

SCoTENS
The Standing Conference
on Teacher Education, North and South

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP POLICY AND PRACTICE **NORTH AND SOUTH**

Secretariat provided and report published by

THE CENTRE FOR CROSS BORDER STUDIES

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2008 CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL REPORTS

Secretariat provided by The Centre for Cross Border Studies

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Committee of the Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) wishes to acknowledge with thanks the financial support of:
The Department of Education and Science, Dublin,
The Department for Employment and Learning, Belfast,
The Department of Education, Bangor



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ISBN No. 978-1-906444-24-2

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Chairpersons' Introduction

Welcome to the 2008 annual report of SCoTENS (the Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South). This report incorporates the proceedings of our sixth annual conference as well as a financial statement and reports on the other conferences, networks and research activities supported by SCoTENS. Together they provide evidence of the progress of our various activities during the year under review.

The annual SCoTENS conference provides a forum where teacher educators across the island of Ireland can engage in open, critical and constructive analysis of current issues in education with a view to promoting a collaborative response to these issues. In addition SCoTENS promotes and funds a range of research-based initiatives with a view to establishing sustainable north/south partnerships and projects.

The sixth annual conference in Belfast in October 2008 demonstrated the effective role being played by SCoTENS in stimulating discussion among a wide range of participants on one of the most challenging issues facing education systems internationally. Based on the theme 'School Leadership, Policy and Practice, North and South', the conference addressed the importance and impact of leadership in schools from varying perspectives, with reference to the inherent challenges facing both jurisdictions. In her opening comments the Northern Ireland Minister for Education Ms Caitríona Ruane MLA recognised the significance of the conference theme as she underlined the central role that principals and school leaders play in improving the efficiency and equity of schooling.

Speaking of her personal commitment to generating a more equitable system of education in Northern Ireland, Minister Ruane commented: 'Getting the right people to become teachers and principals is the best way that a system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child'. The conference would, she hoped, support and sustain the collaborative approach to investigating leadership issues already being taken North and South, and lay the foundation for the joint provision of professional development programmes for school leaders in the future.

In recognition of the increasing complexity of the role of school leaders and the associated awareness of the impact of such leaders on the quality and equity of schooling, school leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas across the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Ireland has had a long and valuable engagement with OECD projects and reports, which have become significant catalysts for change within the Irish system. It was fitting therefore that the first keynote address of the conference was delivered by Ms Deborah Nusche, one of the editors of the 2008 OECD report *Improving School Leadership*. Her presentation, while acknowledging from the outset that the 'men and women who run schools are overburdened, underpaid and near retirement', summarised the findings of this influential international report.

The OECD has identified four main policy levers which they assert can improve school leadership practices, namely to (re)define school leadership responsibilities, distribute school leadership by engaging and recognizing broader participation in leadership teams, develop skills for effective school leadership over the different stages of practice and make school leadership an attractive profession. In their responding paper Tom Hesketh and Paddy Flood contextualised the issues raised within the OECD report on a Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland basis, and considered the implications of the report for the policy and the practice of leadership development.


Providing a critical response to the OECD report in their papers, both Ciaran Sugrue and Timothy London emphasised the importance of examining individually and collectively how an international report becomes refracted within a national context both at local and national levels. They invited participants to view the report as a stimulus for conversation and to examine the concepts that are implicit, explicit embedded in the document. They particularly critiqued the concepts of 'distributed' and 'collaborative' leadership within the document, and cautioned that the implementation of the report would challenge governments to support both the professionalism of principals but also the professionalisation of the leadership function within schools.

David Armstrong's paper, which reported on the *Attractiveness of Headship: Ireland North and South* study being carried out by PriceWaterhouseCoopers, drew substantially on research being carried in both jurisdictions as to the nature of headship, the motivation of principal teachers and the models of leadership that are successful in schools. Cognisant of the individualism and personalities of head teachers and the unique qualities of schools, this paper illustrated that significant investment must be made on a number of levels if school leadership is to become an attractive career choice.

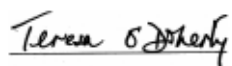
The conference also provided an opportunity to hear from principals of schools who spoke passionately about their vision for leadership, and the panel discussion provided a forum where teacher professional representatives and education trade unionists could discuss the opportunities leadership development offered for the transformation of schools and schooling.

Reflecting the nature and quality of the many projects being supported by SCoTENS, the conference was an opportunity to launch a number of reports, including *A Review of Science Outreach Strategies: North and South*, by Kevin Davison, Veronica McCauley, Christine Donegan and William McClune. This project is just one of a number of research projects completed during 2007-2008 with the assistance of SCoTENS funding. SCoTENS is funded by the Departments of Education, North and South, but also through the subscriptions of our affiliated institutions. We are indebted to the generosity of these organisations for their commitment to supporting the work of cross-border projects and research. Their continued support is essential for the maintenance of this educational forum.

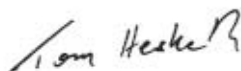




As well as acknowledging the support of our sponsors, we would like to express our gratitude and appreciation to the staff of the Centre for Cross Border Studies who provide administrative support for SCoTENS, especially Patricia McAllister and Andy Pollak on whose organisational skills and absolute professionalism we rely. We would also like to thank the management and staff of the Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast, who provided a welcoming venue for our conference. Finally we thank our fellow members of the SCoTENS committee who give generously both their expertise and time. We wish to recognise particularly the contribution of Dr Margaret Reynolds, one of the founding members of SCoTENS, whose commitment to a shared vision for teacher education contributed to its growth and development.



Teresa O'Doherty
Co-Chair

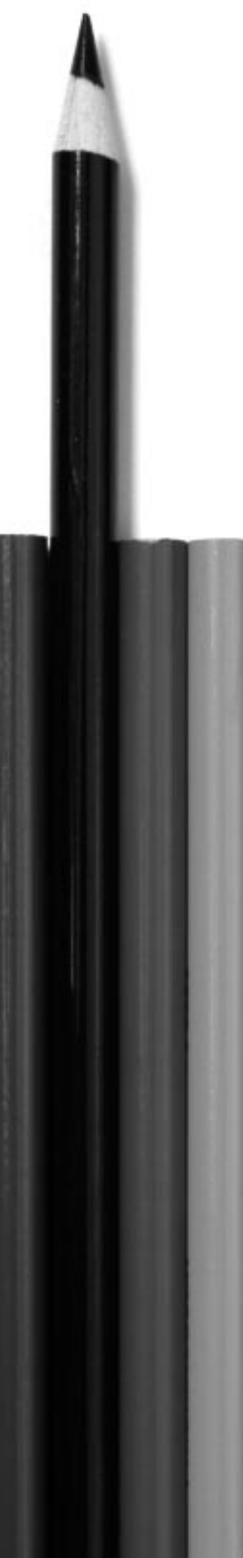


Tom Hesketh
Co-Chair

School Leadership Policy and Practice, North and South



**Annual Conference
Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast
9 - 10 October 2009**



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DAY ONE

OPENING ADDRESS

MS CAITRIONA RUANE MLA

Minister for Education

Sharing. It's built upon North/South arrangements, and it is built upon British Irish arrangements. And the reason that all the parties are sitting down together is because each of those aspects are underpinning the new arrangements, and at the heart of them must be equality and partnership. And the major discussions that are going on at the moment politically are about partnership and the lack of equality and partnership. The same in education at the moment – Who are the partners? Where is the equality? How do we build equality? How do we change our system so that equality is at the heart of it?

I grew up in Mayo in the west of Ireland and am now living in north Louth. I have had experience of the education system in the west of Ireland, in the North of Ireland with my own children and children in the South of Ireland, so while I am bringing to it a broader perspective, the issues I am dealing with right now are the issues that we are dealing with in the North and the NSMC and the various aspects of North South cooperation. So I probably will focus a little bit more on the North and I hope people appreciate that I am not being partitionist when I am doing that.

For me one of the biggest challenges we face is how we deal with underachievement in the North. How do we create equality of access for all our young people? How do we create equality in a deeply hierarchical, deeply divided and deeply unequal system? They are the issues for me - I haven't sat on the fence, and I make no apology for that. I believe the system we have is outdated, needs reform, and we need to make sure that every child gets a fair chance. At present I don't believe that every child is getting a fair chance and that is in spite of the best efforts of teachers and educationalists. This is because, when you do not start on a level playing field, there are difficulties for the people that are disadvantaged in our society. The first thing we have to do is to change the selective system that we have in the North of Ireland. That is probably the single biggest challenge facing us, given the debate and the different political parties and their policies on selection. For those of you from the South of Ireland, you will know this debate was had 40 years ago in the South and it probably raised emotions and tempers then as it has raised here.

We have good things to celebrate in our system here. We are doing amazing work here – teachers are doing amazing work, principals are doing amazing work, but they are doing it against all the odds – they are doing it with one hand tied behind their backs.

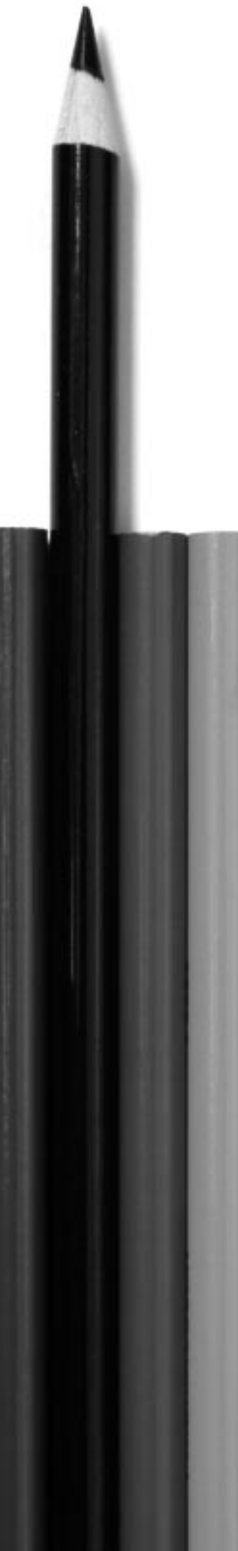
On top of that we are a society coming out of conflict, and I think we have underestimated the impact of conflict on the current school generation and the previous school generation. Many of our parents are people who have been failed by the system, people who have never completed formal education. In the case of my own family, I am married into a family from the North who never had the opportunity to finish school, so in many cases we have to educate parents as well as educating children on what education means and the importance of it. That doesn't mean that people who did not finish school do not understand the importance of education - they do, but actually they don't understand the education system and how it works in many cases. We in the Department of Education need to inform parents about what is happening. We are moving into the last 11+ exam and many people will celebrate that, others will lament it. I am one who will celebrate it, because the evidence clearly shows that the old system created inequality; it served a small number very well, but failed many more. And still whoever you ask in the North of Ireland, no matter what age, they will tell you in stark terms – I failed or I passed. And the very fact that you can remember an exam that you did at age 10 or 11 shows the deep impact it has on your soul.

The 11+ doesn't just brand children failures – it does this to our most disadvantaged children. 1 in 4 children require school meals in non-grammar schools, 1 in 17 in grammar schools. Demographic decline is another challenge, and our secondary sector is disproportionately suffering this more because of the way the system works, so that the schools that are dealing with disadvantage are the schools with the empty desks and those which are facing teacher redundancies.

At the same time we are delivering the Entitlement Framework. We are developing area based planning, and we are trying to give all children access to the post 14 education pathway they need. Post primary reform is about all of these, and the proposals I have brought forward and will be bringing forward are putting everything in context, but the media have tended to focus on one aspect.

We also need to look at the issue of ethnic minorities, our new communities. I was in Dublin recently at a North/South conference on integration looking at the challenges facing us. I was in Croke Park last week, and I saw the leadership of a sporting organisation like the GAA where their profile is leading by example, where they are integrating in a real way ethnic minority children, and a good way to do that is through sport.

We have much to do in dealing with the children of migrants and of the Travelling community. We are failing our Traveller children. Here in the north they are not even second class citizens – they are third class children. This week I launched a Task Force on Traveller Education with joint chairs Robbie McVeigh and Catherine Joyce, a Traveller woman who has led the way in dealing with discrimination against the Travelling community. The Task Force will bring together representatives



from both statutory and non statutory bodies to discuss educational issues and assist the Department to develop an action plan and a report on traveller education.

I am also launching a policy on newcomer children and young people which will assist in the promotion of equality of opportunity by enhancing their language skills to enable them to access the curriculum in the North of Ireland.

We have to take Irish medium education to a new level. Throughout the island of Ireland there is a very dynamic sector teaching through the medium of Irish, and this Saturday will be an important day for the sector in the North of Ireland. On Saturday I will launch a consultation on the review of Irish medium education in the Linenhall Library in Belfast. This review began before I took up office and I added people to the steering group. I delayed it slightly so that we could take a deeper look at some of the issues and make sure that everyone on the committee was very aware of how I wanted to move forward on Irish medium education.

This is not just a tick box exercise – this is real consultation. This is a very important review, and I really want to hear your opinions on it. We have huge success in the system, we have growth in the pre-school sector, growth in the primary school sector and challenges in the secondary sector, and I know that in the South of Ireland there is a lot that we can learn from the gaelscoileanna. We are also looking at youth provision through the medium of Irish, for there is no point in young people, the minute they leave the school gates, talking the dominant language in society. I know many of you are working on that, and I know Pauric that your own institution has done some very good work in relation to Irish medium.

We need a new dynamism for change, and that is the hardest part. When I left Ireland at 21 years of age, and went out to Nicaragua, it was one of the poorest countries in the world. It had just had 30 -40 years of a dictatorship, military conflict, thousands of people killed and a new government. A new government that had no resources. A new government that sat in a bombed out building and planned what new ministers and departments they would have. They had vision - vision is so important if we want to make changes. And the vision that I saw during my time working there from 1983 – 1987 was a vision of 'can do' , a vision in which we might not have resources, but we can really bring about change. Despite the fact that they had no resources, they had a Minister of Culture and Education, Fernando Cardinale, who really tried to change things. The World Health Organisati

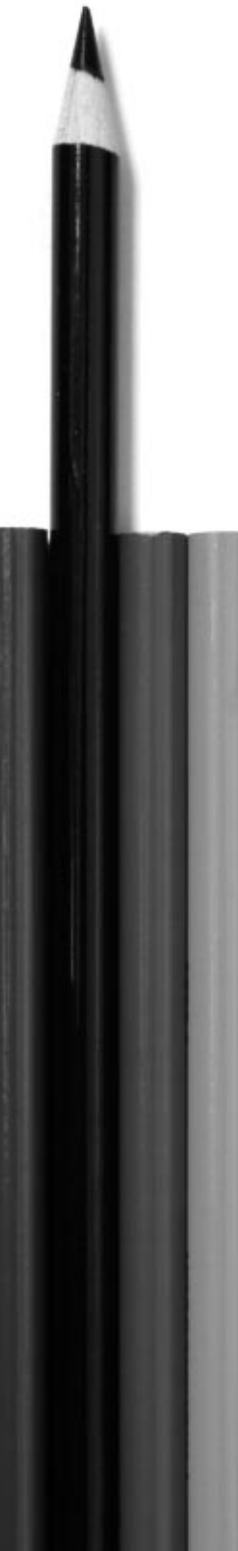
The Department of Education in the North and the Department of Education and Science in the South are working closely on a range of educational issues. Next month will see an important conference on the teaching of numeracy in primary schools. This will provide an opportunity for those responsible for education and supporting teachers to share best practice; learn from one another; and to hear about the latest research on effective methodologies.

At the North South Ministerial Council held recently in Downpatrick we, both North and South, put school leadership on the agenda. It is very important that we hear the voices of teachers and principals.

Regardless of probably having one of the busiest portfolios, I have been taking time over the last few months to go out and visit schools and seeing for myself the situation on the ground in all the sectors. More recently I have been hosting a number of dinners with school principals to listen to their opinions and ideas – although these are time consuming, they are well worth it. In some cases, the principals have stated that this is the first time that they have had an opportunity, as principals from different sectors, to argue and debate the issues. In some cases the principals highlighted that this is the first time they have discussed academic selection, and welcomed that fact.

The joint project entitled 'How do we attract teachers to the position of principalship/headship?' being taken forward by the Regional Training Unit (RTU) in the North and by DES in the South (as part of the South's national programme of leadership development for schools) is another example of the work we are jointly taking forward. This project will investigate the perspectives of teachers who have been appointed to the post of principal/head teacher in the past year, and those of teachers who chose not to apply for such vacancies. I am delighted too that this project will examine potential joint provision in respect of leadership training for those in small rural schools, special schools and schools in challenging urban environments.

Another key North/South initiative is the development of the Middletown Centre for Autism in Co Armagh, and there is some very innovative work being done there. This is a very innovative project. Some political parties feel that it should not be in Armagh, it should be in Belfast. I have listened to those arguments for years and don't subscribe to them. Being a Mayo woman, I think it is very important that we have provision in different parts of rural and urban Ireland, and centres of excellence don't just have to be in Dublin, Belfast, London or Paris, or wherever the case may be. That is a continuing debate. I also subscribe to the fact that things do not need to be in universities, and that is not to take away from the fact of the wonderful work which universities and educational colleges do. I think what we need is dynamic institutions that can work at different levels throughout the country. I think you know that I and my party are very strong on decentralisation, and different parts of the country getting support, but obviously working together. I believe that the role of teachers, principals and unions is fundamental in this.



In the North we have been through a bitter conflict, where many people have suffered, and we are dealing with the emotional legacy and hurt of that conflict. In many cases in the past we had a school sector and the formal education sector including youth and pre-school, and alongside that we had the NGO sector, and people's participation in active organisations working for change. Often these sectors in many cases during those turbulent times were probably not working together the way we know it is better for schools and community to work together.

We are now moving into a new era. And that new era is partnerships, learning communities, parents, teachers, communities and NGOs working together. It will be difficult, but each has something to give to the other. And as someone who has come from the NGO sector – the human rights sector - into the formal education sector every day I am struck by how much is going on in the formal education sector, that the non governmental sector do not know about and vice versa. That is a gap we have to close, because the NGO sector are doing tremendous work in tackling underachievement, the schools are doing tremendous work in tackling underachievement but, often they are not working together, they are working in parallel and for real leadership we need to bring them together. In Ballymurphy working together is happening. In the very high disadvantaged areas with serious problems, including social problems such as violence in the home, there needs to be a culture change in relation to education, and that is going to be difficult, but we have to break out of our frameworks. And once we do, I would foresee, after the initial period of turbulence, good partnerships developing.

I was visiting a women's refuge in Newry, and I was struck by one young girl who is doing her A' levels. This is her home – the refuge. People in school don't know where she goes after 4pm. And in that same refuge these people are not there for days or weeks, they are there for months, and in that same refuge is a woman who has triplets. These are the issues, we all have to work together to bring about the necessary change. It is a big challenge, but I know we are up to it, and you are the leaders, you know how we have to change, but we can all learn – North from South, South from North, Ireland from Britain.

People who have studied conflict know that post conflict you have a certain window of opportunity to try and change things. We are already 10 years into our window of opportunity, and we have to go full steam ahead now to make maximum changes in the next short period, because if we don't we are in danger of loosing another generation, which would be simply unforgivable. In the North 47% are leaving school without an English and Maths or an Irish and Maths GCSE. Now I am not saying that that is the only way to evaluate standards, but if a child is going out into the workforce without those minimum standards we have a problem. We cannot sustain a system that allows that to continue. And if it means moving mountains, then we have to move mountains to bring about these changes.

So I am looking for your support over the next few weeks, your support has never been so badly needed. And the voices of educationalists with a few exceptions

have been too quiet. I know that Tom has sat down and written articles and sent them to newspapers, those articles are so important and articles like them. And sometimes educationalists underestimate the impact you have in the media and the debate that is raging out there. So I am looking for your help. I need it and we have to make the most of now.

Thank you





WHY SCHOOL LEADERSHIP MATTERS

Ms Deborah Nusche

Policy Analyst, OECD Directorate for Education

Improving School Leadership: Policy and Practice

As countries strive to reform education systems and improve student results, school leadership is high on education policy agendas. But in many countries the men and women who run schools are overburdened, underpaid and near retirement. And there are few people lining up for their jobs.

What leadership roles are most effective in improving student learning? How to allocate and distribute different leadership tasks? How to ensure current and future school leaders develop the right skills for effective leadership? These are questions facing governments around the world.

This address is based on a 2008 OECD study of school leadership policies and practices around the world – *Improving School Leadership: Policy and Practice* – which offers a valuable cross-country perspective. It identifies four policy levers and a range of policy options to help governments improve school leadership now and build sustainable leadership for the future.

School leadership has become a priority in education policy agendas internationally. It plays a key role in improving school outcomes by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment. Effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling.

As countries are seeking to adapt their education systems to the needs of contemporary society, expectations for schools and school leaders are changing. Many countries have moved towards decentralisation, making schools more autonomous in their decision making and holding them more accountable for results. At the same time, the requirement to improve overall student performance while serving more diverse student populations is putting schools under pressure to use more evidence-based teaching practices.

As a result of these trends, the function of school leadership across OECD countries is now increasingly defined by a demanding set of roles which include financial and human resource management and leadership for learning. There are concerns across countries that the role of principal as conceived for needs of the past is no longer appropriate. In many countries principals have heavy workloads; many are reaching retirement, and it is getting harder to replace them. Potential candidates often hesitate to apply because of overburdened roles, insufficient preparation and training, limited career prospects and inadequate support and rewards.

These developments have made school leadership a priority in education systems across the world. Policy makers need to enhance the quality of school leadership

and make it sustainable. The OECD has identified four main policy levers which taken together can improve school leadership practice:

1. (Re)define school leadership responsibilities

Research has shown that school leaders can make a difference in school and student performance if they are granted autonomy to make important decisions. However autonomy alone does not automatically lead to improvements unless it is well supported. In addition, it is important that the core responsibilities of school leaders be clearly defined and delimited. School leadership responsibilities should be defined through an understanding of the practices most likely to improve teaching and learning.

Policy makers need to provide higher degrees of autonomy with appropriate support. School leaders need time, capacity and support to focus on the practices most likely to improve learning. Greater degrees of autonomy should be coupled with new models of distributed leadership, new types of accountability, and training and development for school leadership.

Redefine school leadership responsibilities for improved student learning. Policy makers and practitioners need to ensure that the roles and responsibilities associated with improved learning outcomes are at the core of school leadership practice. This study identifies four major domains of responsibility as key for school leadership to improve student outcomes:


Supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality: School leaders have to be able to adapt the teaching programme to local needs, promote teamwork among teachers and engage in teacher monitoring, evaluation and professional development.

Goal-setting, assessment and accountability: Policy makers need to ensure that school leaders have discretion in setting strategic direction and to optimise their capacity to develop school plans and goals and monitor progress, using data to improve practice.

Strategic financial and human resource management: Policy makers can enhance the financial management skills of school leadership teams by providing training to school leaders, establishing the role of a financial manager within the leadership team, or providing financial support services to schools. In addition, school leaders should be able to influence teacher recruitment decisions to improve the match between candidates and their school's needs.

Collaborating with other schools: This new leadership dimension needs to be recognised as a specific role for school leaders. It can bring benefits to school systems as a whole rather than just the students of a single school. But school leaders need to develop their skills to become involved in matters beyond their school borders.





School leadership frameworks can help provide guidance on the main characteristics, tasks and responsibilities of effective school leaders and signal the essential character of school leadership as leadership for learning. They can be a basis for consistent recruitment, training and appraisal of school leaders. Frameworks should clearly define the major domains of responsibility for school leaders and allow for contextualisation for local and school-level criteria. They should be developed with involvement by the profession.

2. Distribute school leadership

The increased responsibilities and accountability of school leadership are creating the need for distribution of leadership, both within schools and across schools. School boards also face many new tasks. While practitioners consider middle-management responsibilities vital for school leadership, these practices remain rare and often unclear, and those involved are not always recognized for their tasks. Policy makers need to broaden the concept of school leadership and adjust policy and working conditions accordingly.

Encourage distribution of leadership. Distribution of leadership can strengthen management and succession planning. Distributing leadership across different people and organisational structures can help to meet the challenges facing contemporary schools and improve school effectiveness. This can be done in formal ways through team structures and other bodies, or more informally by developing ad hoc groups based on expertise and current needs.

Support distribution of leadership. There is a need to reinforce the concept of leadership teams in national frameworks, to develop incentive mechanisms to reward participation and performance in these teams, and to extend leadership training and development to middle-level management and potential future leaders in the school. Finally, policy makers need to reflect on modifying accountability mechanisms to match distributed leadership structures.

Support school boards in their tasks. Evidence shows that effective school boards may contribute to the success of their schools. For this to happen, it is crucial to clarify the roles and responsibilities of school boards and ensure consistency between their objectives and the skills and experience of board members. Policy makers can help by providing guidelines for improved recruitment and selection processes, and by developing support structures to ensure active participation in school boards, including opportunities for skills development.

3. Develop skills for effective school leadership

Country practices and evidence from different sources show that school leaders need specific training to respond to broadened roles and responsibilities. Strategies need to focus on developing and strengthening skills related to improving school outcomes (as listed above) and provide room for contextualisation.

Treat leadership development as a continuum: leadership development is broader than specific programmes of activity or intervention. It requires a combination of formal and informal processes throughout all stages and contexts of leadership practice. This implies coherently supporting the school leadership career through these stages.

Encourage initial leadership training: whether initial training is voluntary or mandatory can depend on national governance structures. Governments can define national programmes, collaborate with local level governments and develop incentives to ensure that school leaders participate. In countries where the position is not tenured, a trade-off must be found to make it worthwhile for principals to invest time in professional development. Efforts also need to be made to find the right candidates.

Organise induction programmes: induction programmes are particularly valuable to prepare and shape initial school leadership practices, and they provide vital networks for principals to share concerns and explore challenges. These programmes should provide a combination of theoretical and practical knowledge and self-study.

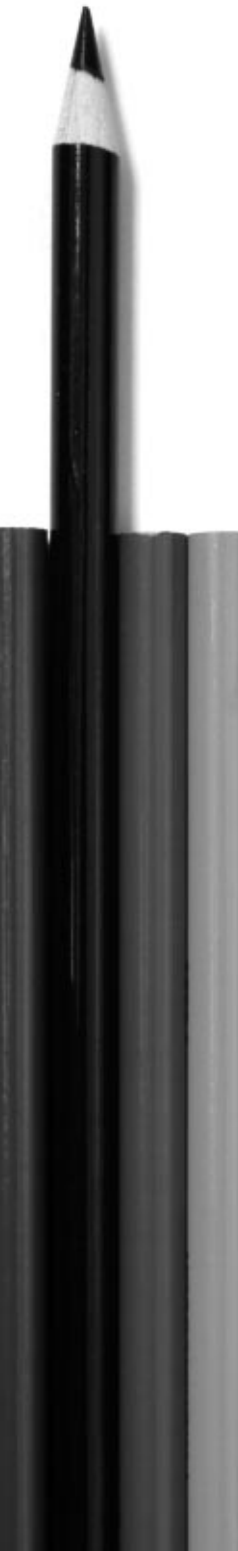
Ensure in-service training to cover need and context: in-service programmes need to be seen in the context of prior learning opportunities for school leadership. Where there are no other initial requirements, basic in-service programmes should encourage development of leadership skills. In-service training should be also offered periodically to principals and leadership teams so they can update their skills and keep up with new developments. Networks (virtual or real) also provide informal development for principals and leadership teams.

Ensure consistency of provision by different institutions: a broad range of providers cater to school leadership training needs, but the training they offer must be more consistent. In some countries, national school leadership institutions have raised awareness and improved provision of leadership development opportunities. In other countries, where there are many providers but no national orientations, it is important to have clear standards and ensure a focus on quality. Many governments have standards, evaluations and other mechanisms to monitor and regulate programme quality.

Ensure appropriate variety for effective training: a broad body of knowledge supported by practice has identified the content, design, and methods of effective programmes. It points to the following key factors: curricular coherence, experience in real contexts, cohort grouping, mentoring, coaching, peer learning and structures for collaborative activity between the programme and schools.

4. Make school leadership an attractive profession

The challenge is to improve the quality of current leadership and build sustainable leadership for the future. Evidence indicates that potential applicants are deterred



by the heavy workload of principals and the fact that the job does not seem to be adequately remunerated or supported. Uncertain recruitment procedures and career development prospects for principals may also deter potential candidates. Strategies to attract, recruit and support high-performing school leaders include the following:

Professionalise recruitment

Recruitment processes can have a strong impact on school leadership quality. While school-level involvement is essential to contextualise recruitment practices, action is necessary at the system level to ensure that recruitment procedures and criteria are effective, transparent and consistent. Succession planning – proactively identifying and developing potential leaders – can boost the quantity and quality of future school leaders. Eligibility criteria should be broadened to reduce the weight accorded to seniority and attract younger dynamic candidates with different backgrounds. Recruitment procedures should go beyond traditional job interviews to include an expanded set of tools and procedures to assess candidates. Finally, those who are on the hiring side of recruitment panels also need guidelines and training.

Focus on the relative attractiveness of school leaders' salaries: the relative attractiveness of salaries for school leaders can influence the supply of high quality candidates. Policy makers need to monitor remuneration compared to similar grades in the public and private sectors and make school leadership more competitive. Establishing separate salary scales for teachers and principals can attract more candidates from among the teaching staff. At the same time, salary scales should reflect leadership structures and school-level factors to attract high performing leaders to all schools.

Acknowledge the role of professional organisations of school leaders: professional organisations of school leaders provide a forum for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and dissemination of best practices among professionals and between professionals and policy makers. Workforce reform is unlikely to succeed unless school leaders are actively involved in its development and implementation through their representative organisations.

Provide options and support for career development: providing career development prospects for school leaders can help avoid principal burnout and make school leadership a more attractive career option. There are many ways to make the profession more flexible and mobile, allowing school leaders to move between schools as well as between leadership and teaching and other professions. Current country practice provides some examples to draw from, including alternatives to lifetime contracts through renewable fixed-term contracts and options for principals to step up to new opportunities such as jobs in the educational administration, leadership of groups or federations of schools, and consultant leadership roles.

The 21st century is still in its first decade, yet many countries have already seen dramatic shifts in the way schools and education systems are managed compared with those of the end of the last century. A prime stimulus for these changes is a combination of shifts in society, including greater migration, changes in social and family structures, and the use (and misuse) of information and communications technologies. Also influential is a greater emphasis on relative performance of different schools and education systems, between schools, school systems and countries.

The strong focus on education by governments and society is entirely appropriate. Only through education can we develop the knowledge and skills that are vital for our countries' economic growth, social development and political vitality; and most importantly for the success of the children who will be our future generations.

The challenge of system leadership

In this new environment schools and schooling are being given an ever bigger job to do. Greater decentralisation in many countries is being coupled with more school autonomy, more accountability for school and student results, and a better use of the knowledge base of education and pedagogical processes. It is also being coupled with broader responsibility for contributing to and supporting the schools' local communities, other schools and other public services.

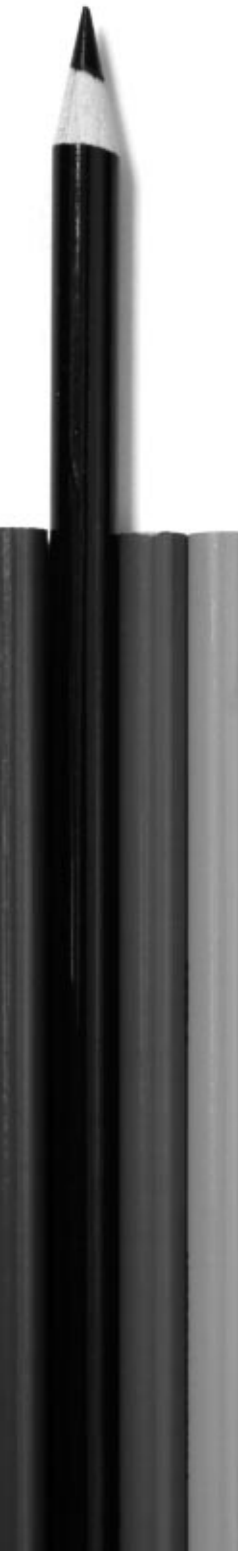
As a result there is a need to redefine and broaden school leaders' roles and responsibilities. This means changing the way school leadership is developed and supported. It implies improving incentives to make headship in particular more attractive for existing heads and for those who will be taking up school leadership positions in the future. And it implies strengthening training and development approaches to help leaders face these new roles.

One of school leaders' new roles is increasingly to work with other schools and other school leaders, collaborating and developing relationships of interdependence and trust. System leaders, as they are being called, care about and work for the success of other schools as well as their own. Crucially they are willing to shoulder system leadership roles because they believe that in order to change the larger system you have to engage with it in a meaningful way.

Some innovative approaches

Volume 2 of this study – *Improving School Leadership: Policy and Practice: Core studies on system Leadership* - focuses on a set of innovative practices that provide good examples of systemic approaches to school leadership. These are particular innovative approaches adopted or developed in Flanders (Belgium), England, Finland, Victoria (Australia) and Austria which are showing emerging evidence of positive results. Each of these cases is developed in detail in the relevant chapter of this book.





The case studies result from research and visits by OECD staff and education experts to each country. The visits included meetings and discussions with national and local government representatives, and site visits to exemplary schools. The case studies are complemented by articles by two authorities in education leadership: Richard Elmore of the Harvard Graduate School of Education and David Hopkins of the Institute of Education, University of London. The five countries visited were chosen because they met two main criteria: they demonstrated models of school organisation and management that distribute education leadership roles in innovative ways; and showed promising practices for preparing and developing school leaders.

The benefits of system leadership

Throughout OECD countries there is significant cooperation and collaboration on school leadership. While every country participating in the OECD activity has some arrangements for cooperation between schools, one group of jurisdictions has made system leadership the centre of their school improvement strategies. In Flanders (Belgium), England and Finland, they have done so by creating possibilities for cooperation that promote going beyond leaders' own schools to support local improvement. In Victoria (Australia) and Austria they have launched leadership development programmes for system-wide school improvement.

These innovations focus on system-wide school improvement by encouraging and developing school leaders to work together. Although the approaches were at early stages of development, the researchers found a number of significant benefits emerging. These included development of leadership capacity, rationalising of resources, increased cooperation, leadership being distributed further into schools and across education systems, and improving school outcomes.

The challenges to practice

Nevertheless, the study also found that there are considerable challenges to overcome before the concept of system leadership can be widely implemented. Sustainability is inevitably a critical factor, as is the quality of school leaders – because system leaders must first be successful school leaders.

The key features identified were: in-school capacity to sustain high levels of student learning; between-school capability (the “glue” that is necessary for schools to work together effectively); mediating organisations to work flexibly with schools to help build in-school capacity along with the skills necessary for effective collaboration; critical mass to make system leadership a movement, not just the practice of a small number of elite leaders; and cultural consensus across the system to give school leaders the space, legitimacy and encouragement to engage in collaborative activities.

The authors note that these conditions for long-term success were not all in place in any of the case studies, but all conditions were seen in some case studies. They

add that the cases that demonstrate more of these conditions are more successful in implementing system leadership. Other important factors for system leadership are: recognising and supporting system leaders; identifying and recruiting them; providing professional development; enabling school leaders to cooperate in an environment often still dominated by competition; and scaling up the innovations so that they can influence the whole education system.

Recommendations: let school leaders lead

The report's authors concluded that systemic leadership needs to come more from principals themselves and from agencies committed to working with them. They suggest that top-down approaches are not likely to work well. Developing ownership by participants, as Victoria (Australia) or the Austrian Leadership Academy are doing, is important.

A more lateral approach may be to create mediating organisations (such as the National College for School Leadership and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust in England, and the Leadership Academy in Austria) to promote system leadership and collaborative activity. Another approach is to foster local education authorities and municipalities in developing and spreading practice, as the Finnish have done. The intention must be not to create a new bureaucracy but to facilitate relationships between schools so that they can collaborate for the good of all students.

There is already significant system leadership activity in the five case study countries, this report finds. System leadership can build capacity in education: share expertise, facilities and resources; encourage innovation and creativity; improve leadership and spread it more widely; and provide skills support.

The collective sharing of skills, expertise and experience will create much richer and more sustainable opportunities for rigorous transformation than can ever be provided by isolated institutions, say the authors. But attaining this future demands that we give school leaders more possibilities in taking the lead.

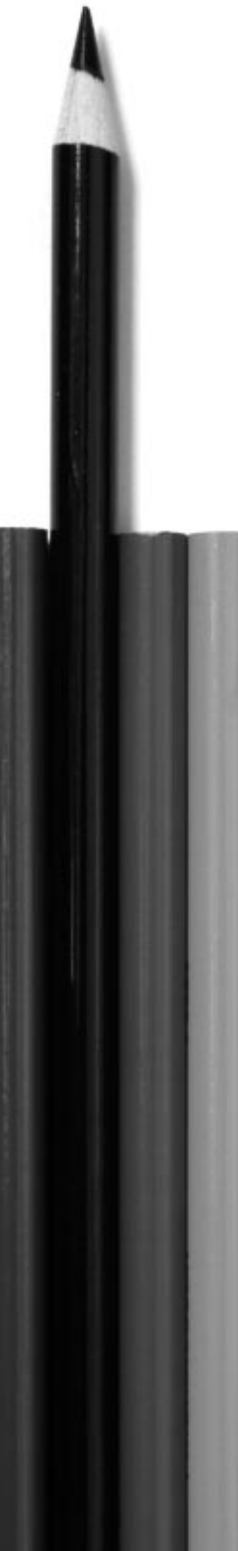
Improving school leadership activity

These reports have been prepared as part of the OECD Improving School Leadership activity. The purpose of the activity was to provide information and analysis to help policy makers formulate and implement school leadership policies leading to improved teaching and learning. In addition to literature on the topic and PISA data, the publications are based on country background reports by the participating countries and five case studies on innovative practices in (a) school leadership for systemic improvement; and (b) training and development of school leaders. All reports are available on the OECD website at www.oecd.org/edu/schoolleadership.

Participating countries

Australia, Austria, Belgium (Flanders and French Community), Chile, Denmark,





Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Korea, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom (England, Northern Ireland and Scotland).

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A NORTHERN IRELAND RESPONSE

Dr Tom Hesketh

Director, Regional Training Unit

THESE are interesting and challenging times in education, not just locally but internationally. As our policymakers and educationalists debate how best to reform the education system, it is important that they take note of the common challenges confronting numerous schooling systems and the emerging consensus on how these challenges can be overcome. Three particular trends are exercising the minds of policy makers and educationalists worldwide.

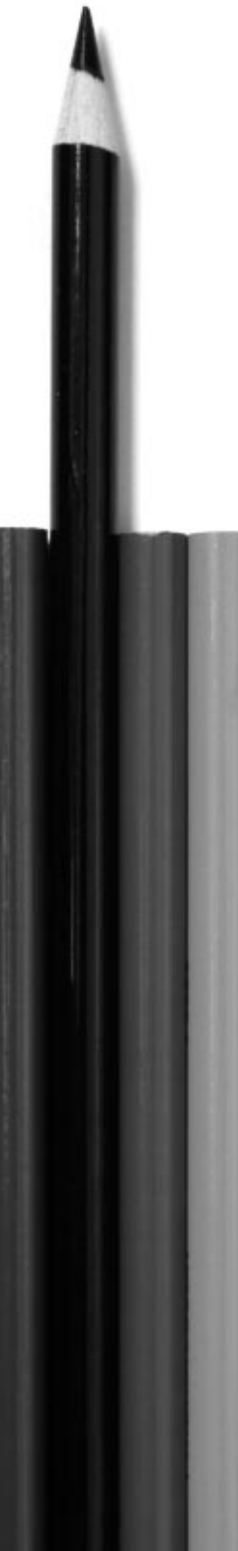
Firstly, the plateauing of school improvement efforts: the tendency for literacy and numeracy levels (standards generally) to reach a point beyond which no amount of additional resources will realise significant returns. Secondly, the persistence of a wide gap between the highest-performing pupils and schools and the lowest performing, with the consequential negative impact on the life opportunities of countless young folk. Thirdly, the persistence within schooling systems of educational determinism, whereby there remains a high correlation between socio-economic deprivation – defined for example by the free school meals indicator – and low educational attainment, with the consequential negative impact on communities and the wider society. However amid the gloom there is also room for optimism.

Two recent reports from the McKinsey organisation and the OECD, underpinned by a rich body of evidence including, in the case of the latter, perspectives and practices from Northern Ireland, provide policy makers with agendas for action. The first key finding is that the quality of an education system cannot exceed the quality of its teachers – in short, good teachers are the number one factor for excellence in student achievement. This was the key finding of the McKinsey report, based on an intensive study of 25 of the world's school systems including 10 of the top performers.

As the report explains: 'We examined what these high-performing school systems have in common and what tools they use to improve student outcomes, and three things matter most: getting the right people to become teachers, developing them into effective instructors, and ensuring that the system is able to deliver the best possible instruction for every child.'

After effective teaching comes high quality leadership. This was the key finding of a new OECD publication: *Improving School Leadership - Policy and Practice*. Drawing also on comparative analysis and case studies, including practices in Ireland, North and South, this report highlights school leadership as a key factor in improving school outcomes by 'influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers, as well as the school climate and environment'. The report emphasized





that 'effective school leadership is essential to improve the efficiency and equity of schooling' and goes on to specify four ways in which governments can ensure high quality school leadership:

- (re)define school leadership responsibilities, focusing on roles that can improve school results
- distribute school leadership, by engaging and recognizing broader participation in leadership teams
- develop skills for effective school leadership over different stages of practice
- make school leadership an attractive profession by ensuring appropriate wage and career prospects. In Northern Ireland the Department of Education has set as its objective that every school will be a good school.

Amid ongoing debates in Northern Ireland about structures and academic selection, it is crucial that the key insights on teacher excellence and leadership effectiveness to be found in the OECD and McKinsey reports find their practical translation in terms of policy and practice. The stakes could not be higher. As the recent investment conference made clear, the capacity to compete successfully in the global knowledge economy demands a population with high level, high value skills. The realisation of this objective, not just locally but for most schooling systems, depends on significant improvements in the quality of schooling outcomes and a more equitable distribution in learning opportunities.

The findings of McKinsey and the OECD raise important issues in relation to leadership development within N. Ireland. For the purposes of this conference I will focus on two: firstly, the need to reframe our thinking on the purpose of headship and secondly, the need to look critically at how the schooling system attends to the critically important agenda of leadership supply.

The need to repurpose headship so that head teachers spend more time on the issues that really matter is a key finding of the OECD study. Put simply, as a result of increasing administrative and bureaucratic pressures head teachers are spending less time on the core business of schools –high quality instruction and high quality learning. As with Southworth (2004), the pathway to this kind of headship practice is threefold: modelling, monitoring and dialogue. Heads need to:

- Lead curriculum development
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching
- Lead teacher professional development
- Build a culture of collaboration amongst teachers
- Use data effectively to improve practice
- Ensure that resource allocations are consistent with pedagogical practices.

The second key finding of the OECD project of particular relevance to Northern Ireland concerns the agenda of training and development, a key sub-aim of which is the identification, nurturing and development of a leadership talent pool to meet both current and future leadership needs within an increasingly distributive context. This is a key policy agenda for our schooling system given that more than half of head-teachers will be reaching retirement within the next five to eight years.

Within Northern Ireland, the Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH) has been the primary vehicle for the cultivation and development of a leadership talent pool, not just in relation to headship needs but also in relation to leadership at other levels.

In many respects, PQH has been a resounding success. Despite early scepticism, even resistance, the qualification has become the recognised pathway for those aspiring to headship. Nearly 40% of the 880 graduates are now in headship. More than 90% of graduates are in a more senior position within the schooling system than when they entered the programme. Recruitment into PQH has grown from 67 in its first year to over 230 by cohort 9, with year on year growth for the last 4 years. In terms of age and gender profile and sector spread, the qualification is fulfilling many of the expectations placed upon it. Additionally, an analysis of the school improvement work taken by each cohort of PQH candidates provides significant evidence of the capacity of PQH to make an impact on both school specific and systems wide initiatives (eg literacy, numeracy, effective use of data, raising standards etc). Less tangibly, but none the less real, PQH and the National Standards for Headship template on which it is based has led to the development of a shared language for high quality leadership and management in contemporary schools (roles, responsibilities and outcomes), which as the OECD report has commented is a key policy lever in advancing the quality of headship.

