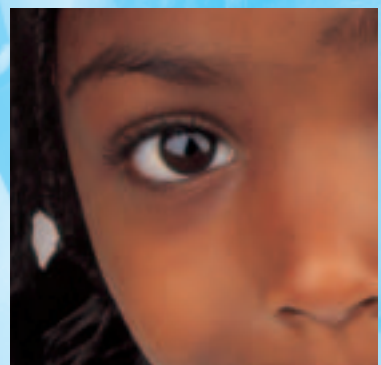
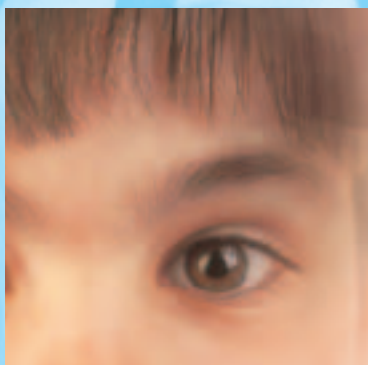
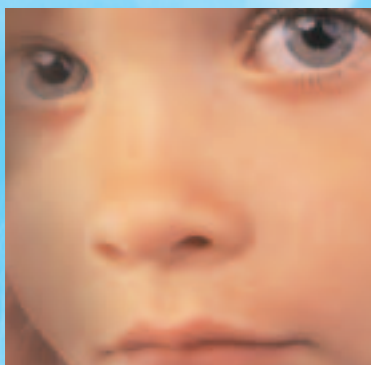
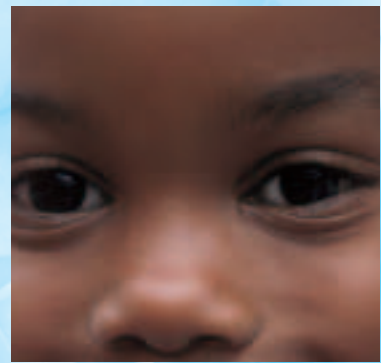
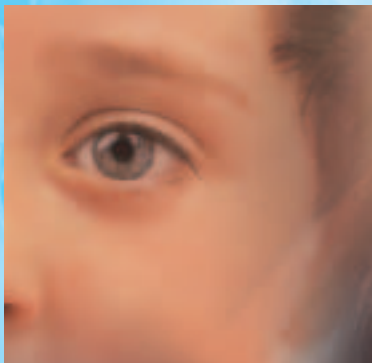


**SCoTENS**

**The Standing Conference  
on Teacher Education, North and South**

# **TEACHER EDUCATION**

## **FOR CITIZENSHIP IN DIVERSE SOCIETIES**



**2005 CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL REPORTS**

THE STANDING CONFERENCE ON TEACHER EDUCATION NORTH AND SOUTH (SCoTENS) RECEIVES FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING IN NORTHERN IRELAND, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE IN IRELAND.



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# Chairpersons' Introduction

## The background to the 2005 Programme of Work

The composition of the population of Ireland, both North and South, has changed dramatically in the last decade. Even if the 'athletic youths' and 'comely maidens' innocently besporting themselves at the crossroads of rural Ireland existed only in de Valera's imagination rather than in the realities of the 1940s, the changes of recent years have been dizzying, all the more so for taking many of us somewhat by surprise. John Hinde's less than accurate picture postcard images of donkeys carrying creels of turf to heat homely thatched cottages have given way to a land of urban by-passes, 'bungalow blight' and a property boom which has driven many urban dwellers into the depths of the Irish countryside, literally 'beyond the Pale', to suffer the tyranny of the 4-6 hour daily commute to and from work.

The Celtic Tiger's pursuit of all things shiny and new has crucially depended on a multiplying army of immigrants, providing an ever-available source of inexpensive labour, drawn from the countries of Eastern Europe and beyond. For example, recent statistics suggest that there are more than 100,000 Poles living and working in Ireland. As one of the contributions to this report points out, Northern Ireland has experienced a similar population influx, albeit on a somewhat smaller scale, with the result that in February 2005 at least 30 mother tongues could be identified in the schools of the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) area. Who could have predicted that the playgrounds of Armagh, Dungannon and Portadown would echo to Arabic, Portuguese, Tag-a-log or Ukrainian? Equally, have we fully absorbed the reality that in some primary school classrooms in the western suburbs of Dublin, in excess of twenty nationalities are now represented?

## Annual Conference

Thus it was more than timely that the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) chose in 2005 to focus particularly on 'Teacher Education for Citizenship in Diverse Societies', especially at its annual conference in the Grand Hotel, Malahide, Co. Dublin (10-11 November 2005). The conference was chaired on the first day by Tom Boland, Chief Executive of the Higher Education Authority (HEA) and on the second day by Professor Richard McMinn, Principal of Stranmillis University College. The event was officially opened by Ms Sile de Valera, Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science, who stressed the need to recognise and acknowledge the various cultural, religious, ethnic and other groups that now exist in our communities and explore ways in which these differences can be respected.

This theme was taken up and expanded by Professor Jagdish Gundara, the current holder of the UNESCO Chair in Intercultural Studies at the University of London's Institute of Education, who deftly linked the debate about citizenship education in Britain and Ireland to both the post '9/11' international scene and to

key themes in Irish history such as the sectarian tensions in County Armagh in the 1790s which gave birth to the Orange Order, not to mention the much earlier incursions of the Vikings and Normans. Dr Derrick Wilson from the Future Ways Programme at the School of Education, University of Ulster, in a hard-hitting presentation, challenged all teacher educators in the context of citizenship education to reflect on whether teacher training is in fact a space for critical reflection. Dr Dympna Devine from the Department of Education, University College Dublin, rooted the challenges of citizenship education for teacher educators in the centrality of children's own social world and their perspectives and experiences.

On the second day of the conference, Ms Signe Marie Natvig Andreassen, Rector of the Gran School, Oslo, Norway, introduced a further note of classroom reality with her pragmatic account of the challenges and the achievements of leading a multinational school in a socially deprived urban area. Dr Roland Tormey from the University of Limerick provided a sociological perspective with his stimulating paper on 'Belonging, Emotion and Intercultural Teacher Education', which posed the interesting question as to what extent "our Colleges and (Education) Departments" are "places where students are supported in engaging in their own emotional development process?" All of these contrasting and, at times, provocative keynote addresses understandably provoked lively debates on the conference floor.

However there was much more to the 2005 conference than the formal presentations. The pre-dinner reception saw the launch of the report from the 'Together Towards Inclusion' North-South project, which is a joint venture by Integrate Ireland Language and Training (a campus company of Trinity College Dublin) and the Southern Education and Library Board (NI), seeking to explore how structural and management issues must be addressed in order to meet the educational needs of pupils from non-English speaking backgrounds. The project is also hoping to develop a 'toolkit' for use by school principals and teachers attempting to address the language and learning needs of non-English speaking children in the primary classroom. The first phase involved eight participating primary schools drawn from both North and South and was led by Ms Mary Yarr (SELB), Professor David Little (TCD, IILT) and Ms Barbara Simpson (TCD, IILT). The report of its first phase was launched by Professor Sheelagh Drudy (UCD). Its contents are reproduced in the pages which follow and represent the outcome of a valuable example of North-South collaboration.

The second day saw the launch of a new section of the award-winning SCoTENS website. This deals with the topical subject of citizenship, which is being introduced into the school curriculum in both political jurisdictions. A presentation on its contents and development (which is ongoing) was made by Dr Roger Austin, Head of the School of Education at the University of Ulster, Ms Una O'Connor also of the University of Ulster, and Mr Gerry Jeffers of the National



University of Ireland, Maynooth.

During the second day of the conference, six work groups tackled subjects relevant to the overall conference theme. The topics and the workshop leaders are listed below:

- Taking a Whole School Approach in a Culturally Diverse Society: Ms Mary Gannon and Ms Margaret Patterson
- Violence in Schools in a Culturally Diverse Society: Dr Mona O'Moore and Mr Stephen Minton
- School Leadership in a Culturally Diverse Society: Dr Tom Hesketh and Dr Jim Gleeson
- ICT & Citizenship in a Culturally Diverse Society: Dr Roger Austin and Dr Paul Conway
- Teacher Education, Inclusion and the Integration of Special Needs: Mr Hugh Kearns and Dr Michael Shevlin
- Preparing Teachers for a Culturally Diverse Society: Mr Gerry Jeffers and Ms Una O'Connor.

The SCoTENS Committee has for some time been anxious to engage a wider group of teacher educators in a discussion about the future directions SCoTENS should take. The conference provided an ideal opportunity to undertake this consultation in the context of a presentation by Professor John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, which laid out a number of possible alternative approaches. Following some group discussion, a final plenary session was chaired by Dr Pauric Travers, President of St Patrick's College, Drumcondra.

The texts of the keynote addresses and reports of the six discussion groups are included in this Annual Report.

### **Programme of Work**

#### **Sectoral conferences funded or part-funded by SCoTENS**

Each of the sectoral conferences, which were funded or part-funded by SCoTENS in 2005, had identified a clear set of aims and objectives for their work, linked to specific outcomes. Full details of each of the conferences are contained in the respective reports which appear in this volume. They were:

- Building Research Capacity North and South: Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) and British Educational Research Association (BERA) in February 2005
- Third Irish Association for Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (IASSEE) Conference in June 2005
- Third North-South Conference on Initial Teacher Education (June 2005).

### **Research Projects funded or part-funded by SCoTENS (2005)**

A number of research projects were supported by SCoTENS. These included:

- Special Educational Needs in Initial Teacher Education: Reviewing Policy and Practice in Ireland
- An All-Ireland Survey of Student Perceptions of History, Geography and Science Education
- North-South Student Teacher Exchange Project: Student Voices 2004-2005.

Reports of these projects and their outcomes are included in this volume.

### **Research Projects funded or part-funded by SCoTENS (2006-07)**

During the course of the year the SCoTENS Committee, as part of a funding submission to the Department for Employment and Learning and the Department of Education in Northern Ireland and the Department for Education and Science in the Republic of Ireland, drew up a fresh programme of work which incorporated a number of new cross-border research projects. These are listed below and are more fully described later in the volume:

- Second North-South Conference on Education for Diversity and Citizenship
- ESAI and BERA Second Joint Conference on Research Capacity
- Current Practice in ICT within Teacher Education
- Teacher Education for Special Educational Needs in the North and South of Ireland: Sharing Cases of Practice
- Together Towards Inclusion: a Toolkit for Trainers, Phase Two
- The Social/National Identity of Young Children, North and South, Research Project
- Phase Two of an All-Ireland Longitudinal Study of Student Perceptions of History, Geography and Science Education.

### **SCoTENS Website**

The award-winning SCoTENS website continues to be maintained and developed under the guidance of Dr Roger Austin and Ms Dolina Patterson. The major development in 2005 was the addition of the new citizenship dimension which, as noted above, was officially launched at the annual conference.

### **Conclusion**

All of the above activity and achievements demonstrate that SCoTENS is very much alive and healthy. The original objectives for the two-year organisational pilot have been more than realised and North-South collaborative activity in the field of teacher education greatly enhanced. A European and indeed a wider international dimension continue to be a vital element of this process.

Thanks are due to the Department of Education and Science in the Republic of Ireland and the Departments of Education and Employment and Learning in

Northern Ireland for the financial support which has made this possible. All of the institutions and organisations linked to SCoTENS have also made additional financial and human resources available to support the worthy objectives of the organisation, and have thereby demonstrated a commitment to those objectives in the most tangible way possible. Members of the SCoTENS Committee in particular have given generously of their time, and teacher educators throughout Ireland, not only in universities and colleges, but also those working in a range of educational partner bodies, have combined to support the work of SCoTENS through enthusiastic participation in all of the activities described in this Report. As in previous years, SCoTENS simply could not function without the dedicated and tireless efforts of Mr Andy Pollak and Ms Patricia McAllister from the Centre for Cross Border Studies. They have kept the show on the road and indeed gone the extra mile to do so.

The Financial Report at the end of this Annual Report illustrates the income and expenditure accounts for the period February 2004 – April 2006 and indicates that the organisation is in a satisfactory financial state.

### Looking to the Future

No organisation can afford to rest on its laurels and given that SCoTENS was initially conceived of as having two years to prove itself, this is especially true in our case. As a result, the SCoTENS Committee has been devoting considerable time and effort to achieving a more long-term and secure funding base. A further one-year subvention from the relevant Departments was eventually secured for 2006, and efforts are now going forward to develop sustainability on the basis of organisational/ institutional membership through the levying of subscriptions and applications to educational charities. The former in particular looks very promising, as we write, and will hopefully make SCoTENS less reliant on Government funding for the future, without ruling this out altogether as a source of support. It will also give the sector a greater sense of ownership, as SCoTENS will be very much a reflection of its members. Clearly, changes in the committee structure will need to be put in place in 2006 to support these developments.

The Committee wishes to express its grateful thanks for the generous response of the many institutions, North and South, which have indicated their positive support for the work of SCoTENS, with effect from the academic year 2006-2007. A full list of the sponsoring institutions will be included in next year's Annual Report, and in other SCoTENS documentation.

In overall terms, the future of SCoTENS as an organisation looks extremely hopeful.

Signed on behalf of the SCoTENS Committee



**Professor John Coolahan**  
Co-Chairperson



**Professor Richard McMinn**  
Co-Chairperson



## Members of the SCoTENS Committee

Professor John Coolahan	NUI Maynooth (co-chair)
Professor Richard McMinn	Principal, Stranmillis University College, Belfast (co-chair)
Professor Sheelagh Drudy	University College Dublin
Dr Pauric Travers	President, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Dr Tom Hesketh	Director, Northern Ireland Regional Training Unit
Dr Roger Austin	University of Ulster
Professor Tony Gallagher	Queen's University Belfast
Professor Mona O'Moore	Trinity College Dublin
Very Rev Professor Martin O'Callaghan/ Mr. Peter Finn	St Mary's University College Belfast
Dr John O'Brien	University of Limerick
Professor Anne Moran	University of Ulster

# Teacher Education for Citizenship in Diverse Societies



## Annual Conference

Grand Hotel, Malahide, Co Dublin  
10-11 November 2005

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## DAY ONE

### OPENING ADDRESS

**Sile de Valera**  
**Minister of State**  
**Department of Education and Science**

It is a great pleasure to open this North/South conference. I would like to express my thanks to Professor Richard McMinn and Professor John Coolahan, Co-Chairs of the Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South, for the opportunity to address the Conference this afternoon.

I would like to pay tribute to Mr Andy Pollak and the Centre for Cross Border Studies, who organised this conference, for their tireless work in making this event happen. As in previous years, the unstinting dedication of the members of SCoTENS in promoting the activities of the group is also to be commended – well done!

The contributions from the list of distinguished national and international speakers coming as they do from various backgrounds will, I have no doubt, be central to interactions and discussions among you and I am sure that will lead to a great learning experience for all of you over the next two days. The variety of contributors and their mix between national and international, clearly demonstrate the value of such events to assist dialogue in education.

Two significant features of SCoTENS conferences which I find so attractive and appealing are: firstly, they expose participants North and South of the border to the most up-to-date international thinking in the topic under discussion and, secondly and most importantly, the forum provides a unique learning environment influenced by different fields of knowledge as well as viewpoints. In this manner, participants can interact, discuss and learn from the richness of their interactions.

The importance of dialogue in achieving our collective goals cannot be understated and the great attendance at this conference is a strong testament to that fact. Your contributions as participants in the workshops will also be very significant in making a success of the conference, and I am sure that through a spirit of partnership and open dialogue, the events over the two days will also prove to be a very enriching experience for all.

The theme of this year's conference, *Teacher Education for Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies*, is very appropriate, particularly in light of the many cultural and societal changes we are experiencing on the Island of Ireland. The ongoing peace process has opened up a greater understanding of our diverse cultural backgrounds on the island and the importance of the values and

attitudes associated with citizenship education. These new understandings are further deepened by the changing nature of the population in both jurisdictions.

The increasingly diverse population North and South is playing an increasingly significant role in contributing to the growth in our economies. It is also adding to a richer cultural life in our cities, towns and countryside. It is therefore vitally important that we as a modern democratic society in Ireland recognise and acknowledge the various cultural, religious, ethnic and other groups that now exist in our communities and explore ways in which these differences can be respected.

It is equally important then, beginning early in the education system, that we try to ensure that all students are instilled with the correct attitudes and values and facilitated in acquiring appropriate knowledge and skills which will enable them to conduct themselves as loyal and responsible citizens. It is their right and our responsibility as educators.

The principles of inclusion and equality compel us to seek full and active participation by all members of our society, across all generations, across all the diverse groups and inclusive of all abilities. Schools are also challenged to engage with these principles. They need your support in the development of whole school policies on equality and social and cultural inclusion. Your support is also needed in the development of newer critical learning practices in citizenship education.

However, with such changes come challenges. We, as policy makers and educational practitioners, are collectively charged with the responsibility of training student teachers, supporting existing teachers and working in partnership with schools and teachers, parents and students in developing a responsive educational system.


A major part of this work involves providing support and training for practicing teachers in their efforts to implement curricula at primary and post-primary levels which develop in students important values, attitudes and responsibilities which help them to grow and develop as good citizens who will know their rights and their duties.

At primary level here in the South, the revised 1999 curriculum provides guidelines, content and teaching strategies to help teachers cultivate positive attitudes, relevant knowledge and skills for citizenship through its programmes in Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Social, Environmental and Scientific Education (SESE).

At second level, the work of cultivating positive attitudes as well as imparting knowledge and developing skills in students continues, so that students are prepared for their future roles as responsible and fully participating citizens of a modern democracy. Much of this work is carried out through the various aspects of the Civic, Social, and Political Education (CSPE) curriculum.







In order to maximise the life chances for all we must provide accessible and appropriate education programmes through a life long engagement. Social, Political and Citizenship Education are vital components in this provision.

It is worth noting some of the current government supported educational initiatives, active on both sides of the border, which are contributing to our understanding of citizenship in diverse societies. These include:

- SCoTENS itself
- The EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation
- The Council of Europe European Year of Citizenship through Education 2005
- United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014

These are part of the large volume of creative and valuable ongoing work in which many of you here today are involved.

I want to reiterate that I am very pleased to be present today as I see great value in SCoTENS' activities in promoting teacher education on the island of Ireland and in building on the achievement and relationships already established. I hope that you, as participants, benefit from your presence here and avail of the opportunities afforded for networking and exchanging teaching and learning strategies for best practice which this conference provides. Thank you all very much for your attention.

## INTERCULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES

**Professor Jagdish S. Gundara**  
**International Centre for Intercultural Studies**  
**Institute of Education**  
**University of London**

### Introduction


I would very much like to thank the organisers of this very important conference for inviting me to speak at the plenary session. The importance of the conference lies in the fact that it brings together teacher educators from the north and south of Ireland, and it is to be hoped that this sharing of experiences will be enriching and help to develop intercultural understandings in the long term in this field on both sides of the border. These initiatives also have wider ramifications in helping to create conditions for peace, stability and security in both our islands. Secondly, this is an important conference because teacher educators are multipliers, and well educated teachers who have the knowledge, skills and understandings about diversities are very much needed at the present time. This, however, necessitates that teacher educators themselves are adequately informed about the critical issues in the field of intercultural teacher education. It needs to be stated at the outset that the status of teacher education within the higher education sector is itself very low and within that the role of intercultural education is marginalised. Since these are my views from the other side of the Irish Sea, I will largely focus on issues in the UK and hope that some of these might have resonances with members of this conference this afternoon.

Discussions about education for citizenship in Britain are taking place at a time when powers have been devolved to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and this has implications for discussions at this conference. These discussions provide an opportunity and a challenge to all of us to develop ideas about citizenship, especially if the imaginations of young people can be captured, because they are frequently reported to be disaffected with the socialisation processes within the British polity.

It is important to underline that citizenship and citizenship education within a democratic political context are not as yet something on which there is any common understanding. This contribution therefore is being delivered in the spirit of examining issues to establish more common ground for discussion and subsequently policies and practice which negate exclusions from societal institutions at many levels. Discussions between teacher educators on both sides of the border can make an immense contribution in defining issues like those of Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) which are relevant many other contexts in the European Union.

Here it is intended to develop a few ideas based on historical and contemporary aspects of diversity and their relevance to inclusion, which are integrative of issues of





identities, citizenship and human rights especially in teacher education institutions. Issues of identity, whether in singular or multiple forms, are relevant for considering issues of social conflict as well as of social cohesion. Within complex democratic societies where globalisation and technological changes may be leading to high levels of unemployment, democratic engagement and democratic institutions are subject to great stress. The need to deepen democracy entails a critical appraisal of issues of societal diversity and the development of collaborative community participation in the public domain and in public institutions. Such strategies of collaboration open up discussions about belongingness of diverse groups in a society and its institutions. These diversities within the Irish context include newer immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

### Human Rights and Citizenship

Human rights and citizenship education should be an integral part of an entitlement to education. Entitlement to good education includes not only a grasp of languages but also competencies in literacy and numeracy. These skills are part and parcel of young people acquiring an understanding of civic and political literacy and developing expertise and skills as active citizens.

It is not only what children are taught and what they learn, but also their actual experiences at school, which contribute to their understanding of rights and responsibilities in society. So a democratic school ethos is important and this needs to be experienced in the context of the wider community.<sup>1</sup> The role of youth work, further education, and other formal and non-formal lifelong learning are all important. There is an African adage that states that 'it takes a whole village to educate a child'. There is obviously a lot to this adage, but nowadays it is possible that the village itself will need re-educating and issues of the digital divide amongst the poorest also need redressing. This is especially true because both young people and adults may not be sufficiently educated to understand the historical and contemporary underpinnings of society and issues of its complexity and belongingness within it.

The terms 'social diversity' and 'multiculturalism', used descriptively, raise issues about which there is no agreement. Firstly, there is the common sense notion that British society has become multicultural. The assumption is that it is the post-World War II immigrants, especially from the Commonwealth, who have caused diversity leading to a loss of national identity. The comparative educationalist Nicholas Hans referred to factors such as languages, religion, social class and territory as forming the basis of nations. If one examines British society using this taxonomy, then the society can be seen as being historically diverse. Lloyd and Jennifer Laing in the introduction to their book write:

*The term Anglo-Saxon has been used in the recent past for a variety of purposes – usually to denote a kind of fundamental 'Englishness'. Paradoxically, the origins of the term lie firmly embedded in late Roman Continental Europe, when a hotch potch of people crossed the English Channel. They intermingled with the Romano-British population, developing a new culture in what eventually became England.<sup>2</sup>*

In linguistic terms, the use of Gaelic and Celtic languages and different forms of regional English makes UK society historically multilingual. Likewise, in religious terms, the pre-Christian religions, various denominations of Christianity and the presence of Judaism since the 12th century makes Britain a multi-faith society.

The historical distinctions between social classes and between rural and urban areas are indicators of social differences and of differential access to public and social institutions.

The policies in these islands have been constitutive of the Welsh, Scottish, English and Irish nations, in addition to the presence of the non-territorially based and largely invisible Traveller/Gypsy communities. All these indices of diversity form the historical basis of the multicultural past of the British and Irish nations.

Hence, an understanding of the complex historical and contemporary aspects of societal diversity ought to provide educators and young people with a more textured and layered understanding of these polities.


Devolution within Britain presents an opportunity to develop a coherent historical and contemporary understanding of societal diversity within an academic framework, which allows young people, and in fact all people, to view the complexity of the notions of belongingness of different groups. The impending regionalisation of powers also represents a challenge to develop social cohesion within the English regions, while issues related to Northern Ireland entail discussions between London and Dublin.

The term 'multicultural' is generally used in programmatic terms in English speaking countries. This usage has largely been racialised because it is seen as pertaining to immigrants who are visibly different from dominant 'white' populations. It is being suggested here that a more appropriate term for discussing programmes, policies and practices is 'intercultural'.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the multicultural educational policies in Britain or in the USA have not been successful and their viability needs to be re-appraised. It is alleged that multicultural educational programmes can stress differences, divergences and perhaps contribute to the lack of social cohesion. Therefore in English speaking countries the usage of the term 'intercultural' ought to receive a more serious consideration, and an effort made to develop a theoretical and conceptual framework that includes the usage of the notions of multiculturalism of communities in descriptive terms and as a basis of more systematic understanding of intercultural relations. The high levels of inequalities and lack of social cohesion present social systems with at least two possibilities. The first is the possibility of intercultural conflicts on the basis of linguistic, religious, racial and social class differences, as well as the continued exclusion of the non-territorial minorities like the travellers.

Secondly, reversing these exclusions in neighbourhood, community and other societal institutions merits attention. Combatting institutional exclusions on the basis of race, religion, social class or language necessitates intercultural and inclusive institutional strategies and policies.





Communities which are not cohesive can lead to intercultural conflict through lack of trust at intergroup levels as well as lack of access to opportunities. There is therefore a question of how citizenship education can address issues of rights and responsibilities which are meaningful and have resonance with all societal groups. Dominant group values are not sufficient basis to address this complex issue.

### Intercultural Education and Diversity

The challenge for intercultural education is the moulding of the one out of the many, and the construction of appropriate educational responses to difference and diversity within multicultural societies, especially in the light of new and emerging constitutional and institutional arrangements, and initiatives for citizenship education.

Public and education policy initiatives of anti-racism or multiculturalism that are directed at 'immigrants' to the exclusion of the dominant groups or nationalities are not useful. With devolution in Britain, this issue becomes even more complex, and previous assumptions about dominant and subordinate groups require re-examination. Human rights become an important issue within devolved nations because all minorities, even from dominant nationalities within these nations, may be created as second class citizens. The devolution of power necessitates a more inclusive democratic engagement within a constitutional framework.

The essentialist rhetoric of some anti-racist or multicultural policies has led to some communities becoming designated as 'other' groups and this has created binary oppositions (e.g. majority/minority, dominant/subordinate, black/white, belonger/non-belonger, winners/losers). This has negated the possibilities of creating an inclusive polity based on inclusive policies. These issues have both long-term institutional and everyday implications. However, after September 11th in New York, March 11th in Madrid and 7th July in London, the 'us-them' divide has become sharper and more overt on both sides of the Atlantic and meanings of common citizenship have been negated. The exhibition of 'Icons of Identity' in the Ulster Museum in Belfast to celebrate the new Millennium raised similar issues of the different meanings for the different communities in Ireland, and the need for dialogue between the past and the present in order to understand the viewpoint of others. These icons included figures like St. Patrick, William of Orange, Sir Edward Carson and Michael Collins, and presented educators with a challenge to use them with students to nurture critical perspectives.

The most important current policy recommendation in Britain does not come from the field of education, but from the McPherson Report on the Stephen Lawrence murder. The issue of 'institutional racism' is of major significance for issues of the human rights of groups who are subject to institutionalised discrimination and exclusions. A more recent investigation (CRE/PFI, March 2005) presents a more complex picture and set of strategies to minimize racial discrimination in the police services in England and Wales. In the educational sector such issues have complex realities, which require analyses based on educational initiatives. Since citizenship legally bestows equality, which is neither graded or divisible, then racial justice and equity can only be actualised if xenophobia and institutional racism is absent.



The issue becomes more critical since the rise of xenophobia, chauvinism and racism can have consequences for even the dominant nationalities such as the English. However for those who are not citizens or even immigrants, their rights are more tenuous, especially groups like refugees and asylum seekers. The simmering issue of religious discrimination also takes exclusionary significance at institutional levels and Islamophobia has resonances for other faiths, even if they do not recognise these dangers. If the Muslims say that 'Islam is in danger', then what are the lessons we can draw from the Protestant Dissenters in England who say that the 'Church is in danger'?

Similarly intercultural education ought to recognise the possibility of the rise of reactive identities in England which can take root in the aftermath of devolution. Amongst the minority communities there can be the development of a 'siege mentality', which is largely sustained by language or religion. Amongst the dominant groups this may be based on racism, xenophobia and territorial ownership at the exclusion of the 'other'. Even before the 7th July bombings in London intercultural conflicts based on a combination of these differences had already taken place in some northern English cities in 2002.


