

termtalk

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- > Foyle View Special School & UNICEF



Letter from the registrar

Welcome to this the first **termtalk** of the new school year. In keeping with our commitment to cover as wide a range of articles as possible, this edition explores issues from behaviour management and creativity, to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the drive for school improvement.

We also have a commitment to facilitate our partners in the education service in bringing their messages to the profession and this edition features a range of articles from bodies such as CCEA, The British Council and the Community Relations Council and the Northern Ireland Assembly, Education Service.

Hopefully you will find something that reflects your interests and if you have any suggestions as to what we might feature in future editions, we would be glad to hear from you.

Eddie McArdle

Eddie McArdle
Registrar GTCNI

Would you like to share an education article with **termtalk** and the teaching profession.
email: termtalk@gtcni.org.uk

Cover image inspired by www.education2010.be website of the Belgian EU Presidency for Departement Onderwijs & Vorming - Department of Education & Training.

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General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland

3rd Floor, Albany House • 73-75 Great Victoria Street • Belfast BT2 7AF
Tel: +44(0)28 9033 3390 • Fax: +44(0)28 9034 8787
Email: info@gtcni.org.uk • Website: www.gtcni.org.uk



General Teaching Council
for Northern Ireland



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BEST PERFORMING STUDENTS

The Stranmillis University College held its annual prize-giving ceremony on 8th July 2010 and jointly awarded its best performing students:



Belinda Walters is presented the Student Teacher Award by Sally McKee (GTCNI, Chair)



Steven Condy is presented the Student Teacher Award by Sally McKee (GTCNI, Chair)

The Queen's University awards evening was held on 22nd September



Paul Oliver was awarded the GTCNI Best performing student by Eddie McArdle (GTCNI, Registrar) and Dr Billy McClune (QUB, Director of Education)



Claire Kirk was awarded the GTCNI Education Studies Prize by Eddie McArdle (GTCNI, Registrar) and Dr Billy McClune (QUB, Director of Education)

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Retired Teachers Needed

Are you a retired teacher with three hours to spare a week? If so then Sólás needs you!

Sólás is a registered charity setup to support children who require additional educational support. 10 volunteers are being sought to pilot the 'Back on Track' scheme. This would involve providing one-to-one classes with children who are struggling with their numeracy and literacy skills.

To volunteer, contact:
 Dr Joan Henderson,
 Tel: 07714204088 or
 02890247600



My GTCNI Winner



Congratulations to Dawn Graham who was the 1000th registrant on the 'My GTCNI' section of the website. She has won a fantastic overnight stay at the Fitzwilliam Hotel, Belfast, including a full breakfast and 5 course meal at the Kevin Thornton restaurant.

If you haven't done so already you can sign up for 'My GTCNI' to amend your details online and to receive information directly to your preferred email address.





There is now more detail in the various quality indicators which are focused around questions to assist the user. The quality indicators relate to five key questions.

1. How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting learners?
2. How effective are teaching, learning and assessment?
3. How well do the learning experiences, programmes and activities meet the needs of the learners and the wider community?
4. How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?
5. How well do learners develop and achieve?



Together Towards Improvement

The Chief Inspector launches the revised *together towards improvement* strategy.

On 19th August, the Chief Inspector of the Education and Training Inspectorate launched the revised version of *Together Towards Improvement (TTI)* at the opening of an over-subscribed course on school improvement provided by the Inspectorate, as part of the RTU Summer School.

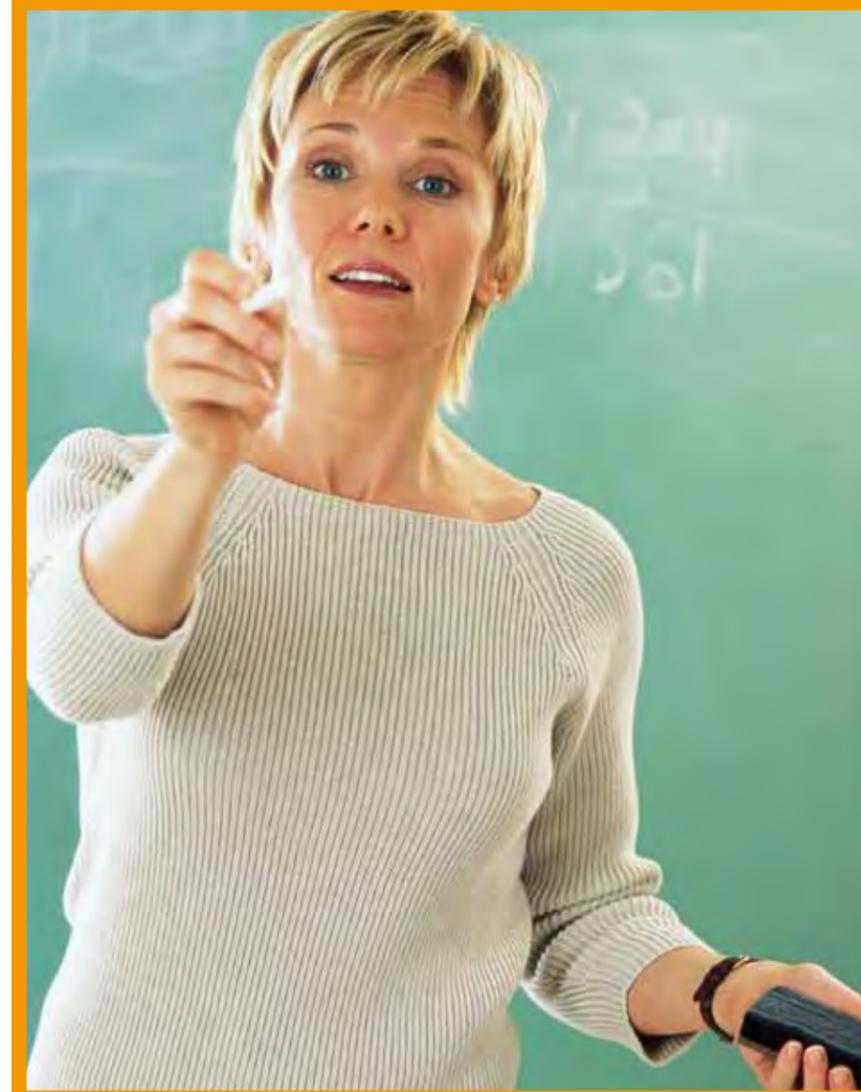
The high level of attendance reflected the growing importance school teachers and leaders place on self-evaluation and the value they place on the support materials produced by the Inspectorate.

Since the original version of *TTI* was launched seven years ago it

has become a valuable resource to support schools in self-evaluation towards self-improvement and to help raise standards of learning, teaching, management and achievement in schools.

In the recently updated versions (one each for pre-schools, primary, post-primary and special schools), a much greater focus is given to the outcomes achieved by the learner and the quality of the leadership and management of the organisation.

This changing emphasis reflects the extent to which the education service in Northern Ireland has developed in its approach towards self-improvement.



The new versions of *TTI* are web-based, so that teachers and leaders can download and adapt the indicators to suit their school and the nature of the evaluation exercise being undertaken. The quality indicators are not exhaustive; there is opportunity for users to discuss what they feel are the most appropriate indicators for their organisation and to add their own to those displayed alongside the key questions; thus prompting debate as a crucial element of the self-evaluative process. The new versions of *TTI* also provide the opportunity for the user to record and edit the evidence alongside the quality indicators.

The Education and Training Inspectorate, as part of its on-going policy of consulting with key stakeholders, met with representatives of all the major teacher unions in Northern Ireland to brief them on the revised *TTI*.

They also met with representatives of the Education and Library Boards' Curriculum Advisory and Support Services to ensure that they are brought up-to-date with regard to the development of this resource.

The ETI website has recently been rebuilt and the new phase-specific versions of the revised

***Together Towards Improvement* are available at www.etini.gov.uk**

Young People's Understanding of the Past

Ray Mullan, Director of Communications at the Community Relations Council, reviews the findings of an important research project that examines how history is taught to young people and how and where they learn about both our recent and historical past.