However amidst the successes a number of challenges have emerged. Our schooling system is encountering difficulties in leadership supply – with a growing incidence of re-advertisements and depleted fields of applicants. Significant numbers of PQH graduates are not entering headships either because they cannot apply (given the high threshold levels - eg seniority - set by employing authorities for prescribed posts) or are overly selective in terms of the posts which will attract them. PWC's attractiveness of headship project, due to report in April 2009, will provide an authentic and evidence based analysis of the factors deterring potential candidates from applying for headship – but clearly PQH requires a much sharper alignment to its central purpose of meeting the ongoing need of our schooling system for high quality and effective future head teachers.

Other challenges can be identified. There is a preponderance within the PQH cohorts of middle, even pre-middle level leadership candidates and correspondingly a relatively small proportion drawn from senior leadership, especially existing vice principal cadres (although significantly, there is no discernible difference in

performance at final skills assessment stage between middle leader level candidates and those in more senior positions, including acting heads). There is pressure on resources caused by high levels of recruitment and consequentially the tendency for provision to be overly generic or, put differently, insufficiently attuned to the specific needs of particular contexts e.g. schools in challenging circumstances; and small primaries. Also there is a need for programme revision (in part rewrites of text materials to reflect a rapidly changing system, including emergent agendas such as collaborative learning partnerships, clusters, maximum supported autonomy, and schools of the future), but also crucially in pedagogy and methodology to reflect best practices in leadership development (e.g. coaching/mentoring by experienced practitioners, and increasingly blended learning approaches incorporating on-line, non text materials etc).

I believe that the time is right for yet another reappraisal of PQH (the third since its inception) aimed at effecting best fit between the qualification and the leadership supply needs of the N Ireland schooling system. The directions of travel can be summarised as follows:

Comparison between current and proposed model
Summary of the key differences


Issue	Current Model	Proposed Model
Recruitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.5 times number of vacancies • Open recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of vacancies plus margin • Published quotas to reflect vacancies
Yearly intake	One entry point	Two entry points
Routes	Three different routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One route – 6 months • Second route – 12 months • Third route – 24 months 	Personalised route: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 4 months • Maximum 12 months
Participants	'Candidates'	'Trainee Principals' (change mindset)
Conversions to Headship	40% not necessarily on graduation	Target: 85% on graduation
Assessment Framework	Underpinned by National Standards for Headteachers	Underpinned by National Standards for Headteachers plus other frameworks

Issue	Current Model	Proposed Model
Assessment Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility assessment process • Contract visit • School based assessment • Final skills assessment • "M" level work (Accreditation and Pathways) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry assessment process 360% evidence • Formative assessment focused on outcomes • Graduation assessment – rigorous review of learning and achievements • 'M' level work (Accreditation Pathways)
Core Development Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction • Contract visit • Online tutor group • Four training days • School visits • Learning journal • Final stage residential 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coaching for improvement • Placement in different context • Research/policy agenda • Self-directed peer groups
National materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPQH study units • Online activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NPQH study units • Online activities
PQH/Early Headship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated provision linked to performance management

(adapted from NCSL)

If PQH is to achieve the aim of identifying, nurturing and developing outstanding leaders capable of assuming headship at an early opportunity, the following actions are needed:

- **Reduce the intake** both as a means of freeing up resources to facilitate programme revision/development, and to narrow the ability range of those entering the programme with a greater preponderance of senior leaders;
- **Secure/enhance the quality of entrants** by, for example, a greater focus on senior leadership development (experienced VPs provision); leadership capacity building within schools; a greater emphasis on middle leader development ; a pre PQH pathway such as a professional qualification in leadership (in association with CASS/ HEIs).
- **Enrich the journey** for those undertaking PQH with a greater emphasis on skills development (inc 360% feedback), placements/internships in challenging contexts; closer RTU/School links to facilitate better on the job learning (including coaching/mentoring by trained consultant heads).

- 
- (post PQH) **connect better** with both the new heads induction and career long provision, with a greater emphasis on performance management, organisational development and career progression.

The above actions chart the directions of travel for PQH (NI) for the foreseeable future. Sustaining stakeholder buy-in (including crucially, governors, employing authorities and the profession) is essential if PQH is to better meet the needs of the schooling system. As we move to internalise and take action on those aspects of the OECD Improving School Leadership policy agenda pertinent to Northern Ireland it will be important to locate PQH as a central element in the schooling system's leadership capacity investment.

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A REPUBLIC OF IRELAND RESPONSE

Mr Paddy Flood

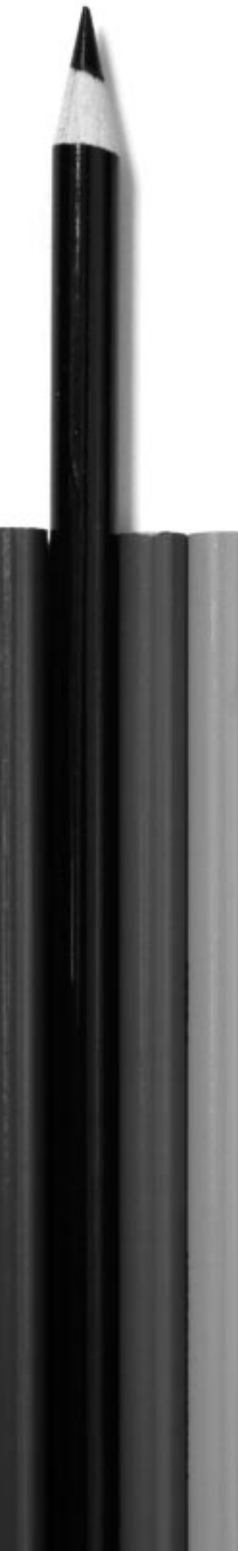
Director, Leadership Development in Schools

The publication of the OECD report *Improving School Leadership* signifies a seminal moment in the evolving role that school leaders play, and are expected to play, in schools and in our educational system. In the Irish context the discourse around the work of principals has evolved from a traditional focus on administration, moving to school management, and in the past decade the notion of school leadership has tended to become the focus of most attention. The track left by the terminology described above is indicative of the level to which the work of principals and other school leaders is increasingly seen as important in the overall educational system and, in particular, in achieving the maximum benefit from schools in pupil learning and growth. The OECD report accepts the findings of previous research activities that underpin the pivotal role of school leaders in bringing about outcomes for students. This now well established fact should be the focus for all those who seek to intervene in the work of school leaders, as it is the contribution of school leaders in overall outcomes for pupils that gives purpose and energy to the notion of 'improving school leadership'.

At the outset I feel that it is important to identify the target audience for this OECD publication. The notion that such reports are first and foremost the business of policy makers betrays the spirit of the report, as I read it. The focus of the report on our educational system as a whole invites policy makers, stakeholder organisations and the general body of practitioners of school leadership to respond to the recommendations and to revisit their convictions and policies on leadership and leadership development.

Evolution of Leadership

The increasing importance of school leadership in policy and practice here in Ireland is evident when we review the developments of the past decade. Prior to the mid-nineties leadership received relatively little attention in the Irish context as the principal's role slowly evolved from an administrative to a management-based role. However in the most recent decade policy makers have increasingly factored in the leadership dimension to reform, matching a period in which the need to drive educational change has been intense. The leadership role of the principal teacher is now underpinned in the Education Act (1998), and the role of leaders has received much greater focus as professional associations for school leaders have emerged and developed in the form of the National Association of Principals and Deputies (NAPD) and the Irish Primary Principals' Network (IPPN). These organisations have given a fresh voice on leadership issues and have contributed towards professionalising the exercise of leadership.



In 2002 the Department of Education and Science established the Leadership Development for Schools Programme (LDS), which has now developed a suite of interventions to support and challenge school leaders at a number of points in their career. These developments highlight the leadership evolution journey that has taken place in Ireland and highlight the more pivotal role that school leaders are expected to play in our education system. As the OECD report confirms, the potential impact of school leaders on pupil outcomes is now consistently proven to be strong and incisive.

Articulating the Purpose and Practice of Leadership

In identifying a number of issues raised in the report from an Irish perspective, I wish to draw initial attention to the suggestion that school leadership roles need to be clarified in terms of practice and competence. It has long been a demand of many groups representing school leaders to seek clarity on the scope and contract that goes with the position of principalship. I have concerns that attempts to create clarity around school leadership roles in some countries have been seen to limit the potential of school leadership through detailed description of tasks and long lists of competences. This does not fit easily with the notion we have here in Ireland of school leadership as a moral endeavour that demands flexibility and creativity in addressing the challenges at hand. As part of its leadership development work in the Republic of Ireland LDS is continuously aware of the need to have a solid basis for leadership development programmes, and I suggest that in order to clarify the role of principal teacher five key questions should be addressed:

- How do we encourage leaders to clarify, identify and promote a strong values and belief platform that drives and informs their decisions as leaders?
- What should leaders of Irish schools know?
- What are the attitudes and dispositions that are most effective in school leadership?
- Which key leadership practices are necessary for the exercise of strong leadership in our schools?
- How can the complexity of school leadership be articulated?

The rather challenging task of addressing these issues is one that LDS is currently engaged in. It is developing a profile of school leadership in the Irish context, one that is necessary so that school leadership can be understood, benchmarked, developed and improved. Such a profile is of potential benefit to practitioners wishing to improve practice, to those aspiring to the role and to those who select and support school leaders.

Role Tension

One of the more persistent tensions in relation to school leadership in Ireland is featured in the *Improving School Leadership* report: namely the potential impact of school leaders on improving and developing a learning agenda in schools which does not sit easily with a model of principalship that often distracts and pulls leaders away from the learning agenda. Professional associations, in particular, highlight this tension on a regular basis, pointing to workload issues, excessive administration and the lack of systematic restructuring roles as a basis for establishing a model of school leadership that is less administratively focussed and more focussed on the key agenda of teaching and learning.

This is perhaps one of the most fundamental issues that need to be resolved in terms of the expected knowledge, beliefs and practices of school leaders. If leadership is to be truly learning-centred, one suspects that this must begin with a professional shift of belief and perception among leaders themselves. The professional identity of any grouping is strongly shaped by the past and the tradition of the particular profession. The notion of school leaders as being learning-centred, and fundamentally about the improvement of teaching and learning, is relatively new (and perhaps revolutionary) in the Irish context, and as such, one wonders to what extent practitioners themselves have bought the new clothes of learning-centredness and abandoned the suit of administratively-focussed leadership.

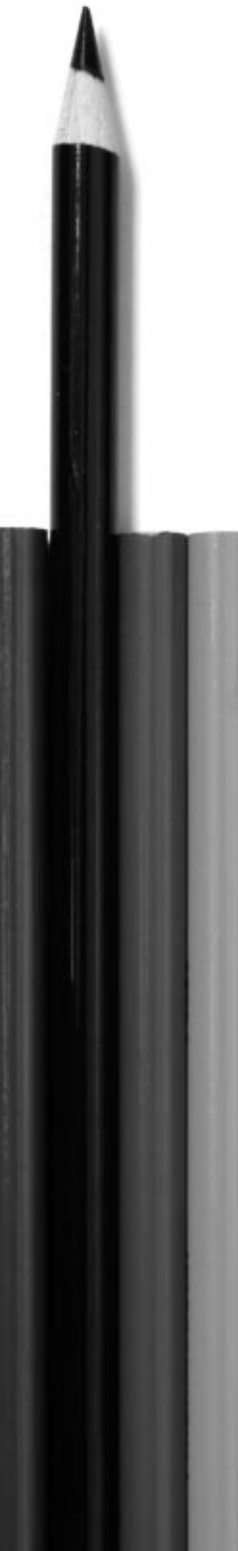
Systematic change will also require that the principles of learning-centred leadership are embedded in policy and national discourse to a larger degree than they are currently. By this I suggest that projects and initiatives that seek to improve learning should consider the need for leadership and the need to engage commitment across the school for such projects. I cannot envisage a situation where improving the standard of mathematics in a primary school can be systematic and sustainable if it is not pursued at whole school level with commitment, support and resources provided by the school leadership. The Forbairt Programme offered by LDS gives school principals and deputy principals an opportunity to revisit their core purpose as professionals, and to develop the skills and practices necessary to engage in the improvement of learning.

School Leadership Distributed

The OECD report strongly recommends that member states recognise that school leadership cannot be the domain of just one person and that the heroic, principal-only model of leadership is scarcely sustainable when facing the challenges that contemporary education pose.

One of the heartening factors in Irish education is the increasingly systematic interest in taking up and promoting leadership issues among many groups. In this room today we have unions, management bodies, professional associations and providers of leadership programmes represented. All play an increasingly active part in the leadership agenda. This is evident in their co-operation with LDS, in





professional development, boards of management training, principals support groups and networks, national conferences and programmes for principals and deputy principals. The language of shared leadership is often difficult to realise in practice. If leadership in Irish schools were to be compared to a dance routine, then might I suggest that we are not ready for 'Strictly Come Leadership' as Team! As in all dance troops some are reluctant to be there in the first place, while others may assume a right to be in charge and direct their co-performers to the point where they lose interest. There is a distinct lack of practice evident (perhaps because they cannot find time to dance together), yet when the judges arrive for the performance known as Whole School Evaluation all rise to the occasion and make a coherent effort.

Ultimately the OECD report suggests that at the world dance championships for distributing leaders we Irish may go in feeling like novices competing against the world champions, only to find that the playing field is much leveller than we think, and that the evidence on successful distribution of leadership internationally is rather frail. Yes, other countries have greater mobility of teachers between schools, building wider and richer life experiences. Yes, there are some models like New Zealand which link rewards to the task at hand, and there is evidence of a clearer line of progression from middle leadership to senior leadership positions in England and other states. However the report does highlight a key difference between developing leadership channels through formal roles and the ability of schools to encourage and empower as many staff members as possible to take on a leadership role in schools. Developments in Irish education over the past decade have afforded opportunities for learning support teachers, career guidance teachers, year heads, home school liaison teachers and a plethora of other teachers to have a bigger influence and effect over the learning and teaching agenda of the school. Those who avail of these opportunities exercise leadership on a daily basis in a most unassuming manner.

Attracting School Leaders

The Irish Country Background Report (2008) for the OECD report expressed concern at the apparent waning of interest in senior leadership positions in Irish schools. In fact, the report concluded that the main concern over the quality of school leadership was around the supply of applicants for principal teachers' positions. There is also evidence that many school leaders are leaving the role at an earlier point in their career, with precious few working to 65. In any professional role a lack of interest and an undersupply of suitably qualified candidates is a major policy concern. This is one area where the Departments of Education on both sides of the border have decided to probe further to ascertain how the role can be made more attractive. Research commissioned by LDS and RTU will report in 2009 and will analyse why principalship remains an attractive option for a smaller number of teachers while others do not show any interest in the role. Indeed the attractiveness of the role (rather than a separate consideration) is perhaps a key thread that links many aspects of the *Improving School Leadership* report. One suspects that among the steps necessary for role attractiveness to be enhanced are:

- Clearer articulation of the complexity, challenges and purpose of school leadership role.
- Clearer distribution of school leadership with a team model, rather than a model with one individual at the centre of the role.
- A more central focus on learning for school leaders and greater support with their administrative duties.

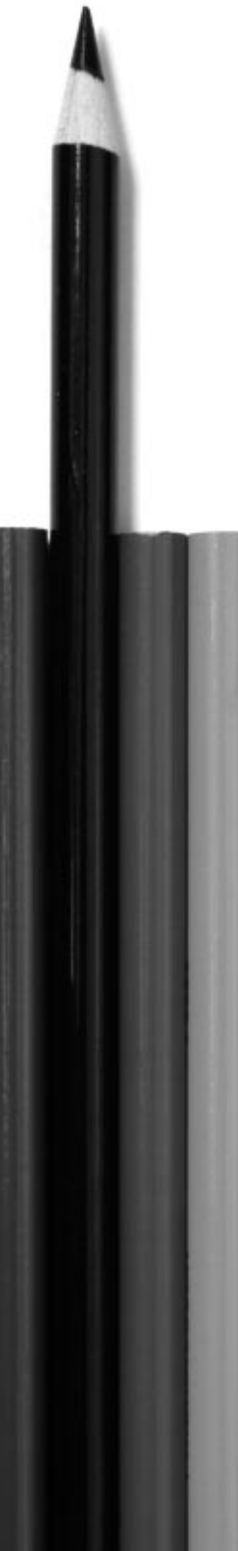
In the absence of the above, there appear to be fundamental work-life balance issues that challenge the sustainability and the vitality which practitioners can bring to the role. Leaders consistently describe the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of pupils as a key motivation factor in the role. The challenge is to provide them with the scope and role clarity to make this difference.

The attraction and appointment of an employee to any organisation is a function of the employer. The Irish education system has a number of employing groups and authorities who attract and select school leaders on the basis of nationally agreed protocols and procedures. The extent to which those protocols and procedures remain appropriate to our education system, given the problem of attracting leaders and the timescale during which this process takes place, is debatable in light of the recommendations. I am constantly struck by the relative depth of succession planning activity that takes place in other countries and within other professions. Irish education is challenged to respond to certain practices including:

- Documenting and celebrating the potential and power of the role of principal
- Conducting the process in a timeframe that allows schools and potential applicants time to prepare for application, selection and appointment and to prepare for the role in advance of take-up. I note from the *Times Education Supplement* that positions advertised this week will not be occupied by the new headteachers for six to eight months. This appears to provide a longer period than is possible in the case of some vacancies that arise in Ireland.
- Investigating which selection processes and tools, including interview formats, offer most potential in enhancing and strengthening the selection process
- Streamlining the induction process of the new leader into the school by way of support and guidance prior to appointment, practical help from boards of management, linkages with professional associations and the Misneach Programme offered by LDS.

Professional Development

This paper so far has focused on structural issues around the role of principal teacher that have been considered from an Irish perspective in the light of the OECD report. The final quartile of the OECD jig-saw is the manner in which we



develop and support school leaders in the field. Leadership development activities are not a primarily a support service for school leaders. Rather, the emergence of groups like RTU and LDS are rooted in a belief that well-prepared leaders can make a fundamental difference to the quality of education in our schools. This in turn is rooted in the international research, documented in the OECD report, on the links between effective school leadership and positive learning outcomes. The report strengthens and challenges the leadership development requirements necessary from the state and from employing bodies. Underlying principles espoused by the OECD and central to policy considerations in the Republic of Ireland include:

- Leadership development as a continuous process: in 2008 LDS introduced Toraiocht, a programme for aspiring school leaders. This is significant in that we now have a national framework of programmes and activities for school leaders including aspirant, induction and experienced leaders, reflecting the evolution of careers.
- Leadership development must include variety and diversity of provision. There will always be a concern that any state could entrust one body with a function such as leadership development. Fortunately in the Republic of Ireland the emerging portfolio of opportunities for school leaders does include employer-provided training, third level opportunities, union and professional association provision and state provision through LDS and other support programmes. This tapestry of provision is to be encouraged by way of providing choice and diversity for practitioners.
- A balance must always be struck between the work of leadership development programmes in walking the tight-rope between the various challenges that the role poses, and the strategic role of such agencies in acting as a pivotal agent in school reform and improvement.

While attention will continue to focus on the quality and diversity of provision for leadership development, professional development remains a central consideration for all states in professionalising and improving school leadership.

I have outlined some key considerations for the Republic of Ireland in light of the *Improving School Leadership* report. These considerations suggest that improving school leadership is an imperative, given the challenges facing schools and education. Within the report there is little scope for a menu-based consideration of options. Rather the report as a whole is a prescribed meal that requires preparation, careful cooking and consumption so that leaders can engage further and deeper in work that makes a fundamental contribution to the quality of learning in our schools.

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A VIEW FROM THE DEPARTMENT

Mr Will Haire

**Permanent Secretary, Department of Education,
Northern Ireland**

Clearly I am not here to summarise all that has been said so far at today's conference. The following remarks are purely some initial thoughts, half way through your event, which I hope will help lead on to what you are going to discuss tomorrow. In short, I am just throwing out some issues, hopefully slightly provocatively, for your consideration.

The first question I have to ask when I attend conferences and read reports such as today's is 'So what?' I've got around the shelves on my walls so many reports that have been produced for the NI Department of Education. Frankly I often feel that we have not done very much with many of them. And my staff will tell you, especially the Inspectorate when they come and talk about education policies, unless they give me a solution within seven minutes my eyes are inclined to glaze over. Indeed I think to get seven minutes of attention span is quite good!

Now let me emphasise that what is being discussed here is really important. This is absolutely core to what all of us in education, including my Department, must be about. But how do actually get some commitment and action? Because the really key issue for you to consider is what you are going to do, to change what your institution is doing, to adopt and think about these issues. How are you going to move on?

The second thing I want to say is that I have concluded that one of my tasks is to 'politicise' education in the north. In saying that, I am not referring to politicisation in a party sense. Rather, first we have to 'politicise' education in the sense of getting across to the public how education is one of the prime policies of any state. The second aspect of 'politicisation' is how we distribute power in the education sector, including how we draw other sectors into the education process. We have to ensure that power is effectively distributed; that the individual school gets its own power structures, organisation and accountability right, and that it is linked effectively to whatever form of administration supports it and to the wider political process.

Further, how do all of us as leaders in education in our different roles work together. I believe such a partnership is absolutely crucial to what we are about. It is not just school leadership but it is also education leadership that is key. Unless school leaders are involved in education leadership, unless we involve principals and teachers and unions in looking at the policy and the implementation of the policy and the power process, we are not going to create that dynamic change which we need.

One issue which we have to agree on is the nature of the challenge we face. We have got many strengths in our education system here, but we have to challenge any sense of complacency because we also have major underachievement in our education sector for too many of our young people. We are failing too many of our young people. It is absolutely unacceptable. This is not me pointing my finger at individual parts of the system. It is collectively our society and our educational system that have let that happen. And we as leaders in the education system have to show people how we can make this change happen.

In this context this OECD report on the role of school leadership has a crucial role to play. We have to have a fervent debate about the different issues it throws up. We have to look at so many aspects of leadership which are being considered here.

This debate about leadership is also about accountability. It is about defining who is accountable for what and in a broad sense about us taking those accountabilities and being honest with each other. It is about school leaders being accountable for outcomes, and not being micro managed from outside by people like myself. That does not mean that in setting overall policies we in the Department don't need to be clear, writing in language that you understand, to give clarity. To achieve that we have got to have much more dialogue than we have had to date.

This issue of leadership is also a collective issue. It is not about narrow management but the wider moral leadership which has already been referred to today. That leadership goes outside the school. You will not – the school itself is not going to - deliver education. The leadership that is required of us is also about connecting more widely to the community, to other public services and to the family.

But I come back to some very basic issues which I think will be mentioned here. You know we can analyse these issues in great detail. But unless each of us takes up our piece of leadership, and each of us in this room does our bit for leadership, we are failing in that process. We can theorise about leadership, but we have to remember the NIKE quote - 'Just do it'. I sometimes believe it can be summarised in a combination of the leadership qualities which I look to in my staff - a combination of continuous discontent and unreasonable optimism! We have to be unhappy where we are at, but we have to believe that we can change this.

I hope that out of today and tomorrow we can decide how we take this report into our different institutions, and how do we get practical things done so that we all as leaders work together.

Can I thank all of the speakers very much – there has been great food for thought here and tomorrow. And can I thank clearly the authors of this report. And after that food for thought, enjoy the food this evening!





AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE FROM CAMBRIDGE

Dr Ciaran Sugrue

University of Cambridge

Introduction

In fast paced 'fluid modernity' (Bauman, 2000/2006), in this 'runaway world' (Giddens, 2002), reports accumulate with mesmerising regularity on the desks and in the offices of school principals, academics and policy makers. In such circumstances the OECD report that is the focus of attention here is one among many. Will it have a significant impact on national policies, on principals' and teachers' lives and work? Will school leadership be 'transformed' as the narrative of the report suggests? While it is not possible to predict the future with any accuracy, it may be more appropriate to ask—what kind of future for school leadership does this report predict and how appropriate are such predictions for 21st century schools? In the meantime it is important to make some initial observations about the report and its provenance.

Initial observations

When the national background papers were being prepared as precursors to this synthesis report, I made some observations regarding the nature of the OECD as an organisation that provide important signifiers a particular 'reading' of which suggest that such reports should be read with these considerations in mind. In general it must be remembered that the OECD is first and foremost an economic organisation rather than an educational one. Consequently there is a tendency to regard education policy and practice as subservient to economic growth, and human capital development as a contribution to that end. Educators, however, while recognising that development of education systems, policies and practices are dependent on financial resources, tend towards promoting concepts of education that extend beyond mere preparation for the workforce—citizenship, identity, wellbeing, civic engagement and participation too require attention as crucially important dimensions of what schools, teachers and principals regard as important, increasingly against a rising tide of regimes of accountability. The OECD as an organisation funded by national governments does not hide its primarily economic remit. The report itself indicates:

The organisation provides a setting where governments can compare policy experiences, seek answers to common problems, identify good practice and work to co-ordinate domestic and international policies (p. 2).

The report continues:

The OECD is a unique forum where the governments of 30 democracies work together to address the economic, social and environmental challenges of globalisation. The OECD is also at the forefront of efforts to understand and to help governments respond to new developments and concerns such as

corporate governance, the information economy and the challenges of an ageing population (p. 2).

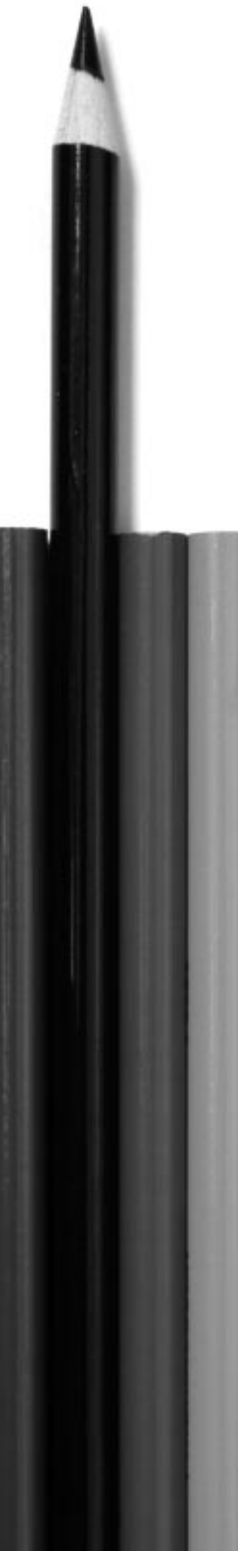
However, as Goodson has pointed out, precisely how reports emanating from such polyphonic fora impact at national level is dependent on the manner in which such policy rhetorics are 'refracted' by the traditions and trajectories of national systems and policies (I. F. Goodson, 2004). It is necessary therefore to heed the general health warning that such reports tend to deploy a particular language, and in the absence of appropriate immunization through a reflexive awareness that recognises 'language does our thinking for us', there is the considerable risk that the reader is seduced by such 'speech communities'. An authoritative tone is often mistakenly understood and internalized as the voice of authority when frequently such reports seek to find an appropriately loose language so that representatives of various constituent countries can feel included. In this regard, it is noticeable that the Republic of Ireland (RoI) frequently does not appear to be included in what may be regarded as mainstream comments, but such marginalisations or exclusions are never identified as distinctive features of a system that may have something of particular importance to say. Rather such differences are ignored.

There is a general tendency in such reports to identify and play up commonalities when it is differences that often lend quality to a country's education system. In addition to succumbing to the risk of allowing language to do our thinking for us, such reports also tend to promote policy homogenization rather than celebrate diversity. Another general concern is a lack of transparency regarding how the literature given prominence in the report was selected from the vast array of available material on school leaders and leadership. It is legitimate to ask, for example, why is there an absence of work on ethical and moral leadership and on values ? Will the kind of focus advocated in this report on teaching and learning create the knowledge workers and good citizens deemed necessary and will this contribute to the 'common good' - or, as dominant policies of the past two decades have done, create greater social fragmentation and division?

Assumptions

The report makes a number of key assumptions that lay the foundation for constructing the case it wishes to make. What are these assumptions and how robust are they? They may be summarised as follows:

- School leadership is now an education policy priority around the world.
- Increased school autonomy and a greater focus on schooling and school results have made it essential to reconsider the role of school leaders.
- There is much room for improvement to professionalise school leadership, to support current school leaders and to make school leadership an attractive career for future candidates.

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- The ageing of current school principals and widespread shortage of qualified candidates to replace them after retirement make it imperative to take action (p. 3).

School leadership may be a priority in some parts of the world, but even where this assertion may have a ring of truth, there is significant variation, while reasons for such policy priorities will vary considerably also. When the OECD completed a review on education in the Republic of Ireland in 1991 (OECD, 1991), one of its major concerns was lack of professional preparation for school leaders. While the then Minister for Education Mary O' Rourke committed to making this a priority, it was another decade before Leadership Development for Schools (LDS) was created - hardly an indication of priority. Subsequently other reports were necessary to prevent the programme from being folded after a handful of principals had received minimal professional support (Morgan & Sugrue, 2005). In the current economic climate, the future of LDS will be a litmus test regarding policy commitment regarding leadership of schools.

The assumption that school autonomy, however construed, and its connection with student outcomes has led to a review of the role is contestable. A preoccupation with results of tests, many educators argue, has been to the detriment of the teaching learning process rather than its enhancement, and while a review of leaders' various roles may be necessary and timely, it is very debatable whether or not 'autonomy', depending on how it is conceived, has anything to do with this.

The recent report from Eurydice describes autonomy in the following terms:

The notion of 'school autonomy' refers ... to several different aspects of school management (essentially funding and human resources). Schools may be autonomous to varying degrees regarding these aspects. They are considered to be fully autonomous, or to have a high degree of autonomy, if they are fully responsible for their decisions subject to legal constraints or the general framework of education legislation.... Schools are partly autonomous if they take decisions within a set of predetermined options or require approval for decisions from their education authority. Autonomy may also be implied where there is an absence of rules or regulations in a given area (Coghlan & Desurmont, 2007, p. 7).

There are at least four different versions of autonomy implied here, while elsewhere in the report it is claimed that it has been the most persistent policy pursued across OECD countries for the last 25 years. What does this look like in practice and where did it come from? It is not necessary to remind educators in Northern Ireland that the 1988 Education Act was essentially ideologically driven and top-down. It was about devolution of decision making and responsibility which very quickly, from the perspective of schools and principals, became a policy directive of 'more for less'.


This report goes on to make great play out of the fact that in Bulgaria, Ireland, France, Cyprus and Romania schools have autonomy to choose textbooks, and this is taken to be a 'measure' of autonomy. But in the RoI, where pupils and their parents pay for the purchase of textbooks, many would dispute that such evidence counts as a measure of autonomy—there are many other market forces at play and in other jurisdictions the very same practice by governments would be perceived as a neglect of public education. Neither is there recognition of the fact that the production, selection, and use of textbooks by teachers, coupled with the impact of public examinations and high stakes testing, have enormous consequences for the nature of pedagogy and the teaching learning process. The point I wish to underline is that presenting such evidence in a generalised, decontextualised manner paints a picture that is a very inadequate representation of realities on the ground, at the level of the school. Consequently there is considerable distortion rather than accurate representation. This is not an isolated example.

There is much room for improvement to professionalise school leadership to support school leaders and to make school leadership an attractive career. Two issues are being conflated in this OECD report which are not necessarily helpful: there is a demographic issue about where the next generation of principals are going to be drawn from and there are also those who are in the position at the moment. So there is an issue about general Continuing Professional Development for the teaching profession as a whole that cannot easily be separated from preparation for leadership including the principal's role. Instead, the report seems very keen on the notion that principalship should be a separate career with a separate salary.

Such a radical shift requires careful consideration—and it seems like a return to the kind of educational entrepreneurialism advocated in the Republic's Green Paper in the early 1990s when Seamus Brennan occupied the position of Minister for Education for a brief period and sought to create a more corporate culture in schools. As things stand, there is extremely little evidence that public private partnerships are mutually beneficial and advantageous to students. Very recent economic events send very clear cautionary messages about any further neo-liberalisation of public education. Needless to say, all of these considerations are open to debate, but it is important not to conflate a larger issue about a decent policy around CPD for the teaching profession with how the whole leadership pool of talent in schools is nurtured and sustained.

I have reservations also surrounding the assumption above relating to teachers' and principals' professional lives. Important distinctions have been made and need to be maintained between professionalism and professionalization (I.F. Goodson & Hargreaves, 1996), distinctions that have been elaborated also more recently (Cunningham & Watson, 2008; Gewirtz, Mahony, Hewxtall, & Cribb, 2009). When the provision of professional preparation for leadership is centralised, thus bringing it much closer to central policy-making, preparation tends to become much more scripted, thus tending towards professionalization. Consequently, with the advent





of such a report, there is greater need than ever to maintain distinctions between these two terms if cloned leaders rather than individuals with autonomy, professional judgement and authenticity are to be charged with leading schools of the future. How are bodies like NCSL and LDS to be held accountable to the teaching profession as well as policy makers?

The 'greying' of current principals and widespread sorties to find suitable candidates to replace them after retirement is imperative, but that is a separate issue. Neither the issues of preparation of school leaders nor the shortage of applicants for principalships—the latter concern varies considerably depending on jurisdiction, and with considerable differences also depending on the socio-economic communities being served by individual schools—are served by conflating them.

Having registered considerable caution concerning the manner in which such international reports should be interpreted, it is important also to acknowledge that they do make a positive contribution since they frequently provoke public debate.

Some highlights

More than anything else this OECD report draws attention to the fact that school leadership matters, and this is the substantive focus of the report's first chapter. There is general acknowledgement also that the impact of leadership is often indirect. Similarly this chapter draws attention to the importance of leadership to improve effectiveness and equity, though often these issues compete and conflict. In such circumstance, school leaders who take a stand for equity to the detriment of efficiency are penalised by external accountability measures. This may very well be an injustice to teachers and school leaders, and more elaborate measures of 'value added' may need to be developed with more emphasis on educational processes and less preoccupation with learning outcomes if efficiency and effectiveness are to be dealt with more equitably. There is recognition also that expectations for school leaders have changed enormously, but with an (implicit) assumption that this is a good thing, an unqualified good. The demands being made on schools are accepted as inevitable, desirable even, without a more fundamental questioning of the role and purpose of schooling.

Nevertheless the report is correct in drawing attention to the role as developed for the industrial age as being no longer adequate or appropriate for the complex challenges schools are facing in the 21st century. However, in this context, as intimated earlier, and not surprisingly since the report emanates from an economic organisation, there appears to be greater concern for attention to schooling for the economy rather than civil society. It is difficult to disagree with the report when it asserts that 'school autonomy makes the job of school leaders more time-consuming by increasing their administrative and managerial workload' (p. 23). Nevertheless, while recognising this, there is a further demand made on this role by insisting that leadership be more concerned 'for improved teaching and learning'

(p. 23). Such a refocusing of the role is laudable, and some leaders need to be weaned off older routines, but as long as legislation insists that it is the principal who is ultimately accountable for the quality of work in the school, more distributed forms of leadership among the teaching staff will often struggle to become embedded in the absence of similarly dispersed forms of accountability.

Nevertheless the following seems like a step in the right direction: 'Instead of serving as head teacher *primus inter pares*, they have to become leaders of learning responsible for building communities of professional practice' (p. 26). However more sensitivity to the policy environment, with greater recognition of the impact of WSE and Ofsted on leadership, will require closer attention and appropriate amendments to existing legislation regarding accountability. While workforce reform in UK/ Northern Ireland has gone some way towards creating spaces and opportunities for collaborative preparation and release time, as well as reassigning some responsibilities to ancillary staff, more fundamental reforms regarding the length of the school year in the South and the nature of teachers' contracts await attention if aspects of school reform are to become more realistic rather than expecting principals to gauge the goodwill of the teaching staff at various stages of the school year before asking for their collaboration. It will be necessary to rethink key aspects of school leadership, and not just the principal's role. Towards this end, the report identifies 4 key considerations or policy levers. Each of these is now identified and briefly commented on.

Leadership focused on supporting, evaluating and developing teacher quality

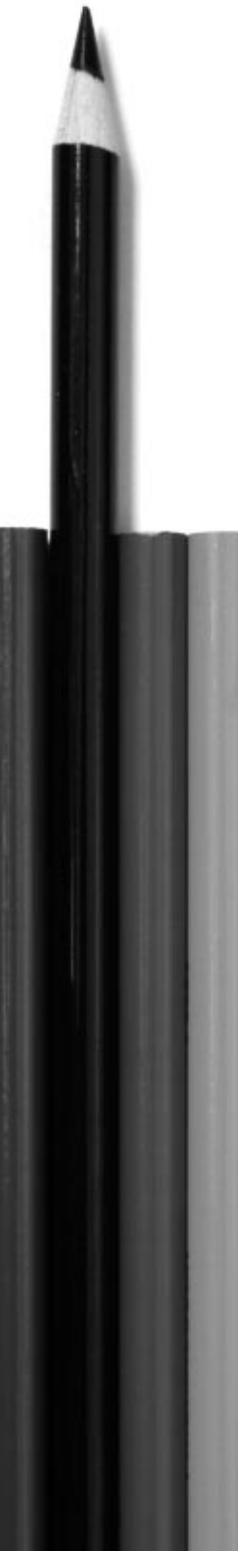
The OECD report in 1991 commented on the 'legendary autonomy' of the Irish teacher, and in many respects this degree of classroom autonomy has scarcely altered in the meantime, while some schools have established more collaborative cultures. There are very few systems even in the more privileged membership of the OECD 'club' that would proclaim that their systems have got the balance in this regard in correct proportion. In Northern Ireland a very likely comment is that it is too scripted and coercive, while in the South, and certainly by comparison with the UK, external accountability continues to be rather benign by comparison.

Setting learning objectives and implementing intelligent assessment systems

It is difficult to disagree with this assertion, while being very wary of what form such a policy requirement might take. Excessive emphasis on summative assessment is all too prevalent, while more formative assessment and self-evaluation on the part of teachers as a counter to the imposition of external accountability measures struggle to find a more dynamic equilibrium (J. MacBeath, 1999; J. MacBeath, and McGlynn, 2002).

Strategic use of resources and their alignment with pedagogical purposes

Here again is a positive sounding policy assertion that inevitably means very different things at the local level. The most crucial determinant will be how much of the education budget devolves to the level of the school when it comes to the purchasing of teaching and learning materials. In a UK context, where partnerships



are becoming more widespread and promoted by policy-makers, greater disparities in resource provision are more likely depending on how generous a partner is and how deep the company's pockets, while in RoI parents in the more leafy suburbs continue to subsidise education through various fundraising initiatives or indeed through various covenanting arrangements. Without continued commitment to public funding of education, inequities are likely to grow even if claims to efficiency may be advanced.

School leadership beyond the school borders

This issue is not new but takes on more urgency in the context of funding, while urging parents and the wider community to participate more actively in their children's education. At a time and in the context of arguing that the role of the principal needs to be refocused more on teaching and learning, this element of the wider mosaic of schooling may have to be sacrificed, although the quality of relationships between home, school and community have significant indirect impact on school climate and learning outcomes. One way of advancing on all these fronts at once is to promote more teacher and distributed leadership.

The potential of distributed leadership?

While distributed leadership has rapidly climbed the totem pole of policy orthodoxy during the past five years, the evidence base regarding claims of its provenance is considerably thinner than the rhetoric frequently admits (Harris, 2008; Leithwood, Mascal, & Strauss, 2009). By contrast, Spillane indicates clearly that he understands distributed leadership as a practice and his preference from a research perspective is to document the interactions and the exchanges between people rather than focus on decision-making at higher levels of the organisation. Additionally, his research clearly indicates when different subject areas are the focus of attention, the patterns of interactions between teachers in maths and science, for example, as opposed to languages are radically different. So building an understanding of what the human interactions look like up close, and the attendant density of leadership within schools as organisations in practice, is what that empirical research is about (J. Spillane, 2006; J. Spillane & Diamond, 2007).

I find the manner in which the report uses the term 'distributive' rather than 'distributed' in relation to leadership somewhat troubling and disingenuous. The latter seems much more democratic and empowering potentially while the former continues to have resonances of the chief executive approach, a tendency towards 'executive' decision-making that denies the democratic impulse. In the current economic climate such distinctions may serve more reactionary forces. In the meantime, the jury will be out for a considerable period of time yet regarding the potential of distributed leadership (Sugrue, 2009). The report acknowledges this when it states: 'There is conceptual support for the practice of distributed leadership and some encouraging, if limited, empirical evidence' (p.81).

Future leaders

The report does acknowledge that given the importance of school leadership, it will require sustained professional support. Towards this end it will be necessary to develop a suite of programmes that develop different skill sets. In laying out this menu however, there is a tendency towards a bifurcated approach—that universities are good at aspects of such work but not others. It says: 'Typically, universities provide academic expertise, schools and school systems provide context and practical expertise'. (p. 126). Nevertheless there is also recognition that a sustained career long approach is necessary:

'The skills needed ... cannot be developed solely in one programme, but rather in a combination of learning, knowledge of how best to combine these approaches to provide a holistic learning experience to meet the needs of leaders at different career stages'. (p. 111).

While this is perfectly plausible and laudable, comments regarding universities suggests that somehow they are incapable of partnerships with practitioners, and such comments also ignore the fact that the majority of staff in education departments or faculties are former classroom practitioners who have often also occupied a variety of leadership positions in schools. There is considerable potential to further such partnerships in the interests of schools and their leadership, while the current economic climate may well be conducive to such collaboration rather than perpetuating fragmentation through proliferation of various bodies and agencies. Such collaboration has the potential also to move beyond a rhetoric of partnership in the Republic of Ireland and to lend some more substance to what has become little more than a policy mantra.

Conclusions

This report provides valuable compass readings that go well beyond issues about school leaders because they have potential to shape the future of education in profound ways. However in the current economic climate, many of the issues that this report takes for granted or ignores will be challenged in much more fundamental ways. Such challenges to the very foundations of 21st century schooling will require extraordinary leadership from policy-makers, politicians and practitioners. This Herculean struggle for the soul of education will be the more substantial test of leaders and leadership—this will not be about distributed or shared leadership, it will be about standing up and being counted for public education and the common good. When these more challenging questions are addressed, and current realities lend them additional urgency in this more searching and testing environment, 'improving school leadership' will be only one element of a larger educational, economic and socio-cultural agenda of national and international significance.





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AN ACADEMIC PERSPECTIVE FROM BELFAST

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This paper addresses the implications, both theoretical and practical, of the most recent OECD report *Improving School Leadership*; specifically, it focuses on the concepts of 'distributed' and 'collaborative' leadership in schools discussed in the report. It is also essential, however, to briefly explain what will not be included in this paper; these issues are absent due to space constraints but are mentioned here because they will be essential factors in determining the success of any initiative in Northern Ireland based on the OECD's recommendations. These issues include:

- 1) Integrated schools' effects on the educational landscape;
- 2) The general state of cross- community relationships (Catholic and Protestant) in Northern Ireland;
- 3) Relative levels of instability in the policy environment, highlighted by the upcoming implementation of the Education and Skills Authority and corresponding changes in systemic structures;
- 4) Declining enrolments in total numbers, leading to more competition between schools for students;
- 5) An increasing level of diversity of families and students being served;
- 6) The tremendous amount of adjustments in resource allocation necessary to put in place many of the initiatives suggested by the report (Odden & Archibald, 2001).

These underlying factors will provide the foundation for systemic changes to the Northern Ireland educational system and will, to a large extent, determine whether the proposed school leadership initiatives are accepted or successful. These foundational pieces, while not expanded upon here due to space constraints, should always be kept in mind.