In historical terms not only societies but also the nature and types of human rights change. For instance, rights change over time from first generation of rights, which were largely civil in nature (18th century) to include political rights in the 19th century and the third generation of social rights in the 20th century. Given the varying levels of inequalities, the state also tries, as Marshall states, to initiate a 'tendency towards equality'<sup>4</sup> by creating basic conditions leading towards social equality. This is a dynamic and an active concept not a passive one.

The challenge is to build social cohesion and inclusive polities, which can accommodate notions of difference but also create conditions for equality and belongingness of diverse groups. From a teacher education perspective this presents a 'creative moment', since notions of intercultural education can be utilised to develop integrative mentalities based on notions of differences and multiple identities. Some aspects of diversity can be counterproductive if they conflict with citizenship and liberal democratic principles. Given that there are deep divisions, and uneven development, what can be done to develop new friendships and constructive and creative imaginations? There is also a legacy of the exclusive and negative phenomena of racism, xenophobia, chauvinism and sexism in many societies. Citizenship and human rights are recent concepts as part of the modern nation state, because in ancient and medieval societies (where monarchies, empires and chiefdoms existed) peoples rights were more circumscribed.

### Particularism and Intercultural Education

One of the ways history has been disarmed in modern states is by settling disputes not by war but through the courts, tribunals and of course through elections. In the teacher education context there is a need for an analysis of negative historical imaginations which can be read critically and thus lead to processes of reconciliation.





In terms of particularisms, the role of communities, identities and customs are important. This access to institutions which provide public goods is particularly important in relation to gender in a socially diverse society, where a group or community (not the state) want to deny girls or women access to education or employment. The conferring of citizenship and human rights entails opposing such particularistic practices, which deny girls equality in education or in employment. Here the barriers to equality may not come from the state but from the customs and practices of communities. Despite patriarchal customs in many communities, teachers are doing something right because girls from many of these communities are doing better than boys in school. However the cultural practice of a Sikh wearing a turban or a Muslim girl wearing a headdress are legitimate because they do not impair acquisition of education or pose an impediment to gaining employment.

In Scotland, Wales and the English regions, if the argument of social cohesion revolves around the issue of 'essentialist' identity of belongers, will the constitutional safeguards be a sufficient guarantee for cohesiveness in communities? The question for us is how to unpick which aspects of an identity are legitimate and which are not. For the settler communities there is another set of issues at present. After September 11th, March 11th and July 7th the subtleties of difference between the customs, for instance, of Sikhs and Muslims, are lost. How can we build more subtle, textured, layered but differentiated notions of religiously derived exclusions, especially through inter-faith education?

If some groups are excluded from or marginalised within the education system and its schools, should the state remain neutral or should it intervene? In other words, is the state fair or is it impartial? Rawls argues that the 'better off' should not do better than the 'worst off'.<sup>5</sup> So to accord equity the state is 'fair' but not 'impartial'. In a democratic state citizens are entitled to access to education and knowledge in order to equalise their life chances. If the state remains impartial it cannot create level playing fields in educational terms. It can only do so by intervening.

In some contexts we currently face an additional dilemma because shared citizenship values and old solidarities based on class have been destroyed, especially as the younger generation confronts greater levels of polarisation by being divided into those who are winners and losers. Such polarisation, where the losers feel that they owe nothing to the winners, poses a new challenge to intercultural and citizenship education. How can the schools build a set of mutualities, resemblances or a stake among divided groups in society? Where groups who are losers contain minority and majority elements (e.g. black and white youths), they may not share solidarities or a set of resemblances. Intercultural education, therefore, has the complex role of addressing the sense of exclusion and loss among youth from both majority and minority communities. In this context genderised exclusions present an added level of complexity and need to be dealt with firmly but delicately. The previous policies, which privileged one or the other group, may prove to be counterproductive by exacerbating differences and reducing features of commonality amongst different groups. Hence the state, through the school, the youth service, or the career guidance

service, is not impartial, but intervenes because both poor majority and minority groups are excluded and need to be re-integrated to establish new solidarities.

Schools and other institutions have an important task of turning the majority/minority issue into one of social cohesion and inclusiveness. The development of inclusiveness would entail reversing the polarities of majority or minority. This necessitates the development of complex policies and strategies, which include diverse groups and establish a minimum level of mutualities or resemblances within the public domain. Furthermore, intercultural education ought to bridge the gaps between those who are considered a permanent minority or majority and nurture the human rights of both. Such policies and processes can instil the enduring notion of fraternity and develop "communities of development and hope" as Judith Green describes it. Yet, this is easier said than done because Britain, like many other states, confronts complicated issues. Habermas writes:

*Today, as the nation state finds itself challenged from within by the explosive potential of multiculturalism and from without by the pressure of globalisation, the question arises of whether there exists a functional equivalent for the fusion of the nation of citizens with the ethnic nation.<sup>7</sup>*

### Multiple Identities


One of the challenges is how the democratic processes in society and experiential democratic education can be guarantors for social integration in highly differentiated contexts. There are already positive examples amongst many young British people. Das of the Asian Dub Foundation describes himself as a 'Hindi, British-Asian, English Bengali European'. Pandit G who operates the decks describes himself as a 'half-Irish Asian Scot'.<sup>8</sup> Professors Steven and Hilary Rose state that these complex cosmopolitan multiple identities "speak both of a new ease and pleasure in difference, and of a political demand that racism become history" (*Guardian*, 9 April 2005). Andrew Marr, writing a few years ago, stated that the multiple Asian identities were a contributory factor in the better performances of children of Asian origin in education. At the time of devolution he stated the following about Edinburgh:

*They began to juggle multiple identities – British, Scottish, European. The Scottish home rule movement, including the SNP, has been vigorously developing the rhetoric of liberalism and democracy.*

Hence the notions of multiple identities are relevant both for newly settled communities as well as for older nationalities. One cannot ignore the grave dangers of the old historically entrenched singularised ethnic identities of nationalities. These historical multicultural pasts and hidden hatreds may be more divisive than the differences arising from contemporary migrations.

However pervasive racism and lack of democratic engagement has also led to more singular notions of identities amongst dominant groups on the basis of nationality and among the newly settled communities on the basis of religion.





Hence, citizenship education confronts a major challenge in trying to deal with this proliferation of identities. This is especially true if they lead to bullying, violence and the disruption of the educational process. Since the school is part of the community in which it is situated, this necessitates the strengthening of school-community links, informal learning and youth clubs. Such links should include parental involvement to ensure that peer and gang cultures do not remain autonomous. Specificities of identities in and of themselves may not be a problem, but reactive identities which are exclusive can be problematic.

### **Bleak futures and youth cultures**

The development of siege communities and siege mentalities partly arises because of economic uncertainties, unemployment and downward mobility. Penalising these groups further not only consolidates reactive politics, but leads to conflict and violence. The recent riots across France are an example of the exclusion and marginalisation felt by the young immigrants. The irony at the present time is that in Britain the government plans to abolish the Commission for Racial Equality and establish a Commission for Equalities and Human Rights. Meanwhile in France – which already has a body for equalities and human rights – there is a move to set up an organisation like the British Commission for Racial Equality. Legal measures to create conditions of equality are a necessary first step, but they are only the beginning of a process to create conditions for greater levels of societal equity. Economic regeneration of these localities and the development of democratically inclusive civic cultures as part of public and social policies need serious and urgent consideration.

The rejection of democratic engagement by young people in siege communities is one of the issues which necessitates consideration. Young people currently only demand their rights but do not necessarily accept that they have obligations. The public culture and domain therefore has to be inclusive of good values derived from minorities and majorities, and not just from the dominant groups in society. Intercultural education, therefore, needs to be inclusive, so that it can symbolically and substantively capture the imagination of disenchanted young people. To engage the young people who are disaffected from the political process it is appropriate to use constitutional and human rights principles – as well as other progressive and democratic struggles – both as part of the curriculum and to build a democratic school ethos. The experience of democratic schools is as important as an inclusive or non-centric school curriculum. These initiatives in turn can lead to young people becoming active citizens in their communities and localities. Legitimation of knowledge from diverse sources within the formal education system can help provide the basis for inclusive good values for citizenship within democratic contexts.

Amongst young people the notion of being part of and belonging to socially cohesive communities and complex localities is important. Hence the notion of territorial belongingness, which is not exclusive but shared, is worth exploring within schools and youth clubs.

In historical terms, the tensions in County Armagh between the rural communities and the new industrial villages which resulted in the events of 1798 need to be revisited to draw lessons on how to resolve tensions between different groups at the present time. For example, can one draw any lessons which can be used in France or in the English Midlands where Afro-Caribbean and Asian communities have recently clashed with each other, or in Irish cities where racial tensions might exist. There is a need to develop processes which lead to the growth of non-exclusive neighbourhoods that are not no-go areas for others but are confederal communities. Such communities would be based on mutualities, shared resemblances and values which are neither racist nor patriarchal. At the level of the community, mutuality compacts can assist this process.

At the level of the school, this necessitates the re-vamping of the old Greek concept of *Paidea* to develop interactive and intercultural dimensions within complex schools and their communities. If this process is not undertaken through citizenship and intercultural education – as well as through active citizenship engagement – the underclass or pauperised groups of whatever nationality or religion will activate their own separatist ‘politics of recognition’. Such a dynamic could heighten notions of fragmentation and lead to divisions with serious political consequences. Even if these groups are statistically small, they cannot be written off as having no political consequences. Urban ghettos and rural blight have a way of permeating the body politic, which prisons and internal security cannot contain, because of their corrosive potential.<sup>10</sup> Unless pre-emptive measures are taken, social fragmentation and insular group demands on the public square – propelled by inequality and injustice – are a more likely scenario than social inclusion. To avoid this, a more pro-active public education and socially inclusive policy needs to be put in place.


### Local communities and Active Citizenship

In many localities the problem currently lies in the way in which de-industrialisation has led to high levels of unemployment, thwarting ambitions in poorer communities who face brick walls in getting jobs. Anthony Giddens refers to how economic globalisation has contributed to local transformation<sup>11</sup>, including tensions between older established communities and the new immigrant and refugee communities.

One issue is the way in which groups are used as scapegoats. When the Irish migrated to England in the 19th century there was a new and changing political landscape at local and national levels. Fears about the rise of movements like the Chartists and the Dissenters were used to invoke fears of the Catholics. This was done to divert attention away from the exclusions which working class people in general were campaigning and organising against. How can these historical precedents be used to negate the fears about the newly settled ‘others’ in our midst in Britain and Ireland? How, for instance, can the image of the refugees as spongers in England be reversed? There is currently a shortage of 20,000 doctors in that country and there are 3,000 qualified doctors amongst the refugee communities who can help to resolve this crisis. Yet the ‘common sense’ perception of these communities is that they are spongers and have no skills.







The Irish diaspora has made immense contributions to all aspects of society in Britain, Australia, Canada and the US. The role of education in improving the life chances of Irish immigrants in Australia, Canada and the US has been important. However this has been less so in the case of the settlement in Britain, and research is perhaps needed to explain these differences. How can educators draw inferences from these migrations to educate effective teachers to teach in diverse but unequal communities who are settled in our midst and are capable over a period of time of making similar contributions in our societies?

These issues present a major challenge to developing socially cohesive communities through public and social policies. Clearly the teaching profession on its own cannot undertake this complex societal task. For instance, segregation in housing and employment are outside the purview of educators. However intercultural education, which nurtures political knowledge, understanding and skills, is crucial in strengthening young people's engagement in the public domain, especially to obviate the binary and oppositional cultures of winners and losers.

The divisive 'politics of recognition' is a powerful issue in the United States as well as in parts of Britain and Europe. Groups which demand a recognition of their particularistic identities also demand separate schools and the 'curriculum of recognition'. Such demands detract from the development of intercultural understandings and an inclusive curriculum based on diverse sources of knowledge which can enhance teaching and learning about citizenship.

Most of the understanding of rights of young people in Britain comes from the media and not the school. Young people are not taught to read these globalised and consumerist messages critically. This raises important considerations for teachers, educators, curriculum planners and schools about what the education systems needs to do about intercultural education, either in tandem with or in response to the media. Likewise, to develop the creativity and imagination of students from diverse backgrounds, the museums are a major resource. The Ulster Museum, the National Gallery, the Viking Museum and the Famine Museum here in Ireland have a reservoir of resources and images which teacher educators and teachers can use in different areas of the curriculum.

### Deep Democracy

Notions of how to develop democracy based on deep and active social participation require urgent attention. The role of social capital among people is now also recognised by the World Bank. This reflects the acceptance of the possibility of a multitude of voices at the universal level, all with social and civic virtues. At the same time the activation of civic values in both the public and private domains – something which Green calls 'deep democracy' – demands a new, deeper and non-traditional understanding of human rights and democratic engagement.

Part of the solution in resolving these contradictions, dilemmas and complexities lies in the recognition of multiple identities and a diversity of political loyalties. In the contemporary British context, being an active member of a local street

association, being Scottish or Welsh, or being British, European and global, are all consistent with the notion of deep citizenship. The acceptance of democratic engagement, which includes the recognition of areas of disagreement, can only be inculcated if groups feel that they are part of the polity and have a stake in it.

### Belongingness


The other issue in discussions about social cohesion which should be raised is that of 'belongingness' of all groups in our societies. Dominant nationalities tend to see the polity as 'theirs', and are hostile to 'others' who are regarded as aliens who do not belong or are seen to encroach upon it. There are obviously specificities of different localities, communities, families and groups which provide a different colour, texture and hue to different parts of our societies. There are also differences of local politics, economies and histories, and these intersect and interact differently within the local, regional, national, European and global contexts.

The sharing of space by the dominant and subordinate, the coloniser and the colonised, the rich and poor, comes together in polities so as to make the functioning of modern democratic societies complex. This complexity includes the way in which material and social goods are produced and distributed, including the political, economic, literary, cultural and the media output. The 'other' is no longer out there, but here among us – and, as Chambers states, here there is an intersection of 'histories, memories and experiences'.<sup>13</sup> It is important to create spaces where we can negotiate the complexity of our societies, both in rural areas and cities. Such an analysis should be inclusive of all groups who live in them. In establishing such a context, past and current exclusions need to be put to right, making it possible to initiate a dialogue between all those living in complex localities. The interaction and intersection of the histories of cultures and languages enable the construction of a more realistic understanding of the past, and better inform us of the present, which may, in turn, have implications for constructing a less biased and a more meaningful future.

Teacher educators have an important role to play, for instance in developing an intercultural history curriculum. In Britain and Ireland this can include the study of pre-Christian stone circles and sites, and the role of Christians, Jews and others in the history of these islands. The Vikings played a role not only in devastating Irish culture, based around the monasteries, but also changed its politics, farming and trading patterns. Likewise, the role of the Normans in undermining the Irish language and in changing the nature of Irish churches and political institutions is key to an understanding of the intercultural nature of Irish history. It is a history of both conflict and co-operation, and a history of all those who have informed the past of these islands. Hence, it is not about ethnicised histories for ethnicised groups but an inclusive understanding of history. This ought to lead to notions of a non-centric curriculum which does not reinforce fortress mentalities at the national or European level.

Communities embody notions of belongingness, of cohesion as well as of alienation. They have both features of a universal nature as well as particularisms





and local differences. Yet non-confederal localisms can become parochial, racist, insular, stagnant and authoritarian. There are thick and textured layers of political, social and economic contexts which intersect with history, culture and language. The presence of different communities in our midst therefore provides possibilities and prospects of an infinite nature, and yet can also be lonely and confining. The confederal nature of society requires integrative thinking and structures to link such groups with other groups and localities. The challenge for the political and educational system is to develop democratic strategies which can lead to the development of basic shared and common values in which inclusive rights and responsibilities will be an outcome of the work of schools, social and political institutions.

Finally, can we as educators subscribe to Bloom's fantasies in Joyce's *Ulysses* on the New Jerusalem as a New Bloomusalem? "New worlds for old, Union of all Jew, Moslem and Gentile. General Amnesty, weekly carnival with masked license, bonuses for all, Esperanto the universal language with universal brotherhood. Mixed races and mixed marriages."

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## PARTISANSHIP OR CITIZENSHIP: TEACHER TRAINING AS A SPACE FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION?

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*A summary of the learning points within this text:*

1. To learn about 'others' needs new patterns of meeting across lines of difference made explicit in teacher training.
2. To meet together in a secure space is to learn with all your being and cut old habits that maintain separation and distance.
3. Citizenship education demands that we primarily work with an explicit mental model of all being equal and different. This baseline guards against all impulses that feed partisanship as a primary identifier.
4. Training teachers for citizenship education requires the generation of a wider learning community established between policy makers, managers, teachers and tutors that also learns together.
5. Critical reflection spaces need to legitimise emotions, rational discussion and politics being examined together across differences.
6. Personal experiences of meeting difference, professional values, organisational cultures and the wider context need to be reflected on and interwoven into a dynamic learning experience that informs citizenship education.
7. Securing the intercultural agenda, North and South, is the prize of citizenship education.



## **PARTISANSHIP OR CITIZENSHIP: TEACHER TRAINING AS A SPACE FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION?**

How do you and I learn about 'the other' when he or she is not present?

Is it done through them being ridiculed, poked fun at or demeaned? Is it through no reference being made about them at all or is it through 'the other' being acknowledged as equal and different?

How do you and I learn about 'the other' when they are present with us?

Is it in having their minority presence brought to our attention or in being challenged by them when they do not stay silent 'in our group'? Is it when they and we meet as equal and valued members of a group?

How do you and I learn about being a minority on this island?

Do we learn about this by being ourselves or by learning with those that are minorities, or by deliberately entering a space where you and I are a minority?

### **Relationships between equal and different citizens matter**

The need to change how relationships are experienced between people from this island's historically competing traditions lies at the core of the search for a more inclusive society in Northern Ireland.

At the centre of this search is the possibility of embracing citizenship, as equal and different people sharing one place, as the foundation stone on which to build a more open, culturally diverse and inclusive society.



**DIAGRAM 1**

Using this work to move through and beyond our historic distrust and fear will also create space and an openness to 'others' from different cultures and traditions who wish to find a place, a job and even sanctuary in the society.



Citizenship in our society has to be made an explicit experience between people and built as a reality in small meetings across lines of difference that challenge established patterns between people, traditions and often separate educational establishments. Citizenship has to be the central reality at the core of institutional and group life in public and civic society.

1. **To meet together in a secure space is to learn with all your being as equal and different citizens.**

To meet in a secure relationship where the other person(s) gives me my place and I secure theirs', where threats or fear are absent, yet where open sharing and challenge can be given and received is to learn with all my being.



**DIAGRAM 2**

Such a relational place has the character of citizenship – here people are equal and different and the character of an open relationship makes it possible for unexpected things to occur and insights to be gained.

2. **To become uneasy with rivals is to seek allies and lose sight of people being equal and different to you**

To be in a relationship where there is rivalry that is getting out of control – rivalry going beyond the notional limits of “some you win-some you lose” – is to become uneasy.



**DIAGRAM 3**

Deep rivalry increasingly focuses you on winning or avoiding loss, not on the relationship with others. Such an experience causes you to think about how to defeat, deny or destroy the other. The character of this space is one of “me or us first” – it has an element of partisanship.

### 3. To gang up with others is to become partisan

To be in a situation where all becomes uncertain and, in the blink of an eye, all changes as you find yourself standing with others over and against some one person, or you find yourself as that one person, is to be involved in scapegoating.



DIAGRAM 4

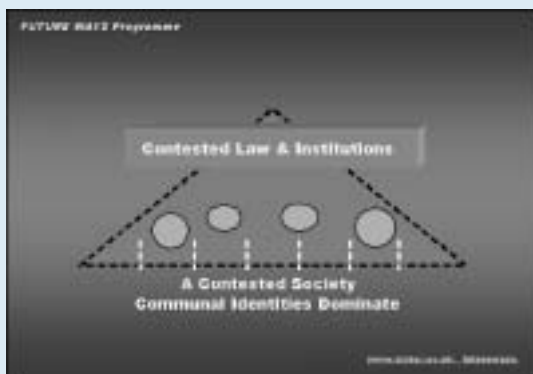
“I am all alone and they are all together” - is what every scapegoat feels.

Scapegoating is the absence of relationship. For a moment it does bind the victimisers together and galvanises a group or even a tradition. Such behaviour is partisan.

### 4. Moving between citizenship and partisanship

In a more secure society citizens are barely aware of their citizenship - it is as water is to fish, without it life's order would not be.

In an ethnic frontier<sup>2</sup> society, such as Northern Ireland, citizenship, at best, can only be a partial experience. Such societies give primacy of place to identity groups or communal traditions – they can be partisan places.



**DIAGRAM 5**

To work in such a society is, on the one hand, to try to work to a 'mental model of citizenship' where those I am with are equal and different citizens. On the other hand I need to be always sensitive to situations and relationships where I, too, can fall into the communal model of being partisan. Here those with me are viewed, or view me, primarily as a member of a particular group. In such a moment our relationships become conditional on the identities we have.

- *"Why didn't Catholics get more involved in making Northern Ireland a better place before 1968?" is a common refrain from Unionists.*
- *"Sure Protestants, deep down, are Irishmen and Irishwomen –you just cannot admit that yet but you will soon enough" is a common Republican statement.*

Both are examples of partisan thinking.

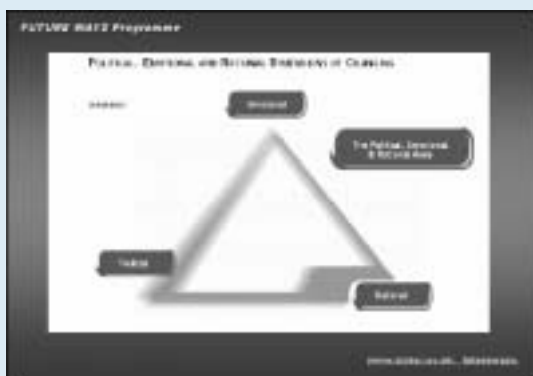
## 5. What do I mean?

Learning about citizenship in a contested society has to be about developing the curriculum and it also needs to be more. This task of citizenship education is too important to be left only to young teachers and pupils. For me, it needs to be surrounded by a learning culture that is shared by policy makers, governors and managers who understand these same dynamics in their own lives and who, preferably, have spent time in diverse groups reflecting on the dynamics of the citizenship space and the partisan space.

To meet others from a different tradition or culture is a journey of emotion, rationality and politics, especially in a contested society<sup>3</sup>.

- Emotionally we have to acknowledge our histories and fears as well as the stories we have been told about the 'other'.
- Rationally we are forced to recognise that when we are excluding groups of people in terms of identity, religion, social background, gender, this behaviour is no longer sustainable.

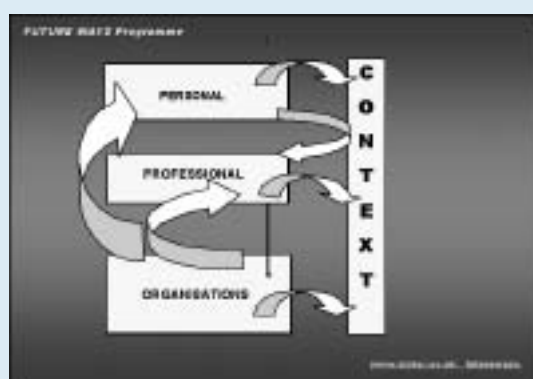
- Politically we are required to renegotiate old power relationships, as well as build a new society where the old bi-polar identities have to acknowledge the new diversity agenda and the challenge of inter-culturalism that is evident in our rural and urban areas.



**DIAGRAM 6**

As one contribution to building the ownership of the wider citizenship agenda, the Future Ways Programme, based in the University of Ulster's School of Education, has piloted reflective learning spaces for diverse groups of public officials, elected representatives, managers, professionals such as teachers, health workers, social workers, probation, police, community workers and young adults.

Here people take time to examine the inter-relationship between their personal experiences, professional or civic values, the organisational cultures they are within and the wider context they live in.



**DIAGRAM 7**

People are invited to identify the tripwires they fall over as they seek to meet others as equal and different citizens yet experience the pull of old ways and partisan identities.

#### **6a. Personal experiences of ease with difference are examined**

The function of people who are not like us:

*John O'Hara and I lived in the same terrace of houses. His mother, Kathleen, was a special friend of my mum, who referred to her as a "devout Catholic woman". My relatives told me "the O' Haras were different, they were very nice people who could be trusted". Mr. O'Hara was from 'down South', "they're different there you know". Mr. O'Hara found it difficult to understand how many Northern Catholics thought.*

*In this small but significant relationship I was introduced to difference as something that kept me apart from other people. I was also introduced to how to stay within my tradition and cope with meeting someone from a different tradition whom I liked. **I learned that the exceptional other can be tolerated.***

*We lived near the Catholic church which was surrounded by what, to me, were 'huge walls'. Behind these walls, we were told, "...children who weren't Catholic were trapped and beaten up by 'bad boys'. If you had to be near the walls at night walk quickly by." **The difficult other is turned into a myth.***

*I remember my mother going to weddings and receptions in the chapel with Kathleen and coming back, having had a great time. At the same time then, I learned that my mother could go there and return safely. I gained a glimpse that the myths were not true. I was invited to question. **Myths are not reality.***


*The working class street I lived in for some years was a mixed one. The people in my street kept a polite peace. One of the ways we felt good about the street was that Jimmy, a young boy with a learning disability lived there too, and everyone rallied round and supported him and his family. In this way we came together around Jimmy. **Here we used the different one to forget our difficulties together.***

*In our school there were members of what now are referred to as 'ethnic minority' groups. They were small in number and those running the school told us "that we were very tolerant of them". We learned to be tolerant of those who were no political threat. **Scapegoating and tolerance are inter-linked.***

*The pupils from the Catholic School down the road were a different kettle of fish – "you should have seen them!". They were not viewed with the same enlightened tolerance. "They were a political threat to our side", was the message. Intolerance was the attitude towards these scapegoats. **Scapegoating and intolerance are realities.***

*We imagined that those Protestants and Catholics who went to separate secondary schools up the road fought with each other. "We would never do that" – we just knew how to strongly sneer, ignore or show disdain.*





*Later on, getting to know some of the Catholic grammar school pupils, their responses mirrored ours in terms of the secondary school ones. Achieving Catholics and Protestants were allies as soon as they had to defend their interests against those who were lower on the social scale, the very scale my parents were at and I was moving out of through education.” **The ‘well-to-do’ shared common views about the poor even though their cultural worlds kept them apart and distinct.***

*Such ways shaped behaviours and attitudes. They gave me possibilities to survive in the North. I did not have to treat people who were different to me as equals. For a time I was an uncritical part of my culture and an uncritical member of the groups I belonged to. **I was partisan.***

*Later, in real meetings and friendships across the lines of division, formed in community relations activities and reconciliation work, I came to a different understanding. **These meetings moved me from partisanship to citizenship.***

Over the past twenty years these same dynamics of intolerance, rivalry and scapegoating still consistently emerge when students have been invited to examine their relevance to their own up bringing. These mechanisms are very deep in culture.

Some students even state in their assignments how the assignment is the first time they have understood these dynamics and that they now wish to dissolve them. **Acknowledging how we are often deeply partisan is the beginning of entering a reflective learning space.**

## **6b. Professional Values**

With colleagues in 1997 our research programme on community relations proposed three interlinked public policy parameters of Equity, Diversity and Interdependence<sup>5</sup>. These are now part of the recent government policy paper on ‘A Shared Future’<sup>6</sup>.

As well as the broader policy lines, these principles translate into practical guidelines for creating and preserving learning and reflection spaces where people can learn about the other as equal citizens.

