth War Grave Commission contains information about the 1.7 million men and women of the Commonwealth forces who died during the two world wars. These records contain detailed information on their burial and commemoration.

<https://vad.redcross.org.uk> – Contains records of British Red Cross volunteers during the war. You can search by area also.

www.census.nationalarchives.ie – Try using the 1901 and 1911 Census records online. Search the name of the person you are researching and see if you can discover more facts about their lives.

MICHELLE O'CONNOR, education officer and teacher liaison at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum, Finglas Road, Dublin 11.

If you would like to participate in a World War I tour or artefact handling session please contact education@glasnevintrust.ie for more information.

Anne Connor

At the age of 28, Anne volunteered for home service with the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF) in Dublin. Her husband, Thomas Connor, served with the British Expeditionary Force on the Western Front. The original aim of the WRAF was to provide female mechanics who could step in for men who were away at war. The WRAF saw huge enrolment, with women volunteering for positions as drivers and mechanics. During her time in service, Anne Connor contracted the Spanish Flu and died in February 1919.



Subject

SESE (History)

Strand

Eras of Change and Conflict
Working as an historian

Strand Unit

Using evidence
World War 1

DEIS initiative in action

Congress adopted a resolution in 2019 calling for a public campaign to highlight the impact of social inequality within our schools. Despite the trojan work being done by primary teachers, social inequalities continue to impact on pupils in our schools. As part of our campaign we will be running a series of articles in Intouch drawing attention to the impact of social inequalities starting with this article on the Challenger programme.

The 1995 *Clancy Report* into participation in higher education identified the Dublin 17 area as a “zone of low participation”. At a level of just 6% participation against the national average of 44%, it was obvious that something would have to be done to offer an improved vision of higher education to the young people in the area. Local schools working with the Northside Partnership sought to develop a programme that would both encourage and support students and their families to participate in higher education. Over the years the Challenger programme has evolved with identified need but continues to hold to its core values; identifying students in primary school with the potential to achieve in education and supporting them and their families to maximise their progression to higher education.

The primary objectives of the programme are to:

- ✦ Maintain young people in education
- ✦ Enable them to achieve their full potential
- ✦ Create a positive culture around

- education in the community and by doing so make third level education both attainable and achievable
- ✦ Work in partnership with parents to achieve these objectives
- ✦ Increase the number of young people from the Dublin 17 and 5 area progressing to third-level education

Children from five primary schools in the Dublin 17 area (Darndale, Priorswood, Bonnybrook, and Kilmore) are invited to interview, along with their parents, early in 6th class. The 'interview' process focuses on how both students and parents view the value of education as a route to lifelong success. In a change from the initial process where teachers identified candidates now all children are encouraged to put themselves forward for selection. With just 40 places available, the interview, along with a personal statement presented by the student is critical to the selection process. Interviews are carried out by impartial committee members to avoid having teachers decide who from their school is selected for the prestigious places.

Using current data, programmes for each cohort are developed based on supporting students in areas where there is an identified need. For our 6th class cohort, we offer supports for Gaeilge, developing confidence, social capital, and literacy. To support Gaeilge, students visit DCU St Patrick's campus for six weeks to practice oral Irish with student teachers. To develop self-confidence, pupils take part in public speaking sessions. There are also book clubs and cultural trips. All of these programmes are provided to fill identified gaps between pupils from our most disadvantaged schools and their



peers from other areas.

Progressing to second level, grinds are provided to all students. Other workshops such as rapping and coding are also provided. TY students get the opportunity to complete the STEPS programme. This programme is a requirement for parents in the initial year of Challenger.

In the 2017/18 school year, over 30% of students progressed onto recognised third level courses. A further 30% engaged with PLCs and 10% went onto an apprenticeship. Of the remainder, 22% went directly into employment and the remainder have gone overseas.

Whilst these figures show a remarkable jump from the 6% rate identified by the *Clancy Report* the legacy of Challenger will be in how its successes can lead to an overall change in engagement in third level across all of Dublin 17. One way of ensuring this is by promoting the successes of Challenger in the area through Challenger graduates returning to work in the area (see panels below).

SHANE LOFTUS, CEC representative, District 15.

Ciara grew up in Darndale and attended Our Lady Immaculate School. She has since returned to teach in her home school – the only person from the area to do so.

“I didn't get onto Challenger until I was in first year. My Mam was eager to get me involved as she saw what Challenger could do for me. The fact that Challenger wasn't just about me going to school was important. My whole family benefitted due to the parental involvement aspect. As well as providing the required academic and financial assistance the career guidance helped me greatly through college until I finally qualified as a teacher. It's great for me to be back teaching now in the school where I was a pupil and where my family all went to school. I know they are all really proud of me being here.”

Adam grew up in Priorswood and joined Challenger when he was in 6th class in St Francis SNS.

“At the time I just wanted to do my best in school. I wasn't sure what parts of Challenger I would like the most but it turned out that Irish was great for me. I didn't think I was very good at Irish but after doing conversational Irish in St Patrick's (DCU) I went on to take part in the Gaeltacht in 4th year. I really enjoyed it. It helped my confidence so much in Irish that I returned as a ceannaire. Challenger gave me the tools to do that. I am currently studying and hope to become a teacher one day – Who knows I might even make my way back to St Francis.”

The hidden disability in

Recognising and supporting pupils with Developmental Language Disorder

Language is a vital skill which we use to communicate our needs, feelings and opinions, to process and store information, to learn and demonstrate learning, to build friendships and relationships, as well as to demonstrate our learning. Language skills are fundamental to a child's ability to access the school curriculum. It is, therefore, not surprising that children with oral language disorders are at a significantly increased risk of social-emotional challenges, academic failure and inferior employment outcomes.

Developmental language disorder (DLD) is a life-long condition characterised by significant and on-going difficulties learning and generalising certain language skills. These difficulties understanding and/or using spoken language impact on the person's social and academic functioning. DLD is often referred to as a hidden disability, as it is frequently unrecognised in children, teenagers and adults and many are skilful at compensating for their difficulties. Unfortunately, the obstacles faced by people with DLD can be further compounded by a lack of understanding and support for their needs.

Previous terminology and criteria used to diagnose children's language disorders was variable and confusing. Terms used included 'specific language impairment' (SLI), 'specific speech and language impairment/disorder' (SSLI /SSLD) and 'primary language impairment' (PLI), among others. An intense focus on the 'specific' nature of these language difficulties did not reflect the range of challenges experienced and often led to inequitable service provision. DLD is now diagnosed using broader diagnostic criteria. It is defined by language skills

The term Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) should be used for children where...

- 1** The child has language difficulties that create barriers to communication or learning in everyday life
- 2** The child's language problems are unlikely to be resolved by five years of age
- 3** The problems are not associated with a known biomedical condition such as brain injury, neurodegenerative conditions, or chromosome disorders

that are developing below expectation, have a functional impact and poor prognosis. Contrary to some previous definitions of SLI, DLD does not require a mismatch between verbal and non-verbal ability. DLD now replaces the above terms. Children with a previous diagnosis of SLI meet the new criteria for DLD.

There is no single known cause of DLD. Research suggests that it likely results from a number of biological, genetic and environmental risk factors. These include family history of oral language and literacy difficulties, being male, poverty and fewer years of parental education. DLD is not caused by limited exposure to a language.

A person with DLD may have co-occurring motor, sensory and cognitive challenges such as dyslexia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), developmental coordination disorder (DCD), behavioural problems, and/or speech sound difficulties.

Persistent language disorders can also occur with biomedical conditions including genetic syndromes, autism spectrum disorder (ASD), sensori-neural hearing loss and intellectual disabilities. Children with these conditions are referred to as having a language disorder associated with X, and not developmental language disorder.