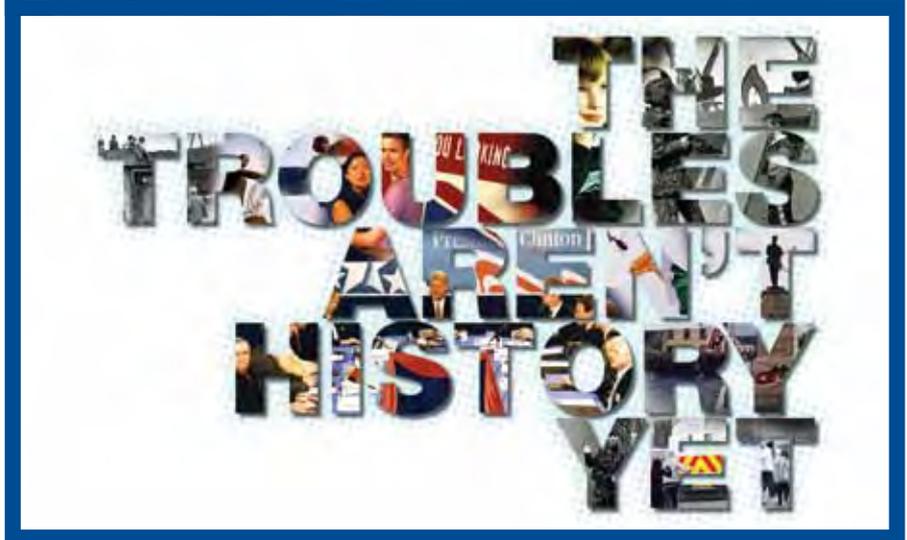
In a society emerging from a generation of conflict the events of both the recent and the historical past will have a heightened significance and the stories that are taught and the lessons learned about the past will impact on the expectations people will have of the future. The way we think and talk about our past will impact on the way we think and talk about our future. We can emphasise our similarities or we can emphasise our differences.

In October 2009 the Institute for Conflict Research, in partnership with Achieve Enterprises, was commissioned by the Community Relations Council to undertake research into the ways in which history is taught to young people in Northern Ireland, how and where young people learn about the past and to explore what they knew of both recent and earlier historical events. The research project, entitled: *The Impact of Division and Conflict in the Past on Young People*, which ran between November 2009 and April 2010, involved surveying the views of 958 young people who were accessed through a range of schools, colleges, universities and youth organisations, and focus group discussions with 238 young people in twelve locations across Northern Ireland which enabled the researchers to explore some of the themes and issues in more detail.



participated in the research were aware that their understanding of the history of Northern Ireland was narrow, and many young people, Protestant and Catholic, male and female, and regardless of age, expressed a desire both to learn more about historical events associated with 'their' community and also those which receive more emphasis within the 'other' community as well.

The challenge for education providers both in the formal education sector and in the less



The research project found that young people develop their understanding about past events from a number of different and at times overlapping sources, including schools, parents and the wider family, films and television, the internet, murals, historical commemorations and so on, although some sources of information are more influential than others and formal education and family members form the primary 'building-blocks' from which historical knowledge is further developed.

The research found that young people's knowledge of history and understanding of the past is partial at best and is loaded towards their own community's sense of history and the events that their community most values. Many of the young people who

formal community and voluntary sector is to find ways to broaden young people's knowledge and understanding of recent Northern Irish history and to do so in way that does not simply reinforce a perception of two parallel histories that only intersect through acts of violence, but rather encourages greater recognition of the complex ways that past events unfold and impact upon contemporary and future lives. 

'The Troubles Aren't History Yet' - Young People's Understanding of the Past by John Bell, Ulf Hansson and Nick McCaffery is published by the Community Relations Council. It can be downloaded free from the CRC website www.nicrc.org.uk. For more details contact 028 9022 7500

An Exciting Year Ahead for the Northern Ireland Assembly Education Service

The Northern Ireland Assembly Education Service provides an educational visits programme which is open to all schools and educational groups – over 15,000 young people took part in the last academic year. Education programmes are designed to encourage young people and others to learn about the Assembly, understand its relevance to their lives and participate in the democratic process.

Education Resources

The Education Service provides resources to support the NI Curriculum, including an education website <http://education.niassembly.gov.uk> The Education Service is currently working with the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) to redevelop and update the education website.

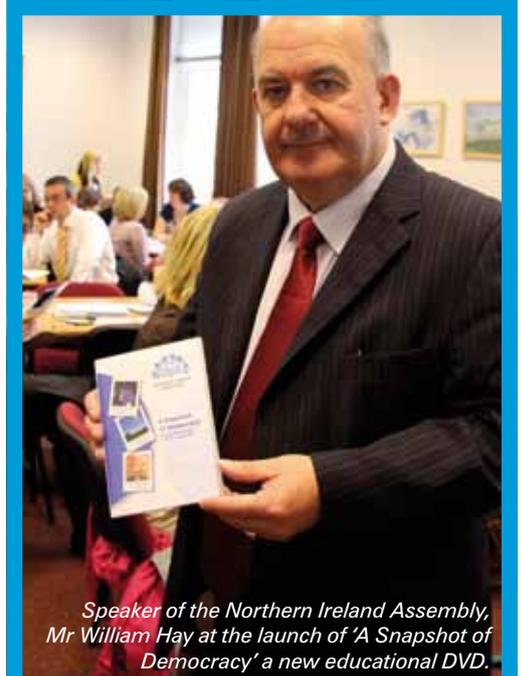
All post-primary schools have received a copy of the recently produced DVD *A Snapshot of Democracy* – this resource was officially launched by the Speaker during a teachers' conference organised by the Education Service in June 2010.

All Key Stage 3 & 4 participants in the programme will receive a copy of the new comic: *The Northern Ireland School Assembly* – a primary school comic is being developed.

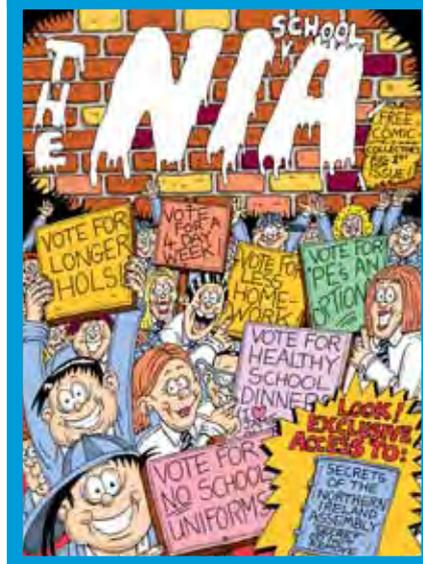
Outreach Events

The Education Service is planning a number of outreach events to schools and educational establishments. Pilot events took place last term in Newry and Fermanagh.

Students from Lurgan College and Lumen Christi College also took part in video links with MLAs. There are plans to develop this facility.



Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Mr William Hay at the launch of 'A Snapshot of Democracy' a new educational DVD.



Teacher Seminars

The Education Service has planned a number of events aimed at teachers. The first began with an A-Level Politics Conference in October.

The Youth Assembly

The Assembly has recruited a youth panel of thirty 16-18 year olds to develop proposals for a Youth Assembly – find out more about this exciting project at www.facebook.com/niyouthassembly [gtncni](https://www.facebook.com/gtncni)

For more information or if you are interested in booking a programme, call the Education Service on 028 90521833 or email education.service@niassembly.gov.uk

To behave or not to behave: The 4-D approach

Practical day-to-day teaching requires teachers to promote positive behaviour to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. **Dr Karola Dillenburger** from the **School of Education at Queen's University, Belfast**, suggests a strategy that schools and teachers may find useful.

Nearly ten years ago we were told that, "Good behaviour keeps pupils safe, reduces stress for teachers and contributes to a welcoming and caring environment in which pupils can develop as people and both pupils and teachers can do their best work." (*Pastoral Care in Schools: Promoting Positive Behaviour, DoE, 2001, p.1*). Yet, the recent Education and Training Inspectorate publication, *Report of an Evaluation of Pupil Behaviour in Schools and Other Educational Settings (2010)*, noted that inappropriate behaviour in and out of the classroom still affects teaching and learning adversely.

Since teaching really is only as good as the learning that is achieved, there are 4-Ds that can help towards managing behaviour.

D1: Define:

Commonly we ask pupils to 'behave', when there is disruption in the classroom. But what we really mean is 'behave better' or 'behave more appropriately' or 'behave according to my expectations'.

We report that a pupil was 'not behaving', when we really mean that the pupil 'behaved inappropriately, badly, or disruptively'.

Clearly, a pupil cannot NOT behave. Behaviour goes on all the time; we talk, sit, listen, eat, walk, look, jump, shout, sleep, feel, or think.



You don't need to be an English teacher to know that all these verbs are 'doing', i.e., behaving words.