The learning space or group is:

- bounded by the character of fairness, where each person has their place **(EQUITY)**;
- an inclusive space where different people are present and valued and others not there are not excluded. **(DIVERSITY)**
- an inclusive space where the dynamic between participants enables silences that are not threatening, and open and honest engagements where people reflect together in a deep and often new way. In such a space people can experience a growing interdependence together **(INTERDEPENDENCE)**.



We have also applied these themes to organisational change programmes in the public sector, in schools and in voluntary and community organisations<sup>7</sup>.

### 6c. Organisational Culture

It is important for managers and staff, as well as teachers in training, to explore how the different levels of the culture they are working in pull together or pull apart. It is impossible to work on citizenship without attending internally to the culture of the group, team or classroom.

To explore how people do pull together in the formal culture, the informal ways and tacit or unspoken ways people are together, can be a tool for all, pupils included, to explore the extent to which they give one another space and value each person or diminish and demean one another.



DIAGRAM 8

### 6d. The Context


Homogeneity cannot be protected by force – being at ease with difference is the goal.

To be partisan in this time is to deny the diverse intercultural reality that is structuring our societies today. We are in a new world where states based on 'same and equal' now have to embrace 'diverse and equal' and at the same time promote 'interdependence and cohesion'. The old tools through which majorities assumed they knew best or ignored minorities cannot be used.

Yet new models around being at ease with diversity are few and far between, and so this new journey into being at ease with diversity will only start by building small local experiments. We need new knowledge and the citizenship agenda is an element in this.

Some still wish for easy answers but they are no longer possible. Assimilating 'others' demeans people; getting rid of others is illegal and withdrawing from the debate only means that somewhere down the line you will be hostage to those who gain power, without your vote.

**The alternative that must now be developed** is to design, think about and create



something that is unknown and untested: finding ways to be at ease with difference outside rivalry and scapegoating. These are central dynamics in the citizenship project, and illuminate how racism, homophobia, sectarianism, sexism and growing attacks on those with learning disability and the aged are inter-linked. They may be different topics on a curriculum, but they are generated by the same powerful dynamics of unease with difference that young and old – you and I too – are easily part of. They are also linked to and widen the emerging ‘good relations agenda’ underpinned by the Equality Legislation (Section 75(2), Northern Ireland Act, 1998)

In modelling such an approach our children and young people will experience models of ease and enquiry to be mimetic<sup>8</sup> with.

These dynamics cannot be readily normalised in 50 minute slots where people do not meet and engage. This, initially at least, has to be an immersion approach using ‘learning community’ events over 5-6 days, with at least two days being residential. Future Ways has developed such a programme, within a University of Ulster Masters module: “Growing a Learning Society”.

In these learning communities a diverse group examines how their personal beliefs, professional values, organisational cultures and the wider political and policy contexts inter weave.

The question is put – How do we contribute to building a shared society? How do we improve good relations or promote experiences of being an equal citizen? What can we learn from one another?

#### **How is it to be structured?**

However time limited, these engagements have the essence of being open to others different to oneself, being vulnerable to hearing and expressing experiences of being in a minority, of negotiating your space.

Such spaces enable people to examine the organisational cultures they are part of or are responsible for. People can then identify what needs to change to keep them more open and their part in this.

#### **CONCLUSION**

If the learning spaces into which teachers and managers come:

- offer space to reflect and integrate personal beliefs and professional values, then they promote the citizenship agenda.
- allow for the political context to be explored together, then they are building a citizenship space between themselves.

If professionals are prepared to examine whether their normalising implicitly or explicitly promotes indifference or normalises enmity, then they ensure that public money is well spent.

I worked with the late John Malone<sup>9</sup> in the early 1970s – he was an educationalist ahead of his time and started work on the above themes then. He was often met by people who said: ‘we need to go gently’ and that this work is ‘long term’. John used to ‘fly off the handle’. 35 years on now such assumptions still must be challenged. This continual putting off what should be a central priority has meant that ‘the long term’ becomes an excuse for ‘the long finger of rejection’.

**The citizenship script is essential for our future sustainability and vitality as a region and an island.**

**It also is a way of redeeming the mortgage of fear that we are in danger of leaving our children.**

**The citizenship agenda is part of the wider challenge of promoting a diverse and interdependent future together.**

**Let us build and protect reflective space that empowers, energises and gives hope to teachers, children, young people and ourselves also!**

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## MAKING THE GLOBAL LOCAL: CITIZENSHIP AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN A MULTI-ETHNIC IRELAND

**Dr Dympna Devine**  
**University College Dublin**

Irish society has undergone substantial change in the past thirty years, characterised by an expanding economy, urbanisation and competition within a global economy. Dual tensions are evident here, as elsewhere, between the promotion of an increasingly globalised market-based economy that brings with it greater individualisation and materialism, and the desire to maintain a socially coherent society where values of inclusion, community and a shared common vision are to the fore. Concerns over democratic participation cannot be divorced from shifting conceptualisations over what it means to be an Irish citizen, and must be interlinked with the inclusion/exclusion of certain groups, in this case migrants, from full participation within society. The recent referendum and debate on Irish citizenship provides a visible testimony to the link in the national consciousness between citizenship, ethnic diversity/immigration and the future direction of Irish society. In this presentation I would like to tease though some of these broader issues with reference to both our concepts of citizenship and practice of teachers on the ground, signalling, I hope, issues we need to consider in framing teacher education policies in this area.

Conceptions of citizenship have developed in line with social and economic development. Marshall's seminal work in the 1950s advanced the theory of social citizenship centred on minimal rights to economic and social security as well as rights to participation in civic, social and political life. More recent analyses, however, argue for the need to take account of the rapidly changing nature of the modern world, including processes of globalisation, the fragmentation of identities, and the notion of citizenship as belonging to 'overlapping communities' rather than one single nation state. Gender and ethnic identities overlap with and coincide with identities related to place and space. Am I Irish? European, Black, White? Male, Female? Heterosexual, Gay? Within this more complex analysis, we can consider citizenship as relational and as part of a process of social identification, where some identities are positioned as more privileged than others, some voices more included than others. We must also bear in mind that the right to citizenship does not automatically confer on the person the experience of full participation and inclusion in society – this is most obvious with respect to Travellers in Irish society.

Giving voice to those currently excluded and acknowledging difference as the norm is central to this evolving concept of citizenship. It is intimately tied therefore to the question of how power is exercised in society, through what Foucault terms processes of subjectification which position some as 'other' and seek to regulate personal and social identities in line with dominant norms. In this context I would like to raise questions about the role of the state in framing dominant discourses regarding ethnic diversity through its immigration and

educational policies. Schooling is a key mechanism employed by the state in the construction of personal and social identity. Schools are embedded in social contexts and are often positioned at the coalface of dealing with shifting realities of life on the ground. The school site is therefore a complex arena where often competing discourses around ethnic diversity and citizenship merge.


As this applies to the topic of this paper, I would argue that teachers bring to their work a series of discourses on immigration and ethnic identity that both reflect and are influenced by the norms and values prevalent in the society at large. In framing teacher education for a multi-ethnic society, we need to understand the discourses that currently inform teacher practice in this area. The challenge for teacher education then is to identify how teachers currently position themselves within this changed context as well as the vision we would like teachers to move towards. With this in mind, qualitative research spanning two school years was conducted in three primary schools and five second level schools. This involved conducting interviews with 52 teachers, observation of school practice, and group interviews with 311 students (Devine et al 2002).

Key themes which emerged in the research were the rapidity of social change, giving rise at times to a sense of being overwhelmed by the implications for practice in their schools. The perceived slowness of the state's response coupled with an absence of a clear policy for schools was evident. This restrictive response by the state framed the context of teachers' work, leading in all schools to a sense of struggle over how to cope. This had direct consequences for how teachers constructed migrant children, especially in making distinctions between 'them' and 'us' in the competition for teacher time related to, for example: settling into class, language instruction, responding to specific trauma and needs.

Not surprisingly, concerns over language were predominant in teachers' minds. This was reinforced by specific focus of state policy in this area. Broader issues that emerged related to the withdrawal of children from class, streaming at second level, appropriate identification of special needs etc. Teacher responses to migrant children were framed very much in terms of a deficit perspective, but one which was underpinned by a concern that children could not integrate socially without fluency in English. This construction of children in deficit terms coincided with an interpretation of integration as assimilation and absorption into the Irish norm. Teachers sought to facilitate social integration by not drawing too much attention to difference. Underpinning teacher practice, however, were also discourses of charity derived from Catholic /Christian discourse, as well as a discourse of empathy deriving from past experiences of Irish emigration.

None of the schools in the study had a stated policy on the management of ethnic diversity. Teachers were working in a policy vacuum in which their practice was informed by a willingness to identify initiatives in use elsewhere. Their capacity was also limited by the temporary nature of appointments. Overall their responses to ethnic diversity were on the whole ad hoc and tokenistic, and risked confirming the 'other' status of many of the migrant students. There was also a notable reluctance to discuss with students the issue of racism, which tended to be dealt with under the more general rubric of bullying and discipline within the





school. This precluded discussion of the structural dimension to racism in society at large. Uncertainty over how to proceed was also reflected in schools' handling of issues of religious diversity. State-sponsored denominational schooling framed how teachers dealt and worked with minority ethnic students in both exclusionary and normalizing terms, e.g. children remaining in class during periods of religious instruction, access to schools etc.

In spite of the challenges posed, teachers on the whole described their experiences of working with migrant children in positive terms. This was consistently voiced in all interviews and about most migrant groups, with the exception of Roma children. However, implicit in their positive comments were class based assumptions regarding the migrant children themselves. Thus positive accounts of migrant children's orientation to school were located in an assumption that such children generally came from middle class backgrounds, and as a result provided positive role models for working class Irish students. Such assumptions were also underpinned by racialised perceptions of migrant groups themselves, and distinctions were identified between the more positive acceptance of migrants of East European origins and more circumspect views of other migrant groups, the latter positioned more clearly outside the Irish norm.

Teachers' constructions cannot be divorced from their own positioning as white, settled, middle class professionals, resulting in feelings of affiliation towards those most closely aligned with these norms. Their constructions of the 'ideal' student drew on their own conceptions of what it means to be Irish (white, sedentary, middle class, Catholic) with implications for the orientation of their practice in schools. Such racialised and classed based conceptions cannot be divorced from the conditions of their work, itself supported and legitimated by state action/inaction which sets the conditions for change, challenging stereotypes and misconceptions or alternately reinforcing them by maintaining the status quo.

In considering the implications of such findings for teacher education, I am brought back to the title of this presentation. When I refer to making the global local, I am talking about the integration of the new 'global' reality into our sense of selves and how we define and understand ourselves – hence those we may see now as 'other'. This shift in the social landscape needs to be integrated into our own constructions and perception of our identity and what it means to be Irish. This is a major challenge. If we wish to advance a notion of citizenship that is about genuine inclusion and participation, we need to focus on barriers to such inclusion at both structural and institutional levels.

In making the global local, we need to tackle issues of identity and power, and voice and embrace a concept of citizenship that is about the recognition and respect of and for difference. The Government is making some progress through, for example, the publication of intercultural guidelines and the National Action Plan against Racism. There is also the inclusion of a question on ethnicity in the upcoming census in 2006. We must also note, however, the absence of a national immigration policy that considers the rights and needs of migrants as much as those of economy. Dual tensions between the globalised market economy in need



of migrant labour versus the development of a socially inclusive and cohesive society can lead to contradictory tensions within government policy.

If we consider the implications of these findings for teacher education, a number of key issues arise. If we wish to make the global local, then we must confront the challenges that arise from increasing ethnic diversity in schools and classrooms openly and honestly. First and foremost, approaches to teacher education in this area must be informed by a critical awareness of social policy and change, and the concepts of citizenship which inform such policy. I have argued for a conception of citizenship which incorporates issues of power, identity and voice into its core. For student teachers, as well as teacher educators, this implies not only a focus on the positioning of minority groups in Irish society, but also reflection on their own identity and concepts of sameness and difference in relation to both majority and minority ethnic groups. Such an approach challenges teachers to move beyond paternalistic and compassionate responses to the challenges facing many minority ethnic children, to responses that are informed by human rights legislation and concepts of social justice and inclusion. Barriers to inclusion at a structural as well as at an institutional level must be highlighted, challenging students to think critically about the broader context of immigration, inclusion and exclusion, and of the rights and status of differing ethnic groups in Irish society as a whole.

The classed and racialised perceptions which were subtly interwoven into the teacher's talk in the study quoted in this paper, are indicative of the type of work which needs to be done that challenges traditional certainties and encourages teachers to question their assumptions about classed and racialised norms. Teachers cannot, however, work toward inclusive practice without the requisite resources that enable them to do this. While this in itself relates to the broader policy context in relation to resource allocation and curriculum development at state level, teacher education has an important role to play in providing student teachers with the practical skills to implement more inclusive pedagogies in their schools and classrooms. Conducting research on this key area to further best practice in an Irish context is also important.

Finally, as a consistent advocate for the voice of the child in educational matters, I believe it is imperative that teacher education take account of the perspectives and experiences of children themselves in advocating policy and practice in schools. Children are competent agents, capable of reflecting critically and insightfully on the nature of their own experience in schools. Central to this experience is children's own social world and the important process of social identification that takes place through their interactions with their teachers and peers. Teacher education for citizenship in a multi-ethnic Ireland has much to learn from acknowledging the complexity of children's response to the challenges and opportunities posed in these rapidly changing times.





## DAY TWO

### TO WIN IN SPITE OF... THE RICHNESS AND CHALLENGES OF A MULTICULTURAL SCHOOL IN NORWAY

**Signe Marie Natvig Andreassen**  
**Gran School, Oslo**

Thank you very much, I feel honoured to be here. I am not a professor, I am not a doctor, I am an ordinary school principal from Norway.

First of all, this little boy is waiting for his first day at school. He is my grandchild. What do you think I am worried about? I am really worried that he should have a bad teacher, because a teacher can give him a bad life or a good life.

I have called my speech 'To win in spite of...' because 21 years ago I was headmistress of this school, and it was the worst school in every sense. But I strongly believe that you can win if you want to – in the Gran School we have won.

I was asked to say something about what happens in Norwegian schools because of immigration, and truly, it puts me to the test every single day. 30% of all students in Oslo are immigrants, and Oslo has about 60 or 70% of all the immigrant children in Norway, and in my school it goes from 85% to 97%. In the lower classes I have one single Norwegian child in each class. Pupils start at 6 years in Norway and I have pupils from 6 to 15 years.

I have an area around my school, and the police say it is the toughest in Norway: we have violence and drugs, we have every sort of criminals - not during the school day - but as soon as they leave school they go raping, mugging old women, doing everything. It is a big challenge for me to be normal, filled with love, to give them a good day at school even if I know what they did last night. We have a lot of single parents, also a lot of Norwegian parents struggling for life, struggling for income, having very little time for their children. When my children come into school, the bank is empty. The school can give them a different life, and it is their only chance. Most of my immigrant children come from Pakistan, Turkey, Vietnam, Sri Lanka and different African countries, but I have the whole world – Australia is the only place where I have no pupils from.

I just want to show you some pictures. These are six year olds. I said to them will you let me take photographs of you, and they did. Here is one single Norwegian girl. We never talk about one another in my school – I think that is a personal matter between the parents and the student. When things happened in Paris recently [involving Muslim girls and the *hijab*], many more of my students put on the *hijab* – it is quite interesting. I think they need to show our society something with the *hijab*.

I am very tired of people only talking about the problems and challenges. I have been principal of this school for 21 years – I am very proud of it and I love my students. There is a lot of richness in such a school because both the grown ups and the pupils are surrounded by diversity every day. And they have to learn acceptance, they have to learn mutual respect, and they have to learn tolerance. And the pupils of my school bring something that they cannot learn in any book when they come back and tell us they are proud to have been pupils in this school.

Customs, clothing, food, music and manners... they bring a lot of new things into Norway which make us much richer than before if we can put them into our heart and use them in a good way.

I have a lot of festivals in my school. We have Ramadan – we let the Muslims hire our assembly hall or our gymnastic hall for prayers, if they cannot get any other accommodation. We have the small Eid and the big Eid. We have Vietnamese New Year when my pupils are decorating my school with the beautiful small flowers they make. We have a spring festival from Pakistan, and of course we have Christmas. I find it very exciting, very challenging, very colourful – much more colourful than an ordinary Norwegian school. And I get a lot of attention and love. I get hugs and kisses from the children, and even from Muslim men. It's a gift, it's a great deal of respect, and I really appreciate it. I would not get so much attention in an ordinary Norwegian school, and it is very important never to forget these presents, because the challenges are enormous.


They struggle with the Norwegian language. We had two different courses: Norwegian for Norwegians, and another type of Norwegian for the immigrants. However this second type of Norwegian gave them very bad marks, so the head of the schools in Oslo now has a three year course with the same Norwegian course for every child. We had to try this out to see if it would do better for the immigrant children. Many of them drop out of secondary school after a month or two, and we do not want it that way.

Then physical education is a challenge, because many of the fathers, especially of the girls, do not want them to take part. It's about the showers, about the locker room and about the swimming. Now we have arranged for a Muslim woman to take Muslim girls on Saturday mornings, so that the girls who are not allowed to swim with the others can swim with her. She is telling us how they have done and how often have they come, and then I can say: OK, you don't have to swim with your class.

Outdoor activities have a long tradition in Norway. It's a challenge for some of the girls to come with us, but we take a mother or two with us and then the girls are allowed to come too.

Many of our ethnic groups think that music and song are not part of school. But it is a strong tradition in Norway, and slowly they get used to it. Christianity is taught to all children. That is a new challenge, but we have had a committee of parents from all different religions working with the leaders of the school for





half a year, and we have found out how to deal with it. So I don't break the law, and they feel confident, and now it works.

Homework is another challenge. Many of my immigrant children have a lot of smaller children at home, so there is no place, no quiet room to do their homework – so we open the school in the afternoon. They get very little help at home. My Pakistani children come from a region where the parents had no tradition of schooling. They don't believe in education – the girls are married anyway and sent back home; the boys make money in an easy way and become criminals.

We have conferences with the parents and they all come now. This autumn 100 parents came together. We are very proud of that. I co-operate with the local Mosque because I have seen there is great power through the Mosque. So I lend them my assembly hall when they need it and they do a lot of communication from me to their parents. So we help each other, and when they have borrowed the assembly hall, the Imam and the people leading the Mosque – all men – come to the school with flowers for me and a big cake for my teachers to thank us.

To make the school good for the students and the grown ups, I have a credo. I make a request and then I make clear the consequences if they don't want to follow it. In doing this I can catch the students often doing the right things. They want a prize of course, and it is very important to create a reason for giving a prize, because then the good is getting bigger all the time.

I have had some leadership problems. With my teachers, I had to establish consensus on the needs of the students because the school neighbourhood is so bad. My staff are trained a lot in how to manage the classroom. They have to be the boss, the take charge of the classroom. We have peer counselling for the teachers. We have no inspectors in Norwegian schools, but I go around a lot in my school, listening and giving advice.

We have parent/school co-operation, and I will say something more about that later. We have activities after school for our students, to keep them away from the streets. And I improve the aesthetics of the school every year. The physical environment is of very great importance – greater importance than we are aware of.

Now I have very little money. In the past three years I have had to let 13 teachers go. I have 42 left. I am on the edge now, but when I had the money I recruited special teachers, not only ordinary teachers. I still have staff from ethnic minorities. I have a student mediation service; safety messages for students and grown ups; and I use sports as a preventative measure against violence. Many of the boys are very good sportsmen if they get the chance to be trained. And I have a general focus every day through the entire day on general behaviour and confidence. I open my school as a culture house for all my parents – we have Moslem weddings and every sort of use of the assembly hall.

What do I think are the main factors for the school's success? I challenge my students about mutual respect, about how they behave, I talk to them a hundred times a day. I am old and I am old fashioned. When I knock on the door, everyone should rise and everyone should say 'hello' in a nice way. That is not common in Norway – pupils are very bad mannered in school. I always reward every positive thing. And we react very quickly if something bad is happening. We work a lot at finding out what happened, and who was involved. I use all legal instruments and co-operate very closely with the police, who are very good. There are some pupils who don't like school very much and want to get out of it. If I have to take them out of class for three days, it is not free time – they are taken out of the class, and put in another room with grown ups, and they take their air separately in the school yard when the others are having their lessons. Because all the other students have to see something is happening when a particular student behaves like this.

I use our assembly hall very much. I try to work very much in a preventative way. We gather our students in the assembly hall once a month and the leaders are responsible for everything. We work on how the pupils come in: walk slowly, sit nicely, keep your mouth shut, listen to what is happening, wait to hear which class is leaving first, and second, and they do it. I am very proud of them, it is so nice to have all my students in the assembly hall. I can gather all upper secondary, almost 250 of them, and they are often the worst. But everyone coming into the school to see its culture, they love to come to Gran, because the students are listening and they are behaving so nicely.

We have also created a school song which we use in the assembly hall when we have gatherings. We have sports clothing with a tree motif, and the name of the school, and the name of the area.

In the school yard they are really tough with each other. All the teachers going out have yellow waistcoats so that if the pupils need help they can find them quickly, and the grown ups can see each other quickly if they need help, and I can see if there are enough yellow coats out. I really check on my teachers to make sure they are out in the yard – that is where the bullying is, and we have zero tolerance for bullying and every sort of violence, by words or physical. Words are perhaps the worst thing.

Because there are so many immigrant parents, I have to think of other ways in which to co-operate with them. So we have 'mother meetings' – not only women any more, although some years ago no man could be in the room; then the men would not show up. And we are working on the grandparents. We have different language groups, where I speak a little Norwegian, it is translated, and they discuss it in their own language. I get a summary eventually, and I don't know if they tell me everything. I am trying to put myself in their place so that I am an immigrant, and see how it is for them. We also have courses for minority advisers, immigrant parents who want to be a link between school, home and officials.

When I had a lot of money I had a band conductor, a professional dancer from the Norwegian opera, a professional musician, a professional storyteller, play





leaders, and a pupil mediator. That is all gone now because of the financial cutbacks. The politicians don't know what they are doing.

Every summer and Christmas we redecorate the school, we go around and make everything nice. That's very important. When the pupils come back, the school should be nice everywhere. It costs very little money, only a little work.

Every half year we give prizes in the assembly hall to the different grades. The classrooms should always be tidy and nice, the books should be taken care of in a nice way. We emphasise how to behave in the assembly hall, and ask for respect and for pupils to be careful with their language.

What I have done didn't cost money, but you have to know what you want. You must have courage to say the truth, and not to put a blanket over your challenges, but tell them as they are and do something about them. You must have stamina (it took me 20 years) and you must have love and you must believe all the time that it is possible to do better today than yesterday, and even better tomorrow. And if you do all this, your pupils will flower, all of them – the white ones and the black ones.



# BELONGING, EMOTION AND INTERCULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION

**Dr. Roland Tormey**

## Emotions by Rory Gleeson


I am a volcano, ready to erupt,  
I am a three year old child at a Shakespeare play,  
I am a caged bird, kept away from the world,  
I am a squirrel in a field of nuts,  
I am a child, at his first day at school,  
I am a dog, trying to learn algebra,  
I am all these emotions bundled in one, but most importantly  
I am a person trying to finish this poem  
Before the teacher kills me.

I know that I have been that student. I was sitting in French class trying frantically to remind myself that the first letter of the alphabet is, in French, pronounced 'ah' not 'ay'. I could feel my chest tighten and tears of frustration welling up under my eyes, but I fought them back because bursting into tears was not an option for a twelve year old in an all-boys' secondary school. Of course, when I was asked, I panicked, blurted out 'ay' and immediately felt my heart sink because I had heard myself pronounce it the wrong way. 'Sit down' was all that the teacher said, but the weariness in his tone said it all.

Learning French was an intercultural experience, in that I was faced with a language that was different to my own, embedded in a culture that was different to mine. France seemed exotic and distant (even if it was only a few hundred miles away) and we laughed at the strangeness of some people in France drinking chocolate from bowls for their breakfast and eating *Croque Monsieur* for their lunch. Yet I liked the difference too and found it appealing. This only made my inability to learn French all the more distressing. I'm sure that emotion was part of the experience for my teacher too. Students like me, who failed to learn even the simplest elements of French, despite his best teaching, can't have made him feel good about himself. I'm sure he felt frustration. Perhaps he also felt a touch of nervousness about having to come in to face a class that contained people as evidently incapable of learning as myself. Now that I have crossed the divide between teacher and learner I can imagine how he felt. I can even feel a little sorry for him.

In this paper I suggest that emotion is central to educational processes. It is also central to the processes of coming to belong to a group (such as an ethnic or national group) and to inter-group communication and conflict. As such it is central to the intercultural project. Arising from these two assertions, I suggest





that emotion is, therefore, central to the sort of teacher education we need if we are to contribute to the development of intercultural capacities in our society. This, in turn, begs a number of questions about how we deal with emotion in education and in teacher education.

Although an understanding of emotion is central to both education and to interculturalism, much of the writing in both these areas has tended to neglect emotion. This may be because emotion is not highly prized in contemporary western societies. This can be seen in the slight attention that is paid to it (in comparison to cognition) in research and writing. It can also be seen in the folk models of mind which people bring to bear on their everyday lives.

### VALUING EMOTION

Even if we rarely stop to consider emotion, we all carry with us common sense folk models of emotion. For those from western contexts, some of these models have deep roots in western philosophy. Solomon (2000) points out that, as western philosophy developed since the time of Aristotle as the pursuit of reason, emotions have often been regarded as a threat. The metaphor of reason and emotion as master and slave is an enduring one, with the wisdom of reason holding the chains of emotion (the irrational slave), which is chained partially because it is less valuable than its master and partially because it is dangerous. Crucially, this image suggests that ethical action requires emotion to be controlled and suppressed by reason.

These ideas became part of medieval Christian ethics, where the seven deadly sins (greed, gluttony, lust, anger, envy, pride and sloth) were all either emotions or, in the case of sloth, linked to an emotional state like despondency (Solomon 2000, p. 3 -6), while virtues like love were classified as not being emotions at all, but belonging to a higher plane. These ideas also found their way into modern thought. They are evidenced in the commonly cited separation between the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, and in the primacy that has been placed on moral reasoning (that is, cognitive work) in the study of pro-social action or moral orientation (such as in the work of Kohlberg [1976] or Krathwohl et al. [1964]). Indeed, it may be that our contemporary social context reinforces these ideas of the separateness of emotion and rationality and the superiority of rationality. The highest award our institutions make is a PhD, awarded to those who demonstrate excellence in rational thinking. What reward system (or indeed, framework for judging) exists for excellence in emotions?

Although common sense concepts of emotion and rationality have often accepted the master-slave model unquestioningly, there are also a number of growing bodies of work that call this model into question. Work on the biology of the brain has indicated that when emotion brain-centres are disconnected from rational brain-centres, individuals have difficulty in making decisions and tend to make what appear to be irrational decisions. "Thus, human rationality and, more generally, decision making are dependent on emotions" (Turner and Stets, 2005, p. 22). At the same time there is a broad recognition that a person's emotional response to a situation will be shaped by their (cognitive) understanding of the situation, making

emotions dependent on cognition. There is also a growing recognition that the emotional response to a situation, and perhaps even the very experience of an emotional state will differ between people belonging to different cultural or ethnic groups (Kitayama and Markus, 1994). Overall then, there is a growing body of work that highlights that attempts to make sense of emotion need to do so into the context of a mutual interpenetration of biology, cultural construction and cognition (White, 2000, p. 32; Turner and Stets, 2005, p. 10).