DLD is a highly prevalent presentation however there is poor public awareness of the condition. An epidemiological study in the UK (Norbury et al. 2016), found that 7.58% of school-entry children had a language disorder of unknown origin and a further 2.34% had a language disorder associated with another condition. Bearing this 7% prevalence rate and the 2016 census figures in mind, it can be estimated that 85,463 children present with DLD in Ireland. More importantly for teachers, two children out of every classroom of 30 may have DLD.

DLD presents differently in all children and their needs will vary over time. Some of the wide ranging difficulties experienced by school-aged children are depicted in the puzzle picture below. It is important to remember that some children may try masking their language difficulties by copying the responses of their peers and avoid engaging in classroom discussions. Other children may respond to the challenges that they face by having a low opinion of themselves, acting out emotionally and/or physically and failing to maintain attention to tasks.

Appropriate support can ameliorate obstacles faced by children with DLD. Teaching staff are well-placed to support children with DLD in the school setting.



RADLD campaign raising awareness of DLD

our classrooms



Collaboration between parents, teachers and speech and language therapists (SLTs) is essential to helping each child with DLD reach their potential. If you are concerned that a child you are working with has DLD and needs support please get in touch with your local SLT team with parental consent.

Friday, 18 October 2019 marked International Developmental Language

Disorder Awareness Day, led by the RADLD campaign. Events took place globally to build knowledge and raise awareness of this hidden but common disorder.

Further exploration

- ◆ www.radld.org
- ◆ www.naplic.org.uk/dld
- ◆ www.dldandme.org

- ◆ <http://bit.ly/RADLD1-2-3>
- ◆ *IASLT Supporting Children with Developmental Language Disorder in Ireland, Position Paper and Guidance Document (2017)*

NIAMH ROWLAND and SINÉAD FINN, speech and language therapists, HSE CHO Dublin North City and County.

Some general strategies

- **Get the child's attention prior to giving an instruction.**
- **Use short and explicit instructions.**
- **Use visuals – visual cues, gestures, pictures, acting things out.**
- **Give the child time to process and respond.**
- **Check that the child has understood at regular intervals.**
- **Create multiple opportunities to hear, speak, read and write new words.**
- **Encourage the child to communicate with you however they can.**
- **Praise their effort and acknowledge what they have said.**
- **Provide opportunities for structured oral language activities.**





Celebrating the festive season in Spain

Aida González shares how the Christmas season is celebrated in her home country.

Christmas is just around the corner. It's a time of year that all children eagerly await, but not all of them expect the same from these

festivities. Spain is well known for its variety of cultures and traditions. Christmas is a season in which all these differences are reflected as well.

24-25 December: Olentzero



In the Basque Country and some parts of Navarra, an old coalman called Olentzero is the character who drops off presents for

children on this magical night. It is said that he originated in pagan practice, related to the winter solstice and that with the passing of time, this was adopted by Christianity. The origins aren't entirely clear (a mythical giant announcing the birth of Jesus, a punisher, or a winter solstice herald). What is true is that he has been increasing in popularity since the seventies and nowadays, children in those areas wait for him on this night.

24-25 December: Tió de Nadal or Caga Tió



This Christmas log or 'poo' log is traditionally from Catalonia and Aragon (where it is also called Tizón de Nadal). It's origin, like Olentzero,

is believed to be in pagan practice. The log is placed in the home a few weeks before Christmas. During this time, children feed it with nuts and peels, wrap it up with a blanket to keep it from

getting cold and take care of it during those weeks. On Christmas Day or Eve, the children beat the Tió (log) with sticks while singing a popular song in which they ask the Tió to 'poo' small presents and turrón (a kind of nougat). All these presents are shared among the family members.

31 December: New Year's Eve



People celebrate New Year's Eve all over the world. In Spain, as elsewhere, a countdown accompanied by fireworks and parties,

is common. It is a tradition in Spain to eat twelve grapes during the countdown – one grape for each stroke. On Sol Square in Madrid, there is a big clock with an enormous ball that only drops on this night of the year at midnight. Everyone waits in front of their TVs with their twelve grapes for this moment. You have to be careful not to choke!

5-6 January: The Tres Reyes Magos and the roscón de Reyes

For most countries in Latin America and some in Europe, such as Spain, the Christmas season ends on the day of the Epiphany (6 January). This day is known in

Spain as 'Día de Reyes' (Three Wise Men's Day or, literally, 'Kings' Day'). On the evening of 5 January, the Cabalgata de Reyes (Twelfth Night procession) takes place in every Spanish town and city to celebrate and commemorate the coming of the kings with their gifts (gold, frankincense and myrrh) for the infant Jesus.

At the end of the float parade, when thousands of sweets have been thrown to the children, it's time to go home and go to bed. But not before leaving some milk and cookies for the Three Kings, some water for their camels and cleaning your shoes. On the morning of 6 January, among all the presents left by their majesties, there must be a roscón.

A roscón (in Spain), rosca de Reyes (in Latin America) or bolo Rei (in Portugal) is a crown of sweet bread topped with crystallized fruit and with a small figure and a bean hidden inside. When cut into pieces, the person who gets the figure will be crowned as a king, and the one who finds the bean should have to pay for the roscón. It's similar to the Irish barmbrack in some ways.



Above: Cabalgata de los Reyes, Barcelona. Shutterstock

AIDA GONZÁLEZ, INTO communications team.

Subject

SESE (Geography)

Strand

Human environments

Strand Unit

People and places in other areas

Knowing what's real and fake



Guidelines for evaluating sources

Today's students have more information at their fingertips than ever before and this means the role of the teacher as a guide is more important than ever. Teachers can guide students in understanding that not all information is reliable or accurate, nor will all information be suitable for a particular research topic. Evaluating sources encourages students to think critically about the origin of information they reference. Whether they are using information from a book, website, or blog, the following are several general factors to consider.

Author

Is the information from a credible, reputable and trustworthy author? Information from sources written by experts, reviewed by an editorial process, or based on strong credible evidence are good sources to reference.

Tips for evaluating the author:

Credentials – consider the credibility of a source by looking at the author's credentials or the reputation of the organisation. Decode websites quickly by examining the URL extension. Extensions such as '.gov', '.org', and '.edu' represent government agencies, organisations, and educational institutes.

Reviewed – investigate who the publisher is and check whether they have an editorial or peer-review process. For example, organisations and government agencies produce publications approved by several people.

Fairness – examine the information

carefully to check whether the author is showing favouritism or prejudice for or against someone or something. If the content contains bias, only one point of view is being presented. Assess for bias by examining the purpose of an article or website. For example, is the author trying to sell or promote a product? Consider comparing the information to other reliable sources so that you can make an informed decision on whether bias is at play.

Timeliness

Is the information up to date or archived? Archived information sources can provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence concerning a historical topic. For example, sources of archived information may include newspaper articles from the Irish Newspaper Archive – bit.ly/ScoilnetINA, Irish Times Archive – bit.ly/ScoilnetITA, or video recordings from the RTÉ Archive – www.rte.ie/archives. Archived sources of information may work for history but not if you are researching a rapidly developing field.

Tips for evaluating the timeliness:

Books – information in books is not always as current as the information online. If you are using books, try to reference the latest edition.

Websites – check the publication date of the article or whether the article was revised since the publication date.

World Book

Online –

bit.ly/ScoilnetWB is a reliable up-to-date source of information for all students and teachers and is free to access in the Republic of Ireland through Scoilnet. World Book is reliable as it maintains an editorial advisory board composed of academics and practitioners who are experts in their fields to ensure the continued accuracy of content and articles. When you need fast, reliable information for homework, reports, or just a lingering question, World Book Online is the place to go.

AOIFE McDONNELL, project officer, Scoilnet PDST.



Cornmarket Cumann na mBunscol Awards 2020



In 2020, the Anner Hotel in Thurles will host the AGM of Cumann na mBunscol on Saturday, 7 March while the Cornmarket Cumann na mBunscol Awards banquet will take place the previous night, Friday, 6 March.