Of course, some of the behaviours are more public, i.e., everyone can see them, while others are more private, i.e., only the individual in question can 'see' them.

In either case, behaviour never stops, it's like a continuous stream and like the water flow the behavioural stream has patterns. Sometimes it comes thick and fast, other times it flows more slowly.

Behavioural scientists have developed methods to identify and define 'components' of the behavioural stream and their function, so therefore, at the start of any intervention you need to develop clear definition of the 'target' behaviour, always define it in positive terms, i.e. the desired behaviour. After all, 'good' and 'bad' behaviour are like two sides of the same coin, it is next to impossible to do both at the same time.

Once we have defined the topography of the desired target behaviour, we define its dimensions, e.g., frequencies, durations, or intensity. Make sure you are 100% clear what the desired behaviour looks like, so it is clear to pupils and colleagues, i.e., teaching assistants.



D2: Design:

The next important point of the simile of the behavioural stream is to understand that as the river always flows according to the embankment, so the behavioural stream flows according to the physical and social circumstances in which it occurs.

If behaviour is always 'right' according to the circumstances in which it occurs (in behavioural science also called contingencies); lets look a little closer at what this means. A contingency is an if-then relationship between events, i.e., if A then B and/or if B then C. This may sound very basic and most teachers have probably heard about the three-term or A-B-C contingency, the Antecedent event – the Behaviour – the Consequent event.

We usually consider past/ antecedent experiences when we explain a pupil's behaviour, e.g., you may say "he has problems at home", or "she was sick and missed a lot of class." Usually, we can do little about experiences outside the school, but we can design experiences inside the school to compensate and help pupils deal with barriers to learning during difficult times. Teachers also know about consequent events, e.g., they use praise and reward systems, but they often do not pay enough attention to the if-then relationship, i.e., contingency, between these.

D3: Deliver:

Take for example the P7 teacher who gave children 'Golden Time' during the last period on a Friday, a 45-minute time period in which the children were allowed to engage in activities of their choice, e.g., go on the computer, play games, etc. The kids loved Golden Time. The teacher also arranged that for very poor behaviour during the week



a child could lose 5 minutes of Golden Time. A cunning plan to get the kids to behave well, you may think, but it was always the same three boys who lost Golden Time, often for 15 minutes or even all of it. Needless to say, that these boys used the extra time to misbehave some more and disrupt the other pupils enjoying their Golden Time.

This is where it is important to know about the power of arranging the right contingencies. With an extremely small shift of perspective, the teacher could have made much better use of the positive reinforcement contingencies available within Golden Time. If she had defined the target behaviour in positive terms, she could have given the children 30 minutes Golden Time with the prospect of 'earning' additional 5-minute slots for 'good' behaviour. She would then monitor, (i.e., take data), during the week to enable all children to earn an additional three 5-minute periods (so they would get a total of 45 minutes of Golden Time). Do you not think that she would have been able to 'catch them being good' often enough, even the three boys?

D4: Data:

The fourth dimension of effective behaviour management is data taking, i.e., by closely monitoring and taking clear data on whether your management strategy works or not right from the start you can change contingencies quickly, if necessary, to allow for success. Don't wait until the end of the week/month/term. Data taking should permeate any good behaviour management strategy from start to finish. We tend to do it instinctively, but in order to be successful, we need to do it comprehensively. 



Further reading:

Alberto, P.A. & Troutman, A.C. (1995). *Applied behavior analysis for teachers*. (4th Edition). Englewood, NJ: Simon & Schuster Company.
Schloss, P.J. & Smith, M.A. (1998) *Applied behavior analysis in the classroom*. (2nd Edition). London: Allyn and Bacon.
Vargas, J.S. (2009). *Behavior analysis for effective teaching*. Florence, Kentucky: Routledge.

Making Global Connections

British Council programmes and activities support a variety of areas in the revised curriculum and can **support schools through professional development opportunities** and resources for school linking and international projects.



Laura Miskelly, Project Co-ordinator for the European Resource Centre, British Council Northern.



Michelle Giffin, from Hart Memorial Primary School.



Sean McMorrow, Head teacher of St Anthony's Primary School, Craigavon.

CONNECTING CLASSROOMS

Fleming Fulton School and Oakwood Primary School, Belfast took part in a Connecting Classrooms project with three schools in Uganda and three schools in Zimbabwe. Martán Ó Meallaigh from Fleming Fulton School explains the benefits for the teachers and pupils in participating in such a programme:

"Our projects focused on the exploration of world religions, environmental awareness and HIV/Aids awareness in relation to Africa and Europe. We exchanged information with



colleagues in partner schools and posted information on the partnership website, and this was used in teaching within the existing curriculum. Through a variety of activities and visits, we were able to raise overall awareness of our partner countries, Uganda and Zimbabwe, and the different styles and resources we use to deliver education.

knowledge. Teachers and pupils alike have an increased sense of their place in the global village and their responsibility to consider the educational needs of other people around the world. The establishment of real genuine links with colleagues in Uganda and Zimbabwe proved to be a real bonus. Friendships were

For teachers, there was a greater awareness of the bigger picture in education. Discussions with our Ugandan and Zimbabwean colleagues of enhanced teaching through sharing experience and

made and we have learnt how the global dimension can be a part of our everyday curriculum."

Connecting Classrooms builds lasting partnerships between groups of schools in the UK and others in over 60 countries around the world.

For more information on Connecting Classrooms and impending deadlines, please contact CCNI@britishcouncil.org

COMENIUS IN SERVICE TRAINING

Michelle Giffin, from Hart Memorial Primary School, took part in job-shadowing in Spain as part of the In-Service Training programme offered through the Comenius

programme, which is managed in the UK by the British Council.

"Our school has been involved in The Primary Languages programme since 2009. Our students have great fun with the Spanish lessons and I have been amazed at how quickly they pick up on the language.

Through the IST programme I was fortunate enough to spend a week job-shadowing in the Castilla La Mancha region of Spain. The host school was one of the many bilingual schools in the area. I was struck by the standard of English amongst the Primary school

pupils and their general confidence in using another language. As a member of the group I gained first-hand experience of life in a Spanish school; we were able to take part in daily activities and compare and contrast routines in both countries.

We as teachers are continually looking for ways to liven up our lessons and provide new and rich experiences for our children. Introducing an international dimension to the curriculum has many benefits, not only for our pupils, but us as educators too. As a school we have dipped our toe in the water and are now poised to expand our links in the future."

Comenius in-service training grants are available for staff involved in school or further education to job shadow a colleague for up

to six weeks in any of the 30 participating European countries.

For more information on Comenius In-Service Training and impending deadlines, please contact comenius@britishcouncil.org

INTERNATIONAL STUDY VISITS

Sean McMorrow, Headteacher of St Anthony's Primary School, Craigavon, participated in an International Study Visit to Carolina International School, Harrisburg, North Carolina, USA. The schools are also linked with Changzhou Foreign Language School in China.

Sean explained that through the school's director Carole Forbes they set up an eco project involving the three schools. The three way link will focus on the theme of water and will be funded by a US company. They have also organised a video conferencing element through C2K using Marratech software. The P5-7 pupils and teachers will be developing a literacy project using novels. The visit was busy, productive and extremely rewarding.

Small grants for International Study Visits are available to principals and heads of department, full-time permanent teachers or lecturers in grant-aided schools, institutions of Further Education Colleges, Education and Library Board/CCMS advisers and educational psychologists in order to establish educational partnerships and

exchanges in schools overseas, encourage international educational co-operation, or study educational provision abroad which would be of interest and benefit to the Northern Ireland Education Service.

For more information on International Study Visits and impending deadlines, please contact ISV@britishcouncil.org

The British Council helps Northern Ireland schools to make connections with schools throughout the world, developing joint curriculum projects and professional development opportunities.

Further information on the programmes available and the work of British Council Northern Ireland can be found at www.britishcouncil.org/northernireland



CLICK: A regular feature book-marking educational resource and information websites

Prof John's bête noir is the waste of a school's investment in interactive whiteboards (IWB) when they are used only for projecting boring PowerPoint: especially when the Internet is brimming with worthwhile interactive resources.

www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/ Auntie BBC released 6,000 video clips (available in Real media, Flash video and Windows media formats) with an excellent search by subject, topic or keyword and supported by tips for classroom use. Try the 'Pot Luck' button. Michael Morpurgo's reading of 'The Ghost of Grania O'Malley' at: www.bbc.co.uk/learningzone/clips/4468.html is a favourite; the story of the pupil who could not write creatively 'on demand' on the topic of 'The Night', will either appeal or appall.

