

2010 CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL REPORTS

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The Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South (SCoTENS)

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION

2010 CONFERENCE AND ANNUAL REPORTS

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CONTENTS

CHAIRPERSONS INTRODUCTION

Dr Tom Hesketh Professor Teresa O'Doherty 5

ANNUAL CONFERENCE REPORT

Teacher Education for Inclusion

9

RESEARCH PROJECTS – EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

Funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2008-2010

Primary school teachers' experiences of teaching healthy eating within the curriculum

109

Building North-South links in whole college initiatives in global justice education

110

Developing all-Ireland research capacity in arts-based educational research (ABER)

112

Sixth form/sixth year religion in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland

114

Gaeilge labhartha na Bpáistí I schoileanna lán-Ghaeilge in Éirinn (The spoken Irish of pupils in Irish-medium schools)

The development of case studies in identifying key features of good practice in the teaching of pupils from ethnic minorities



RESEARCH AND EXCHANGE PROJECTS AND SECTORAL CONFERENCES – EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES AND INTERIM REPORTS

Funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2010-2011

7th North South Student Teacher Exchange (2010-2011)	140
Cross-border conference on integration of academic and personal learning in post-primary religious education	143
Disablist bullying: an investigation of student teachers' knowledge and confidence	145
Effective mentoring with physical education teacher education	151
An evaluation of the implementation of realistic mathematics education (RME) with primary schools in the North and South of Ireland	153
Doctoral research in education – links, challenges and opportunities	155
mages and identity: a collaborative art and design citizenship education project	156
Directors of Teaching Practice Research Group: Continuing professional development for teaching practice supervisors	159
Exploring Japanese research lesson study as a model of peer to peer professional learning	161
A comparative study into further education teacher education in the North and South of Ireland: towards a framework for further education teaching qualifications	163
Understanding the potential for research capacity building in initial teacher education programmes North/South. A baseline comparative study: phase 1	165
Children exposed to domestic abuse: helping student teachers understand their role in the primary school setting	167



NEW RESEARCH AND SECTORAL CONFERENCE PROJECTS

Funded or co-funded by SCoTENS 2011-2012

Exploring and developing spaces among adult education practitioners for online and arts based reflection	172
Assessment in teacher education North and South (ATENS)	172
An exploration of mathematical identity using narrative as a tool (MINT)	173
Science enhancement and learning through exchange and collaboration among teachers (SELECT)	173
A critical analysis of North-South educational partnerships in development contexts	174
Teachers' views on the factors influencing their professional development: perceptions, experiences and motivation	174
Teaching controversial history: a symposium on the teaching of 1916 and the battle of the Somme	175
Spiritual education: new challenge, new opportunity	175
Promoting an active 'restorative school' learning community North and South	176
Writing as a professional development activity in initial teacher education (ITE)	176



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Chairpersons' introduction

Welcome to the 2010 annual report of SCoTENS (the Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South). This report incorporates the proceedings of our eighth annual conference as well as a financial statement and reports on the other conferences, networks, exchanges and research activities supported by SCoTENS. Together they provide evidence of the sustained impact of our various activities during the year under review.

The annual conference provides a forum where teacher educators across the island of Ireland and from abroad 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 wide range of research-based initiatives – over 70 in the period 2003-2011 – with a view to establishing sustainable North-South partnerships and projects which have impact in terms of both policy and practice.

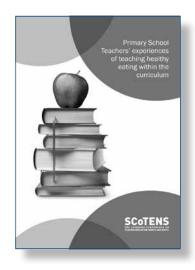


The eighth annual conference in Belfast in October 2010 carried powerful resonances since it conjured up the sense of hope, aspiration and commitment which accompanied the setting up of SCoTENS following an inaugural conference in Belfast 10 years previously. How fitting it was therefore to have ministerial endorsement of SCoTENS' first decade from Mr Sean Haughey TD, Irish Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, who during his opening address stated that 'this North-South platform has gone from strength to strength in building professional partnerships and personal networks through its wide ranging activities and research initiatives'. The point was reiterated by Caitriona Ruane MLA, Minister of Education in N. Ireland, who through her permanent secretary Mr Paul Sweeney, asserted 'SCoTENS has been acknowledged by commentators as one of the best examples

of North-South cooperation.' She recalled that she had been 'pleased to hear about the work of SCoTENS at a North South Ministerial Council meeting held last November.'

The significance of the conference theme – *Teacher Education for Inclusion* – also attracted a strong endorsement from Minister Ruane, who stressed that 'inclusion in all its forms underlines many of the Department of Education's strategies.I am delighted that the themes addressed cover race, Travellers, migrants and special education needs.' She said there was 'a real need for the teaching profession itself to focus on inclusivity, if the diverse needs of our young people and society more widely are to be addressed.' Minister Haughey referred to the timeliness of the conference, coinciding as it did with the launch in September 2010 of Ireland's first national intercultural education strategy, aimed at ensuring that all students experience an education that 'respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership'.





As with previous SCoTENS conferences, the ministerial inputs were followed by insightful and scholarly presentations which brought together various dimensions of the conference agenda. Global perspectives on inclusion, including the challenges presented by definitions and philosophical starting points, were provided by Renato Opertti from UNESCO and by Amanda Watkins and Verity Donnelly from the European Agency for Development in Special Needs. These global perspectives found an interesting local response in the commentaries provided by Dr John Hunter (Education and Training Inspectorate in Northern Ireland) and Aine Lawlor (The Teaching Council in Ireland). The complexities of the inclusion agenda were reflected in the rich array of workshops provided by teacher educator practitioners on themes as diverse as race, access and Traveller education, disability and special

education. Throughout the exchanges there was an ever-deepening focus on the implications of the inclusion agenda for teacher education, which drew much inspiration and understanding from Amanda Watkins' presentation of the competency framework underpinning teacher effectiveness for inclusion and Aine Lawlor's comments on emerging work on teacher competences from Teaching Council deliberations.

The focus on the implications on inclusion for teacher educators provided the heartbeat for the conference's second day when delegates were engaged, provoked, informed and at times entertained by a rich vein of input from an impressive line up of presenters from both third and second level who spoke passionately about inclusive practices within their own settings. We were particularly stimulated by Professor Sir Tim Brighouse who provided a humorous and hugely insightful journey through the topic of inclusion from the standpoint of teacher, academic, chief education officer and London education tsar. We hope that you will take time to access the richness and depth of these contributions in this publication.

Reflecting the nature and quality of the many projects supported by SCoTENS, the conference afforded an opportunity to launch a timely and highly significant publication on *Valuing Education Technology in Schools in Ireland, North and South,* by John Anderson and Conor Galvin. This project was just one of a number of research projects completed during 2010 with the assistance of SCoTENS seed funding.

SCoTENS continues to attract funding from the Department of Education and Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland and the Department of Education and Skills in Ireland, although 60% of its funds now come from the subscriptions of its affiliated institutions. We are indebted to the generosity of these organisations and institutions for their continuing commitment to and championing of the work of cross-border research and collaboration. It has made teacher education one of the most advanced sectors – if not the most advanced – when it comes to giving a lead in practical, mutually beneficial North-South cooperation in the cause of greater mutual



understanding on the island of Ireland. Over 70 research, exchange and sectoral conference projects supported, 10 international conferences organised, and 17 high-quality reports published tell their own story.

As well as acknowledging the support of our sponsors, we would like to express continuing 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 professionalism we rely. We would also like to thank the management and staff of the Hilton Hotel in Belfast who provided a welcoming venue for conference (10 years after it hosted the inaugural conference in 2000). Finally we thank our fellow members of the SCoTENS committee who give so generously both of their expertise and time to ensure that the all-important symbolic bridge that is SCoTENS moves into its second decade motivated and inspired by the documented successes of the first.

Tom Hesketh (Dr)

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Co-Chair

Teresa O'Doherty (Prof) Co-Chair

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ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Hilton Hotel, Belfast 28 – 29 October 2010





Conference Reports – Contents

Opening Address: Mr Seán Haughey TD

Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Department of Education and Skills, Ireland

Opening Address: Mr Paul Sweeney (on behalf of Ms Caitriona Ruane TD, Minister for Education,

N.Ireland)

Permanent Secretary, Department of Education, Northern Ireland

FROM INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TO INCLUSIVE CURRICULA

Mr Renato Opertti, Coordinator, Capacity Building Programme, UNESCO International Bureau of Education

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION - ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN EUROPE

Dr Amanda Watkins, Assistant Director and Dr Verity Donnelly,

Project Leader, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education

TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION WORKSHOPS

RACE: facilitated by **Dr Karl Kitching,** University College Cork

SPECIAL EDUCATION: facilitated by Mr Pat Curtin, Chief Executive, National Council for Special

Education (RoI) and Dr Jacqueline Lambe, University of Ulster

ACCESS AND TRAVELLERS: facilitated by **Dr Lisa Keane**, Trinity College Dublin, and **Dr Joe Travers**, St Patrick's College Drumcondra.