What this paper will address are the following seven concerns, with each explored in more detail following this list, related to *Improving School Leadership's* recommendations:

- 1) There is a lack of clarity around the meaning of the terms distributed, distributive, and collaborative in the report, research literature, and in their usage by practitioners;

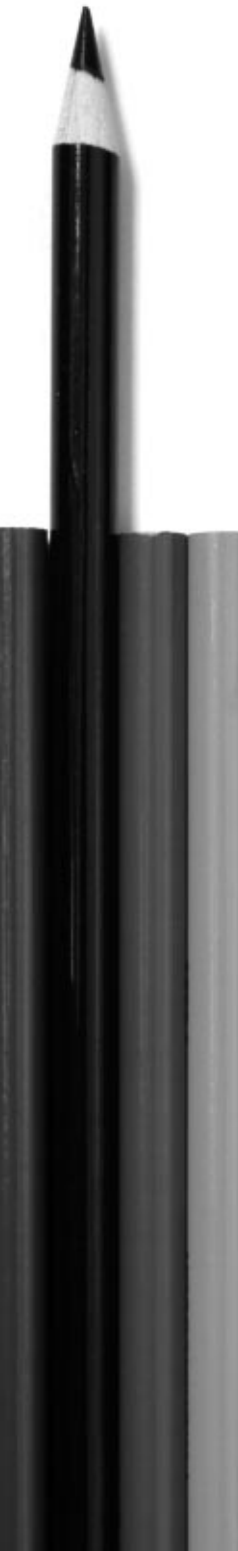
- 2) Teacher training would need to be radically changed to provide teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to succeed in a dramatically different educational system;
- 3) More effective training methods for leadership would be required;
- 4) The selection process for both teacher and school leaders would have to be addressed;
- 5) Given the range of training organizations, there are likely gaps and/or redundancies in their remits;
- 6) Cultural and social norms in education, deeply embedded in both the structures and beliefs of the educational system, are not addressed but remain powerful determinants of what happens in schools;
- 7) There is a danger that the release of the report will be equated with actual change in the educational system, ignoring the existing divide between the academics' discussion of the issues in the report and the practitioners' implementation of the ideas contained therein.

1. Concepts of Distributed/Distributive/Collaborative Leadership

While the words 'distributed', 'distributive', and 'collaboration' are frequently used interchangeably – both in the OECD report and in other discussions and writings – they not only have different meanings from one another, but each is also defined differently by different people. This results in a severe lack of clarity about what is meant when the report refers to "collaboration". This lack of precision is not simply an academic quibble, but is tied into the challenges that each of these different leadership styles present when trying to put them into action. In other words, given that different skills, structures, and environments are necessary depending on the specific definition of these terms, this ambiguity is a major stumbling block to logical discussion as well as application.

In a best case scenario, distributed, distributive, and collaborative models would all be in the 'toolbox' of practitioners, along with a number of other types of leadership and organizational structuring. This diversity of abilities allows a school or educational system to tailor its methods to the situation at hand, resulting in greater efficiency and productivity than those tied to only one method of functioning. An ability to utilize more than one model does demand an enormous amount of training for all members of the educational system, however, as there will need to be an understanding among all stakeholders of when to use each of the different models, who will be involved in the process, how to put the model into action and the magnitude and intensity of the effort needed (Trice & Beyer, 1993).





Because of the variety of skills required – and these skills must not only reside with a sole leader in these paradigms but with multiple stakeholders – there is an enormous challenge in developing the facility to monitor local needs accurately, choose the most appropriate organizational model to address those needs, and then ensure that those local needs are addressed efficiently. This is not a case for isolated training of select individuals within a school; the professional development to change to these collaborative models will need to be radically different than our current models. Many current professional development methods rely on standalone training for a few individuals; these methods will neither adequately prepare the individual nor develop a sufficient base within a school for effective collaboration to take place. Training will have to focus on all staff members in a school and also be much more intensive, taking place over months and years with a great deal of support from experienced professionals and connections with institutes of higher education. Similarly, the expectations for teacher training programmes will have to change to include the skills and understandings of these models, so that they can enter the educational system prepared to work with others in a variety of situations, including being a part of the leadership process.

2. Training of Teachers for New Demands

New demands on workers are useless without also providing them with the requisite skills to meet these new requirements (Smylie et al., 2002; Follett, 1926). Asking teachers to take on a pronounced leadership role in schools must be accompanied by a significant change to the way in which they are trained to include aspects of leadership, and not just a simple overview of basic leadership concepts. Successful teachers will need to learn a broad range of leadership and research skills.

In terms of leadership specifically, teachers in training will need courses on general leadership concepts, collaborative models of leadership that include inter- and intra- school collaboration as well as connections to out-of-school groups, and distributed models within the school setting. Along with this, teachers and school leaders will need training in the use of research, including research methods and data analysis, so they can better understand their school. The combination of these two facets will allow all the members of a school to not only see the marked change in what schools are expected to do, but also better understand how they can all work together to meet those goals.

The challenge with this additional leadership and research training is how to fit it all into the rest of teacher training programmes. Programmes would either need to replace some of their existing courses or expand their programmes; the latter option would add significant length to the time it would take for students to complete their training. These changes could easily add a year or more to the current length of teacher training programmes to allow enough time for students to develop the necessary capabilities to become effective teachers and leaders. These modifications must not only apply to taught courses, they must also be extended into practical aspects of teacher training programmes to maximize their effectiveness.

3. Most Effective Training Methods


Just as it is important for teachers to practice their teaching in an actual classroom prior to gaining full time employment, it is essential that they are allowed to practice their leadership abilities in actual schools. This could be accomplished by ensuring that their placements in schools during their training include working with department heads, senior management team members and others who work at various levels of leadership within the school; ideally it would include working across multiple leadership tasks at differing levels of the school. It is essential that teacher training programmes take an expanded view of what it means to be a teacher; this is not to diminish the importance of training future teachers in content and pedagogy in their area, only to clarify the understanding that there is more to being an effective teacher than teaching a subject to their classroom. Given that leadership will be something they will have to practice in various ways and with multiple groups, they must have a wide range of opportunities to practice these skills in a well supervised environment.

Just as with teaching placements in schools, if this practical leadership experience is to be effective, it must be carefully monitored by appropriate supervisors (it is essential that supervisors are not simply the closest leader available, but are selected based on their fit with the objectives and skills of each student), linked to taught courses, and be built around clear outcomes. As students develop and are then hired as full time teachers, there must be continuing support mechanisms. Currently there are continuing professional development courses offered which are primarily based on helping teachers become better teachers; these offerings must be expanded to include opportunities for teachers to become more effective in their leadership capacities as well. These offerings must be based on best practices for helping adults learn (for example: Zenger, Ulrich & Smallwood, 2000; London & Smither, 1999; Bransford, Brown & Cocking, 2000; Broad & Newstrom, 1992) so as to make these learning opportunities as effective and efficient as possible. This will include providing teachers with ongoing support in their work environment, access to research and other resources, and formative feedback, among other aspects.

4. Selection of Teachers and Leaders

Despite the many inherent and profound differences between teachers and school leaders, the criteria for assuming the roles are essentially the same. Hill (2007) describes why it is so difficult to be successful when people assume their first leadership role, citing the challenges of changing relationships with others, setting and managing agendas for a group instead of just themselves, feelings of being overwhelmed, and battling their own misconceptions about what it means to be a leader. While Hill's examples stem from a business perspective, it is easy to see these same issues cropping up in schools when teachers are asked to take on leadership roles, whether at the top of the school in formal roles (principal, head teacher, deputy head), in middle management (assistant principals, department heads, coordinators), or in more informal roles that are even less clearly defined (informal mentor, liaison with PTO/PTA, school event planner). Regardless of whether teachers are asked to take on a formal or informal leadership role, it is





essential that careful attention is paid to both the selection process and how those selected are trained so they can be successful in their new positions.

In terms of selection, the process must be transparent to all involved in the school; this includes establishing clear criteria. Developing these criteria is essential not only to make it plain what candidates will be evaluated on, but also to help the selectors to state, with absolute precision, what it is they need in the leadership position in their precise context. This is very similar to writing a research paper: by writing the research questions out, it forces the writer to focus on these essential pieces as they align their methodology and data collection on these questions. This establishment of essential skills, capabilities, and attitudes is even more important in a hiring/promotion situation, since this usually involves multiple people who must evaluate each candidate on agreed upon standards if the process is to be effective. With clearly stated criteria, potential applicants can easily see what they will be asked to do and the selectors will be able to match candidates to the necessary characteristics. In this scenario, there would likely be fewer applicants but they would also likely be better suited to the role, and the selectors would be able to base their decisions on an agreed set of criteria as opposed to how they 'feel' about a candidate or some other irrelevant basis. Once selected, it is equally important that new leaders are given training and support so that they can be successful.

Training of new leaders is essential because, no matter how well they fit the criteria for the position, there will be a learning curve as they take on new roles, even if they remain in the same school. This support can take the form of a mentoring programme, a temporary reduction in responsibilities, courses offered through higher education institutions, or training from others, even others within the school. Regardless of the form it takes, training must be ongoing and responsive to the specific needs of the new leader, not simply 'off the shelf' training that may not be appropriate for every individual. Selection for a leadership role should not be considered the final step, but rather an intermediate step as the new leader continues to learn and grow into the responsibilities of their new position. Similarly, selection must not be seen as the 'first' step either, as it is the school's and more broadly the educational system's responsibility to train teachers in leadership long before they might ever be asked to take on leadership roles in schools.

Teacher training must include a core component of leadership, given that schools are becoming more complex in terms of what they are being asked to accomplish as well as the growing diversity of the families they will be working with on a daily basis. As the complexity of schools grows, this will place greater demands on more and more teachers taking on leadership roles throughout the school, not simply at the top of the hierarchy. In distributive and collaborative models of leadership, the assumption is that teachers should take on leadership roles; these models also assume that teachers are prepared to take on these roles successfully. Given that very few, if any, teacher training programmes have significant elements of leadership embedded in them, the system is setting up these distributive models for

failure because their foundation, the teaching staff, is not prepared to work in these environments. If the system is to work effectively, initial teacher training needs to provide training in leadership broadly and in these collaborative and distributive models specifically. Following this, training needs to continue to be provided once they start teaching professionally through induction programmes and continuing development opportunities. Only with this support will schools be able to effectively rely on devolving leadership responsibilities to teachers.

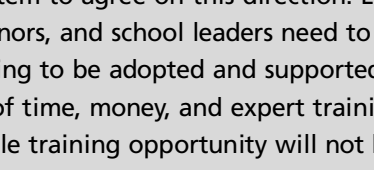
5. Gaps Between Training Organizations

While universities handle the pre-training of teachers in the form of undergraduate degrees in education or through a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE), teachers' in-service is generally organized by the schools they work in, frequently with little if any connection to higher education institutions. Schools may source teachers' professional development opportunities from a number of places depending on needs and available resources. This disjointed relationship between pre-service and in-service training makes it likely that the training of teachers is inefficient, including both redundancies as well as gaps in the training process. As it stands, theories or skills related to collaborative and distributive leadership – indeed, leadership training of any kind – are almost assuredly absent from the existing scheme.

At the pre-training level, focus is placed on content and pedagogical knowledge, evaluation of lessons, and pastoral care: in short, classroom based competencies. Obviously there are also nods to other areas of education, but these are minimal in the overall process. Few, if any, undergraduate education degrees or PGCE programmes include any sort of training on leadership for future teachers. This means that, upon entry to the profession, teachers are completely unprepared for an environment that utilizes collaborative or distributive leadership; even if a school leader wanted to utilize these leadership models, they would find that their teachers would only have the ability to take on such roles through chance. This makes it less likely that a leader would actually implement such a system and almost ensures that, if they do attempt to put such a model in place, it will be unsuccessful.

Given that the Northern Ireland system (and many other education systems around the world) depends on teachers taking on leadership roles formally – often with roles awarding 'responsibility points' – as well as informally almost immediately upon the start of their professional careers, this lack of leadership training seems a glaring omission. It is doubly startling given that a major component of teacher training programmes is the placement of aspiring teachers in schools to take on responsibilities normally expected of teachers, including classroom teaching, assessment and interactions with parents. Surely this connection between universities and schools during pre-service training is the ideal opportunity to communicate about this neglected aspect of the training process and ensure it is addressed either through coursework from the university or through on-site training by members of the school; ideally a combination of efforts from both sides





would be the best. Regardless of how this glitch is fixed, until it is, pre-training of teachers will not prepare them effectively to work in schools that utilize collaborative or distributive leadership models. Unfortunately the current Continuing Professional Development (CPD) process for in-service training makes no guarantee that this missing component will be supplied during a teacher's career.

While CPD provision could be utilized to train teachers in how to function effectively in a collaborative model, it requires a concerted effort by a number of levels of the system to agree on this direction. Education and Library Boards, boards of governors, and school leaders need to concur that this model of leadership is going to be adopted and supported. Done properly, this means a long-term provision of time, money, and expert training and assistance. In other words, providing a single training opportunity will not be sufficient, especially given that their teachers will not have received leadership training during their pre-service time. The focus then needs to be on all that is known about best practice in the transfer of training, with frequent training, ongoing support from others both from within and outside the school, and opportunities for teachers to practice leadership activities without fear of failing¹. To date, CPD for teachers is notoriously lacking when it comes to effective training for a multitude of reasons.

Among the issues in the way of an effective CPD experience are policy changes, a lack of long-term strategic planning, limited resources, changing school demographics, and a general lack of clarity over what initiatives will best serve the staff at any given time. It also must be recognized that deciding on training teachers for one thing necessarily means the exclusion of another item. The fear that something will be missed can lead to the same mindset that plagues the curriculum provided to students: covering as much as possible, regardless of how this then limits the depth and usefulness of the ideas being briefly covered. What results is that teachers go through a hodgepodge of training that is not followed up on, thus being seen as irrelevant to teachers' work. So if in-service training is going to remedy the omissions of the pre-service training process, it will need to be done much more effectively than the current system carries out this task.

Perhaps with the implementation of the Education Skills Authority (ESA) in 2010, the training process will become more efficient and effective by bringing together the Regional Training Unit (RTU), universities, boards of governors, school leaders, and unions so that a more coherent system of training is created to carry teachers from pre-service through the rest of their career. With all of these entities working together, there will undoubtedly be improvements in supervision, a wide array of expertise, and the capacity to tailor training to specific contexts. This closely linked system will reduce the gaps and redundancies built into the current scheme; without such a tightly bound team approach to developing leadership capacities in teachers, it is certain that collaborative and distributive models of leadership will fail.

¹ For a fuller description of principles of effective transfer of training, see works previously listed under the heading of **Most Effective Training Methods**.

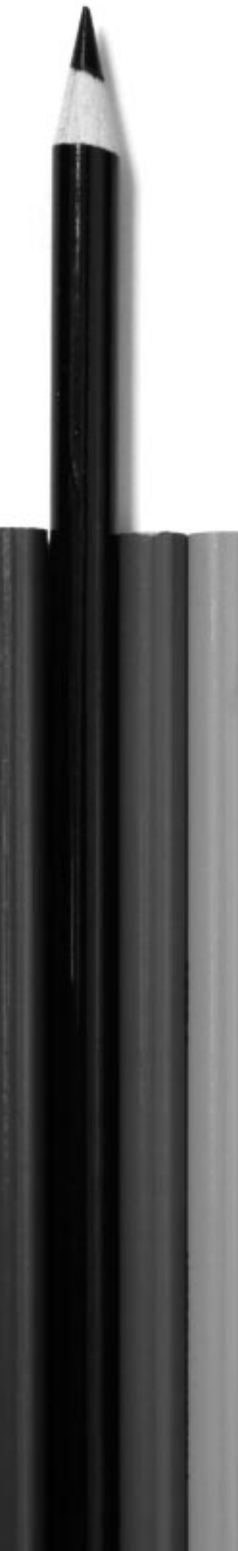
6. The Power of Social and Cultural Norms

To this point, this paper has focused on formal structures and summative outcomes, just as the OECD's *Improving School Leadership* report has done. However it cannot be overstated how serious a flaw this is when studying education. While written policies and large data sets are easy to measure and compare, they fail to capture the reality of what takes place in schools. Written policies are indicative of what *should* be happening, but often the actual practice at the school level is different in many respects. For example, *Improving School Leadership* points out that policy provides for virtually all public school administrators in the United States to have control over almost their entire budget, but it fails to point out that, of this money, only a very small percentage is unencumbered. So while the report is technically correct in its reporting of written policy, the lack of detail leaves the reader with an inaccurate picture of the responsibilities of principals.

Looking at larger data sets presents the same problems that relying on written policy for information present. Data sets based on a very large number of schools, without taking the time to disaggregate on multiple variables, reduce the delicacy and sensitivity of the measure, resulting in averages that fail to illuminate what is happening in subsets of the population. As an example, the OECD country report for Northern Ireland sets out the average length of time positions are posted and the average number of applicants per posting; those averages hide the fact that depending on the specific school and location, the variance in both numbers can be dramatic, with some schools struggling greatly to attract applicants while others are spoiled for choice immediately upon advertising their openings. Again while the report is factual in its reporting, it nonetheless paints a picture that will not ring true for many practitioners, depending on their school's specific context.

This is not meant to disparage the hard work that OECD researchers put in to collecting vast amounts of information from so many countries. The point is that considering the reports to be a comprehensive detailing of what is happening in schools would be a grave misstep. The reality is that much of what actually happens on a day-to-day basis in schools is based on a local context that will impact on all aspects of a school. This includes the types of teachers at the school, how staff is trained, the families and students that work with the school, the school's mission, and every other facet of the school's operation. In other words, schools have incredibly powerful social and cultural norms that they not only respond to, but that are also present within the school itself. These informal structures, though much harder to measure and detail, are equally as powerful as the formal structures in education.

The way organizations learn and operate are driven to a great extent by these informal norms and create their own informal structures. As an example, a new teacher may be formally assigned a mentor but come to realize that certain types of questions are best directed at someone else in the school; savvy individuals learn how to adapt to their reality and this often means not following mandated policy to the letter. Unfortunately, until better documentation is done on the realities of



schools, including these informal norms, cultures and structures, an accurate description of the education system will remain elusive. Delving into these informal aspects of schools is not an impossibility given the extensive amount of research that has been published for decades in the areas of organizational learning, social and cultural norms, and how organizations function (see, for example: Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt (1998); Trice & Beyer (1993); Cook & Yannow (1993); Blau & Scott (1962); Schein (1985); Martin (2002); Marks & Louis (1999); Scribner, Hager, & Warne (2002); Selznick (1948); Etzioni (1965); Hersey, Blanchard, & Natemeyer (1979); Randall, Copper, Speakman, & Rosenfield (1998)). Only when a better accounting is done of the formal and informal processes in schools, will significant changes to practice become possible. With a clearer picture of the inputs into teaching, learning and leading in schools, it will be possible to influence these forces to change outcomes.

In regards to the OECD report, this means fundamental changes across all of the areas discussed in this paper. What is crucial is to focus on practice with these changes, not simply relying on large-scale policy changes or new initiatives from the ESA. Effective collaborative and distributive leadership is not going to be created in schools with a mandate from policy makers, although this will be a step in the right direction. In the end, however, these leadership models will require micro-level provision in the form of training and support. If school leaders and teachers are not adequately prepared to take on these new roles, no amount of formal policy changes will overcome the habits and social/cultural norms that dominate the practice of education in every school. If real change at the school level is required, there must be a concerted effort to study the informal aspects of schools and to ensure a connection between policy and practice, bringing together three groups that have largely been separated from each other for years: policy makers, academics/researchers and school-level practitioners.

7. The Communication Divide

Reports such as the OECD's *Improving School Leadership* are important to the educational system because of the information they provide as well the discussions that are prompted. It is vital, however, that the report – and its launch at the 2008 SCoTENS conference – is not seen for something more than it is. There is a tendency for the release of findings and reports to be seen as ends as opposed to means. In other words, while the OECD report is compelling, its release must not be equated with actual change in the educational system. If the release of this report follows the form of so many like it in the past, it will be something discussed by researchers and lecturers; the best that might happen in terms of widespread dissemination would be if it was assigned to students enrolled in a particular module at a university. So it is not simply a matter of seizing on the good parts of the report individually, it is paramount that all the layers of the educational system come to discuss the issues raised.

This engagement across multiple levels would be a radical departure from the deeply entrenched partitions that have become common in the field of education.

There is a significant history of partitions between policy makers, academics and practitioners; these include how each group communicates internally and externally as well as the sources each consider credible. Given that the aim of the OECD report is to influence practice, the academic discussion of leadership concepts to this point is insufficient. Practitioners must be able to voice their understandings of how these concepts can be integrated into schools policy and makers must be open to differing viewpoints on what is reasonable and effective even if they do not make good sound bites or enraptured constituents. The easy work of this agenda is to put forth this report; the hard part is going to be deciding to press ahead with the agenda and implement all of the changes necessary in the system to make it a reality.

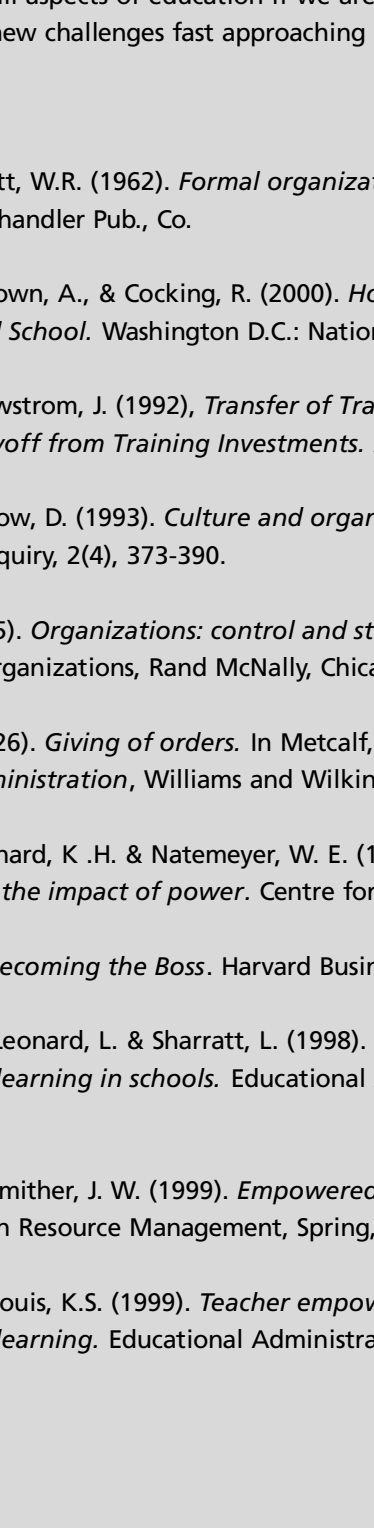
Perhaps my main concern about this report is that the idea of collaboration and distribution in leadership will be another of the recycled ideas in education that come into vogue briefly, poorly supported, and then are deemed failures. No, collaborative leadership will not cure all that ails our educational systems – and, of course, no such single fix exists – but it must be given an opportunity to prove how successful or unsuccessful it can be, and this report alone will not make or break such an initiative. The field of education is littered with ideas that have become mere catchphrases, popping up on the radar briefly, poorly implemented, and then scrapped, only to re-emerge years later with a new name: site based management, learning communities and community based schools are among the many initiatives that crop up every few years. The only way to make sure that a new initiative takes root is to set out a fully inclusive plan of action.

This plan of action means that new initiatives must be more than mandates for political expediency; more than theoretical discussions among academics; more than the hopes of practitioners. Bringing all of these people together to meaningfully discuss all of the implications of new initiatives is the first step. Following this, there must be enough will to change existing structures to facilitate the new initiative; this will need to be accompanied by enough selflessness to avoid the ‘turf wars’ that tend to break out over who will handle resource allocations. Finally, there must be a commitment to the process that extends over multiple years. Too many initiatives are never given the time to find footing; if collaborative and distributive leadership is going to be successful, it is almost certain that such a system will take time to evolve as capacity is developed among the all of education’s stakeholders. These three steps will clearly demand a greater investment of time and resources by all stakeholders. If we continue to ignore them, however, we will continue to throw away valuable resources by throwing out new ideas without the necessary practical support to see the ideas through to the point where they can start positively impacting on teaching and learning in schools directly.

Conclusion

There are three main points I hope that people take from this article in regard to the idea of collaborative and distributive leadership in schools. The first is that this





is recognized as a major change in our existing conceptions and practice in education; such enormous changes must be accompanied by new training, support and structures. Secondly, these ideas must be an extension of involved conversations and work between policy makers, academics and practitioners if they are to be implemented meaningfully. Finally, the educational system must not put greater stock in this initiative than it deserves: these leadership models, done properly, will likely provide a boost to our education system, but they will not solve all of the issues in the system. We must continue to investigate and support best practice across all aspects of education if we are to outgrow the limits of the past and tackle the new challenges fast approaching our schools now and in the future.

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A VIEW FROM PRICEWATERHOUSECOOPERS

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Introduction

This paper examines the importance of school leadership and the challenges relating to the recruitment and retention of school principals, both internationally and in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In particular, it considers the attractiveness of school leadership, and draws out at a high level the factors that motivate experienced teachers to apply to become principals and those that discourage potential applicants.

It is based on *School Leadership Matters*, a research study by PricewaterhouseCoopers into school leadership commissioned by the Regional Training Unit (RTU) in Northern Ireland and Leadership Development for Schools (LDS) in the Republic of Ireland in 2008, due to be published in autumn 2009. The structure of the paper is as follows:

- The importance of school leadership;
- Challenges to effective school leadership;
- The *School Leadership Matters* study;
- The attractiveness of principalship;
- Conclusions.

The importance of school leadership

School leadership is vitally important. It is considered to be one of the key factors impacting on educational attainment (Waters et al., 2003) and, indeed, is thought to be second only to teacher quality in terms of its impact on pupil achievement (Leithwood et al, 2006).

In recent years there has been an increasing focus in industrialised countries on school leadership and succession planning for school principals. In both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland there has been considerable investment in the development of current and emerging school leaders, with the establishment of the RTU and the introduction of the Professional Qualification for Headship (PQH) in Northern Ireland in 2000 and the LDS national programme in the Republic of Ireland in 2002. However while school leadership is evidently crucial to improving educational attainment, many industrialised countries are facing a number of challenges in recruiting, developing and retaining effective school leaders.

Challenges to effective school leadership

In 2008 the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published *Improving School Leadership* based on studies of school leadership in 20 member countries, including Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. This

report identified four main challenges to effective school leadership common to participating countries:

- The ageing demographic profile of current principals;
- The falling number of applications for principal vacancies;
- The expanding role of the school in society; and
- A renewed focus on teaching and learning both in terms of raising overall attainment and of catering for more diverse pupil populations.

These challenges exist in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland: the OECD background reports for both jurisdictions highlight concerns around decreasing pools of talent for future school principals and the calibre of candidates for principalship, together with questions about the attractiveness and sustainability of the role (OECD 2007a & b).

In Northern Ireland there are growing concerns regarding the declining number of applicants for principalship positions (particularly in small rural primary schools), the calibre of applicants, and the under-representation of women in senior posts, specifically at the post-primary level (OECD, 2007a).

In the Republic of Ireland the current age profile of principals suggests that almost half at primary level are likely to retire within the next ten years. At the same time there are increasing difficulties in attracting potential candidates to the role of principal (OECD, 2007b). A further challenge facing school leadership in the Republic of Ireland is the high proportion (almost 75%) of schools with fewer than eight teachers. Only those schools with eight or more teachers may appoint a principal whose responsibilities do not include full teaching commitments and, as a result, a large proportion of principals combine their leadership role with full-time teaching responsibilities.

The School Leadership Matters study

In light of the OECD reports and wider concerns regarding attracting future school leaders, PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP was commissioned in June 2008 by the Regional Training Unit and Leadership Development for Schools to carry out an all-island research study into school leadership. A key aim of the study was to provide a robust evidence base on the perceptions and experiences of school leadership in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The study examined the views of experienced teachers who have not yet chosen to apply for principalship, and those who have recently been appointed to the post of principal, in order to investigate the reasons why some teachers seek principalship and others do not. In particular, the study focused on a number of key areas, including:



- Personal circumstances;
- Levels of reward;
- Levels of support attached to the post;
- Current career satisfaction;
- Alternative career path options;
- Prospect of selection;
- Perception of the role;
- School or context specific issues.

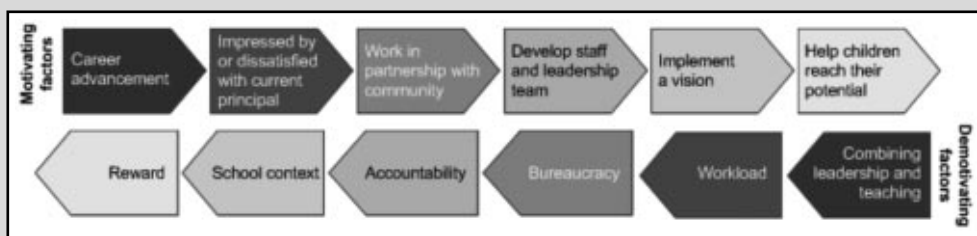
The study also considered the impact of other variables, such as gender, age and experience, on teachers' perceptions of principalship. It was based on an extensive research exercise in the autumn of 2008, comprising qualitative and quantitative research with newly appointed principals and experienced teachers, a review of the relevant literature, and consultation with key stakeholders, North and South. The remainder of this paper summaries the key themes emerging from this research in relation to the attractiveness of the role of principal and outlines the main areas addressed by our recommendations in the final published report.

The attractiveness of principalship

Given the challenges facing school leadership, an exploration of the factors that may motivate or discourage experienced teachers from progressing to principalship is crucial in order to find ways of ensuring the future supply of high quality, effective school principals.

The current literature on school leadership highlights a number of recurring themes that are thought to discourage potential candidates from seeking principalship positions, as well as several aspects of the role that may serve as motivating factors. Figure 1 illustrates the main themes identified in the research.

Figure 1: Factors that motivate and discourage teachers considering principalship



Motivating factors

In our review of the literature on the attractiveness of school leadership, it became clear that there is a greater focus on the factors which discourage experienced teachers from applying for principal posts than on the motivating factors. Several authors, however, highlight the intrinsic nature of the rewards associated with the role of school principal. Sugrue & Morgan (2008) undertook a survey of principals in the Republic of Ireland which found that receiving and giving support was the

aspect of the role giving principals the greatest satisfaction. Other motivating factors identified by IPPN (2005) include the capacity to influence a school's ethos and culture and the opportunity to advance or change the direction of their career.

The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) identified four key reasons why candidates choose to apply for principalship in their publication *Go for it: reasons to be a headteacher*, which again emphasise the vocational nature of the role. These include:

- Helping children and young people reach their potential;
- Working in partnership with the community;
- Developing staff and leadership team;
- Seeing the vision for the school come to life.

Findings from our research with newly appointed principals and experienced teachers in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland also underlined the vocational nature of the role and a sense of moral purpose among those considering progression to principalship. Personal ambition and opportunities for career advancement were also noted as encouraging factors by some focus group participants.

The IPPN study (2005) also suggested that strong role models can play an important part in encouraging applications from experienced teachers (whether candidates are inspired by their principal or dissatisfied with their current experience of leadership). This theme also emerged in the qualitative phase of our research.

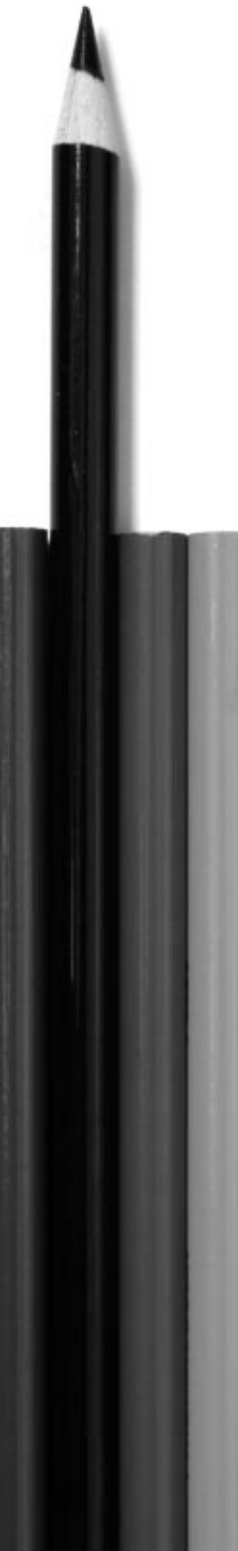
"The principal at my previous school did the job extremely well, and that made me wonder: 'could I do that?'"

"I've seen the job done badly and that motivated me".

Source: PwC focus groups with newly appointed principals

Demotivating factors

There are many aspects of principalship believed to discourage potential applicants for principalship roles (Mulford, 2003). The literature frequently describes leading a school as a demanding and complex role, with principals having onerous administrative workloads and experiencing a high level of public accountability. Our research in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland supports these findings, with participants citing public scrutiny, accountability and bureaucracy among the key disincentives for principalship. Indeed negative perceptions of workload and administrative duties were the main discouraging factors cited by experienced teachers in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. A sense of isolation associated with the role of principal was also important to teachers in Northern Ireland, while the challenge of combining leadership and teaching roles was more important to teachers in the Republic.



Reward was also reported to be a discouraging factor for many potential candidates in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. In particular, salary differentials between the highest paid teachers and principals, and anomalies in the system (for example, where a principal in a small school earns little more than the assistant principal of a larger school) are among the key issues identified (OECD 2007a & b). This issue also emerged in the focus groups with newly appointed principals and experienced teachers in the course of our School Leadership Matters research.

"You are a public figure, and that puts you under tremendous pressure."

"I don't get the time to do the things that I took on the job to do; the bureaucracy gets in the way."

"I took a pay cut as a vice-principal to become a principal in a small rural school."

Source: PwC focus groups with newly appointed principals

Conclusions

Effective school leadership plays a fundamental part in raising the educational attainment of children and young people. However, the role is becoming increasingly challenging, and many countries are facing declining rates of application for principalship positions. Indeed, there are growing concerns in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland regarding the increasing difficulties of attracting high calibre individuals to principalship. The research into the factors that may motivate candidates to become school principals highlights the vocational nature of the role, while aspects of the role that are thought to discourage applicants centre on the responsibilities of a school principal, with high levels of accountability and bureaucracy among the most frequently cited disincentives.

School Leadership Matters, our research study into school leadership in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, is due to be published in the autumn of 2009, and will present our detailed findings from the primary research with experienced teachers, recently appointed principals and other stakeholders, alongside supporting evidence from the literature.

Our report will also present a series of actions that could be taken in order to attract future leaders, develop new leaders and sustain existing leaders, and thus ensure a pool of high calibre individuals who may become the school principals of the future. Our recommendations are based around a continuous cycle of attracting future leaders by considering communications; the process of recruiting principals and their reward; developing new leaders through formal and informal development and planning for succession; and sustaining existing leaders by looking at new models of principalship, alternative career paths and the support provided to principals.

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A NORTHERN PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Mrs Catherine Wegwermer

Principal, St Joseph's Primary School, Crumlin, Co. Antrim

Perspectives on Leadership Development – Primary

This article considers educational leadership from a primary school perspective. It outlines the importance of teacher training and development in the raising of standards and the provision of an outstanding educational experience for every individual child and young person.

The context - child centred leadership

St Joseph's is highly regarded in relation to leadership which is evidenced in many ways: academic standards, positive pastoral systems, thriving community and enriching environment. It is a school that has leadership, in the broadest sense, at the heart of everything it does. It could be called shared leadership, distributed leadership. What makes it a successful school is, I believe, a combination of factors, events, strategies and creativity all of which results in developing successful leadership throughout the organisation and indeed well beyond. This leadership has assisted in the development of high performance in terms of learning and teaching.

At the centre of everything is the child. We continually pose the same question, 'How will what we do as leaders help develop the child?' This is ultimately our core purpose and all of the points made, in terms of developing leadership, assume this starting position.

Developing leadership is complex and multi faceted. It requires

- Having vision
- Thinking strategically
- Building relationships, and
- Building leadership capacity

Central to this is personal and professional commitment, energy and enthusiasm. This brief presentation considers the development of leadership in our school and the impact that training and development has had.

Leadership – A journey

Before detailing the specifics of training and development, it would be useful to give a brief overview of the leadership journey of our school to understand the context and culture. Developing a system of shared leadership has been a journey with very distinct stages which have taken a few years to achieve.

A quick overview of the journey indicates that at the initial stage people had little involvement and a low level of interest in school leadership. There was need for

rapid change to systems and practices which required leading from the top and beginning to empower others.

Initially it involved challenging attitudes and raising expectations. It was a difficult time for many, and required leadership training at all levels within the school, for myself as a newly appointed head and other staff taking on new leadership roles.



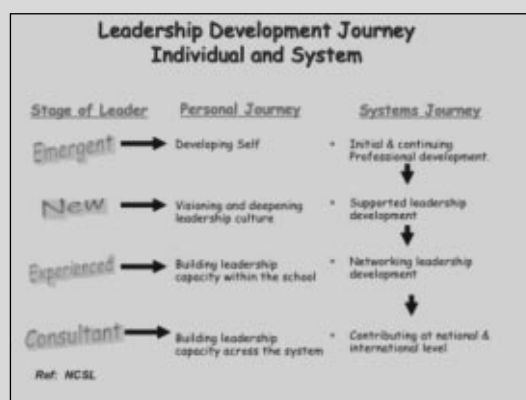
The second stage was more about developing a positive leadership culture, providing vision and helping all staff to see their leadership role, and extend the training and tools to do so. This involved a wide range of training and development delivered in-house and through external training organisations and partners in education.

The third stage is leadership widely distributed with staff very aware of their leadership roles in and beyond the classroom. Training and development opportunities are availed of as a matter of routine and staff welcome opportunities to coach, mentor and help develop leadership in others.

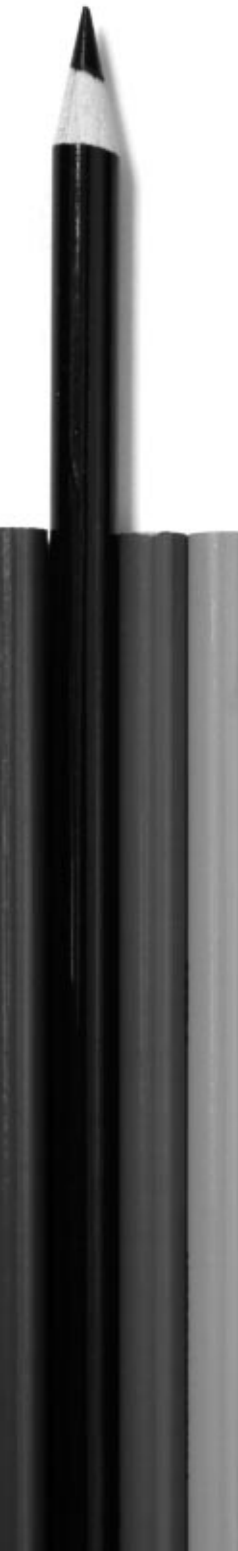
I believe it has been necessary to travel through each of these stages in the transformation or development of leadership in our school. Each stage built on previous learning, moving from low level restricted leadership to high performing shared leadership.

Developing leaders

Keeping that image of a leadership journey in mind, I would now like to elaborate on the many factors that have impacted on this transformation journey, focussing on training and development which was a key feature of each stage.



The NCSL (National College for School Leadership) notion of emergent, new, experienced and consultant leadership is a useful framework to assist me in outlining the main elements of my leadership development as a head, the leadership development of others in our school, and the impact this has had on leadership at system level.



Emergent leaders

The emergent stage of leadership is a crucial time and it is extremely important to nurture and encourage all leadership attempts. This encouragement may come from the head teacher and from others in the organisation who have leadership roles. Mentoring is invaluable. Training, including Masters Degrees and PQH (Professional Qualification for Headship), is beneficial and opportunities should exist for aspiring leaders to gain experience, enabling them to have access to such training. I believe that all teachers are leaders, and that the leadership journey begins at initial teacher training. As a beginning teacher I did not consider myself a leader, but now expect to see leadership skills demonstrated by teachers at a very early stage in their career. I consider this an essential component in developing a culture of shared leadership.

New leaders

A new leader needs to understand their role as a leader before beginning the process of developing it in others. It is about creating a leadership culture, establishing effective structures, and systems being authoritative when necessary and being skilled at unlocking leadership in others. It is a period of transformation and agreeing a shared vision. Supporting leadership development is crucial at this stage. In my personal experience as a new leader, I received leadership support from the RTU (Regional Training Unit N.I.), my employing authority (Council for Catholic Maintained Schools), the NEELB (Education and Library Board) and DENI (Department of Education). Advice and support on important administrative and technical issues was also available from training organisations.

At this stage developing inclusive leadership within the school is important. Devoting time to design in-house training programmes, developing teams and agreeing roles and responsibilities is essential. Recruiting qualified and highly skilled staff is an important priority for building leadership capacity. As experienced leaders emerge within an organisation, it is possible to see a leadership role beyond the confines of the school. The training and development received assists in ensuring that a flexible and needs driven leadership model is developed. This allows staff opportunity to undertake leadership roles while at the same time meeting the needs of the school. Investing time and creative thinking in developing such a structure will bring about positive results.

Experienced Leaders

With experience senior leaders can use self evaluation to assist with the development of leadership and high performance in others. This ensures that everyone within the school is accountable, always learning and willing to accept that they can improve, as individuals and as teams. As head my involvement in NEAC (the National Education Assessment Centre), an intensive two day evaluation of the current and potential leadership of the head, was invaluable. It was a demanding experience facilitating reflection and challenging perceptions. Teacher appraisal, Performance Review Staff Development (PRSD) and the *Together Towards Improvement* document developed by the Inspectorate, also contribute to

self evaluation at leadership level. Sharing good practice with an open culture is challenging, it raises the bar and sets new standards and targets for improvement. It helps develop dialogue, coaching and mentoring which require high level leadership skills, and is indispensable in raising standards.

Networking and learning from other individuals and systems is also an important context for experienced leaders. Continuing professional development and keeping well in tune with changing educational priorities assist at a system level as experienced leaders train, assess and mentor other emergent and experienced leaders.

Encouraging a culture of training and development with staff and gaining additional qualifications helps prepare others as leaders for the future. In my own experience additional training has brought limitless benefits to our school in terms of distributing leadership, and has also brought us to the level of 'consultant leadership'.

Consultant leaders

Consultant leadership emerges when individuals are willing and able to share outstanding practice. Consultant leaders disseminate at national and international level through good practice on a wide range of themes. They are recognised for research and development and can be helpful to policy makers and educational strategists. While this helps develop leadership across the system, it also supports the personal development of the consultant leaders themselves.

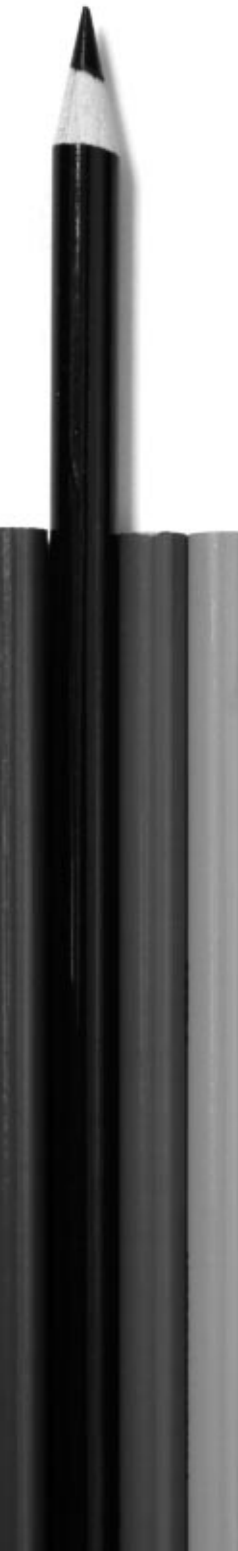
Developing an emotionally intelligent culture is important. It is my view that developing emotional intelligence is one of the greatest enablers of leadership within a school. It impacts on how we understand and support each other, creates an open culture, celebrating success and learning from mistakes. It facilitates the development of coaching and mentoring within the school and beyond, and develops the emotional competencies needed to produce an organisation of outstanding practice. It is my experience that people want to perform well; they have high expectations and see learning as a process and not a goal. Taking responsibility for developing our own leadership, and unlocking leadership capabilities in others with a clear focus on leadership for learning and teaching, will assist in raising standards across the system.