Yet while some emotions research is moving away from the reason-emotion/master-slave metaphor, it seems to retain considerable influence in the common sense folk models of emotion that inform research on education and on identity and, indeed, which shape how we choose to live in everyday interaction. Those working within a humanistic psychotherapeutic tradition utilise the concept of 'congruence' to describe a situation in which a person's outward actions match their inner feelings. The opposite of this is called 'incongruence', a situation in which our inner emotional world is not reflected in our outward actions. Mearns and Thorne (1999, p. 94) note that there are two sources of incongruence: the person may not be aware of his or her own underlying feelings, or the person may not express these feelings if aware of them (for example, as part of a process of impression management). Both sorts of incongruence are so widespread in western societies, they argue, that they have become the norm:


Incongruent relating is so thoroughly ingrained within our culture that it has become viewed as the healthy reality. As human beings we use our considerable skills to cultivate our incongruence such that we are protected from being openly 'seen' by the other (1999, p. 84).

Whether because we do not know how we feel, or because we know but do not let on how we feel, the suppression or ignoring of our emotional lives seems to have become our daily reality. In this context the challenge of breaking out of our received folk models of mind and creating a space in which emotion can be valued is not one to be underestimated.

## EMOTION AND INTERCULTURAL WORK

The contemporary orthodoxy in relation to people's sense of belonging to social groups such as ethnic or national groups sees this sense of belonging as a social construction (Anderson 1991, p. 6; O'Connell 1994, p. 112; Gillespie 1998, p. 8; Mac an Ghaill, 1999). This sense is captured by Kiberd who has noted of the Irish that we "...were not so *much* born as made, gathered around a few simple symbols, a flag, an anthem, a handful of evocative phrases" (emphasis in original, 1996, p. 101). This process of identity construction involves the construction of both an 'us' and of an 'other'. Lentin suggests that these two processes are dialectic "in that by defining the other we necessarily define ourselves" (2000, p. 7) and in defining ourselves we also define 'the other' (Jenkins 1996, p. 98). This involves both boundary maintenance (identifying what is different between 'us' and 'them') and a focus on cultural continuity (identifying what it is that makes 'us' similar to each other). It should be noted that to say that social identity is a





social construction does not mean it is unimportant or that it lacks effect. People's life expectancy and life experiences can be shaped by the way they are categorised by themselves and others. It does however mean that there is no universal or agreed basis upon which people are categorised. As Richard Jenkins puts it, "identities are... at least potentially, flexible, situational and negotiable" (Jenkins 1996, p. 102).

Although the bulk of the literature in this area ignores emotion, the mobilisation of symbols in this regard is not simply a cognitive process, but must also be recognised as an emotional one. Commenting on the sociology of Emile Durkheim, Turner and Stets note, "ultimately, collective solidarity is the result of the arousal of positive emotions" (2005, p. 70). When the national anthem is sung before a match, it is not so much the content of the words that help to create group identification as the emotional resonance it produces. It is unlikely that many Irish people singing *Amhrán na bhFiann* really cognitively see themselves as soldiers repelling those who have come from a land beyond the wave, or that it matters to the English rugby team whether or not there is a God or if he/she takes an interest in the health of the Queen, while singing their national anthem. What is more important is the rush of blood, the hair standing up on the back of the neck and the emotional sense of belonging that is produced by singing it together (and against the opposition), a self-sustaining ritual experience which Durkheim termed effervescence. Boundary maintenance between groups is, in part, an emotional experience.

Emotion plays a role in the decision as to whether or not to act in a manner that discriminates against 'the other'. As Hannah Arendt noted of the Nazis who carried out a policy of mass murder and genocide, the most difficult task for their superiors was getting ordinary men, who were not killers by nature, to overcome "the animal pity by which all normal men are affected in the face of physical suffering" (1994, p. 106). This was carried out by dehumanising the victims (thereby lessening the perpetrators' emotional connection with the victims) and ultimately by separating the perpetrators from the evidence of, and responsibility for, their actions (Bauman, 1991). Although the outcomes of the Nazi holocaust were far from typical, Bauman makes clear that the social-emotional processes of distancing people from the consequences of their actions that enabled it are characteristic of everyday western modernity.

This emotional element may exude into and shape other more cognitive elements, such as beliefs that are held about other groups. Barton and McCully (2003, p. 109) describe a Northern Ireland history class in which young people engage in moral evaluative discussions of the distant past of their own ethnic conflict, but refuse to evaluate the more recent past in the same way. They note that it is "an emotional wall" that descends and blocks the learners' engagement in this moral reasoning process. Ultimately, then, a simple equation of prejudice with a lack of knowledge about 'the other' is not accurate. As we wrote in the *Intercultural Education In the Primary School Guidelines*:

Neither racism nor interculturalism is based on knowledge alone. Both are informed and influenced by emotional responses, feelings and attitudes, as

well as by knowledge. Simply providing people with facts and information or focusing on cognitive development will not, on their own, counteract racism, since there may be an emotional resistance to changing one's mind, even in the face of new evidence, facts or ways of thinking. In particular, the development of positive emotional responses to diversity and an empathy with those discriminated against plays a key role in intercultural education (Ireland/NCCA 2005, p. 21).

Although the bulk of the literature on the construction of ethnic identity and of social distance focuses on the symbolic and cognitive aspects of such identification, it seems clear that emotional engagement and emotional distance play a part in ethnic identification and boundary maintenance, both through direct emotional responses and indirectly through emotional responses impacting on belief systems. Although emotion has tended to be peripheral to discussions of multicultural or intercultural education (in Banks and Banks [2004] enormous 1,000 page *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education, Second Edition* there is an entire section on 'Knowledge Construction and Critical Studies' but no explicit reference to emotion in article titles or in the index), there is a need for greater recognition and understanding of the role of emotions in relation to ethnic identity.

### EMOTION, EDUCATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION

As we have seen above, ethnic identification and discrimination involve a number of emotional processes. Consequently making sense of intercultural education also requires engagement in emotional processes. Of course, this claim could also be made on a more widespread basis in respect of education in general. As Rosiek has recently noted:


Human experience is an emotional affair. This is as true for educational experience as it is for any other aspect of our lives. Learning is not simply about comprehending the abstract content of ideas; it is about discovering ourselves in relation to new ideas. It involves surprise, revelation, delight, and sometimes outrage...It is distressing, therefore, that we find ourselves in a moment when the public discourse about education is so exclusively focused on measurable cognitive outcomes of teaching (Rosiek 2003, p. 399).

This is not to suggest that there is no focus on emotion in education. Indeed, recent years have seen an increased focus on caring teachers (Noddings, 1992; Gay 2000), passionate teachers (Fried, 1995) and emotionally intelligent teachers (Goleman, 1995). Yet, as Hargreaves has pointed out, "writers in these traditions tend to advance a view of teachers' emotions and emotionality that is broadly personal and psychological - indeed sometimes Pollyanna-like" (2002, p. 5). Of course, dealing with emotion is not all sweetness and light, and the challenges do need to be recognised. As we noted in the Intercultural Education Guidelines:

When people (children, teachers, parents and others in the community of the school) explore their own attitudes and values, and when they look at their own past reactions to certain situations, they may get defensive, angry or







upset. Learning to deal with one's own emotions and the emotions of others is central to the development of intrapersonal...and interpersonal...skills, which the curriculum identifies as being essential for the child's personal, social and educational fulfilment (Ireland/NCCA 2005, p. 21).

What we need therefore, is detailed, rich and situated accounts of the emotional cultures, rituals and processes of teaching and learning which will equip teachers to be able to work effectively with emotion in practice.

This marginalisation of emotion in education that Rosiek has noted can also be seen in debates on teacher education. While the literature is stuffed with discussions of pedagogic content knowledge (PCK -a cognitive frame of reference), lay theories of teaching (the term 'theory' also locates this in a cognitive frame), or with teacher competencies (a cognitive and perhaps behavioural frame), there seems to be a lack of focus on emotion in teacher education. Yet what work has been done, such as that of Oosterheert and Vermunt (2001), has identified that student teachers' patterns of engaging with their emotions concerning teaching and learning are a key part of their diverse learning styles as student teachers.

This suggests a number of questions that we need to address if we are to improve our teacher education practice and to make it responsive to the needs of a changing and intercultural island:

**To what extent do our students learn to deal with emotion in their classrooms (other than in the context of managing 'behaviour')?** Within the incongruent folk model of emotion, the affective domain is something to be chained if possible and managed if not. In this context, pupil activity that expresses emotion (laughing, crying, feeling excited) may well be seen as a manifestation of challenging behaviour rather than as an expression of a valued facet of human life. Ultimately, we need our students to be able to engage with expressions of emotion and to work with them. We need, therefore, to think through how we enable them to do that.

**To what extent do they learn to see themselves as teachers of empathy, emotional self-regulation/ self-understanding?** The statement of Aims and Principles of the Junior Certificate notes that the "...general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in community and for leisure" (Ireland/NCCA 2000, inside front cover). Many other curriculum statements contain similarly rounded and humanistic statements of intent for schools. At the same time, it is often suggested that many teachers, particularly at post-primary, think of themselves in subject-specific terms (as teachers of geography, maths, biology or French). If we are to encourage our students to see themselves as teachers of the whole person in front of them, how are we to do that? Will we not have to devote some time on our timetables to that endeavour?



**To what extent are our Colleges and Departments places where students are supported in engaging in their own emotional development process?** It is hard to teach that which you do not understand. Do we assume that our students have had the opportunity to develop their own interpersonal and intrapersonal capacities before they come to us, or do we create environments in which they can do this as they learn to become a teacher? If so, how are we to do this? Undoubtedly we will find ourselves butting against the incongruent folk model of mind that has become embodied in the workings and assumptions of our universities. Perhaps we will also find ourselves butting against the fragile emotional blind spots of those who have found themselves driven to seek positions of power in our colleges and universities? Maybe too some of us will find ourselves butting against ourselves and our own instincts and tendency to live as academics in our own heads, rather than in our guts and hearts?

## CONCLUSION

Western assumptions about the nature of the relationship between reason, emotion and morality have tended to ensure that emotion is regarded as an unpredictable and dangerous family member who needs to be kept out of sight if we are to put on a good show and thereby retain a good relationship with our neighbours. Such incongruence has become so commonplace that it may well be regarded as healthy, and is certainly regarded as necessary to 'get ahead' in an incongruent world. One outcome of the dominance of such folk models of mind is that emotion has tended to be neglected in research, including in research on education and on intercultural practice. Yet it is clear that an understanding of emotion is central to making sense of both these areas of work.

I have not tried to present answers as to how we can help to make our places of teacher education places in which people can develop their own emotional capacities, but have instead asked questions and pointed to the embedded structures of incongruence that may pose difficulties. Confronting these difficulties is essential if we, as teacher educators, are to meaningfully contribute to intercultural practice in our societies. These questions remain to be addressed. As Ann Louise Gilligan has put it:

To prepare teachers to educate in this 21st Ireland, where disadvantage and poverty among children is growing, we need to 'prepare them to love'. This is indeed a challenge and immediately calls us to examine the context of teacher training and ask: Are Colleges of Education communities of love? (2003, p. 47).

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## WORKGROUP 1

### TAKING A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

**Facilitators: Mary Gannon, Interculturalism Project, City of Dublin VEC Curriculum Development Unit, and Margaret Patterson, St Mary's High School, Newry.**

This was a newly established working group and its purpose was to engage participants in a discussion on good practice in taking a whole school approach to cultural diversity. A rapid rise in immigration has meant that increasing cultural diversity among their students has been a reality for schools in the South for a number of years and is now beginning to affect schools in the North.

The session began with short presentations on two experiences of the use of a whole school approach, one with schools in the greater Dublin area and the second within an individual school in Newry.

The CDU Interculturalism and Equality Project supports a network of schools in taking a whole school approach to the development of policy and practice on interculturalism and equality. The presentation described how the model worked and highlighted the main learning points for teacher education. These included:

- The benefits of working alongside teachers on a long-term basis in order to sustain motivation, and allow time for teachers to develop confidence in responding to a new area of change for schools;

- The benefits of well-structured partnership between staff, students and parents, which broadens teachers' perspectives, develops participation by students and parents, and helps build a democratic school culture;

- The necessity for each school to go through its own reflection and learning process and to plan for its own context, as no one template can be applied to all schools;

- The importance of access for schools to ongoing support, information, and advice;

- The benefits of networking with other schools in order to facilitate the development of good practice;

- The importance of mainstreaming the learning from such projects through, in this case, working in association with the School Development Planning Initiative.

The presentation from St Mary's High School demonstrated the impact on the whole school of the long-term professional development of the Citizenship Education Team teachers, provided over a period of three years. The aim of the training programmes was not only to equip a small team to teach citizenship

education, but to raise awareness among all the staff and students. The initial training had a significant impact on the team, with one teacher applying to a Links programme to spend time teaching in a school in Africa, and another joining the CDU's North-South Education for Reconciliation programme. Whole school activities which followed the initial training included:

- Awareness training on citizenship education for staff;

- A presentation to staff by the teacher on his African experiences;

- A Global Week run throughout the school, including African art and dance workshops; and a Fair Trade workshop, drama and coffee morning;


- A common citizenship theme for Open Night and Presentation Night.

These events impacted on all students and staff. For students, the Global Week created a great buzz throughout the school, with students becoming more aware of diversity and environmental issues such as Fair Trade, recycling, poverty and homelessness. The Citizenship Education Team became very enthused and motivated. The rest of the staff initially reacted with varying degrees of enthusiasm, with some raising difficulties such as lack of time for citizenship education, difficulties with the use of active methodologies, and lack of materials. However as the year progressed some teachers became involved in their own citizenship projects. With the support of the senior management team, the problems initially identified by staff were addressed. Citizenship was timetabled as a discrete subject; training in active learning methodologies was provided for the whole staff, and citizenship materials were developed.

The impact on the school has continued to grow. While some of the skills acquired by staff are difficult to measure, there has been a general increase in active participation by students in class through the use of active learning methodologies. Two more teachers are about to join the Citizenship Education Team, and links with other schools have been developed. Overall the process has provided teachers with considerable scope for professional and personal development. An example of the impact on students is provided by the action project undertaken by a class as part of the pilot GCSE Learning for Life and Work, which has a strong citizenship element. Concerned about how inclusive the school induction policy was, the students researched its effectiveness and presented their findings back to the school. As a result of their recommendations, the pastoral care and senior management team are currently updating the induction policy. School plans for 2006 include a staff day with the Citizenship Office from the Southern Education and Library Board, the carrying out of a citizenship audit in the school, and the further development of the whole school approach.

Discussion following the two presentations centred on the challenges which cultural diversity brought to schools and on appropriate responses to them. It was pointed out that the definition of citizenship and the problem of identity in Northern Ireland add another layer of complexity to the recognition of the





identities of new immigrants. In responding to new immigrants there is a real danger that Traveller students continue to be marginalised and their identity not recognised or valued. The level of racism within Northern Ireland, as exemplified by recent racist attacks, is a concern for schools. Meeting the language needs of bilingual learners is very difficult for schools in the face of inadequate resources, lack of experience and lack of training in appropriate 'language-aware' teaching methodologies for mainstream class teachers.

In the face of these challenges, it was essential that there was real leadership within schools. In relation to professional development, commitment and leadership on the part of school management were needed to make budget decisions to allocate money to training in this area. It was also important that schools availed of whatever flexibility exists in the curriculum to adapt the curriculum in ways appropriate to a culturally diverse society. Recommendations from the group concerned professional development and the sharing of good practice. Firstly, the strong need for professional development of teachers in relation to all aspects of cultural diversity was recognised. It was recommended that in-service training be provided during teachers' working days and that it not be expected that teachers would need to attend training at weekends or evening times. Secondly, the group believed that many schools were doing good work and that they needed to be more vocal about what they were achieving. It was recommended that ways of disseminating good practice in this area should be explored.

## WORKGROUP 2

### VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

**Facilitators: Prof Mona O'Moore,  
and Mr Stephen James Minton, Trinity College Dublin**

Five delegates from the conference joined the facilitators to participate in this workshop. The topics that were scheduled for discussion were (i) the VISTA (Violence in Schools Training Action) programme, an EU-funded project in which the facilitators are currently engaged; (ii) a practical exercise, geared towards achieving consensus upon key definitions; (iii) input on school violence and bullying behaviour; (iv) researching the issue in the Republic of Ireland; (v) resources and contacts.

#### 1. The VISTA (Violence in Schools Training Action) Programme

The VISTA project brings together a unique team of European experts (from Republic of Ireland, the facilitators, Belgium, Bulgaria, Norway, Spain and the UK) from the disciplines of sociology, psychology, education and criminology to produce a web-based training programme for the promotion of non-violence in schools. The VISTA training is designed to benefit and inform teachers, local education



authorities and policy-makers Europe-wide; also local communities, NGOs, parents' groups, social services and young people themselves. VISTA focuses not simply on individual skills, but on the school as a system within a community linked to the wider society (Cowie et al., 2004).

Key issues that form the basis of the VISTA training approach are the need to understand: (i) the context of school violence; (ii) definitional issues; (iii) knowledge about violence; (iv) children's rights; (v) the curriculum. The following are particularly emphasised in the VISTA approach: (i) the whole school approach; (ii) respect for the individual person's rights and integrity; (iii) society's responsibilities to protect the individual; (iv) the individual's responsibilities towards others and society as a whole; (v) society's particular responsibility towards individuals or groups that are for some reason in a weak position, vulnerable or at risk (Cowie et al., 2004). This three-year project will be completed in June 2006, at which point its resources will be available on-line ([www.vista-europe.org](http://www.vista-europe.org)).

## **2. A Practical Exercise: Achieving Consensus upon Definitions**

The participants and facilitators discussed the following terms: violence, aggression, bullying behaviour and multiculturalism. They were then set two tasks: (i) to come up with a definition upon which all were agreed, such as could be used in research and practice; (ii) to reflect upon how the different groups within the school community (school management staff, classroom teachers, parents and students) are likely to use such definitions. Will they use the term in the same way? If not, why? Is this important? Do we have to re-define the term in the light of this reflection?

The results of this exercise were interesting to all who took part in the workshop. For example, the discussion of and reflection upon the term 'violence' yielded fruitful ideas. The roots of violence were discussed as perhaps emanating from a lack of 'catharsis' opportunities, the presence of binary opposition cultures, strong 'passions', 'disrespect' (of the individual, or of group harmony) and neglect. It was noted that words, as well as physical acts of aggression, can be powerful too, as well as the psychological violence of total exclusion (e.g. so-called 'indirect' bullying, especially among girls). The media representation of violence was discussed, and how this (among other factors) can lead to the 'legitimisation' of violence. On a macro-level, it was observed that violent protest action by oppressed communities can lead to the destruction of their own resources – this being an example of how violence can be damaging to perpetrator, as well as to society.

Concerning the use of the term 'multiculturalism', it was advanced and generally accepted that there are grounds for a descriptive use only of this term, and that at a policy formation level, the term 'interculturalism' should be used. It was pondered whether 'multiculturalism' or 'interculturalism' affects how we, as a society and as educators in particular, commonly look at abusive behaviour. The use of mediation was also discussed, and the question 'What is normal, and who defines this?' was raised.



### 3. Violence in Schools: Definitions and Language

Olweus (1999, p.12) defines physical aggression (violence and violent behaviour) as:

“aggressive behaviour where the actor or perpetrator uses his or her own body or an object (including a weapon) to inflict (relatively serious) injury or discomfort upon another individual.”

This definition excludes purely verbal aggression, but includes fights between equals. Most empirical studies of aggressive behaviour in schools in the Republic of Ireland have focussed on bullying (O’ Moore & Minton, 2003), but as Olweus notes, “there is a good deal of bullying without violence.... and, likewise, there is a good deal of violence that cannot be characterised as bullying”.

The most typically used definition of bullying in the Republic of Ireland is that found in the Department of Education and Science’s 1993 *Guidelines on Countering Bullying in Primary and Post-Primary Schools*:

“repeated aggression, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against others.” (Department of Education and Science, 1993, p.6).

This definition includes physical aggression and:

“damage to property, extortion, intimidation, abusive telephone calls, isolation, name calling and “slagging” .... [in cases where the latter] extends to very personal remarks aimed again at one individual about appearance, clothing, personal hygiene or involves references of an uncomplimentary nature to members of one’s family, particularly if couched in sexual innuendo.... [or] sexual orientation’ (Byrne, 1999, p. 115).

### 4. Researching the Issue in the Republic of Ireland

The Travelling community has been recognised as a distinct ethnic group in Ireland since only 1989 (under the Prohibition of Incitement to Racial, Religious and National Hatred Act). According to Carlson & Casavant (1995), Travellers are “frequently the victims of prejudice and discrimination in Ireland”. For example, and in the context of the current discussion, some schools have refused to enrol Travellers (Noonan, 1994), and there also exists a low expectation of attainment among those teaching Travellers (McMahon, 1993; Noonan, 1994), which has been argued to produce somewhat of a “reverse Pygmalion effect” (Carlson & Casavant, 1995). Whereas most Traveller parents favour their children being co-educated with children of the settled community (Noonan, 1994), Traveller children have traditionally been segregated into special Travellers-only schools, where facilities are all-too often inadequate (McMahon, 1993; Noonan, 1994). Carlson & Casavant note that Traveller children - boys in particular - have a reputation for fighting and classroom indiscipline, but also report that “because of their nomadic lifestyle, and the extreme prejudice of settled people, Traveller

children are often intimidated by settled classmates" (p. 103). It has been argued that as a result of all this, absenteeism amongst Traveller children remains high (O'Connell, 1989), whilst scholastic attainment remains low (Noonan, 1994).

The Republic of Ireland's foreign national school population is as yet relatively small in numbers. However, in the context of the current discussion, Sheehan (1998) reports on three young Irish men who have taken their own lives as a result of bullying based on their ethnic / national family background. Similarly, as long ago as 1993, one-third of the responding schools in INTO's study reported bullying along the lines of race / ethnicity (INTO, 1993, in Rocks, 1995); additionally, in a nationwide study of bullying behaviour, 7 per cent of girls and 9 per cent of boys at the primary level, and 4.8 per cent of girls and 8.1 per cent of boys at the post-primary level indicated that they were "called nasty names about my colour or race" (O' Moore, Kirkham & Smith, 1997).

O' Moore's nationwide study was conducted in 1993 – 1994, and involved more than 20, 000 primary and post-primary students in a representative sample of the schools in the Republic of Ireland. Since that time, some new interests have emerged, and data from a new survey of school bullying behaviour conducted by the facilitators (2005 – 2006, involving more than 6, 000 primary and post-primary students) are due to appear later this year. For this survey, some new questions have been included concerning (i) racist bullying and harassment; (ii) bullying and harassment involving religious background / sectarianism; and (iii) e-bullying (also known as cyber-bullying; that is to say, bullying via SMS message, e-mail or Internet).

## **5. Resources & Contacts**

Please contact Stephen James Minton, Lian Maguire or Professor Mona O' Moore at:

The Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre, Department of Education, Trinity College Dublin.

Tel: (01) 608 2573

<http://www.abc.tcd.ie>

The *Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre* offers a range of services, including assistance with formulation of anti-bullying policy and strategies; in-service training for school staff; parents' evenings / presentations; classroom work with students; the provision of an advice telephone line / visitor service; and assistance with research projects of any kind. Areas covered by such services include bullying (school and workplace), aggression and violence, racism and discrimination, self-esteem, positive behaviour management, and stress management. Please e-mail ([mintonst@tcd.ie](mailto:mintonst@tcd.ie)) for further details.

The *VISTA Project's* site will be complete and go on-line for use by all (in terms of its resources) by the end of the summer in 2006 ([www.vista-europe.org](http://www.vista-europe.org)).



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## WORKGROUP 3

### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP – LEADERSHIP ON THE FRONT LINE

**Facilitators: Dr Tom Hesketh, Regional Training Unit (NI), and Dr Jim Gleeson, University of Limerick**

The workshop provided an opportunity for colleagues to consider a joint Northern Ireland Regional Training Unit (RTU) /London Leadership Centre Research and Development project targetted at school leaders working in exceptional circumstances – with elements directly related to the conference’s overarching theme of cultural diversity.

This research and development project brings together head teachers from across a number of cities - Belfast, London, Liverpool, Dublin, Manchester, Derry, Cardiff and Greenwich – who are leading schools in urban, ‘front line’ contexts. The project has two aims.


- The first is experiential: to provide a rich developmental experience for the 36 head teacher participants whose challenging school contexts include high levels of social and economic deprivation, transient populations and divided communities, and whose teachers may have to grapple with low educational expectations, racism and sectarianism.
- The second aim is analytical and research-based: to reach a greater understanding of the experiences of those 36 leaders, in ways that will contribute to thinking about leadership in challenging urban contexts, and help generate illustrative tools and approaches which will be of benefit to other school leaders.

Case study material from the project was explored as a means of identifying and considering the challenges of leading in exceptional circumstances including;

- The extent to which these contexts made extra demands on heads in terms of the range of skills/competences required;
- The extent to which these contexts necessitated a specific policy response
- The extent to which these contexts demanded customised and innovative responses from leadership development providers.

Debate centred on the policy lessons highlighted by the project. The lessons for policy makers are as follows: There is a need to recognise the tension between headship in challenging circumstances being projected as necessitating a ‘super hero’ response ( typically the approach of policy makers ) and these same contexts requiring leadership for sustainability ( Fullan 2004 ). Only the latter can begin to address over the long term frame required the major issues of equity, access and consistency of provision.





Secondly, the socio-economic context within which these schools typically are located ( Urban Task Force 2000 ) confronts the school leaders with enormous challenges in relation to harnessing both ' intellectual capital' ( Hargreaves ) and 'social capital ' ( Bryk and Schneider ). The problems of recruiting and retaining skilled staff, support staff and governors place significant constraints on these leaders' ability to tap into the reserves of intellectual and social capital so necessary for effective schooling.

Additionally, the socio-economic context generates two other paradoxes: the need for these schools to adopt increasingly multi-agency approaches and yet the logistical and jurisdictional difficulties which attend to such; and, even more fundamentally, the constant challenge for these leaders and their staff of confronting the mutually exclusive agendas of schools as reflectors of or transformers of the settings within which they are located. Such paradoxes are made all the more stark by the increasing emphasis being placed on the interdependence of school and community improvement , including expectations of " collaboration with other agencies " (NCSL 2004 revised National Standards for Headteachers). Our 'front line' heads embrace these challenges and paradoxes with a passionate intensity for and commitment to their pupils' well-being. However the consequential activities of interfacing on behalf of their mainly disempowered communities with a range of public institutions, and setting their educational endeavours within a wider anti-poverty framework, demands much more from these heads in terms of the skill set required and emotional drain experienced, than is the case for their colleagues working in less problematic contexts.

## WORKGROUP 4

### ICT AND CITIZENSHIP IN A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

**Facilitators: Dr Roger Austin, University of Ulster, and Dr Paul Conway, University College Cork**

This well attended seminar addressed two key issues about the role of ICT in citizenship education. The first was the extent to which student teachers in teacher education institutions in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland received adequate preparation in ICT to embed digital learning in their classroom practice. The seminar heard that ICT 'competence' in Northern Ireland was subsumed under broader competences to do with learning, the use of appropriate resources and assessment. Unlike the rest of the United Kingdom, where student teachers had to pass an on-line test of ICT skills before they could enter the teaching profession, higher education institutions in Northern Ireland generally required students to complete a reflective ICT portfolio. The portfolio contained evidence of the ways that student teachers had used ICT in their own learning, their professional preparation for lessons and how they had used ICT with pupils. In one institution, student teachers were also asked to write a short reflective piece towards the end of their training on the role of ICT in their professional development.



It was also noted that where student teachers were engaged in work, like the Dissolving Boundaries programme, which required two schools to work together through ICT on an aspect of the curriculum, that pupils were involved in negotiating agreement on data collection, analysis, presenting findings, narrative development and creative writing. The skills required to do this included respect for difference, an understanding of diverse culture and, in some cases, a willingness to address controversial issues in history. These skills were seen as being consistent with citizenship objectives while also helping to build trust through the creation of an 'end product' like a joint web site.