DISABILITY: facilitated by **Dr Bronagh Byrne**, Queen's University Belfast

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: facilitated by Professor Marie Parker Jenkins

THE INCLUSION AGENDA - CHALLENGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Professor Sir Tim Brighouse, former Schools Commissioner for London and Chief Education Officer for Birmingham

PERSPECTIVES FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

Dr Michael Dobbins, Principal, Foyle View Special School, Derry; **Mr Maurice Doherty**, Principal, Ballynahinch High School, Co Down; **Ms Mary Dunlea Fitzgerald**, Principal, St Tola's National School, Shannon, Co. Clare; **Ms Anna Fitzgerald**, newly qualified teacher, Limerick

HEI RESPONSES: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, TRANSFORMATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND **Professor Tony Gallagher,** Pro Vice Chancellor, Queen's University Belfast, and **Professor Sheelagh Drudy**, University College Dublin



DAY ONE

OPENING ADDRESS (1)

Mr SEÁN HAUGHEY TD

Minister of State for Lifelong Learning

Distinguished guests, co-educationalists and friends, it is a great honour for me, as Minister for Lifelong Learning, to be with you in Belfast this morning, to take part in the official opening of the 10th Anniversary Conference of SCoTENS. I sincerely thank Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary, for his warm welcome. It is hard to believe that a decade has passed since the then Ministers for Education North and South officially opened the inaugural SCoTENS Conference in Belfast in 2000. This North/South platform has gone from strength to strength in building professional partnerships and personal networks through its wide-ranging activities and research initiatives.

I am very pleased that SCoTENS has identified Teacher Education for Inclusion as the theme for this year's conference. It is also significant that the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education has highlighted the same theme as a priority area in its current three year project, involving Ireland and 28 other member states. This conference provides an interesting opportunity for teacher educators, policy makers and practitioners to discuss the initial findings of the European agency's work. I note that you will also have important opportunities during the conference to pool expertise in addressing the complex issue of inclusion from its many important dimensions and perspectives, such as race, disability, special education, sexuality, Traveller education and religious education.

It is widely agreed that considerable progress has been made towards the development of inclusive practices in Irish education over the last decade. It is important to recognize, however, that inclusion in education is but one aspect of inclusion in society. Inclusion is about appreciating difference, social justice and developing beliefs and value systems. Inclusion is a journey, it is about asking lots of hard questions: How do we create inclusive classrooms so that every child is visible and valued? How do we engage in pedagogical practices that allow children with different languages, religions, backgrounds, cultures and abilities to learn and to succeed? How can we create schools that will help all students thrive in a diverse society? Unless inclusion is the norm in schools, how can inclusion be the norm in our communities?

Ireland has continued to promote the principle of inclusion through a range of legislative provision. Legislation such as the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2004 outlines areas where discrimination is prohibited. However, our focus at this conference should be on the positive process of overcoming these inclusive challenges in our education system, particularly in relation to teacher education.

I am pleased to report that as recently as 16 September last, the Minister of State for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, Mary White TD, launched Ireland's first national Intercultural





SCoTENS committee members with opening speakers at the 2010 SCoTENS conference. Front row, left to right: Professor Teresa O'Doherty, Joint Chair; Mr Séan Haughey TD, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning; Professor Marie Parker Jenkins; Dr Tom Hesketh, Joint Chair; Ms Áine Lawlor. Back row, left to right: Ms Geraldine Magennis, Professor John Coolahan; Mr Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education, N. Ireland; Professor John Gardner, Mr Eddie McArdle, Mr Eugene Toolan, Mr Andy Pollak, Ms Marie McLoughlin

Education Strategy. As highlighted in the Education Act (1998), this strategy aims to ensure that all students experience an education that 'respects the diversity of values, beliefs, languages and traditions in Irish society and is conducted in a spirit of partnership.' The intercultural strategy will aim to ensure that inclusion and integration within an intercultural learning environment become the norm. It highlights key components to support inclusive practice such as leadership, quality of teaching, high expectations, rights and responsibilities, partnership, effective communication, and research and evaluation. My Department has also developed a range of programmes and schemes to improve the quality of access to and participation in education under the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS)(2005) initiative.

Ireland is a signatory to the Salamanca Statement since 1994 and subscriber to the 2008 UNESCO recommendation, which highlights that inclusive education is an ongoing process aimed at offering quality education for all, while respecting diversity and difference in terms of needs, abilities, characteristics and learning expectations by eliminating all forms of discrimination.

Striving for the inclusive goal of 'education for all' puts high demands on teacher education institutions and on the education system generally. Irrespective of whether a newly qualified teacher will be employed in a mainstream or a special school, we need to think in terms of all schools being part of a continuum of provision within an inclusive education system. How teachers might best be



prepared to work in schools with an increasingly diverse pupil population is of concern to teacher educators, professionals and governments around the world. Changes that have taken place in legislation and practice often fail to taken into account how practitioners can best ensure that all children and young people are able to achieve. What core competencies will a teacher need for an inclusive society in a 21st century school?

The role of the curriculum in promoting inclusion cannot be underestimated. The basic right of all children is to have access to quality education and a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective curriculum implementation provides a challenge for teachers through the need to modify and adapt content, learning and teaching materials and adopt effective and meaningful methodologies to assess and record students' progress. The primary and post-primary curricula address issues of difference, equity and human rights and allow for a balanced and informed awareness of the diversity of peoples and environments. The Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum at primary and post-primary levels, in particular, provides specific opportunities to enable students develop a framework of values, attitudes, understanding and necessary skills that will inform their actions and decisions in relation to cultural diversity and inclusion. In Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE) further opportunities are provided for post-primary students to explore the concepts of democracy, equality, law, rights and responsibilities.

Teachers should also have an understanding and appreciation of the various religious traditions encountered not just in Ireland, but also in Europe and the wider world. The Religious Education (RE) programme, which caters for 'those of all religions and those of none' was introduced on a phased basis by my Department in a small number of post-primary schools in 2000 and is now available to all post-primary schools. The growth and popularity of the RE programme to a point where some 26,000 students sat the Junior Certificate examination in 2010 highlights the strong movement towards an understanding of inclusion. Similarly the numbers of students sitting the RE Leaving Certificate Examination has increased 12 times in the last 5 years from a total of 80 students in 2005 to almost 1000 students in 2010.

It is acknowledged that it is the beliefs and values of the teacher that are crucial in creating an effective learning environment for students and in developing inclusive practice. This makes a teacher a critical influence in the development of the inclusive school. Teachers must be especially skilled in the organisation and management of inclusive teaching strategies and methods in order to facilitate the integration of all students in heterogeneous classrooms. Team-teaching between mainstream class teachers and the special educational support team is increasingly being used as an inclusive strategy in schools to support the learning and teaching needs of students of diverse needs. Such co-planning and differentiated co-teaching practices require high levels of teacher competence and expertise to ensure that learning experiences are appropriate for all students, including those with disabilities and those at risk. To ensure that implementation is effective, highly developed collaborative skills and a shared value system are required. For inclusion to work, teachers must discover where each of their students are academically, socially, and culturally in order to determine how best to facilitate learning. Such child-centered teachers view their role more as being facilitators of learning rather than simply transmitters of knowledge. Therefore skills in



differentiation, cooperative learning, technology, curriculum-based assessment and team teaching are important for teachers to develop, practice and use in inclusive classrooms. As highlighted at last year's SCoTENS conference, there is a need for all teacher education institutions to develop a 'teacher researcher,' 'reflective practitioner' and problem-solving culture of peer observation where teachers are constantly asking 'How can I do this better?'

Teacher education is the key to developing an attitude of inclusion. The Teaching Council's work in the ongoing review and accreditation of teacher education programmes presents a unique opportunity for teacher educators to reflect on the competencies required for the new generation of teachers to implement successful inclusive policies and practices. This will inevitably require teacher education institutions to review and enhance existing provision in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Supporting the participation of prospective student teachers with disabilities and students from a variety of backgrounds in teacher education programmes poses a further challenge for teacher education institutions. There is an onus on all third level institutions to balance the spirit of inclusiveness required under equality legislation with the high standards and duty of care required of graduate teachers in schools.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to acknowledge that the coordination and dissemination of innovative practice and research on Teacher Education for Inclusion at conferences such as this would not occur without the foresight, resolve and commitment of each member of the SCoTENS management committee, and in particular the leadership and direction provided by committee co-chairpersons, Dr Tom Hesketh, Director, Regional Training Unit, Belfast and Professor Teresa O' Doherty, Head of Education, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. I would also like to thank the dedicated staff of the Centre for Cross Border Studies, particularly Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister, who provide unstinting professional and administrative support for the effective operation of SCoTENS.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir!