Challenges

I have talked about a leadership journey and I have outlined many of the key enablers along the way. As a leader I am very aware that a school, or indeed any organisation, requires considerable support if high performing leadership is to be developed, and indeed sustained into the future for the benefit of each child, parent, staff member and person involved in the school/organisation.

There are challenges for schools at local and system level and for training organisations. System changes in Northern Ireland will require additional leadership





and commitment. Re-motivating current leaders and developing excellent leadership in others is a great challenge. I believe that emotionally intelligent leadership will be crucial to motivating and continuing to develop others, and that emotional intelligence training should be included at every stage along the leadership journey. Building capacity and high level training and development is essential; while PQH is an excellent qualification, there is a challenge to facilitate leadership training at initial teacher training, early professional development, middle management and beyond. Sharing leadership across the system and challenging underperformance needs to be tackled with a more consistent and positive approach.

The education of each individual child and young person is a daunting responsibility. As current leaders, and trainers of leaders, we have an investment in the leaders of tomorrow. We have a major role in developing ourselves and others to ensure that we produce an excellent education system with high standards achieved and every child and young person developing their full potential.

A SOUTHERN PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Mr Martin Wallace

Principal, Castletroy College, Limerick

As a principal who values the importance of good leadership, I have a vested interest in contributing to any effort which seeks to raise awareness and improve the attractiveness of the job I do. I particularly welcome results from research, which recognise the important contribution school leaders make to teaching and learning in our schools. It is suggested that the most legislated role in Irish public life during the past decade has been that of the school principal. This legislation has brought increased responsibility and accountability to the position at a time when concern is being expressed at the decline in the number of applicants applying for the advertised posts. At present the role of principal is synonymous with work overload and stress in the minds of some potential applicants for the job. The perception exists that the role of principal is subject to increased and sometimes conflicting expectations, it has limited support structures, and there exist no real mechanisms to deal with staff members experiencing professional difficulties.

The wise use of power

There are many definitions of leadership and whichever one chooses I believe that, in practice, effective leadership is a process of influencing others' actions to achieve desirable goals. It also involves working with others to prepare for the future and respond to change. At all times leadership involves the wise use of power.

- The power invested in the role of principal allows a wise leader to build a strong sense of community through encouraging cooperation and collaboration.
- The wise leader shares his power. Empowering others contributes to the creation of a shared vision which looks to a better future.

If leadership requires wisdom where does the wisdom come from? Principally, I think from our own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. Opportunities to learn from the experiences of others in similar roles through mentoring and networking is an excellent way to develop as a leader.

I have concentrated on the wise use of power because the wise leader chooses

- **persuasion before control**
- **example before compliance**
- **expertise before status**
- **and service before position.**

In an effective school these are the only choices.



My leadership journey

My leadership journey is in many ways typical of most principals: whether it is a case of being in the right place at the right time or being the right person at the right time I am not certain. A first step to my leadership development was a promotion to assistant principal, a promotion which carried responsibility and authority as well as a reduced teaching timetable of four hours. As I worked in a community school at the time this promotion was not based on seniority.

A further important milestone was an appointment as principal to another progressive school, which provided many learning opportunities for me. Subsequently I became principal of a new 'greenfield' school and I was appointed to the position nine months prior to the school opening. This appointment allowed me to build on previous experiences and to introduce real collaboration from the beginning, where all share in the responsibility for the overall direction, performance and success of the school.

As a principal I am realistic enough to know that people learn from experience, and that purpose and policies are often discovered through an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process. Castletroy College was in its fifth year before we wrote our present mission statement - it is a statement based on shared experiences and values, which evolved with the school culture over the previous five years.

I believe that the wise leader plans, guides, interprets, supports and stimulates for improvement, he does not impose. In a world where change is more frequent and complex, the leader as a hero is unrealistic. We need to firmly move to a position where skills and ability are more important than status, and where delegation is seen as allowing expression to the more creative and service aspects of leadership. I believe that the inability to use power wisely is the greatest obstacle to long-term progress and improvement - just look at the present economic crisis.

Wise leadership principally involves creating and nurturing a positive school culture through leaders:

- Having questions as well as answers
- Coping with weakness as well as displaying strength
- Creating a shared perception of what we do
- Listening and acknowledging as well as talking and persuading
- Letting go as well as taking charge
- Depending on others

It is about being part of a jazz band rather than an orchestra. I promote the image of the jazz band where innovation is welcome and admired rather than staying with a set score. The leader is not obvious, as all members of the band can take a lead role if they wish. I might be able to play the drums but don't ask me to play the piano!

Leadership development

As the principal must be an instructional leader, a collaborative leader as well as a transformational leader, it is essential that training should be ongoing and of the highest possible quality. Also, as a school leader it is incumbent on me to develop the leadership potential in others as well as in myself. In practical terms it involves, among other things, giving opportunities to teachers to lead new initiatives, finding time for meetings, ensuring that there is adequate office space for promoted teachers, reviewing responsibilities, promoting e-learning. I believe that leadership development is about creating wiser leaders, and in this regard the advent of LDS (Leadership Development for Schools) has been a great benefit to school leaders, be they aspiring, perspiring or expiring! A major strength of LDS is that practitioners play a central role in the delivery of residential modules. The priorities of LDS are

- Moral purpose and collaborative practice
- Personal effectiveness and personal well-being
- Leader of people and a leader of learning
- Reflective practice and school self-evaluation
- Mentoring and e-learning

These promote essential aspects of leadership relating to self, others and the position of leader. I am optimistic in relation to the future of principalship, particularly in the light of recent developments in LDS where future leaders will be offered accredited courses in leadership and management.

Leader of learning

While LDS is a much needed support for principals, other supports and changes are needed to enable principals to be true leaders of learning in their schools. In particular I consider the contrast between primary, second-level and tertiary in relation to the type of learning which takes place.

The new primary curriculum encourages learning for understanding where investigation, critical analysis, cooperative and collaborative learning are part of the process. In second-level the emphasis is on learning content rather than learning skills. Learning is seen as a means to an end and is not valued as a process in itself, and for many students the ability to learn in a deep and profound way does not develop as it should and with consequent problems at third level. This excessive emphasis on examination results from a very early stage and the continuance of the Junior Certificate examination in its present format should at least be under consideration.

Our efforts to encourage improved learning among our students include the use of assessment for learning techniques such as asking higher order questions, using comment only marking and involving students in peer assessment. We also use ICT to enhance teaching and learning in our school. The school has developed a Virtual Learning Environment using Moodle; all teachers have a laptop; all classrooms have

web access and many rooms have a data projector. Weekly meetings of teachers are an important element in keeping issues around learning and planning to the forefront of our work.

In conclusion, it has been a pleasure to speak to this distinguished group of educationalists on my experiences as a principal and I wish to thank the organising committee of the SCoTENS conference for inviting me to address you.

PANEL DISCUSSION

Mr Clive Byrne

National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (Rol)

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD) is the professional organisation for school leaders at second level in the Republic of Ireland. I was appointed Director on the 1st February and am seconded from my role of Principal of St Mary's College in Rathmines. The NAPD is neither a union nor a management body and as such has a particular niche representing the interests of principals and deputies. We lobby all groups and build varying alliances to suit the needs of members.

The challenge for NAPD as a result of the OECD musings is to adapt the role of the school and the school leader to suit the values and visions that society has for Ireland. The membership needs to be energised to realise that issues of import to us in Ireland are equally challenging colleagues overseas.

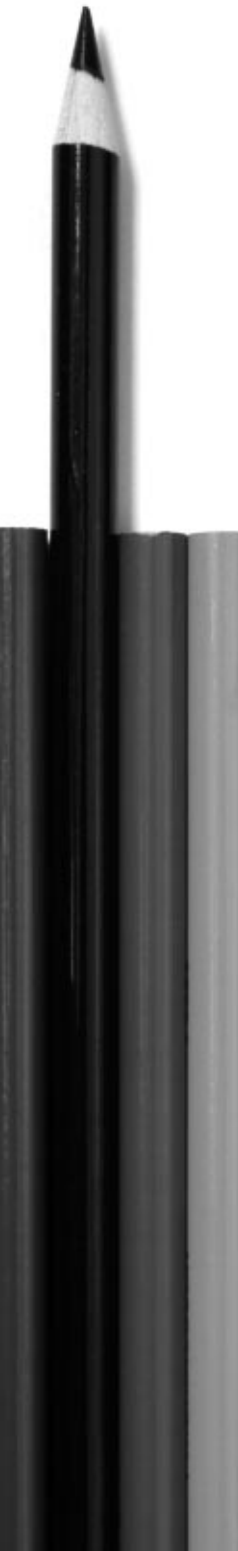
Recently 45 principals and deputies from all nine regions of NAPD attended the European School Heads Association Conference in Denmark which was in turn attended by representatives from 29 countries. This is a major investment by NAPD in promoting international links which should help to change the insular approach we have to many issues in Ireland by networking with other schools and countries.

The existing school year in Ireland is based around an agrarian model where schools operate for 167 days. NAPD is keen to promote a debate on the structure of the school year, and on the teacher's contract in Ireland as opposed to Northern Ireland, the UK and other OECD countries.

Irish society regards the health service as a shambles but feels that the doctors and nurses are wonderful. Irish education is very good by international standards but the general perception of teachers is that they are underperforming. This circle cannot be squared.

There are genuine difficulties in attracting school leaders. The job is seen by many as undoable. NAPD believes that we need to abolish negativity and talk up the role of education and teaching. Principals' salary is a factor but not the major factor in the Republic of Ireland.

Supports to do the job properly are required and we feel we can learn from other systems in Europe, while not straying too far from home either because it seems to us in the Republic that we should be envious of the supports for school leaders which exist in Northern Ireland.



In our system the role of the school leader is a lonely one; the existing middle management structure is regarded as ineffective and not having meaningful or significant responsibilities attached to promoted positions, which carry allowances of €4,000 approx and just over €8,000 for deputy principal and principal respectively.

NAPD is producing a *Vision Paper for In-school Management* which will be circulated to the Department of Education and Science, the teacher unions and the management bodies with a view to strengthening the supports available to school leaders, thereby enabling them be the leaders of learning in their schools.

While NAPD seeks effective middle management, the Association maintains that the concept of the excellent teacher, a charter or master teacher, must equally not be neglected so that excellence in the classroom can be rewarded and affirmed.

The OECD study challenges us to look critically at our system. However given the economic bent of the OECD it is no harm to have a healthy scepticism when formulating our response.

MS MOIRA LEYDON

Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (Roi)

The presentations over the last two days have been deeply challenging. School leadership is critical and we have seen that there are several real –and potential – barriers to realising the highest standards in this area. What we cannot ignore is that school leadership is a matter of concern for us all in the education system. From the perspective of the second level teachers' unions – the ASTI and the TUI – several 'dichotomies' emerge when we enter into discussion of this complex area. I highlight these dichotomies in order to underline the need for cooperation in a context of professionalism to secure the highest standards of leadership in our schools.

Speakers have referred to *competence* as a fundamental pre-requisite for good leadership. Sadly, many of the situations which the unions have to deal with arise from a lack of competence in the leadership role. Notwithstanding the excellent work of the LDS in our system in recent years, many teachers are appointed to principalships inadequately equipped to efficiently manage their schools. The fall-out from this lack of preparation can be very serious in some situations.

Speakers have referred to *trust* as an essential feature of good leadership. Again, some of the situations which the unions have to deal with arise from a lack of trust in the schools between the principal and the teaching staff. Coming out of this situation and creating an environment of mutual trust can take a long time, depending on the quality of communication and inter-personal relationships. Again, adequate professional preparation and training would be of great assistance here.

The principle of *care* has emerged very strongly in the presentations. A highly valued characteristic in our school system is the respect for the individuality of each student and a focus on their holistic development as young people. In some circumstances, teachers feel that this principle of care does not extend beyond the student population. They perceive that their needs as a staff are not acknowledged; their contribution un-affirmed and negative aspects of their working conditions left unattended. A very important dimension of the leader's role is to motivate and affirm the teaching staff. Schools in which there is focus on the broad welfare of the teaching staff are very positive environments.

Finally, courage! Leadership always requires courage: the courage of one's convictions; the courage to make difficult - and frequently unpopular - decisions; the courage to delegate responsibility; the courage to acknowledge that one could have done better. All of these aspects of courage are necessary in a school leadership role. This intangible but necessary virtue is vital. To give a practical example, I have repeatedly heard teachers express their disappointment over prevarications in cases of student indiscipline, where decisive and consistent action was not taken at the top leaving teachers feeling frustrated and demoralised. Leaders who are prepared to demonstrate courage are what our schools need in our complex school communities.

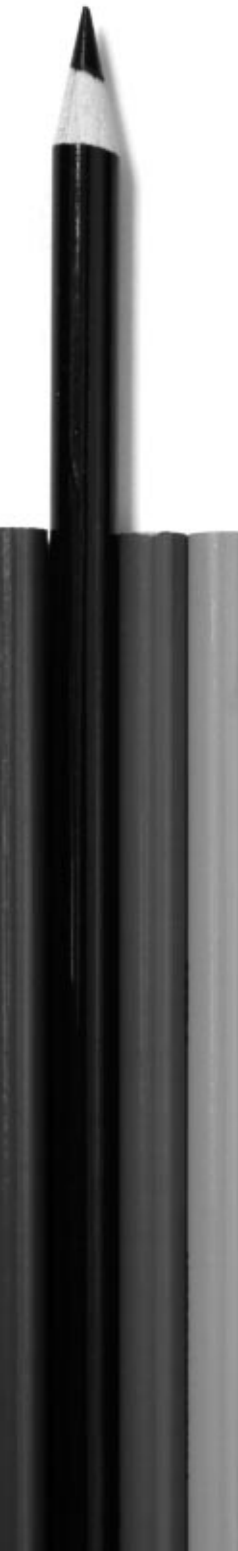
MR SEAMUS SEARSON **NASUWT (NI)**

The vision of the school of the future needs to focus on raising standards and creating a responsive school that creates environment for all young people to reach their full potential and make a positive contribution to society.

To raise standards depends critically on the hard work, commitment and professionalism of the whole school workforce, including teachers and principals. To improve the quality of the educational offer available to pupils teachers and principals need to focus on their core responsibilities for teaching and leading and managing teaching and learning.

The school workforce remains fundamental to realising the vision of the school of the future. A core element in ensuring that an even higher standard of educational offer is made will be to embed and build on remodelling, including recognising the important contribution of support staff and the need for them to access appropriate pay, grading, training and career development opportunities. The success will rest upon the further development and recognition of the importance of the education team around the child, led by teachers and principals working with trained support staff who are qualified professionals in their own right.

Leadership of schools is now exercised in the context of increased demands, higher expectations on the part of parents and the public, greater autonomy, increased accountability, diverse and changing political agendas, a sharper focus on



personalisation, different models of governance and emerging, varying leadership structures, and the changing and developing role of local authorities. No one can, therefore, have any doubt that leadership of the school of the future will be immensely challenging.

References to 'strong leadership' promote the view that if leaders are strong they require an army of persons who are led and are by default, therefore, weak. This is the hero head model the NASUWT has persistently challenged.

A better, more appropriate model is that of effective leadership which is visionary, strategic, authoritative and capable of making decisions, even if these are sometimes the wrong decisions, but also leadership which is enabling, inclusive, participatory, consultative, caring and responsive to others. These are leadership values and qualities which the NASUWT would regard as at the heart of the vision for the school of the future. There is a need to focus on factors, such as professional development, different teaching practices and school leadership styles, which are associated with teacher effectiveness.

The styles of school leadership could be described as instructional and administrative. Instructional leadership is characterised by actions to support or improve teachers' instruction and to set the school's goals and curriculum development. Administrative leadership is characterised by actions to manage accountability to stakeholders and to set and manage administrative procedures.

We know that all too often the emphasis has centred on the administrative rather than the instructional model of leadership as teachers and principals have been forced to jump through hoops to satisfy the demands of the current accountability system.

School leaders need first to be effective instructional leaders if they are to become good administrative leaders. That means they must know, understand and have the necessary skills and empathy for the practice of teaching. Where school leaders adopt an instructional leadership role there is more collaboration between teachers, better student teacher relationships and greater recognition given to teachers for innovation. School leaders must not abnegate interest in or responsibility for the practice of teaching. Indeed they would lose credibility with peers, children and parents. Remaining focused on the practice of teaching, the NASUWT believes, is the cornerstone of effective school leadership.

When the question is asked 'what is the most important factor in the success of a school', the response is often leadership. No one would deny that leadership is important and will remain so, but it cannot and should not be claimed that it is the most important factor. Teaching matters also and effective leadership is about:

- enabling teachers to be creative, autonomous professionals, whose professional judgement is respected, valued and trusted;

- providing working conditions which support them to work effectively and to access pay which rewards and recognises them as a highly skilled professionals;
- listening to teachers to see what they need to work effectively;
- seeking to protect staff from too many initiatives and burdens;
- securing the confidence of staff and trusting and celebrating their professionalism.

Effective teaching and learning in all contexts is only possible where teachers are given the time, resources, training, development and support necessary to allow them to make best use of their professional talents and expertise and to create learning environments where higher standards can be achieved and maintained.

In short, the effective school leader in the school of the future will enable teachers to reclaim the classroom. Where school leaders create space for teachers to develop and grow pedagogy their schools and the system as a whole is likely to be more effective as a result.

We all know that state schools are packed with talented, hard working, committed teachers and school leaders and support staff. They are crammed with children and young people who want to learn and achieve. The task is to encourage and develop the system to unlock the huge potential for the benefit of all in the future.


MR AIDAN DOLAN

National Association of Head Teachers (NI)

NAHT (NI) recognises much of the findings of the OECD report on school leadership. Many key points resonate with NAHT's own research on work-life balance and also surveys commissioned by the Department of Education Northern Ireland and the Regional Training Unit.

There is no doubt that in Northern Ireland role intensification for school leaders is extreme. NAHT (NI) has identified over 70 workload issues sitting on school leaders' desks. In addition there is a constant stream of consultation documents awaiting individual school responses; at least eleven in the six months from the conference to the submission of this report. And there are more lined up to be published: SEN review, 0-6 strategy and on it goes!

The 1989 Education Reform Order heralded a new era for NI schools, promising local management and financial delegation, concepts supported within the OECD report. Unfortunately the legislation and subsequent DENI rhetoric was not matched by actions. In England similar legislation has led to substantial increases in pupil funding (about £ 1000 per pupil more than NI) and a growth in delegation direct to schools of 85 - 90% of the education budget. In NI delegation still



languishes at 60% – hardly ‘maximum delegation’. It is little wonder that our leaders report significant levels of work-life imbalance, and furthermore there is reluctance by younger teachers to step forward into leadership given the impossible job school leaders are asked to do. The decision by DENI to grant teaching principals of small primary schools two days management time is recognition of the demands placed on these leaders. Extension of the funding to nursery school principals is a priority.

School leaders in Northern Ireland are ready for the challenges they face but they need the resources to meet them. As the new Education and Skills Authority comes into being, there are great opportunities for new ways of working. However at the time of writing there is great concern that the proposed legislation will serve to replicate the top down approach to in-service teacher training and curriculum support that has failed in the past. The resources for training should be put in the hands of school leaders, who are best placed to identify the needs of their school and also to procure the training and support required.

Whilst NAHT (NI) can welcome this report and agree with much of its findings, it remains deeply concerned that government is not meeting its challenges and is still not putting the resources into schools that our children deserve.

Mr Frank Bunting (Irish National Teachers Organization, N Ireland) and **Mr Sean Cottrell** (Irish Primary Principals Network, Republic of Ireland) also contributed to the panel discussion.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 9 OCTOBER

McWilliams Suite 1, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast

Chair: **Dr Pauric Travers**, President, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

2.15 **Registration** and refreshments

3.00 Official Opening by Minister for Education, **Ms Caitriona Ruane MLA**

3.20 **Ms Deborah Nusche**, Policy Analyst, OECD Directorate for Education, Education and Training Policy Division, on 2008 OECD report *Improving School Leadership*

4.00 Break

4.30 School system responses from **Dr Tom Hesketh**, Director, Regional Training Unit (NI) and **Mr Paddy Flood**, Director of Leadership Development in Schools (RoI)

5.15 Discussion

5.40 Closing remarks by **Mr Will Haire**, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education N Ireland

6.00 Close

7.00 Reception to launch two SCoTENS reports:
1. **Teaching in the Knowledge Society, SCoTENS 2007 Conference and Annual Report**
2. **Building Effective Science Outreach Strategies, North and South**, by Kevin Davison, Veronica McCauley, Christine Donegan and William McClune

8.00 Dinner – McWilliams Suite 2

FRIDAY 10 OCTOBER

McWilliams Suite 1, Wellington Park Hotel, Belfast

Chair: **Dr Tom Hesketh**, Director, Regional Training Unit, Belfast

9.00 **Dr Ciaran Sugrue**, University of Cambridge, and **Dr Timothy London**
Queen's University Belfast: academic responses to OECD report
Improving School Leadership

10.00 **Dr David Armstrong**, Education Division, PricewaterhouseCoopers,
on the PWC study on attractiveness of headship: Ireland North
and South

10.30 Break

11.00 A view from the principals
Mrs Catherine Wegwermer, Principal, St Joseph's Primary School,
Crumlin, Co. Antrim
Mr Martin Wallace, Principal, Castletroy College, Limerick

11.30 Panel discussion led by education trade unionists and teacher
professional organisation representatives
Mr Frank Bunting, INTO (NI); **Mr Aidan Dolan**, NAHT (NI); **Mr Seán
Cottrell**, IPPN (RoI); **Ms Moira Leydon**, ASTI (RoI); **Mr Clive Byrne**,
NAPD (RoI); **Mr Seamus Searson**, NASUWT (NI), **Mr Aidan Dolan**,
National Association of Head Teachers (NI)

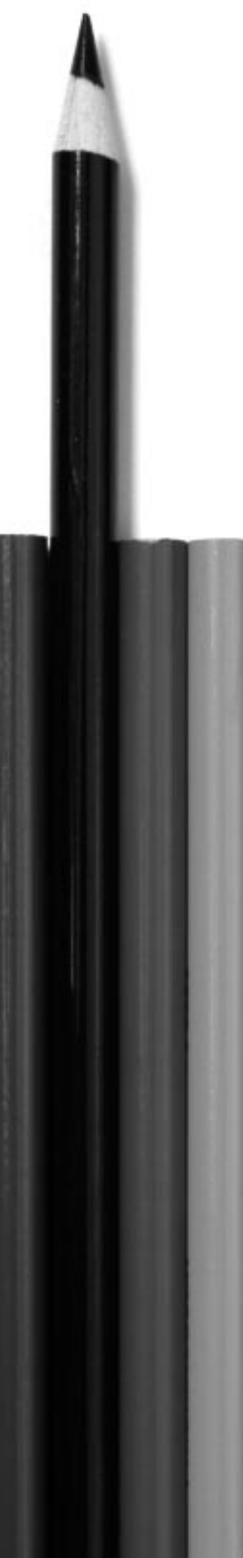
1.30 Close

LIST OF CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Mr. John Anderson	Managing Inspector,	Teacher Education Department of Education
Mr David Armstrong	Director	PriceWaterhouseCoopers
Mr. Barney Ball	Policy & Reg. Mgr	General Teaching Council for N.I.
Ms. Patsey Bodkin	Lecturer in Education	National College of Art and Design
Ms Sally Bonner	Director	Donegal Education Centre
Mr Gavin Boyd	Chief Executive	Education and Skills Authority
Mr Frank Bunting	Northern Secretary	Irish National Teachers Organisation
Dr. Pat Burke	Council Member	Irish Federation of University Teachers
Mr. Clive Byrne	Director	NAPDP
Dr. Linda Clarke	Lecturer	School of Education, University of Ulster
Ms. Claire Connolly	Director of Teaching Practice	St Mary's University College
Professor J Coolahan	Professor Emeritus	NUI Maynooth
Mr Seán Cottrell	National Director	Irish Primary Principals' Network
Mrs. Kathryn Crowley	Director	NCCA
Ms. Audrey Curry	Head of ITE (Post Primary)	Stranmillis University College
Dr. Peter Daly	Associate Dean	Legal, Social and Educational Sciences, QUB
Mr. Gerry Devlin	Senior Ed Officer	General Teaching Council for NI
Mr. John Dickson	Staff Officer	Teacher Education Branch, Dept. of Education
Ms. Ann Dinan	Director	Education Development, Joint Managerial Body
Mr. Aidan Dolan	Education Director	N AHT (NI)
Ms. Eimear Donnelly	Project Administrator	Centre for Cross Border Studies
Prof. Sheelagh Drudy	Professor of Education	School of Education and Lifelong Learning, UCD
Mr. Jim Enright	Director	Laois Education Centre
Mr. Michael Finneran	Acting Assistant Dean	Mary Immaculate College
Ms. Maureen Fitzpatrick	Head of Education	Hibernia College
Mr. Paddy Flood	National Coordinator	Leadership Development for Schools
Mr. Pat Furlong	Project Dev Officer	Drumcondra Education Centre
Ms. Ruth Gallagher	Education officer	Amnesty International
Prof Tony Gallagher	Head of School	Graduate School of Education, QUB
Mr. Flan Garvey	VICW President	IVEA

Mrs. Mary Greenwood	Senior Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Mr. Martin Hagan	Senior Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Mr. Will Haire	Permanent Secretary	Department of Education
Dr. Anne Heaslett	Principal	Stranmillis University College
Ms. Catherine Hennessy	Regional Coordinator	Tionscnamh Pleanála um Forbairt Scoileanna
Dr. Tom Hesketh	Director	Regional Training Unit
Dr. Ivor Hickey	Principal Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Ms. Elish Humphreys	Asst Co-ordinator	Leadership Development for Schools
Ms. Bernie Judge	Education Officer	Teachers' Union of Ireland
Prof. Gordon Kirk	Professor	Academic Secretary, UCET
Ms. Aíne Lawlor	Chief Executive	Teaching Council of Ireland
Ms. Moira Leydon	Assistant Gen Sec	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland
Dr. Timothy London	Teaching Fellow	Education Department, QUB
Ms. Deirdre Loughran	Senior Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Ms. Patricia McAllister	Administrator	SCoTENS, Centre for Cross Border Studies
Mr. Tony McCann	Executive Director	Edmund Rice Schools Trust
Mr. Dermot McCartan	Senior Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Dr. William McClune	Lecturer	Graduate Education, Queen's University Belfast
Mr. Niall McConville	Senior Teacher	St Dominic's High School
Mr. Ciaran McCormack	Vice-President	NAPDP
Ms. Liz McCrystal	Staff Tutor (Education)	Open University in Ireland
Dr. Claire McGlynn	Senior Lecturer	Graduate School of Education, QUB
Ms. Bernadette McHugh	Director	Navan Education Centre
Ms. Patricia McHugh	PhD. Student	NUI Galway
Ms. Paula McIlwaine	Prof Dev Officer	NICIE
Ms. Denise McKee	Lecturer	St Mary's University College
Ms. Sally McKee	Chairperson	General Teaching Council for NI
Ms. Marie McLoughlin	President	Froebel College of Education
Mr. Gene Mehigan	Principal Lecturer	Education, Colaiste Mhuire
Ms. Rose Morrow	Principal	Teacher Education Branch, Dept of Education
Mrs. Hazel Mullan	Asst. Senior Ed Officer	Southern Education & Library Board
Mr. Peter Mullan	Press Officer	Irish National Teachers Organisation
Dr. Isobelle Mullanney	Lecturer	National College of Art & Design
Mr. Gerry Murphy	N/S Co-ordinator	Irish Primary Principals Network
Ms. Deirbhile Nic Craith	Senior Official Ed	Irish National Teachers Organization

Ms. Deborah Nusche	Policy Analyst	Education and Training Policy Division, OECD
Mr. Risteard Ó Broin	Divisional Inspector	Department of Education and Science
Mr. Tomás Ó Slatara	Principal	SN na Grainsi
Dr. Anne O'Gara	President	Marino Institute of Education
Ms. Elizabeth O'Gorman	Lecturer	Education Department, UCD
Mr. Kevin O'Hara	Senior Ed. Adviser	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
Ms. Helen O'Sullivan-Dwyer	Senior Lecturer	School of Education, Trinity College Dublin
Prof. Marie Parker-Jenkins	Chair of Education	University of Limerick
Mr. Andy Pollak	Director	Centre for Cross Border Studies
Mr. Frank Quinn	Coordinator	St Mary's University College
Ms. Maria Quinn	Vice Principal	Hazelwood Integrated College
Mr. Justin Rami	Lecturer	School of Education, Dublin City University
Mr John Reid	Adviser	Leadership College, Regional Training Unit
Ms. Caroline Renehan	Lecturer	Mater Dei Institute
Mr. Irvine Richardson		Department of Education NI
Mrs. Deirdre Robson	Head	Art Department, St Mary's University College
Mr Brian Rolston	Advisor	Heads, Teachers & Industry (HTI)
Ms. Caitriona Ruane	Minister for Education	Department of Education
Mr. Seamus Searson	NI Organisator	NAS/UWT
Mr. Paul Sloan	Staff Officer	Department of Education
Dr. Ciaran Sugrue		Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge
Mr. Eugene Toolin	Head of Education	St Angela's College Sligo
Dr Pauric Travers	President	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Mr. Martin Wallace	Principal	Castletroy College
Mr. David Walsh	Principal Officer	Department of Education and Science
Mr. Sean Ward	Policy Adviser	Raising Standards, Department of Education
Mrs. Catherine Wegwermer	Principal	St Joseph's Primary School



Research and Exchange Reports

Funded or Co-Funded by SCOTENS 2007-2008





BECOMING A TEACHER: PRIMARY STUDENT TEACHERS AS LEARNERS AND TEACHERS OF HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY AND SCIENCE: AN ALL- IRELAND STUDY

Dr Fionnuala Waldron, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Dr Susan Pike, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Mr Richard Greenwood, Stranmillis University College

Dr Cliona M Murphy, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Ms Geraldine O'Connor, Church of Ireland College and Education

Dr Anne Dolan, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

Dr Karen Kerr, Queen's University Belfast

The full report of this research project will be launched as a 'stand alone'
SCoTENS Publication at the 2009 Annual Conference on 15 October.

Executive Summary

The Irish Association for Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (IASSEE) was established in 2000. IASSEE provides a forum for initial teacher educators to share their ideas in history, geography and science education. Amongst the aims of the association is the improvement of the teaching of history, geography and science education in initial teacher education (ITE). Therefore, in 2002 IASSEE embarked on a longitudinal research project, which has resulted in this report.

The main purpose of the research was to increase members' knowledge and understanding of their students with a view to improving teaching and learning in their respective ITE courses. The research was conducted in three phases over four years in the five ITE colleges (primary level) in the Republic of Ireland (RoI) and in two ITE colleges (primary level) in Northern Ireland (NI). Questionnaires were administered to Bachelor of Education (BEd) students in all of the colleges at the beginning of their first year and at the end of the final year of their degree courses. A total of 32 focus group interviews were also conducted with students at the mid-point of their courses. The data were gathered between September 2004 and May 2008. The main findings are summarised here.

Student teachers' experiences of and attitudes to history, geography and science

- **Liking of subject:** While there were some differences between the two cohorts, the majority of students from both RoI and NI colleges held positive attitudes towards history, geography and science at the entry and exit stages. There was evidence that their liking of the subjects increased during their ITE programmes.
- **Confidence to teach subjects:** While reported levels of confidence varied across the two cohorts, the majority of students who participated in the study indicated that they felt confident about teaching history, geography and science on entry to and on exit from ITE. During their ITE courses the students reported increased feelings of confidence in all three subjects.

- ***Perceived importance of the subjects:*** The majority of students maintained that history, geography and science were important subjects for children to learn in primary schools. Higher levels of importance for the subjects were expressed at the exit stage. Based on their responses in both the entry and the exit questionnaires, it was apparent that the NI students felt science was more important when compared to RoI students. RoI students, on the other hand, maintained history and geography were more important than their counterparts in NI.

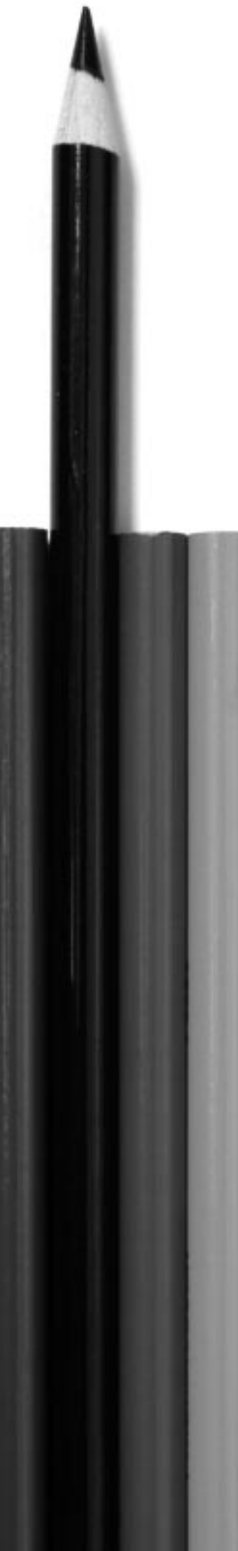
Student teachers as learners of history, geography and science: Experiences, perceptions and attitudes

- Overall, the students reported many positive prior experiences as learners of history, geography and science. Positive experiences focused on interesting and enthusiastic teachers and active and participatory learning approaches. Experiments in science, fieldwork in geography and field trips to historic sites were among the teaching and learning approaches most frequently mentioned as positive experiences.
- When the overall levels of positive and negative comments were considered across the three subject areas, science emerged as the subject that drew the most positive and the most negative comments. Students frequently reflected on their enjoyment in conducting experiments. Equally their responses revealed concerns relating to incidences of experiments 'going wrong'. Other concerns expressed regarding science related to the apparent requirement of memorising vast quantities of definitions and formulae.
- Geography emerged as the subject with the most positive only comments, many of the which focused on the students enjoyment of fieldwork. In their negative experiences many students focused on the requirements to memorise physical features and textbook-based teaching.
- History attracted the most negative only comments with several students viewing history as a boring and irrelevant subject. Negative experiences of history were centred around the dominance of textbook-based teaching and the need to memorise content.
- Students from NI were more likely to use words relating to boredom and complexity about each of the subjects than their counterparts in the Republic, while students in the RoI frequently gave more negative comments regarding the use of text books, their experiences of reading and memorisation of facts, than the NI cohort.

Student teachers' experience of teaching geography, history and science during school placements

- The vast majority of students gave positive comments in relation to history, geography and science and a considerably lower percentage of students gave negative comments regarding each of the three subjects on school placements.
- Students were most positive about the interaction between themselves as teachers and the children as learners. Many of the students commented on their





pupils' engagements with particular topics and methodologies in each of the three subjects.

- Many of the students also gave positive comments regarding what was taught and how the subjects were taught. Issues regarding the use of resources in each of the three subjects were also frequently commented on in a positive manner.
- Students' negative experiences provided many examples of students reflecting critically on their own practice. Students commented on problems with children's behaviour and on difficulties finding or getting access to resources. Many expressed concern about the different and sometimes contradictory expectations of class teachers and college supervisors which could cause problems for the students.

Concepts of the Good Teacher

What is the good teacher like?

- In both the entry and exit questionnaires students ascribed personal and interpersonal characteristics to the good teacher of history, geography and science, such as the need to be interesting, creative and imaginative.
- While students in the entry questionnaire identified a range of professional characteristics of the good teacher around knowledge, preparation and competency in teaching skills, the category was noticeably larger in the exit questionnaire. A significantly higher proportion of students in the exit cohort placed emphasis on the importance of professional competency, planning, using resources and being knowledgeable about subject matter in the three subject areas.
- In both questionnaires, students saw it as important that teachers would be enthusiastic about and interested in each of the subjects.
- While risk taking was evident as an emerging concept in the entry data, it had a stronger presence in the exit data. The teacher as risk-taker was associated with creativity and innovation and with not being afraid to do fieldwork or conduct experiments.

What does the good teacher do?

The responses from the entry cohort indicated that the students were already positively disposed towards ideas such as active and participatory approaches to teaching and learning in history, geography and science.

- With regard to history, it was evident from the entry data that the students' apparent commitment to such interactive approaches was associated in many cases with a perception of history as problematic. This view was considerably less apparent amongst the responses from the exit cohort where greater emphasis was placed on historical investigation.
- A similar pattern was seen in relation to geography amongst the entry cohort where the use of active and/or integrated approaches was presented by some as a way of making geography more interesting and enjoyable. This concern was not as apparent at the exit stage where there was a much greater emphasis on geographical investigation and enquiry-based learning.

- The entry cohort maintained that good teachers tried to ensure science was accessible to children by making it fun and enjoyable and by providing them with opportunities to conduct practical activities. Child-initiated, enquiry-based learning was more evident amongst the exit cohort's responses along with ideas associated with constructivist approaches to teaching.
- There was little mention of ICT in either the entry or the exit concepts across all three subjects. Neither was there much explicit reference to the role of discussion in developing historical, geographical and scientific understanding.



5th NORTH SOUTH STUDENT TEACHER EXCHANGE (2008-2009)

Mr Peter McEvoy

Summary Evaluation Report

The Centre for Cross Border Studies has commissioned an external evaluation of the North-South Student Teacher Exchange Project for SCoTENS¹, and this was undertaken during March and April 2009. The evaluation had four main sources of information:

- a questionnaire of the 19 student participants prior to their teaching practice placement;
- a questionnaire of the same students immediately following completion of these placements;
- group discussions with students in the course of the Evaluation Day held in Church of Ireland College of Education on 28th April 2009;
- group meetings with the Directors of Teaching Practice from the participating colleges.

The expectations of the participating students prior to commencement of TP placements, can be summarised under three headings, as follows:

<i>Professional</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exposure to a new and different curricular setting, methodologies, classroom management techniques and resources• Improvised teaching skills and attitudes• Prospect of being able to bring back new insights into best practice.
<i>Cultural</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More awareness of diversity• Contributing to strengthening North-South relations• More empathy with 'other' tradition(s)• Overcoming the urban/rural dichotomy
<i>Personal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhanced self-confidence• Enhanced career prospects• Meeting new people / making new friends• Independence (an opportunity to live away from home for an extended period, for some for the first time).

1 The seven colleges participating in this exchange were Stranmillis University College and St Mary's University College (both Belfast); St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Marino Institute of Education, Froebel College of Education and Church of Ireland College of Education (all Dublin) and Mary Immaculate College, Limerick.

The participating students also expressed some apprehensions in advance of placement, such as:

- coping with an unfamiliar curriculum;
- Being understood by pupils (with different accent and mode of speech);
- Fear of inadvertently causing offence;
- Practicalities such as accommodation and transport.

The initial findings² from this evaluation reinforce those of the earlier external evaluation³ and of the longitudinal research study⁴, both of which concluded that the project had been transformational for the student teachers involved. The evidence is that in this, its fifth year of operation, the project has again scored well in terms of (a) enabling students to gain a valuable 'insider' insight into the educational system in the other jurisdiction, (b) promoting mutual understanding (both cross-community and cross-border), and (c) encouraging students to become 'reflective practitioners' in the future.

From a short-to-medium perspective, the private benefits being conferred on the participating students are found to be very substantial, and undoubtedly the prior expectations of the students were more than fulfilled in practice. The benefits identified were:

- ***Self-confidence was greatly enhanced;***
- ***Greater adaptability and general ability to cope with unfamiliar settings;***
- ***Acquisition of new skills for effective planning and management of classwork, e.g. the 'WALT' and 'WILF' indicators ('We Are Learning To' and 'What I'm Looking For');***
- ***Mind-broadening encounters with - and learning from - those of a different identity or culture;***
- ***Development of greater appreciation of collaborative effort, e.g. in preparation and sharing resources.***

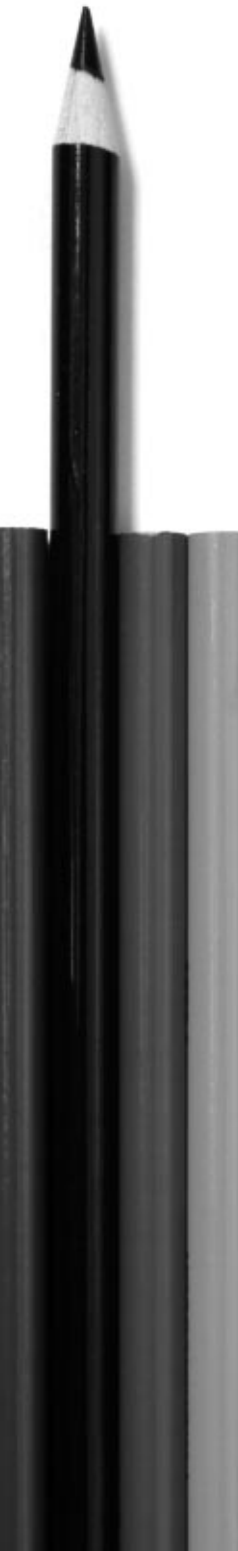
Students from the South were pleasantly surprised at the fact that classrooms were better resourced in the North, but were less pleasantly surprised by the overshadowing effect of the Eleven Plus exam, especially in P6 grade. Several students observed that the religious ethos in a Catholic Maintained school in the North seemed more pronounced than they had experienced in corresponding schools in the South; they also perceived that in general the legacy of the sectarian conflict remains palpable, and they noted that the proportion of children from minority ethnic communities was visibly less than in the Republic.

2 A fuller analysis of the evidence supporting these findings appeared in the final report in September 2009.

3 Executed by P McEvoy and completed in 2007.

4 Undertaken by Dr Maeve Martin and completed in October 2008.





Students from the North were conversely surprised at the relative under-resourcing of the Southern schools, especially when they found themselves having to pay for photocopying etc out of their own pockets; they were also surprised at the relative discretion enjoyed by the individual teacher in the South to determine what is taught, how and when.

Both sets of students felt pressured by the demands of lesson preparation throughout the 3-week duration of their placements, and felt that this effectively precluded their participation in extra-curricular cultural and recreational events, which was intended to be a feature of the project. Having said that, the Students Unions in the two Northern colleges and St. Patrick's College Drumcondra were highly commended during the Evaluation Day, for the lengths to which they had gone to arrange a special welcome for the cross-border visitors.

Both the students and the Directors of Teaching Practice had fulsome praise for the host schools and for the class teachers, all of whom had engaged enthusiastically to ensure that the student placements were so enriching for those involved.

From a longer term perspective, the hope (albeit one for which it is difficult to adduce evidence) is that these private benefits for the student teachers will translate into wider benefits for society, as those participating in the exchange graduate, move out into the professional world, and 'cascade' the skills, understanding and insights amongst a wide circle of pupils in their classrooms over time.

The Directors of Teaching Practice reiterated their appreciation of, and continuing goodwill towards, this project. However in doing so, they also indicated to this evaluator a strong sentiment that this goodwill had been overstretched this time around, as more of the administrative burden fell on their shoulders than had been the case in previous cycles of the project, when EU Peace Programme funding was in place. Their sensitivities on this were no doubt heightened by the fact that the pressure points generated by this project occurred at precisely their busiest time of the year, and by the fact that they have little administrative support to fall back on. Particular issues to which they drew attention were as follows:

- The decision to proceed with the project for 2009 was taken - or was communicated - too late in 2008 for proper planning to be undertaken, with the result that every subsequent step in project delivery seemed to be done in haste and in a rather ad hoc fashion. They recommend that if the project is to run again, they need to know definitively by early September of the academic year.
- The day which had been designated for professional development for the TP Directors ended up having to be devoted instead to sorting out management and logistical matters relating to this project.
- Greater clarity was expected by the group of TP Directors in regard to the funding available for the project, including a breakdown of costs.