Classes studying the Earth & Beyond in science lessons should look at the BBC's Exploring the Solar System website, with clips from The Planets, The Sky at Night and Horizon. Perhaps Morpurgo's boy should watch the interview with Alan Shepard on Apollo 14 who heard things 'go bump in the night' on the moon!

www.bbc.co.uk/solarsystem/astonauts/edgar_mitchell#p009xqyk

Crickweb at www.crickweb.co.uk is bugged with comprehensive and highly professional early years, KS1 and KS2 resources. Hint: there are lots more links to sites under their 'News' button.

Crickweb teacher Christopher Thorne provides videos on a special "Mr Thorne Does Phonics on Crickweb" page. Christopher: "This phonics resource is broadly in-line with the UK Letters and Sounds programme and I have created it for parents with young children, teachers in classrooms, student teachers, or anyone with English as a second language."

www.echalk.co.uk/preview.aspx Although this is a subscription site, you can preview what's available and the cost is modest enough for IWB use.

www.teacherled.com is another good source of IWB objects including numeracy and spelling objects. I especially liked playing with this one:

www.teacherled.com/resources/mirror/mirrorload.html

www.topmarks.co.uk/Interactive.aspx features educational resources which work well on IWBs organised by subject, age group and category.

www.learn-ict.org.uk/resources/gallery/index.asp This picture gallery contains a range of images with subsections for the rather quirky topics of 'Artists, Celebrations, World War II, RE Artifacts, Seasons, Food and Pirates'



www.derry.k12.nh.us/dvs/staff/cmccallum/interboard/index.htm Click to the USA to see what an effective area learning community can do when they pool resources in the Derry Cooperative School District in New Hampshire.

The Internet and IWBs are a gift for language teachers needing sources of authentic target language. CILT catalogues sites with audio, video and current news stories in French, German and Spanish.

www.cilt.org.uk/secondary/14-19/ict/interactive_whiteboard/resources.aspx

Birmingham Grid for learning www.bgfl.org/ is one of the Broadband Consortia which indexes IWB resources on

www.bgfl.org/bgfl/15.cfm?s=15&p=248,index

Sites which provide handy lists of further sites (be patient with the broken links!) are:

www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/IWB/resources.asp

www.tre.ngfl.gov.uk/server.php

www.btinternet.com/~tony.poulter/IWBs/resources.htm

by Tony Poulter

<http://tinyurl.com/3yn27a3>

for Sam Linton's list

www.whiteboardblog.co.uk/

from Danny Nicholson a freelance educational consultant.

www.iwb.org.uk/

Set up by Woodland Grange Primary up to KS3 in topics such as literacy, maths, geography, science and digital media – has all the charm of a lucky dip barrel.

And finally, www.think-bank.com/iwb/ which includes a link to the brilliant early years Poisson Rouge.

www.poissonrouge.com/poissonrouge.php

There are no instructions, so if you are bewildered, get out of the way and let a child show you!

I defy you not to have these four singing in an endless round!

www.poissonrouge.com/frerejacques/



If you'd like to share your favourite websites on this educational topic or on any other, email profjohn@gtcni.org.uk

New Council 2010

Renewing and Developing Teacher Professionalism

A new Council began its work in October, with an Induction Day, held in Armagh.

This is the third Council, and members will serve until October 2014. Those members attending for the first time, were introduced to the role and remit of the Council, and had an opportunity to examine and discuss the values and principles underpinning the Council's work. Members participated in specific sessions on registration, regulation, policy development and corporate governance.

The Registrar, Eddie McArdle, provided members with an overview of the many difficult issues facing the teaching profession, at this time of tremendous change. He outlined the Council's core objectives for the next four years and stressed the vital importance of the role played by teachers in building a positive future for all. Members indicated that they had found the Induction Day very useful and were looking forward to working together to achieve the Council's objectives.



Introducing some of the new council members.



Sharon Beattie

Sharon has been a teacher for the past twenty years. She began her career in the primary sector, teaching both Key Stage 1 and 2, acting as SENCO and as Designated Teacher. Sharon was appointed Principal in 2001 to open and develop a green field site nursery school in Dromore, County Down.

Developing her passion to promote quality early years education, Sharon serves on the Early Years Committee of the NAHT. She is presently the National Vice Chairperson of the British Association of Early Childhood Education Great Britain, serving on the London Board of Trustees.

Her current research interests include "Boys' Learning in the Early Years". Sharon is keen to promote quality teacher led education through all sectors, with an emphasis on positive transitions.



Carney Cumper

Carney Cumper has taught a variety of classes throughout her twenty one years at Killyleagh Primary School. However, she specialises in the education of Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Carney believes passionately in early years' education and in giving young children the life skills they need to prepare them for the future demands of an ever-changing society.

As a keen advocate of maintaining 'small schools'; Carney understands their pivotal place at the heart of local rural communities.

Carney has just completed her six year term on the Central Executive Committee and has been a member of the Ulster Teachers' Union throughout her career. She is keen for the General Teaching Council to keep developing as an organisation that represents the professional interests of all teachers.



Brian Carlin

Born and raised in Strabane, Brian Carlin was educated at St Colman's High School before going on to study at De La Salle College in Manchester. He returned to his home town in 1978, taking up a teaching post at St Mary's Boys' Primary School. Holding a B Ed in Education Management, Brian was appointed co-ordinator for the implementation of the Primary Guidelines in both History and Geography and was subsequently promoted to the role of Key Stage 2 Co-ordinator.

Brian has been a union representative for over twenty years. He is currently President of the Strabane Association of NAS/UWT. As a delegate for his local Association to the Executive Council, he has attended and spoken at National Conferences.

Brian's deep interest in local history led him to co-found the Strabane History Society and he has served as both Secretary and President. He has also contributed at the Society's monthly talks and has written articles for its publication.



Colm Davis

Colm Davis is currently Principal of Tor Bank School (Special) and has taught in the primary and special school sectors for twenty nine years. During that period, he was seconded to NISEAC for two years and, since then, he has continued to write Assessment Units for SEN pupils.

Colm is passionately interested in SEN, using his enthusiasm to pressurise and influence policy makers at all levels. He is currently lobbying DEL, DENI and CCEA to restructure the existing examinations and assessment system to guarantee equality and give formal recognition to accreditation offered to pupils with SEN throughout all sectors.

Colm has served on many DE SEN and inter-departmental working groups. He chairs the NAHT SEN Committee, the joint union SEN Standing Committee and is a member of the TEPG SEN Committee. Colm hopes to use his GTCNI position to pressurise DENI, DEL and ELB decision makers to fund a co-ordinated NI SEN CPD competency framework for 'all teachers' and support staff working with SEN pupils.



Sandra E Douglas

Sandra is currently a P4 teacher in Victoria PS in Newtownards. She has experience teaching all classes and as a special needs teacher and SENCO. While on secondment to CCEA as a Key Stage 1/2 Moderator with the SEELB, and as the Chief Moderator for Key Stage 1 for Northern Ireland, Sandra trained teachers/principals in assessment procedures and was involved with quality assurance of school portfolios.

Sandra holds a Certificate of Education; a B. Ed. and M. Ed in Professional Development; a PQH(NI) and a Certificate in Counselling. In 2006, she was awarded a GTCNI bursary and carried out research into AfL.

An active member of ATLNI Branch Committee and its Education and Pay/Conditions sub-groups, Sandra represents ATLNI at Consultative Forum and at inter-union/ inspectorate meetings. Sandra would like to thank all those who supported her and as a Council member will remain committed to quality professional development and pastoral care for all teachers.



Gillian Garrett

Gillian Garrett has been teaching in the primary sector for sixteen years and is currently Vice-Principal of Donaghadee Primary School, where she teaches Year Seven. Her career to date has afforded her the opportunity to work in five different primary schools, experiencing both Key Stages 1 and 2.

Over the last 14 years, Gillian has represented teachers on the Central Executive Committee of UTU; serving on various committees, with colleagues in INTO, addressing important issues affecting teachers. She sits on NITC and has met with the Education Committee at Stormont lobbying for an end to the Transfer Test at 11, increased funding for the Primary sector and an immediate move of Education Services to ESA. She believes that the NI Assembly has a chance to influence change in society if the necessary funding is earmarked for Education. She is looking forward to her year as President of UTU in April 2011.

Gillian is grateful for the support she has received and is determined to effectively represent colleagues' interests on the GTCNI.