OPENING ADDRESS (2)

Mr PAUL SWEENEY

Permanent Secretary, Department of Education, Northern Ireland

Good morning everyone. Regretfully the Minister of Education, Caitríona Ruane MLA, is unable to attend today's conference. She has asked me to extend her apologies and to deliver the address that she would have otherwise delivered herself.

I am pleased to be able to join you here today and to jointly open the eighth annual SCoTENS conference. I would like to thank the Centre for Cross Border Studies for organising the conference and for putting together a programme which addresses many of the issues currently challenging our education systems North and South.

SCoTENS has been acknowledged by commentators as one of the best examples of North-South co-operation and I was pleased to hear more about the work of SCoTENS at a North South Ministerial Council meeting held last November. It's hard to believe that it is 10 years since the founding conference was held at this very venue in 2000.

I commend Dr Tom Hesketh and Professor Teresa O'Doherty for sustaining the energy of the original chairs, John Coolahan and Harry McMahon.

My vision for education is rooted in a strong and passionate belief in equality and in the creation of a school system where every girl and boy has the same opportunity to succeed, regardless of socio-economic background, gender or race. I am totally committed to the development of an education system in the North which embraces the highest standards of achievement for all.

During my time as Education Minister I have worked to ensure that inclusion in all its forms underlies many of the Department of Education's strategies, and my Department is actively working to ensure that all young people have the opportunity to become fully included in a positive educational experience which welcomes the wide diversity already existing in our schools – children with SEN, newcomer children with English as an additional language, Traveller children, 'looked after' children to name a few.

Therefore I am delighted that the themes addressed at this conference cover race, Travellers, migrants and special education needs together with the issues and challenges faced by the teaching profession in a period typified by increasing pluralism and diversity. There is a real need for the teaching profession itself to focus on inclusivity if the diverse needs of our young people and society more widely are to be addressed.

Our education system has to be as future-proof as possible. That is why I am intent on implementing a broad range of progressive reforms and I will briefly update you on several of these.



The abolition of academic selection is at the heart of the programme of change I have put in place. It is the important pre-requisite for the range of other programmes. Academic selection is a failed system, socially and educationally. It creates and sustains injustice and inequality. It is fundamentally immoral. It has no place in a modern, progressive and enlightened society.

In truth, state-sponsored academic selection was, in reality, academic rejection for the majority of our children. Who can credibly defend or be part of a system that condemns the majority of our children as failures? As educationalists we must reject absolutely and irreversibly the notion that any child is a failure.

Schools in the North have nothing to fear in moving away from academic selection. A grammar school can remain legally defined as a grammar school when it ends academic selection, unless it chooses explicitly to remove this status through the formal development proposal process.

For example, the ending of one school's academic admissions could be part of an area's visionary plan for the delivery of education to its children. I do not, as some have argued, propose a 'one size fits all' system, far from it. I recognise that diversity in provision is essential in order that children can access a balanced range of subject choices at a variety of educational institutions, working in collaboration where necessary, that will equip them for the ever changing world of work.

The key elements that underpin every one of my policies are Equality and Quality. It is because of my belief in equality that we are implementing the proposals from the Review of Irish-medium Education.

The number of Irish-medium education providers has grown substantially here in the North and I am delighted that we now have 23 voluntary and private pre-school centres, 24 grant-aided Irish-medium schools (23 primary and 1 post-primary), and 11 Irish-medium units (9 primary and 2 post-primary). This growth is apparent in every county and every major town in the North of Ireland.

In June 2010, in recognition of the importance of the early years of a child's life, I published for consultation a draft Early Years (0-6) Strategy. The purpose of the draft Strategy is to set out a vision and plan for the development of Early Years provision with a particular focus on child development leading to better educational outcomes. It seeks to ensure better outcomes for children by setting out a framework to improve the quality of provision to the youngest children and also to support their parents and families over the next 5 years in order to provide all children, regardless of their circumstances, with the best possible start in life.

The consultation, which runs until 30 November 2010, has attracted a great deal of interest. This is most encouraging and I would encourage everyone with an interest in the education of our young children to take the opportunity to respond.

Already our policies are beginning to make a difference. The Chief Inspector has reported improvements in overall education provision in pre-school, primary school and post-primary settings. I welcome these improvements, but am committed to delivering further advances, particularly in



raising standards in literacy and numeracy. I will shortly publish a revised literacy and numeracy strategy which will set out how teachers will be supported in ensuring pupils develop the literacy and numeracy skills that are fundamental to their education and future employment prospects.

Over recent years, we have been given the opportunity to welcome many newcomers who have chosen to work and raise their families all over Ireland. This has enriched the diversity of our population and our cultural perspectives and has greatly changed the range of languages spoken here. However, this also brings new challenges such as overcoming various forms of discrimination, lack of understanding and, unfortunately, racial prejudice and racial harassment.

As we continue to embrace the diversity in our society, a number of new initiatives to support schools, newcomer parents and their children have been developed in the North. In April 2009 I launched the policy 'Every School a Good School – Supporting Newcomer Pupils' and in March this year I was delighted to launch Toolkits for Nursery, Post-Primary and Special Schools which had been developed by the regional Inclusion and Diversity Service in collaboration with colleagues in the South of Ireland. This followed the successful SCoTENS-initiated all Ireland Toolkit for Primary Schools, first introduced in 2007. These Toolkits provide guidance and support to teachers in creating and sustaining a welcoming and inclusive environment for students and parents from all backgrounds and ensuring equal access for all.

My Department has allocated funding of nearly £9 million directly to schools and to the Inclusion and Diversity Service which specifically provides training and support to schools dealing with newcomers. The Service is also responsible for interpreting and translating services, a multi-lingual website and the development and delivery of training to teachers in the use of the Toolkits. In August of this year guidelines on good practice in the use of the additional funding to support and include newcomer children were also issued to all schools.

I am pleased to say that the Education and Training Inspectorate's Chief Inspector's Report published on 13 October noted the increased confidence and capacity in schools to identify and meet the needs of newcomer learners. With support from the Inclusion and Diversity Service, schools here have demonstrated a commitment to improving their provision for newcomer learners and are making good use of a range of effective strategies and resources to support them.

The Inclusion and Diversity Service is currently working with educationalists in the South of Ireland on developing a new inclusion training tool for trainers to build the capacity of middle management and embed the learning in schools.

Having visited hundreds of schools across all sectors, I have seen many excellent examples of how schools are providing high standards and celebrating the diversity of the population. I am delighted that schools have risen to the challenge of building multi-cultural atmospheres of warmth, care and respect. I would encourage everyone to continue building on this.



Travellers are a group who have traditionally been marginalised and have suffered many years of discrimination in education, health, housing and employment. They experience low educational achievement and poor health as well as exclusion from mainstream society. There is a need to reverse this trend and ensure that future generations of Traveller children are educated, have a strong sense of identity and continue to be proud of their culture and traditions.

In September 2008 I established the Taskforce on Traveller Education to remove the barriers that have caused poor educational outcomes for this community. The Taskforce is cross-sectoral and includes members of the Traveller community from across the North, representatives from a range of non-government organisations, as well as government Departments and public bodies from all of Ireland. Its aim is to assist my Department develop an action plan on Traveller education. There has been good progress and a draft report should be agreed by the Taskforce by the end of this year.

Alongside the important work of the Taskforce, an updated School Circular on Traveller education was issued to all schools in August 2010. The primary aim of this circular is to provide more comprehensive guidance to schools on how to deliver high standards of support for children of the Traveller community. It emphasises the importance of recognising Traveller cultures and attitudes towards them, and of having an ongoing programme of diversity training.

I have sought to improve the opportunities for education for all young people and to ensuring that this educational provision is of the highest quality. In particular, working towards getting that right for young people with special educational needs and other barriers to learning is for me a top priority.

The term inclusion can be used to mean many things: not only the placement of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, but also the participation of all pupils – in the curriculum; in the social life of mainstream and special schools; and in the full range of social experiences and opportunities once they have left school. For most children, placement in a mainstream school and involvement in the wider community leads naturally on to the other forms of inclusion.