The 2007 external evaluation recommended that this project merited mainstreaming, necessitating collaboration between the two Departments of Education, North and South. Although the merits of the case remain unchanged, the sharp deterioration in public finances inevitably reduces the prospect of this actually happening in the foreseeable future. The collaborative network which has evolved among Directors of Teaching Practice across the island of Ireland has been a very valuable spin-off from this project, as there is no other forum at which this group meets to exchange learning and reflection. It is therefore recommended that even if the substantive project cannot be replicated due to funding restrictions, SCoTENS should nevertheless agree to support the cost of keeping this valuable network alive in such a way so as to enable working meetings to take place at all-island level at least twice per year.





PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR POST PRIMARY SEN TEACHER IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Ms Elizabeth O’Gorman, Professor Sheelagh Drudy, Dr Eileen Winter, Dr Ron Smith, Dr Mairin Barry

The full report of this research project will be launched as a 'stand alone' SCoTENS publication at the 2009 Annual Conference on 15 October.

Introduction

This research was carried out under the auspices of SCoTENS between April 2007 and June 2008. The full report of this research project will be launched as a 'Stand Alone' SCoTENS publication at the 2009 annual conference on 15 October. The research was carried out within the overall framework of identifying common areas for potential cross-border collaboration to promote inclusive education within second level/post primary schools in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The study set out to gain an understanding of teachers' perceptions of their continuing professional development (CPD) needs arising from the move towards more inclusionary practices in mainstream post-primary schools.

To this end, the research investigated the CPD requirements of second level/post primary teachers who have a specific remit to work with students who have special and additional educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools in both the North and the South of Ireland. These were identified as SENCOs and Learning Support/Resource (LS/R) teachers within the two jurisdictions. Specifically the project sought to make a set of recommendations for the CPD of these teachers that would be applicable in both jurisdictions.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be used to assist in the review of current CPD programmes and in the development and implementation, in both jurisdictions, of models of CPD that will be beneficial to schools, teachers and students. It is through well grounded, well researched and evidence-based professional development programmes that system capacity improves in addressing educational provision for students identified with special needs.

In addition, it was anticipated that the CPD needs identified by the participants would be closely associated with the roles they were undertaking currently within their specific school contexts.

Research context

Meeting special educational needs in the context of mainstream schools and classrooms is one of the most complex challenges facing education today. Traditionally across Ireland provision for pupils with disabilities and special needs

has tended to take place in segregated settings. Recently the move to more inclusive systems worldwide where all pupils are educated and welcomed in the mainstream has placed increased demands on all those involved. The preparation and ongoing CPD of teachers with responsibilities for special educational needs is of paramount importance in ensuring that students have access to the best possible education that meets their needs.

The growing impetus of inclusion necessitates that all teachers, primary and secondary, have the skills necessary to address the needs of a range of diverse learners on a daily basis successfully. This requires not only input at a pre-service level, but also CPD aimed at strengthening the knowledge, skills and competencies of teachers as they progress through their careers.

Internationally and in Ireland there is a growing body of research on inclusive education. In Ireland, however, the dominant focus of inclusive education research has been at an operational level, exploring school and curriculum adaptations rather than addressing the development of the knowledge, skills and expertise needed to teach students with special and additional needs effectively. Thus there is a need to develop this knowledge base related to the CPD needs of teachers currently in SEN roles in second level settings. It has been established that many variables contribute to positive educational outcomes for all students. The most influential in-school factors which impact on student learning, however, are the teachers whom the students encounter on a daily basis. Students benefit most from a well educated teaching force. Those with a remit for special needs within a school have a key role to play in the successful inclusion of students with SEN.

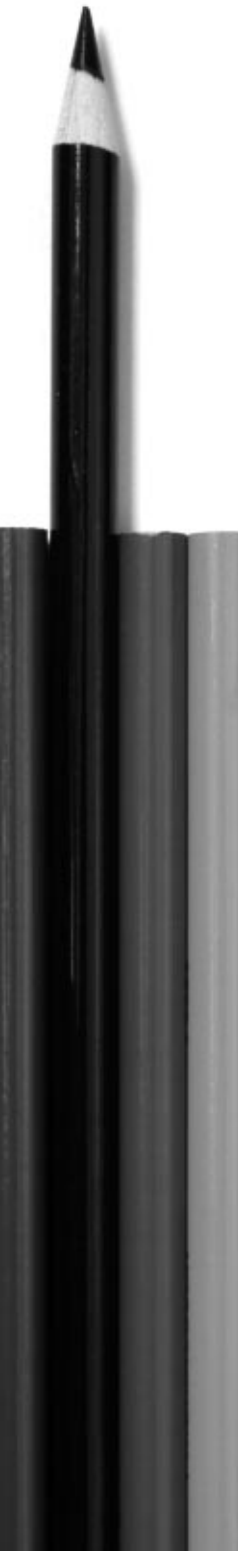
International research has demonstrated the importance of teacher education in effecting change and moving to more inclusive systems at all levels. There is evidence that, to facilitate this change, special needs education needs to be embedded in initial teacher education, in induction and in CPD programmes.

This study incorporated a comparative North-South component to provide perspectives that might assist the two jurisdictions in reviewing and evaluating their individual practices from a broader perspective. The intent was to explore any similarities between contexts that might provide the key as to whether particular approaches to CPD might or might not work in another context. Similarities can provide a useful framework within which any differences between the jurisdictions can be analysed. The intent was to take a non-evaluative approach designed to educate, to inform and to contribute to the understanding of the challenges involved in creating appropriate CPD opportunities in SEN for second level/post primary SENCOs and LS/R Teachers in both jurisdictions.

Research process

The research was carried out over a fifteen month period. A mixed- method design was used to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data. Mixed method designs have the advantage of yielding richer, more valid and more reliable





findings than evaluations based on either qualitative or quantitative methods alone. A mixed method approach is also likely to increase the acceptance of findings and conclusions by the various stakeholders.

The research was carried out in two main phases. The first phase consisted of a questionnaire designed to elicit both qualitative and quantitative data and derived from the research literature. This was piloted on a small group of current practitioners. Specific adjustments were necessary to reflect the differences in the educational systems of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Semi-structured interviews with a sample of the original participants were used in phase two.

General findings and recommendations

This research set out to identify common areas for potential cross-border collaboration to promote inclusive education in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. The focus adopted was the professional development requirements of 'inclusion specialists' - teachers specifically appointed to the area of special educational needs in mainstream schools. It was anticipated that the professional development required would be associated with the roles undertaken by the teachers and therefore both these elements were highlighted in the research process.

Across both jurisdictions it would appear that the role has evolved very much in reaction to the needs of the individual schools and in relation to the relative importance accorded to special needs support within the schools. The perceived lack of direction from the respective Departments of Education is common to both jurisdictions, despite the existence of official policy documents. While retaining a sense of differing school cultures and the constantly changing needs of students, which requires the role to remain flexible to best meet the needs of unique populations, it would seem that there is a need for coherence among schools within each jurisdiction so that there is a more common approach to the delivery of support services in line with each Education Department policy.

In examining the skills and knowledge that participants feel are needed to carry out the role successfully, both pedagogy and curriculum areas are conspicuous by their relative lack of emphasis. The main skills mentioned were related to organization and time management. One might question whether these are generic skills that belong to general teacher education and general professional development programmes, rather than being viewed as specific skills particularly pertinent to inclusion specialists. Other skills participants considered essential for the role were akin to a range of personal attributes. Again the question arises as to whether 'patience', 'sensitivity to student's needs' and 'positive regard for students' should be the prerogative of the SEN teacher or part of a set of generic skills for all teachers.

The barriers to carrying out the role successfully were very much the same for both jurisdictions. Lack of time and an overload of paperwork appear to be the main stumbling blocks. Many respondents do not have sufficient time allocated to the role, while some are trying to fulfil the role alongside having the responsibility of a

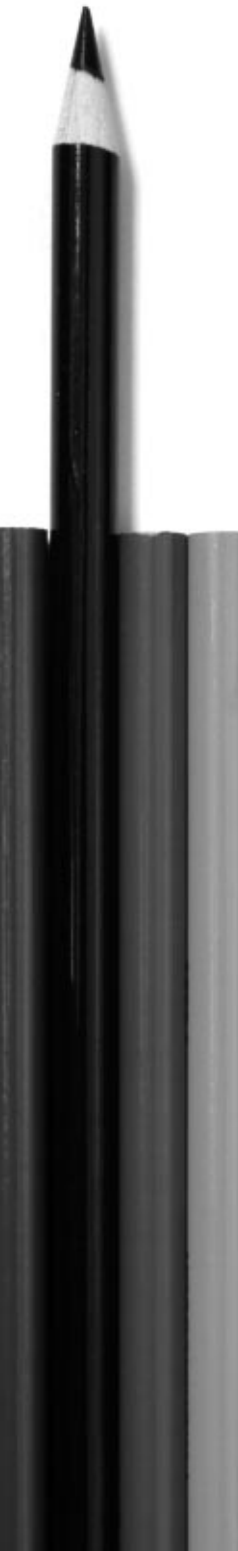
full teaching timetable. There would seem to be a case for some clearer guidelines regarding the full time versus part time nature of the role. There may be some value in developing a model that assigns the role according to the number of pupils in the school. There would, however, need to be some flexibility for schools designated as 'high needs' or disadvantaged where the number of pupils requiring support may be high.

In the main the role in both jurisdictions appeared to be somewhat peripheral to the main activity of the school, with a particularly heavy reliance in the RoI on withdrawal. Some indications were in evidence of moving the role towards a more central, senior management role where the expertise of the inclusion specialist was made available for whole-school staff development. This is a welcome development where the goal of inclusion and means of addressing the needs of all students was perceived as a concern of the whole school staff. The opportunity for inclusion specialists/SEN teachers to promote critical, reflective dialogue among the whole school staff should be considered as a key future development of the role and corresponding professional development offered to hone teachers' team building and leadership skills in this field.

In relation to specific professional development sought, in both jurisdictions there was a strong emphasis on information pertaining to various classifications of disability and a corresponding lack of emphasis on pedagogy and curricular adaptations. As noted previously, the role seems to be interpreted as one which acts as a buttress to the current status quo rather than challenges it. Professional development sought by teachers is generally based on the teacher's current role. However professional development also has a function in informing the nature of the role. If professional development precisely mirrors the role undertaken by the teacher, it results in stagnation and little forward movement towards a more inclusive education system. This symbiotic relationship between these two elements is not always fully exploited in professional development programmes in ensuring exposure to topics outside those areas perceived as being immediately useful by the inclusion specialist/SEN teacher. New directions must be sought for professional development which promotes critical reflection and dynamic, creative approaches to including all students in mainstream schools.

In summary, from this research it would appear that with regard to the role of the specialist teacher working in the area of inclusion/special educational needs in mainstream schools in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, there is more variation within rather than between the two jurisdictions. In consequence of this commonality, potential areas can be identified for future collaboration in designing professional development programmes to promote inclusive education. Courses focusing on exploring the philosophical and sociological foundations of inclusion and developing creative ways of moving the inclusive education agenda forward should be core components of such programmes, combined with the research skills to explore and evaluate the effectiveness of approaches undertaken. Other areas contributing to such professional development programmes could include holistic





curricula, inclusive pedagogy, knowledge of disabilities, instructional skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, presentation skills and administrative skills. The overarching philosophy of such a programme should be for professional development to interrogate and inform the role rather than have the current role dictate the nature of professional development.

The evidence from this research suggests that respondents perceived their role as LS/R/SENCo teacher as being primarily a 'remedial' one in the Republic of Ireland and a 'SENCo' one in Northern Ireland. This role perception seemed to shape the professional development they felt they needed. However the international literature would suggest that best practice in inclusive education requires a shift from these models towards what Clarke, Dyson et al. (1997) have described as the 'External Coordinator' and the 'Transforming Coordinator' models, indeed eventually moving to the ideal of the 'Disappearing Coordinator' model. Best practice in professional development should seek to move teachers and schools towards these transformative roles.

In the context of a changing world, there is a need to promote a vision of an equitable and just society which values all its citizens and where the most vulnerable children are accorded every opportunity to participate fully and equally with their peers.

A CROSS-BORDER EXPLORATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS OF HEADS OF YEAR IN A SAMPLE OF COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND) AND INTEGRATED SCHOOLS (NORTHERN IRELAND)

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Research background

Pastoral work in schools is about meeting student needs. However in the context of an increasingly changing society, students' needs are also rapidly changing. The expectation that schools should assume more responsibility for mental health promotion, coupled with an increase in poor mental health and distress among young people, have placed increased pressures on parents and schools (Shucksmith et al. 2005). In schools it is often the pastoral care team, and in particular the year heads, who have to deal with situations that they often feel unprepared for (Wilson et al. 2004, Rothi et al. 2008). It is therefore important to seek the views of year heads specific to their needs for support and professional development to enable them to perform their pastoral care duties more confidently and effectively. There is little published research specific to Northern Ireland (NI) or the Republic of Ireland (ROI) in this area, so this study fills a gap in the literature, in addition to informing policy development and the provision of supports and professional development for year heads on the island of Ireland.

Research aim

To explore the perceptions and needs of year heads relevant to their professional development.

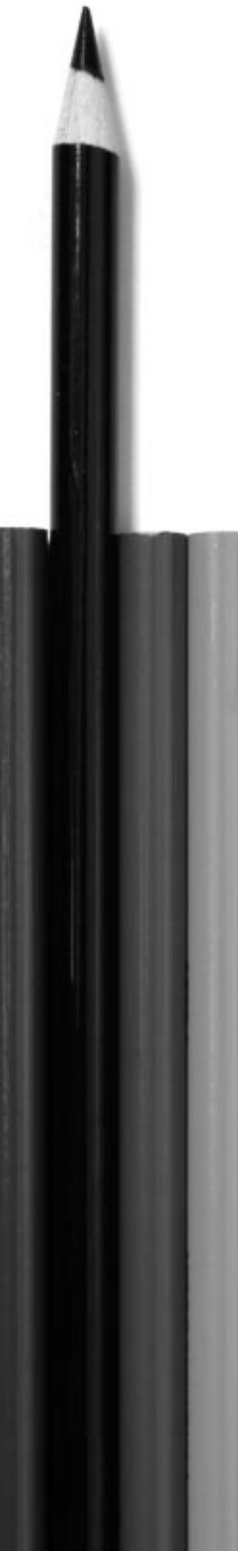
Research objectives

- To explore year heads' perception of their role
- To explore year heads' views on challenges and supports specific to performing their pastoral care roles
- To explore year heads' perceived needs for professional development.

Understanding pastoral care

Pastoral care is about meeting the personal, social and learning needs of children. It is about the promotion of well-being; it is about building quality relationships in schools that enhance learning; and it is about creating caring school ethos and culture. The Department of Education and Science provide a comprehensive definition of pastoral care that appears to have stood the test of time.





Pastoral care is concerned with promoting pupils' personal and social development and fostering positive attitudes; through the quality of teaching and learning; through the nature of relationships amongst pupils, teachers and adults other than teachers; through arrangements for monitoring pupils' overall progress, academic, personal and social; through specific pastoral structures and support systems; and through extra-curricular activities and the school ethos. Pastoral care accordingly should help a school to achieve success. In such a context it offers support for the learning, behaviour and welfare of all pupils, and addresses the particular difficulties some individual pupils may be experiencing (DES 1989:3).

This definition demonstrates the complexity and scope of pastoral care. Significantly, the definition implies that pastoral care is not only an institutionalised structure, but a whole school approach to holistic education.

Pastoral care in education is also about care of the staff in schools and about meeting their needs relevant to their pastoral care roles. The year head plays a key role in the pastoral care team. The review of literature in this research has highlighted some traditional and emerging roles for the year head; however, there is a scarcity of published literature in this area. As the role is developing, year heads are likely to express changing needs to enable them to perform their role confidently and effectively.

The National Association for Pastoral Care in Education (NAPCE) has defined specific pastoral goals for the school. These goals are identified as follows:

- Creating a point of personal contact with every student
- Creating a point of personal contact with parents/carers
- Monitoring students' progress across the curriculum
- Promoting a school which identifies and meets young people's needs through providing information about students' learning between teachers, other professionals and young people
- Providing support and guidance for young people related to their learning
- Encouraging a caring and orderly environment
- Engaging wider networks as appropriate.

(Lodge 2005).

Professional development needs of pastoral care teachers

There is urgent need for support systems and professional development for year heads and other pastoral care team members. This is an area that has not been prioritised by schools. Formal support systems and professional supervision are also not commonplace in schools, yet the work of pastoral care teams and of year heads is becoming increasingly challenging. New challenges for pastoral care workers include mental health promotion, dealing with behavioural issues, and the inclusion of more children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. This study indicates that teachers do not feel fully prepared for this role. Support and

professional development for year heads and other pastoral care team members is essential for future best practice in this area, which will benefit all children in schools, staff in schools, families, communities and the wider society.

Training in pastoral care has been *ad hoc* at best, as it is competing with so many other priorities in the school, and with so many other subject areas at pre-service and in-service levels (Best *et al.* 1995). Teachers need specific skills to conduct their pastoral roles and these skills need development similar to subject specific professional development (Lang 1995). Staff development for pastoral care needs to address two key processes: firstly, organizational development which considers both the needs of the individual/team and the whole organization; secondly dialogue, using a counselling approach, is also central to the process (O'Sullivan 1995). The number of teachers who engage in professional development in the field of communication practices and counselling is limited. Priority in professional development is generally given to subject specific training over pastoral skills courses. Existing course provision outside of specific guidance and counselling education is limited in availability.

Changes in educational policy mean that mainstream schools are now increasingly expected to include more children and adolescents with special educational needs. They are also expected to play a significant role in mental health promotion of children and adolescents. It is likely that teachers with pastoral care roles will play important roles in these developments. While teachers accept that they have a degree of responsibility to care for the mental well-being of their pupils, they do not feel adequately prepared for this role (Rothi *et al.* 2008). Thus there is pressing need for training in mental health promotion. And this is just one aspect (there are many others) competing heavily for the pastoral care teachers' attention:

Teachers felt disempowered by the current educational climate, often highlighting the link between feeling ineffective and untrained on the one hand and the high demands placed upon them by inclusion... reduced school exclusions, raising school standards, time constraints and ...the decline in their pastoral role.

(Rothi *et al.* 2008:1228).

Research approach

To address the aims of the project, a naturalistic research paradigm was chosen. The naturalistic approach is particularly suited to answer research questions relevant to complex and messy social settings, such as schools, and where participants' meanings and understandings of their own world are sought (Cohen *et al.* 2007). It is also suited to exploratory research questions, where one attempts to add new knowledge to a body of research. While smaller numbers of participants are involved, compared to positivist (scientific) research, this approach yields in-depth, detailed and rich data not only in the forms of words but also in the non-verbal interactions. Focus groups were chosen as the data collection method. Four focus group interviews were conducted, two from the ROI and two from NI. Criterion



sampling was used to recruit participants. All participants were year heads and a total twenty five participants took part in the study.

School A: *Mixed gender Comprehensive school, located in an urban location in ROI. The school has an enrolment of 900 students. The year heads in this school are responsible for a particular year, for one year only. In other words, they meet a new cohort each September. There were eight participants in the focus group conducted in this school, three males and five females.*

School B: *Mixed gender Comprehensive school, located in a town in rural ROI. The school has an enrolment of 600 students. The year heads in this school follow their cohort from First Year to Sixth Year. There were five participants in this focus group, one male and four females.*

School C: *Mixed gender Comprehensive school, drawing pupils mostly from urban contexts in NI. The school has an enrolment of approximately 1200 students. The Year Heads in this school either follow a cohort from First Year to Fifth Year or from Sixth to Seventh Year. There were 6 participants in the focus group conducted in this school, 3 males and 3 females.*

School D: *Mixed gender Comprehensive school, located in an urban location in NI. The school has an enrolment of approximately 800 students. The year heads in this school either take First Year, or follow a cohort from Second Year to Fifth Year or from Sixth to Seventh Year. There were 6 participants in the focus group conducted in this school, 3 males and 3 females.*

Results

The data show that the year heads in the study perform traditional year head roles, such as casework. This includes meeting students' developmental needs and responding to problems of a personal, emotional, social and behavioural nature. A pastoral, pro-active and preventative approach was preferred when addressing discipline. Advocacy, mediation and conflict management were perceived to be key activities in casework. All year heads agreed that student needs had changed, reflecting the rapidly changing societal contexts that schools operate in. The adverse circumstances that many adolescents find themselves in were very much acknowledged by the participants as a root cause of individual problems in the school. Suicide and bullying were highlighted as specific problems that year heads responded to in most schools.

Year heads are central in promoting and maintaining an orderly environment. While the year heads in the study did not perceive a dilemma between their pastoral and discipline role, because they viewed issues of discipline from a pastoral perspective, they perceived that other staff members did so. More recent year head responsibilities were most prominent in the NI schools, and these included management of student learning and liaison work with other agencies. Some negative health impacts were also found to be associated with the year head role.

The perceived challenges for year heads included lack of time allocation to perform their duties, the complex and changing student needs, poor communication and unrealistic expectations from other staff and parents, possibly due to a lack of clarity of the role of the year head. Supportive factors were found to be team working, having regular meetings, informal support, school policies and structures that were reinforced and fair, and a school vision that embraced pastoral care.

All participants in the study had learnt the year head role 'on the job' and/or from other colleagues. There was a perceived gap in structured courses that address professional development in pastoral care generally and for year heads specifically. Year heads' perceived needs included training in specific pastoral care areas; opportunities to network and share best practice with colleagues informally and formally, both within their schools and with year heads from other schools; more time allocation to do the duties of the year head; clear job descriptions, and communication of the year head role to the school community; effective communication channels; and more resources for pastoral care.

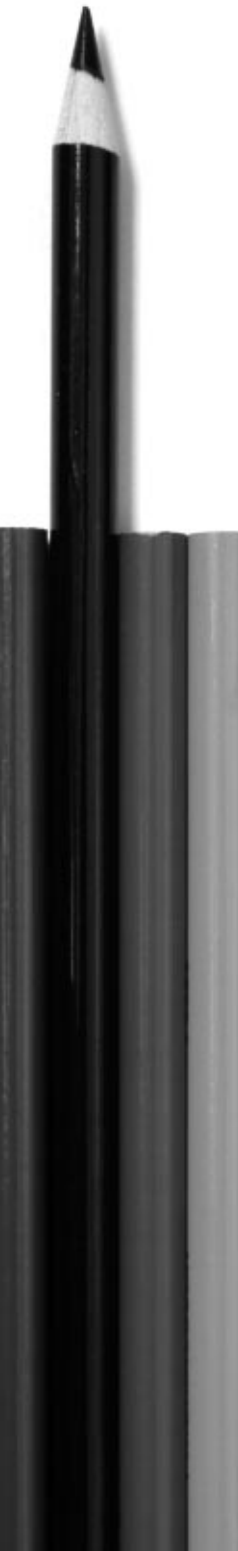
Research significance

The year head role is clearly a pastoral one, as they are responsible for identifying and meeting the welfare and developmental needs of the students, and 'in loco parentis' was a serious aspect of their role. A large proportion of their daily activity is reactive casework, characterised by Best (1999) as responding to problems that are of a personal, social, emotional or behavioural nature. Often year heads serve a mediating role, managing conflict between students, between students and teachers, and between students and the 'school system'. It was clear from the findings that the year heads in the study perceived casework to be a time consuming task, and that often there was not enough time allocated to do casework adequately. Not surprisingly, lack of time allocation for the year head role emerged as the most commonly referred to challenge to their current practice, and there was a perceived need for more time to be allocated to this role.

Casework requires specific skills and personal qualities, such as active listening, negotiation, conflict management, guidance and counselling (Best 1999), and some of these were indeed perceived to be key areas for training by the year heads in the study.

The findings revealed an acute awareness among the year heads both in the RoI and NI that students' needs have changed in the recent past, and that this was linked to the influences of the student's family and socio-economic circumstances, and wider community and societal influences. Specific problems that year heads in the study were responding to included bullying and suicide. Suicide was of particular concern and a source of worry for year heads in one of the schools, though it features as a general concern for all year heads. Clearly it is very important for staff in schools to have informal and formal supports in place as well as training in suicide awareness and prevention. It was perceived that often students' adverse circumstances expressed themselves as misbehaviour or other





problems that the year head responded to. As year heads, they accessed more detailed and confidential information about the students, and because of this some perceived that they were in a position to empathise with individual students and indeed advocate for these students at risk. This is very important, because there is evidence that quality relationships that build trust between the school and the student are a protective factor, and can have positive effects on the mental well-being of the student (Nadge 2005, Spratt *et al.* 2006). Furthermore, fostering school connectedness (where students feel close to school staff and the school environment) can have positive effects on health risk behaviour of adolescents and prevent early school leaving (Barrowman *et al.* 2001, Bonny *et al.* 2000, Voisin *et al.* 2005, Patton *et al.* 2006). Promotion of school connectedness is a feature of best practice in pastoral care (Hearn *et al.* 2006), and needs to be valued and supported.

Development of quality relationships in the school is at the heart of pastoral care (Best 1995). Adolescents need to feel that someone in the school environment cares about them, listens to them and respects them. Some year heads spoke of the time they dedicate to 'just talking' to students, noting that these conversations may be the most supportive ones that some children have with adults at that particular time in their lives. Relationships that are caring and concerned can help to retain students in school (Barrowman *et al.* 2001), and 'academic care' can have powerful effects on student well-being, resilience and success (Hearn *et al.* 2006). Positive relationships between students and teachers can also have protective effects on teacher mental health (Kovess-Mastefy *et al.* 2007, Unterbrink *et al.* 2008). However some year heads perceived that this aspect of their job was not always valued by their colleagues. Clearly there is a need for raising awareness among the whole school community about the importance of relationship building and the potential positive impacts on student health, student engagement in school and future educational attainment.

Promoting and maintaining an orderly and supportive environment

The promotion and maintenance of an orderly and supportive environment is another important facet of the year head role. The year heads in the study did not perceive a tension between their caring and disciplinarian roles. This reflects a pragmatic and more holistic understanding of pastoral care principles (Monahan 1996). The year heads in the study in the main adopted a positive and preventative approach to discipline. They believed that if students were supported and nurtured, and had developed positive relationships; and where there were fair structures and policies in place that were consistently enforced, there would be fewer problems with discipline in the school. The year heads' views reflect recently published guidelines for schools in the ROI for developing a code of behaviour (National Education Welfare Board 2008:42). These guidelines aim to 'promote positive behaviour and prevent inappropriate behaviour' using three key principles: strategies that affirm and promote good behaviour, quality relationships between students and teachers, and use of reward systems.

Findings suggest that some year heads perceived that the pastoral approach to behaviour was not always well understood by colleagues. Sometimes they felt 'caught in the middle' between the expectations of other teachers to 'sort out the problem' and their preferred pastoral approach to behaviour. They noted a perception that they were the 'the enforcers', and that they were solely responsible for managing misbehaviour in the year group. This tension challenged their principles of pastoral care, where promotion of good behaviour and prevention of inappropriate behaviour is the responsibility of the whole school (NACPE 1986, NEWB 2008).

Managing student learning

A more recent year head role is the management of student learning and monitoring of student performance. While this role was referred to in all focus groups, it was discussed in more detail in the schools in NI. This probably reflects educational reforms in the UK. The findings agree with previous literature, which describes and discusses this emerging aspect of the year head role (Lodge 2005, Roberts 2006, TeacherNet 2008). It can be argued that this development has reduced the academic/pastoral split: in fact, some of the year heads in the study agreed with this view, noting the 'blurring' of the pastoral and academic boundaries in their school. However not all year heads perceived the development to be entirely positive, as some felt that this responsibility should be shared with subject departments. Clearly year heads did not feel adequately prepared for this aspect of their role.

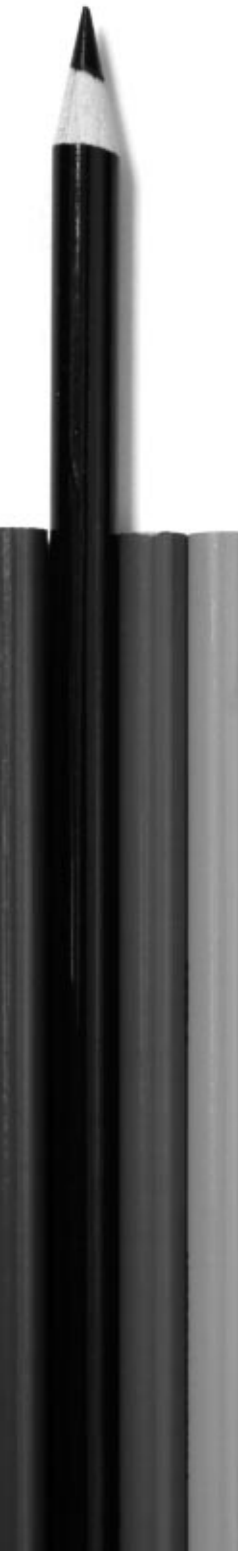
Home-school-community-agency link

Findings from the study suggest that the traditional aspect of the year head role - serving as a link between the home and the school - is still an essential task for year heads. However, the more recent emphasis on inter - agency work was also evident in the findings, reflecting recent developments in educational policy. It appears that these new inter-professional collaborations can cause some unease. Liaising with other agencies can be time consuming, and adds significantly to the year head workload that needs to be performed in the allocated time. Sharing and receiving confidential information can be a source of stress for year heads, particularly as it is likely that they do not have professional support structures for debriefing. A formal structure for support and supervision of pastoral care staff, similar to that of other professions (such as social workers and counsellors) has been endorsed by Griffiths (1995) and found to be an expressed need by head teachers in previous research (Nelson and While 2002). However this is not commonplace in schools and does not feature in the required discourse. The provision of internal and external support structures and networks is a feature of practice in pastoral care (Hearn et al. 2006) and needs serious consideration.

Lack of time and other resources

The pastoral role is time consuming and there was not enough time allocated, which sometimes led to feelings of frustration. Participants both north and south felt strongly that they needed more time to perform the job comprehensively. This





finding concurs with previous research on constraints to pastoral care in schools (Nelson and While 2002). Some of the participants also referred to a lack of other resources such as office space, phones, computers and language translation support. The need for adequate resources and facilities form part of the infrastructure of pastoral care, and this needs to be in place to enable effective pastoral work to take place.

Meeting unrealistic expectations

Findings indicate that the year heads in the study felt that colleagues and parents had unrealistic expectations of what they could achieve in their capacity as year heads. They perceived expectations that they would address (and solve) discipline and behaviour problems in particular. As referred to earlier, in best practice guidelines on behaviour a whole school approach is recommended. It is clear that a job description that clearly outlines the boundaries of the year head role would be beneficial. Best (1995) stated the need for clear job descriptions as a part of the infrastructure that facilitates other pastoral tasks. While the year heads themselves seemed clear about their role, there was a perception that other school staff did not have the same understanding. Some perceived that they had to address problems that could have been dealt with by a subject teacher or a tutor. As discussed previously, they perceived that the important but 'invisible' activities, such as talking with students, were not valued enough by others. Findings indicate that the year heads perceived a need for clear job descriptions for their role. It was also felt to be important to disseminate the job description to the school community. In one of the schools, year heads had disseminated information about their role during an in-service day in an interactive manner with other staff, and perceived it had been a useful experience.

Health impacts and self-care

The perceived health impacts of the year head role varied between the schools. Some year heads reported negative impacts, including worry, sleeplessness and difficulty in separating their professional and personal lives. Fundamental principles for pastoral care also include pastoral care for teachers, and they need 'counselling, guidance and moral support in the face of demands and stresses of their pastoral work' (Best 1995: 14). The need for informal and formal support systems for year heads has already been articulated.

Conclusion

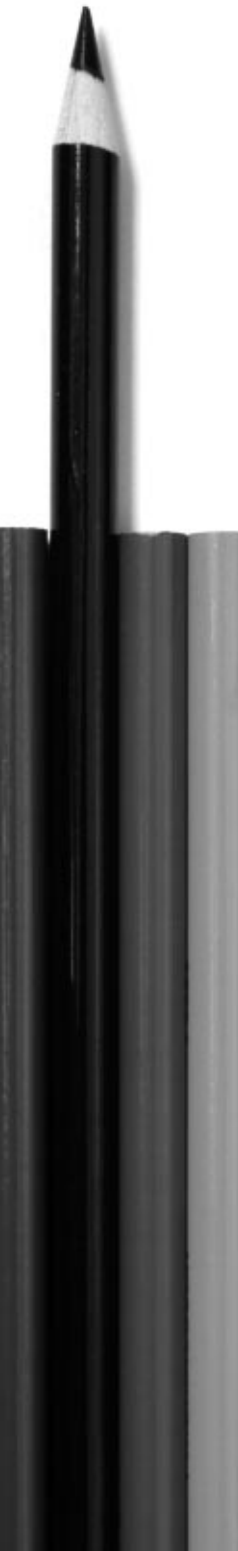
Clearly the lack of specific professional development in this area, with year heads learning the role 'on the job' and sometimes (sometimes not) being informally mentored by other year heads is problematic. Many of those who choose pastoral care roles may have innate personal qualities that attract them to this role; nevertheless, there is urgent need for in-service training and professional development in this area. The findings from both NI and ROI concurred that these needs were pressing. This agrees with the view of Lang (1995) who argued that pastoral care roles are specialised ones that need specific staff development. The areas where professional development is most needed can be broadly divided into

counselling/interpersonal skills, skills for effective administration and management, and topic specific areas such as adolescent development, behaviour management, and management of student learning.

Such professional development needs to be formalised, accredited and on-going. The research also elicited a strong desire amongst all participants for sharing of experiences and of best practice models. Year heads wished for more opportunities to share experiences within their own school, and with year heads from other schools. This research provides a snapshot of current practice and professional development needs of year heads in a sample of schools. There is need for further research in this field to contribute to fostering much needed discourse and with a view to informing current practice and policy specific to the role and function of pastoral care in schools across the island of Ireland.

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BRINGING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER TO PROMOTE EDUCATION FOR DIVERSITY (final report)

Dr Ron Smith, Queen's University Belfast

Professor Keith Sullivan, National University of Ireland, Galway

Dr Ron Smith and Professor Keith Sullivan successfully applied for a SCoTENS grant of £6000 to initiate a North South project aimed at 'bringing school communities together to promote education for diversity'. Ron and Keith share a research interest in the general area of culture, education and divided societies. Ron's experience has been in Northern Ireland in relation to the Catholic and Protestant communities. Keith was raised largely in the bilingual/ bicultural context of Québec, Canada and has carried out research in Maori Studies in New Zealand, the post - colonial context of Kiribati in the South Pacific, and in the educational interface between Israelis and Palestinians in the Middle East (see bibliography at the end of this paper).

With the official start of a rapprochement between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland since the Good Friday Agreement, the development of closer economic, political and social relationships, and our growing joint participation in Europe, it seemed timely to explore and celebrate both what we share from our joint heritage and also to better know and understand how we are different. This is the spirit with which SCoTENS was created and, as educationalists, we thought that a good place to start this process off would be in our primary schools, where the future of the two Irelands reside.

One of the general lessons that can be taken from the sub-discipline of Comparative Education is that, if we look outwards to how others interpret and respond educationally to the world around them, not only can we develop new understandings about the educational system we are studying, through reflection we can also learn about ourselves. The distance provided by this one-step removed approach also enables us to be more objective about our own experiences, processes and institutions. In setting up the current project, we decided to utilize such a construct as a starting point by going beyond what is normally a dual relationship to create a triangulation. What we did was to bring groups of teachers and principals to Dublin, from Northern Ireland and from the west of Ireland, in order to participate in (to learn about, discuss and critique) a one day seminar and workshop about the Jerusalem-based Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project (TCSP). This presentation was provided by the Director of the project, Dr Simon Lichman, and facilitated by Ron and Keith. We feel that this reflective and constructive triangulation (the 3 contexts being Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Israel/Palestine) proved to be very useful. The vehicle provided a window on the third Middle Eastern context - the Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project or TCSP.

The TCSP focuses simultaneously on three problems in the context of the Israel/Palestine situation i.e. cultural pluralism, the transmission of home-culture between generations, and co-existence between neighbouring Arab and Jewish communities. The project is formed around working with twinned classes of Arab and Jewish children over the course of their last three years of primary schooling and in developing an understanding of games, oral traditions, foods and ethnographic processes. The children explore their traditions individually at home with their parents and grandparents, and then at school they share what they know with their classmates. On regular occasions children and their families from the Jewish and the Arab communities visit each other's schools where they share what they have discovered. As a result of working and playing together, the children learn a lot about their homes culture and that of the children in their partner schools. The basis for appreciating the 'otherness' contained in the differences between generations, religions and ethnicity is created through this process. Rather than talking about interculturalism, the project quietly creates it in a deep and accessible fashion over the course of the three-year partnership and beyond, as children of different ages from the same families pass in succession through the programme.

The two researchers felt that the TCSP was a useful model of best practice in a difficult and often violent context, where progress was often interrupted or reversed as a result of internecine violence that was occurring. In this and other respects there was much that 'felt' similar in relation to our contexts. In arranging for this event to take place, we weren't suggesting that anybody should adopt the model being presented, but rather that we could use it as a vehicle for reflection and learning to assist the shaping of our own thinking as we developed strategies and programmes appropriate to our own settings. From the theoretical, ideological and methodological points of view, we were concerned to develop an educational project to creatively and positively address the contemporary educational interface between North and South in Ireland.

As researchers and practitioners we realized that we would initially play a leading role in such developments, but wished to move towards a role where all processes and decision-making were shared between researchers, teachers, parents and pupils, with those in the schools gradually taking more control.

We also wished to develop a process that was action-based and theoretically linked to the Freirian conceptualizations of problematisation, praxis, critical pedagogy, conscientisation and empowerment. Although this was not as 'clean' a process as many research-supported projects (where a design or hypothesis is developed, put into effect, tested to see if it has been effective and followed by analysis, recommendations and conclusions), our path has been spontaneous, sometimes unpredictable but always creative, inspiring and enjoyable. This, in fact, reflects the reality of the living school, classroom and community of pupils and teachers where you have plans prepared but are aware that you also often have to respond to and deal with the unpredictable. In arriving at our present place, we have gone through several stages as follows:





Stage One: cross-border primary school visits

With the spirit of SCoTENS in mind, we decided to seek the involvement of four primary schools from Northern Ireland and four from the Republic of Ireland and to arrange a cross-border exchange whereby selected classes within the selected schools would visit parallel classes in their partner's jurisdiction and experience each others' educational, social and community life (this was largely geographically determined in that Ron had developed relationships with schools in the greater Derry area and Keith in the Connemara/ Galway City area). In preparation for the visits, it was intended that teachers and pupils (with input from the researchers) would develop and present a theme that introduced the educational and community activities and concerns of each school. Having carried out a formal and educational exchange, informal activities such as games, a shared meal etc. would be similarly planned for. Although this was well intended, we found that we were thinking 'too big' for such an early stage. We also found that, financially and logistically, it would be impractical. Due to regulations and personal safety, the original intention of experiencing each other's schools and staying as billets in each other's homes was not possible. From the point of, for example, bus hire, paid accommodation and sustenance, the costs would have been prohibitive. It also became apparent that before any such exchanges could occur, there were fundamental issues and two protocols that needed to be sorted out. Consequently, we modified our original plans. In Northern Ireland, two sets of school relationships between twinned Catholic and Protestant primary schools were established (as originally planned). In the South, however, we decided at this formative stage to focus on developing a strong relationship between just one set of very interesting paired schools - a Catholic Irish speaking national school in a Gaeltacht area and an Educate Together School in an urban setting. Specifically, the school links were as follows:

In Northern Ireland: Two sets of paired schools in an urban (Derry/ Londonderry) and rural (Strabane) setting:

1. Longtower Primary School, Derry (Maintained school - pupils from Catholic background);
2. Fountain Primary School (Controlled school – pupils from Protestant background);
1. Ardstraw Primary (Controlled school –Protestant background);
2. St Eugene's Primary, Victoria Bridge (Maintained school - Catholic backgrounds).

In The Republic of Ireland: A pair of schools in Galway and Barna:

1. Scoil Shémais Naofa Bearna (Catholic Irish speaking national school)
2. Galway Educate Together School (multi-denominational and multi-ethnic city national school).

Stage Two: the separate development of understandings

As we gradually unpicked the issues within our two contexts, both in conversations between ourselves, with the teachers, and with reference to the literature, it became clear that it was 'early days' and that the situations in both precincts were complex and needing of an extensive working through. Furthermore, the different

histories made the contemporary issues in the North and South not at all similar. Although more than 10 years have passed since the Good Friday Agreement was signed in Northern Ireland, the religious and cultural divide is still deeply ingrained and is the main intercultural issue. On the other hand, in the Republic, things had developed in an insular fashion and until recently had been almost completely Catholic and monocultural. Society is however changing and, although the Catholic Church still governs the schools and controls the ethos, lay people largely run them.

What is more, there has been an influx of Eastern Europeans and Africans who have arrived for economic or refugee reasons and there has also been a growing focus on the educational needs of Traveller communities. In other words, it was important to first of all learn about the wider nature of our new contexts before establishing any cultural and educational exchange process. Although this may seem to have been a period of inactivity, this was not the case. It was rather a period of gestation whereby many discussions and internal processes were occurring. This is similar to the fact that when you build a house, if you want it to last, you need to create adequate foundations before you can erect a structure. Furthermore, such structures are not usually visible.

Despite our sea change, we decided that it would still be useful to bring Dr Lichman from Israel and to utilise the triangulation focus to stimulate debate and discussion between the teachers and principals both North and South. We were supportive of maintaining the positive momentum that was emerging but realized that, with the energetic and creative response of the participants, we the researchers were hanging onto the tail, rather than riding on the back, of this particularly energetic Celtic Tiger.

The intervening period

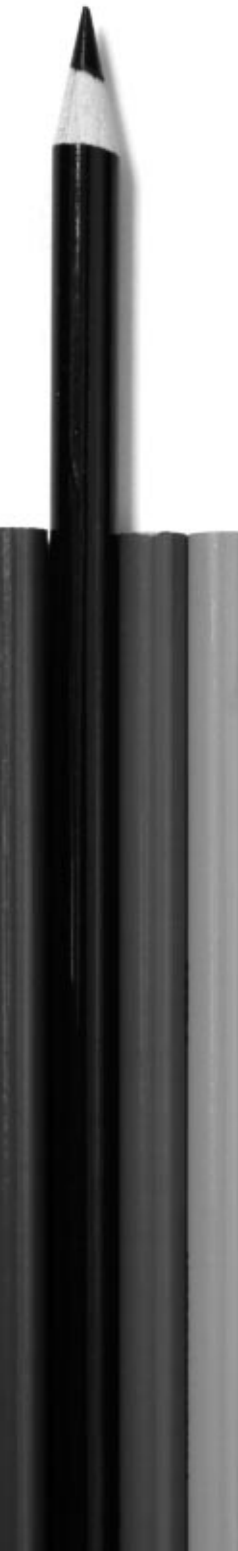
Dr Smith and Professor Sullivan carried out preparations with participants from the schools in anticipation of Dr Lichman's visit. Then they went through a further process of reflection and critique as a result of the well-attended presentations they made at the 2007 SCoTENS conference in Malahide. Here key scholars and interested parties from both Irish contexts discussed and debated issues central to our interests. For example, Ron presented a review of the literature on school improvement for community relations education in N. Ireland as well as parental involvement in the design and implementation of diversity curricula within the planned curriculum. It was noted that, despite the ubiquitous use of the rhetoric of partnership in education, research evidence suggested that school practice was still a very long way from a situation where the skills of parents/ carers were considered to be of equal value. Keith then described the work, under the leadership and direction of Dr Simon Lichman, of the Centre for Creativity in Education and Cultural Heritage, Jerusalem (CCECH).