Mary Leonard

Mary Leonard has been a primary school teacher in St Luke's Primary School in Twinbrook for thirty six years. She is presently Head of Foundation, teaching a P1/2 composite class. Mary has responsibility for the Positive Playground Programme throughout the school and, as Parent Co-ordinator, organises courses for parents. Mary is tutor for the Incredible Years Parenting Programme and is currently training as an instructor for the Roots of Empathy Programme, which will be piloted in sixteen schools in the South Eastern Trust, targeting Primary 5 children.

Mary is the INTO representative in her school and chairs the Lisburn branch. She also serves as Teacher Representative on the Board of Governors.

As a member of the General Teaching Council, Mary hopes to represent the practising teacher in the classroom and help shape the future of primary education, taking into account the increasing workload the introduction of the revised curriculum brings.



Paddy Linden

Paddy began his teaching career at St Paul's Travellers' School in Belfast, before moving on to St Patrick's College in Maghera to work in his specialist area of Technology and Design.

He spent ten memorable years in Corpus Christi College, where he became Head of Department and served on the Curriculum Team; representing staff as Co-ordinator on the College Development Committee, as Teacher Representative on the Strategic Review Group and as INTO Representative.

Away from the classroom, Paddy is Vice Chair of Ulster Colleges GAA and is an active coach at under-age and senior level. Paddy recently took up a post in St Mary's CBGS, returning to the school he attended as a pupil many years ago.

gtcni continued from page 13,14 and 15.



Frances Donnelly

Frances Donnelly's career began teaching science in St Louise's Comprehensive College, before she decided to pursue her wider interest in environmental education at Slieve Gullion Courtyard Centre in South Armagh.

Subsequently, Frances moved into the integrated education sector with NICIE, where she has worked since 1995. She retains a strong personal and professional commitment to the promotion and development of shared education between our two main communities. Presently on secondment to CCEA, she is employed in the development of new qualifications to support the delivery of the Entitlement Framework.

Frances has been a proud member of GTC since its inception and wants to use her term in office to help ensure it assumes full responsibility for its regulatory function. She is determined that the Council, as the professional body for teachers in Northern Ireland, will continue to set the highest standards of professional conduct and practice within the teaching profession.



Brian Jess

A teacher since 1981, Bryan Jess is now in his tenth year as Principal of Carrick Primary School in Lurgan. He previously served for nine years as Principal, and four as Vice Principal, of a small rural primary school.

With a total enrolment of 340 pupils, Carrick Primary incorporates a mainstream primary school, a double nursery unit and five special needs classes.

Bryan is a member of the NAHT Primary Committee and continues to lobby on primary funding issues as a member of the NIPPAG Steering Committee. He has chaired a local principals' forum committed to the development of an evidence based Social and Emotional Learning project.

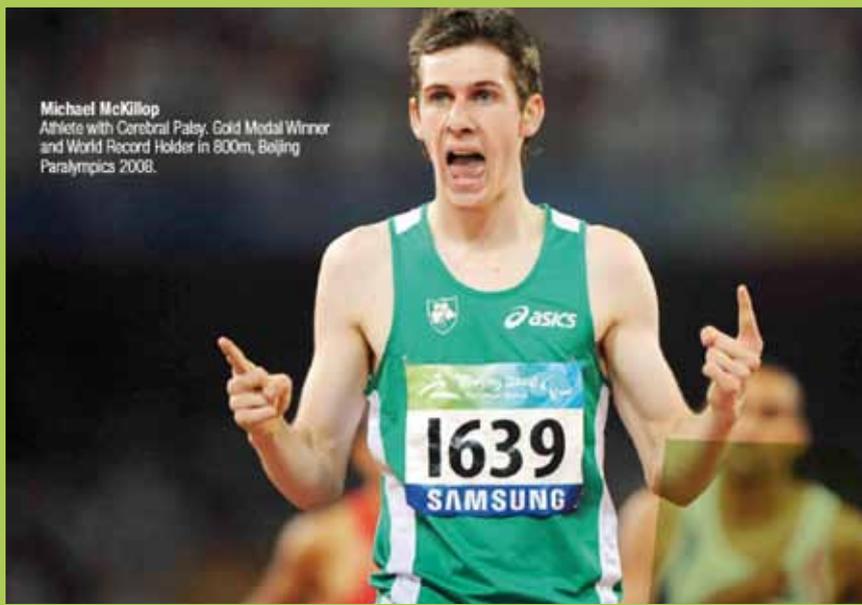
As the teacher's role becomes ever-more demanding, with levels of expectation growing and accountability increasing, Bryan views participation in the Council as a vehicle for ensuring that development in the profession is brought about with reasonable measure and pace.

This new Council begins its work at a time of great challenge and uncertainty. The recent Comprehensive Spending Review settlement will mean that hard choices will have to be made by the education sector. The Council recognises that, in times of economic constraint, the investment of resources is problematical. However, the investment of energy in collaboration and consensus building is essential, and resource neutral.

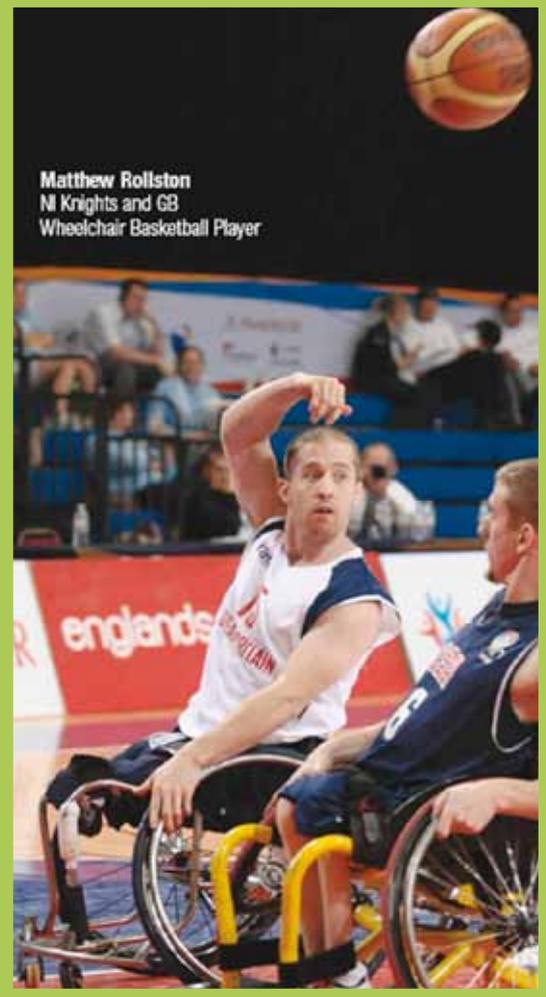
Over the coming years, the Council's collective responsibility will be to help to ensure that the profession is supported in its demanding role. The Council is committed to a positive programme designed to further empower the teaching profession to facilitate renewal and development, so it can meet the challenges ahead. gtcni



Council members Induction Day: (L - R) Paddy Linden, Gillian Garrett, Tony Lappin, Carney Cumper, Stephen Moore.



Michael McKillop
Athlete with Cerebral Palsy. Gold Medal Winner
and World Record Holder in 800m, Beijing
Paralympics 2008.



Matthew Rollston
NI Knights and GB
Wheelchair Basketball Player

Does your school have Northern Ireland's next Paralympian?

Disability Sports Northern Ireland (DSNI) is encouraging all post-primary PE teachers to be on the look out for NI's next generation of disabled sports stars. With more and more young people with physical and sensory disabilities now attending mainstream schools it has become increasingly difficult for organisations such as DSNI to engage with young people and promote disability sporting opportunities. Therefore, DSNI hopes to work with PE teachers to promote opportunities through the 'Be Active Be the Best' Talent ID Programme.

The programme, which is funded by Sport Northern Ireland and has been awarded the London 2012 Inspire Mark, was launched by the Sports Minister, Nelson McCausland MLA and Britain's most successful Paralympic Swimmer and Director of Paralympic Integration for London 2012, Chris Holmes at Parliament Buildings, Stormont on

9th September. The programme aims to increase awareness of disability sports opportunities in the mainstream school environment in the hope of not only discovering potential Paralympians but inspiring young disabled people and PE professionals to find out more about disabled sports.

During the month of September every post-primary school in Northern Ireland received a series of posters featuring inspirational images of local disabled sports people. PE teachers were encouraged to display the posters prominently within the school in the hope of inspiring young people with disabilities to get in touch with DSNI.