Colleagues in the Republic of Ireland were not bound by any regulatory framework and therefore practice varied considerably from one institution to another. It was agreed that, as a first step, a small-scale project should be initiated which would gather data on what all initial teacher training providers were doing in terms of ICT training. Roger Austin (Ulster) and Paul Conway (Cork) agreed to put together a proposal to SCoTENS which would not only gather data, but bring colleagues together for a conference in 2006 to reflect on the place of ICT in initial teacher education.

The second issue in the seminar was the place of e-learning in professional development: a number of colleagues thought that it was only through direct experience of on-line learning that teachers and pupils would be able to come to terms with the challenges of virtual learning. Roger Austin led a simulation of an on-line environment that involved active learning about the challenges of handling provocative comments, limited literacy skills and self-censorship. Colleagues enjoyed the team work and reflected in a debriefing session that the exercise could be adapted for many different audiences.

## WORKGROUP 5


### TEACHER INCLUSION AND THE INTEGRATION OF SPECIAL NEEDS

**Facilitators: Mr Hugh Kearns, Stranmillis University College, and Dr Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin**

The workshop took as its starting point the report to SCOTENS of the deliberations of two SCOTENS funded conferences convened by Dr Shevlin at TCD and Mr Kearns at Stranmillis in 2004/5. The report of these conferences contained a review of current provision for Special Educational Needs in Initial Teacher Education, drawing attention to patterns in provision across the 13 participating institutions North and South. The authors of the report presented conference conclusions and were questioned further by workshop members. There was unanimous approval for the view that SEN input should be discrete and compulsory.

While there is sympathy for the view that SEN concerns and interests should permeate all parts of ITE programmes rather than being isolated and apart, discrete modules focussing particularly upon disabilities, SEN provisions, values





and strategies needed to be compulsory for all students rather than presented as optional and for interested students only. Awareness of learners in mainstream schools with increasingly common difficulties [Dyslexia, Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity, Autistic Spectrum, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, marginalised learners] is now essential for all students. Models of effective individualised and inclusive curriculum provision should be made available to all teachers during ITE. It was noted that the SEN/ITE conferences and the SEN/ITE report provided summaries of SEN specialist tutor views and practices and that it would be helpful to widen this scope somewhat. With these aims in mind, five points were made by way of recommendation:

1. **Models of best practice:** It would be helpful if there were now a shared North/South focus upon and consideration of the particular "models of best practice" referred to in the report to SCOTENS.
2. **Student voices:** Student views and experiences would help to provide a more balanced view of provision North and South. The student voice should become apparent in these models.
3. **Partnerships:** Policy for the development of university/school partnerships and institutional strategies for involving schools more in the dissemination of SEN practice to students could usefully be a focus for cross-border enquiry.
4. **Portfolio development and reflective practice for SEN:** SEN input in ITE was premised upon the assumption that all student teachers were first and foremost developing throughout their training as critical and reflective practitioners in their immediate classroom practice. SEN input should not be regarded as additional content to be delivered but an essential context for reflective practice in student portfolios. The continuity of reflection upon SEN issues throughout school experience needed to be a priority during ITE. Hence there is a need for cross-border models of best practice in the use of the teacher portfolio as a vehicle for ensuring continuity in student SEN competence.
5. **The Open University** should be included in further SCOTENS North/South funded dialogue in this area.

## WORKGROUP 6

### PREPARING TEACHERS FOR A CULTURALLY DIVERSE SOCIETY

**Facilitators: Ms Una O'Connor, University of Ulster, and Mr Gerry Jeffers, National University of Ireland, Maynooth**

It is acknowledged that although citizenship can be a contentious and problematic area, it requires us to question what it means to live in a culturally diverse society. It is often easy to blame teachers and education for society's ills; this is both an inaccurate and unfair assessment. It does not mean, however, that education does not have a role to play. Schools are at the cutting edge of many

changes in society. Paradoxically, it is often the youngest, most vulnerable members of the educational environment – the pupils – who are asked to undertake the implicit and explicit challenges of broader societal, cultural and political change.

With 'Education for Citizenship' increasingly articulated as a priority in schools, how should teachers be prepared for their role as citizenship educators? How much exposure should all those participating in initial teacher education have to citizenship and what form should this take? How much specialised teaching time should be devoted to methodologies for citizenship and what processes might this entail? How can teacher educators themselves incorporate a citizenship dimension into their work with students? These were just some of the challenging questions for this workshop.

The premise of the workshop was to engage colleagues in discussion and debate on the implications and challenges of preparing teachers for a culturally diverse society within a climate of change. The direction of the group discussion was primarily focused towards the role of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the function of teacher education institutes and departments, both to prepare students for greater diversity in the educational environment and to establish institutional commitment and ownership at school level.

The discussion was a very engaged one. Many participants were frank about both the opportunities and the challenges they see in their work as teacher educators regarding this topic. The value of professionals exploring similar questions in diverse situations was very evident during the discussion. A synopsis of the feedback from the group discussion is presented below.

- Education for Citizenship is a process and not an answer.
- An orientation to Education for Citizenship should be an integral part of Initial Teacher Education for all teachers.
- The development of some teachers with particular expertise in aspects of Education for Citizenship is desirable. Furthermore, opportunities for continuing professional development in this field should also be supported.
- Staff development – both theoretical and practical - relating to Education for Citizenship should be an ongoing part of the work of all education departments.
- There is a need to re-define the purpose of ITE institutions to produce teachers of human beings in the first instance – subject areas are secondary.
- There is need to challenge and re-define the purpose of teaching practice, so that students approach it in learning terms, rather than in behavioural terms (i.e. as a teacher).
- There is a need to develop student capacity for critical reflection as an inherent component of teacher training programmes.
- Participatory learning – or engaging with learners – should be a fundamental pedagogical feature. This approach should not just be applied to citizenship, but extend to all subject areas.
- The challenge, however, will be to encourage all teacher educators to adopt this type of pedagogy.



- The potential for greater inter-departmental collaboration within ITE institutions should be explored with the aim to produce a population of teachers who have transferable knowledge and expertise.
- The importance of nurturing teacher confidence should not be underestimated, particularly in citizenship, where the seduction of the 'right answer' is particularly strong. The virtue of saying, 'I don't know' should be acknowledged as a feature of working in democratic classrooms.
- There was strong support for the creation of dedicated 'safe spaces' where young people could 'find their voices' in an atmosphere of trust and openness. Such space is essential in both the primary and post-primary sectors. Creating and safeguarding such 'safe spaces' is a challenge for teacher education to encourage students to find and use their own voices.
- This creates a duty on teacher educators to encourage in students the acceptability and the creativity of the unknown in the preparation of some classes, through visible demonstration in their own practice.
- The power of experiential knowledge provides an informed stance that facilitates an inquiry path that is open and receptive to the unknown.
- The importance of the induction year should not be underestimated since it represents the first opportunity for NQTs to explore and develop the knowledge and skills acquired in during training.
- A key criterion for the sustainability of citizenship is its profile within schools. The importance of embedding citizenship within an institutional framework is an exercise that requires a whole school commitment rather than individual teacher responsibility.
- Citizenship education should be central to all school teaching and so should necessarily permeate teacher education. This will have implications for the development of staff capacity within ITE institutions.
- The status of citizenship should be clearly articulated to avoid any tendency towards an 'add on' mentality which minimises the capacity for full implementation. It is important, however, that teachers have the time and space to develop relevant programmes which facilitate extended collaborative practice within and across curriculum areas.

# Conference Programme

## Thursday 10 November

**Conference Chairperson: Mr Tom Boland, Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority**


- 2.45 Registration
- 3.30 Official Opening by **Ms Sile De Valera TD**, Minister of State at the Department of Education and Science.
- 4.00 **Professor Jagdish Gundara**, UNESCO Chair in International Studies and Teacher Education, Institute of Education, University of London; *Intercultural Teacher Education in Multicultural Societies*, followed by discussion.
- 5.00 Refreshments
- 5.30 **Dr Derick Wilson**, Senior Lecturer, University of Ulster and co-director, *Future Ways: Partisanship of Citizenship! Teacher Training as a Space for Critical Reflection?*
- 5.50 **Dr Dympna Devine**, Senior Lecturer, Department of Education, University College Dublin: *Teacher Education for Ethnic Diversity: Challenges and Opportunities from a Southern Irish Perspective*, followed by discussion
- 7.30 Reception and launch of 'Together Towards Inclusion' North-South project report.
- 8.15 Dinner

## Friday 11 November

**Conference Chairperson: Professor Richard McMinn, Principal, Stranmillis University College.**

- 9.05.1 **Ms Signe Marie Natvig Andreassen**, Rector, Gran School, Oslo: *To win in spite of...the Richness and Challenges of a Multinational School in Norway*
- 9.40 **Dr Roland Tormey**, University of Limerick: *Belonging, Emotion and Intercultural Teacher Education*
- 10.00 Discussion
- 10.25 SCoTENS website on citizenship. Dr Roger Austin and Ms Una O'Connor University of Ulster and Mr. Gerry Jeffers, NUI Maynooth
- 10.45 Refreshments
- 11.15 Workgroups
  - a) Taking a Whole School Approach in a Culturally Diverse Society: Ms Mary Gannon and Ms Margaret Patterson
  - b) Violence in Schools in a Culturally Diverse Society: Prof Mona O'Moore and Mr Stephen Minton
  - c) School Leadership in a Culturally Diverse Society: Dr Tom Hesketh and Dr Jim Gleeson
  - d) ICT & Citizenship in a Culturally Diverse Society: Dr Roger Austin and Dr Paul Conway



- 
- e) Teacher Education, Inclusion and the Integration of Special Needs:  
Mr Hugh Kearns and Dr Michael Shevlin
  - f) Preparing Teachers for a Culturally Diverse Society: Mr Gerry Jeffers  
and Ms Una O'Connor

- 12.45 Lunch
- 2.00 Professor John Coolahan on future directions for SCoTENS
- 2.20 Discussion of SCoTENS future directions and possible research projects
- 3.20 Report back session
- 4.00 Closing remarks by Dr Pauric Travers, President, St Patrick's College,  
Drumcondra.



## List of Conference Delegates

Andreassen Signe Marie Natvig Ms.	Rector, Gran School, Oslo
Austin Roger Dr	Head of School, School of Education, University of Ulster at Coleraine
Avery Hilary Ms.	Programme Leader, Subject Studies, Stranmillis University College
Boland Josephine Ms.	Lecturer, Education Department, NUI Galway
Boland Tom Mr.	Chief Executive, Higher Education Authority
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Carville Pat Ms.	Principal, St Patrick's College, Dungannon
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Coleman Eileen Ms.	Regional Development Officer, Civic, Social and Political Education, Department of Education and Science
Connaughton Breeda Ms.	Higher Executive Officer, North/South Co-operation Unit, Department of Education and Science
Conway Paul Dr.	Lecturer in Education, Education Department, University College Cork
Coolahan John Professor	Emeritus Professor, National University Ireland Maynooth
de Valera Síle Ms.	Minister of State, Department of Education and Science
Deegan Jim Dr.	Head of Education, Education Department, Mary Immaculate College
Devine Dymrna Dr	Lecturer in Education, Education Department, University College Dublin
Devlin Gerry Mr.	Senior Education Officer, General Teaching Council for NI
Devlin Rose Ms.	Senior Lecturer, Business Studies, St Mary's University College
Dinan Ann Ms.	Director, Education Development, Joint Managerial Body
Dinan Carmel Dr.	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Doherty Malachy Mr.	Past President, NAHT (NI)
Donnelly Caitlin Dr.	Lecturer, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
Donnelly Michelle Ms.	Business Studies Lecturer, St Mary's University College
Donnelly Philomena Dr	Education Department, St Patrick's College Drumcondra
Drudy Sheelagh Prof.	Professor of Education, Department of Education, University College Dublin




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Finn Peter Mr.	Acting Principal, St Mary's University College
Flanagan Donal Mr	Chief Executive, Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
Gannon Mary Dr.	Coordinator, Interculturalism Project Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin VEC
Gill Barbara Ms	Education Officer, Development and InterCultural Education Project, CICE
Gleeson Jim Dr.	Department of Education, University of Limerick
Gordon S.I. Dr	Managing Inspector, Department of Education
Gundara Jagdish Prof.	UNESCO Chair in International Studies & Teacher Education, Institute of Education, University of London
Hagan Martin Mr.	Senior Lecturer, Education Studies, Stranmillis University College
Hanratty Brian Mr.	St Mary's University College
Hennessy Frank Mr.	Head of Business Studies, St Mary's University College
Hesketh Tom Dr.	Director, Regional Training Unit
Hinchion Carmel Ms.	Lecturer in Teaching, Learning and Assessment, University of Limerick
Hogan Deirdre Ms.	University of Limerick
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Hughes Mairéad Ms.	Finance Manager & Administrator, Centre for Cross Border Studies
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Kirk Gordon Prof.	Academic Secretary, UCET
Lazenby Simpson Barbara Dr.	Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT), Trinity College Dublin
Longman Alan Mr.	Official, NAS/UWT.
Looney Anne Ms.	Chief Executive, National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
Mahon Tony Mr	Insight Ireland, Laois Education Centre
Malone Emer Ms	Programme Manager, Education Service, Leargas

## List of Conference Delegates

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McEvoy Lesley Mrs.	Lecturer, School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
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McGrath John Mr.	Vice President, NAHT (NI)
McKenna Mary Ms.	Sectoral Officer, North/South Ministerial Council
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Yarr Mary Ms.	Language Adviser, Craigavon Teachers' Centre

## Sectoral Conference Reports

Funded or part-funded by SCoTENS 2004-2005





## IASSEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2005 : PROGRAMME

### Monday 20th June

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 10.00 a.m. | Registration<br>Tea/ Coffee  |
| 10.30 a.m. | Welcome<br><b><u>Chair of IASSEE, Richard Greenwood (Stranmillis UC)</u></b>   |
| 10.40 a.m. | <b>Keynote Speech: Prof. R McMinn</b> (Principal, Stranmillis UC)<br><b><u>From the Tagus to the Lagan: Curriculum change in Northern Ireland in a European context</u></b>  |
| 11:30 a.m. | - <b>Alan McCully</b> (UU) Educational responses in a contested society<br>- <b>Brian Ruane</b> (Amnesty International) Human rights education in primary schools: The Lift Off Experience<br>Chair: Fionnuala Waldron   |
| 1.00 p.m.  | Lunch  |
| 2.00 p.m.  | - <b>Tracey Cuthbert</b> (Braniel PS) Use of the interactive whiteboard in the primary school- a demonstration<br>- <b>Richard Greenwood</b> (Stranmillis UC) A report on M.Phil research by science teacher Lynne Ellison on pupil and teacher perceptions of the use of interactive whiteboards in the teaching of science in a Lisburn grammar school |
| 3.15 p.m.  | Tea/ Coffee  |
| 3.45 p.m.  | - <b>Barbara Gill &amp; Claire O'Neill</b> (DICE) Workshop - Teaching about disasters – a development education perspective  |
| 4.45 p.m.  | - <b>Deirdre Butler</b> (St Pat's) Empowering Minds - creative ICT and CCTs: Science meets narrative in the digital age<br>Chair: Teresa Cash  |
| 5.15 p.m.  | Close  |
| 8.00 p.m.  | Conference Dinner  |





### Tuesday 21st June

- 9.30 a.m.      - **John McCullagh** (Stranmillis UC) An investigative approach to primary science through school-college partnership  
- **Lisa Corrie** (Year 4 BEd student, Stranmillis UC)  
Literacy and Science  
Chair: Julian Greenwood
- 10:50 a.m.      - Tea/ Coffee
- 11.10 a.m.      - **Elaine Regan** (Univ. of Limerick) Students' views of the science classroom experience  
- **Geraldine O'Connor** (CICE) Reflective journals and what they indicate about student learning in Science, History and Geography  
Chair: Janet Varley
- 12:20 p.m.      - **Susan Pike** (St Patrick's Drumcondra) New teachers' experiences in teaching primary geography
- 1.00 p.m.      Lunch
- 2.00 p.m.      **IASSEE research meeting**
- 3.00 p.m.      Close of conference

# IASSEE CONFERENCE

Stranmillis University College 20 & 21 June 2005

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## Conference Report

The fifth annual conference of IASSEE, the Irish Association for Social, Scientific and Environmental Education, was held in Stranmillis University College, Belfast on 20th and 21st June 2005. IASSEE is a group of teacher educators working in the areas of geography, history and science education. Ten institutions north and south are represented within the group. Many of us have a special interest in the teaching of these subjects in the primary school.

The conference had 32 delegates and speakers as well as some additional visitors.

The keynote speech was, fittingly, given by Professor Richard McMinn, Principal of the host institution, an historian and a member of the SCoTENS committee. The title of his presentation was 'From the Tagus to the Lagan: Curriculum change in Northern Ireland in a European context' in which he described the limited impact and visibility to date of the European Union's Lisbon Objectives for education, but indicated the clear linkages between the Objectives and the revisions to the Northern Ireland curriculum for schools, which will be phased in from 2007-2008 onwards.

The rest of the programme on Day 1 dealt with issues such as contested societies, human rights, the interactive whiteboard, development education and creative ICT. Day 2 had a focus on Science education, reflective journals and the experiences of new teachers. The conference ended with a discussion of achievements so far and future plans for IASSEE's ongoing research into student teachers' perceptions of and attitudes towards the subjects of Science, History and Geography.

**Richard Greenwood**

**[SCoTENS grant: £2000 ]**





## BUILDING RESEARCH CAPACITY NORTH AND SOUTH

### A joint conference convened by ESAI & BERA supported by SCoTENS

**18-19 February 2005**

This conference took place on Friday and Saturday February 18th & 19th at All Hallows College, Drumcondra, Dublin. It drew an attendance of 75 people and was well received.

The conference opened on Friday afternoon with a session setting the context for educational research on the island of Ireland and, more broadly, in the European context. John Gardner for the British Education Research Association (BERA) and Denis Bates for Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) gave inputs. This was followed by a workshop session in which participants discussed their own views and experiences on the provision and practice of educational research in Ireland. A rapporteurs' report back session was provided before the first keynote input, by Tom Schuller of the OECD. Schuller spoke on the European perspective on educational research and on the priorities which are likely to predominate in the near to medium term. John Furlong for BERA and Jim Gleeson for ESAI responded to the keynote address and grounded the macro issues in the realities of contemporary Irish practice.

The Friday evening dinner was provided for all participants as part of the conference programme. It was attended by the majority of the participants and offered a welcoming forum for discussion which continued into the evening.

Saturday morning started early with a summary of the previous day's work which prepared the way for the second keynote, delivered by Gareth Rees of the University of Cardiff. Following a workshop session, Conor Galvin for ESAI and John Gardner for BERA responded and summarised the general outcomes of the discussions. The conference then concluded with informal discussions over lunch.

The evaluation of the conference indicated a high level of satisfaction on the part of participants with the proceedings. A number of significant points emerged. Appreciation was expressed for the first joint ESAI and BERA event, especially as it focused on building research capacity and expertise on the island of Ireland. This was seen to be about networking and building key relationships which will be critical to the success of future ventures. The line up of speakers was also valued with representation from Europe, the UK and Ireland. Most of all, though, participants appreciated the localisation of the major European issues and trends within the Irish context, both North and South. The hope expressed was that this conference would mark the start of a process of consolidation and exchange between North and South. This could take the form of a series of seminars focusing on specific research skills rather than that of a large conference.

ESAI and BERA are deeply grateful for the practical support and encouragement which has been received from SCoTENS. This has been essential to the success of the undertaking. We are encouraged by SCoTENS interest in renewing its support during the coming year and look forward to building on the foundations so successfully laid in the conference just completed.

A more detailed report with recommendations for future initiatives is being finalised by the organizers.

**[SCoTENS Grant £5000]**





## THIRD NORTH-SOUTH CONFERENCE ON INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION

**3-4 June 2005**

In the past five years the ScOTENS sub-committee dealing with the initial and continuing professional development of teachers has organised three very successful North-South conferences involving representatives of ministries of education, university departments and colleges of education in both jurisdictions. The papers presented at the second conference were published by the Centre for Cross Border Studies for SCoTENS in November 2004.

The third North-South ITI conference took place in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra 3-4 June 2005. The conference theme was *The Competences Approach to Teacher Professional Development: Current Practice and Future Prospects* – a topic of particular interest in view of current developments related thereto in the OECD, the EU and the USA. The keynote speakers were Professor Marilyn Cochran-Smith of Boston College and Dr. John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus, NUI Maynooth. Other presenters included: Dr. A. Burke, St. Patrick's College, Dublin; Dr. J. Deegan, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick; Ms Emer Egan, Assistant Chief Inspector, Dept of Education and Science; Dr. J. Gleeson, University of Limerick; Dr. Dolores Loughrey, University of Ulster; Dr. E. McArdle, Registrar, General Teaching Council, Northern Ireland; Ms Janet Moody, University of Limerick; and Mr. S. Moran, Open University, Northern Ireland.

The complete schedule of presenters and presentation topics was as follows:




SPEAKER	INSTITUTION / POSITION	TOPIC
Dr. John Coolahan	Professor Emeritus of Education, National University of Ireland, Maynooth.	The operational environment for future planning in teacher education: OECD and EU initiatives.
Dr. Marilyn Cochran-Smith	John E. Cawthorne Professor of Education, Lynch School of Education, Boston College.	Standards and accountability for teacher education: consensus and debate.

#### APPROACHES TO THE APPRAISAL OF TEACHING IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Dr. Jim Deegan	Director, Postgraduate Studies in Education, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.	Approaches to the appraisal of teaching: ITE Primary.
Dr. Jim Gleeson	Head of Education, University of Limerick.	Approaches to the appraisal of teaching: ITE Post-Primary.
Ms Janet Moody	Lecturer in Education, University of Limerick.	
Ms Emer Egan	Assistant Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Science, Dublin.	Evaluation of teaching and teachers in Irish primary and post-primary schools.

#### APPROACHES TO THE APPRAISAL OF TEACHING IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Dr. Delores Loughrey	Director, Primary Education, University of Ulster.	Competences in ITE: A classroom perspective.
Dr. Eddie McArdle	Registrar, General Teaching Council, Northern Ireland.	Competences: Opportunity or constraint?
Mr. Sean Moran	Staff tutor for education, Open University, Northern Ireland.	The teacher as Phronimos – an alternative model.
Dr. Andy Burke	Dean of Education, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin.	Cross currents: Arguments for and against the competences approach.



The Conference concluded with a roundtable group discussion and a comprehensive plenary session.

Feedback from the participants in all three ITE conferences indicates that

- They found them timely, informative and very worthwhile.
- They provided a welcome forum for the discussion of common interests and the sharing of professional wisdom.
- There is considerable potential for further development of this initiative.

It is intended to publish the proceedings of the third conference.

Members of the ScOTENS ITE sub committee are: Barry Burgess (University of Ulster), Andy Burke (St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra), Rose Dolan (National University of Ireland, Maynooth) and Jim Gleeson (University of Limerick). It is intended to seek at least one more member from Northern Ireland and one from the Republic to replace Andy Burke who has served two terms.

**[SCoTENS Grant £5000]**

## Research and Exchange Reports

Funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2003-2005



# Together Towards Inclusion



## Addressing the issues of integrating Non-English-speaking children into Mainstream primary education

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## Purpose of the Project

*Together Towards Inclusion* is a North-South project organised by Integrate Ireland Language and Training (a campus company of Trinity College Dublin) and the Southern Education and Library Board (N.I.), and supported by SCoTENS. The aims of the project are to explore how structural and management issues must be addressed in order to meet the educational needs of pupils from non-English speaking backgrounds; and to develop a toolkit to provide support for principals and teachers in addressing the language and learning needs of non-English speaking children in the primary classroom.

The basis for seeking SCoTENS funding for this project was the practical experience already gained by IILT and SELB in meeting one of the particular challenges to primary education of the early years of the 21st century. The arrival in Ireland of children from families whose mother tongue did not allow ease of communication and whose cultural background did not appear to be immediately accessible, has caused those responsible for the educational success of children to question how such change may best be managed. The motivation to work in a North-South collaboration was based on the conviction that the sharing of expertise gained throughout the island of Ireland would generate a variety of perspectives and a rich basis for examination of the crucial issues. This has proved to be the case.

Ireland, North and South, is not alone in facing the challenge of integrating children into education. The movement of people between and within continents is a marked feature of the early twenty-first century. Many educational systems across the European Union, as well as those further afield, must make informed adjustments to practice if they are to address the educational needs of newcomer populations. It is important that the competent authorities, North and South, in Ireland do not move forward on the basis that this educational challenge is a temporary one. Such a view would seriously underestimate the importance of 'finding the right answers'.

The purpose of this collaborative project is to inform the vision and to ensure that the integration of children, from different ethnic backgrounds and mother tongues, into primary education, benefits educational culture as a whole. The funding of the project by SCoTENS has provided an opportunity for teaching professionals to meet, share experiences and ideas, identify common challenges, and learn from colleagues.


## Partners in the project

### **Integrate Ireland Language and Training:**

*Through education and training, to empower people of other cultures and languages to achieve a place in Irish society.*

Integrate Ireland Language and Training was originally established by the department of Education and Science as the Refugee Language Support Unit (RLSU) in March 1999. The RLSU was a two-year pilot project under the aegis of





Trinity College Dublin, Centre for Language and Communication Studies. At that time the primary function of the unit was to co-ordinate the provision of English language support for adult refugees admitted to Ireland.

By the end of the pilot project the RLSU had fulfilled the terms of reference laid down by the Minister of Education and Science. These included the development of English language proficiency benchmarks for the adult sector (vocational and pre-vocational) and for the school sector (primary and post-primary), and the design and delivery of English language courses appropriate to the needs of adult refugees. During the pilot project the RLSU also began to develop materials and provide in-service seminars to support primary and post-primary teachers specially appointed to teach English to non-English-speaking immigrant pupils.

In September 2001 the RLSU became Integrate Ireland Language and Training Ltd, a not-for-profit campus company of Trinity College Dublin. IILT has been allocated funding by the Department of Education and Science for the duration of the National Development Plan.

Since June 2000 IILT has been responsible for the development of a range of instruments and materials for use by language support teachers in primary and post-primary schools throughout Ireland. These teaching resources, and the appropriate approaches and methodology for their implementation in the classroom, are mediated through a series of regional in-service seminars which are held twice in each school year.

There has been a marked and steady increase in the number of language support teachers attending the seminars delivered by IILT. The sanctioning by the DES of additional posts each school year, as well as the provision of grant aid for schools, reflects a rapidly growing situation in primary education in southern Ireland. For details of the provision of language support see 6.4.4.

#### **Southern Education and Library Board:**

*To be valued for providing coherent high quality services to meet the needs of our user community.*

The Southern Education and Library Board serves the district council areas of Armagh, Banbridge, Cookstown, Craigavon, Dungannon and South Tyrone, and Newry and Mourne. It covers 1,450 square miles, with a total population of approximately 332,000 people, including 75,000 school pupils.

The mission of the board is to ensure that high quality education, youth and library support services exist throughout the area in order to promote learning, provide opportunities for personal development, and encourage individuals to acquire core skills. SELB also seeks to promote spiritual and moral values in individuals and, in the community, a sense of shared responsibility, respect for one another and appreciation of the worth of the individual person.



## Background to the project

The primary sectors of the educational systems in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland have had to address, in recent years, an increasing number of children enrolling in schools whose mother tongue is neither English nor Irish. This situation has developed as a result of the arrival of refugees, asylum seekers and, latterly, migrant workers. For the purpose of this document, such families will be referred to generically as 'migrant' families. The current trends of inward migration are set to continue, particularly as a result of enlargement of the EU in May 2004 and the strength of the economy in Ireland, North and South, necessitating the wide recruitment of workers for different sectors.

In both jurisdictions, primary level education is a right of every child and, consequently, the status of parents does not affect the access of children to formal education. This entitlement, combined with the relatively widespread location of migrant families, has meant that children have been enrolled in primary schools of all sizes, in all types of locations, and with variable levels of resources and support available to them.