“The Cornmarket Awards banquet is invariably a night to remember”, says Mairéad O’Callaghan, who teaches in Glenville NS, Watergrasshill, Cork and is uachtarán of Cumann na mBunscol. “The awards give schools of all sizes and backgrounds the opportunity to display their wares. They are the perfect platform for teachers involved in Cumann na mBunscol to showcase their work. Whether you work in a large urban school or a small rural school, there is something



Mairéad O’Callaghan, uachtarán of Cumann na mBunscol.

for you. Success in the awards is not defined by winning silverware but by promoting gaelic games in an atmosphere of fun and enjoyment. As well as recognising excellence, the awards banquet is an occasion for colleagues to enjoy themselves and meet friends from all corners of the country.”

The closing date for the 2020 awards is 8 January 2020.

- ✦ **Category 1:** Pat Trainor Hall of Fame Award
- ✦ **Category 2:** Allianz Public Relations Award
- ✦ **Category 3:** County Publication
- ✦ **Category 4:** Promotion of Gaelic Games and Culture – Schools
- ✦ **Catagóir Cúig:** Cur chun cinn an

Chultúir Ghaelaig agus na gCluichí Gaelacha tri mheán na Gaeilge:

- ✦ **Category 6 – School of the Year:** Schools with a roll of 150 pupils or fewer
- ✦ **Category 7 – School of the Year:** Schools with 151 or more pupils.

Please post entries to your provincial delegate:

Connacht: Micheal MacThiarnain, Corrin na Coille, Drumaweel, Drumcong, Co Leitrim.

Ulster: Gary Farrell, 75 Annvale Road, Keady, Co Armagh.

Munster: Joe Lyons, Ballybrown NS, Clarina, Co Limerick.

Leinster: Jim Fennelly, Churchhill NS, Cuffes Grange, Kilkenny.

Further details on <https://bit.ly/2WT2sv6>.



The staff of Roan St Patrick’s PS, Eglisli, Co Tyrone, winners of the small school category at the 2019 awards with Adrian Travers Cornmarket.

Coaching corner

<https://learning.gaa.ie/planner/primary> is full of ideas and tips for teachers. It covers all classes from junior infants to sixth class. Lessons are graded. Activities in hurling, gaelic football and rounders are provided. Illustrations are easy to follow. These activities may be used in full games, small sided games or conditioned games.

Whether you want to dip in here and there or follow a programme from start to finish, there is something here for everyone.

Ronnie recalls winning gold in Croke Park



Officers of Cumann na mBunscol Átha Cliath were guests of Lord Mayor of Dublin, Paul McAuliffe, at a function in the Mansion House recently in recognition of the contribution of its members to the lives of thousands of children since its foundation in 1928.

Among the guests were Cathaoirleach David Gough, who is one of the top referees in the country; Tadhg Kenny, 2018 winner of the Pat Trainor Award for Lifetime Service to Cumann na mBunscol; Jerry Grogan, ‘The Voice of Croke Park’ and long serving PRO of Cumann na mBunscol in the capital and Ronnie Delany. Ronnie revealed that he won the gold medal at the Cumann na mBunscol Athletics Championships in 1946, ten years before he won gold in the 1500m at the Melbourne Olympics. It was the first gold medal Ronnie won on an athletics track.

Including a child with autism in PE lessons

Autism is a lifelong neurological developmental condition that affects the central nervous system. It is characterised by individuals displaying differences in communication patterns, social interactions and restricted interests and/or sensory seeking behaviours.

The 'TREE' model is applied to assist teaching PE to a class which includes a child with autism.

TEACHING STYLE

- ‡ The day before the lesson, share images/videos with the SNA to show the child.
- ‡ Teach expectations beforehand (e.g. when we enter the hall, we sit on the bench).
- ‡ Explicitly teach hand signals/social cues you may use in PE lessons.
- ‡ Demonstrate skills, using visuals and single words, in the same space to establish the listening space.
- ‡ Use a social story/role play to teach about challenges (e.g. winning or losing).
- ‡ Give specific praise.

RULES

- ‡ Keep lesson structure similar as a routine.
- ‡ Teach rules.
- ‡ Be consistent.

EQUIPMENT

- ‡ If the child is tactile defensive with certain materials, let him/her be the equipment manager to allow exposure.
- ‡ Use a variety of equipment to avoid fixation on any one piece.
- ‡ Keep equipment the same colour.
- ‡ Give a countdown to manage/end an activity.
- ‡ Allow the child to take equipment planned for the lesson home (e.g. a bib), to practise putting it on and to become familiar with the smell/texture.

ENVIRONMENT

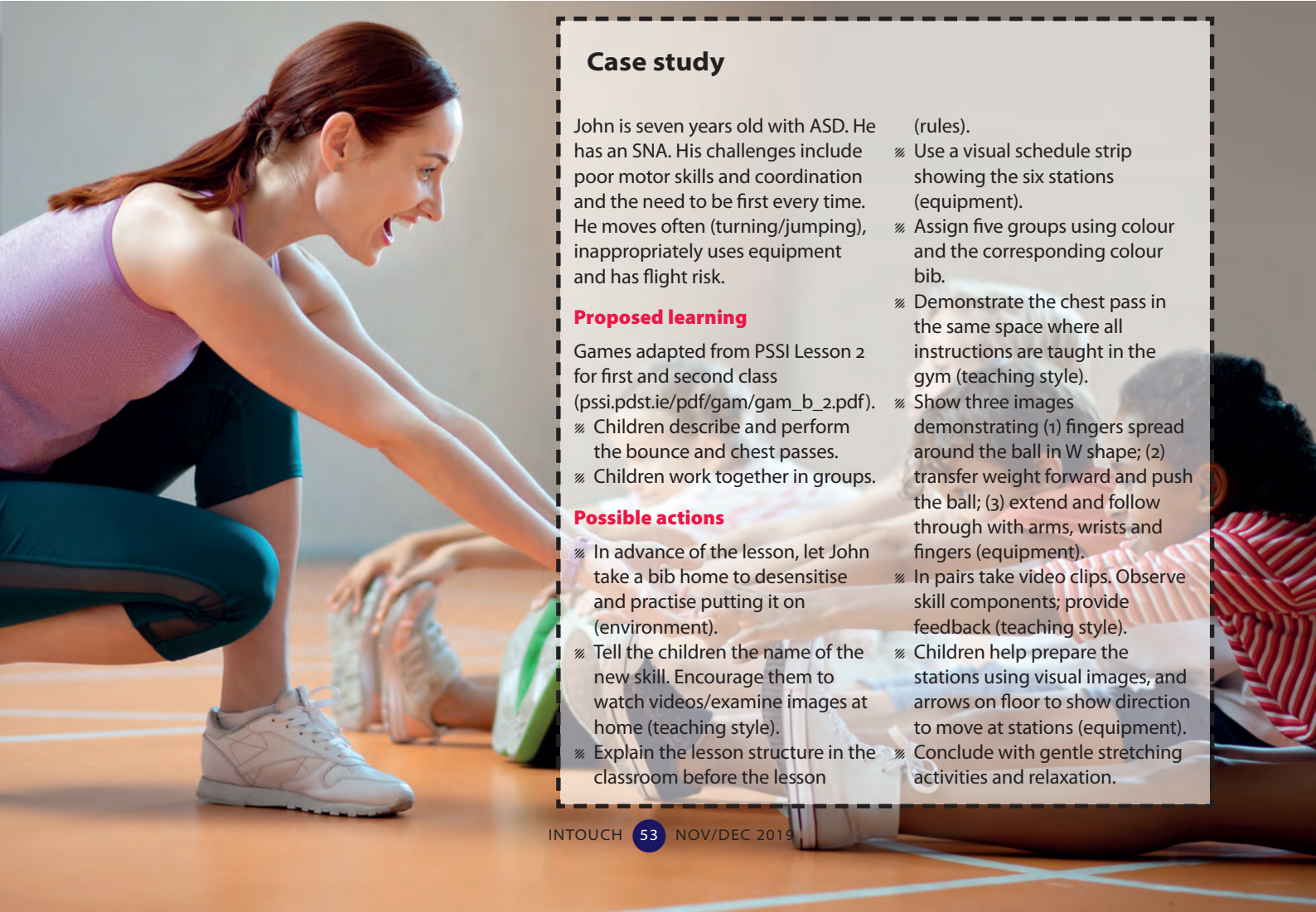
- ‡ Have a quiet spot the child can access using a break card.
- ‡ Be aware of sensitivity to stimuli such as noise (e.g. whistle) or touch (e.g. use hand signals). Consider ear defenders but be aware of safety issues.