Overall, we estimate that some 25% of the school population here experiences some kind of barrier to learning. This presents a challenge to the skills of the school workforce. What this means is that the majority of mainstream teachers will, at any given time, need appropriate and ongoing skills to meet the needs of children with SEN and children who are coping with other social, emotional and environmental impacts on their young lives.

In recognition of this, I have initiated work on the development of a capacity building programme. This programme is aimed at equipping teachers and others within the school workforce to meet their responsibilities within the context of the existing SEN framework.

I want a fully inclusive system to ensure that every learner is given an equal chance and that all children are provided with the necessary support to help them achieve their potential. For this reason I regard the thrust of policy proposals for special educational needs and inclusion as important building blocks in furthering inclusion in our schools here. An inclusive framework, which identifies



the needs of all children whenever they occur, supports these needs, and promotes a culture that welcomes diversity, is essential.

With this aim in mind, my Department is continuing to work on the development of detailed SEN and Inclusion policy options in light of the responses received to the Department's consultation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, may I express my gratitude to all involved with SCoTENS, and to Tom Hesketh for inviting me to jointly open the Conference.

I am pleased at the opportunity provided by SCoTENS to learn not only from speakers from schools and Higher Education Institutions in the North and South but also from speakers from wider afield. I am delighted to welcome Mr Renato Opertti from UNESCO; Amanda Watkins and Verity Donnelly from the European Development Agency; and Professor Tim Brighouse (who is no stranger to these shores). Delegates will undoubtedly benefit substantially from all of the insights provided by all of the speakers in this vitally important area.

I am keenly aware of the challenges that we all face both now and in the future, not least in the current financial circumstances being experienced across the globe. But children and young people are our future and, therefore, they should be at the heart of all of our decisions. Helping children and young people to access the best educational support possible is a crucial driver in all aspects of my work and I would imagine that this would be the same for everyone attending this conference. So I applaud the aims of this conference and each of you for your continued work in this area.

I hope that over the next two days you have a very interesting and valuable conference. I have every confidence that you will enjoy the debates and that we will learn much from each other in progressing the important theme of inclusion within teacher education.



FROM INCLUSIVE EDUCATION TO INCLUSIVE CURRICULA: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES – A VIEWPOINT FROM UNESCO

Mr Renato Opertti

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In this presentation, there are four main points which will be addressed, namely:

- UNESCO's evolving definition of inclusive education
- Inclusive education: global and regional agendas
- Inclusive curricula as a powerful tool for inclusion
- Reconceptualising teachers' role, profile and competencies

1. UNESCO's evolving definition of inclusive education as the core of a refined Education for All (EFA) agenda

The **foundations of the concept of inclusive education** focusing on regular schools and excluded groups were laid in a series of international declarations, including the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien,1990), the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (Salmanca,1994) and the Dakar Framework for Action (Dakar, 2000). Inclusive education originally began as a response to special education and integration/ mainstreaming, in order to support regular schools with an inclusive orientation.

However, it was increasingly acknowledged that inclusive education was about more than just a changing the place of learning; Peters, for example, also described it as a service (Peters, 2004). It was also closely related to the prioritisation of targeted excluded groups, linked to ethnic, gender, cultural, socio-economic and migrant factors. This can be seen to reflect the traditional 'access-based approach' towards the EFA policy framework. (Opertti et al, 2009)

From 2005 onwards, the concept of inclusive education was broadened, to be seen as a means to address the diversity of learners, as supported by UNESCO's official definition: 'Inclusion is a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.' (UNESCO, 2003)

Most recently, **UNESCO's 48th International Conference on Education (ICE)** in November 2008 supported the strong endorsement of a broader concept of inclusive education by 153 countries (with over 100 Ministers of Education present) to create a common, broadened concept of inclusive education for achieving EFA. This can be seen in the ICE outcomes: 'a broadened concept of inclusive education can be viewed as a **general guiding principle** to strengthen education for sustainable development, lifelong learning for all and equal access of all levels of society to



learning opportunities' (ICE outcomes, November 2008). The ICE outcomes also encourage a more comprehensive approach to the UN Convention of the Rights on Persons with Disabilities, and in particular Article 24 to which obligates signatory States to ensure a system of inclusive education.

In other words, the ICE identified a broadened concept of inclusive education as a way of rethinking the nature, content and scope of EFA, in particular as a holistic way to globally address the transformation of the education system from visions to practices and as a key strategy for democratising learning opportunities.

Some of the other key outcomes of the ICE 2008 included: (i) intense policy dialogue, networking, knowledge production and sharing on inclusion amongst key stakeholders; and (ii) the preparation of national reports by Ministries of Education (MOEs) and other stakeholders engaged in data collection, monitoring and analysis.

The ICE outcomes also specifically refer to teachers, advising States to 'reinforce the role of teachers by working to improve their status and their working conditions, and develop mechanisms for recruiting suitable candidates, and retain qualified teachers ...; train teachers by equipping them with the appropriate skills and materials to teach diverse student populations and meet the diverse learning needs of different categories of learners ...; support the strategic role of tertiary education ...; encourage innovative research in teaching and learning processes related to inclusive education; equip school administrators with the skills to respond effectively to the diverse needs of all learners ...; and take into consideration the protection of learners, teachers and schools in times of conflict.'

There are several **key themes linking inclusive education and EFA**, namely:

- An emphasis on equity and quality as going hand in hand;
- · An emphasis on long-term policy visions and objectives;
- Support to international conventions with a focus on the CRPD -United Nations Convention of the Rights on Persons with Disabilities (Art. 24, 2006);
- Curricula seen as a key tool for inclusion;
- Greater focus on teachers' role, profile and competencies;
- Higher, secondary and TVET education incorporated together through a lifelong perspective;
- Global, national and local needs, responsibilities and roles considered in a more balanced way (glo-local approach);
- Appreciation of new learning and teaching tools and strategies for diverse learner profiles and characteristics.

There are also several key dimensions of inclusive education as the core of a refined EFA agenda, including:

- A transversal approach, within a common vision, of all dimensions and levels of lifelong learning opportunities;
- Understanding diversity as cost-effective and as a strong sign of societal cohesion;





Delegates at the 2010 SCoTENS annual conference. From left to right: Dr Conor Galvin, John Anderson, Mary McGeown, Deborah Gadd, Mary Yarr

- · Restructuring cultures, policies and practices to respond to the diversity;
- Understanding, addressing and responding to the diverse needs of all learners through personalised learning;
- Understanding, identifying and removing barriers of the education system;
- Aiming at the presence (access and attendance), participation (quality learning) and achievement (quality outcomes).

Across the education system, **the key interventions for inclusive education** as the core of a refined EFA agenda are as follows:

- a guide to clear, common and participatory policy planning, implementation and monitoring;
- a visualisation of the interfaces and synergies between social and educational inclusion;
- an orientation to the design and implementation of inclusive curricula and schools to address all learners' needs:
- the conceptualisation of the role, profile and competencies of an inclusive teacher i.e.
 promoting the diversification of teaching practices for engaging the students effectively in the learning process.

The education system must be transformed in an integral and holistic way to make inclusion effective. In order to implement inclusive educational reform from a long-term perspective, UNESCO-IBE's main role in 2010-2011 is (i) supporting MOEs in the development and implementation of inclusive policy frameworks and strategies; (ii) supporting MOEs in the development and implementation of inclusive curricular frameworks (a comprehensive curricula vision increasingly represents a crucial tool to promote inclusive education); and (iii) contributing to creating a global, interregional knowledge network and dialogue on inclusion (e.g. IBE Community of Practice in Curriculum Development, online and face-to-face interactions).



2. Inclusive Education: Global and Regional Agendas

Global agendas around inclusion tend to focus on: (i) clarifying the relationship between equity and excellence as complementary, e.g. the OECD and European Council of Ministers have both issued statements to this effect; (ii) developing and implementing inter-sectoral and collaborative social policies for inclusive education grounded on the leading role of the state and strong partnerships; (iii) strengthening teachers' role, status and competencies; (iv) reaffirming non-formal, TVET and adult education (lifelong learning perspective); (v) developing and implementing flexible and relevant curricular frameworks (i.e. competency-based approaches); (vi) analysing and overcoming systemic barriers; (vii) establishing benchmarks and success indicators (where inclusive education is a process and an objective); and (viii) strategically and transparently injecting more financial resources.

Regional agendas for inclusion may be summarised as follows:

In **Africa** the key barriers are poverty, HIV-AIDS, conflict and gender roles, so that agendas are focusing on enlarging basic education, supporting teacher education and professional development, and establishing innovative approaches to non-formal school models.