The Department of Education (NI) and the Department of Education and Science (RoI) have addressed the particular needs of migrant children, and the schools in which they enrol, in different ways. Details of the current situation in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland are presented in sections 5 and 6.

## Working Method

### Principals

A consultative group of eight school principals, with particular experience in addressing this issue, were invited to meet in Integrate Ireland Language and Training's offices in Dublin on 16th November 2004. All principals represented primary schools where the arrival of children whose first language is not English has had an impact on the school as a whole, raises a number of questions about policy and sustainability, and raises questions about the effective inclusion of such pupils into the school and their full engagement with the curriculum.


### Teachers

Following the meeting of principals, a group of teachers was convened who are working with non-English speaking children in the schools represented by the principals.

The teachers' meetings provided a forum for discussion of the challenge under the following headings: *The community of the school and home/school relationships, the mainstream classroom, and language support*. These themes raised a number of questions but also many interesting suggestions, particularly examples of existing practice that should be shared and disseminated.

It is intended, therefore, that a second and subsequent outcome of this initial project, should appropriate funding be available, would be a document which





demonstrates how learning may be made more accessible to children from migrant families and contains some examples of good practice at the level of the community of the school. Such a 'toolkit' would have clear relevance both in pre-service teacher training and in-service professional development.

## THE CURRENT SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

### The newcomer population

In Northern Ireland the trend towards inward movements of population is of very recent date. The census conducted in 2001 predates the arrival of significant numbers of migrants to Northern Ireland and, as a consequence, can provide little statistical detail. The ethnic minority community, in general, is composed of migrant workers and existing minority ethnic communities including Chinese, Pakistani and Arabic speakers.

### The impact on the SELB area

There are no precise figures for the number of migrant workers in the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) area. However, most are EU nationals in particular from Portugal, Poland, and Lithuania. Non-EU nationals may be found in the hospital sector with many nurses coming from the Philippines. There is evidence of increasing numbers of immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe since the enlargement of the EU in May 2004. This immigration is a direct consequence of the economic demands of the labour market in Northern Ireland and would appear to be set to continue for the foreseeable future.

Over a period of four school years the number of children starting school in the SELB area with little or no English has increased by 700%. The impact of the arrival of children whose mother tongue is not English has been felt in both urban and rural schools across the area. Because there is no information flow between local employers and the schools in different catchment areas, it has proved impossible to plan for the arrival of new pupils or for the mobility of the migrant population. In February 2005, at least thirty mother tongues were identified in schools in the area (see table below).

Arabic	German	Latvian	Polish	Swedish
Bengali	Hindi	Lithuanian	Portuguese	Tag-a-log
Bulgarian	Hungarian	Malayan	Punjabi	Thai
Cantonese	Indian dialect	Mandarin	Romanian	Ukrainian
Danish	Italian	Marathi	Russian	Urdu

## Response to the challenge

There is currently no N.I. Department of Education policy on educational provision for those pupils for whom English is not the first language. The management of SELB has expressed, to the Department of Education, the urgent need for a coordinated strategic approach, with appropriate funding and within the current legislative framework (Northern Ireland Act).

Support in English as an Additional Language (EAL) has been provided in schools

in the SELB area on a peripatetic basis\*. This system has also been used in the other four Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland. EAL teachers provide targeted language support to individual pupils or small groups on a withdrawal basis. Provision is generally of the order of one hour twice per week. The peripatetic language support teachers also offer guidance to classroom teachers and school principals.

### From the principals' perspective

With changing contexts in education in Northern Ireland, there is considerable difficulty in addressing current needs for language support through the peripatetic system. There are several key obstacles to the provision of an effective language support programme. These obstacles include:

- The difficulty of recruiting suitably qualified/trained teachers
- The short contact time with pupils per week and the need to prioritise this time as new pupils arrive in a school, with the result that pupils must be dropped from the list before they have acquired adequate levels of English language proficiency
- The difficulty of managing the geographical spread of schools with newcomer pupils throughout the SELB area
- The absence of time and opportunity for joint planning between language support and classroom teachers
- The perception of peripatetic teachers as lower in professional status than other teachers in the school
- Meeting the cost of travel
- Issues and uncertainties arising between school management and EAL teachers with regard to accountability.

The Advisor in SELB who is responsible for the peripatetic team of EAL teachers has also identified new demands that arise from a changing landscape in primary education. These include:

- The need for the development of specific INSET provision as a matter of priority
- The requirement for inter-agency planning
- The need for liaison between all educational sectors and public and voluntary bodies
- The desirability of having interpreting and translation services available to SELB and/or individual schools as necessary.

### Pre-service training and guidelines

As yet, there is no training provided in teacher training colleges to prepare newly qualified teachers for the challenges of dealing with classrooms in which some or many of the pupils are not native speakers of English.

## RECOMMENDATIONS (Northern Ireland)

### 1 The peripatetic structure\*



- Prohibits the exchange and planning necessary for each language support pupil's educational development
- Creates a perception of lower status teaching
- Results in essential knowledge and expertise being removed from the school
- Forces decisions to be made about priority needs with the result that
- pupils are removed from language support despite the fact that they may still need it (on the arrival of more pupils in the school).

## 2 Budgetary provision

- It is essential that budgetary provision has adequate flexibility so that the needs of schools, resulting from the arrival of newcomer pupils during the school year, may be addressed appropriately
- There should be access to contingency budgets.

## 3 Standardised tests

- The inflexibility inherent in the system of standardised tests mitigates against pupils who require language support. It should be noted that this problem has also been identified south of the border.

## 4 Transfer procedures

- There is a need for clarification of transfer procedures, including exemption from standardised tests, for pupils moving from primary to post-primary education.

*\*From 1st September 2005, provision for ethnic minority pupils has changed in the Southern Education and Library Board. There is no longer a peripatetic EAL service. A new Ethnic Minorities' Achievement Team has been established. It consists of two advisory officers, managed by the Advisor for Languages. This team works with teachers and school leaders, providing advice and support on meeting the learning needs of ethnic minority children. It organises and delivers school and centre-based in-service support in both primary and post-primary schools*

## THE CURRENT SITUATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

### 6.1 The 'newcomer' population

In addition to the Vietnamese and Bosnian refugees who came to Ireland between 1979 and 1996 through UNHCR and at the invitation of the Irish Government, the Republic of Ireland became a destination of choice for economic migrants and asylum seekers in the latter half of the 1990s. The 'sudden' arrival of migrants coincided with growth in economic prosperity.

## Population and migration estimates April 2004

The estimated number of immigrants in the year to April 2004 was 50,100.



Source: Central Statistics Office, Dublin

Throughout the late 1990s the dominant groups of 'newcomers' came from sub-Saharan Africa and Eastern Europe. The status of families as asylum seekers, migrant workers or refugees did not affect the rights of children to access formal education, often very quickly after arrival in Ireland. The Government policy to disperse asylum seekers to different parts of the country meant that the impact of the new arrivals was felt in both rural and urban schools with a wide range of available teaching capacity, facilities, and resources. Despite initial difficulties and concerns about dealing with pupils from such varied cultural, religious and ethnic groups, primary principals and teachers rose to meet the challenge. Within a matter of a couple of school years, a high level of familiarity with the educational and other needs of the newcomer pupils and their families had developed.

Apart from the asylum seeker population, another category of newcomer pupils was created by the location of clusters of migrant workers in particular areas of employment. For example, some schools located in areas where the meat packing industry dominated, enrolled numbers of Portuguese-speaking children from Brazil, while those school located near large hospitals often enrolled children from Pakistan or the Philippines whose parents were employed in the health sector.

A partial survey of primary schools carried out in December 2004 in the western suburbs of Dublin indicated that the non-English speaking populations of a number of schools exceeded 25% and, in one case, reached almost 50%. Where newcomer pupil populations were large, typically in excess of twenty nationalities were represented in a school.

Albania	Italy	Nigeria	Sierra Leone	Vietnam
Angola	Japan	Norway	Spain	Zambia
Congo	Kosovo	Pakistan	South Africa	Zimbabwe
Croatia	Latvia	Philippines	Sudan	
Germany	Lithuania	Poland	Syria	
Ghana	Malaysia	Romania	Ukraine	
India	Moldova	Russia	USA	

Other countries represented in the primary educational system throughout Ireland include Afghanistan, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Bosnia, Burundi, Cameroon, Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, Ghana, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Macedonia, Pakistan, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Syria, Tajikistan, Uganda, Uzbekistan, Zaire. This list is by no means exhaustive.

It is in the context of migrant working families that the recent growth in the school-going population may be seen. Anecdotal evidence gained from discussion with teachers around Ireland would suggest that current increases in pupils requiring language support are more representative of the new EU countries than of the previous asylum seeker population. While it may be the case that many EU immigrants are young and single, there would appear to be growing evidence of children from Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Estonian family backgrounds. The table below gives some indication of trends in inward migration in the period from EU enlargement in May 2004 to the end of February 2005. The totals indicate the number of people from the 10 accession states who have been allocated PPS numbers.

Country	Total
Poland	32,648
Lithuania	14,700
Latvia	7,519
Slovakia	5,830
Czech Republic	3,755
Hungary	2,213
Estonia	1,952
Malta	148
Slovenia	75
Cyprus	28

*Source: Dept. of Social and Family Affairs*

#### **Population projections**

Population projections by the Central Statistics Office (CSO) forecast that immigration into Ireland will remain at significant levels until 2021. Two assumptions are proposed by the CSO which would entail inward migration at either 20,000 or 30,000 per annum for the next ten years, followed by a drop in levels after that time. Employers' organisations indicate the need for annual immigration of between 30,000 and 40,000 migrant workers in order to sustain the economy at existing levels. Inevitably, the levels of immigration suggested by these figures will continue to impact on the educational system as a whole and on the primary sector in particular.

#### **The response of the Department of Education and Science (DES)**

In the Republic of Ireland, the DES had, in the early 1990s, a system of peripatetic teachers who were responsible for addressing the language learning needs of Vietnamese and Bosnian refugee children. Because the settlement of refugee families was, at that time, the responsibility of the Refugee Agency, the families were located in a relatively small number of areas and the children were



effectively 'clustered' in a small number of schools. The arrival of growing numbers of Bosnian families during the mid 1990s changed this situation and the addition of large numbers of asylum seeker families towards the end of the 1990s presented a challenge which demanded immediate action. In the late 1990s the DES set up a structure of 'language support teachers' which continues to the present day.

A full-time temporary post of *language support teacher* is sanctioned for a school when the number of non-English speaking non-national pupils requiring additional help with the English language reaches 14. If there are between 3 and 13 non-English speaking pupils in the school, the support is based on two levels of grant assistance which allow for the provision of teaching hours and the acquisition of resources.

The widespread location of migrant families throughout Ireland has resulted in the enrolment of children in all types and sizes of primary schools with varying levels of support, resources and accommodation available.

It is worth noting that the term *non-national pupil* is no longer accurate as there are now children entering primary school who were born in Ireland but whose mother tongue is not English or Irish.

The DES charged Integrate Ireland Language and Training (then the Refugee Language Support Unit) in 2000 with the responsibility of providing support to the teachers appointed to language support posts.


### From the principal's perspective

#### Management

The effectiveness of the provision of a full-time post presents management difficulties because the temporary nature of this post requires that it should be renewed on a year-to-year basis. The principal may be informed by the end of June or beginning of July that a post has been sanctioned for the following school year. This allows for existing language support teacher(s) to have confirmation of employment or for the early recruitment of a teacher. However, where a third, fourth or fifth post is requested on the basis of large numbers of pupils requiring language support, this post is not confirmed until the list of children enrolled in the school is resubmitted to the DES in September. The difficulties of dealing with the situation in the school and recruiting an additional teacher after the school year has begun should not be underestimated.

A further concern for principals is the evidence that has been growing, in recent years, of English speaking (Irish) children entering school with lower levels of language skills than in the past. Combining this situation with increasing number of non-native English-speaking pupils, there is a real possibility that language standards will decrease, in general, if appropriate measures are not put in place. Critical among any measures is ensuring that children from non-English-speaking backgrounds receive the level of language support necessary to engage fully with





mainstream curriculum learning and with the activities of the community of the school as a whole. It is important to note that the situation currently exists where in excess of 50% of the pupils in a classroom are not native speakers of English.

### **Temporary posts**

The temporary nature of language support posts contributes to a sense of impermanence in the area of language support. From a planning perspective, it is virtually impossible, in many cases, to plan the language support programme so that it provides an effective element in the support structure of the school. With greater permanence of posts, it would be possible to develop language support in the school to meet more accurately and fully the needs of all concerned – the principal's management objectives, the needs of mainstream teachers, pupils' learning and socialisation needs, and parents' involvement in the education of their children.

### **The professionalisation of the domain**

In part as a consequence of 'last minute' confirmation of posts and recruitment, there is frequently a lack of experienced primary teachers to take up language support posts. Furthermore, the post of language support teacher tends to be held in low regard and perceived as an *ad hoc* situation within the school. This perception is highly detrimental to the overall effectiveness of language support as it mitigates against professional interaction between mainstream teachers and those providing language support. Inevitably, the pupil's progress, not only in language learning but also in relation to the curriculum in general, will fall victim to this environment.

### **In-service teacher development for language support teachers**

Evidence of the movement of teachers in and out of language support may be seen in the numbers of teachers attending in-service training provided by IILT. This intensive programme of in-service teacher development specifically for language support teachers and entirely related to the primary curriculum, has been provided by Integrate Ireland Language and Training and funded by the DES since June 2000.

Since autumn 2000 ten rounds of in-service seminars have been organised and delivered by IILT at regional locations. The seminars have been held in the autumn and spring terms of each school year. The initial national in-service seminar in June 2000 was attended by 28 teachers. The number of primary teachers attending seminars has increased steadily and significantly since that time, with in excess of 400 participants attending the spring round of six seminars held early in 2005. IILT expects to meet approximately 500 teachers in the round of seven seminars being held in autumn 2005.

The programme has resulted in many primary teachers throughout the country developing a high level of skill in the delivery of appropriate language support, then moving back to mainstream teaching because of the temporary nature of

language support posts. The loss to language support is, obviously, a gain to the mainstream classroom but, nonetheless, has resulted in an on-going need for teacher development which is growing year by year with increasing numbers of children enrolling in schools. Rather than solving the problem, therefore, the provision of in-service training has become a growing and ongoing necessity, the immediate effectiveness of which evaporates as the teacher leaves language support.

Anecdotal evidence would suggest that many qualified and experienced primary teachers would welcome the opportunity to continue to work as language support teachers if these were permanent positions and if they were perceived as key professionals within primary education.

The in-service training provided by Integrate Ireland Language Training is not available to class teachers. Only those employed as language support teachers (full-time or part-time) can avail of it. As indicated above, many of the qualified teachers will leave these posts in order to enter permanent teaching positions in the mainstream.

As yet, there is no training provided in teacher training colleges to prepare newly qualified teachers for the challenges of dealing with classrooms in which some or many of the pupils are not native speakers of English.


#### **From the child's perspective**

As soon as there are three children requiring language support in a school, application may be made for grant aid to provide language support hours. This grant aid, and the sanctioning of a full-time post, may take place at any stage during the school year as the numbers are reached by the arrival of new entrants to the school. Each child for whom language support is sought is entitled to two full school years of support. Support is provided on a withdrawal basis and recommendations about planning this support are provided by IILT on the basis of research carried out in schools.

Where provision is organised systematically in a school and delivery is focused and appropriate, two years of support is effective to support children in primary education to access the learning of the mainstream classroom. There is indeed evidence of a single year only of support being needed by some pupils in order to allow them to engage fully with mainstream education.

International research, however, indicates that there is considerable individual variation in rates of second language acquisition. Such factors as the age of the child on arrival, previous formal education, mother tongue, social interaction with other children, home attitudes, and the effect of the 'silent period', among others, will influence the rate of acquisition of English as a Second Language. Clearly there are cases where children would benefit from regular or sporadic access to a language support teacher over a longer period, possibly for the duration of their primary education.





This fact, combined with the current trends of inward migration, indicates that there is an urgent need for review of the current framework of provision for language support in the primary sector. It is essential, however, that such a review would be informed by the experience and observation of principals of primary schools for whom the education of non-English speaking children at all stages in primary education is an everyday challenge.

### **Curriculum and tools for language support**

In the summer of 2000, Integrate Ireland Language and Training agreed terms of reference for the provision of an in-service programme for primary and post-primary teachers providing language support, as follows:

- To analyse the linguistic demands of the primary and post-primary curricula and identify the language needed by non-English-speaking non-national pupils in order to participate fully in the educational process.
- To develop materials to support the learning of English as a second language in schools.
- To present materials, methodology and supplementary aids via an ongoing in-service training programme for language support teachers.

### **English language proficiency benchmarks**

Work undertaken in fulfillment of the first of these terms of reference yielded two sets of English Language Proficiency Benchmarks which reflected the linguistic demands of the primary and post-primary curricula respectively. The first version of the benchmarks was in use in schools from autumn 2000 until June 2003. However, as more and more support materials for teachers were developed – diagnostic and assessment instruments as well as teaching aids of various kinds – it became increasingly clear that the original benchmarks were limited, especially as regards the relation between the five communicative skills – listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing – and the content of the curricula. It was decided, therefore, to overcome those limitations by defining global scales of English language proficiency in greater detail than previously, including a new global scale of underlying linguistic competence, and rewriting the thematic units to take specific account of the five communicative skills. These new versions draw fully on the wealth of experience and insights contributed by teachers at in-service seminars.

The English Language Proficiency Benchmarks (version 2) were originally presented to primary and post-primary teachers at the round of in-service seminars held during the autumn term 2003. Since that time, teachers' feedback and comments have been positive and many language support teachers in the primary sector now rely totally on the Benchmarks to guide the delivery of their courses. The resulting high levels of English language proficiency achieved by pupils confirms the accuracy and effectiveness of the second version of the Benchmarks.

### **European Language Portfolio**

In fulfilment of the second term of reference, IILT has developed versions of the European Language Portfolio for primary and post-primary learners of English as a second language.

Validated by the Council of Europe's Validation Committee in 2001, these European Language Portfolios support the development of the individual learner's proficiency in English and at the same time provide teachers, principals, inspectors and parents with a dynamic record of progress. They coincide with key principles that underpin the Irish primary and post-primary curricula: learning how to learn; accommodating individual difference; basing learning on what is already known and on the immediate social and educational environment; integrating the development of new knowledge and skills; and, by making the learner an active agent in his/her learning, fostering the development of the learner's full potential.

It was decided to revise both European Language Portfolios to bring them into line with the revised benchmarks. The revision process began at the end of 2003 and the new draft versions were presented to teachers during the spring 2004 round of in-service seminars. Teachers greeted the new versions of the ELPs with enthusiasm and were immediately keen to use them with their pupils. The new ELP versions were then submitted to the Council of Europe for validation, which was granted in May 2004. This allowed for the production and distribution of the revised ELPs at the beginning of the school year 2004-05.

The European Language Portfolio has become a significant element in language support delivery in primary schools throughout Ireland. Many positive comments have been made by teachers about its use and implementation. An interesting feature of ELP use in schools is the support it provides to teachers who are new to the language support role in illustrating what pupils are capable of doing, and guiding the direction of language support so that it is entirely relevant to each individual pupil.


#### **Other tools and materials**

In addition to the Language Proficiency Benchmarks and the European Language Portfolio, IILT has developed and disseminated tools for monitoring pupils' progress; for communicating children's progress to parents; for eliciting feedback on a child's performance in the mainstream classroom; and an informational handbook for schools. Classroom materials based on the curriculum have been developed for addressing literacy problems in older children, using school text books in language support, working with specific skills of language (speaking and writing), and working with very young learners.

#### **Language proficiency tests**

The development of language proficiency tests began in 2003. This is a critical phase in the overall development of the support programme for both primary and post-primary schools. The tests, which are based on the Language Proficiency Benchmarks and therefore reflect the demands of primary and post-primary education, are intended to provide a means of assessing the proficiency levels of pupils' language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) on entry to the school and monitoring pupils' progress in learning English as language support proceeds. With the cooperation of principals and teachers, it has been possible to trial examples of these tests in order to ensure their suitability for implementation in the classroom and their accuracy in relation to pupils'





performance. The school year 2005-6 will see the conclusion of this project and the production of batteries of tests for use in schools. The testing process will continue to be monitored and evaluated and further adjustments to the tests will be made as necessary by IILT.

## **6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS (Republic of Ireland)**

### **1 Stability of teaching posts**

- There is an urgent need for the establishment of permanent language support teaching posts.
- Regular changes of staff are impacting negatively on the consistency and success of language support.
- Many schools, in which the enrolment of non-English speaking children is used as a positive influence, cannot build on a vibrant dynamic because of uncertainty about the post of language support teacher in the following school year.

### **2 Review of the two-year rule**

- It is necessary to review the rule which permits a child to have language support for two full school years. There is much evidence to demonstrate that while some children will achieve full integration into the mainstream within the two-year period, others will require language support for considerably longer and possibly throughout their time in primary education.

### **3 Use of standardised tests**

- A statement or circular is necessary regarding the use of standardised tests as a means of determining the educational progression of non-English speaking pupils

## **JOINT NORTH – SOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS**

Despite different systems for the provision of language support in primary schools north and south of the border, collaboration between IILT and SELB has illustrated clearly that many of the fundamental management and educational problems are the same. The identification of a strong common basis supports the view that progress in this important and dynamic area of education could be made through future joint action and, as a result, a number of common recommendations can be made:

### **Policy**

The competent authorities North and South should review the nature of the provision of support for non-English-speaking pupils in primary education in light of recent demographic changes and current examples of good practice. The formulation of policy specific to either Northern Ireland or the Republic of Ireland should take into consideration the effectiveness of North-South collaboration in relation to the following:



### **Common whole school issues**

- Home-school communication and parental involvement
- Pastoral care/school ethos
- Appropriate induction procedures
- Creating intercultural environments
- Changing role of Boards of Management

### **Partnership building**

- Consolidate current partnerships (IILT and SELB)
- Involve other stakeholders within the educational sector
- Promote inter-agency partnerships, e.g. pre-school provision, health, community services.

### **Pre-service and in-service training**

This project should help to inform the following:

- A module in pre-service training in all training colleges
- Training tools for delivery to whole school staff – including janitors, catering staff etc.
- Developing the expertise of classroom teachers to deal with varying levels of English language proficiency in the mainstream classroom
- School-based INSET
- Centre-based INSET

### **Common learning and assessment instruments**

The development, exchange and collaborative implementation of learning and assessment instruments to include the following:

- Entry testing to determine a pupil's language learning needs on admission
- Learning and assessment instruments to support learner autonomy and the mobility of pupils
- Means of monitoring/self-monitoring a pupil's progress in language learning and diagnosing particular areas requiring attention
- Pedagogically appropriate tests to confirm that a pupil has achieved the targets set for curriculum access

Language testing is a highly specialised area of activity and in this particular case will fulfil its functions only if it is integrated into the pedagogical processes by which language support is delivered. IILT has been in the process of developing and collaborating with teachers in piloting tests in the last two years. With the availability of funding, joint developments could be undertaken in this regard.





### Areas for immediate future collaboration

Agreement with the General Teaching Councils about: redefinition of existing specifications for classroom teachers to include issues raised by multilingual and multiethnic school populations; the competences required for language support teachers.

Participation in the development of appropriate modules for pre-service training. The collaborative development and piloting of toolkits for in-service professional development to support the challenge of integrating ESL pupils into the mainstream and to promote the achievement of the inclusive school.

### In conclusion

The experiences gained in this small-scale project have clearly demonstrated the richness of, and benefits to be gained from, 'inter-professional and inter-institutional linkages' North and South. The project has highlighted the potential for the effective joint delivery of INSET North and South. Furthermore, it has begun the process of building a new network of support for principals, teachers and teacher trainers on the basis of future collaborative planning. The project has generated highly-focused ideas for future collaboration on a North-South basis. Such collaboration will depend on the explicit support, including financial support, of the relevant competent authorities.

**Mary Yarr (SELB)**

**David Little (TCD, IILT)**

**Barbara Lazenby Simpson (TCD, IILT)**

**August 2005**

#### **Participating Schools:**

St Francis Xavier Junior School, Castleknock

Scoil Bhríde Girls National School, Blanchardstown

Scoil Bhríde Girls National School Palmerstown

Scoil na Mainistreach, De la Salle, Kildare Town

Holy Trinity Primary School, Cookstown

Windmill Integrated, Dungannon

Dungannon Primary School

St. Patrick's Primary School, Dungannon

**[SCoTENS Grant £5,000]**

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: REVIEWING POLICY AND PRACTICE IN IRELAND**

**Mr Hugh Kearns, Stranmillis University College**  
**Mr Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin**

### **Abstract**

*This paper reports the key conclusions of a shared review of pre-service teacher preparation for special educational needs in Ireland. The research was funded by SCoTENS as part of its remit to support collaboration in teacher education in Ireland, North and South. Policies for special educational needs and initial teacher education in the two jurisdictions are reviewed. The special education representatives of 13 institutions of initial teacher education in Ireland responded to a survey and met in conference for focused discussion. The authors identify patterns in the positioning of what is currently construed as SEN knowledge within pre-service courses and suggest a framework for the co-ordination of SEN knowledge and experience.*

### **Shared interests and uncertainties in the North and South of Ireland**


Current policy in the North and South of Ireland is to mainstream, wherever possible, pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in ordinary schools, but there is ongoing debate in both jurisdictions about strategy, with demands for improved resources in schools and improved teacher education at both initial and in-service stages. Reviews of initial teacher education (ITE) in both jurisdictions indicate a desire for increased teacher competence in curriculum delivery to more diverse pupils and a greater role for schools in the training process. Views about the pre-service training implications of national policies for more inclusive schools have been reviewed internationally (Savolainen et al. 2000). While socio-political and economic realities in different nation states render rates of change and the commitment to change uncertain, the general direction of change is such that teacher educators across a range of training institutions and national boundaries are increasingly being called to review practice.

In seeking to extend our knowledge of pre-service preparation for special educational needs in Ireland this research inevitably engaged with practice that is uncertain and changing. An all-Ireland review of policy and practice in this context is therefore important, not simply for the purpose of documenting provision as North-South relationships begin to develop, but to offer SEN specialists the support and diverse insights that shared review can provide. It was an important aim of the research that SEN specialists in ITE assess their role, share practice, experience and aspirations while taking into account changing constructions of SEN, uncertainty about inclusion and growing demands upon all teachers to address diversity.

### **Different systemic influences, North and South**

ITE providers, North and South, experience different levels of control that may affect the pace and the process of change. Statutory regulation and codified





practice in both SEN and ITE has been traditional practice in Northern Ireland. In the Republic of Ireland, education has been relatively immune from the bureaucracy, politicisation, scrutiny, ideological change and disillusionment with standards that Northern Ireland has experienced under direct rule. Being less politicised, responsibility for schools in the Republic is held at the periphery through diverse forms of school governance. In contrast, the five Education and Library Boards in the North act as extensions of government and the Department of Education, maintaining an appearance of educational uniformity. The education inspectorate in the Republic of Ireland operates largely with the consent of schools in a less regulated environment. In the North, the Department of Education inspects the delivery of a regulated curriculum, codified SEN practice, competence based ITE and prescribed training partnerships. In the Republic of Ireland, the Department of Education, rather than government, has shaped SEN provision reactively and piecemeal and in response to litigation and public concern through a series of targeted resources and curricular guidelines.

#### Provision for Training. North and South

The report of the Republic of Ireland Working Group on Primary Initial Teacher Education 'Preparing Teachers for the 21st Century' (Government of Ireland, 2002) coincided with an extensive growth in the training of resource teachers, special needs assistants, psychologists and a remedial teaching service. At pre-service level, three in ten new teachers from the larger colleges and one in ten from the smaller were reported to be well prepared to deal with special needs (p 49), and detailed recommendations for improvement were made.