- ‡ Have a 'change of plan' card in case a major change occurs (e.g. location change).
- ‡ Consider a 'buddy' system.
- ‡ Discuss upcoming change with the child.
- ‡ Keep the same layout for the gym.

ROISIN KELLY, autism class teacher, and Susan Marron, Institute of Education, DCU and the IPPEA Committee.

Resources

- Peter Downs' 'Symbols of Inclusion: Swimming, Part 2'. *The Inclusion Club*, Episode 56 shows how symbols can aid communication when teaching swimming. (bit.ly/InclusionClubSwimming)
- National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability. Physical Education Routine for Children with Autism.
- PE routine for children with autism (bit.ly/PEforAutism)
- A teacher speaks about teaching PE to children with autism in 'Inclusion in physical education: Dancing with your eyes' (Episode 75 of *The Inclusion Club*) (bit.ly/InclusionInPE)



Case study

John is seven years old with ASD. He has an SNA. His challenges include poor motor skills and coordination and the need to be first every time. He moves often (turning/jumping), inappropriately uses equipment and has flight risk.

Proposed learning

Games adapted from PSSI Lesson 2 for first and second class (pssi.pdst.ie/pdf/gam/gam_b_2.pdf).

- ‡ Children describe and perform the bounce and chest passes.
- ‡ Children work together in groups.

Possible actions

- ‡ In advance of the lesson, let John take a bib home to desensitise and practise putting it on (environment).
- ‡ Tell the children the name of the new skill. Encourage them to watch videos/examine images at home (teaching style).
- ‡ Explain the lesson structure in the classroom before the lesson

(rules).

- ‡ Use a visual schedule strip showing the six stations (equipment).
- ‡ Assign five groups using colour and the corresponding colour bib.
- ‡ Demonstrate the chest pass in the same space where all instructions are taught in the gym (teaching style).
- ‡ Show three images demonstrating (1) fingers spread around the ball in W shape; (2) transfer weight forward and push the ball; (3) extend and follow through with arms, wrists and fingers (equipment).
- ‡ In pairs take video clips. Observe skill components; provide feedback (teaching style).
- ‡ Children help prepare the stations using visual images, and arrows on floor to show direction to move at stations (equipment).
- ‡ Conclude with gentle stretching activities and relaxation.

Good evening, Ireland – Brussels calling!

Déaglán Ó Donnchú from Galway's Gaelscoil Riabhach describes life as a seconded teacher in the European Schools (ES).

It was the moment I heard a group of nine-year-olds in the yard organising weekend playdates that I realised the truly unique status my new school enjoyed. These children, from backgrounds as diverse as Austria, France, Ireland, and Spain, were deftly using four different languages to plan their action-packed itineraries. The Tower of Babel had met its match! The ease with which they conversed in a plethora of languages – polyglots the lot of them – is one of the most astonishing aspects of the ES system. They even encouraged me to brush up on my languages, which lay somewhat dormant since my university days.

Simply put, the ES system is a network of 13 nursery, primary and secondary schools whose core objective is to educate the children of employees of the EU's institutions. Member states are required to second teachers for nine years, after which they return to their home school.

This is now my eighth year teaching 5th class – the final year for children before embarking on their secondary adventure in the building next door. What's great about the combined campus is that former pupils return to visit; it's astonishing to see just how much they've progressed – and aged! Alas, they say the same about me as they point out every additional grey hair on each visit!

School sizes vary – from a couple of hundred pupils in Alicante to well over 3,000 in Brussels. There are seven language sections in my school with a special status for Slovak and Irish. Indeed the Irish language has a special status across all the 13 European Schools ensuring that Irish pupils can learn Irish and engage with their Irish heritage and culture. Many activities take place across language sections and year levels – concerts, assemblies, green-energy projects, nature walks – allowing children



to engage with the work of their peers.

For new teachers, the initial move may appear daunting – however, there's wonderful support provided by the Department, the host school and a network of former/current seconded teachers. Indeed, conversing with various teachers in different tongues adds further colour to our daily life!

Teachers are encouraged to bring their experience from their home country into the classroom. So much so, the majority of textbooks/readers which I use are Irish. The reputation of Irish teachers is second-to-none. Creating a print-rich environment, for example, isn't the norm in many countries so everyone's amazed by the class displays for which Irish teachers are famed!

Daily life is similar to home – yard duty, corrections, planning, parent-teacher evenings, groupwork activities, choir, homework journals, staff meetings – such fun isn't just kept in Ireland!

An rud is mó a chuireann gliondar ar mo chroí ná go bhfuil deis agam Gaeilge a mhúineadh toisc go bhfuil roinnt

Éireannaigh inár scoil. Cé nár rugadh fórmhór na bpáistí in Éirinn, tá sé soiléir go bhfuil an-tírghrá acu.

There's much scope for personal enjoyment. Host cities across Europe provide rich cultural offerings – theatre on a Monday, tango dancing on a Wednesday, pub quiz on a Friday. With a well-established network of ex-pat communities, making new friends is easy! Excellent transport networks mean weekend getaways across Europe are a must!

Whilst I may reflect with fond nostalgia on my previous seven years, I begin my penultimate year intending to savour each moment of this rewarding journey, both professionally and personally.

I'm a firm believer that challenges enrich us: applying for a position in the European Schools could be the beginning of your life-changing adventure!

The jury's in – and it's a douze-points from me!

DÉAGLÁN Ó DONNCHÚ, Gaelscoil Riabhach seconded to a European School in Brussels.

Seconded teachers continue to receive their normal fortnightly salaries in Ireland – and an additional allowance is paid by the host school to help with rental costs and other daily expenses. Comprehensive healthcare for the family is also provided by the EU. Vacancies for new positions are usually advertised in January for commencements in September of that year. The Department's website provides further details about the application process. More information about the ES system is available on www.eursc.eu.

Poetry for Christmas

Oliver Brennan shares his Christmas poems that may support your language lessons at this time of year.

Winter's Night

Owls in woodlands dark and dreary,
Hoot and swoop with flapping eerie.
Rabbit, ferret, fox and stoat,
Shiver in their winter coat.

Forest trees of leaves denuded,
Have not howling gales eluded,
Frosted branches, thin and bare,
Like outstretched arms in midnight air.

Twinkling stars in pristine skies,
Sparkle like a billion eyes.
Moonbeams on a frozen lake,
Pale illuminations make.

All across a freezing land,
Nature lays her icy hand.
On hill and dale for miles around,
A snowy blanket hugs the ground.

Christmas Joy

Though Christmas comes but once a year,
It fills our lives with warmth and cheer,
As streets and homes begin to glow,
With sparkling lights and mistletoe.

Scented candles, red in hue,
With hope and joy our hearts renew,
While carols wafting through the air,
Banish sadness and despair.

Boughs of holly hung on high
Show the festive time is nigh
Of turkey, ham and Christmas cake,
Soon each family will partake.

Toys and gifts in dainty piles
Turn grumpy frowns to winning smiles,
As reindeer bells in distant skies
Tell Santa's rush to beat sunrise.