In **the Arab States** there is a focus on learners with special educational needs, girls and refugees, while programmatic priorities include: training teachers; an increased use of ICTs; more closely linking TVET and non-formal education, and the provision of further infrastructure in conflict and post-conflict areas. Regional challenges include the raising of public awareness and acceptance of inclusive education; and enabling the monitoring of education systems, in particular about school culture and practice.

In **Asia and the Pacific** the key barriers include: malnutrition; lack of data on excluded learners; negativity towards inclusive education; and the remoteness and inaccessibility of many schools. The importance of addressing the diversity of learners' expectations and needs is recognised, but there is still a focus on learners with special education needs and children suffering in light of natural disasters. Regional priorities include the developing of social awareness and acceptance of diversity; developing teacher training; school and curriculum reform; school-based management reform, and the provision of further infrastructure.

In **Europe** there has been a focus on developing inclusive policies to address learners' diverse needs across various levels of the education system e.g. participatory curricular development, school-based management and teachers' competencies for inclusion. There is also some focus in Nordic countries on personalised learning i.e. paying attention to the specificity of learners' needs, not separating learners or presupposing expectations of learning achievement. Finally, some focus in the former Commonwealth of Independent States countries has been placed on learners with special education needs, with some reference to the defectology approach.



Lastly, in **Latin America** there has been a call for consensus around the common conceptual vision and core objectives of inclusive education i.e. equity, quality and social inclusion. Some progress has been made in terms of political and legislative frameworks, infrastructure, learning conditions, etc. However insufficient political will exists from the elite to change the power balance. There has been a recent focus on integrating teachers into inclusive education agendas through professional development, while considering their role more closely so as to move away from understanding teachers as 'implementers' towards understanding them as co-developers of educational and curricula change.

3. Inclusive curricula as a powerful tool for inclusion

In **defining inclusive curricula**, it is important to see the curriculum as a reflection of the kind of society to which we aspire, involving numerous political and technical dimensions. Therefore, the curriculum must be solidly grounded on an agreement between institutions and actors from politics, civil society and education.

The curriculum should also be understood as guiding both the development and implementation of the syllabus and the organisation of pedagogical and administrative action plans of an education system. Thus unified and strong curricular frameworks from early childhood onwards are highly relevant. It is also important to consider that the curricula do not constitute a prescriptive document, but an interactive, non-linear and dynamic process, leading to the improvement of the education system as a whole. Curricula can therefore be defined broadly to relation to objectives, structures, supports and disciplinary content, didactic strategies, management, learning outcomes, pedagogy and assessment of learning outcomes.

In terms of **inclusive curricular objectives and concepts**, the following key elements can be identified: (i) education should be underscored as a cultural, economic and social policy, which sees equity and quality as complementary concepts; (ii) strong universal public policies must be solidly grounded on principles of inclusion and diversity; (iii) it is essential to understand, respect and build upon individual, cultural and social diversities; and (iv) articulating and developing a comprehensive vision of citizenship education, primarily through solid and unified curricular concepts and frameworks, is essential.

With respect to **inclusive curricular frameworks**, **structures and supports**, the following core considerations should be underlined: (i) the combined orientation, density and strength of common universal concepts and visions with choice and flexibility for learning at the local and school levels – for example, a sound combination of centralised and decentralised systems with formal and nonformal life-long opportunities; (ii) the promotion of a diversity of frameworks, settings, provisions and processes, instead of institutional, curricular and pedagogical separation or specialisation i.e. strengthening what should be common and available to all through flexible and interconnected pathways; (iii) the application of competency-based approaches to provide the transversal axis of educational change, from aims and objectives to classroom practices; and (iv) a change in the



assessment rationale and tools within an inclusive mindset i.e. from penalisation and stigmatisation to guidance and support.

Considering **inclusive pedagogy, content, strategies, assessment and outcomes,** there is a particular need for: (i) integrating global, regional, national and local realities, expectations and demands (glo-local) to ensure relevance and variety to contexts and content; (ii) the reconceptualisation, revision and hierarchisation of inclusive classroom practices aimed at categories of students with special needs into practices for all, strengthening the work in heterogeneous learning environments (for example, peer-to-peer tutoring, cognitive strategies of instruction, self-regulated learning and memory strategies); and (iii) collaborative and active learning amongst teachers and students (group-work, discussion etc) with students participating freely in discovering new information (not just being 'filled' with information).

Finally, in terms of **inclusive curricular design and management of the curricula**, it is essential to: (i) encourage teamwork, collaboration and support among supervisors, school principals, teachers, students, parents and communities for inclusive and coherent policies in a common direction, namely the learning and welfare of the learners; and (ii) reconceptualise teachers' profile, role and practices, as curriculum co-developers from an inclusive curricular perspective.

4. Reconceptualising teachers' role, profile and competencies

There are five key points which should be made with respect to the reconceptualisation of teachers' role, profile and competencies. Firstly, teachers need to be **recognised**, **engaged and empowered as inclusive curriculum co-developers**. Indeed, 'understanding the articulation between the system's overall policies, school and classroom sectoral policies may allow the whole education sector to break the vicious circle of reciprocal demands made by governments on teachers and by teachers on governments'. (Braslavsky, 2001). Teachers should be 'active agents' in their own practices and students' progress (OECD, 2005), and policies should be more 'subjective' i.e. considering and sharing teachers' personal and social narratives in order to better understand what they are thinking and doing. This may help to develop a culture of trust within and outside the educational system and supports a sense of value and ownership of inclusive reform.

Secondly, it is important to reflect on **how we can develop positive teacher attitudes, tolerance and understanding of inclusion and diversity.** In particular, there is a strong need for all actors to understand equity and excellence as complementary, and diversity as human, as well as a potential resource, instead of a problem. Similarly, there should be a clear sense of teacher responsibility for all learners, which sees inclusive education as a refinement of teaching skills, not a separate category delineating responsibility for certain learners. In general, it is important to redefine current mindsets, identities and boundaries of teachers as well as other stakeholders, e.g. developing an awareness of existing discriminatory attitudes and practices; re-defining the ethos of teaching subject disciplines; and re-defining the roles and practices of teacher trainers.



Thirdly, it is essential to **engage teachers as competent professionals**, where teaching is seen as a 'knowledge-rich profession' in the education system and society (OECD, 2005), as reflected in ongoing high-quality teacher education programmes, increased salaries, better promotion opportunities etc. The term 'competent' in this context implies the development of core teaching competencies and relevant knowledge relating to learning differences, e.g. the ability to self-reflect on teaching practice (alone or with others); the ability to respond to diverse learners through flexible and relevant objectives, teaching methods, activities and assessment; and a greater focus on active student participation and learning.

Fourthly, this reconceptualisation is about **developing an understanding of the teacher within the larger context of inclusive schools, communities and societies.** This means reconsidering which stakeholders are involved in learning from a broader perspective (formal, non-formal and informal learning); reconsidering education as a social process which must respond to and integrate global, regional, national, local and personal realities, expectations, identities, demands and needs; and facilitating and creating opportunities for collaboration and support (e.g. a school principals, teachers, students, but also school administrators, inspectorates, higher education institutions and training centres, parents and communities). This should also help to ensure quality decision-making, support and accountability and overcome traditional questions of responsibility for certain students.

Finally, it is crucial to **recognise that inclusive teachers need to be supported and empowered by the education system and society as a whole.** Along these lines, it is important to develop inclusive teacher education which corresponds coherently to the expectations of inclusive teachers; develop inclusive legislative and policy frameworks to support comprehensive, high quality teachers' recruitment, training retention strategies; and raise societal awareness and support for teachers, taking into account interactive and dynamic relationships between teachers and other stakeholders to support reform. Indeed "when work is based on trust and confidence, with high expectations and supportive structures and procedures, people respond by trying to do their best. That is the key to success in education – and certainly in inclusion" (Halinen and Jarvinen, 2008).

In summary, the following key areas for profound, serious and frank policy discussion may include:

- The role of social and educational inclusion in respective societies and the need for reconceptualising teachers' attitudes, roles and competencies;
- Establishing what changes are necessary in pre-service training and continuous professional development, as well as in legislation, public policy and curricular frameworks;
- Developing political, legal and curricular frameworks as a critical orientation for both the
 development of teacher education, the curriculum, the renewal of school visions and practices for
 inclusion, and as an important reference point for teachers and communities;
- Identifying ways for engaging schools, teachers and the wider community in these processes of educational and curricular reform.



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TEACHER EDUCATION FOR INCLUSION: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN EUROPE

Dr Amanda Watkins Assistant Director, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education Dr Verity Donnelly Project Leader

Amanda Watkins

[This is an edited transcription of Dr Watkins and Dr Donnelly's address]

I'd like to start by thanking the Ministers and their representatives for their invitation to speak to you to-day, as well as SCoTENS as the conference organisers.