Stage Three: Honing our thinking in order to progress

The Meeting in Dublin:

A one-day workshop took place on Monday 14 April 2008 in Dublin. The Dublin





City Council Arts Officer kindly arranged for us to use a seminar room in Dublin's Art Space, the LAB. Dublin City Council also provided us with morning and afternoon teas. This workshop brought together participants from the 6 schools in a location at a similar distance from the two national settings.

Participants:

Researcher and guest speaker

Dr Simon Lichman, Director - Centre for Creativity in Education and Cultural Heritage, Jerusalem, Israel

Irish Coordinators

From Northern Ireland: Dr Ron Smith, Lecturer in Education, Queen's University Belfast and June Neill, General Secondary Adviser, Western Education and Library Board (WELB)

From the Republic of Ireland: Professor Keith Sullivan, School of Education, National University of Ireland, Galway.

School Participants

From the 6 schools (3 sets of paired schools), 4 principals and 7 teachers attended.

Order of events

1. 10:30 am - 11:00 am Introduction of purposes and participants
2. 11:00 am - 1:00 pm – Workshop with Dr Lichman

An overview of the Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project (TCSP) and how it worked in the Israeli context was provided by Simon; followed by a question and answer session.

3. 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm Lunch
4. 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Workshops

The question we asked participants to consider was: 'How can we best utilize the Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project to develop intercultural understandings in our schools?' The aim of this session was to work together in small groups and then, in the large group, to come up with a plan of action. Dr Lichman, June, Ron and Keith acted as facilitators for both processes.

5. 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm Draft plans of action were developed to take back to each of our two contexts.

Seminar Day and Outcomes

Dr Lichman's presentation was excellent and the engagement and discussions brought interesting comments, challenges, and refinement of thinking. The major themes and observations that occurred were as follows:

1. It became apparent that although sharing an island and a history, the two major groupings from the North and the South were as far apart as if they had been at either end of a large continent. For the two paired schools from Northern Ireland, there was an excitement at being presented with a project that was from the Middle East, and, although in ways exotic and culturally different, the major concerns were very similar. What the Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project had accomplished was seen as inspiring and a useful model. However it became even more clear that groundwork in the home schools needed to be done. Furthermore, in the context of the North, the issue of the conflict in N. Ireland stood high above all other concerns.
2. The group from the Republic of Ireland became very inspired and it became apparent to them in relation to the Galway Educate Together School in particular - that although they wished to have a cultural exchange with their partner Gaeltacht school they wished first of all to pursue an internal development process of getting to know who they were culturally. Keith Sullivan has been working with them on this. An evening seminar and/or teacher development day is planned for the coming school year. In the context of the South, the ethnic cultural mix has long been essentially solidly Irish Catholic with a small minority Protestant population and a marginalized Traveller community. However, in recent years, with the emergence of a strong Celtic Tiger economy and the need of people to fill the positions that this created, there was an influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe and of refugees from various African nations (this may, of course, change now!). Since its inception, the Educate Together School movement has been marginalized by the powers that be, and is very concerned to understand and honour the rights of the large number of ethnic minority children in its school and also to educate the Irish children about interculturalism. From the point of view of where to go from here, ideas that have been germinating will be addressed when we next meet so that we can continue to move forward. It is hoped both to develop useful educational approaches to address the issue of interculturalism and to develop a model that could be used in other schools in the process.

The meeting in Dublin provided the participants with a stimulating triangulation of the Arab/ Israeli interface, the Catholic/ Protestant Northern Ireland interface and the Catholic Gaeltacht monoculture / multi-denominational, multicultural Educate Together contexts. This coming together had been preceded by some thinking about the issue of cultural/religious divides and the notions of monoculturalism, multiethnicity and interculturalism. The day was a fascinating experiment in its own right, but also provided us with a sense that, as in other areas of life, both the simplicity and complexities of situations need to be fully addressed before progress to the next stages can be contemplated. We had been faced with a similar complexity in our earlier stages and had to consider the issues and negotiate resolutions in order to reach the next stage. Tensions have been high, and sometimes stressful, but this has provided a creative force and the impetus to utilize what we had learned in order to make sense of our current situation so as to be able to build bridges of understanding.





Follow up

Ongoing relationships between local schools were arranged and this has been maintained through local-based activities, inter-school visits and ICT contact, such as through the use of Skype. General support and developmental assistance is also provided to participant schools by the coordinators from Queens University, Belfast, the Western Education and Library Board and the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Summary and conclusion

We applied to SCoTENS under the title of 'Bringing School Communities Together to Promote Diversity for Diversity'. We developed five project elements that were both aspirational and which served as an organizational umbrella. We will indicate under each heading what we have accomplished to date:

- 1. To involve one pair of schools in each jurisdiction that had a history of involvement in intercultural and /or multicultural education and where, particularly in the Northern Irish context, cross-community contact was viewed as one important location for making a contribution to such work.**

Our original intention had been to have several schools from each jurisdiction take part in a cross-border interchange with a visit and return-visit. From a safety and cost point of view, at this point such an interchange was not possible. Consequently we modified our intentions to focus on an interchange between two schools in Northern Ireland and two schools in the Republic of Ireland, and for there to be a North-South dialogue and general exchange created with the focus and 'opening up' point being the meeting which occurred in Dublin in April 2008 and Dr Lichman's presentation at the meeting.

- 2. To engage Dr Simon Lichman to facilitate residential cross-border professional development with teachers from the paired schools mentioned above and according to the methodologies of the Centre for Creativity in Educational and Cultural Heritage.**

With the support from SCoTENS, we were able to arrange a full day's seminar-cum-workshop in Dublin (also supported by Dublin City Council). The group from Northern Ireland had travelled down from Derry/Londonderry and County Tyrone and the other group from Galway. Eight people travelled from the North (6 teachers from 4 schools, the Secondary Adviser with responsibility for community relations from the Western Education Library Board, and Dr Smith). From Galway, 5 teachers from 2 schools (including the 2 principals) attended and Professor Sullivan. A lunch was also arranged and allowed conversations to develop in an informal context. The presentation from Dr Lichman was informative, stimulating and provided the basis for intensive, reflective and relevant questioning. It also allowed, through looking at another interface (Arab-Jewish), similar issues as found in the Northern context to emerge. Because of this 'other-perspective' context, it was non-threatening. It allowed us to look at what was happening 'over-there' and provided

an ease in starting up non-threatening conversations. This also allowed a 'getting to know each other' (which had started on the journeys to Dublin) and 'getting to trust each other' atmosphere to develop. This provided the foundation for the more difficult local issues to start to be addressed.

This process underlined how very different the two contexts were; but, interestingly, also how different the contexts were within each jurisdiction (see also Appendix 1).

3. To encourage the school-attached professional personnel connected with the paired schools to attend residential professional development sessions.

This was proposed as a way that Ron Smith and Keith Sullivan could support professional development in terms of cultural interfaces and in relation to multiculturalism. What in fact happened, in the context of the two Galway schools, was that, contrary to our intention of having the two schools come together to have a cultural interchange, it was felt (particularly in the Educate Together school) that it was much more important to carry out an in - school process in order to understand this from their own point of view, rather than having an interface having not first created this crucial and fundamental understanding of their own school. Similarly in Northern Ireland, a different trajectory was being developed.

Rather than the two university researchers taking charge and running the project they had in mind, the power of the interchange in Dublin between the North - South participants and Dr Lichman was such that they had jumped a few steps ahead of what was anticipated and were 'empowered' to take more control at an earlier stage. Although this could have been seen as loss of control by the university researchers, in Freirian terms it was the kicking in of conscientisation and those who needed to take control in the long run doing it earlier than planned. This was a good result.

4. To have one project up and running in each jurisdiction by the end of 2008 incorporating an action-research network of practitioners and researchers.

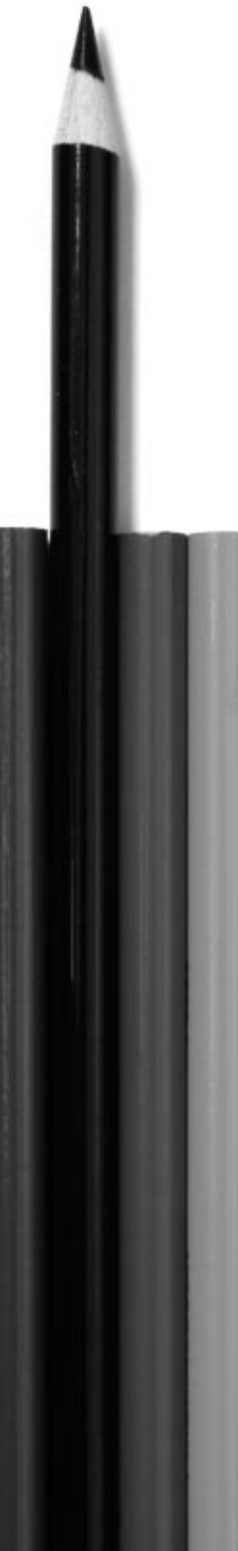
As a result of the conference, the two settings, North and South, have chosen to take responsibility for their own development overall and to work with the two coordinators in so doing. Appendix 1 provides a summary of follow-up activities both North and South.

5. To have completed a proposal for securing long-term funding.

Appendix 2 provides an overview of our proposal for funding.

Concluding Remarks

To date, the process that we have been involved in has been action-based and has been driven by responding to the needs of the various groups that we are assisting



to develop programmes to address their intercultural needs. The process is a slow one, but we are clear that going through considered processes that put down deep roots, and can be adapted to a variety of settings, is appropriate for what we are attempting to achieve.

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APPENDIX 1: TWO RESPONSES TO THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

I. THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY IN DUBLIN: A NORTHERN PERSPECTIVE

Bridget Devine (Principal St. Eugene's Primary School, Strabane) with Sinead Johnston (St. Eugene's Teacher) and David Stinson (Principal, Ardstraw Primary School)

Contextualisation

Both of us (BD & DS) came to our present schools as principals in post. David has now been in Ardstraw for 25 years and Bridget has been in St Eugene's for 13 years. We teach in small rural schools located in extremely staunch Loyalist and Republican-Nationalist areas respectively involving high multiple social deprivation. Ardstraw is situated in an almost exclusively Protestant area. The only Catholic children who ever attended was from an English family that moved to the area. In the past, one parent seeking to enrol their child in Ardstraw asked if the school was involved in cross-community work. On finding out that it was, the parent declined to enrol their child! St Eugene's is situated in Victoria Bridge in an area of mixed housing, and prior to BD's time several Protestant children attended the school.

We had been involved in the Schools Community Relations Programme (SCRCP) for approximately twenty years. Approximately six or seven years ago, due to the combined pressures of curriculum demands and our roles as teaching principals, our community relations partnership lapsed, and although there was informal contact between our schools planned community relations contact work ceased. However, in response to the review of the Schools Community Relations Programme and its recommendations, in 2004 the WELB Advisory Teacher for the SCRCP held a joint meeting with ourselves at which we agreed to revive the partnership and try to incorporate into our programmes some of the recommendations contained in the SCRCP report. Consequently, I believe that our involvement in the *the Bringing School Communities Together Project* was due to the already very strong, vibrant, effective partnership between our two schools which extended, well beyond our formal contact as part of SCRCP.

The Bringing School Communities Together Project

Since no formal meetings had taken place prior to the Dublin visit, as far as we were concerned, the project formally began when we joined representatives from four other schools (2 ROI and 2 NI) at a Dublin venue in order to take part in a one-day workshop led and facilitated by Simon Lichman. The staff at St. Eugene's discussed who should attend the Dublin meeting and BD persuaded Sinead - a young member of staff - that participation provided an unique opportunity to enhance her CPD. Sinead was initially reluctant to agree since she didn't really know David Stinson very well and was also not entirely sure what the proposed project

entailed. She was also not aware that teachers from schools in the Irish Republic would be attending.

DS travelled by car to the meeting whilst the remainder of the N. Ireland contingent - June Neill, BMcL (WELB), Ron Smith (QUB), BD, Sinead, AS (Long Tower Primary School), SD and NG (Fountain Primary School) travelled together by plane. Everyone involved had been sent several articles outlining projects that had been undertaken by Simon Lichman working with Jewish and Arab schoolchildren and their families. I think DS and JN were already fairly well informed about many issues related to the Arab-Israeli conflict, but the remainder of the group had a very sketchy background knowledge.

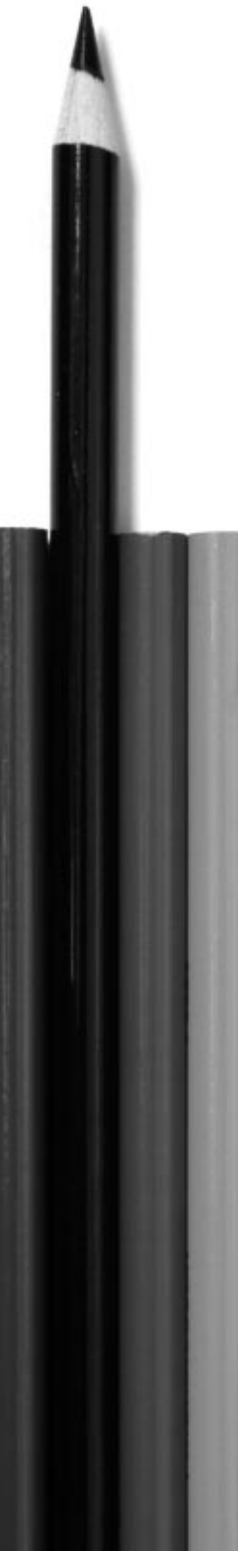
Sinead was very nervous and apprehensive when she was asked at the workshop to talk to the whole group about the cross-community work the two schools were involved in. I think that she would have preferred to have been informed of this beforehand and been able to prepare something that could have been given to all of the participants. On the other hand, in his role as principal, and through other work involving speaking to large groups, David Stinson had a lot of experience and consequently did not find this experience stressful. I remember DS commenting that the examples Simon provided concerning the parts of the programme where the Jewish and Arab children involved their parents and grandparents in homework activities - to find out about traditional foods, games, family stories and traditional songs - might not transfer to the NI situation since the two main traditions here shared a lot in common with respect to these areas.

During the afternoon session, ongoing relationships between the local schools were arranged which being maintained on an on-going basis through ICT contact (the use of Skype); local-based activities and inter-school visits; and support and development help provided by QUB and the NUI Galway partners. I also remember making a mental note of the following issues that arose for me at the time with respect to the meeting, as well as further involvement with the Bringing School Communities Together Project:

- The difference between the NI and RoI education systems and the great lack of knowledge we displayed of the working of each other's system;
- The multicultural context of the Educate Together Schools being so different to ours and how each Educate Together school in the RoI operated so differently, no uniformity. It was difficult to build up a picture;
- The commitment required;
- The restricted funding.

When DS and BD returned to school, they talked to their respective colleagues about the Dublin meeting and the possibility of receiving SCRP funding from the WELB for a joint project. Both staff groups agreed that active and meaningful parental involvement was an extremely important, yet neglected, aspect of the SCRP and consequently should be the main focus of the project. In order to





encourage maximum parental participation, DS and BD agreed that the project should have a strong element of fun and that the community relations element would be an integral, although understated part. It was agreed that the two of us would speak about a possible joint venture involving parents, grandparents and children to those attending our respective school Christmas concerts. As it happens, due to a family illness, BD was unable to address the Ardstraw parents, so DS spoke to both groups.

Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

It was at one of these meetings that the idea of staging a drama involving mothers, fathers, children and grandparents received strong endorsement. A production of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was agreed. Initially, in response to parental input, an action plan was drawn-up. A conscious decision was made to hold the initial meeting and rehearsals for a joint production of the production in the Young Farmer's Club (YFC), a relatively neutral venue in Ardstraw. We also felt that, in order to get the project up and going, a member of staff from either school should be present at every meeting or rehearsal in order to show that, although ownership of the project belonged to the parents, staff members were actively supportive.

The first meeting saw parents gravitating towards other people they knew from their own school, whilst the teachers deliberately approached parents from the other school. However by the third meeting cross - community friendships were beginning to form, which continued to develop throughout the project. Whilst early meetings took place in the YFC, the hall turned out to be extremely cold, dreary and confined. Consequently, the parents suggested using both school premises instead - no need for a 'neutral' space.

The drama became an established and important event in the community. Some of the women who were working on costumes, props etc arranged informal meetings to work in each other's houses. Indeed for some women rehearsals became their only social outlet. The intergenerational aspect involving young people and parents working together was an extremely impressive aspect to witness. We believe the profile of both communities was raised by the performance of the production in a professional theatre and subsequent excellent reviews of the show in the local press. Furthermore, whether in a performing role or backstage making props and scenery, we witnessed the self-confidence and esteem of a number of participants grow. At whatever level of involvement, the children appeared extremely proud of their parents. There were also some unplanned outcomes such as renewed contact between family members who had drifted apart a few years earlier; parents becoming aware of unknown skills and talents that their now grown -up children possessed, and parents of pre - school children, as a consequence of their involvement, changing their minds and deciding to send their child to a local school rather than schools outside the community.

Sustainability

A local drama group has now been formed involving all those parents and others who were associated with *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. They have indicated that they would like to work on a similar project next year - with the parents taking ownership and the schools acting less as leaders but still providing support. The support and advice provided by the WELB's Advisor for Community Relations (June Neill), and the Assistant Advisory Teacher for Community Relations (Brigean Mc Laughlin), is tremendously valued and greatly enhances the sustainability of this project.

2. THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE PRINCIPAL OF GALWAY EDUCATE TOGETHER SCHOOL

Aim of the Project and Reason for Participation

To create an understanding of diversity in contemporary Ireland for school children: as Galway City's only multi-denominational school it was a project that interested us greatly as it harmonized well with our ethos and its aims were very similar to many of the aims of the school's Religious and Ethical Education Programme. The Principal, John Farrell, and two class teachers, Sinead Carroll and Sara Falvey, attended.

Reflection on the workshop

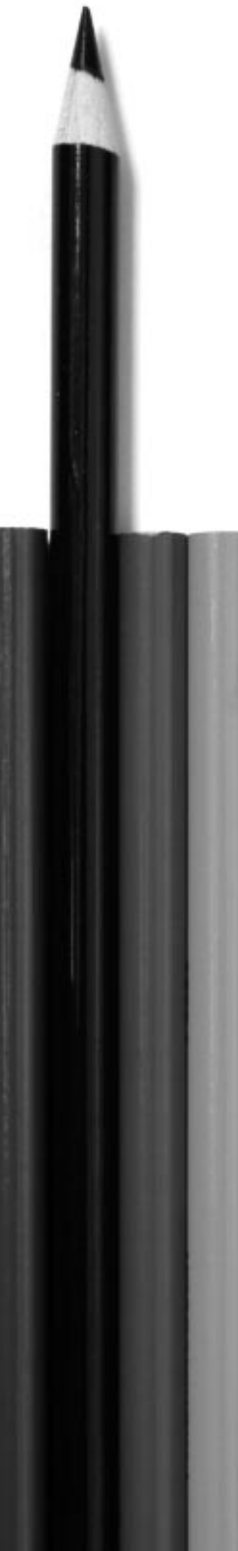
The morning session consisted of a workshop presented by the director of Traditional Creativity in the Schools Project, Dr Simon Lichman. This presentation was very engaging and showed to great effect the remarkable work being done by Dr. Lichman and the TCSP. The presentation drew a great response from the participants in the workshop and there were plenty of opportunities for questions and discussion.

One of the main ideas to emerge through the discussions was the vital importance of the children understanding their own cultural backgrounds in some depth before engaging with other cultures. Examination of our own lives and a willingness to share this with others were important aspects of the project. Children develop a sense of pride in their own cultures and through interaction with children from different cultures and would find similarities and differences between themselves. Family participation was a prerequisite and a vital element for the success of the project.

Looking at the project in a GETNS context

Galway ETNS is a school that has developed and changed greatly in only a few years. The school has gone from being a school where the vast majority of the pupils and their families were from Ireland to a school that now has families and children from 41 different countries. It has also developed from having one part-time language teacher to support the children with additional English language needs to having two full-time language teachers.





This rapid development requires us to take the time necessary to recognise the different cultural backgrounds of the children attending GETNS and to see how best to help children share their own cultures with each other.

One of the main points of agreement between all participants in the workshop was the need for each school community to identify ways of examining “who we are” in their own schools. It was the view of the participants that while creating connections between schools both in a local and a North-South context was something the schools would like to pursue. It was more important for schools to begin with exploring their own cultures first.

At Galway ETNS we have decided to begin sharing our cultures with each other by hosting an ‘International Day’ before the end of the school year. We will seek to have as many representatives as possible from the differing cultures in the school. They will be able to share with each other through music, dance storytelling and food. We will also invite guests from Bearna school as a way of introducing ourselves to them.

APPENDIX 2: PROPOSAL TO SECURE LONG -TERM FUNDING

NcompasS is an initiative designed to promote understanding, respect and reconciliation between young people in Northern Ireland and the border region of Ireland. It supports young people, and those who work with them, through activities such as thematic projects; training courses in managing educational exchanges; student teacher/youth worker placements and dissemination of good practice. The aim of *NcompasS* is to develop partnerships in the formal and non - formal education sectors which will contribute to peace and reconciliation in Ireland and Northern Ireland between people and organizations from differing cultural traditions. The project is administered by a cross-border partnership which includes the **British Council in Northern Ireland**, the **Youth Council in Northern Ireland** and **Léargas** (based in Dublin).

Following their seminar at the 2007 SCoTENS Annual Conference, and, as a consequence of contacts made with the Project Coordinator of Léargas (Eva Creely), Professor Keith Sullivan and Ron Smith were invited to become specialist partners in a schools’ programme led by *NcompasS* and seeking EU funding under the Peace 3 programme. Our role is to deliver intergenerational -based programmes for school communities (see below).

The NcompasS Schools Programme

This programme involves a partnership of key practitioners, educators, trainers and providers from the statutory, private and voluntary sectors collaborating on a series of projects on a regional basis designed to have far reaching impact on statutory

provision for the training, development and support of teachers in the front line of division and diversity. The programme aims to address the legacy of the conflict and challenges arising from the fast changing demographics of migration, sectarianism and inequality in communities throughout the region. It will endeavour - through strategic alliances and partnerships - to share best and good practice and build on cross - border and cross community links. The programme has three interrelated strands:

1. The Cluster Strand

This is the main area of activity, where clusters of school communities (including teachers, principals, parents, classroom assistants and outreach workers) will engage in a process to develop and embed suitable strategies for dealing with issues of difference. Training and good practice will be developed in regional clusters, with support services provided locally and regionally.

2. Leadership in Education Strand

The focus of this capacity building strand is on a programme of cooperation between the institutions that share responsibility for developing leaders and teacher education. The key objectives of this strand will be:

- To develop modules of training and support jointly;
- To offer interventions and support to the cluster strand;
- To develop joint policy approaches which reflect the learning outcomes of the cluster strand.

3. Research and Dissemination Strand.

An initial baseline study of knowledge and skills (as directed by the intended outcomes) will be undertaken. Throughout the lifetime of the programme (4 years) a dedicated resource will be in place to closely monitor progress and impact of the activities. The research function will disseminate learning from the cluster strand and from other external sources, and will act as a conduit for the monitoring of best practice and policy formulation. It will maintain a constant dialogue between the cluster strand and the leadership in education strand.

All three strands are designed to be interrelated, informing each other and ultimately working towards the production of an evidence - based model of cross border, cross community provision of initial teacher education, support and continuing professional development designed to address the emerging needs of educators in the post conflict, multicultural Ireland, North and South.



INTENDED OUTCOMES

Stakeholder	Intended Outcome
Policy Makers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased understanding of what is needed to build capacity and overcome racist and sectarian challenges; • Increased understanding of problems facing formal education systems in terms of racism and sectarianism; • Increased understanding of how different models of collaboration can help meet the challenges of racism and sectarianism; • Increased number of leaders for change in the system; • Increased opportunities to meet existing policy objectives regarding sectarianism and racism; • Increased opportunities to meet policy objectives regarding collaboration between schools and the communities they serve.
Teacher Education and Agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness and understanding of issues for educationalists in meeting sectarian and racist challenges; • Increased cross-border and cross-sectoral links; • Increased capacity to work in partnership with other educational stakeholders; • Increased likelihood of delivering appropriate services.
Headteachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater understanding of the challenges facing different levels within formal education in terms of sectarianism and racism; • Increased opportunity to direct services; • Greater access to cross-border and cross-community support networks; • Greater ability to engage and implement programmes and strategies that seek to challenge sectarianism and racism; • Increased professional development opportunities.
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased ability to discuss and deal with contentious issues in the classroom; • Wider variety of techniques to rely upon to challenge sectarian and racist attitudes and behaviour; • Increased number of colleagues in support networks; • Increased understanding of what causes racism and sectarianism; • Increased awareness of other sectors and organisations;

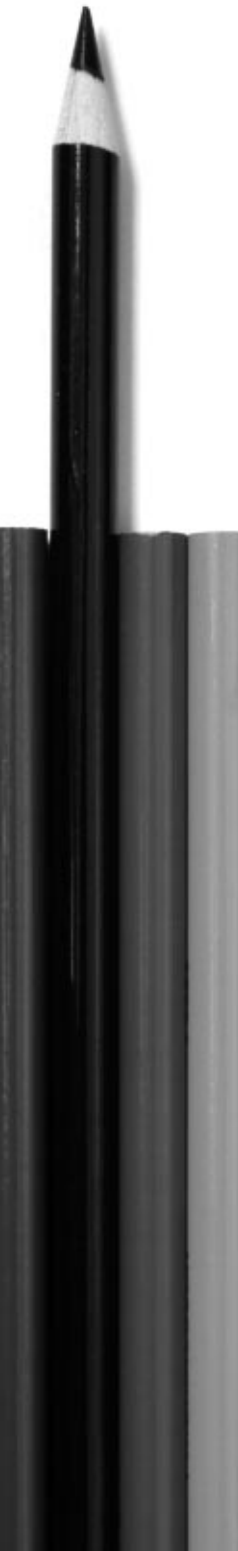
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased professional development opportunities.
Pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of racist and sectarian attitudes and behaviour; • Better understanding what produces racism and sectarianism; • Increased ability to discuss contentious issues in a respectful and secure manner; • Better relationships with people from other backgrounds; • Better life chances and broader horizons'
Community Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased involvement with schools; • Increased sense of inclusion in planning; • Increased capacity to engage with statutory services; • Changing perception of schools' function in communities.
Wider Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better relationships at a local level with the school recognised as a resource for positive change in the community.

OUR PROPOSAL: BRINGING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES TOGETHER TO ADDRESS DIVERSITY

Aims and Objectives

As specialist partners in the proposed **NcompasS Schools Programmeme**, our aim is to build and coordinate communities of practice within education North and South that encourages mutually sustaining collaborative relationships between schools, families and communities - in the pursuit of tackling discrimination based on linguistic, socio-economic and cultural difference. Our objectives include:

1. To embed a commitment to tackling discrimination based on linguistic, socio-economic and cultural difference through a menu of research-based school - home -community strategies;
 - 1.1 Cross-generational involvement in diversity education modelled on the principles and aspirations of the Traditional Creativity in the School - Community Project or (TCSP) based at the Centre For Creativity in Education and Cultural Heritage (CCECH) in Israel - but adapted to the Irish contexts;
 - 1.2 Improving school - community connections with families of culturally and linguistically diverse learners using a school self-evaluation and improvement process devised by Dr Caroline Linse at the School of Education, Queen's University Belfast.*

- 
2. To provide professional development and consultancy to clusters of school communities;
 3. To establish and develop an action-research network to provide on-going support to the work of the schools;
 4. To develop and disseminate materials to support development planning within school communities;
 5. To build and maintain a comprehensive presence on a project website to provide access to information, materials, support and to support e-mail discussion;
 6. To publish and disseminate good educational practice.

*ELABORATION ON 1.2 above

Devised by Dr Caroline Linse at the School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, the self-evaluation and improvement process is a process of collective review that guides staff along a structure allowing for a progressively detailed examination of the school or department. It is a means of examining and improving school practices and levels of responsiveness to families whose home language is not English. The process typically:

- It is a systematic process, not simply reflection;
- Its short-term goal is to obtain valid information about a school's condition, functions, purposes and products;
- It leads to action on an aspect of the school's organization or curriculum;
- It is a group process that involves participants in a collegial process;
- It is a process owned by the school or sub-system;
- Its purpose is school improvement/development and its aspiration is to progress towards the problem-solving or relatively autonomous school.

Collective review has to do with ensuring that the collective whole exceeds the sum of the parts. That is, it is an approach to organizational improvement that places learning at the heart of matters; that eschews instrumental, controlling and bureaucratic change management strategies having narrow foci on performance and efficiency (Clarke et al., 1998). As Brighouse and Woods (1999) suggested, it provides schools with an opportunity to increase the common wealth of their curiosity, an extension of knowledge through the sharing of other people's ideas. However turning information into knowledge necessarily engages the organization's current state of knowledge and the quality of its learning processes as an organization. The development of information systems needs to be paralleled by the development of learning systems, which utilise data (Watkins, 1997). Consequently, like Watkins, MacBeath (1998) and other school improvers, experience suggests that 'schools need friends' to develop the approach.

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION: A CROSS BORDER PERSPECTIVE

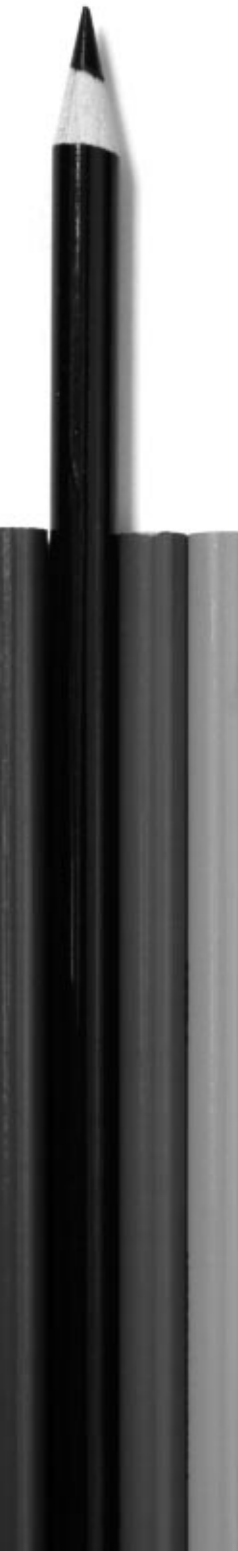
Dr Audrey Bryan, University College Dublin
Dr Marie Clarke, University College Dublin
Professor Sheelagh Drudy, University College Dublin
Professor Tony Gallagher, Queen's University Belfast
Mr Martin Hagan, St Mary's University College Belfast
Ms Lesley McEvoy, Queen's University Belfast
Dr Margaret Reynolds, St Mary's University College Belfast
Dr Ken Wylie, Stranmillis University College

This report seeks to enhance our understanding of pre-service teachers' attitudes towards and understandings of social justice, diversity and international development issues, based on a collaborative research project undertaken by teacher educators at institutions in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland. It presents the findings of research amongst a sample of consecutive cohorts of pre-service teachers enrolled in initial teacher education programmes at four institutions: University College Dublin in the Republic of Ireland and St. Mary's University College, Stranmillis University College, and Queens University Belfast in Northern Ireland. Its purpose was to generate baseline data on pre-service teachers' understandings of social justice and development education issues and to consider the implications for initial teacher education programmes on the island of Ireland. It is hoped that the findings will be of particular interest and benefit to teacher and development educators who seek to equip student teachers with knowledge and methodologies that will enable them, as well as their own students, to reflect on how they can contribute to a more locally and globally just future.

Since the 1990s there has been increased recognition of the need to instil in citizens a global consciousness in the face of an escalating range of problems which transcend national borders and demand a global response, such as global poverty, climate change and environmental degradation, and pandemics such as HIV/AIDs. Increased funding for and prioritisation of development education by government bodies including Irish Aid in the Republic and the Department for International Development (DfID) in Northern Ireland in recent years have enhanced opportunities for integrating development education or global educational content and methodologies in initial teacher education programmes, and in the formal education sector more broadly.

For example, specific projects that have enhanced opportunities for integrating development education content and methodologies in initial teacher education programmes include a three-year DfID-funded 'Global Dimension in Education' project in N Ireland and the Irish Aid funded 'Development and Intercultural Education' (DICE) and 'UBUNTU Teacher education for Sustainable Development' projects in the South. These attempts to incorporate or 'mainstream' Development





Education are coupled with an increasing emphasis on notions of social justice more broadly within teacher education discourses and policies, scholarly articles, books and conference programmes, and in formal school curricula (North, 2006).

While the meaning of social justice is contested, social justice education typically involves highlighting social injustices at a local and/or global level with a view to motivating individuals and groups to envision and work towards a different future, based on a more humane and just vision of society on both a local and a global scale (North, 2006). There are a variety of forms of education which can be classified as falling broadly within the remit of social justice education as they share many overlapping concerns. These include but are not limited to: inclusive education, citizenship education or education for democratic citizenship, multicultural and intercultural education, diversity education, development education and education for sustainable development, human rights education, global education or the global dimension in education, and education for international understanding. While the specific priorities of each of these versions of social justice education may differ somewhat, each shares a concern with cultivating awareness of the nature and causes of injustice and inequality in the world, and is oriented towards effecting positive social change. As an approach to learning, therefore, social justice education is about both understanding and transforming the world in which we live.

Initial teacher education programmes have been identified as having a key role to play in equipping teachers with the necessary competence to promote progress towards concern and action for equal opportunities, social justice and sustainable development from the local to the global scale in their schools (Holden & Hicks, 2006; Robbins, Francis & Elliot, 2003). While specific initiatives have provided enhanced opportunities for teacher education programmes to offer a variety of courses and units with a strong social justice orientation, such as inter/multicultural education, diversity education or development education, it cannot be assumed that socially and culturally responsive teaching will necessarily follow from student teachers' participation in such courses (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Teacher educators need to understand students' underlying values and ideas about diversity, their own experiences of development and social justice issues, and their understandings about local and global injustices and inequalities, in order to ensure meaningful classroom dialogue and to facilitate learning (e.g., Clarke & Drudy, 2006).

Moreover, despite efforts to mainstream development and diversity education in the formal education sector, and an enhanced profile of international development in the tertiary sector in recent years (McCloskey, 2009), there is a dearth of research on the opinions, values and attitudes held by pre-service teachers as it relates to development, social justice and diversity issues (McCutchen, Knipe, Cash & McKay, 2008). The present study was undertaken to lessen these gaps in our understanding, with a view to enhancing the development and effective delivery of development and social justice education offerings in initial teacher education on the island of Ireland.

Methodology

An initial mapping exercise and literature review were conducted with a particular focus on identifying existing provision, as well as key issues and challenges pertaining to the implementation of social justice education in formal educational settings. A survey instrument was designed for the purposes of gathering attitudinal data on social justice, development and diversity issues among students in initial teacher education programmes at University College Dublin, Queen's University Belfast, Stranmillis University College and St. Mary's College who have been exposed to content knowledge and methodologies relevant to development, diversity and social justice issues. The survey comprised a combination of open-ended, likert-scale and rank-order questions.

Specific items were included to examine student teachers' perceptions and understandings of a range of issues including: the role and scope for development and diversity education in the curriculum; the perceived relevance of social justice education to one's own subject areas; attitudes towards migration, cultural diversity and racism; attitudes towards specific minority groups (e.g. Travellers); understandings of poverty; and attitudes towards social action, activism and social change. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample from two separate cohorts of students in initial teacher education programmes at each of the participating institutions.

Respondent Profile

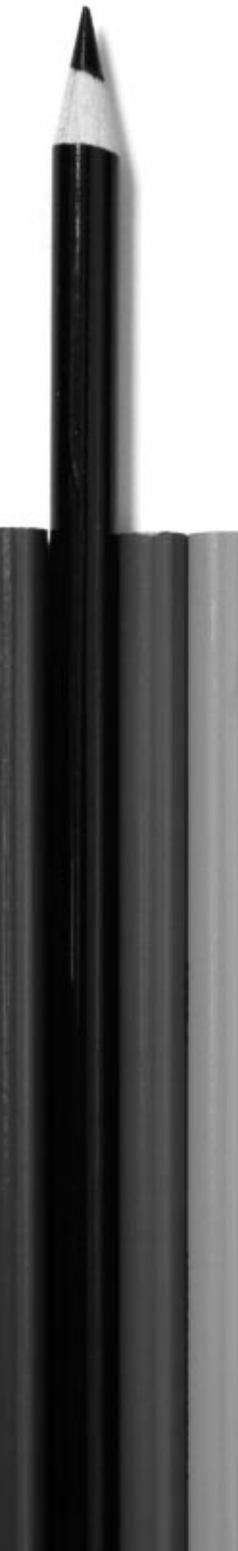
- A total of 489 completed surveys were included in the final dataset: 95 from QUB, 204 from St Mary's University College; 67 from Stranmillis University College and 123 from UCD.
- Respondents ranged from 20 to 47 years of age; the mean age of respondents was 24 years.
- Eighty percent of the sample was female, which is broadly reflective of the gender profile of entrants to the teaching profession in Ireland.
- 68% of the sample identified as Irish; 22% as British and 6% as Northern Irish. Two percent held dual nationality (e.g. Irish/French), while the remainder were nationals of countries in Asia, South America, Europe and North America.

Key Findings

Understandings of development education

"[Development education] is an educational process to increase awareness and understanding of global inequality and injustice. It is an attempt at social transformation – to make the world a better place" (UCD student).

Responses to an open-ended question asking respondents what the term 'development education' meant to them were broadly classifiable according to five major (sometimes overlapping) thematic understandings:

- 
- (1) Raising awareness of global issues/understanding about the developing world
 - (2) Multicultural-diversity-related understandings
 - (3) Social transformation/change-oriented definitions
 - (4) Meanings which privileged the local-global nexus and
 - (5) Meanings which focused on the personal, social, emotional aspects of development.

Levels of support for social justice and development education among student teachers

"Development education work in the university sector does not need to work to engage students' interest in development issues, or to persuade them that it is important. Students already show high levels of support. If the government is concerned with maintaining public support for its development programme ...[there is a] need to foster a more sophisticated understanding of development amongst university students and a more nuanced understanding of the role of [Official Overseas Development Assistance Programmes]" (Connolly, Doyle & Dwyer, 2008).

The findings are consistent with those of recent research carried out which suggests that students in third level express high levels of support, enthusiasm and commitment to learning and teaching about social justice and development issues (e.g., Clarke & Drudy, 2006; Connolly, Doyle & Dwyer, 2008; Holden & Hicks, (2007).

- Over 70% either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that development education should have a high priority in initial teacher education, and only 16% felt that there wasn't 'really room for development education within the confines of an initial teacher education programme.'
- Almost 70% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that development education should be afforded higher priority within the school curriculum than is currently the case. Many felt ambivalent about the extent the existing curriculum provided sufficient opportunities for them to incorporate development education in their classrooms: 29% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement, while only 37% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that this was the case.
- From the point of view of embedding development education, it is encouraging to note that 71% of survey participants either 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that 'development education is relevant to all subject areas,' and that over 60% agreed that development education was relevant to the specific subject areas they taught.
- Those who would prefer to have more lectures or workshops on their own subject areas than on development and social justice issues were in a minority, with just over a third of respondents indicating that this was the case.
- Only a quarter of respondents felt that teaching about development and social justice issues was less important than teaching numeracy and literacy skills.

Perceived competency in delivering development education content and methodologies

- A majority felt confident in their ability to deliver development education content and methodologies, with over two thirds of respondents agreeing that they felt confident in their ability to teach about development and social justice issues.
- Only 11% did not feel that active and participatory learning modalities were practical in a classroom context.
- Analysis of the open-ended comments, however, revealed variation in the extent to which participants understood the meaning and aims of development education, with some respondents acknowledging that their understandings of the issues were limited.

"I feel that my basic understanding of this topic is quite limited, and by right it should be introduced from primary school with active campaigns and involvement for the children so that it stands out and stimulates their interest" (St Mary's student).

Attitudes towards Social Action and Confidence in one's own Ability to Effect Social Change.

"[Development education] is about supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and the lives of others at personal, community, national and international levels" (Irish Aid, 2007).

While student teachers are favourably disposed to the social action dimension of development education, they tend to hold contradictory views about the possibilities of social transformation, and a majority are generally lacking in confidence about their own ability to positively effect social change.

- A substantial majority (over 80%) agreed that their role as an educator involved striving to help their students both understand social injustices as well as encouraging them to transform society.
- A majority were motivated to attempt to improve society, with less than 10% 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' with the statement 'you can try to change things in society, but it will just end up making you feel bad for trying'. Only a small minority of respondents felt that they as individuals should not play a role in the betterment of society; eleven percent of respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the statement 'making societies better is the responsibility of governmental agencies and/or NGOs, not mine'.
- On the one hand, 72% agreed or strongly agreed that a more equal world is possible; yet at the same time, almost two thirds felt that social inequalities (based on class, gender, race etc) were inevitable.

- A significant proportion of respondents felt ambivalent about their ability to bring about positive social change. A significant minority (43%) neither agreed/nor disagreed with the statement "I feel helpless in bringing about positive social change", while a further 26% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they felt helpless in this regard.
- Only one third of respondents felt confident in their ability to influence decisions affecting their local area and society more generally, whereas less than a quarter felt confident in their ability to influence decisions affecting other parts of the world.

Understandings of Global Poverty and Social Injustices

"We are familiar, through charity appeals, with the assertion that it lies in our hands to save the lives of many or, by doing nothing, to let these people die. We are less familiar with the assertion of a weightier responsibility: that most of us do not merely let people starve but also participate in starving them" (Pogge, 2002, p. 214).

- A majority of students had an awareness that their own actions have an impact on those in other parts of the world, with 60% 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' that their day-to-day actions affect people's lives in other parts of the world, and a similar proportion agreeing that the lifestyles and actions of ordinary people in the First World were partly responsible for problems in the Developing World.
- At the same time, almost a third of respondents 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that 'underdevelopment in the Third World is mainly the result of internal problems,' and almost 30% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement.
- When asked to select from a list, the three most important reasons for poverty in poor countries, 'lack of education and training' (38%), 'war and conflict in developing countries' (36%) and 'debt repayments to banks and other financial institutions in the West' (31%) were the most popular responses. On the other hand, other possible causes, including developing countries' colonial pasts (7%) and the lifestyles of people in the West (4%), were seen as the most important reasons by far fewer respondents.
- Over a third of respondents believed that the governments should work towards eliminating poverty in Ireland first, before providing development assistance to the Third World, while a significant minority (40%) 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement.
- Respondents tend to favour individualistic understandings of racism, with over 80% 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' that racism is mainly the result of people's ignorance and lack of understanding of other cultures and less than 40% indicating that government policies were largely to blame for the intensification of racism in society.
- A significant minority (34%) also held the view that racism was an inevitable feature of society.

"I believe all of us could become more aware of how our own society is contributing to the inequality in the developing world and so something in our own lives to change that. There needs to be a bigger public campaign to raise awareness of this and what we could do to help." (St Mary's student).

Nature and levels of civic engagement and development activism amongst student teachers

"If you think you are too small to have an impact, try sleeping in a room with a mosquito."-African proverb

The survey included a range of indicators of active citizenship, civic engagement and development activism to gauge the levels of student involvement in efforts to promote social change.

- Whilst a majority (70%) had been involved in some form of 'voluntary work' during the previous 12 months, engagement in other forms of civic activity (such as attending a public meeting, joining an action group or becoming involved in a political party or campaign, contacting an organisation or public representative about a particular issue) are relatively low.
- Similarly, while a majority (83%) had donated money to an NGO or charity group during the previous 12 months, other forms of development and political activism and civic engagement were relatively low amongst the sample.
- Less than a quarter indicated that they had engaged in activities to support the cause of social justice during the previous 12 months.
- Making donations to charity or other appeals on behalf of developing countries and buying fair trade products (53%) were the most common forms of development activism in which respondents engaged; more political forms of development activism were rare, with only 12% of respondents indicating that they had been involved in campaigning or other groups who worked on behalf of developing countries in activities other than fundraising, and less than 6% indicating that they had lobbied politicians to promote development issues, either alone or as part of a lobby group.