An Chéad Nollaig

Glór na nAingeal ins an spéir,
Naíonán álainn sa mháinséar.

Iosaf, Muire is Íosagán,
Baibín gléasta i mbindealáin

Asal, bó is uan óg,
Muire ag tabhairt na mílte póg.

Aoirí is Trí Rí ag siúl,
le bronntanais do Rí na nDúl.

Christmas Tide

Stockings hanging by the bed,
Reindeers flying overhead,
Snowflakes falling from the sky
Christmastime is here! Oh my!

Turkey roasting in the oven,
Brussels sprouts boiled by the dozen.
Stuffing, gravy and mince pies,
Fruit cakes of enormous size!

Christmas trees, fir, spruce or pine,
With fairy lights and baubles shine.
Of needle-scent the evergreen smells,
Each branch adorned with jingle bells.

Fire-logs crackling in the grate,
Tiny tots all lie in wait.
It's that magic time of year,
When 'Dear Old Santa' will appear!

OLIVER BRENNAN is a teacher and staff rep at Our Lady's Boys' National School, Ballinteer, Dublin 16.

Register for Incredible Edibles 2020

Agri Aware has launched its national healthy eating initiative Incredible Edibles 2020. The free initiative for primary schools aims to educate students on how to sow, grow and cook an array of fruit and vegetables to get their seven a day!

Schools across Ireland will receive free

grow packs including compost, seeds to grow their own school garden along with curriculum-linked interactive educational resources – including lessons on food origin, the health benefits of a diet rich in fruit and vegetables and cooking tasks.

Agri Aware's 2020 Incredible Edibles programme was launched with the help of the 5th class pupils of Scoil Íde Presentation PS, Clondalkin.


To register your school for the project or for further information visit www.incredibleedibles.ie.



Pictured (L-R) are 5th class pupils with Agri Aware's Kalyn Arias, preparing to plant some seeds.



Pictured (L-R) are Suzanne Finnerty, Meade Potato Company; Alan Jagoe, Chairman Agri Aware; Paul Brosnan, Department of Health; Niamh Brennan, Irish Farmers Association with 5th class pupils.

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 Aladdin

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Brianóg Brady Dawson
 (36 years' Primary Teaching Experience)




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 Staff Narrative Workshops

Contact: breenogue@gmail.com

Michael Grainger
CAMINO WALKING
Guided Trips 2020

May 23 : Sarria to Santiago.
 June 6 : First stage from St. Jean Pied de Port to Estella.
 July 4 : Sarria to Santiago.
 July 11 : Camino Finisterre.
 Sept 5 : Sarria to Santiago.

Full details and walk schedules from
Michael Grainger
mvgwalking@gmail.com
 087 2206360

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Spreag an Ghaeilge le Spraioi



Foilsíodh an dara heagrán de *Spreag an Ghaeilge le Spraioi* le déanaí. Acmhainn an-úsáideach atá ann chun cabhrú le múinteoirí an Ghaeilge a spreagadh, a fhorbairt, a cheiliúradh agus a shaihbhrú ar scoil.

Tá *Spreag an Ghaeilge le Spraioi* ar an bhfoilseachán is mó éileamh atá ag COGG, rud a dheimhníonn an úsáid shuntasach a bhaineann scoileanna as, agus rud a dheimhníonn an fiúntas a bhaineann leis.

Leabhar seachas fillteán atá san eagrán nua atá uasdátaithe agus é ag teacht le *Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile*. Sa lámhleabhar, tá pleananna ceachta, cluichí teanga, cluichí clóis, moltaí maidir le cruinneas teanga a chothú, moltaí chun an chaint a spreagadh, agus áiseanna cóipeála.

Cuireann *Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* béim ar thaitneamh a bhaint as foghlaim na Gaeilge, agus sa leabhar seo, éascaíonn na cluichí an iliomad deiseanna an Ghaeilge a mhúineadh agus a spreagadh le spraioi.

Aithníonn *Curaclam Teanga na Bunscoile* gur bealach éifeachtach í an Fhoghlaim Chomhtháite Ábhair agus Teanga (FCÁT) le teagmháil na bpáistí leis an nGaeilge a mhéadú trí fhíorchomhthéacsanna a chruthú ina mbeidh an teanga á húsáid ag páistí. Éascaíonn an pacáiste teagaisc seo deiseanna chun an FCÁT a chur i bhfeidhm leis na cluichí clóis agus na ceachtanna teanga a ghabhann leo.

Tá an cur chuige cumarsáideach

lárnach sna ceachtanna agus cuideoidh an acmhainn le múinteoirí an Ghaeilge a spreagadh, a fhorbairt agus a chur chun cinn ar bhonn scoile trí fhoghlaim ghníomhach.

Úsáid sa rang

- Múin an teanga a bhaineann leis na cluichí clóis go foirmiúil sa rang ar dtús ionas go mbeidh muinín ag na páistí tabhairt faoi na cluichí agus iad ag spraioi sa chlós - tá teanga na gcluichí agus na cluichí féin leagtha amach i gcuid 1 den leabhar.
- Nuair atá pleanáil uile-scoile á déanamh, úsáid na greillí i gcuid 2 den leabhar, a leagann amach eiseamláirí oiriúnacha teanga, le cumarsáid a dhéanamh i dtimpeallacht na scoile. Tagann forbairt ar an teanga seo ó rang go rang, rud a chabhróidh le saibhreas agus líofacht na bpáistí a fhorbairt. Baineann na heiseamláirí seo le gnáthchaint an lae agus is fearr iad a mhúineadh go foirmiúil sa rang ar dtús.
- Dirigh ar líofacht agus ar chruinneas na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn trí na straitéisí atá molta maidir le conas dul i ngleic le botúin, m.sh., an cheacht a dhíríonn ar úsáid chruinn na ceiste 'An bhfuil cead agam...' agus cóipeáil na leathanaigh póstaer a bhaineann leis, agus cuir iad ar taispeáint timpeall na scoile chun botúin choitianta a sheachaint.

- Cóipeáil na cártaí a bhaineann leis na cluichí meaitseála, déan lannú orthu agus tabhair deis do pháistí na cluichí a imirt chun úsáid a bhaint as cleachtadh spráiuil a dhéanamh ar struchtúir atá cruinn.
- Cruthaigh zón Gaelach sa scoil (m.sh., i halla na scoile nó ag an bhfáiltiú) chun samplaí taitneamhacha d'obair Ghaeilge na bpáistí a chur ann agus an teanga a cheiliúradh.
- Tabhair aitheantas do pháistí a dhéanann iarracht, ó thaobh úsáid na teanga, ag baint leas as na moltaí agus ábhar tacaíochta atá sa chuid den leabhar – Spreagadh na Cainte.
- Tabhair deis do pháistí tabhairt faoi rainn scipeála, cluichí foirne, rainn ghníomhartha, agus cluichí eile atá leagtha amach i gcuid 5 den leabhar - taispeáin na gearrthóga físe a ghabhann leo chun treoir a sholáthar maidir le conas tabhairt faoi na gníomhaíochtaí ar leith.

Acmhainn thairbheach, úsáideach is ea *Spreag an Ghaeilge le Spraioi* agus tugann sé deiseanna ilchineálacha do pháistí an Ghaeilge a úsáid i gcomhthéacsanna bríochsa sa scoil.

Tá leagan digiteach den lámhleabhar ar www.cogg.ie nó is féidir an leabhar a ordú ó shiopaí leabhar áitiúla nó a cheannach ó www.siopaleabhar.com, www.siopagaeilge.ie nó www.siopa.ie.

MÁIRE NIC AN RÍ, oifigeach bunscoile, COGG.

Reviews

Santa needs help!

Seamróg The Irish Reindeer – Santa Needs Help is an extremely festive story! The story starts with a very sick Rudolph and a kind couple who offer their own reindeer to help Santa deliver his presents all over the world. *Seamróg* is a beautifully illustrated novel suitable for 2nd and 3rd class.