Tom Hesketh and Teresa O'Doherty first started talking to the agency group regarding the possibility for a SCoTENS event focusing on teacher education for inclusion at the beginning of the year. Verity and I were extremely pleased about this initiative because it's rare within the European context that people are devote an entire conference to this issue. It's usually a side issue which is sometimes debated at conferences, so we are extremely pleased to be involved in your discussions.

Following on from Renato's Opertti's virtuoso performance, you are going to have a little bit of a double act now. I'm not sure if this is going to be Morecombe and Wise or French and Saunders – you can debate that afterwards – but we'd like to give you a presentation introducing some of the general issues of the work of the European Agency, and some of the contexts which pick up a number of points highlighted by Renato Opertti. Then we would like to move on to some of the issues which are coming out of our project – Teacher Education for Inclusion: Issues and Challenges – involving 25 European countries, which is specifically looking at issues to do with preparing all teachers to work in inclusive settings. I would like to say that there are representatives from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland involved in this projects in the audience. So if they want to correct us at any point, or raise any other points, we would be grateful for that after the presentation.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education is an organisation which was established by the EU member countries. The slide here shows that we have our networks in 27 European countries, including Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and we have small offices in Denmark and Brussels as well as staff dotted around Europe working on different projects. We are now into our 14th year of operations. We started back in 1996 as an initiative of the Danish government when the EU programme Helios for the promotion of opportunities for people with disabilities came to an end. And at that time it was decided that there needed to be some form of permanent platform for debates regarding Special Needs and Inclusive Education at the European level, and the Agency was formed with a mission to be member countries' platform for collaboration, both for policy makers and practitioners in this area.



Our activities are to work towards the collection, analysis and dissemination of information on different priority themes and one of those is teacher education: specifically how can all teachers be prepared to work in a much more changing, diverse, challenging arena. This issue was highlighted by all of our member countries as being a priority for them. This isn't something that just you in Northern Ireland and the Republic are grappling with. We would say that from our work, and from work with the experts in our member countries, that there are more similarities in the issues being faced by teachers in classrooms and teacher educators than there are differences.

Renato mentioned that the Agency collaborates with a number of different European and international organizations we work with closely: the European Commission and Parliament, organisations such as Eurydice and Cedefop, and OCED, UNESCO and the UNESCO International Bureau of Education. These last two organisations in particular have been quite influential in thinking about teacher education for inclusion. The OECD work on teacher education for diversity probably highlights more similarities than differences with the approach that we are taking. Even though the OECD project in this area has a working definition which is maybe more geared towards children from ethnic minority and immigrant backgrounds than towards the wider concept of diversity that we are using, the issues that OECD countries are identifying as being problems and possible strategies for addressing those problems are really very similar to those being faced across Europe at the moment.

The Agency is funded by member countries and by the European Union. The reason that I include this slide is that it is a way of explaining how this fits with education policy generally at the European level. The Agency is run on the principle of subsidiarity – a wonderful word - and this basically means that it is totally independent from European direction. The reason for that is that at the European policy level education is not an area where there is any legislation written by European policy makers. Education is purely and simply the responsibility of member states.

But increasingly there are more and more agreements at the European level – particularly at the Council of Ministers level – regarding education. Over the last 10 years, since the EU Lisbon Objectives 2010 were written back in 2000, there have been more and more Council of Ministers' policy agreements, directives and resolutions which are influencing national level policy. The reason I want to highlight this is that there are more and more European level agreements which are filtering down into national level policy and legislation, and if there is one area where there are repeated Council resolutions, teacher education is that area.

The European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education provides lots of information resources which are freely available in different languages. Also, I am very pleased to say, recently we began providing things in Irish (gaelic).

The Agency works as far as possible to a very clear international policy context. We obviously work to Council resolutions, and to EU Education Ministers' guidance documents on education policy. We work to the UNESCO statements and declarations on Education for All, and, very importantly, we work within the framework which is now outlined within the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. And particularly we try to look at and explore how our member countries –



the majority of whom have signed the UN Convention, if they have not ratified the optional protocol – are dealing with Article 24. And Article 24 is quite important as it stresses one of the points Renato raised: inclusive education is not just about compulsory schooling – it is about educational opportunities at all levels – and when a country has signed and ratified the convention, and the optional protocol, they are agreeing to Article 24. I am not going to say too much more about that (I am going to join the workshop this afternoon which is going to debate this) except to say that sometimes Verity and I have a little bit of difficulty in explaining, being British, that the UK's position – that is the English and the Welsh representatives – insisting on a reservation when it came to signing and ratifying Article 24 of the Convention.

Something that we would like to stress before we start talking about the teacher education agenda is that from the Agency member countries position inclusion is not something that is to do with piecemeal changes. Inclusion has to be seen as a process which is very clearly based on systemic change. It has to be understood to concern a far wider range of children than just those who we might have traditionally thought of as having Special Educational Needs, based on disabilities, learning difficulties or different disadvantages. It has to be understood to involve a curriculum for everything that is considered academic and social learning. Curriculum goals and implementation have to reflect this dual purpose, and this means that consideration of inclusion and inclusive education means a move away from subject orientated-curricula to learning, learning goals and competency based curricula. The final point to make is that inclusive education is an ongoing process, not a state which countries can say they have ever achieved.

As you will be aware, the Agency covers a number of different thematic topics and priority areas, teacher education being one of those, which our member countries have suggested present issues for them, or that they would like in some way to explore and get more information on. Every now and again we have the opportunity to look horizontally across these topics and try to identify as what we see as being the key principles emerging across different thematic areas in relation to inclusion. The most recent of these reviews was completed last year and these were some of the key messages which were coming out from Agency country members' work.

The first one of these was the need for strategies, policies and practices that will widen participation to increase educational opportunity for all learners. And then there were a number of factors regarding the promotion of inclusion which appear relevant across all countries' perspectives and across different levels of education. The first one is organisational culture and ethos. Are our educational organisations operating in a culture and ethos for the promotion of inclusion? Educational leaders here are key players. What is the vision of head teachers and principals and deans of faculties? Do they have personal visions which translate into policies and organisational culture for inclusion? What are the support structures in the different levels of organisation within the system of education in a country? Are there flexible resourcing systems in place? And do policies and legislation favour inclusion, and the message from our countries is that favoring inclusion is an active choice on the part of policy makers and legislators – it's not something which should be implicit and left as a developmental grass roots initiative. It's something which should have policy makers at national level taking a lead, and outlining a vision and a pathway for.



Probably the key issue that was looked at in this analysis was the issue of how all teachers can be prepared to work in systems which try to work towards these principles of widening participation, working within a positive culture and ethos and within support structures which are designed to promote inclusive education.

Across Europe we can see that it doesn't matter what position on the journey towards inclusive education countries are at, there are a number of factors which can be seen to support inclusion in all countries' systems. A wider, flexible, more diverse curriculum is one – for example, the provision of sport is one of the key factors. Developing funding models which move away from resourcing individual children based on their label of having some form of special need or disability or difference to more flexible systems where individual schools, consortia of schools or even regions can make decisions about flexible funding which meets the needs of groups of children as well as individuals is another.

The development of resource centres and systems for mainstream schools is another area, and crucially here we see in quite a number of countries the transformation of special schools and the special school sector into a resource for the mainstream sector as being a crucial factor.

But there are still some challenges, the first of which is the dichotomy between the need for our education systems to achieve higher academic achievements, versus meeting special educational needs. The second challenge relates to the secondary education sector. In all countries inclusive education appears to be something which is – let's put it simply – a little bit more manageable in the primary sector, where you have a model of one teacher-one class and a different way of organising the curricula and the delivery of the curricula. It is very interesting to note that in countries that have traditionally had quite a high level of inclusive education and quite a high quality of education for children with different types of needs, particularly the Scandinavian countries, they operate in the main a Folkskole or fully comprehensive school system where children go to school at 6 and they remain until they are 16 – there is no transition, no change in the basic model of schooling, or if there is a change it's a very gradual one. One focus of a number of Scandinavian systems of education is on the social aspect of schooling – local schooling in the local community, with a young person remaining in a community school throughout their compulsory schooling career.

Across Europe there are still 2% of children in segregated educational settings. And this figure has remained relatively stable from 1999 to the present day. What we have actually seen in the last two years is a slight increase in that figure across Europe – from 2008 to 2010 Agency figures suggest that across Europe there has been an increase of 0.2% of children who are in segregated settings as opposed to mainstream fully inclusive settings. This is something which is not just an issue at national level – it is an issue that the Council of Ministers are taking very seriously. For the European Union Programme for Education and Training 2020 there are a number of objectives that have been set which will be worked towards, and one of the indicators for those objectives and benchmarks is the percentage of children in segregated settings across Europe and how that moves and hopefully decreases in a ten year period.