Inspection reports of individual training institutions in Northern Ireland (<http://www.denidata.nics.gov.uk/>) have been silent on SEN issues and are preoccupied with the effectiveness of training partnerships, ITE accountability within a competence framework and the delivery of the N. Ireland statutory curriculum. The competence framework identifies two modest SEN competences as the responsibility of initial teacher education (NITEC, 1998 p. 12-13). [The teacher] (a) "demonstrates understanding of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice and (b) shows awareness of potential areas of learning difficulty within the subjects of the curriculum". Two further competences are indicated as a priority for the induction phase: [The teacher] (a) "is able to recognise pupils' special needs and provide appropriately for these." and (b) "identifies and assesses pupils' special educational needs in accordance with the Code of Practice." A final competence is indicated as a priority for the phase of Early Professional Development: [The teacher] "demonstrates the ability to devise, implement, monitor and review individual education plans for each stage of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice." (NITEC 1998. p.15).

On the other hand, inspections of SEN provision in Northern Ireland schools provide useful information to teacher educators regarding their strengths and shortcomings in providing pre-service students with models of good practice.

## Research Method and Questions

The very different backgrounds and histories of education provision in Northern Ireland and South of Ireland and the lack of research about SEN in ITE within the two jurisdictions were important contexts for this research. While participants gathered and shared in conference available information on their institutional practice, an agreed outcome of the research was to provide a general overview of provision identifying patterns, views and issues for further consideration. Participants, including the two researchers, were the institutional representatives of initial teacher education with particular responsibility for SEN. Thirteen providers of initial teacher education were identified. Just under half prepare teachers for post-primary education only. Just over half provide undergraduate (Bachelor of Education) and postgraduate programmes for both primary and post-primary teachers.


In the Republic of Ireland courses lead to the Higher National Diploma in Education and in Northern Ireland to the Postgraduate Certificate of Education. In the South, some smaller providers linked to particular religious or pedagogical traditions (Church of England, Froebel and Montessori) provide part of the training course, the remainder being taught in the validating university. The research sought to identify the knowledge, skills and values that students acquire as part of their initial preparation for teaching pupils with special educational needs. Furlong et al (2000) identify four dimensions of initial teacher education courses which they view as important determinants of the knowledge teachers acquire at this stage:

- A. Course structure
- B. Curriculum
- C. Personnel
- D. Strategies for Integrating Theory and Practice.

Participants were encouraged to report upon their institutional provision under these headings. The research sought to identify how provision for SEN was positioned within the undergraduate Bachelor of Education degree and the training year for postgraduate entrants (the Postgraduate Certificate and the Higher National Diploma). Course structure in the context of SEN includes the time allocated to special educational practice in school and the patterns of special educational experience (individual visits, serial visits and continuous block practice).

Curriculum in the context of SEN is defined as all aspects of provision that assist beginning teachers to understand and provide for pupils with special educational needs, learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Participants were requested to indicate content that is compulsory, optional, elective, assessed, certified, discrete, permeated (diffuse or embedded), practical and/or theoretical. They were asked to indicate school-based and college-based elements and the relationships between these elements. They reported upon the range of professional staff (academics and/or practitioners) providing the education or training. Participants were facilitated to indicate any other aspects of provision believed to be relevant to the enquiry.





The paper reports upon an initial electronic survey and focus group discussions conducted at a conference held in March 2004 and attended by eleven of the participating institutions. E-mail responses to a survey of provision were received from eleven institutions in April 2004. Two further institutions reported and were interviewed separately. Participants attending the conference were joined by members of the education inspectorates in both jurisdictions for the purpose of informing and supporting the discussion with information upon current policy and practice in the two jurisdictions. Conference representatives made individual presentations following the structure outlined above. They were further questioned and engaged in focused discussion upon issues raised in presentations. Finally participants considered the implications of their discussions for further research, networking and course development.

## Results

### SEN within Undergraduate Degree Courses

Three principal models of course structure can be identified in participants' summaries of SEN content in the primary BEd degree:

1. **Serial SEN inputs:** A sequence of SEN modules or course units is provided by SEN specialists in each year of the undergraduate degree with an additional elective and an associated special placement in the third or fourth year. There may be special educational visits annually, closely or loosely associated with the serial inputs. The content of the annual inputs may be assessed by coursework or examination, and at some point by portfolio reports of observations, reflections or reflective action in schools. The involvement of non specialist staff may be required if the latter are to be managed among larger groups.
2. **Single SEN input:** A single assessed course provided almost always by SEN specialists is provided, usually in the third year, in association with a more advanced elective course for interested students. The elective may offer or require a special placement, also in the third or fourth year. Specialist staff alone tend to be responsible.
3. **Serial units in inclusion courses or Equality Studies:** A serial programme setting SEN within an inclusive context and spanning several years of the undergraduate programme. The different parts of this provision may comprise Special Educational Needs, Education Disadvantage and Development or Intercultural Education.
4. **Permeated SEN content:** All SEN content may be embedded or permeated within a degree programme with little or no discrete time allocation for SEN. There is a general view that diverse forms of explicit and implicit SEN content tend to permeate the first three undergraduate years of Education Studies, Teaching Studies and Curriculum Studies. The wide range of generalists and specialists contributing to these courses reflects a broad range of tutor interests and variable experience of learning difficulties. In some cases and to some extent permeation of SEN content in these course units may be planned and monitored. In these cases the SEN dimensions may be explicitly written into the programme objectives and may be assessed.



5. **Combinations of the above:** While permeation is often assumed, an additional and compulsory SEN unit is also provided in order to consolidate, integrate or complement what is developed elsewhere in the programme. Permeation may be confidently assumed by some because of the generic nature of programme content throughout the three or four year programmes of Education Studies, Teaching Studies and/or Curriculum Studies. This may be a favoured approach, preferable to the clinical-rehabilitative approaches adopted by highly focused SEN courses. These programmes are believed to introduce overarching knowledge about learning, child development, curriculum and professional development, raising issues central to all teaching contexts. The programmes are provided by a variety of specialists (Early Years, Lower Primary, Upper Primary, Special Education and Secondary or Subject specialists). There may also be a single, discrete and assessed course provided by SEN specialists, usually in the third year, often with an elective and possible SEN placement in the third or fourth year. Where there are serial or annual SEN inputs, permeation is generally believed to be a *sine qua non* of preparation for teaching diverse pupils.


### Postgraduate Diploma Courses

Three main patterns of course structure can be identified in participants' summaries of SEN content in the Higher National and the Postgraduate Diploma courses.

1. **Serial SEN inputs:** A co-ordinated Special Educational Needs programme is delivered by a specialist or range of invited specialists, often with the option to complete coursework in the area and/or a supervised special placement, perhaps in the schools of guest speakers.
2. **Diffuse SEN and SEN-related inputs:** A range of individual lectures or workshops on SEN and related topics delivered by a variety of specialists throughout the time allocated in college/university. These tend not to be assessed. A wide range of session titles are evident: Literacy in Learning; Pupils with Learning Difficulties; The Special Needs Code of Practice; Underachievement; Inclusive Education; Differentiation in the Classroom; Bullying; Child Protection Legislation and Guidance; Behaviour Management; Provisions for Pupils with Disabilities; Pastoral Care; Self-esteem; Working with Parents; Information and Communications Technology and SEN. There may be an additional elective and linked placement for interested students.
3. **Permeated SEN and SEN-related content:** Diverse forms of explicit or implicit permeation of SEN provision is reported to be present, usually in the Educational Studies components of the course within units on the Psychology and Sociology of Education.

Total dedicated time for the focused study of SEN appears to be greatest in the first pattern of undergraduate provision described above (Serial SEN inputs). One institution provides approximately 90 hours of SEN content face-to-face for all students over the first three years (3 x 30). Another provides 62 contact hours for





all students over the same period (3 x 21) with the additional option to complete a further elective involving 42 contact hours in the third year. These institutions each provide 30 contact teaching hours for their primary one-year postgraduate students. In both cases SEN focused visits are standard practice and there are short placements of four days duration in selected SEN contexts. The placements and visits are integrated with the academic course content. Academic knowledge and school-based applications are closely related for purposes of promoting generalisation of the content to a range of teaching contexts. Visits and placements are focused upon particular issues and illustrate particular cases raised in lectures and seminars. The visits are designed to accelerate learning transfer from theory to practice and are focused upon solving practical problems that are frequently encountered by students in schools.

#### **Linking academic and experiential learning: portfolios, learning partnerships and on-line mentoring**

The linking of academic and experiential learning is structured by some providers via a teaching studies portfolio that is wholly or partly dedicated to special educational needs. In some cases the portfolio may require or support a situational analysis, the collection of information upon school provision, student observation and reflection upon key issues and questions. Time-consuming consultation with schools is thought necessary if these observations go beyond general observation and reflection and require pupil diagnostic assessment, the formal interviewing of teachers and pupils, or the shared review of policy documents gathered by students in a range of schools. Despite the obvious challenges to school/university communication systems and the constraints of time and proximity, close contacts with real classrooms and professional development in schools are achieved and commonly offered as examples of best practice. The range of institutional links and partnerships of this kind tend to go unpublicised and are worthy of further investigation.

In some institutions, school-university learning partnerships collaboratively address a range of issues of immediate concern to students and may produce case-based resources for study by other students. In one institution, eighteen postgraduate students are providing classroom support to one large special school seeking to develop an innovatory approach to teaching literacy and numeracy. In return, individual teachers are timetabled to provide tuition for the postgraduate students prior to periods of classroom intervention or action research. In another university, classroom-based action and reflection is discussed through video-conferencing. Student teachers are mentored on-line and the discussion sites are archived for continuing discussion by other students. In a third, different groups of students are visiting a range of special schools, support services and inclusive settings. They return to college to share their experiences in workshops with other students. One group visits a referral unit for children with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties and returns to college to make a presentation to the entire student cohort. These practices are considered important ways of developing varied and flexible ways of achieving transfer of training between university and classroom learning.

### Planning for variety, depth and the dissemination of student learning

It is evident that while some providers may plan for continuity of experience in long block placements, others plan for a variety of student experience in shorter visits. In contrast to courses in which a wide range of individual student experiences and contacts in schools are selected to enrich and illuminate academic teaching and promote student participation in academic teaching, other courses may be more individualised and planned around a sequence of visits and student-teacher enquiries corresponding to topics introduced in academic teaching sessions. The resulting information may not be shared but becomes part of individual student assessment. One provider of serial and discrete SEN input throughout the initial training course schedules the academic content. In turn, the programme addresses issues that will focus student observation and reflection in schools.

Issues include: signs and symptoms of disability; legal and philosophical issues; aetiology and prevalence; current provision, policy and practice in Ireland; methods of teaching, assessment and screening; multidisciplinary and collaborative approaches; the uses of Individual Education Plans for a range of pupils.


The availability of special schools and special teaching settings demonstrating best practice may be difficult for providers to organise for their very large student cohorts. For other reasons, less elaborate or specialist training resources may actually be preferred. One provider asserts a strong preference for links and placements with a range of inclusive mainstream schools. Special school visits are not planned and placements not particularly favoured. Many brief placements in a wider range of mainstream schools with focused SEN observation and reflection in each are preferred to the single long block favoured by providers following an apprenticeship and competence-based training model.

In one institution, the development of SEN content over the first three undergraduate years (30 hours per year) commences with the students past experience of learning difficulty. Portfolios are personal rather than technological. They emphasise student voices and narratives rather than bureaucratic accountability for plans and actions, encouraging emerging feelings about the teaching of pupils with difficulties over short periods in a wider variety of schools. A single 30-hour course with the same content and aims is condensed and provided for the one-year postgraduate cohort. The approach is characterised by synchronised lectures, visits, placements and shared student presentations. The collaboration of students, rather than the collaboration of schools, is clearly a prerequisite for an approach based upon variety of experience and not simply the systematic coverage of content. Serial progression for one undergraduate group is described below.

#### ***Year One: Introduction and awareness***

*Student exploration of own attitudes to SEN; personal experiences of disability and learning difficulty; values exploration re deficit, medical, inclusive models of*





*provision; labelling; SEN in public perception and media; history of SEN in Ireland and US; overview of policy documents; influence of US.*

***Year Two: General and specific difficulties***

*Observing children; an overview of the range of pupil performance, experiences, needs, interests, characteristics, abilities, learning styles and disabilities; individualised learning; gifted children; behaviour management; multi-sensory education; differentiation - an integral part of teaching methodology.*

***Year Three: The continuum of disabilities***

*Training in instructional approaches, performance objectives and task analysis; developing pupil adaptive strategies; differentiated planning and teaching; understanding and managing emotional/behavioural/social difficulties; assessment and provision in respect of ASD, Asperger's Syndrome, sensory impairments, dyslexia, cerebral palsy, Down Syndrome, profound disabilities, physical disabilities; introduction to pictorial/sign communication systems and sign language.*

***Year Four: Professional collaboration and educational organisation***

*Multi-disciplinary and collaborative processes involving a range of parents, professionals, agencies and schools.*

It is evident from the comments of participants in this research that while all of this content may be addressed in academic teaching sessions, pupil contacts and practical experience of particular forms of provision are difficult to plan. In institutions providing serial and discrete provision, student numbers may be relatively lower, the proportions of SEN specialist staff higher, and planning is possible. Consequently, more direct relationships between SEN specialist staff and a group of partner schools are described. A more extensive range of SEN content and experience appears to be achieved through the co-ordination of taught units with matched visits to schools, enabling shared student presentations of teaching notes and portfolio evidence. Frequent and varied access to special educational settings for all students is achieved because individual placements are brief and long teaching blocks are not required. A student support and personal research role rather than an apprenticeship or teaching role may be emphasised in special placements.

Total student contact time with pupils who have learning difficulty appears greater when a series of SEN support and research placements rather than a whole class teaching block is attempted. The assessment of student knowledge of SEN issues also appears to be greater. A fundamental consideration raised in this research is the proportion of SEN academic input to SEN workplace learning time, and the sustainability of tutor-school contacts in ensuring links between the two. The extent to which ITE course inputs in respect of SEN are varied, information-rich and enthusiastic of a range of discourses, practices and values, needs to be contrasted with others that are centred on technical competence in single placements. Teacher educators and policy makers may need to decide whether students in initial training require the stimulus of a range of brief and shared special educational experiences or the intensity of individual training preparation and contact across a more limited range of experience.

### Mainstream competence before special: questioning the logic

In the larger institutions, SEN issues tend to be approached gradually in permeated provision over the first two undergraduate years within Education Studies, Teaching Studies or Curriculum Studies. Where it is provided, a dedicated SEN course is commonly delayed until the third year or fourth year and may range from 14 to 26 contact teaching hours. The delay is argued on grounds that undergraduate student teachers may not be ready to provide differentiated teaching to individuals in the early stages of training. Fuller's three-stage model of teacher development (Fuller, 1969) from concern about self, to concern about tasks, to concern about learners and teaching outcomes, is well supported by many subsequent studies (Conway & Clark, 2003), but the findings may simply reflect a prevailing interventionist approach to SEN in schools and a consequent concerns-based culture in pre-service teacher preparation. Implicit in the model may be the perceived priorities of a 'commercialised' rather than a 'social service form of teacher professionalism' (Hanlon 1998, quoted in Furlong et al, 2000. p 170). The model could be said to lean towards instrumental development of competent student performance rather than a constructivist or practitioner-reflective discourse.

In some institutions, the third year teaching practice for undergraduates may perhaps be said to encourage student concern about competence in differentiated teaching in contrast to earlier concerns about competence in whole class management. The dedicated SEN module may be seen as a supportive element in this approach. The same delayed specialist content may be provided in shortened form to postgraduate teachers. Postgraduate primary students tend, out of necessity, to have less dedicated SEN time, ranging from 10 to 30 hours over the training year. A delayed SEN elective, often in the third or fourth year, is commonly available to undergraduate primary teachers and, in some cases, may also be available to primary postgraduates.


The complexities of auditing permeated SEN provision were encountered in conducting this research. Many of the participants, as institutional representatives for SEN, acknowledged the difficulty in being clear about what is permeated in a course of initial teacher education given the number and range of specialists and the complex range of content areas and changes to courses over time. Few participants could claim to have conducted a formal institution-wide audit of permeated SEN provision other than through scrutiny of the course handbooks. The permeated SEN provision in one institution across Education and Curriculum Studies is extracted and described below. The author acknowledges that additional or similar content will have been covered within Teaching Studies, during school-based mentoring, or the plenary sessions following periods of school experience.

#### **Year 1 Education Studies: SEN related extracts**

*The professional responsibilities of teachers for all pupils; the diversity of abilities and needs in mainstream schools; psychological development in childhood and adolescence; self-esteem and self-concept; managing emotional and behavioural difficulties; parents and their children; individual differences in learning and*







*socialisation; social disadvantage; language and literacy in the home; individual educational planning for social / behavioural difficulties.*

**Year 2 Education Studies: SEN related extracts**

*Observing children; the teacher's role in identification; curriculum adaptation, assessment and differentiation; the psychology and sociology of motivation and learning; developmental (social and emotional) difficulties; learning styles; multiple intelligences; meta-cognition and learning strategies; the psychology of learning and principles of instruction; information processing in reading and problem-solving.*

**Year 3 Education Studies: SEN related extracts**

*School ethos; staff relationships; teacher professionalism; collaboration; policy development; community relationships; reflective and evidential practice; professional standards; changing professionalism of teachers; inclusive schooling; processes of early identification and the teachers role; Northern Ireland curriculum accommodations for special educational needs in early years; curriculum assessment and differentiation; psychology and sociology of motivation, learning styles; multiple intelligences; meta-cognition and learning strategies.*

**Years 1-3 Curriculum Studies (SEN Literacy and Numeracy Extracts)**

*SEN addressed in all years; early assessment and identification of communication skills in literacy and numeracy; observation, testing and diagnosis in oral and written language; error pattern/miscue analysis; running records in reading; reading readiness; reading recovery; differentiated and diagnostic teaching; multi-sensory teaching of gender and social issues in the curriculum; the assessment of numeracy; what makes mathematics difficult?; signs of difficulty in mathematics.*

**Special Education in post-primary initial teacher education**

The time allocation for special educational content in the initial training of postgraduate post-primary teachers appears more varied and less well defined than for their primary undergraduate counterparts. Consequently, time allocations are more difficult to obtain. The difficulty may arise partly in the organisation of the student cohort by curriculum subject into different teaching practice groups, and the simultaneous fragmentation of SEN content into individual lectures or groups of seminars upon specific issues: behaviour management, discipline in schools, language and learning, raising pupil self-esteem, pupils with learning difficulties, readability and study skills, counselling and pastoral care in schools, literacy and numeracy across the curriculum etc. Consequently it is not uncommon to hear that there is "no unit or module" or "no one unit or module" specifically dedicated to SEN. Estimates of contact teaching time for explicit SEN content varied from zero to 10 hours over the training year, but estimates are difficult to obtain where on-line learning, web-based collaborative learning, e-portfolios and mentoring at a distance have become standard practice.



In one institution a core SEN unit of four hours is taught face-to-face to a group of mixed subject specialists mid-way through a course of only 10 months, following upon their first experience of teaching in a wide range of mainstream secondary school contexts. In a second institution, an introductory SEN unit for all students offers an elective whereby reflective practice with a SEN focus is managed online, enables shared student learning via discussion sites, provides additional content through a dedicated website and requires completion of a reflective log. In a third, a compulsory SEN unit is taught to secondary teachers mid-way through the training year, and assessed by formal examination after a second period of school experience in which a focus upon differentiation and SEN is encouraged.

While certification of completion is rarely provided in respect of SEN training, all undergraduate SEN provision tends to be assessed, usually by formal written examination, sometimes involving case studies testing student reflection in problem situations. The requirement to submit for assessment reflective diaries and coursework portfolios is not uncommon. Focus upon SEN issues may be required, but this is more likely within special education electives and among small postgraduate cohorts where student numbers are manageable and special teaching placements can be provided.

### Difficulties with special placements

Special school and unit placements are not widely available to students for reasons other than the strategic. In some institutions it is traditional for students to organise their own school placements and the range of school experience is entirely dependent upon student choice. In the Republic of Ireland only primary teachers can teach in special schools. Hence secondary teachers in training are less likely to choose special electives.

While secondary trained teachers are recruited by special schools in Northern Ireland, completing a special elective and placement in the final year may be thought prejudicial to the career prospects of the subject specialist and to the achievement of good grades on the final teaching practice. Secondary students specialising in Religious Studies and ICT are currently opting to complete special placements, but specialist students of other subjects (Business Studies, Design and Technology) feel that they cannot achieve through special placements the level of subject experience they need.

Special placements are considered problematic by a number of initial teacher educators. Legal and insurance difficulties appear to be a cause of concern for some. Others express concerns that schools and staff with SEN responsibilities may not be appropriate for training beginning teachers. There are concerns about confidentiality and whether students could or should be given access to confidential reports on pupils. A higher level of supervision is felt necessary in special placements than could be provided in the currently allocated time and with current personnel.





### The SEN Content of initial teacher education courses


A majority of participants in this research were prepared to speak of the content of core SEN units and electives rather than report upon the wider provisions within their institutions. Tutor interests, teaching experience and research backgrounds were observed to be a major factor in determining course content. This was particularly the case where SEN tutors were drawn from a pool of external practitioners and guest speakers. Detailed institutional audits are required if a more detailed picture is to be achieved. Participants in this study tended to teach both dedicated SEN modules and others in which permeated SEN content was identified. Descriptions of the course content of all discrete SEN units, electives and of the SEN content reported to be permeated in other modules were therefore gathered for undergraduate and postgraduate courses. 12 categories of content were identified. More research is needed to establish the range and depth of coverage of this content for undergraduate and postgraduate teachers. All the 12 areas could be found to varying degrees within core content, in the electives and permeated in other courses.

1. **Administrative, bureaucratic, organisational, legalistic and procedural knowledge.** This knowledge was most frequently included in core SEN content and electives in Northern Ireland. It was seldom reported as permeated in other content. The knowledge informs students about existing and forthcoming statutory, professional, legal and administrative requirements and codes of conduct in respect of SEN. It may include information on the developing roles of education bodies, professionals, officials and agencies. The knowledge is drawn from relevant acts and initiatives, school policies, legal cases and guidelines, formats for notification and reporting, ethics of professional relationships, rights and duties, formal stages of pupil assessment and formal instruments for teacher self-assessment in the area of SEN using competence descriptors (Northern Ireland). Inspection reports and research summaries may also be used.
2. **Diagnostic/prescriptive and psychometric knowledge.** Some institutions provide a comprehensive course in formal assessment and testing for all students and seek to extend this to embrace a wide range of pupils. SEN course units may enable study of underachieving pupils across a range of salient abilities and identify stages in the development of key skills. These may include reading, writing, oral language, movement, play, communication, the emotions, cognition, study skills and social skills with a view to informing diagnosis, the prescription of remedial or precision teaching and the writing of individual reports and education plans. Standardised and criterion referenced tests or developmental checklists tend to be examined and may be made available for use in schools.
3. **Knowledge of disabilities.** This body of knowledge includes signs, symptoms, aetiology and prevalence of major disabilities, and difficulties with information about disability agencies and websites and outline guidance on strategies for teaching. The knowledge is provided most often

within core SEN content and the electives. Units focusing upon a range of disabilities may be core in one programme and optional in another. The range of disabilities addressed and technologies introduced may vary widely. Responding to dyslexia, general learning difficulty and emotional and behavioural difficulty was reported as permeating Psychological studies, Teaching studies and English modules in different institutions.

4. **Sociological knowledge.** This includes knowledge about disaffection, the social context of achievement, peer group pressure, social identity, the experiences of minorities, culture and schooling, culture and pedagogy, subculture, intercultural learning, injustice arising from gender and ethnicity. This knowledge may be contained in course units drawing upon the sociology of education or in units focused upon disaffection and inclusive education. It is less evident within core SEN units and electives.
5. **Knowledge of special educational resources.** This tends to include knowledge about the uses of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in teaching pupils with diverse needs, and learning difficulties and in motivating disaffected and gifted pupils. Also included was knowledge about resource evaluation, the readability and suitability of texts for pupils of different ages, ethnicity, spoken language background and interests. This knowledge was least frequently reported as permeated within other courses and most frequently indicated within core SEN units and electives.
6. **Classroom management for differentiation and inclusion.** Strategies for managing underachieving or highly gifted pupils alone, individually or in collaboration with resource teachers was commonly reported, particularly within teaching studies courses. Some students may be introduced to research in mixed ability teaching methods. Forms of pupil grouping, peer support, withdrawal, support teaching, team teaching, classroom organisation and timetabling may be evaluated, but not always or exclusively from a SEN perspective. Students are made aware of the additional collaboration, planning and supervision required in respect of identified pupils; of the need for clear rules and routines in the context of challenging behaviour, and the organisation of resources and time for pupils with very varied abilities, learning styles and attention spans. Students may see video of schools deemed to practice full inclusion successfully, but most are unlikely to be placed in fully inclusive classrooms or experience the range of internal and external resources to support full inclusion.
7. **Diagnostic and precision teaching.** This includes advice about the precision teaching of basic skills (social, literacy and numeracy skills) to individuals with well defined difficulties (Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulty, Dyslexia and Down Syndrome) and may be illustrated by pupil case histories taken from recommended texts, purchased workshop materials, or by using in-house video and the placement portfolios of former students. Applied behavioural analysis, task analysis and the sequential adaptation and recording of teaching plans





based upon observation and collaborative reviews are part of the content in this approach. Plenary discussion with students following observation of teaching in schools may be video-recorded for seminar discussion. This practice was most frequently reported to occur in preparation for placements linked to electives. In at least one institution discussion may be managed on-line and archived for further study.

8. **Philosophical and ethical issues:** Students may spend some time considering principles underpinning special educational policy and trace these historically from Warnock through subsequent policy documents. The ethical dimensions of the debate about inclusion, streaming, mixed ability teaching, labelling, equality and human rights are reviewed. Changing and conflicting views of teacher professionalism and of SEN may be explored (social service, restricted-extended, commercialised, democratic definitions of teacher professionalism).
9. **Alternative approaches to curriculum:** Within Curriculum Studies, Philosophical Studies in Education, Studies in Inclusion or Equality Studies, the implications for some pupils of a curriculum based upon subject disciplines with sharply defined boundaries and tight teacher control are considered. The aim may be to develop teacher sensitivity to disability, multiple intelligences, cultural diversity, multilingualism, sexism/sexuality, racism, religious and/or rural/urban differences. Alternatively, the aim may be to assist students in planning placement schemes of work with learning activities that pay greater attention to vocational social, personal and community needs.
10. **Child development and pedagogy:** These course units introduce students to a study of child development that is designed to advance understanding of the origins and implications of individual differences with some focus upon disability, deprivation and developmental delay. Topics include critical stages in cognitive, emotional, social and motor development, child-rearing, the use of scaffolding, theories of learning, development and related pedagogies for primary and secondary teachers including Montessori, Froebel, Reggio Emilia, Freinet and Dewey.
11. **Case-based reasoning and problem solving:** Students identify issues and questions raised by selected case studies focused upon individual pupils, categories of disability, classrooms, teacher records and/or individualised programmes from mainstream and special settings. Students discuss, write and evaluate pupil assessment profiles, reading records and annotated pupil work.
12. **Personal / participatory action research:** Students are trained in the management of action research in special settings, in clarifying intent, gathering evidence, involving others and in selecting strategies of teaching, monitoring and evaluation. They are supported in maintaining and sharing reflective teaching diaries alone or with a collaborating student, recording critical actions and reflections.

The extensive range of SEN content gathered by participants in this research is generally judged to exceed what can be reasonably expected of every beginning teacher within core time. All is believed to be relevant and much is believed to be expected by external pressure groups. Prioritisation, identifying progression and managing the classroom applications of SEN core content are believed to be essential aspects of collaboration if there is to be standardisation across institutions.