The story is peppered with cultural references and characters of the present day such as Leo the Taoiseach, Michael D and Ryan Tubridy. While this might interest a young reader within the next year or two, these characters may be alien concepts in a short time.

The book is nicely written and paced with a good, solid plot and likeable characters. It has clearly been a labour of love for the author. It would be suitable as a Christmas gift for a child



living in Ireland.

Bookhub. ISBN: 978-191- 6088-351. Cost: €12.99.

Reviewed by ROZZ LEWIS, Co Carlow.

GIY's Know-It-Allmanac

We are in safe hands with Monty Sheddington-Potts as he gives us a child-friendly tour of Grow It Yourself in this brilliant new book from Michael Kelly and Muireann Ní Chiobháin and illustrated by Fatti Burke.

A wonderful concept, *GIY's Know-It-Allmanac* has been developed around the Irish seasons. Moving across the calendar year, we are provided with a fun-filled list of daily ideas for child GIY enthusiasts.

Also included is a guide to seasonal produce, with every month focusing on a

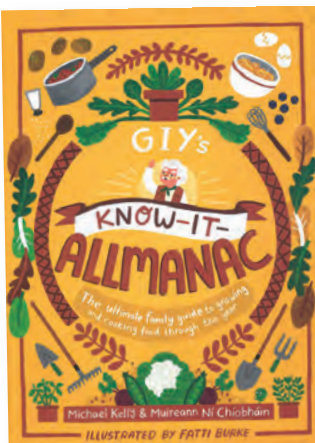
different food. Importantly, these sections, full of humour and beautiful illustrations, share interesting facts, growing advice and recipes for each highlighted food. Carrot cake for breakfast, anyone?

GIY is a book that has the potential to bring classrooms and families together, nurturing positive relationships around food. If you are a teacher interested in introducing a school garden or a parent hoping to inspire a love of food related activities, you need look no further than this book. Crucially, there is an emphasis on being environmentally aware too.

The authors and illustrator have produced a winning recipe!

GIY. ISBN: 978-0993-042-621. Cost: €25.

Reviewed by DUNCAN MCCARTHY, Midleton, Co Cork.



We have a copy of GIY's Know-It-Allmanac to give away to two lucky INTO members. To enter, email your

name to competitions@into.ie with 'GIY Giveaway' in the subject line before 9 December 2019.

See page 63 for details of INTO's policy on competitions and draws.

Lily at Lissadell

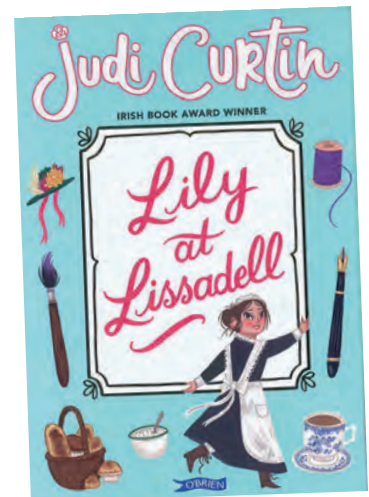
When young Lily's school days come to an abrupt end, she has no idea what adventures await her. Hired as a young domestic in Lissadell House by the Gore-Booths, Lily has to grow up fast, leave her childhood behind and make a new life for herself far away from friends and family.

Lily at Lissadell is a beautifully written book for children aged nine years and over. While it is a book of fiction, Judi Curtin has based the book on historical fact and the life and times of an ordinary young girl working as a domestic in the early years of the 20th Century. Featuring well-known historical landmarks like Lissadell House and real characters from history such as Countess Markievicz, this fiction book would lend itself well to use in the classroom both for literacy and history lessons alike.

This book will be instantly appealing to the young reader as we read of the trials and tribulations of the main character Lily, a likeable girl whose new life as a housemaid is often hard, but who finds joy in the new and sometimes unlikely friendships that she makes.

This is another delightful page-turner from this well-loved children's author. O'Brien Press. ISBN: 978-1-78849-128-0. Cost: €12.99.

Reviewed by LORNA ROCHE, Blackrock, Co Dublin.



Competition!



Boys will be boys!

Author and fellow primary school teacher Anthony Broderick perfectly captures the true meaning of boys will be boys in his five book series, *The Adventures of Jack and Adam*.

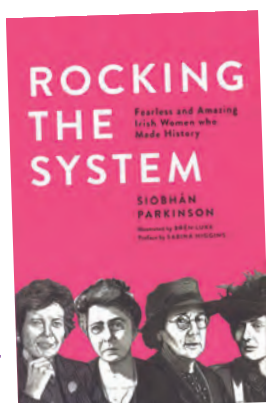
Each book tells the action packed tale of brothers Jack and Adam growing up in Willows town. Reflecting the life of a child, the scoundrels never miss an opportunity to go on an adventure whether it be at home, school or throughout their Halloween, Christmas and summer holidays. Their adventures lead the two to learn valuable life lessons through interactions with characters from their wider community.

The illustrations featured throughout the book prompted mixed reviews in my classroom. They could be described as having a dark-colour, pixelated and animated feel. Although they may not entice every reader to begin with, Broderick himself ensures his book endings have a 'Netflix addictive quality'.

This series would be an exciting addition to any class library especially that of a senior class in an all-boys primary school. The recommended reading age is 8–11.

Choice Publishing Book Store. ISBN: 978-1-91131-10-6, 978-1-91131-21-2, 978-1-91131-31-1, 978-1-91131-51-9, 978-1-91131-65-6. Cost: €8.99 each.

Léirmheas le INÍÓN NIC GIOLLA BHRÍDE, An Lú.



Shooting For The Stars

In 2017 Dr Norah Patten, from Ballina, Co Mayo, was one of 12 participants from around the world selected to take part in a unique scientist-astronaut training programme, Project Possum.

In *Shooting For The Stars – My Journey To Become Ireland's First Astronaut*, Norah tells us about her journey to becoming an astronaut starting with when she first wanted to be an astronaut to her current role testing and researching space missions.

Norah talks about all things related to space travel like astronaut training and life without gravity. She answers curious questions like what do astronauts eat, how do they exercise in space and where do astronauts go to the toilet?

This book is suitable for 3rd class to 6th class and perfect for a non-fiction read aloud due to its engaging text and colourful illustrations by Irish illustrator Jennifer Farley. It would make a special Christmas present.

O'Brien Press. ISBN: 978-1-78849-100-6. Cost: €16.99.

Reviewed by ROZZ LEWIS, Co Carlow.



Jumping through time

Megan Wynne's debut novel is a tale of time travel, family relationships and second chances. Two children, Beth and Robbie are at the forefront of this appealing story. They belong to different eras, namely modern Dublin and Dublin from the 1950's but share the same address – 'The House on Hawthorn Road'. Their worlds collide when they pass through a portal that appears as a crack in the wall of the house.

The author has fun playing off the expectations and the reality the characters perceive when they move in and out of their wrong era. Drama arises when the 1950's characters become trapped in modern times and cannot return from when they came.

For me, the most enlightening aspect of the book is the portrayal of the female characters. Both the mothers are given favourable and flawed qualities to deem them true and inspiring

characters while Beth the young protagonist is resourceful and quick-witted.

Megan has written a modern, fun and informative take on the time travel trope with interesting characters who allow the reader to realise the importance of celebrating family.

This novel is suitable for nine to 12 year olds and would be a wonderful addition to a school library.

O'Brien Press. ISBN: 978-1-78-8490-900. Cost: €8.99.

Reviewed by STUART PURCELL, Co Dublin.



Rocking The System

Rocking the System by Siobhán Parkinson is a collection of twenty illustrated essays which celebrate the role of determined, fearless, amazing Irish women, both historical and contemporary, who have made a difference in our society, who have defied cultural norms around femininity, who have refused to be considered less capable or important than their male counterparts, and as a result have achieved great things.