Pupils who are interested in finding out more on the various sports opportunities should register their

interest with Disability Sports NI and will be invited along to an athlete assessment day at Antrim Forum on Saturday 20th November where everyone will be given the chance to try out ten different sports specifically aimed at young people with disabilities. Many of the sports are also suitable for young people with high levels of disabilities so everyone is encouraged to get in touch.

The posters feature many successful athletes who attended mainstream education and DSNI is sure the next Paralympic Gold medal winner could be sitting in your classroom! 



If your school would like to find out more about the programme contact Elaine Reid at Disability Sports NI on 028 9038 7062 or email ereid@dsni.co.uk



Professor Laura Lundy of the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast reviews the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty. The UNCRC was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 18 November 1989 and came into force on 2 September 1990. The United Kingdom is a signatory to it and is therefore obliged in law to implement its provisions. This is carried out primarily through ensuring that local law and policy on education complies with the principles in the UNCRC.

The UNCRC has two substantive rights related to education: Article 28 defines the right of access to education and Article 29 defines the aims of education.

Article 28

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
 - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
 - (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
 - (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
 - (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
 - (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.



Article 29

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
 - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
 - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
 - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
 - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;
 - (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

The UNCRC also contains a number of principles in relation to the treatment of children generally. These include rights to freedom of conscience and expression, to be safe from abuse and harm, and to play and leisure.

Moreover, all of the rights in the UNCRC must be enjoyed without discrimination. However, one of the most significant Articles in the educational context is Article 12. This gives children who are capable of forming their own views, the right: "to express their views freely in all matters affecting the child,

the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." It is as a direct result of Article 12 that schools in Northern Ireland are required by statute to consult pupils on bullying and discipline policies. Further obligations to consult pupils are likely to follow in line with current legal developments in England, Wales and Scotland.

The UNCRC does not work in the same way as ordinary domestic law, in particular, a child who thinks that their rights have been breached does not have a right to complain



Article 28 defines the right of access to education and **Article 29** defines the aims of education...

about this in a court. Instead, the UNCRC is enforced through a system of monitoring by a specialist UN panel, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, to which the state is required to report. This monitors compliance and encourages states to make their law, policy and practice CRC compliant.

The UNCRC also contains a provision requiring the provisions of the UNCRC to be made widely known to children and adults alike. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has said: "if the adults around children, their parents and other family members, teachers and carers do not understand the implications of the Convention, and above all its confirmation of the equal status of children as the subjects of rights, it is most unlikely that the rights set out in the Convention will be realised for many children." In view of this, the Committee has recommended that initial and in-service training for teachers and others working with children should be "systematic and ongoing" and should "increase knowledge and understanding of the Convention and encourage active respect for all its provisions." [gtcni](#)

Foyle View

A UNICEF Rights Respecting School

Dr Michael Dobbins the Principal of Foyle View Special School describes how promoting the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child can have a positive impact on all aspects of school life.

Last year, Foyle View School, a special school in Derry for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD), became the second school in Northern Ireland to achieve level 2 of the UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award (RRSA).

This innovative nationwide award scheme promotes the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) as the basis for enhancing teaching, learning, ethos, attitudes and behaviour.

In making these meaningful within education, a Rights Respecting School, is not only challenged to teach about children's rights, but also to model rights and respect in all its relationships between pupils, school staff, parents and the wider community. Moreover, awareness of children's rights builds empathy and reduces xenophobia and bullying as children recognise that to have their own rights respected means an obligation to respect the rights of others.

As a school community there were specific reasons why we wished to pursue a rights agenda. Firstly, until the first U.K. legislation appeared in 1970, children and young people categorised as having severe learning difficulties, were considered to be 'ineducable', with special schools in Northern Ireland for pupils with SLD only moving from the control of Health Boards to the ELBs in 1987. Thus, the firm recognition of all children's rights supports a progressive understanding that not only do all children have the right to an education, but that all children can learn with effective support.

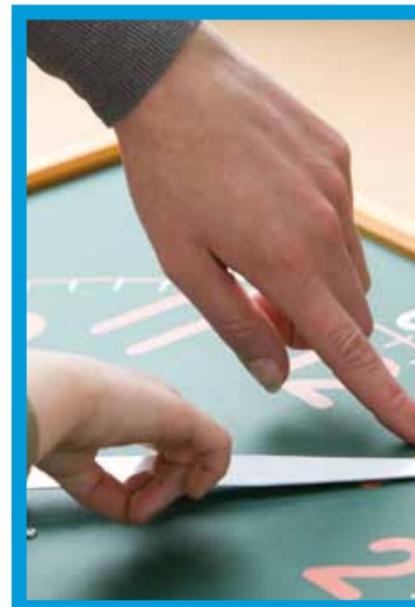


This is a core value familiar to all special schools, and to some extent, it summarises the challenge to all schools in supporting pupils with additional needs.

Secondly, and more pragmatically, were the practical benefits accruing from the adoption of a rights' agenda. It complemented a natural progression for us as a school that emphasised shared values and agreed aims in building a strong and successful educational community. In doing so, RRSA has helped improve relationships at all levels, encouraged better problem-solving, dispute resolution and strategic development by providing

a clear benchmark for action. It has enhanced school pastoral provision in supporting pupil participation and given greater voice to the views of pupils as learners, and of their learning context. Also, RRSA facilitates a strategic focus on elements of the Revised Curriculum, for example, PDMU, and active citizenship, as well as supporting pastoral provision and supporting the enhancement of well-being across the school.

There is a rigorous process of evaluation involving school audit and evaluation against benchmarks focused on 4 aspects of school life: leadership and management;



knowledge and understanding of the UNCRC; rights-respecting classrooms; and pupils' active participation in decision-making throughout the school.

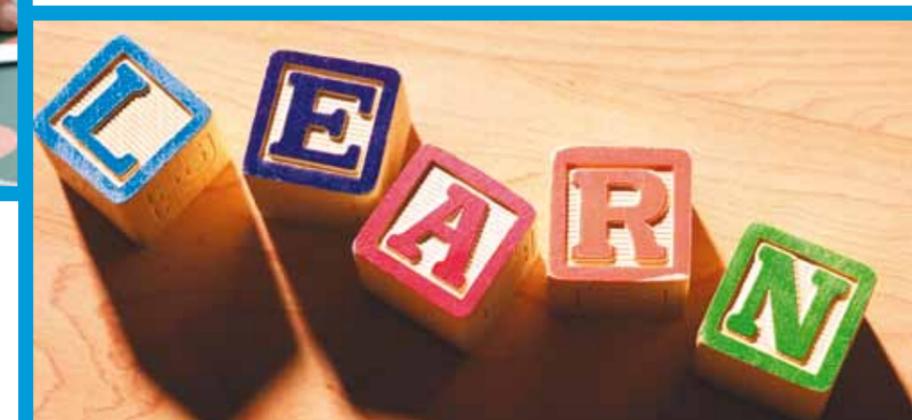
The RRSA recognised many of the initiatives that Foyle View has been successful in delivering in the past three years. For example, formal and informal links with other schools both local and international, the development of the Playtrail as a community resource supporting 80k users annually and participation in local and regional lobbying for better services for children and young people. We have seen new initiatives, such as staff and student councils, rights awareness projects and inclusive links with a wide range of organisations contributing to the enrichment of our school community.

Home-school partnerships have been a key development in supporting this and the school has worked hard to meet the challenge of being a serving school, supporting children and their families, with a focus on enriching the lived experience of the child, within the family, and across their lived experience, not just the 14-15% of their time a child spends at school. Enhancing our work with allied services in health and social care, within parent partnerships, has been a priority in enriching the lives

of our pupils within and beyond school. To this end, the school building and grounds are open to a range of projects for our pupils and the wider community seven days a week and for 51 weeks of each year.

At the heart of the UNCRC is the right to be heard and to participate. The Awards Scheme challenges schools to make this happen for pupils with, for instance, profound and multiple learning difficulties; to pupils with severely challenging

behaviour and to all the other barriers to learning that our children and young people experience. Recognising human potential in everyone, placing the responsibility on schools to become enablers of children's rights, to move beyond a narrow focus on compensating for individual pupil deficits are the exacting, but rewarding challenges of becoming a rights respecting school. For that alone, it is well worth the journey. [gicni](#)



'Sparking the Imagination'

Imagination is more important than knowledge. For while knowledge defines all we currently know and understand, imagination points to all we might yet discover and create.
Albert Einstein.