One of the other priorities that has been recognised by the Council of Ministers is preparing all teachers to work in inclusive settings. I would just like to highlight to you now a couple of policy statements from the European Union which sets in context teacher education for inclusion and some of the challenges which we are facing. In May of this year under the Spanish Presidency of the European Union the Council of Ministers highlighted a number of key messages. The majority of these stress the importance of inclusive education systems as a major tool for promoting societal inclusion. It is quite interesting to reflect a little bit on a difference in wording and a difference in terminology and a difference in perceived thinking that is coming from the Council of Ministers, the European Commission and the European Parliament. The Lisbon 2010 objectives had an implicit message that education was a tool for economic growth. Education and training were key factors in promoting economic development in European societies. But the messages which are now coming across after a ten year period of the Lisbon objectives are much more in line with these May Council conclusions. Education and Training 2020 uses these sorts of words: inclusion not integration, social cohesion not economic growth.

In 2007 the European Commission highlighted to the Council and the Parliament their views on the need to take very seriously the changing demands on teachers in European classroom. There are estimated to be around 6,500,000 professionals who are formally recognised as teachers across Europe. The Commission's concern is that training systems that were in place and being planned were not taking enough notice of the change that was going on in society and being reflected in classrooms. So the May statement was one of the first to really start pushing the Council of Ministers towards asking: What can we do as a collective group of Ministers to highlight these facts and then perhaps to raise these issues within our own education systems?

The Council of Ministers response actually acknowledges the changing systems in society. The Council acknowledges the need to confront teachers' abilities to meet the challenges of social and cultural diversity in classrooms. They talk about the importance of promoting initial teacher education, early career support, continuing professional development, and the acquisition of competencies to enable teachers to teach in heterogeneous classrooms.

All these messages emphasise issues to do with the fact that inclusive education has to be viewed as a shared responsibility. It can't be viewed as a marginal issue which only a few people deal with. Inclusion isn't something that can be seen either as a separatist agenda or be dealt with in a separatist way. Inclusive education is now recognised at Council and Commission level, and at the Agency member countries' level it has really been essential in promoting social equity and as a constituent element of lifelong learning. Preparing all teachers to work in inclusive settings is a prerequisite for inclusive education.

The word 'responsibility' here is really quite crucial, because one element of successful inclusive education is teachers taking responsibility for all learners within their classrooms. But if teachers are going to be supported to have those attitudes and to have the capacity to develop the knowledge and skills to be able to take responsibility for all learners, it means that teacher educators must also take on a new set of responsibilities including viewing themselves as educators of all



teachers and educators of teachers for inclusive education. We can also see that there might be new responsibilities for Higher Education Institutions where they may need to review their course structures and review how they prioritise policies and visions for promoting inclusive education. But there are also responsibilities at the policy level, and national policy makers, not just for education but also for teacher education, need to see promotion of inclusive education as something that they should consider very seriously.

I'd like to just quickly highlight a summary of the EU agenda for teacher education. There are 10 key points that the Council of Ministers have raised in terms of key aspects of this work (see Figure 1). You are probably very familiar with a number of these. What I would say is that inclusive education is not separate to any one of these – it should be seen as an integral theme throughout each one of those policy agenda issues.

EU Agenda for Teacher Education 1) Promote professional values and attitudes 2) Improve teacher competences 3) Effective recruitment to promote educational quality 4) Improve the quality of Initial Teacher Education 5) Introduce Induction programmes for all new teachers 6) Provide mentoring support to all teachers 7) Improve quality and quantity of Continuing Professional Development 8) School Leadership 9) Ensure the quality of Teacher Educators 10) Improve Teacher Education Systems Priorities for improving Teacher Education that were identified by Ministers of Education in the Council Conclusions of 2007, 2008 and 2009

Figure 1: EU Agenda for Teacher Education

What I would like to come onto now is the final message. There are sources of information that we need to actively look at in considering how the challenges I have outlined can be met. There are many, many colleagues who work to prepare teachers to work in inclusive classrooms already. There are numerous examples of practice within your own countries and across Europe where we could say 'this is how things could develop'. I would say that there is no country that has got everything right at the moment though. There is not one country where all teachers are being prepared to work as inclusive teachers in inclusive classrooms.

Practice in inclusive schools needs to be another source of inspiration in this area. Teacher educators need to become more familiar with what happens in inclusive classrooms and what good



inclusive teachers do. There are also good examples of inclusive education going on in your Higher Education Institutions and maybe again teacher educators need to be aware of how educators within higher education can be inclusive in their own practice.

As a final message from this half of this double act, I'd like to say that possibly some of the key sources of inspiration come from learners within inclusive settings themselves. In 2007 the Agency was privileged to organise a hearing of young people with disabilities and special needs in the Portuguese Parliament, and they had the opportunity to voice their views on what it meant to be educated in inclusive settings. I would just like to leave you with two messages from this event. The first is that inclusive education is best if the conditions are right. The young people who were involved in this particular event highlighted teachers' attitudes and skills as being the crucial aspect for their personal success in inclusive settings. And finally the message that came across from these young people was that yes, inclusive education is beneficial to us, but it is also beneficial to other people in the school setting.

That message is the final one that I'd like to leave you with before handing over to Verity – that inclusive education is not just about the young people who we are identifying who have differences. Quality inclusive education systems are about improved learning opportunities for all learners, and in improving learning opportunities for a few young people you are possibly impacting on the majority of the young people your student teachers come into contact with.

Verity Donnelly

As the second half of the double act, I am not sure if I should do a song and dance or something. That might be more interesting for you, but I am going to stick with the good old power point presentation, and I am going to move on to the detail of the project, and more about the issues and challenges that it has raised for us and that we are currently trying to tackle. As Amanda said, our projects come from the decisions made by the Agency's member countries, and teacher education was top priority. We have got 55 experts from 25 countries taking part in the activities and we think they are a very strong combination of special needs educators, specialist teacher educators and policy makers, and mainstream teacher educators and policy makers. So we have a good mix, and (reflecting the growing importance of this area of work) we are also joined by representatives of OECD and UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE) as participant observers, and by the European Commission.

Our intentions in this project are to build on what is already developing in some countries. Obviously we have got a really rich source of information across our member countries, and we are identifying project activities and outputs that have a maximum input impact in those countries, along with international level debate, and looking at the essential question outlined earlier: How are mainstream teachers prepared by their initial training to be inclusive? And, importantly, I think because we are working across so many different countries and different contexts, we recognize that countries are at different starting points and have different histories, particularly in terms of inclusion



and teacher education, and we need to see that as a strength. We recognize that no country has all the answers. Amanda said that inclusion is a process and not a state, and a lot of countries are working towards inclusion and have a lot to offer in the debate, and we have some very strong examples of practice, but we learn from diversity and that is a principle for the project, and we would say an aim for inclusive education.

The project actually has three main activity tracks. The first one is international policy and research literature. Amanda talked about the policy review, which is international documents and reports, and the second element is an international literature review which is available on the Agency website. This is a review of worldwide literature after the year 2000, and again a strength of this is that we had contributions from the experts taking part including from literature that was in languages other than English.

We have also collected country information, so that country teams of experts and policy makers have put together and provided us with a report on the current picture of teacher education in their country, and we are also working towards developing a profile of inclusive teachers. So we are looking at policy and practice in teacher education across all these countries.

Our country reports collect information on the central project question, and use a common format so that by the end of this year we hope to have all the reports from the various countries on a data base which will make it possible for you to search for information on particular questions across all those countries. We were conscious that there was a lot of information already in the Eurydice reports and the Eurybase country reports, so we have built on those without repeating information. The information from all the country reports will be pulled together to provide a synthesis report, and also a bridging document which will highlight the key issues and the evidence that has come to support those issues (based on country visits and reports and from the literature reviews and other aspects of the project).

I am now going to move on to some of the underpinning principles and then some of the emerging recommendations of the project. The project is due to finish in Spring 2012, so these are the interim findings and recommendations in draft form. One underpinning principle is that the reform of teacher education must be part of wider societal reform and that inclusion requires collaboration between policy makers to ensure a holistic approach. We have heard from both Renato and Amanda this morning about the need for everybody to work together and for it to be a holistic approach to societal reform. There was some work from the Council of Europe on teaching for socio-cultural diversity in 2009 which talked about the process of inclusion transforming communities and schools to become 'diversity sensitive' rather than adding things on to existing structures. Equity must be at the centre of general policy decisions, and not limited to peripheral policies designed to correct the effects of general policies that have not led to equity of justice. There is a tendency to 'bolt on' themes rather than looking for fundamental change – we are forever bolting on and playing catch up to make things more inclusive.