The women range from stateswomen to sports stars, artists, writers, activists

and rebels and include Queen Medb, Lady Gregory, Constance Markievicz, Peig Sayers and Sonia O'Sullivan.

The book includes fascinating fact files and fabulous illustrations. It would be a great addition to the classroom library and may assist students in 6th class do projects on women who changed history or supplement material in the children's history books.

Little Island. ISBN: 978-1910-41196-4. Cost: €15.

Reviewed by JEAN O'MALLEY, Co Galway.

Finishing Touches

Noticeboard



Mortgage and tax advisory seminars for INTO members and their families

ITAS Accounting and EDUC Mortgage seminars will take place at 7pm as follows:

- Thursday 5 December in the Clayton Hotel, Ballybrit, Galway
- Thursday 23 January in the Strand Hotel, Limerick
- Thursday 13 February in the Newpark Hotel, Kilkenny
- Thursday 2 April in the Clayton Hotel, Lapp's Quay, Cork
- Thursday 14 May in the Teachers' Club, 36 Parnell Square, Dublin 1.

INTO members and their families are very welcome to attend.

This seminar will cover the following topics:

- Tips on Mortgage applications
- First time buyers, moving home or investment properties
- Saving money by changing mortgage providers
- The role of your solicitors in buying or selling property
- Ownership options
- The importance of drafting/updating your will after purchasing property
- Tax reliefs available for property owners
- How to reduce your tax bill on rental income
- Understanding your tax obligations
- Gifting or inheriting property
- Tax tips
- Offers exclusive to INTO members

The above information is provided in conjunction with our partners/colleagues at EDUC Mortgages, ITAS Accounting and Summit Law. To register for this event, please visit INTO Events on www.into.ie



Retirement planning seminars

INTO retirement planning seminars are delivered by a team of experts and are specifically tailored for primary teachers who are contemplating retirement. We advise that, if you are considering retirement, you attend a seminar at least a year prior to your proposed retirement date.

The seminars cover topics under the following headings:

- INTO guide to pensions
- Introduction to the Retired • Teachers' Association
- Income tax
- Wills and inheritance
- Preparing psychologically for retirement
- Enjoying a healthy lifestyle
- Additional voluntary contributions and making the most of your investments

The final two seminars will take place on 28/29 February 2020 and 20/21 March 2020 in the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Santry, Dublin 9. Registration for these seminars will open in early December.



INTO Youth Conference 2020

The INTO Youth Conference – for members aged 35 years and younger – will take place on 13 and 14 March 2020 in Kilkenny. INTO Youth Conferences involve a mixture of top-level inputs from INTO and other speakers, active delegate engagement and a social element.

Branches will nominate delegates to the Youth Conference at their January meetings so if you are interested in attending please make sure you're at your January branch meeting.



INTO Principals' Seminars

INTO's popular principals' seminars will continue in the new year, with bookings opening in early January. The seminars, delivered by officials from INTO Head Office, cover a range of topics relevant to primary principals.

Seminars are free – subject to a booking deposit of €40.00, which is fully refundable on attendance at the seminar. Please note that refunds will be made in the days after attendance at the seminar. Places are limited and will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis.

Upcoming seminars

- Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan: The Glencarn Hotel – Wednesday, 29 January 2020
- Gort, Co. Galway: Lady Gregory Hotel – Wednesday, 12 February 2020
- Waterford City, Co. Waterford: The Tower Hotel – Wednesday, 25 March 2020
- Charleville, Co. Cork: Charleville Park Hotel – Wednesday, 1 April 2020
- Glen of the Downs, Co. Wicklow: Glenview Hotel – Wednesday, 29 April 2020

Applications can only be made online through the INTO website.

Comhar Linn winners – August and September car draws

Deirdre Woods, from Dublin.
Mary McMoreland, from Sligo.
4 x cash draw winners – details withheld by consent.

Where Teachers Borrow



Comhar Linn
INTO Credit Union

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COMHAR LINN CROSSWORD NO. 202

A draw for five Christmas Hampers will be made from all correct entries. Simply complete the crossword and send it to INTO, InTouch Bumper Crossword, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1 before 9th December 2019.

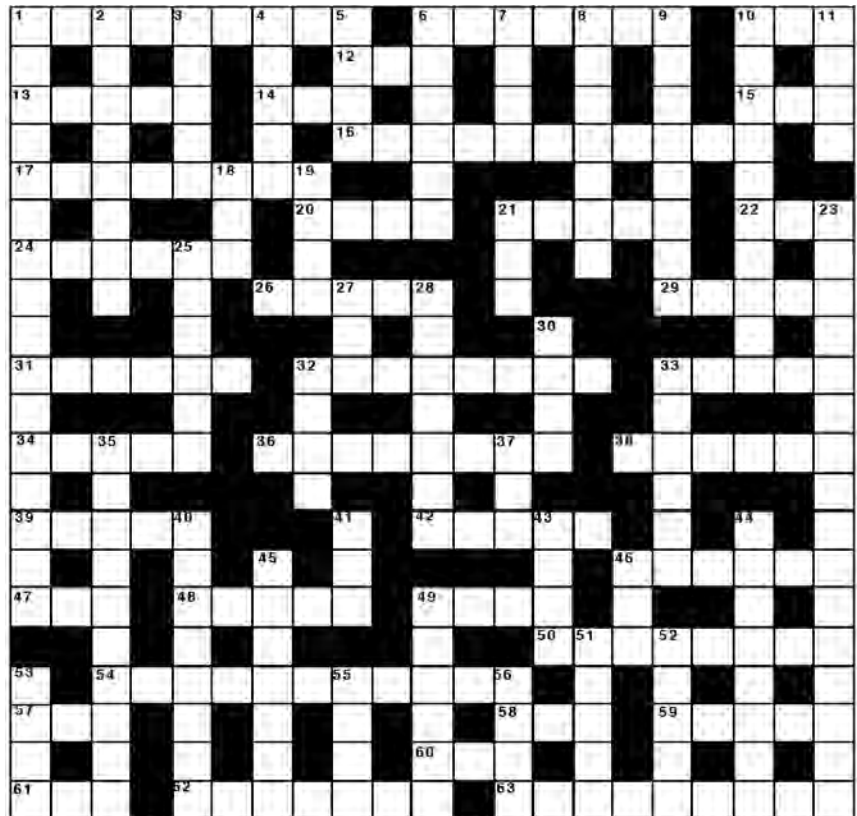
No photocopies, no faxes please.

ACROSS

1. Talked inanely with many a milliner, Edward? (9)
6. The garment is shortened thanks to Ken (alongside unnamed people, initially). (5,2)
10. Encountered me at the junction. (3)
12. Promissory note that is essentially pious. (1.1.1)
13. Out of practice? Try us out. (5)
14. Virginia finds a novice for Mr Kilmer. (3)
15. It's so cold in central Yukon at first. (3)
16. Novel about female leprechauns? (6,5)
17. Shells out around America and denies schooling temporarily. (7)
20. The King leads 27 down to this joint. (4)
21. See 47 across.
22. Ring very loudly? That's not on! (3)
24. My taking in the broken 7 down is viewed unassertively. (6)
26. Get a utensil to a seasonal show. (5)
29. Make the motor leave what's in the ship's hold. (5)
31. There's soft gold for every poor person. (6)
32. Will 2020 be The Year of the Flea? (4,4)
33. Sounds like one had a stab at the identity of the invitee. (5)
34. Stared into space beside the editor. (5)
36. Such sauce! How can he be calm? (8)
38. The baby breaks a tin fan. (6)
39. A heavenly figure in Cuban gelatine. (5)
42. It's sadly written how ye swallow 46 down and then return. (5)
46. Sparkles in a single Amsterdam setting. (6)
- 47, 6d & 21a. Was this gift a pair of amphibious birds? (3,6,5)
- 48 & 49. Santa's home refers to someone from Gdansk, perhaps - but definitely not from Krakow! (5,4)
50. Plenty of money perhaps, but a source of water yet to be engineered! (4-2-2)
54. Identifying a snack puts Noah's son in the bread. (3,8)
57. I would love to say these words in a marriage ceremony! (1,2)
58. A ship provides the original Christmas transport. (3)
59. Liam's converted to this religion. (5)
60. Vehicle made of calcium, right? (3)
61. Draw a hackneyed Christmas gift. (3)
62. Go score thus for a Dickensian skinflint. (7)
63. Works out how ballet shoes eliminate wrinkles. (5,4)