The University of Ulster's 'Sparking the Imagination' project began in September 2010 for its fourth successful year of delivery in a sample of Belfast primary schools. The action research project, implemented through the School of Education within the University of Ulster, explores the potential for a creative curriculum to raise the educational aspirations of young children and their parents residing in disadvantaged areas. In the article that follows, Dolores Loughrey whose teaching was recently described by the ETI as 'inspiring', describes the success of the project to date.

The 'Sparking the Imagination' project is a small-scale research study but one of significant importance to the educational opportunities presented to children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The project aims to tackle the readiness of such children and their parents to thrive in the formal school setting and particularly to build the self-confidence and self-esteem to do so.

A decision was taken to develop project content which fostered creativity in education in and through the arts. Working to enhance children's creativity appeared to provide the medium to instill in children both a sense of self-confidence and self-esteem, coupled with an ability to rise to a challenge and take opportunities to control their own learning.

In this project, the arts were placed at the centre of the curriculum rather than occupying a more subsidiary role.

A programme was developed whereby a number of creative professionals were approached to engage in creative partnerships with children, with parents and with teachers. This involved creative experts working collaboratively with teachers, parents and children over a twelve week period. Programmes have included a focus on storytelling, drama, dance, ICT, music, art, poetry and photography. Education in and through the arts has been somewhat overlooked by educationalists but teachers participating in this project testify to the use of the arts as a good learning strategy. Throughout each short arts programme, the children responded enthusiastically to the 'real-world' content and felt able to demonstrate and use the skills they possessed within the active learning environment.

Teachers commented on how children looked forward to the creative sessions and were especially excited on the days when they were joined by the creative professionals. One teacher summed up the value of teaching through the arts by claiming that such experiences were helping her reach 'the unreachable' children.

From the parental point of view, there was a great sense of pride as they viewed their children taking part in active learning tasks and participated with them in these learning situations. Parents also, related how their children were now keen to attend school and how they often talked about and even carried on work begun in school at home. Some felt that they themselves had benefited from the affirmation that

their contribution to their child's education was of value, and that they were in the privileged position of actually seeing their children work in the school environment.

Others made comparisons between their own experiences of school and those of their children, and seemed somewhat relieved that their own memories did not match the realities of the classroom today. Parents who become partners in the creative learning sessions reported a growing sense of confidence about their role in their children's education.

Children learned skills specific to a given art form but, in doing so, they were also developing academic and social skills; they expressed their thoughts and feelings, communicated and demonstrated their understandings in oral and written form. Furthermore, they



Children taking part in the 'Sparking Imagination' Project with dance expert Mags Byrne

showed that they could compare and contrast their work and ideas with that of others. They experienced the benefits of working collaboratively with their peers and, moreover were able to interact similarly with adults rather than do so in a power-based relationship. Children responded to this sharing of power by displaying high levels of motivation when engaged in learning encounters rather than being reluctant recipients of the taught curriculum.

One of the projects most successful outcomes has been its impact on teacher skill and confidence in creative areas of the curriculum. Teachers acknowledged within

their project evaluations that there had been a shift in their own views of themselves as 'creative' people. This was a result of the timetabled creative sessions that permitted the scope to develop personal passions, and for teachers to gain a sense of their own creativity within a supported environment. They believed that working alongside the creative professionals allowed personal confidence to be built and skills acquired to allow them eventually to lead the creative sessions. Moreover, they described 'feeling good' about themselves and appreciated the focused time to question and examine their own

professional practice. In their project interviews, there was evidence of a positive mind change towards realizing their own potential not only as teachers, but also as learners.

Within socio-economically disadvantaged areas, there are often low expectations of what children can achieve. 'Sparking the Imagination' helped to generate a belief in a culture of improvement. It provided time and opportunities for new approaches to professional development such as mentoring, collaborative learning, creative knowledge and skill development. Learning in and through the creative arts established a more positive climate for learning as it was embraced by the children and parents. Relationships markedly improved as learning was truly more collaborative and inclusive of all abilities and talents.

There is no doubt that creativity is the most important human resource of all. Without creativity, there would be no progress, and we would forever repeat the same patterns.

Edward de Bono

The message from 'Sparking the Imagination' is that, irrespective of their socio-economic situation, schools and communities can make a difference to the lives of children. The success of the project was attributed to the fact that its was contextually sensitive to the schools and to their communities and, very importantly, approaches were adapted to fit their particular developmental needs. **gtcni**



Dance expert Mags Byrne, Jim Doran (Sparking Imagination committee member) Michelle Long, (Sparking Imagination project co-ordinator) Dolores Loughrey (Sparking Imagination Project Manager) Orla McKeagney (Drama specialist)



Nasen aims to promote the education, training, advancement and development of all those with special and additional needs.

The NI regional committee is a conscientious band of volunteers which represents Primary and Secondary mainstream, SENCO's, Reading Recovery, the Peripatetic services, MLD, Outreach and Area Boards. We maintain strong links with Nasen nationally; keep up-to-date with current trends in Britain and work tirelessly to provide learning opportunities, thereby meeting changes as they arise.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Nasen membership includes:

- discount with publishers and suppliers when purchasing resources;
- discounts when applying to attend national conferences;
- the provision of journals - Special, Support for Learning and British Journal of Special Education; and
- access to a 'members only' site on the Nasen website which provides up-to-date information on research via the online publication *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs* and Nasen's involvement with government agencies.



AUTUMN CONFERENCE

The Nasen NI Annual Autumn Conference and study day each spring aim to ensure your classroom practice is both effective and up-to-date. They are open to all interested parties, both professional and non professional. Consequently, we respond positively to the feedback of our delegates when planning future events by seeking out speakers who are highly acclaimed experts in their chosen field.

The next event currently being planned by the regional committee is the Annual Autumn Conference organised for Saturday 13th November 2010 at Stranmillis University College.

Nasen was formed in 1992 when the National Association Remedial Education (NARE) amalgamated with the National Council for Special Education to create a single powerful voice to promote equal opportunities for all learners. **gtcni**

“ alive and well and working in your best interests ”

AUTUMN CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Theme / Title	Speaker	Seminar / Workshop
Early Identification of Dyspraxia & DCD	Pearl Barnes President nasen UK	Keynote Speaker Seminar / Workshop
Creative Approaches To Emotional Literacy	Eilish Kelly Education Officer: North Belfast Partnership	Seminar / Interactive Workshop
Developmental Disability with an Overview on Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Disorders	Dr Kieran O'Malley Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist	Seminar
Supporting Pupils with Dyslexia & Dyspraxia	Dr Sean MacBlain Consultant Educational Psychologist	Seminar
Sports Psychology & the Importance of Motivation for Pupils with SEN	Dr Graham Walker Psychologist SEELB	Seminar
Brain Based Learning Fast ForWard Programme	John Kerins Director, Neuron Learning Ltd	Seminar / Interactive Workshop

You will receive an application form and details via C2K
Contact Details: Gillian Neill, nasenni@hotmail.co.uk Mary Campbell, mcampbell864@c2kni.net
Website: www.nasen.org.uk

Important Dates



1st September 2009:

Qualifying period – volunteer activity needs to have taken place on or after this date.

1st September 2010:

Applications and programme instructions mailed to all second-level school Principals

22nd October 2010:

Students must complete and submit applications to their School Principal by this date.

12th November 2010:

Schools may submit a maximum of two applications for national judging by this date.

February 2011:

20 finalists are announced.

29th March 2011:

The 20 finalists attend a Gala Awards dinner, where time two All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year are named.

What do participants receive?

- All participants will receive a Certificate of Merit.
- The 20 finalists will receive engraved silver medallions, €500 award, and invitations to the awards dinner at the Radisson Blu, Galway.
- The two All-Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year receive engraved gold medallions, €1,000 for a charity of their choice and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington D.C., to attend the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Pramerica 2011 Spirit of Community Awards



The 2010 Pramerica Spirit of Community All Ireland Youth Volunteers of the Year, Shane Walsh, Davitt College, Castlebar, Jennifer Lynch, St. Mary's College, Derry pictured with Mickey Harte, Tyrone senior football manager, John Hume, Chairperson of judging panel & Henry McGarvey, MD, Pramerica

What are the Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards?

Pramerica Systems Ireland Ltd. based in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal is an information technology and customer contact centre and is a subsidiary of Prudential Financial (www.prudential.com), a financial services company headquartered in Newark, New Jersey, USA.

The Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards were launched in Ireland in 2006, to recognise post-primary/second-level students for volunteer work. These prestigious awards are sponsored by Pramerica Systems

Ireland in partnership with the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) and the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland (GTCNI).

Principals are encouraged to promote the awards. The Pramerica Spirit of Community Awards provide an opportunity to salute deserving students, inspire young people to get involved in community service activities and attract widespread recognition for your school. 



Pramerica

For more information or to complete an application form see our website www.pramerica.ie/spirit or email spirit@pramerica.ie



Policy Developments in Education

Teachers could be forgiven for being somewhat bemused about the current state of education policy development in Northern Ireland.

The continuing and long running sagas around selection and the establishment of the Education and Skills Authority have not inspired teachers' confidence in policy makers' ability to reach a consensus on these crucial areas. Nevertheless, the profession can be proud of its efforts to 'hold the system together' while our policy makers continue to grapple with issues and problems that, at times, appear to be intractable.

For its part, the Department of Education has recently launched three more significant policy consultations, namely:

- *Teacher Education in a Climate of Change – The Way Forward;*
- *The Early Years (0 – 6) Strategy;* and
- *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity, including Equality Impact Assessment.*

The *Teacher Education in a Climate of Change* consultation addresses the professional formation of beginning teachers and makes a number of recommendations for the continuing professional development of all teachers. The Council has always been forthright in advocating that teachers have the right to high quality professional development as the basis for personal and professional empowerment. Teachers now, more than ever, work in highly complex and accountable circumstances and they need to be reassured that their professional development needs will be met in a responsive and progressive way.

The Early Years (0-6) Strategy will have profound implications for colleagues working in early years settings. It is essential that the voice of teachers in both nursery school and units attached to primary schools are heard and that the experience and expertise of colleagues working as specialists in early years settings is taken seriously. Crucially, significant research findings support the relationship



between teacher-led early years' provision and quality. Therefore, future provision in this critical phase of education must build on current best practice and 'level-up' quality rather than put it at risk.

The implication of the *Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education* consultation will challenge teachers to examine the role of schools in educating children and young people in a community emerging from violence and conflict. Crucial issues such as sectarianism and racism still need to be confronted and schools certainly have a role



to play. However, it is essential that the whole of political and civil society confronts these issues; the challenges are simply too complex for schools alone to address.

Over the coming years the outworkings of policies resulting from these consultations will have a significant impact on teachers in all school phases.

The Council, in responding to consultations and policies, considers them in the light of two questions:

- 1) Do they recognize and support the professionalism of teachers?
- 2) Will it enhance the capacity of the profession to meet the needs of pupils in our schools?

The Council will, in the coming months strive to ensure that our policy makers and administrators are made aware of the views and concerns of those who work at the 'chalk face'. 



The Same, Only Different

Four schools have been learning about **similarities and differences** between life here in Northern Ireland and in Malawi.

The schools – St Columba’s, Kilrea; Kilrea Primary School; Foyle View; and Kilronan Special Schools, have been going online to compare photos of daily life in the two countries. They have used the Learning NI environment to get to know each other, to look at the photos and to share their comments in the Discussion Forum.

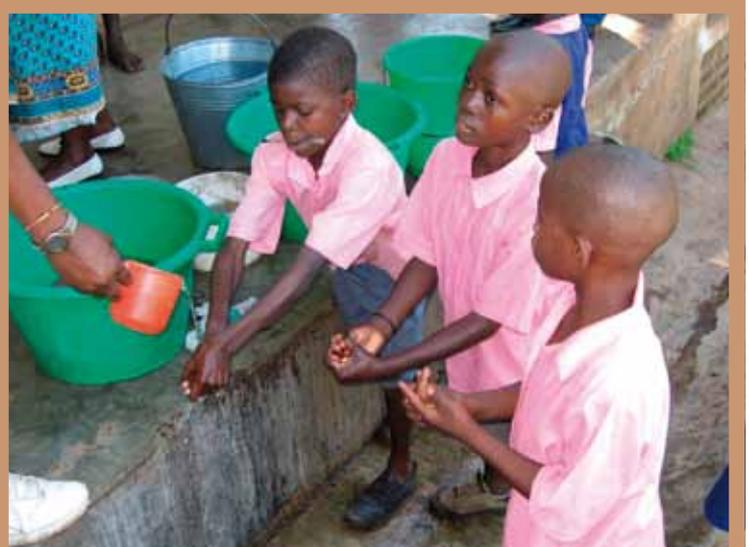
As well as gaining knowledge about a less economically developed area (LEDC) like Malawi, pupils have been developing their communication and ICT skills.

The Malawian photos made a big impact on both pupils and teachers. It is hard to say whether the picture of an ambulance (basically, a stretcher pulled by a bicycle) or of school hand-washing facilities (children gathered round a bucket of water) provoked more discussion.

The project began as a ‘thank you’ to Coleraine schools who had been giving practical help to their counterparts in Malawi through a Coleraine-based charity – The Zomba Action Project (ZAP). The topic, titled *The Same, Only Different* and other lessons in citizenship and geography, are published on the ZAP website www.colerainezomba.org.uk

The topic is designed to be accessible to a range of age-groups and abilities so it was very satisfying to see how much both the primary and special school pupils gained from their experience. 

If you want to find out more or if you would like your school to take part in a future project, contact Norma Perceval-Price at nprice@c2kni.org.uk or Elizabeth Snelling at elizabeth.snelling@morehead.com



Enabling Entitlement

As momentum continues to gather for the implementation of the Entitlement Framework, from September 2013, CCEA has made significant advances in its plans to increase and enhance its existing portfolio of general and applied qualifications.

A particular focus has been placed on the development of additional applied subjects, designed specifically for delivery within the context of the Entitlement Framework, which stipulates that young people should have the choice of at least one third applied courses at Key Stage 4 and post-16.

Over the course of the last 8 months a lengthy and comprehensive consultation process has taken place between CCEA and a wide range of stakeholder groups, all of whom have a vested interest in how young people are preparing for their future as life-long learners and contributors to the economy and society.

At a macro level, CCEA not only researched a significant number of high-level corporate strategic plans but also engaged in discussions with employer bodies and government agencies including the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, the Department of Employment and Learning and the Sector Skills Alliance. These meetings served to identify and highlight areas of skills shortages within the workforce and also considered the changing needs of Northern Ireland's business and industry sectors. The extension of the consultation process onto a micro level saw CCEA entering into face-to-face dialogue with the Sector Skills Councils, universities and a cross-section of schools.

Ultimately, however, all post-primary schools were invited to get involved in the process through a postal questionnaire and the high response rate was indicative of the interest demonstrated by all participants throughout the course of the entire consultation. CCEA's early engagement with stakeholders and willingness to take on board comments, suggestions and concerns from all quarters has resulted in the identification of a number of key subject areas (now under consideration for future development)

which CCEA believes will offer an extended choice to both centres and students through the Entitlement Framework. These subject areas are as follows:

- Software Development;
- Environmental Studies;
- Agriculture and food production;
- Sports Science; and
- Journalism.



Throughout the consultation process, the key issue raised by all stakeholders has been that any new qualifications need to be robust, challenging and have the credibility to lead students into Higher Education as well as the world of work. This view is shared wholeheartedly by CCEA and the links previously established with the



local Universities and Sector Skills Councils will be used throughout the development process to ensure the full participation and involvement of all essential partners. In addition, teachers throughout all post-primary schools are being invited to get involved in writing teams and will, in the future be offered the opportunity to comment on the draft specifications as they become available.

Please note that at time of writing, titles for the new qualifications remain non-specific and may, therefore, be subject to change.

Finally, CCEA's vision is one of an education provision which "reflects the needs of individual learners, the community and the Northern Ireland economy." The anticipated qualifications are designed to reflect the shifting requirements of these groupings, offering new and innovative topics for study and augmenting existing learning pathways for students. **gtcni**

If you are interested in applying to join any of the proposed writing teams for the subject areas identified to date, please contact one of the Education Managers (Qualifications Development) listed below for further details.

<p>Frances Donnelly fdonnelly@ccea.org.uk 028 9026 1200 Ext 2212</p>	<p>Michael McAuley mmcauley@ccea.org.uk 028 90261200 Ext 2342</p>	<p>Joan Nelson jnelson@ccea.org.uk 028 9026 1200 Ext 2115</p>	<p>Mary Currie mcurrie@ccea.org.uk 028 9026 1200 Ext 2106</p>
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