Attitudes towards Minorities

While student teachers expressed broad support for teaching and learning about social justice and development issues, their own attitudes towards minorities revealed a somewhat more pessimistic picture, indicating a greater degree of variation and conditionality in their views. The findings are consistent with previous research which suggests that issues that of more immediate and local relevancy tend to reveal a different pattern of responses among student teachers than issues that are more global and removed from specific contexts (Clarke & Drudy, 2006). The data on attitudes towards immigrants also suggest that a significant minority of respondents hold assimilationist views where minorities are concerned, and that their

willingness to embrace migrants is contingent on a number of factors, including employment levels and minorities' willingness to integrate into Irish/Northern Irish society.

A measure of social distance adapted from Micheal McGréil's study of prejudice in Ireland was included in order to capture attitudes towards one of the most marginalised sectors of Irish society, namely Travellers.

- On the one hand, the results suggest broad favourable attitudes to Travellers in general: almost 90% of respondents indicated that they would respect the average Traveller and a similar proportion indicated that they would be happy to have a Traveller child in their classroom.
- Over 70% stated that they would be willing to employ a Traveller or consider them competent to sit on a jury (77%).
- However over almost two-thirds of respondents acknowledged that they would be reluctant to buy a house next door to a Traveller; 62% would be hesitant to seek out this person's company and close to 40% would exclude Travellers from their close set of friends. This indicates a reluctance to interact with Travellers on a more personal level.
- Almost a fifth of respondents were of the opinion that 'many foreigners come here to abuse the country's welfare system', with over a quarter indicating that they 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement.
- Almost one fifth felt that Northern Ireland/Ireland's asylum policies are too lenient.
- Over a third were of the opinion that 'there is a limit to how many people from other countries and cultures a society can accept,' while a similar proportion held ambivalent views on this issue.
- 44% were of the opinion that immigration into Northern Ireland/Ireland should be restricted if unemployment levels rise, and a similar proportion believed that 'the presence of racial/ethnic minorities in Northern Ireland/Ireland has caused problems in recent years.'
- A significant minority (40%) were of the opinion that immigrants should alter parts of their lifestyle so that they can fit in or integrate better into society, while over half of all respondents felt that it was a good idea to encourage linguistic minority students to speak English, as opposed to their native tongues, in schools.

Attitudes towards School and Curricular Reform

- A majority (60%) believed that students from lower socio-economic backgrounds typically do not have the same educational opportunities as their middle class peers, although a significant minority (20%) agreed that they did, and a further fifth of respondents 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement.
- Less than a third were of the opinion that schools and curricula should be altered to privilege the views of the most marginalised in society, with a significant minority (over 40%) expressing ambivalence about this issue.
- Only 30% were of the opinion that teaching about development and social justice issues should, when necessary, make students feel uncomfortable about the views they hold. Once again, a significant minority 'neither agreed nor disagreed' with this statement.

- Over one fifth of respondents felt that schools should not be responsible for the development of linguistic minority students' native language, while two fifths were ambivalent about this issue.

Implications

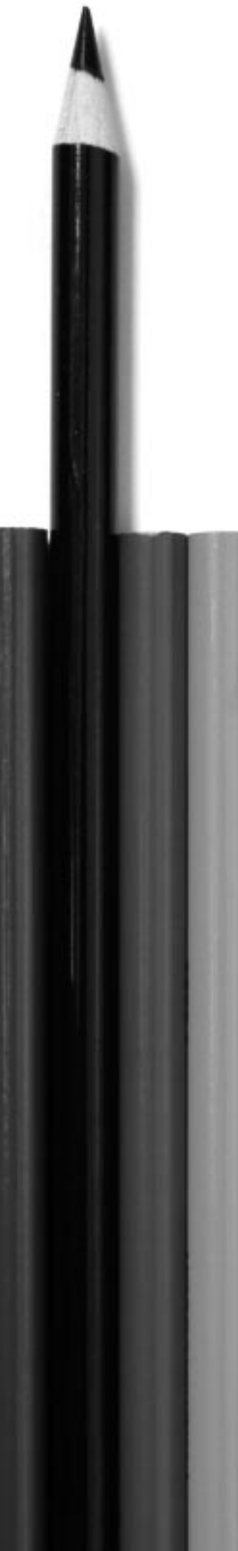
It is argued that the effective delivery of social justice and development education is largely dependent on the understanding, ability and motivation of teachers to help young people to make 'global connections' (Hicks & Holden, 2007). This research offers a comprehensive understanding of student teachers' perceptions, opinions and understandings towards a host of issues related to educating for social justice, diversity and development. The study's findings have a range of implications for teacher and development educators who seek to equip student teachers with knowledge and methodologies that will enable them, as well as their own students, to reflect on how they can contribute to a more locally and globally just future.

On the one hand, the study's findings are very encouraging, in that they suggest high levels of willingness amongst pre-service teachers to engage directly with social justice and development issues and methodologies in their classrooms. That pre-service teachers display high levels of interest in these topics and pedagogies is reassuring from the perspective of governmental and non-governmental agencies and teacher educators who support and engage in the delivery of inputs and modules with social justice, diversity and development themes. If public understanding of injustices, crises and problems affecting people on a local and global scale is to be enhanced, there is a need for educators as well as young people to be critically engaged with such issues in school. Teachers, teacher educators and educationalists more broadly are in a unique position to draw attention to local and global crises and injustices that might otherwise be neglected or under-prioritised for a host of reasons.

Overall the findings of the study complement those of existing research which indicates that third level students are persuaded that development is important and are motivated to donate or act (Connolly, Doyle, & Dwyer, 2008). Also extremely encouraging from the point of view of the transformative goal of social justice and development education is that the vast majority of those who took part in the research understood the role as educators as transformative, with the vast majority agreeing that they should strive to help their students to understand social injustices, as well as encouraging them to transform society.

However the findings suggest that while support for the social justice dimension amongst teachers and their students is generally high, barriers exist to ensuring effective teaching and learning in this regard. Some of the findings suggest that understandings of development are more consistent with 'soft' (as opposed to more critical) versions of development or global citizenship (Andreotti, 2006), wherein poverty is constructed as a lack of development, education, resources, skills, technology etc. Those perspectives which attribute poverty primarily to a lack of skills and resources, including education, rather than to a lack of control over the





production of these resources, places the burden of responsibility for poverty on the poor themselves.

In other words, development education efforts need to focus more on creating a better understanding of the causes of underdevelopment and the structural factors relating to interactions between richer and poorer states (Connolly, Doyle, & Dwyer, 2008). Critical versions of development or global citizenship education engage with theoretical and pedagogical frameworks which seek to redress unequal power relations and which stress the structures, systems and assumptions that produce and maintain exploitation in the first instance. More critical approaches to development education offer greater scope for students to interrogate how they themselves (and the nation and regions to which they belong) are implicated in the global economic processes and relations of domination that have generated and reproduce global inequality in the first place (Andreotti, 2006). The study highlights the need to promote and find creative ways of engaging students with more critical versions of global citizenship and development education within initial teacher education.

Also less encouraging from the point of view of the likelihood of realising positive social transformation are the findings that levels of civic and political engagement and development activism likely to effect change are low amongst pre-service teachers, and that they themselves do not feel especially confident in their ability to influence their local, national or international environment to any significant extent. As student teachers' own sense of ability to effect positive social change has significant implications to encourage their own students to do so, this has important implications for the kinds of development education content that teacher educators privilege in their interactions with their students. One possible strategy in this regard draws on Parker's concept of 'democratic enlightenment' (Parker, 2003), which focuses on providing students with a set of concrete tools and skills required for critical and effective political engagement. Relatedly, providing concrete examples of positive, effective, non-violent social movements which can enable students to 're-narrativise' the world and realize alternative, more progressive and socially just realities is another possible pedagogical strategy that educators might use in enabling their students to feel more positive and empowered about their ability to effect positive social change.

Finally, the finding that a significant minority (and in some instances a majority) of respondents hold conditional and negative attitudes towards minorities, is likely to have negative consequences if they teach in culturally diverse settings. These findings suggest the need for anti-racist approaches within teacher education which provide spaces for teacher candidates to interrogate their own racial/ethnic identities, as well as their pre-existing assumptions, beliefs and knowledge regarding race, racism and racialised minority students (Solomon et al, 2004). The findings also suggest the need to provide pre-service teachers with alternative understandings of social injustices and inequalities which view problems like racism, sexism and class-based inequalities not as fixed and inevitable features of humanity, but as ideologies which are produced and reproduced by human beings and in and through social institutions, and which may therefore be radically transformed (Rizvi, 1991).

Sectoral Conference Reports

Funded or part-funded by SCOTENS 2008-2009





REPORT ON THE SEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF IASSEE

The Annual Conference of the Irish Association for Social, Scientific and Environmental Education (IASSEE) was held on the 19th and 20th June 2008 in Queen's University Belfast (QUB). It was the seventh annual conference organized by the association and it built on the success of previous conferences. IASSEE is an all-Ireland association which focuses on the teaching and learning of history, geography and science at primary level and on the pedagogy underlying that teaching and learning in initial teacher education. The 7th IASSEE annual conference focused on educational research, particularly in the areas of images, perceptions and teaching. Members were updated on the IASSEE all-Ireland longitudinal study on *Student Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of History, Geography and Science: An All-Ireland Survey* which has been generously funded by SCoTENS since 2004.

This year's conference was attended by thirty delegates. This attendance included members of IASSEE, invited participants, delegates from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), members of the Northern Ireland Inspectorate, education and library boards as well as interested educationalists and academics drawn from the three disciplines. The conference was opened by a welcome from the conference organisers, Karen Kerr (QUB) and Karen Carlisle (QUB). The first keynote address - 'Educating for what? 'soft' versus 'critical' approaches to values-based educational initiatives in Ireland' - was delivered by Lesley McEvoy (QUB). Lesley introduced 'soft' and 'critical' global citizenship education. This paper examined citizenship education in Northern Ireland in terms of potential tensions and 'policy approximation', human rights education, approaches to teaching controversial issues and teaching 'political generosity'. Lesley concluded by looking at 'adjectival educations' in terms of science, history and geography and discussed 'going towards a more critical approach'. A lively and interesting debate ensued, chaired by Karen Kerr.

The IASSEE dissemination presentations followed and members were updated on phase 3 of the longitudinal study on *Student Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of History, Geography and Science: An All-Ireland Survey*. A paper by Karen Kerr and Colette Murphy updated members on the findings related to science. The second presentation, by Fionnuala Waldron, Geraldine O'Connor, Eileen O'Sullivan and Paddy Madden, examined the findings for history. This was followed by an update on the geography findings by Susan Pike, Richard Greenwood and Laura Walsh. The dissemination session concluded with a discussion, involving all the members present, on the overall findings from phase 3. The first day of the

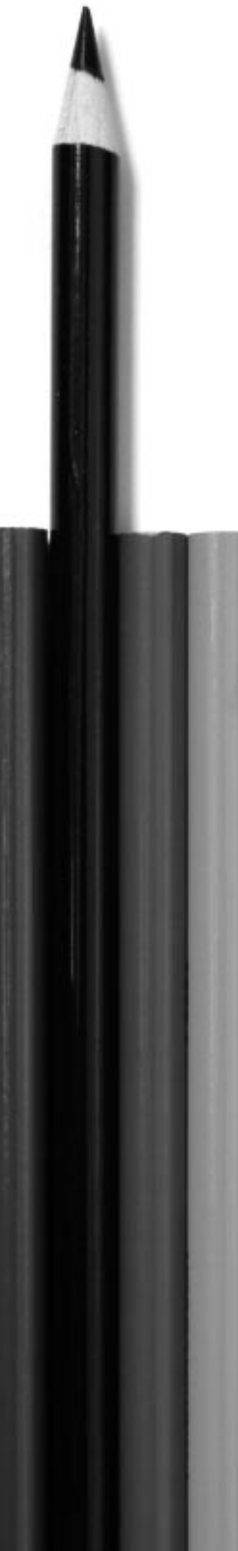
conference concluded with a second keynote address, given by Prof Janette Elwood (QUB). It was entitled 'Stepping outside one's comfort zone in educational research – shifting perspectives and influences on what we know and how we come to know it'. This sparked a very interesting and insightful debate on what it is for us to research outside our 'usual' areas.

The first session on the second day of the conference included two papers and was chaired by Karen Kerr. Brian Ruane (St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra), in his paper 'Citizen Teacher- Perceptions of initial teachers regarding development, human rights and diversity in education', gave an account of the development and delivery of a new course for first year BEd students in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra, which aims to help these aspiring teachers become confident practitioners addressing the challenges and opportunities of diversity and change in an interdependent world. The course employed participative methodologies to enable students to explore their own knowledge, attitudes, values and perceptions. This paper analysed the response of 300 students to a questionnaire completed at the end of the six week course. The qualitative and quantitative data therein offered insights into the students' readiness to implement development and intercultural education, their perceptions on the interconnections between their personal and professional development, and the extent to which their personal convictions and perceptions regarding global justice issues determine how they engage in such courses and integrate such learning into their professional practice and lives.

Conor McCrory (Queen's University, Belfast) gave the second paper in this session, entitled 'Evolution, Creationism, and Intelligent Design in Northern Ireland: the attitudes of pre-service science teachers'. This paper presented an outline of the evolution-creationism struggle and issues of relevance for science education. Recent developments in Northern Ireland were summarized and situated in a national and international context. Data was presented from research being undertaken among pre-service science teachers in Northern Ireland which looks at the opinions of future teachers to the related issues. Some questions for further consideration were raised: What factors affect teacher attitudes to the relevant issues? How should teachers and science educators respond to the issue of creationism versus evolution? Who should decide what is taught in the science classroom (courts, lobby groups, politicians, subject specialists, educators)?

Chaired by Karen Carlisle (QUB), the second session included three papers. The first paper was given by John McCullagh (Stranmillis University College Belfast) and involved preparation from James Stewart (W5, Belfast). It was entitled 'Learning beyond the classroom and the lecture theatre: the important role of external education agencies within an ITE programme'. This presentation was based on the format and evaluation of the module 'Primary Science Beyond the Classroom' within the BEd (Primary) pathway. This module examined the role of trips to external science agencies, including the W5 Discovery Centre in Belfast, and examined the role of the classroom teacher before, during and after a school visit in maximising children's learning experiences. During the course students





specialising in different areas of the curriculum were placed in local schools and required to collaboratively plan cross-curricular lessons to support and consolidate learning before and after the trip to the centre. The evaluation (using questionnaires and interviews) indicated that the students (and their host schools) find this an extremely worthwhile experience which contributes greatly to their development in planning classroom teaching and critical reflection. Although the context was science, the principles and skills developed are transferable across all areas of the curriculum. This paper promoted practices and approaches that are of use to colleagues in ITE and encourage links with local educational agencies.

The second paper was given by Órlaith Veale, Clíona Murphy and Janet Varley (St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra) and was entitled 'Implementation of the Primary Science Curriculum in Ireland: The children's view'. This paper considered international and national concerns regarding the decline in pupils' interest in the sciences, which has been suggested begins even at primary school level. This paper also examined the curricula in the Republic of Ireland, which has been subject to considerable change. It represents a significant alteration of both emphasis and content when compared with the equivalent sections of its predecessor, the 1971 *Curaclam na Bunscoile*. This paper reported on a large-scale study which aimed to discover pupils' experiences and perceptions of science within the new curriculum. Findings were based on data gathered from a nationwide survey of primary school children and detailed case studies of children in eleven primary schools. This paper highlighted some of the successes and concerns surrounding the children's view of the science they are encountering at primary school. This research was funded by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

The final paper of the conference was given by Clíona O'Keeffe and Arlene Forster (NCCA). The paper was called 'Primary Curriculum Review, Phase 2 – Teachers' experience with the Science Curriculum'. A brief history of the Primary School Curriculum in the Republic of Ireland was given. One year after science was implemented, the NCCA initiated phase one of a curriculum review—an ongoing process to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of the curriculum. This paper was on the second phase of the review which focused on three subjects—Gaeilge, science, and Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE). This paper focused on the science curriculum as enacted and experienced in schools. It outlined the successes and impacts of the curriculum as reported by teachers; it drew attention to children's interest in and enjoyment of the subject, their development of skills such as working scientifically, and their increased awareness and understanding of and curiosity about the world around them. The presentation also highlighted particular challenges as experienced by teachers. These included a lack of resources and equipment, a limited amount of teaching time allocated to science and difficulties in undertaking investigative work with large class sizes. When asked to state their priorities for furthering their implementation of the science curriculum, teachers focused on resources (accessing and making more effective use of them), increased participation in hands-on investigative work by children, and supporting children's conceptual understanding across all four strands of the curriculum.

The IASSEE annual general meeting took place on Friday afternoon. At this meeting members discussed the next steps in the longitudinal study on *Student Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of History, Geography and Science: An All-Ireland Survey*. The conference ended with a short address by Karen Kerr in which speakers, participants and organizers were thanked and the gratitude and appreciation of IASSEE for the support provided by SCoTENS and Queen's University Belfast in jointly funding the conference was expressed.



NEWCOMER PUPILS IN THE POST-PRIMARY CONTEXT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES – A JOINT NORTH SOUTH CONFERENCE

Friday 3 April 2009

Malahide, Co. Dublin

Ms Mary Yarr (Inclusion and Diversity Service - NI)
Dr Barbara Lazenby Simpson (Trinity Immigration Initiative)
Mr Ray Gilbert (Inclusion and Diversity Service - NI)
Prof David Little (Trinity Immigration Initiative)

Introduction

Since 2004 there has been ongoing North South collaboration focused on the needs of newcomer pupils and students, their teachers and the school communities of which they become members. This collaboration, initially between the Southern Education and Library Board (SELB) and Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT), began by examining the situation in primary education.

Following consultation with principals and teachers from both sides of the border, including meetings, a conference and a workshop, *A Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School* (2007) was produced jointly. This became the first educational resource to be distributed to every primary school on the island of Ireland by the Department of Education (NI) and the Department of Education and Science (RoI). The current collaboration, between the Inclusion and Diversity Service (NI) and the English Language Support Programme of the Trinity Immigration Initiative (RoI), builds on these earlier activities with the focus now upon post-primary education.

We wish to thank SCOTENS for providing the funding which initiated this rich collaboration and has allowed us to continue with this important work. The Trinity Immigration Initiative (English Language Support Programme ELSP) also thanks Allied Irish Banks for their funding support; Gill and Macmillan for their cooperation and permission to reproduce text from their publications; and ASTI for supporting and promoting the ELSP.

Partners in the project

Inclusion and Diversity Service

www.education-support.org.uk/teachers/ids/

The Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS) is an amalgamation of the previous EAL / Ethnic Minority Teams from the Education and Library Boards in Northern Ireland. It is responsible for supporting schools (both primary and post-primary) in providing for the needs of pupils and parents for whom English is not the first language.

Support is provided both regionally and to individual schools. At a regional level the IDS informs and guides beginning teachers, boards of governors, and classroom assistants. It is also responsible for the rollout throughout Northern Ireland of the Primary Toolkit and Post Primary Pilot as well as developing intercultural awareness and participating in international collaboration. The IDS also provides school-based support in relation to the pastoral needs of newcomer students, basic language needs, the deployment of personnel, curriculum support and assessment of students' progress.

Trinity Immigration Initiative

English Language Support Programme (ELSP) www.elsp.ie

The English Language Support Programme for Post-primary schools (ELSP) is part of the Trinity Immigration Initiative: a research programme on Diversity, Integration and Policy (www.tcd.ie/immigration) which is based in Trinity College Dublin.

The ELSP follows work carried out by Integrate Ireland Language and Training (2000 - 2008) and was motivated by concerns that, for migrant students entering post-primary education, the challenge of subject learning through English imposed considerable constraints on the ultimate potential of the students, as well as creating additional pressures on subject teachers.

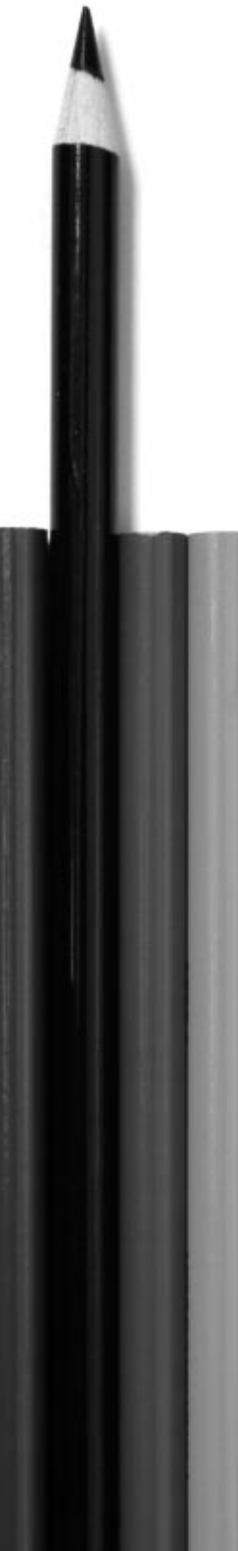
In order to address this challenge, the ELSP has developed a website which is openly available to all teachers and which contains a large collection of subject-based and language-based resources for post-primary use. The development of this website is ongoing. The English Language Support Programme also published a report in May 2009 entitled *A report on English Language Support in Post-Primary Schools* by Zachary Lyons and David Little.

Current situation – Northern Ireland

The school census conducted in October 2007 by the Department of Education (Northern Ireland) reported a total of 5,665 pupils in all schools for whom English was not their first language. This total included pupils at all levels, from nursery to post-primary schools, and included special schools. The majority of pupils fell within years 1-7 of primary education. At the time of the census there were 1714 pupils in post-primary schools who 'have significant difficulties with the English language and require additional support' (source of definition www.deni.gov.uk).

The Inclusion and Diversity Service commenced operation in September 2007 as a regional support service which aims to build capacity within the education system to support newcomers at all levels in all schools. In developing a strategic plan for the service existing expertise, resources and examples of good practice were adopted as a foundation. In addition further important services were put in place. These included translation and interpretation for schools, teacher training, and the Education Support website which is available in all the main home languages of





newcomer families. In January 2008 Inclusion and Diversity Coordinators were based directly in more than 90 schools.

The *Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School*, developed on the basis of North-South collaboration, and with SCoTENS funding was launched in 2007 and has been rolled out across primary schools in Northern Ireland.

The post-primary programme began in January 2008 with the establishment of nine cluster groups of schools. The programme, which involves working with teachers from the schools, has taken thematic areas as the focus for development. The themes include a whole school approach, induction and the early days, cross-curricular monitoring and provision, and preparation for examinations. Professional development has also been provided for heads of departments in schools on the challenge of ensuring curriculum access to subject learning for newcomer pupils.

Funding for the Inclusion and Diversity Service is provided by the Department of Education. In addition per capita funding is provided to schools to support the development of human and educational resources. The Department of Education has recently published a policy document entitled 'Supporting Newcomer Pupils'.

Current situation – Republic of Ireland

The population census carried out in 2006 indicates that there were 117,635 young people under 19 years of age in Ireland who were not born in the state (CSO, 2006). This increase in population is not evenly distributed. Schools in some parts of the country are experiencing a fall in enrolment, while others have difficulty in coping with the increase in demand for places .

In February 2008 the then Minister for Education, Mary Hanafin, pointed out that post-primary schools in Ireland were educating over 17,000 students from 160 nationalities. Between them these students spoke 150 different languages. This situation brings both a fundamental change and a challenge to Irish post-primary education.

Educational policy requires that all children between the ages of 6 and 16 must attend full-time education and are entitled to continue their education until the age of 18. Newcomer students entering post-primary education are, in accordance with policy, entered into the age-appropriate year. If their English-language proficiency is considered insufficient to allow them to engage with learning at this level, they may be placed one year lower. The Department of Education and Science distributed an assessment kit to all post-primary schools early in 2009. This kit is designed to support assessment of students' English-language proficiency on entry to the school as well as providing a means of monitoring progress.

The Department of Education and Science allocates additional hours for the provision of language support teachers in accordance with the number of students requiring such support in the school. Language support may be carried out in the

classroom or on a small-group withdrawal basis. DES Circular 0053/2007 states that key features of effective language support provision include a defined whole-school policy in relation to the identification of pupils requiring support, assessment of pupils' levels of language proficiency, programme planning, recording and monitoring of pupils' progress, and communication with parents.

Success and achievement in education is dependent on the ability to use the language of instruction to engage with formal curriculum learning; to carry out self-study; to perform appropriately in informal tests and formal examinations; and to develop a well-rounded personality through socialization with peers and all others in the community of the school. Newcomer students spend the greater part of their week in subject classrooms. It is clear that a priority, and indeed an educational right, is the acquisition of the English language skills which will allow them to perform in accordance with their overall academic ability.

The English Language Support Programme of the Trinity Immigration Initiative has launched a website, which is freely available to teachers, as a means of making language and subject support material available to language support teachers, mainstream subject teachers and students. For further information see Lyons, Z. and Little, D. *English Language Support in Irish Post-Primary Schools*

Conference rationale

Sharing experiences and ideas on a North-South basis provides a rich and inspirational platform with obvious potential for further collaboration. There are many similarities in the challenges faced by the educational systems of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. There are also differences in approach which provide food for discussion and reflection.

The purpose of the conference was to bring together school principals, teaching practitioners, curriculum designers, materials developers, researchers and lecturers in the area of post-primary education as a means of sharing, discussing and examining mutual challenges. The conference programme was designed to allow exploration of a number of different issues ranging from the broader whole school level to the more detailed level of individual actions and projects.

Speakers and sessions

Welcome: Andy Pollak, Director, Centre for Cross Border Studies and Secretary, SCoTENS

Keynote Speaker: Joseph Sheils, Head of Department of Language Education and Policy, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

A Whole School Approach: Ethna Kelly, Vice-Principal, St. Benedict's College, Randalstown

An Irish Medium Perspective: Dr. Seán McCorraidh, Adviser for Irish Medium Education, NI



Workshops:

Dr Zachary Lyons, Trinity Immigration Initiative: English Language and Support Programme

Joanne Glasgow, Inclusion and Diversity Service

Ethna Kelly, St. Benedict's College, Randalstown

Glenda Crockett and Katie Loughran, Inclusion and Diversity Service

Plenary summary and discussion: Professor David Little, Trinity College, Dublin

Keynote address

Joseph Sheils, Head of Department of Language Education and Policy, Council of Europe, Strasbourg

The keynote address set the scene for the entire conference with a challenging and thought-provoking presentation. The speaker highlighted the conflicts which may exist in educational systems between opposing forces such as humanistic and utilitarian goals, and national traditions and the internationalisation of education. He emphasised that full access to the school curriculum entails mastery of the language of schooling. He reminded us that language learning is always part of subject learning, and vice versa, so that learning the subject content of any subject requires specific language competences. He drew attention to the differences between the language necessary for Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), and the time that a language learner requires to develop these different language skills.

Based on PISA and other studies, he pointed out that immigrant students are motivated learners with positive attitudes towards school. They tend to perform less well in science, mathematics and reading and will often lag one year to eighteen months behind the native-speaking peer group. Research into migrant policy has shown that successful educational outcomes arise from the provision of systematic language support, with clearly defined goals and standards, from kindergarten to post-primary level. Curriculum documents should be based on language development frameworks with benchmarks to promote and monitor progress.

Joseph Sheils also drew attention to the importance of a student's mother tongue. The Council of Europe recommends that home languages should be supported. They are important markers of identity. Evidence also shows that the implementation of bilingual programmes has no adverse affect on academic development in the majority language. He pointed out that language competences are expected by the curriculum and students are entitled to have appropriate learning experiences and opportunities. They have a right to appropriate forms of evaluation and to support for the development of their plurilingual repertoire.

In conclusion he proposed that there should be an overarching vision of language education with a holistic and coherent approach to all languages. He viewed the school principal as having a key role in promoting a coherent language policy at

school level which would ensure that language would become a transversal instrument for learning.

Plenary presentations

Ethna Kelly, Vice-Principal , St. Benedict's College, Randalstown Co Antrim

Ethna Kelly's presentation entitled 'Developing a Whole School Approach' explained in detail how St. Benedict's College has addressed the challenge of creating an inclusive environment which has had a positive impact on many aspects of school policy and management. Starting with the induction process for new students, she described how information and communication with parents is supported by documentation which is clear and easily accessed by non-English speakers. The physical environment reflects the inclusive ethos with the use of appropriate signage and the availability of bi-lingual dictionaries. Interpretation and translation services are used and school assemblies promote diversity, equality and inclusion. Students are supported in the early days through classroom interventions which include the use of visual timetables, keyword booklets and on-going observation of each student's ability to interact from the earliest time.

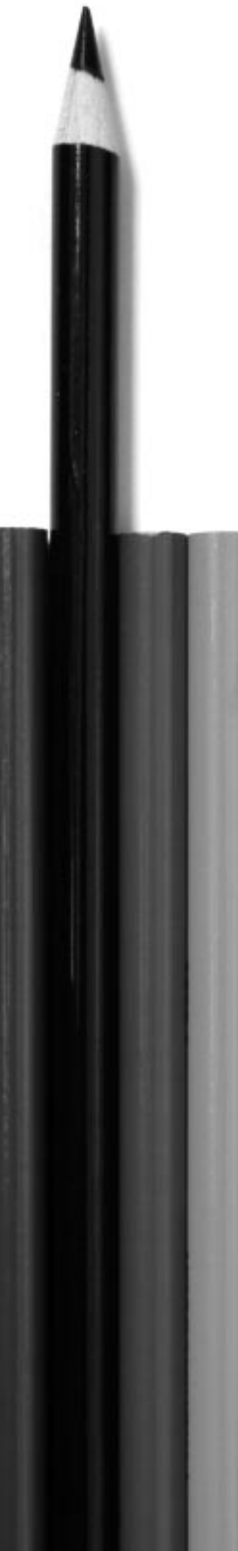
Staff throughout the school are involved and have roles to play in promoting school policy. Contact is also made with feeder primary schools so that the transition of pupils is carried out with the least possible disturbance to their progress and educational development. Throughout parents are seen as key participants in the educational process.

Language support is provided for newcomer students on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The language support teacher maintains records of each student's progress and liaises with the co-ordinator and other support teachers. St. Benedict's College is part of a cluster group of similar schools where examples of good practice are shared. Learning intentions and success criteria are also shared. Where appropriate, alternatives to statutory English examinations are provided.

In relation to assessment, teachers are involved in adapting schemes of work to meet the particular needs of newcomer children. Arrangements are made for choices to be made at the end of key stages/ cycles of learning, and visits by careers officers and outside agencies support students in making decisions about the future. The school promotes and celebrates all its languages and provides opportunities for students to share cultural experiences and use their home languages.

Dr Seán Mac Corraídh, Regional Advisor on Irish-medium Education for the Education and Library Boards

Dr Seán Mac Corraídh began his presentation by drawing comparisons between the context of Irish-medium education and the situation of newcomer students in majority English-speaking schools. He pointed out that students are studying the



local curriculum; already have literacy skills in their first language; are translating from a weaker to a stronger language in the process of constructing learning; and they are obliged to construct and express in oral and written form their learning, opinions and feelings through a language which they are in process of acquiring.

He introduced the concept of obligatory and compatible/complementary language. Obligatory language is the essential items of language without which students cannot understand or master the content of a lesson. Compatible/complementary is that language necessary due to the nature of the content of the lesson. He pointed out that learning and teaching in immersion programmes are both highly experiential with a strong focus on meaning. However, students must also consider the form of the language. This means that attention must also be paid to grammatical structures and rules. While many students experiencing education in an immersion situation will develop their receptive skills to a high level (reading and listening), their production (speaking and writing) of language presents a different challenge. Therefore it may be necessary to provide alternative ways for them to express ideas, opinions and possibilities.

There is also an inherent challenge for teachers. Ideally they should have developed awareness of the learning processes for bilingual and second language strategies. In addition they must develop the ability to integrate content and language learning; the ability to simplify content so that it is more accessible to students; and the awareness to offer high level and extended intervention as necessary.

In conclusion Dr Seán Mac Corraidh highlighted the fact that planning obligatory and complementary language objectives involves the investment of time by teachers so that they will present their subject confidently and in a form which all students can use in mastering the particular curriculum content.

Workshops

Four workshops were run twice in parallel sessions, allowing participants to attend two different workshops.

Dr Zachary Lyons, English Language Support Programme, Trinity Immigration Initiative: Post-primary English Language Support at the curricular level

The focus of this workshop was the website www.elsp.ie, which provides a substantial resource for language support teachers, subject teachers and students. Dr Lyons outlined the background to the project, and described the process of developing the units of learning.

The units are entirely based on the range of textbooks used in post-primary schools in the South for the main curriculum subject areas. First all textbooks were analysed in order to provide lists of key words for each individual topic in each subject textbook. A range of language learning activities, at A1, A2 and B1 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, were developed on the basis of 1) activating students' previous knowledge of the topic; 2) building

language learning and engagement with curriculum subjects and 3) encouraging use of textbooks and other learning supports. At this time there are 80 units on the website focussed on Junior Certificate materials and examinations. Units for the Leaving Certificate will be added for the next school year.

The workshop group examined in detail some examples of language support units for the history curriculum. The feedback from the group was very positive. It was noted by those present that these units could be useful for all students, and their use would not apply exclusively to newcomer students.

Joanne Glasgow, Inclusion and Diversity Service: Preparing post-primary ESL learners for examinations

This workshop was in two parts. First participants were engaged in activities aimed at raising their awareness of the challenges faced by students in coping with the language of examinations. Conclusions drawn from the activities focused on how to make examinations more accessible. The following suggestions were made:

There is a need for familiarization with the wording and format of different types of exam questions/different subject demands. It is necessary that students learn the specific vocabulary (e.g. action verbs) associated with exam questions and understand what type of answers are required and how these may be structured for different subjects. It is essential that they practise answering sample exam questions and know what are the assessment criteria for the different subjects and how to apply these to their own answers .

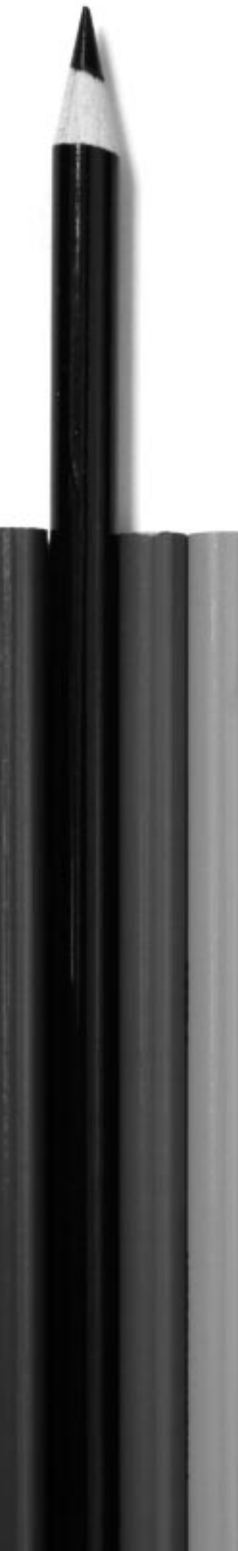
Students also need to understand the importance of the context of use and be aware of the fact that the same lexical items can have different meanings across different subjects. Based on the above conclusions, participants were then invited to suggest practical suggestions for the classroom. Suggestions included a classroom activity in which students construct exam questions and an exercise in which students evaluate sample exam answers against the formal assessment criteria. These activities were considered to enhance the transparency of the assessment process.

The workshop underlined the linguistic challenges posed by examination questions and stressed the importance of ensuring that students understand and know how to use exam-specific language, structure their answers appropriately and use assessment criteria to evaluate and improve their answers.

Ethna Kelly, Vice-Principal, St. Benedict's College, Randalstown: Whole School Planning

This workshop allowed participants to pursue many of the issues that emerged from the plenary presentation by Ethna Kelly. Among the topics that arose for discussion were concerns about how programmes for English as a Second Language are perceived by other teachers and students; and a sense that these programmes are generally undervalued within the school.





The difficulties faced by mainstream subject teachers were identified and, equally, the problems created by teachers' lack of awareness of the challenges facing their students in acquiring an adequate level of proficiency in the English language required for different subjects. It was suggested that in the area of multicultural education and, in particular, in identifying and addressing racism within the school community, expert training for all school personnel is necessary.

Concern was expressed about the absence, generally, of a platform for parental involvement and input. The support of the principal was identified as key to the implementation of a successful ESL programme; to the development of an inclusive culture within the school; and to the professional development of all staff.

***Glenda Crockett and Katie Loughran, Inclusion and Diversity Service:
Raising Intercultural Awareness through use of Dual Language Texts and Modern Technologies***

Participants were introduced to *The World of Gaelic Games*, a dual language text published by the GAA which captures the experiences of young people from different countries in coming to Ireland and becoming involved in Gaelic games. A number of podcasts were shows which were produced to accompany the stories.

Participants were then asked to analyse activities from the booklet 'classroom ideas' which was developed to accompany the dual-language text. They then discussed how the activities could be incorporated into different subject areas in the school. It was agreed that they could be used in any or all of seven different curriculum subjects.

The activities were then reviewed to identify how they might be used with different age groups within post-primary education. It was generally agreed that the approach presented in this workshop created many positive opportunities for students including working in teams; independent and peer learning; the promotion of orally effective communication and first language use; opportunities to compare and contrast cultures as well as celebrating cultural identity; raising the awareness of English speaking students to the challenges faced by others; and generally fostering a sense of belonging in the community of the school.

Participants

The conference was attended by 31 participants from Northern Ireland and 33 from the South. They represented the following aspects of the educational systems:

- School principals
- Teachers
- Education Centres
- Education support services
- The inspectorate
- Curriculum design units

- Educational research and development
- Teacher training and universities
- Teachers' unions
- Representatives of parents' councils

Comments from participants included the following:

'Well structured and thought provoking. Good to have time to be informed – and to think about the key developmental issues.'

'Thank you for a very useful conference and the opportunity to network with like-minded people. Content all useful and will be used.'

'Very interesting and particularly useful to meet with colleagues from the South to discuss their work and issues. '

'Overall a very informative day and most enjoyable.'

'Three excellent speakers whose thoughts and views dovetailed perfectly to give us all cause for thought.'

'Lots of food for thought and plans for action.'

'Great opportunity to network and find out about provision in Northern Ireland. '

Participants were asked to evaluate the conference under the headings Facilities, Organisation of Programme, Content of Input, and Workshops. 93% of participants considered that that conference was good or excellent under all headings.

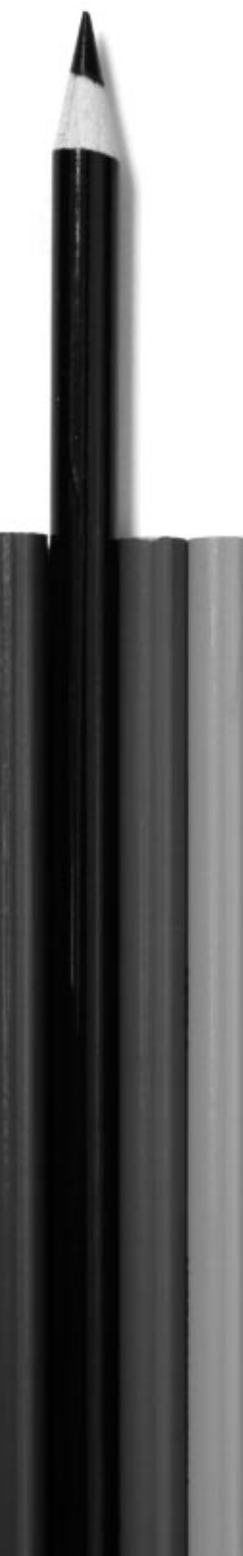
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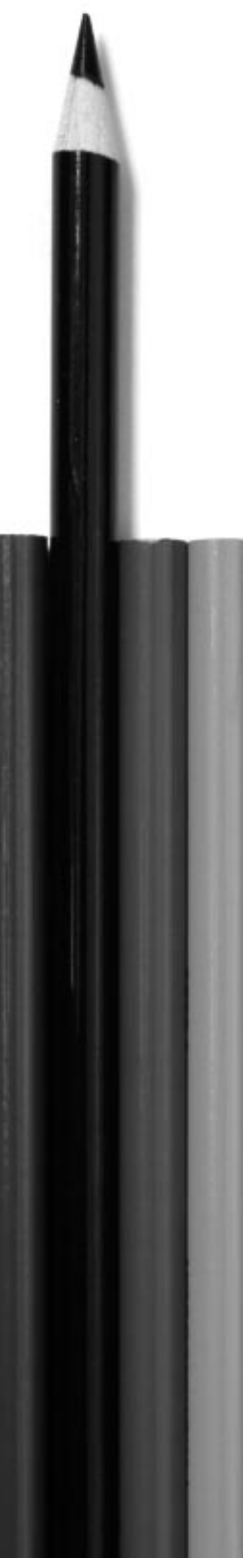


LANGUAGE EDUCATORS CONFERENCE

Dr Eugene McKendry, Queen's University Belfast
Mr Patrick Farren, NUI Galway.

This conference is due to take place in Queen's University Belfast on 13 – 14
November 2009





Research and Exchange Reports

Funded or co-funded by SCOTENS 2008-2009





A STUDY OF WORK BASED LEARNING MODELS AND PARTNERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF POST-COMPULSORY PROGRAMMES OF TEACHER EDUCATION.

Professor Gerry McAleavey, University of Ulster
Mrs Celia O'Hagan, University of Ulster
Mr Walter Bleakley, University of Ulster
Ms Sylvia Alexander, University of Ulster
Mr Harry McCarry, Belfast Metropolitan College
Dr Ted Fleming, NUI Maynooth
Dr Robbie Burns, Dublin Institute of Technology

Executive Summary

This SCOTENS funded project has been successfully completed and the objective of bringing about constructive liaison between the North and South in relation to teacher education in the work-based learning sector was achieved through a range of initial discussions at University of Ulster and Dublin Institute of Technology. This process culminated in a North South conference at the Ballymascanlon Hotel at Dundalk on 15th December 2008 which was attended by representatives from the General Teaching Council (GTC) from the North and the Teaching Council (TC) in the South as well as LSDA, LLUKNI representatives and policymakers. These discussions are ongoing and are designed to achieve recognition of the university programmes under the emerging rubric for work-based teacher education in the South.

The debate initiated by the project has informed the following policy developments:

- In the South the Teaching Council is now reviewing the required standards for a mandatory vocational teacher education programme which will commence in 2013.
- In the North the General Teaching Council is reviewing and examining the role of work-based learning teachers.

Members of the project have been involved in discussions with both the GTC and the TC. A website link has been set up to facilitate discussions among teacher educators: <http://www.ulster.ac.uk/lll/scotens/>

The SCOTENS project has been succeeded by a project aimed at improving the skills of mentors North and South within work-based learning organizations. The production of a new module on mentoring (Mentoring for Performance Improvement) will contribute to this process.

Summary of findings

This paper offers an overview of the purpose and value of work-based learning as an integral part of the current teacher education practices in Northern Ireland and

the Republic of Ireland. In Northern Ireland the formal education and training sector is supported by six area based regional Colleges. In the Republic of Ireland the formal sector operates through VECs which support community and vocational schools and a range of Further Education Colleges. This formal post primary sector is aligned closely to the needs of the counties and managed locally by VECs. The informal sector North and South is diverse with a developing link to industry requirements and marginalised community needs. The range of providers in the RoI is dealt with through FAS approved and other community funded initiatives and training providers. In Northern Ireland the provision is not dissimilar, with many local and regional training organisations operating alongside or in partnership with businesses, Further and Higher Education Colleges and community and voluntary groups.