DOWN

1. Make Noel summon a teacher? That's all for show! (9,7)
2. One helped 58 across first, Edward. (8)
3. Herb has both archaic and current pronouns. (5)
4. Some brave detractors ranted. (5)
5. Herb makes many sick. (4)
6. See 47 across.
7. The Welsh vegetable turns up at the bottom of a boat. (4)
8. A fresh signal for music of the late 1970's... (3,4)
9. ...is this suitable for 'Dad Dancing'? (3,5)
10. Find mother in the links for part of a meal. (4,6)
11. Playthings? Opening them offers you satisfaction. (4)



NAME:

PHONE:

SCHOOL ADDRESS:

INTO Membership No.

To read the Crossword Competition Terms & Conditions and INTO's Data Privacy Policy Notice please visit <https://www.into.ie/about/compliance/data-privacy-notice/>

18. Say this to refuse any arrangement. (3)
19. Auks turn up with this bird. (4)
21. Dry evening weather starts to provide morning moisture. (3)
23. Featuring in a seasonal song himself, he rearranged two seafront hymns. (6,3,7)
25. According to the old story, something's afoot. (6)
27. How she was originally named, somewhere in the Pyrenees. (3)
28. See 49 down.
30. See 55 down.
32. Was untrue, according to a German song. (4)
33. Convivial cocktail of ale and gin. (6)
35. Characterise narrowly how a bird will sink a putt. (10)
37. A seer with only one pupil. (3)
40. The continent is no place for service at sea, it seems! (4,4)
41. As hot as a tree can be. (3)
43. Some meagre weeds got bigger. (4)
44. The accountant got a posh 60 across for the seasonal singer. (8)
45. It's bigger than a regret can allow for. (7)
46. Note - the Spanish put this in your hair. (3)
- 49 & 28d. No epic preface can encapsulate this Christly title. (6,2,5)
51. Poems composed on the Derby course. (5)
52. Den's found a tune in Laos. (5)
53. This word will do, for the present. (4)
- 55 & 30d. Can this moulding do radial transformation? (4,4)
56. Keep on about an instrument for 39 across. (4)

In Touch No. 201 Solutions:
will be published in the next InTouch issue.

Each month
Children's
Books Ireland
recommend a
book of the month for primary
pupils



Recommended read – November

The Great Irish Science Book

Written by Luke O'Neill. Illustrated by Linda Fährlin
Gill Books, 2019. ISBN 9780717185580. 96pp. Cost: €24.99.

It's November, which means only one thing – Science Week. Join Trinity's Professor Luke O'Neill on a brilliant journey through all things science in *The Great Irish Science Book*. From the very big to the very small – vast galaxies to microscopic atoms – travel through the wonders of the universe, the mysteries of the human body, and the tiny world of molecules.

How do we measure the universe? Why do we need plants? How do our bodies repair themselves when we are ill? What species will exist on earth in a million years? Discover the answers to these questions and a lot more in this thrilling and engrossing book packed with fascinating phenomena, vibrant illustrations, experiments you can do yourself, and heaps of fun facts.

The Great Irish Science Book is designed to create budding scientists and incite wonder in any young reader. The book explains various topics using experiments, Linda Fährlin's bright illustrations and jokes keep the reader engaged. Best of all, Luke O'Neill highlights Irish connections to these topics.

Discover the Irish scientists that have helped to shape our world and find out how to become one yourself! (Age 8–12)

Children's Books Ireland is the national children's books organisation of Ireland. For further information and more reviews, visit www.childrensbooksireland.ie

InTouch competitions and draws


From time to time, the INTO runs competitions and draws for members via InTouch, our e-newsletter, website or social media. Only essential data required for the running of the competition is requested from members. The data collected is deleted once winners have been selected.

The full name and county of prize winners is published by the INTO. By entering the competition, it is assumed consent is given by members for publication of these details.


For more information on T&Cs for competitions visit the Benefits section of the INTO website.



scoilnet
 portal for irish education
 lárshuíomh oideachais na héireann



Star site



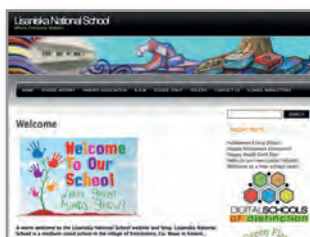
Top 10

The most clicked resources at the start of this month


- 1
BIA – BOSCA LÓIN
<http://bit.ly/BoscaLoin>
Seo cur i láthair PDF le focail don téama bosca lóin.
- 2
MATHS IS FUN – FRACTIONS
<http://bit.ly/FunFractions>
Introduces the subtopic of fractions in an easy to follow way. Lots of practical challenges and interactive games.
- 3
BIA – BRICFEASTA
<http://bit.ly/Bricfeasta>
Seo cur i láthair PDF le focail don téama bricfeasta.
- 4
CREATIVE DRAMA LESSONS
www.childdrama.com/lessons.html
Long list of class activities sorted by age level covering the equivalent to infants all way up to sixth class or even secondary.
- 5
FRACTIONS EXPLAINED
www.kidsolr.com/math/fractions.html
Deals with fractions from explaining a basic fraction to multiplying and dividing fractions and mixed numbers.
- 6
RAINN AGUS AMHRAIN
www.resources.teachnet.ie/clane/2008/
Songs and rhymes based on curriculum topics. Also includes worksheets, colouring pages and PowerPoint presentations
- 7
SA BHAILE – AONAD
<http://bit.ly/SaBhaile>
An bailiúchán iomlán pictiúr, cártaí taispeántais, luascháirte, agus ceisteanna.
- 8
SCOILNET MAPS
www.maps.scoilnet.ie/
Licensed Ordnance Survey Ireland maps for use in the classroom.
- 9
READER'S THEATRE EDITION
www.aaronshp.com/rt/RTE.html
35 free play scripts adapted from folk tales, fables, tall tales, humorous stories and world tales.
- 10
RIVER LIFFEY THROUGH THE AGES
www.dublincity.ie/library-galleries/501
Collection of pictures of the River Liffey and its bridges from 1700s to the present day.

ONES TO WATCH

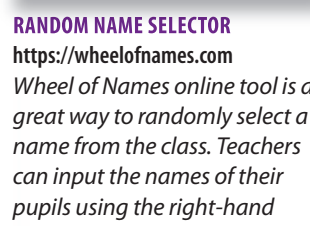
LISANISKA NS, FOXFORD, CO MAYO
<https://lisaniskans.scoilnet.ie/blog/>
Happy-looking site with all the essential details covering school history, staff details and policies.



RANDOM NAME SELECTOR
<https://wheelofnames.com>
Wheel of Names online tool is a great way to randomly select a name from the class. Teachers can input the names of their pupils using the right-hand side text editor.



EDUCATORS' GUIDE TO TWITTER
<http://bit.ly/ScoilnetTwitter>
Potentially useful 15-page guide to how teachers can use Twitter.



UNHCR TEACHING ABOUT REFUGEES
<http://bit.ly/Teachingaboutrefugees>
Teaching materials for different age groups. Also gives some facts and figures around refugees.