Electives vary extensively in the kinds of progression they offer. Some provide general introductions to learning difficulties, differentiation and the development of inclusive practice in mainstream classrooms. Alternatively, electives may be highly specialist, focusing in some depth upon pupils with formally assessed disabilities and perhaps requiring a portfolio of verifiable action and reflection. Primary undergraduate students completing courses that include a core SEN option are more likely to be offered highly specialist electives of this nature. While SEN electives are reported to be well attended and highly valued by students, there is as yet little information on the range of electives on offer, the numbers of students taking SEN electives and the dynamics of student choice. Many electives were reported to explore generic issues in teaching and to overlap with SEN electives. Those focusing upon pastoral care, classroom management and ICT were frequently reported to facilitate reflective practice in the areas of disadvantage, underachievement and learning difficulty.

## Discussion

Inspection and review of initial teacher education in respect of special educational needs has been very recent and 'light touch' in the North and South of Ireland, but criticisms have been common elsewhere. SEN content that is diffuse or permeated across the taught elements of ITE has been criticised as insufficiently focussed and of variable quality (Mittler, 1992; Davies & Garner, 1997). Warnock (DES, 1978) found courses in child development to be too theoretical and limited in scope, paying insufficient attention to the individual differences in learning caused by common disabilities (12.6).

In Ireland, the time has perhaps come for an in-depth collaborative assessment of the ways in which SEN knowledge, skills and values permeate teacher education programmes. Review of these programmes may need to ask how and to what extent they can or ought to provide (a) knowledge (b) skills and (c) values in respect of (i) the full range of pupils, (ii) common SEN management and support systems, (iii) special educational technologies and (iv) more inclusive curricula. The matrix suggested in Table 1 below is offered as a possible strategy for institutional review. Entries in the body of the matrix reflect the range of content permeation suggested by participants in this study.





**Table 1. Sample matrix identifying the SEN content permeating undergraduate programmes of initial teacher education.**

	Special / Diverse Learners	SEN Management & Support Systems	SEN Teaching Resources	Inclusive / Adapted Curricula
Knowledge	Psychological / Sociological / Intercultural and/or Teaching Studies	Professional and/or Teaching Studies	Educational Technology / Curriculum and/or Teaching Studies	Curriculum / Subject / Equality, Intercultural and/or Teaching Studies
Skills	Psychological / Professional and/or Teaching Studies	Professional and/or Teaching Studies	Educational Technology / Curriculum and/or Teaching Studies	Psychological / Curriculum and/or Teaching Studies
Values	Philosophical / Psychological / Sociological and/or Teaching Studies	Professional and/or Teaching Studies	Curriculum and/or Teaching Studies	Philosophical / Sociological and/or Teaching Studies

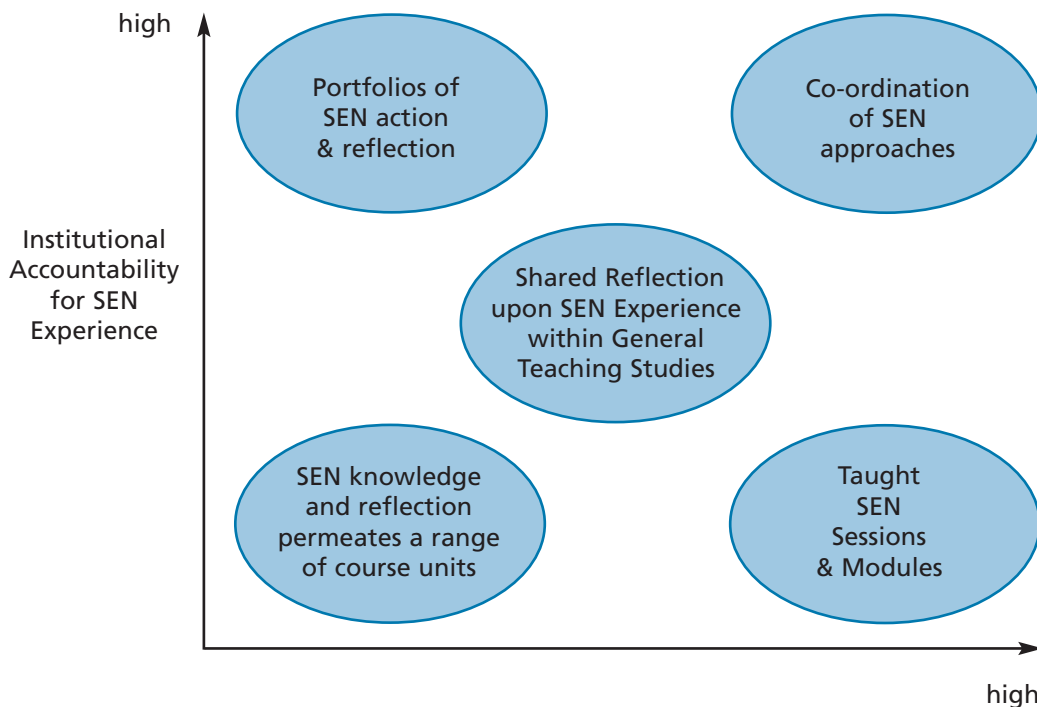
### Dedicated SEN course units

Following upon such a review teacher educators will be in a better position to identify what may need to be consolidated or added in dedicated SEN modules or offered by way of extension within electives. Alternatively, dedicated course units may themselves be critically reviewed in the same manner. Dedicated special education modules have been criticised for simply imparting information rather than confronting problematic attitudes and values (Hastings et al. 1996). SEN modules have frequently been observed to encourage separate views of special and mainstream education, and lack the capacity to provide a collaborative model or ethic (Kemple, et al., 1994, Villa et al., 1996). Collaborative planning is demanding in time, resources and academic relationships, and specialists may inevitably become guest speakers. Approaches promoted within dedicated SEN modules may clash with philosophies implicit within other aspects of the programme, reflecting general uncertainty in society at large.

Special educators may need to change. Booth (2000) proposes an end to the traditional medical or clinical-rehabilitative approach that has predominated in special education. More radical change is advocated to the culture of courses and academic teams with moves from separate, parallel training inputs towards an integrated and collaborative teacher education programme in which special and mainstream educators work closely together. (Muthukrishna, 2000; Blanton et al., 2001). This may be most sensibly achieved by evaluating the range of current strategies and incorporating these within a co-ordinated approach that maximises institutional accountability for both academic study and school experience. A range of training approaches is described diagrammatically in Figure 1. It identifies the major forms of provision and their levels of institutional accountability for student study and experience. Higher levels of institutional accountability may be required if we are to have increased expectations of students.




Fig. 1. Co-ordinated Provision for SEN in Initial Teacher Education.



In time, radically new practices may also be warranted. Training pre-service teachers to engage in collaborative teaching is increasingly advanced as an essential precursor to effective inclusive teaching of children in mainstream schools (Gerber et al, 2000; Hudson et al, 1997; Salend et al, 1995; Tichenor, et al, 1998; Welch, 2000). There is evidence that the multidisciplinary and inter-professional approaches needed for inclusive practice cannot be effectively taught if these are not shared within partner schools (Magrab, 2000).

In Ireland, with widening access to mainstream schools, there are signs of a reduction in the divisive effects of selection, prescribed curricula and narrowly defined assessment. There is some evidence that inclusive practice in schools is advancing in pace with the leadership and support which is necessary for full inclusion to work. In 1999 a Northern Ireland primary school inspection (DENI 1999, p 3) reported that "a significant minority of schools organised the provision for special educational needs on a whole school basis with all teachers involved in the process." A similar survey of primary and post-primary schools in 2001 (DENI, 2002) reported that "in the majority of schools the provision for special educational needs is given appropriate attention in the school development plan". Progress is gradual. The report goes on: "In only a minority of [NI] schools have evaluative criteria been identified and used to measure progress" (4.2). Over the period of both reports the withdrawal of pupils for reading and writing tasks is described as the most common form of support, with undue emphasis upon repetitive and de-contextualised drills. Where in-class support is provided, the SENCo (special educational needs co-ordinator) and teachers were reported to be



planning and working together to provide a coherent experience with useful links established between them. These are the schools that ITE will need to access.

## Conclusion


It is the unanimous view of participants in this research that SEN should remain a discrete element within ITE courses, while simultaneously permeating all aspects of study. The area is said to be increasingly appealing to students as a dedicated subject of study and reflective practice, offering a fulfillment less evident in the increasingly commercialised lives of teachers and schools. There are, however, acknowledged shortcomings in the planning of student contact with pupils who have learning difficulties. Some pre-service courses may nurture exclusive approaches through over-dependence upon electives and the medical model, while others may advance inclusive approaches inconsistent with student school experience. The role of the SENCo (special educational needs co-ordinator), commonplace in the management of special provision in schools, is not easy to recognise in ITE course management or in the co-ordination of SEN knowledge and experience. Dedicated time varies widely across ITE courses. At times extensive for primary teachers, it may be restricted to several hours for postgraduate secondary teachers. A crowded curriculum and reduced student time in college will continue to require better definition and greater permeation of SEN content within the ITE curriculum and school experience.

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## **STUDY OF STUDENT TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY AND SCIENCE (IASSEE)**

In 2003 the Irish Association of Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (IASSEE) embarked on a four-year longitudinal study of how student teachers' prior experiences and perceptions of history, geography and science interacted with their initial teacher education. The study was planned in three phases: an entry questionnaire to establish their ideas and attitudes at the beginning of their initial teacher education; case studies in the form of semi-structured interviews of a small number of students in each participating institution mid-way through their course; and an exit questionnaire to establish any development in perceptions, ideas and attitudes.

From the start, the study has been focused on illuminating the processes by which student teachers' knowledge about teaching history, geography and science is constructed with a view to improving practice in teacher education, North and South. For this reason, similarities and differences in experiences and attitudes between students in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is central to the study. Such comparisons will do much to draw out the critical factors in the process of initial teacher education. While all the members of IASSEE are involved in the research project at a design and planning level, the following institutions are the main focus of the research: Stranmillis University College, St. Mary's University College, Mary Immaculate College, St. Patrick's College, Colaiste Mhuire, Church of Ireland College of Education and Froebel College. These constitute all the colleges who offer a primary B.Ed course in initial teacher education in Ireland as a whole.

The research began with an intensive piloting process in the 2003-2004 academic year. In June 2004 a research committee was formed by IASSEE to oversee the first stage of the research. The research committee comprised seven IASSEE members, drawn from five different institutions North and South. In September 2004 the final version of the questionnaire was rigorously piloted and validated through focus group interviews. In October the entry questionnaire was distributed to all first year B.Ed student teachers across the seven institutions. The 1114 responses constitute an 82% response rate. The quantitative data compiled was recorded in digital form using SPSS. Data entry and preliminary analysis were undertaken by a research assistant.

The qualitative data was analysed by members of the research committee to arrive at an agreed method of coding. The complete database, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data, is now being coded and this important work was due to be completed by December 2005. The findings from the preliminary analysis have been presented at a number of conferences to invite discussion, suggestions and critical engagement from other researchers in the field. All these presentations were well received and allowed the researchers to engage with others working in similar areas in the EU. A written paper on results to date will be submitted to Irish Educational Studies for publication in the coming weeks. These presentations were:



- The conference of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland in Cork, March 2005. At this conference an introduction to IASSEE , the research project and a general overview of the data were presented by Susan Pike and Richard Greenwood.
- A comparison of the responses of students in relation to aspects of the science and geography data was presented at the ATSE (Association of Tutors of Science Education) conference, Belfast, September 2005 by Dr. Janet Varley and Susan Pike.
- Also in September 2005, Dr. Colette Murphy and Fionnuala Waldron presented a preliminary analysis of student teachers' conceptions of good teaching in the three subject areas at the ECER (European Conference on Educational Research) in Dublin.

It is intended that further analysis of the data from the entry questionnaire will be undertaken once the coding has been completed. This will give rise to further publications in the coming academic year. As this is a collaborative venture, data will be made available to all IASSEE members via the research committee, to encourage joint publications involving lecturers from different institutions and jurisdictions.

The first phase of the study is near completion and, currently, the research committee is planning the second phase, i.e. the semi-structured interviews. It is intended to begin piloting this phase early in 2006 with a view to conducting the interviews on a phased basis in the colleges before the end of the calendar year 2006. The mandate of the current research committee will last until the annual meeting of IASSEE in December 2005 when a new committee will be selected to oversee phase two of the project. To ensure continuity of the project in this second phase, it is envisaged that there will be some overlap of committee membership from phase one to phase two, while still ensuring that the North-South dimension is retained.

The successful completion of phase one of this project was made possible by the funding of the project by SCoTENS, and IASSEE is extremely grateful for the support shown. The research has already generated debate and interaction among teacher educators, North and South, and we are confident that the analysis of the data will yield important and influential findings which will have a beneficial impact on the design of courses in the three subject areas in initial teacher education.

**Fionnuala Waldron**  
**Chair of IASSEE Research Steering Committee**

**[SCoTENS Grant £5,000]**



## NORTH SOUTH STUDENT TEACHER EXCHANGE PROJECT

### STUDENT VOICES 2004-2005

This is a brief overview of responses to questionnaires and in interviews undertaken with students who participated in the North – South Student Teacher Exchange Project 2004 - 2005 (part of a 2002-2005 project funded by the EU Peace and Reconciliation Programme through the Centre for Cross Border Studies, managed by CCBS, and participated in by the seven major Colleges of Education on the island of Ireland).

Out of a total of 28 participants from the seven Colleges of Education, 21 replies were received from students in all seven colleges.

The thrust of the responses was that all respondents enjoyed the experience as a whole. They felt it was very worthwhile and they would recommend other students to participate in any similar project in the future. All commented on their own growth in confidence, their self-knowledge that they can adapt to new and challenging situations, and their ability to meet, live and work with new people.

There was a sense coming through that the experience was more about doing a teaching practice in a different jurisdiction, with a different curricular approach, than about immersion in a different place. Yet all commented on the positive, welcoming experience they had, about seeing people as people, and about breaking through stereotypes.

They stated that they have already begun to discuss their experiences with fellow students, friends and family. Many have already made links between children, North and South, Protestant and Catholic. Some made friends from other colleges, other religious backgrounds and other jurisdictions and have said that they have made efforts to maintain these contacts.

The general impression was that this exchange will have a long term impact on these students as teachers and as people, and that they will use this experience in their classes with the children in their care.


Generally the responses can be divided into three sections.

1. Professional/Teaching Practice experiences
2. Social/Personal/Cultural experiences
3. Recommendations for the project

#### 1. PROFESSIONAL/TEACHING PRACTICE EXPERIENCES

Taking a professional viewpoint, it is clear that from the perceptive, insightful comments made by these young students, some only in their second year, that all the Colleges of Education are developing analytical, evaluative young teachers who will undoubtedly become professional, reflective practitioners.





All felt they were well received in schools. Staff and principals were welcoming and supportive. They obviously enjoyed the challenge of working in a different environment. All commented on positive relationships built with children. Many stated that they had grown greatly in self-confidence because of the experience.

Not one said they had experienced any difficulty with teaching/working in another jurisdiction or in a school not of their own religious denomination. One student interviewed admitted to being quite overwhelmed by the whole experience while participating, but on reflection afterwards felt that it had been very worthwhile and did not in any way look upon the experience negatively.

There were many comments made comparing and contrasting the different curricular approaches, curricular emphases, methodologies, behaviour management strategies, relationships with children, teaching practice procedures and expectations. Professionally these evaluations and analyses were of a very high quality considering the limited teaching experience of these students. While the main impact of their experience may have been in the professional area, by living and working with real people there is a sense coming through the responses that many preconceived ideas, myths, suppositions were exposed as false.

## **2. SOCIAL/PERSONAL/TEACHING PRACTICE**

All deemed the experience worthwhile. Quite a number complimented either Dublin or Belfast on their friendliness, attractiveness and general "buzz". Some students from the North commented on the greater size, cosmopolitan nature and growing interculturalism of Dublin. Some students from the South expressed surprise at how lively Belfast was and how they felt quite safe socialising there, while admitting that they were a little more cautious than they would normally be. Many made reference to the fact that they got to know students from other colleges – North-South, North-North, and South-South. Some said they had made friendships that they felt would endure. Students in the host colleges were complimented on their efforts to include the visiting students, although these efforts were limited for all as students of the host colleges were also on teaching practice.

This was a general complaint. The heavy workload of teaching practice prevented students from enjoying the experience socially and culturally to the fullest extent.

However it was obvious that students had absorbed quite a lot in the short time spent in the other jurisdiction. Most had already had meaningful discussions around their experiences with family, friends and fellow-students. All insisted that the experience had impacted on them at a personal level, that they hoped to maintain contacts made and that they expected to use their experiences in the future as teachers.

### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

All expressed the desire for more school observation (orientation) days and more time with and watching the teachers in the classroom (please note these recommendations are made by all students on any teaching practice!).

All expressed satisfaction with the general organisation and management of the project. Some felt ,however,that some teachers/schools were not prepared for them coming on their school orientation days.

An interesting recommendation for improvement was for at least some time on the project to be undertaken during lecturing periods. This would allow for greater immersion in college life, more time to socialise with host college students and more time to socialise and attend to cultural experiences.

Unanimously all students agreed that it was a very worthwhile experience, that they were glad they had participated in the project , and that they would recommend it to their fellow-students. They expressed the hope that the project would continue so that other students could benefit as they had.

The **Directors of Teaching Practice** met to consider the teaching practice frameworks under which each college works, to identify the commonalities and differences and, following from this, the strengths and challenges of each system. A number of key factors were identified and these were grouped into four areas:

**Statutory teaching practice requirements**

**Assessment practices within each course**

**The logistics of teaching practice**


**The strengths and challenges facing teacher educators**

Many commonalities emerged, as did some differences, and a considerable amount of time was spent in discussing the systems and rationale of each college. This was very productive and has enhanced the group's understanding of the underlying principles, organisational matters and assessment tools used in teaching practice in all colleges, North and South. Through this process strengths and weaknesses emerged, and these were catalogued.

Having gathered the operational facts across the seven colleges, the group then deliberated on areas that would benefit from further examination. Several were identified, including :

- assessment tools
- grading of assessment areas
- progression in each year group
- professional development of supervisors
- the experiences of students in different educational contexts
- strengths from each approach and how these can be applied in other systems.





It has been very beneficial for the Directors of Teaching Practice to meet as a group and to share practice, as this has shed light on many aspects of our work. The identification of common problems has led to the beginnings of solutions as the group has been able to explain how issues have been addressed. This sharing of practice has been invaluable. A unanimous decision has been made that it would be essential to continue the valuable work that has been started. It was decided to apply for further funding to explore the points listed above.

*Meeting 1: St. Mary's College, Belfast (22 April 2005)*

*Meeting 2: Froebel College, Blackrock, Dublin. (16 May 2005)*

*Meeting 3: Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines, Dublin. (7 September 2005)*

Considerable professional input has been given to the study group discussions. All Directors of Teaching Practice have a very full work load and have agreed to meet voluntarily. This is valuable work that has considerable long term potential and an effective start has been made in this process.

While SCoTENS has funded these meetings, we have met on other occasions not under the auspices of the this grant. It is important to note that the report submitted in July 2005 was collated on the basis of two meetings. The amount of time required to share practice between seven different institutions is considerable and should not be underestimated. We have identified the best means for engaging with colleagues is through extended meetings over a day and a half. This allows significant dialogue and engagement and sustains the momentum and dynamism of this group. This is very difficult with the present funding allocation, given that there are 10 colleagues involved. Disquiet has been expressed over the amount of time that has been dedicated to addressing issues raised and by report writing.

***Claire Connolly, St. Mary's University College, Belfast***

***Sonia Kidd, Stranmillis University College, Belfast***

***Brian Tubbert, Froebel College, Blackrock, Dublin***

***Margaret Farrar, Church of Ireland, Rathmines, Dublin***

***John White, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin***

***Fiona Mc Sorley, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick***

***Paraig Cannon, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino, Dublin***

**[SCoTENS Grant £1,765]**

## Conference, Research and Exchange Projects



To be funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2006-2007



## **NORTH/SOUTH CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR DIVERSITY AND CITIZENSHIP**

**Ms Una O'Connor, University of Ulster, and Mr Gerry Jeffers, National University of Ireland Maynooth**

This is a two part project:

### **Part A**

The first part of this project will concentrate on maintaining the Citizenship Education Website as part of the main SCoTENS website:

[www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte](http://www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte)

### **Part B**

The second part will focus on organizing a second citizenship conference in late 2006. The conference will actively take forward one of the key recommendations of the first North-South Citizenship Conference (September 2004) and of the annual SCoTENS conference (November 2005), namely to promote joint citizenship activity to a wider educational audience. It is anticipated that the website will be fully operational at this point and will be introduced to the delegates who will be drawn from an equal representation of teachers from both jurisdictions. The conference will be held at venue in the border region, with an international guest speaker.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000**

## **ESAI & BERA JOINT RESEARCH PROJECT**

**Mr Denis Bates, University of Limerick, and Professor John Gardner, Queen's University Belfast**

This project will:

- Organise a number of seminars on applied educational research on specific topics of relevance to academic researchers and teacher practitioners, North and South
- Review the policies and practices of educational research in the North and South of Ireland
- Establish a network of educational researchers in Ireland by publishing a directory of people institutions and organizations involved in the field.
- Consolidate working relationships between researchers, North and South.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000.**



## CURRENT PRACTICE IN ICT WITHIN TEACHER EDUCATION

**Dr Roger Austin and Ms Deirdre Graffin, University of Ulster, Dr Paul Conway, University College Cork, and Dr Joe O'Hara, Dublin City University**

This project will:

- Establish the nature and variation in current practice in ICT provision (and any related assessment) by pre-service teacher education providers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- Ascertain the relative emphasis on different aspects of ICT such as basic skill development, teaching in subject areas using ICT, and use of technology for professional development.
- Ascertain how the different ICT policy contexts have constrained and/or afforded different uses of ICT in pre-service teacher education.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £4,980**

## TEACHER EDUCATION FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF IRELAND: SHARING CASES OF PRACTICE

**Dr Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin, and Mr Hugh Kearns, Stranmillis University College**

This project falls into two categories:


### Part A

- A report on best practice in the provision of practical training for student teachers in the area of teaching pupils with special needs.
- Assess the implications of a set of cases of best training practice and consider the issues arising from student school experience in special educational settings in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- Produce a North/South resource for ITE providers seeking to meet the challenges of Special Educational Needs legislation in both jurisdictions.

### Part B

- Build upon an overview of the patterns of ITE provision gained at two SCoTENS funded conference in 2004 (Trinity College Dublin) and 2005 (Stranmillis University College) and published in Kearns, H. & Shevlin, M (2006), Initial Teacher Education and Special Educational Needs: Policy and Practice in the North and South of Ireland, *Journal of Teacher Development*. Vol. 10 No 1. This will be done by looking at:
  - a) Case studies of policy and practice in respect of school-based and related college-based elements and of school experience of special educational needs in both undergraduate and postgraduate courses.



- 
- b) Sharing a North-South review of the conceptual and strategic issues to be addressed in advancing SEN provision in the school-based elements of initial teacher education courses.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000**

### **TOGETHER TOWARDS INCLUSION: A TOOLKIT FOR TRAINERS (PHASE TWO)**

**Ms Mary Yarr, Southern Education and Library Board, Ms Barbara Simpson, Integrate Ireland Language and Training, Trinity College Dublin and Professor David Little, Trinity College Dublin**

This is the second phase of an ongoing project, and will further develop resources for teacher trainers working in intercultural and multicultural education. The project will produce a toolkit on a pilot basis. Continuous Professional Development (CPD) will be addressed using the package on both an in-school basis and in centre-based joint in-service training North and South.

The objectives included are:

- Support for teachers, linguistic and intercultural
- Provision of opportunities for a cluster of teachers to work collaboratively North and South, to inform the outcome
- Focused research at institutional level (ILLT, TCD and SELB)
- Promotion of respect for diversity and challenging prejudice
- Promotion of an inclusive school/classroom
- Enhance provision of English as a second language
- Share best practice
- Disseminate best practice through the use of the Internet

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000**

### **THE SOCIAL/NATIONAL IDENTITY OF YOUNG CHILDREN, NORTH AND SOUTH, RESEARCH PROJECT**

**Dr Barbara McConnell and Dr Louise Quinn, Stranmillis University College, and Dr Philomena Donnelly, St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra**

This project intends to explore the feasibility of a large scale project to research the social identity of young children living and being educated in close proximity to the Border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The study intends to:

- Identify an appropriate early years setting that has children attending from both North and South of the border
- Identify two settings, one North and one South, to act as control groups with children only attending from their own jurisdiction
- Investigate children's attitudes and awareness relating to social/national identity in the three settings.
- Investigate the impact that living in border regions has on young children's emerging identities.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000**

### **IASSEE – AN ALL-IRELAND LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF STUDENT PERCEPTIONS OF HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY AND SCIENCE EDUCATION (PHASE TWO)**

**Dr Colette Murphy, Queen's University Belfast, and Dr Fionnuala Waldron, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra**

This is the second phase of an ongoing project which has been examining the attitudes and experiences of B.Ed students in seven primary teacher education institutions to History, Geography and Science.

Phase two of the project, which will take place over an 18 month period, will interview a sample of students from each institution in order to collate and compare the findings with data gathered via the initial questionnaire and to assess the impact of ITE curriculum courses and teaching practice experiences.

It is intended that semi-structured interviews will be carried out in groups so as to seek the views of up to 80 students across the seven institutions. For the sake of continuity, one research assistant will conduct all the interviews. The results will be transcribed and an analysis of the interim results will be disseminated to a wider audience via conferences and publications.

**Amount pledged by SCoTENS £5,000**

### **SCoTENS WEBSITE**

**[www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte](http://www.socsci.ulst.ac.uk/education/scte)**

The updated SCoTENS website, now with both special education and citizenship education elements, has been extensively used by student teachers in both Irish jurisdictions and abroad searching for information and practical guidance in these areas.



## SCoTENS FINANCIAL POSITION

30 April 2006

	Pre Feb 2004	1 Feb 2004- 31-Jan-05	1 Feb 2005- 31-Jan-06	1 Feb 2006- 30-Apr-06
	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOME</b>				
DEL/DE			50,000.00	
DES			50,000.00	
University of Ulster		40,000.00		
University of Ulster		10,000.00		
University of Ulster		12,000.00		
Maynooth	20,750.95			
DES for Conferences		40,000.00		
Printing Costs		1,311.48		
Conference Fees	10,010.98	7,735.30	6,988.11	817.11
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>30,761.93</b>	<b>111,046.78</b>	<b>106,988.11</b>	<b>817.11</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Salaries			1,075.00	
Hospitality	153.00	4,360.26	0.00	
Travel, susistence and conference	219.00	25,007.57	19,099.00	1,000.00
Research projects	1,938.00	9,052.25	30,248.00	5,329.00
Mileage	224.00	86.00	26.00	
Sundry expenses	395.00	695.75	651.76	90.63
Photocopying and Printing	455.00	7,449.84	5,033.00	
Telephone		211.56	173.00	
Equipment		1,635.09		
CCBS / Administration & professional services		40,710.00		25,000.00
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>3,384.00</b>	<b>89,208.32</b>	<b>56,305.76</b>	<b>31,419.63</b>
<b>surplus / (deficit) for period</b>	<b>27,377.93</b>	<b>21,838.46</b>	<b>50,682.35</b>	<b>-30,602.52</b>

**TOTAL AVAILABLE 30 APRIL 2006 PER QFIS**

**76,174.59**

**Commitments as at 30 April 2006**

Research projects	38,630.00
Dolina Patterson	630.00
Website	5,000.00
Evaluation	5,000.00
Conference October 2006	10,000.00

**TOTAL UNCOMMITTED FUNDS AVAILABLE**

**16,914.59**



Secretariat provided by

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