Work-based learning [WBL] as a method of teacher education

Most formal teacher education and training is provided by a university, or a college of a university, offering recognised training in support of general teaching practice. By 'formal' the authors are referring to that which is accredited and recognised by the Departments of Education in the North or South of Ireland and/or where appropriate the Teaching Council responsible for the sector. The role of the workplace, whether an institute, college, training organisation or community or adult educational provider, is to support a developing teacher or tutor by offering mentorship and leadership.

1. What is Work Based Learning?

Work based learning (WBL) is generally accepted to mean 'learning in the workplace'. The value of the work situation in offering resources and situational challenges to a new or developing teacher or tutor is central to the personal journey involved in work based learning.

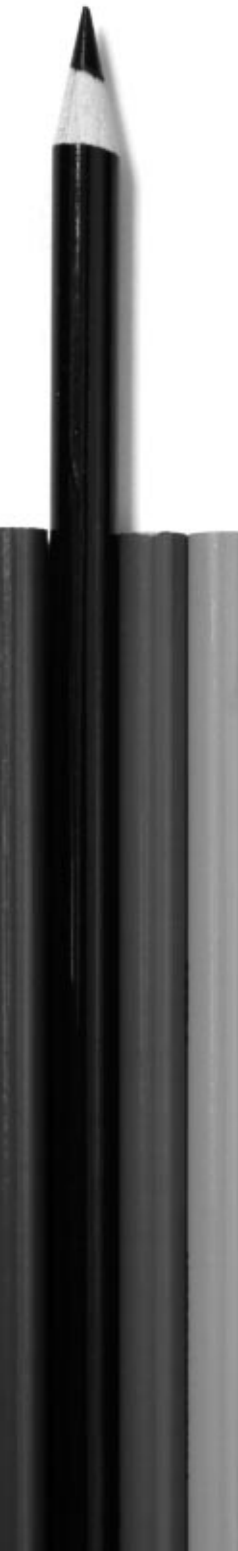
2. How does WBL support the developing tutor or teacher?

Experience is known to be central to the growth of the profession, whereby the individual has the opportunity, time and support to revisit/reflect, analyse and understand (interpretive learning) the process of good practice and the needs of learners s/he is responsible for. Central to the experiential learning (where a person is supported in this time of reflection) are the tools of the developing teacher or tutor. The tools to help us reflect include: a method of recording (some use a diary), a tutor to support their constructive review (some use mentors/coaches) and a professional dialogue to enhance the experience.

3. What are the needs of the teacher/tutor early in their career in the classroom/training room/in supporting learners?

Typically it has been found that the new tutor/teacher will require certain skills to support their practice. An awareness of good practice is not easy to pick up from a book, nor is it attainable without experimentation and support.





Planning is central to the teaching experience of the new teacher/tutor as is the overall structure of curriculum/lessons and documentary teaching guides. Often in the post-compulsory sector a tutor will have to design these documents themselves.

Direct teaching can be very exciting but also daunting to the new tutor, particularly when faced with the diversity of learner needs that are common to the post compulsory education and training sector. Management traits can support such challenges, including an ability to use methods of teaching to support different types of learners with different and often challenging needs. An ability to stimulate, maintain attention, manage behaviour and be creative is a tall order for a tutor who has a curriculum/programme to follow, a new group of learners and many different styles and needs in the room.

Good communication skills are essential. The tutor/teacher must show confidence in their presentation of information, the manner in which they approach and disseminate messages and the way they challenge learners to learn.

Conclusions

Learning in the workplace is vital to the process of teacher/tutor education and development. A skills-based teacher education and training programme should include key teaching skills development in areas as outlined above. Providers of teacher/tutor education must work in partnership with the workplace to support the new and developing staff. Partnerships are central to the process of teacher/tutor education and training – bringing work-based learning and formal accredited teacher education provision together in support of a common goal: improved practice/professional development. Roles and responsibilities must be clarified in order to ensure standards in teacher education partnerships.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE IN UNDERGRADUATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IN IRELAND: A SUMMARY OF THE REPORT ON PROVISION IN TWO TEACHER EDUCATION COLLEGES

Mr Seán Bracken, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education
Mr Martin Hagan, St. Mary's University College, Belfast
Ms Barbara O'Toole, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education
Mr Frank Quinn, St. Mary's University College, Belfast
Dr Anne Ryan, Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education

In recent years, society across the island of Ireland, which comprises the jurisdictions of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, has become noticeably

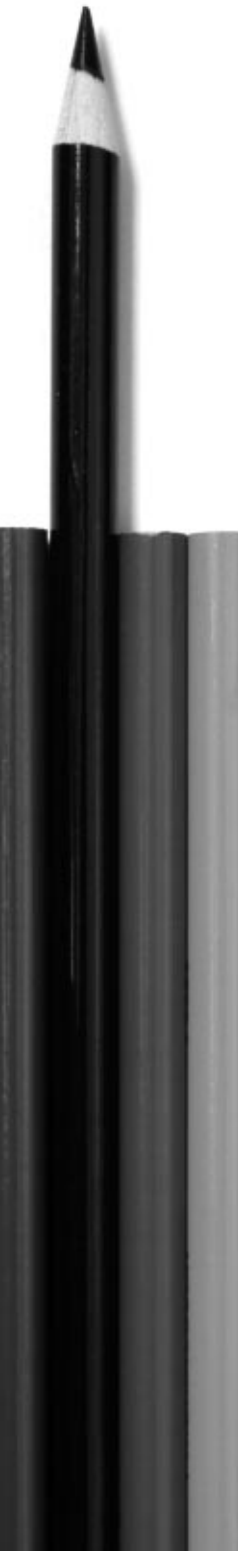
more multicultural. This development has brought challenges for policymakers, educationalists and service providers. One significant challenge is that of recognising and providing for the wide diversity of cultures and languages within classrooms. Schools and teachers are being called upon to provide access to the curriculum for learners whose first language is not English, but who are, in accordance with all other learners, entitled to equality of educational opportunity. Consequently, teacher educators have had to reflect upon the role of English as an Additional Language (EAL) as a potentially important component of programmes within Initial Teacher Education (ITE).

In light of this situation, a team of researchers –from St. Mary's University College, Belfast and Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Institute of Education, Dublin examined the provision of EAL learning opportunities for student teachers in ITE in their respective institutions. Student teachers' perceptions of their preparedness in terms of knowledge, skills and beliefs were ascertained, as were their views on the current status of EAL provision in ITE.

At the outset of the study, it was deemed appropriate to provide an overview of the educational contexts in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. This was followed by a chronological review of policy documents and legislative frameworks with a particular focus on interculturalism and language education. Thirdly, provision for student teachers with respect to EAL in both colleges was outlined. Coláiste Mhuire provides introductory input in EAL as part of the Inclusive Education course in Year 2 of the B.Ed. degree programme, and since 2007 has also offered a twenty-hour elective course on the subject for students in Year 2 or Year 3 of the B.Ed. Further EAL input is offered by the college as part of an additional elective course – 'The World in the Classroom'. In St. Mary's EAL is embedded in all B.Ed. literacy courses, and in 2008 a new twelve-hour compulsory course entitled 'Working with Pupils who have English as an Additional Language' was introduced for Year 2 students.

Two research instruments were employed: a questionnaire which elicited data for quantitative analysis and a semi-structured interview schedule which provided qualitative data. The questionnaire was piloted with Year 2 student teachers in Coláiste Mhuire in February 2009. It was subsequently administered to Year 3 student teachers in the college in March 2009 and to a corresponding cohort of students in St. Mary's in May 2009. A response rate of 85 per cent to this questionnaire was obtained in Coláiste Mhuire, while in St. Mary's the response rate was 45 per cent. In Coláiste Mhuire two groups of student teachers from Year 3 participated in the interviews. The first group consisted of five student teachers who had not undertaken the EAL elective course, but who had participated in introductory input on EAL teaching and learning during year 2 of their Inclusive Education course. The second group comprised ten student teachers who had undertaken the EAL elective in either Year 2 or Year 3 of the B.Ed. programme. In St. Mary's a group of ten B.Ed. student teachers from Year 3 participated in interviews.





While acknowledging certain limitations of the study, particularly in terms of the number of participants involved, and hence the generalisability of its outcomes, the data yielded is noteworthy. Most significantly, as the questionnaire findings indicate, many student teachers in both institutions did not feel competent in accessing teaching methodologies appropriate to EAL learners. This stance was supported in interview responses. The latter data demonstrated the specific benefits to student teachers of participating in intensive training in the area of EAL teaching and learning. Interviewees who had availed of such provision as a consequence of the EAL elective course in Coláiste Mhuire voiced a greater degree of confidence in teaching children from minority language backgrounds. Moreover they could draw from a broader range of approaches, and link to a theoretical framework where relevant. These students also recognised the importance of children's first languages and could identify strategies through which teachers could incorporate heritage languages into the learning process. However, in general, student teachers were somewhat dissatisfied with the knowledge of EAL they had acquired through their ITE programmes, and recommended a more developmental approach to the provision of same in the programmes of both institutions.

Many student teachers also stated that they were less than comfortable with their competence in identifying and employing a range of pedagogical approaches in respect of EAL. Indeed, some of the methodologies they outlined could be viewed as not unique to EAL teaching and learning, but rather as generic strategies appropriate to the development of language and literacy. This finding pertained in particular to students who had not availed of the elective course. Nonetheless, students were generally empathetic towards the EAL learner and anxious to develop and employ an appropriately child-centred approach in this regard.

Although the research instruments were not specifically designed to ascertain beliefs, the data provided some insights into those which prevailed. While student teachers were for the most part positively disposed towards EAL learners in the classroom, a very small minority also provided responses which suggested that they held 'deficit' views, as articulated in lower expectations of EAL learners' academic potential. However most respondents did not subscribe to this perspective, and did recognise that limited English language proficiency was not necessarily indicative of cognitive ability in these learners.

While the study did not directly seek to ascertain student teachers' views on EAL provision within their ITE programmes, the data which emerged highlighted inferences of this nature. For example, student teachers in St. Mary expressed the opinion that EAL provision should be a core element of the B.Ed. programme, while students from Coláiste Mhuire were of the view that ITE preparation in the field of EAL should be more substantial. In general, student teachers across the two institutions felt there should be greater opportunities provided to them during their preparation to facilitate interaction with children for whom English is an additional language.

In summary, while this has been a small-scale project, it does highlight a need for further research into the competence of graduating students as they enter the teaching profession in a context where the populations of many schools are linguistically diverse.

The research team is currently in the process of outlining the conclusions and recommendations arising from the project and finalising the report.

MEASURING THE VALUE OF EDUCATION TECHNOLOGIES IN IRELAND: NORTH AND SOUTH [MVET]

Dr Conor Galvin, University College Dublin
Prof John Gardner, Queen's University Belfast
Prof John Anderson, Queen's University Belfast

INTERIM REPORT

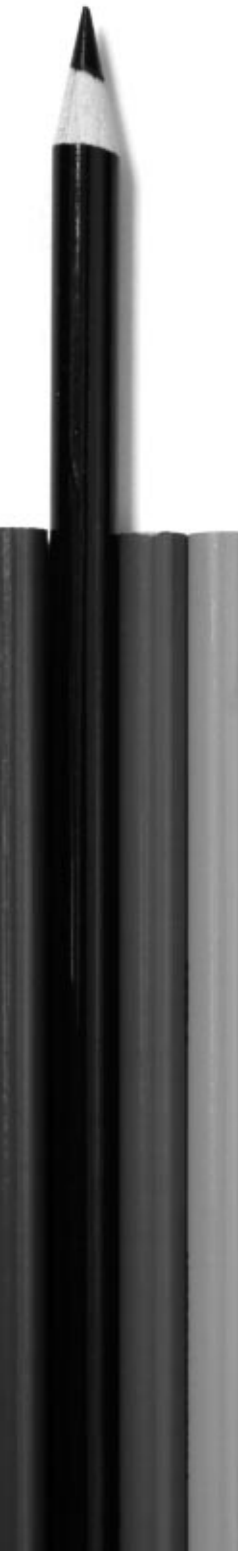
Political, technological and cultural changes in Europe continue to alter significantly the role of education across the EU. Education is seen increasingly as a prime force in creating the conditions and capabilities needed for citizens to deal with life in a knowledge economy. This is particularly true since the agreeing of the *Europe of Knowledge* strategy at Lisbon in March 2000 and the reaffirmation of this in more recent i2010 documents.¹ And education technology (as the use of information and learning technologies in the context of education may be termed) plays a major part in this.

But despite considerable advances in our understanding of the possibilities of technology – particularly Information and Communications Technology (ICT) – as a force for innovation and change in the economic arena, progress towards the *Europe of Knowledge* targets within the education sector is widely held to be disappointing. EU countries are notable for the large sums of money spent on schools' ICT in recent years, yet very little research exists beyond the basic metrics of student to computer ratios and availability of / speed of speed of broadband access. Difficulties in integrating ICT into classroom instruction; problems in scheduling enough computer time for classes, and teachers' levels of ICT skills and knowledge are widely seen as significant, unresolved issues in schools ICT usage (OECD 2004), but remain largely unexplored. These issues have also had an impact on how we envision and approach education ICT policy here in Ireland – both North and South.

1 See EU 2004a and 2004b for discussion.

2 See <http://ijl.cgpublisher.com/product/pub.30/prod.1904>





The MVET Ireland project was designed to investigate the possibilities of applying a novel approach to measuring the value of educational technologies in schools. We were familiar with and admired the ongoing and ground-breaking work of Professor Kathryn Moyle, University of Canberra, who initiated and runs an international research project around case studies of technology use at schools in the USA, UK and Australia.² Professor Moyle initially agreed to act as mentor to MVET Ireland and subsequently became an active partner in our work as it developed. Her support has been generous and valuable – both in terms of guidance and facilitating access to the international research instruments she and her colleagues are developing. This has allowed us to add an additional pillar to our research by contributing early data to the wider project and so assist in the developing international understanding of this issue.

The defining focus of MVET Ireland has been fourfold. We set out to investigate:

- The value of technologies in learning and teaching
- The complexities of measuring this value
- The role of intangibles in value measurements
- The inter-relationships between teaching and learning with technologies, school infrastructure and financial models.

To date all waypoints have been successfully achieved and the project is on track for completion in the early autumn of 2009. We expect to produce an initial project report for the upcoming SCoTENS 2009 conference and, funding allowing, to continue with the dissemination of project results via teacher and inspectorial conferences, North and South, into 2010. In brief, MVET Ireland waystages attained include:

- The identification of suitable, technology rich project sites North and South and the negotiation of access to these sites.
- In depth, all-staff, teacher and classroom assistant surveys directed on usage patterns and comfort bands.
- Focus group interviews conducted with groups of students from across the age and ability range at the project sites.³
- In depth interviews with school management and local authority directed vision and deployment strategies for education technology, maintenance costings and replenishment practices at the sites.
- In depth interviews with opportunity samples of teaching and learning support staff at the project sites.
- Initial write-ups of the student experience at the project sites.
- Initial write-ups of the teaching and management experience of using education technology within a technology-positive learning environment.

3 Some of which were conducted by Professor Moyle when she was a guest of the project in June 2008.

Over the coming weeks and months we will continue to analyse and interpret the project data set, and to focus in particular on understanding the value as well as the costs of educational technologies in the schools concerned. The most challenging aspect to-date has been attempting to unpick this notion of the value of educational technologies in schools. By continuing to explore what MVET Ireland data has to say about the relationships that exist in the site schools between educational technologies or 'tangible information technology (IT) assets' and 'intangible assets', such as the capabilities of teachers and schools leaders, we hope to produce some meaningful insights into the importance of schools being able to strategise the place of education technology in their wider planning and development processes.

A CROSS-BORDER COMPARISON OF STUDENT TEACHERS' IDENTITIES RELATING TO MATHEMATICS

Dr Patricia Eaton, Stranmillis University College
Dr Maurice O'Reilly, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

INTERIM REPORT

This project, known by the acronym MIST, aims to explore the mathematical identities of primary school student teachers. The mathematical identity of an individual is the relationship she/he has with mathematics, including knowledge and experiences, perceptions of oneself and others. Participants were drawn from both Stranmillis University College and St Patrick's College Drumcondra . The researchers on this project are Dr Patricia Eaton (Department of Mathematics, Stranmillis) and Dr Maurice O'Reilly (Department of Mathematics, St Patrick's).

Work to date has been in three phases: preparation, data gathering, and data processing and analysis. The researchers met in Dublin on 10/11/08, 5/2/09 and 23/2/09 and in Belfast on 6-7/8/08, 9/2/09, 16/2/09 and 20/4/09.

Preparation (May 2008 – January 2009)

This phase involved gathering background information on the respective systems of initial teacher education and the broad context of mathematics education in Northern Ireland and the Republic, familiarization with the research literature and preparation of a questionnaire to be used for gathering data. The last of these included completion of requirements of the Research Ethics Committee, St Patrick's College Drumcondra, and presentation of the draft questionnaire to peers in the Mathematics Education Reading Group meeting in NUI Maynooth (12/12/09). The comments from the Reading Group were very helpful for fine-tuning the questionnaire.



I. Data gathering (February 2009)

Data was gathered from participants in the third year of their B.Ed. programme, having chosen to specialize in mathematics, using the questionnaire (with mainly open-ended questions, 5th February in Dublin, 9th February in Belfast) followed by focus groups (16th February in Belfast, 23rd February in Dublin), involving the same participants.

II. Data processing and analysis (March – June 2009)

The data (both questionnaires and focus groups audio recordings) were transcribed by Ubiquis Ireland Ltd (Waterford) and checked by the researchers. Patricia Eaton presented an initial overview of the research findings to the Mathematics Department, NUI Galway (3/4/09) in a paper entitled *Mathematical Identity or Who are you and why are you here?* At the time of writing this report, the following three papers are in preparation for conference presentations in 2009:

1. *What other people think and why it matters? An investigation of key influences on mathematical identity* for presentation at the 34th ATEE (Association for Teacher Education in Europe) conference in Palma de Mallorca (29 August – 2 September).
2. *Exploring mathematical identity as a tool for self-reflection amongst pre-service primary school teachers: "I think you have to be able to explain something in about 100 different ways"* for presentation at the 10th Mathematics Education into the 21st Century Project conference in Dresden (11-17 September).
3. *Who am I, and how did I get here? Exploring the Mathematical Identity of Student Teachers* for presentation at the 3rd National Conference on Research in Mathematics Education (MEI3, 24-25 September).

The last of these papers is intended to provide a general overview of the MIST project to peers in mathematics education. The first two look in some detail at specific issues emerging from MIST. We expect other papers to arise from the research. We will include details in our final report to SCoTENS which is due at the end of November 2009.

STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR COMPETENCE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF PUPILS WITH AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER IN MAINSTREAM PRIMARY SCHOOLS

**Mrs. Mary Greenwood, St. Mary's University College Belfast
Ms Anne O Byrne and Dr Patricia Daly, Mary Immaculate
College, Limerick**

INTERIM REPORT

The research project is progressing as expected and is currently within the predicted time frame. The rationale for the project is underpinned by an increased

awareness of the prevalence of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) over the last decade. Additionally the advent of inclusion means that many pupils with high functioning autism are in mainstream schools. In 2002 a Task Group Report for Autism was published as a result of parallel task groups established North and South. This report showed that there was a wide variation of rates of diagnosis of and identification of ASD on the island. As many of the pupils who potentially could be diagnosed with ASD are in mainstream schools, it is important that teachers are equipped to identify the characteristics of ASD so that early identification takes place.

The purpose of this project is to ascertain the key issues final year Bachelor of Education (BEd) primary-level students feel need to be addressed in order to ensure they can become effective in their teaching of pupils with ASD.

The main objectives of the research are:

- to ascertain how competent BEd primary students in their respective institutions perceive themselves to be in identifying the characteristics of ASD through the teaching element of the BEd course;
- to establish how well prepared BEd primary students feel they are in addressing the needs of pupils with ASD through the teaching element of the BEd course;
- to ascertain how much BEd primary student competence in the field of ASD is enhanced as a result of their time spent on school experience;
- to investigate how BEd primary students could be helped to develop their teaching in the area of ASD whilst on school experience;
- to examine data gathered from the BEd primary students so as to establish whether there are observable differences between students in the two jurisdictions in order to make comparisons.

The research consists of four phases.

Phase 1 Establishing the background context and research instrument design

Phase 2 Data collection

Phase 3 Analysis of the data

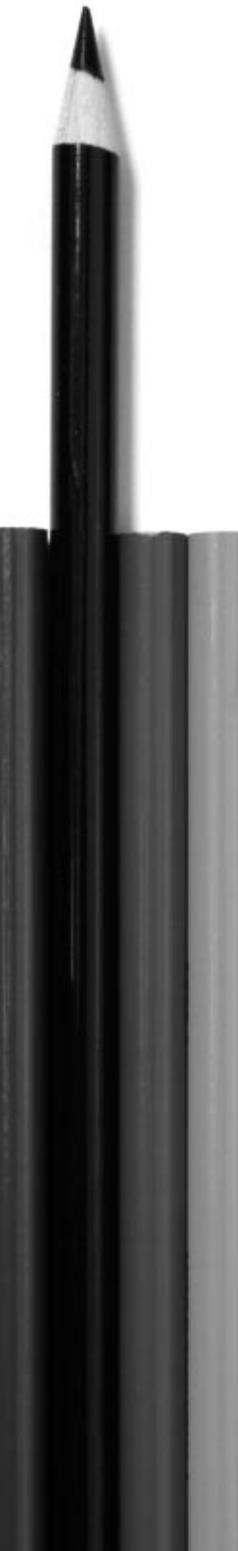
Phase 4 Writing the report

Progress to date: June 2008 – June 2009

Currently Phases 1 and 2 of the project have been completed.

Phase 1. Establishing the background context and research instrument design

This phase commenced in June 2008 with dialogue between the researchers to clarify the contexts and issues within the respective jurisdictions. There were similarities and also differences. For example all students in both jurisdictions receive an input in their courses on autistic spectrum disorder and content was similar. However in the Republic of Ireland the duration of the BEd degree is three years whilst in the North it is four years. Frequent e-mails and phone calls have further supplemented dialogue.



Much time was devoted to the construction of the research instrument - a questionnaire and the draft instrument was piloted. As a result adjustments were made. In addition a set of questions was agreed for use with focus groups of students within the respective institutions. These questions required numerous drafts and revisions.

Phase 2 Data collection

Once ethical approval was granted, questionnaires were completed in November and January 2008 in the respective institutions. The focus groups have also been conducted. Two have been carried out in St Mary's Belfast and four in Mary Immaculate Limerick.

The questionnaire was designed so it could be read electronically by optical mark reading (OMR) software referred to as 'Print & Scan'. This enables the raw data to be presented in a spreadsheet format that can be analysed using a statistical package. The audio tapes from the focus groups will be transcribed in July 2009. It is envisaged that all the data will be analysed in September and October 2009 after which the writing of the report will commence.

CONSULTING PUPILS ON THE ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION OF THEIR SPECIFIC LITERACY DIFFICULTIES

Ms Louise Long, Saint Mary's University College Belfast
Dr Michael Shevlin, Trinity College Dublin
Dr Therese McPhillips, Saint Patrick's College Drumcondra

This exploratory study, *Consulting Pupils on the Assessment and Remediation of their Literacy Difficulties* aimed to consider the views held by primary pupils on their level of participation in assessing and remediating their own learning needs. The rationale for the study was based on three premises: the increasing recognition and commitment by the UK and the Republic of Ireland governments to give voice to children with special educational needs in research, evaluation and consultation; the growing body of research highlighting that when pupils are able to talk about learning and teaching there are positive outcomes from both an educational and citizenship perspective; and a holistic vision for education that reasserts the affective experience and concurrently aims to raise standards in literacy.

The researchers worked in eight primary schools in the North and South of Ireland. A vignette, solution-focussed brief therapy and participatory creative methodologies were used in the context of focus groups that were comprised of pupils aged between 8-11 year olds who were receiving additional within-school support for literacy. The use of collage provided an ethically secure, child-centered container for the pupils to communicate their inner and outer academic, social and emotional worlds individually and collectively, and the end result was tangible products that can be revisited and revised.

The key findings can be considered across four main themes as follows:

Positive relationships

Children spoke about the importance of significant relationships to support them in their learning. Parents, grandparents and siblings were mentioned as somebody to turn to for help.

At home, my mam, dad, brother, sister, nanny, big brother [help me] [I can] ask my grandad, then my uncle, my brother.

In school, the class teacher and learning support or 'help teacher' was seen as a positive support. The principal was suggested as an approachable person, somebody who could change things. Help from a good friend in class was also seen as an important way of supporting each other. There was a sense of belonging among the pupils in the reading groups and they reported how they worked collaboratively (*'you're not the only one doing the work'*) and supported each other in an informal way (*we help each other*). Tara could ask *'her best friend'*.

Social / affective dimension of learning

The children had the capacity to verbalise how they feel about their learning. Labels such as 'special needs boy' caused embarrassment and upset. They wanted to demonstrate what they know about their learning, what they like and what works for them. They had an understanding of the holistic nature of learning, a capacity to integrate the social, emotional and academic aspects.

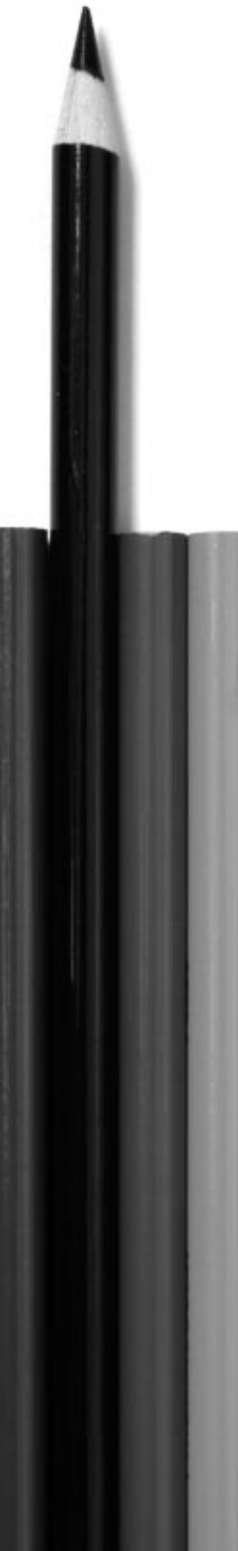
The pupils reported they want to be consulted, they want to be involved in meetings concerning them, and they want the choice to be more involved in their own learning. They want to know their scores, to know what is included in reports and how they are progressing. Feedback was considered important, as one child said *'to see if they said anything bad about you'*. Others would like to attend meetings to *'hear what your teacher thinks of you, and how good you're doing at school, and how good you're doing at spelling and reading'*. Another suggested *'maybe you can improve it'*.

They want the class teacher to know too, not just the Learning Support Teacher or Teaching Assistant or Special Needs Assistant. Some pupils reported *'missing all the fun stuff'* when withdrawn for additional support. They want to hear more positive talk about what they can do. They want to be praised for their efforts, not their attainment level or scores.

Teaching and learning strategies

The pupils demonstrated an awareness of the teaching and learning strategies that supported them. Specific approaches mentioned included active learning, games and computer work. Working on the computer was described as *'learning having fun'*. They reported that *'more practice'*, and *'reading harder books'* helps them improve their reading skills. Other suggestions included *'more story books, Roald*





Dahl books, exciting stories, five spellings every day, games, could learn them easier, card games ...'

They were familiar with various word identification strategies, and could describe the strategies they used, for example: *'If you don't understand a word or you can't pronounce it properly, you just break up the word and then you have it.'* Reading meaningful texts and reading continuous text were referred to as important. One of the pupils said: *'But when you are reading something you should know what you are reading about. It's easy just to read words on a piece of paper, you need to read it and know what you are reading.'*

Pupils' self-knowledge

Pupils displayed a capacity for self- reflection that showed they are experts on their own learning. They were conscious of the importance of good reading and writing skills *'so you could have a good education, and get a good job'*.

The pupils were aware of their own learning strengths and know what works for them. *'when I went into third [class], I started learning more. 'I can read faster; I can do attached {writing}'*. They recognised the progress they have already made. They like interactive methods of learning, in fact they want to model and help others in their group. They wanted more reflection time, *'time to think'*, during their reading.

It is evident the children are already working collaboratively in small groups. They questioned why it seemed they were identified only for their weaker subject areas. Opportunities to use their interpersonal skills in the larger class, such as organising the Green School Committee, were identified.

These findings have implications for structuring opportunities to increase pupil participation in the management of their literacy difficulties; and also for encouraging teachers to move away from a protectiveness value system to one that facilitates participation by communicating high expectations to pupils, and concurrently fostering an emotional climate based on positive and open relationships between teachers and pupils.

The outcomes of the study have been the presentation of papers at the Educational Studies Association of Ireland annual conference in Kilkenny on 4 April 2009 and at the in-house seminar series at Saint Mary's University College, Belfast; and the preparation of manuscripts for peer-reviewed journals. The research team are also currently drawing up a proposal for funding so that the study can be conducted on a larger scale.

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXPERIENCES OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH REGARD TO THEIR TEACHING OF HEALTY EATING GUIDLIENES WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

Dr Elaine Mooney, St. Angela's College, Sligo
Ms Eileen Kelly-Blakeney, St. Angela's College, Sligo
Ms Amanda McCloat, St. Angela's College, Sligo
Mrs Dorothy Black, University of Ulster

Introduction

This all-Ireland research project is a joint initiative between lecturers in the Home Economics Department, St. Angela's College, Sligo and the School of Education, University of Ulster. The project is focused on primary school teachers' experiences of teaching food and nutrition in the classroom within both the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PD&MU) curriculum in Northern Ireland and the Social, Political and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum in the Republic of Ireland.

Project Aim

To investigate the perceptions, knowledge, attitudes and experiences of primary school teachers in their teaching of healthy eating.

Project Objectives

- Complete a comparative study of nutrition education within the primary level curricula in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland in order to ascertain progression of key concepts from school entry to completion of primary education stage
- Establish how teachers translate the syllabus into practice in their classrooms
- Document teachers' experiences of teaching healthy eating and nutrition within their respective SPHE/PD& MU syllabi
- Identify barriers to effective teaching of the syllabus material and quantify issues of concern which are common to teachers within both jurisdictions
- Examine experiences in relation to the implementation of school based nutrition education interventions and establish their relevance to the PD&MU/SPHE curricula
- Determine the supports required by teachers for enhanced teaching and learning of food and nutrition at all stages of the primary school curriculum
- Contextualise findings with a view to identifying how actions required may be supported at both the initial teacher education stage, as well as during continuous professional development of teachers
- Disseminate the findings as part of a research paper.



Progress of Research

A desk based review of literature for the revised primary school curriculum in both jurisdictions was completed. This information assisted in the development of the research plan. Following a number of meetings and teleconferences, a questionnaire was designed by the research team. This questionnaire was piloted in 2008/2009 in both jurisdictions in a bid to determine its suitability as a research tool. Following piloting, some minor amendments were made to the questionnaire.

Initially it was decided to administer the questionnaires to primary school teachers at in-career development cluster group meetings. However due to poor attendance at these meetings it was decided to consider an alternative method of distribution. Subsequently it was decided to distribute the questionnaires via initial teacher education students of home economics in both institutions during their respective teaching practice school placements. This ensured a wide geographical spread. The questionnaires were administered during the months of March, April and May 2009. In both jurisdictions some difficulties were encountered regarding the return of these questionnaires, which resulted in the research team having to target schools and administer the questionnaires utilising a face to face approach. The questionnaires are currently being analysed using SPSS version 15. The preliminary findings were presented by the research team at the 4th International Consumer Sciences Research Conference in Edinburgh on 24th June, 2009. Once the quantitative analysis is completed, the qualitative analysis will commence. It is anticipated that the complete research findings will be reported in Autumn 2009.

The research team at St. Angela's College, Sligo and the School of Education, University of Ulster are grateful for the support provided by SCoTENS which has enabled us to undertake this collaborative project.

ALL-IRELAND DOCTORAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE IN EDUCATION

Ms Deirdre McGillicuddy, University College Dublin
Mr Declan Fahie, University College Dublin
Ms Elizabeth O'Gorman, University College Dublin
Dr. Dympna Devine, University College Dublin
Ms Nicola Ingram, Queen's University Belfast
Mr Conor McCrory, Queen's University Belfast
Ms Donna Kernaghan Queen's University Belfast
Professor Jannette Elwood, Queen's University Belfast

The School of Education, Queen's University Belfast, and the School of Education, University College Dublin jointly hosted the first all Ireland conference for doctoral students in Education, with the theme: *'Doing your Doctoral Studies in Education: Questions, Challenges and Opportunities'*. Supported by funding from SCoTENS, UCD and QUB (along with two student bursaries offered by the Educational Studies

Association of Ireland), the conference took place on Friday and Saturday May 8th and 9th 2009 in the School of Education, Roebuck Castle, UCD. It provided a forum for doctoral students from all over Ireland to come together in a supportive environment to present and discuss their research and extend their understanding of advanced research in education. With 47 accepted submissions across eleven higher education institutions on the island of Ireland, topics ranged from research methodologies in education, higher education, pedagogy assessment and learning, diversity and inclusion in education.

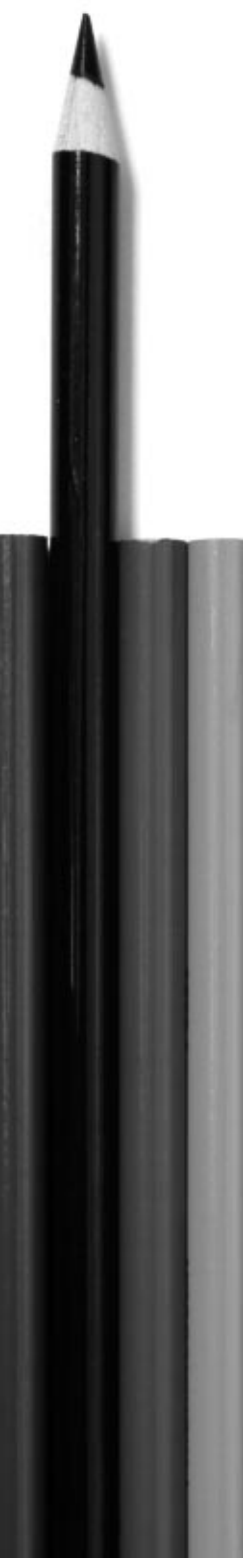
The conference encouraged the formation of professional links among educators and researchers in education who are at the earlier phases of their research careers. A very stimulating and well received keynote address was provided by Professor Peter Mortimore (former Director of the London Institute of Education and Pro Vice Chancellor of the University of London) entitled: '*The challenge of educational research: changing times, changing issues?*'. This was followed by a wine reception and conference dinner. Feedback from the conference was excellent and further funding has been received to host a similar event in the School of Education, Queens University Belfast in May 2010.

BUILDING NORTH SOUTH LINKS IN WHOLE COLLEGE INITIATIVES IN GLOBAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

Mr Brian Ruane, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Mr Gerard McCann, St Mary's University College, Belfast

The building of North South links in the field of whole college initiatives in global justice education between St Patrick's College in Dublin and St Mary's College in Belfast has been ongoing since the initiation of the project. The objectives were to confirm the working relationship between the Centre for Human Rights and Citizenship Education and the Global Dimension in Education Project, in Dublin and Belfast respectively. The colleges have also been attempting to integrate the global justice dimension into initial teacher education. There is an ongoing process to document pathways and opportunities for undergraduate and postgraduate teachers to develop competencies in teaching for democratic citizenship within both colleges. As another aspect of the project the colleges have been looking to the possibilities of joint work in relation to initial teacher education and the global justice dimension, working towards research partnerships and regular student visits and exchanges North South and visa versa.





Conference, Research and Exchange Projects

Funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2009-2010



CONTRIBUTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL PHYSICAL EDUCATION TO HEALTH ENHANCING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Dr David McKee, Stranmillis University College, Belfast
Dr Elaine Murtagh, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

This research project will focus on:

- Establishing cross border research links and building research capacity in the field of Paediatric Physical Activity (PA)
- Comparing PA levels of primary school children on school days with Physical Education (PE) and school days with no PE
- Identifying factors within PE lessons which are related to variance in observed PA levels
- Exploring the temporal distribution of children's PA

SCoTENS Grant awarded £5,953

DEVELOPING ALL-IRELAND RESEARCH CAPACITY IN ARTS BASED EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH (ABER)

Dr Ruth Leitch, Queen's University Belfast
Ms Shelley Tracey, Queen's University Belfast
Ms Caryl Sibbett, Queen's University Belfast
Dr Mary Shine Thompson, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

This project will develop and strengthen a community of practice using arts-based educational research (ABER) in teacher education and amongst teachers in Ireland, North and South, by developing a small working group of interested teacher educators in both jurisdictions to focus on:

- Creating a workshop and two seminars to explore and extend the various research interests, abilities and projects being undertaken under the umbrella of ABER by teachers and teacher educators in Ireland
- Planning and developing web-based resources as a focus of communication and dissemination for ABER practitioners North and South
- Identifying possibilities for setting up a Special Interest Group (SIG) on ABER through ESAI (Educational Studies Association of Ireland)

SCoTENS Grant awarded £5,800

FACING AUTISM IRELAND 2009

Dr Karola Dillenburger, Queen's University Belfast
Dr Geraldine Leader, School of Psychology, NUI Galway.

SCoTENS awarded 'seed funding' to help fund a conference which was held on the 26 and 27 June 2009 in the Europa Hotel Belfast for 300 delegates. The aim of the conference was to update evidence-based practice in the treatment of ASD to ensure that parents and professionals have the best possible information

SCoTENS Grant awarded £3,000

THE DIGITISATION OF THREE VOLUMES OF IRISH EDUCATION DOCUMENTS; VOLUME 1 FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO 1921; VOLUME 2 THE IRISH FREE STATE AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND FROM 1922 – 1991; VOLUME 3 NORTHERN IRELAND FROM 1922-1991

Professor Áine Hyland, Church of Ireland College of Education
Professor Tony Gallagher, Queen's University Belfast

The aim of this project is to digitize the three volumes of Irish Educational Documents and to make them openly available and in an unrestricted way, via the web, to educational scholars and researchers, North and South, and throughout the world. The total number of pages involved is 1,600.

SCoTENS Grant awarded €1,702

SIXTH FORM/SIXTH YEAR RELIGION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Dr Andrew G McGrady, Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin
Dr Christopher A Lewis, University of Ulster, Magee Campus

This research project will focus on:

- Profiling the religious beliefs, attitudes and practices of sixth-form/sixth year pupils in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- Comparing the current situation in Northern Ireland today with the earlier studies conducted in the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (taking full account of the comparison between pupils attending Protestant and Catholic schools)
- Extending the research to sixth form pupils in the Integrated schooling sector in Northern Ireland
- Comparing the current situation in Northern Ireland with that of the Republic of Ireland

SCoTENS Grant awarded £6,000





PEER MENTORING FOR POST COMPULSORY TEACHER EDUCATION

Mrs Celia O'Hagan, University of Ulster, Jordanstown Campus
Dr Ted Fleming, NUI Maynooth

This research project will focus on piloting a specialised model of mentorship in line with FE partners north and south. The project will explore a model of peer mentoring in support of Cavan Further Education teachers and Belfast FE teachers, through the formalised certification of mentors at the University of Ulster in support of the formation of a community of practice across boundaries.

SCoTENS Grant awarded £6,000

DOCTORAL RESEARCH IN EDUCATION NORTH AND SOUTH – LINKS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Dr Caitlin Donnelly, Queen's University Belfast
Dr Dymphna Devine, University College Dublin

Seed funding for this research project will be used to organize a cross-border research conference for doctoral students in Schools of Education at higher education institutions throughout the island of Ireland in spring 2010 at the School of Education at Queen's University Belfast.

SCoTENS Grant awarded £3,000

GAEILGE LABHARTHA NA BPÁISTÍ I SCOILEANNA LÁN GHAEILGE IN ÉIRINN (THE SPOKEN IRISH OF PUPILS IN IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOLS)

Dr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
Ms Jill Garland St Mary's University College, Belfast

This project will examine the proficiency in Irish of Primary 7 pupils in Irish-medium primary schools in Northern Ireland and compare them to data already gathered in relation to 6th class pupils in Irish-medium primary schools in the Republic of Ireland. The study in the Republic of Ireland identified weaknesses in the syntactic and lexical features of Irish-medium pupils' spoken Irish and the present study will seek to ascertain if there are significant differences between the features of both populations.

SCoTENS Grant awarded €5,213

LIFT OFF LITERACY PROGRAMME FOR THE IRISH MEDIUM SCHOOL

Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir, St Mary's University College, Belfast
Sister Elizabeth Connolly, Monaghan Education Centre

This research will focus on:

- Redeveloping the Lift Off programme into Irish
- Exploring the training needs for teachers and classroom assistants to organize, plan and carry out this programme in Irish
- Assessing the outcomes of the programme, using the AML assessment tool
- Producing resources and information to support the implementation of this programme on a wider scale in the future.

SCoTENS Grant awarded £6,000

DYSLEXIA, LITERACY AND INCLUSION CONFERENCE

Ms Louise Long, St Mary's University College, Belfast
Dr Therese McPhillips, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin

The subject of this research is:

- To develop a dynamic interface on the island of Ireland that will harness educational theory, research and practice on the special educational need, dyslexia, for the purposes of enhancing learning and teaching in schools.
- To promote collaboration between Northern Irish and Southern Irish educational practitioners into what constitutes best practice in the identification and management of dyslexia.
- To contribute to an overall knowledge-based society and inform the educational inclusion debate in the North and South of Ireland.
- To bring together a nucleus of academics, educational psychologists, NGOs (for example, representatives from the Northern Ireland Dyslexia Association) and curriculum developers from the North and South of Ireland who are interested in the area of dyslexia, and to sustain this initiative through the creation of a discussion group via e mail to disseminate research and examples of best practice.

SCoTENS Grant awarded £2,500





THE DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH/SOUTH CASE STUDIES IDENTIFYING KEY FEATURES OF GOOD PRACTICE IN THE TEACHING OF PUPILS FROM ETHNIC MINORITIES

Mr Ken Wylie, Stranmillis University College, Belfast
Dr Mark Morgan, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin

This research project will: Develop case studies exemplifying good practice in the teaching of pupils from ethnic minorities by focusing mainly on identifying teaching/learning strategies which are successful in integrating ethnic minority children into the classroom and engaging them actively in their learning. Schools will be chosen from the North and South and will be representative of both the primary and post primary sector.

SCoTENS Grant awarded £6,000

SCoTENS FINANCIAL POSITION

SCoTENS Statement of Affairs	1 Feb 07 - 31 Jan 08	1 Feb 07 - 31 July 08	Aug 08 - 31 July 09
Balance Carried forward 1 February 2007	30,335.64	30,335.64	47,041.49
Income			
DEL/DE	50,000	50,000.00	50,000
DES		50,000.00	50,000
Nuffield Foundation		20,000.00	
Conference Fees		9,016.23	8,495.16
Income Received from SCoTENS Members	51,540.06	64,657.84	69,707.01
Total	131,875.70	193,674.07	178,202.17
Less adjusted figures from Account	11,368	11,368.00	6,876.36
Total Income	120,507.7	182,306.07	171,325.81
Expenditure			
Research Projects	32,606.70	54,494.05	50296.88
Travel, Subsistence & Conference	28,906.43	31,410.73	12,002.66
Mileage	343.2	569.15	2,607.17
Sundry Expenses	600.41	862.01	7.9
Photocopying & Printing	7,638.78	7,638.78	7,496.98
Student Teacher Exchange Project			28,456.29
CCBS Admin & Professional Services 30/6/07	30,828.50	44755.00	57,762.17
Total	100,924.02	139,729.72	158,630.05
Less adjusted figures from Account @ 31/01/07	83,948.08	83,948.00	109,828.50
Total Expenditure	16,975.94	55,771.72	48,801.55
Net Surplus	103,531.76	156,869.99	122,524.26
CCBS Admin & Professional Services 30/6/08		30,828.50	
Amount pledged to Research projects	36,635.00	79,000.00	66,500.00
Balance carried forward	66,896.76	47,041.49	103,065.75