In the project we have used the UNESCO's broader definition of inclusion, but it is evident from the country reports that there is a lot of variety across countries arising from differences in legislation, and different historic and political contexts. At a recent project meeting in Zurich, keynote speaker Tony Booth said inclusion is a principled approach to the development of both education and society. I think that gives us a strong steer for the sort of change we are looking to move towards. Some countries are moving away from using inclusion as a term. Terms like 'school for all', with attention paid to schools being diversity sensitive, are increasingly being introduced.

What is fundamental is clarity about the different perspectives in their proper context, so that students, teachers and teacher educators can make informed choices. Are we are talking about special educational needs or disability or about wider groups of learners whom we can refer to as vulnerable or marginalised? Or are we talking about increasing participation and reducing exclusion for all learners? I think that the latter is what we are talking about. And learners include adults in the community: adults in the school are learners and are in that inclusive community. If we don't talk about that broader definition, how can we expect teachers to take responsibility for all the learners they meet in their classes, and provide relevant outcomes for all, including a relevant curriculum. They have got to have that belief that they are responsible for everybody, and see themselves as teachers of children, not just deliverers of curriculum content, whether it is from the books that Renato referred to or other means – they need to be more dynamic in meeting learners' needs.

The country report from Spain pointed out that many courses in teacher education are linked to the evolution of special needs education and the integration of learners with special educational needs rather than tackling diversity issues more broadly – this is a key issue that a lot of countries are tackling at the moment. So this reform has got to include clarification of the terminology around inclusion and around diversity and must, we feel, move away from categorising and labelling children and young people as this, in turn, encourages provision which is separate from the mainstream. We also suggest that inclusion and diversity issues need to be infused across teacher education courses – involvement in one or two courses on special education and inclusion may only reinforce a sense of separation. Florian and Rouse have pointed out in the literature that modules or units tend to reinforce this sense of separation, and lead students to believe that only those who have taken the particular specialist courses can teach learners from those particular groups.

So if the curriculum is a resource – a flexible, dynamic resource to support learning – increasing flexibility is needed in initial teacher education parallel to schools; not delivering a set content, but delivering learning through varied experiences to counter one of the most powerful influences that emerge in the literature, which is our own experience of education. If we haven't been educated in an inclusive setting, sometimes it is quite hard to actually visualise what that might look like. But again, diverse experience is needed to try and build on that. Roger Slee suggests that critical thinking about identity and difference, privilege and disadvantage, inclusion and exclusion are fundamental things in teacher education. He makes reference to a system that in some areas – and I think particularly in the UK – are tightly bound by targets and high stakes assessment and so on. But Slee suggests thinking about archers as well as targets, and I think that gives a good image of broadening the agenda.



So we are back to one of the key points that is emerging. All teachers must be capable of teaching all learners. They must know how and when to use a range of practices and become informed users of research and advice, able to make decisions informed by theory and research, feedback and classroom evidence. To ensure that, we need to focus more on the things that learners have in common and less on their differences and that there are fundamental things like social and emotional factors in learning; the need to be motivated by seeing learning as relevant; the need for support at times of stress and the shared values that have been referred to before. And of course teachers need to move from planning for a majority and then considering additional needs, to planning using universal designs providing options for learners with different needs – I think it was Libby Purves on Radio 4 who referred to children as kaleidoscopes and not clones. It is meeting that mixture of needs, so that good practice is essentially the same for all learners, requiring innovative thinking and high expectations to increase learning capacity, and the use of interactive approaches to involve learners more effectively.

In the literature review there is reference to a lot of research which highlights the importance of appropriate attitudes and values to support inclusive practice and effective relationships. Again Rouse talks about knowing, doing and believing, and Shulman talks about the apprenticeship of the head, the hand and the heart, and the importance again of those values, and the fundamental belief in being able to teach and to meet the needs of all learners.

It is less clear from the literature how these beliefs and attitudes are actually developed, but certainly there are suggestions which include direct interaction and practical experience with people with diverse needs – but again such experiences need to be mediated, with time for interaction for discussion and reflection.

Teaching practice is obviously a key element in the preparation of teachers. It needs to be carefully planned and supported by intellectual analysis, and there is a lot of reference to a theory-practice gap. The importance of research skills and the use of research findings in practice; skills in observation and assessment; classroom management; behaviour management, skills in collaboration and development of active and learner centered pedagogy are all key features that emerged from the literature and from our country reports and discussions with experts.

Student teachers need to be placed in inclusive settings, which is not that easy to manage in many countries, so there is a range of different approaches trying to provide those experiences for teachers either within college or within communities to supplement teaching practice and to make sure that students have a range of experiences with diverse learners and also that they are appropriately supervised by mentors and supervising teachers, who again have the appropriate attitudes and values to support inclusion. This highlights a need for closer collaboration between training institutions and schools and this is something that we are looking at – Finland in particular has an interesting model which is Teacher Demonstration Schools, where teacher educators are actually working in schools alongside students and that is something that we will be looking at more in the spring. Other countries too are developing the roles of teachers in schools and looking at the role of other school personnel and school leaders in the development of teachers.



We are looking particularly in this project at mainstream initial teacher education, but we are constantly reminded that teacher education is a continuum, and we need to bear that in mind. This project is focusing on the initial phase because of manageability, but we need to bear in mind that teachers are lifelong learners, so they go from their initial training to their induction, and after that further professional learning opportunities need to be developed for students, but also for teacher educators, particularly if they haven't had much experience of diversity. I have talked before about the importance of our own experience of education and about models of education, and the impact and messages passed to the students and others. The need to develop teacher educators so that they can model reflective and inclusive practice and lead the change process in teacher education, informed by the experiences of early career teachers, is another finding emerging from the project. There doesn't seem to be a lot of systematic follow-up of new teachers, and using that information to feed back and impact on teacher education courses is key. There is some work currently going on in a couple of countries and we will be looking at that, but at the moment this seems to be an area for development.

So we stress the importance of maintaining the status of teachers with academic rigour and a continuum of professional development to ensure that they are lifelong learners and that they can think through, adapt, and apply research findings, and act as facilitators of learning for all. The McKinsey report referred to the quality of an education system that cannot exceed the quality of its teachers, so there is also a need to address teacher recruitment, to get the best graduates, to get key people to become teachers and to continue developing them into the profession. The research also shows the need for statements or competencies for teachers to support a shared understanding of quality teaching. The profile of an inclusive teacher may include (and these are just some thoughts from the literature): subject knowledge, knowledge of child adolescent development, pedagogical skills, skills of collaboration, and a will to continue professional development.

According to the country reports, approximately half of the countries already have, or are developing, some form of competencies. Several more countries have standards and there is a variety of models – some are set in legislation; some countries are required to have competencies, but the development of the detail is at the discretion of individual colleges and universities. Within that, a number have content relating to inclusion or diversity, but this is often described by country colleagues as being ad hoc, with separate units for special education, cultural diversity and so on. And many such units form a very small percentage of initial teacher education courses, so most countries recognise that this is an area for development, and they are faced with the difficult task of trying to square the circle, ensuring appropriate coverage of diversity issues but not separating content out – trying to infuse it, but maintaining the importance of these key issues.

Teacher competencies provide a shared understanding of quality inclusive teaching. Competencies represent a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities which are obtained or developed during the process of learning by the student. I think we see competencies as something that is developed over a longer period of time, and certainly would go on developing throughout a teacher's career, whereas standards and learning outcomes are assessed in a summative assessment at the end of a course. As we have described in our paper on the profile – competencies



are statements describing teacher actions that can be demonstrated, providing evidence that teachers hold certain beliefs and have obtained certain knowledge, understanding, skills and abilities. For teachers there is clearly the need to include, in addition to academic and interpersonal competencies, knowledge and skills needed for responsive pedagogy in an increasingly personalised and learner centered system. Competencies also require different forms of evidence, and some countries are developing the use of portfolios which require collaboration and self reflection.

A couple of examples from the member countries:

In Austria colleagues have referred to competencies for an ever changing environment – which I think is key, because the current context in education requires teachers to cope well with change and with new challenges. A small study in the Flemish community within Belgium has found that special needs expertise is not as important as some of the general competencies and attitudes for teaching for inclusion.

So one of the outputs of the project is to develop a profile of inclusive teachers and this slide shows some of the main considerations. As well as researching the literature, we had five country study visits in the spring of 2010: to Northern Ireland, Portugal, Sweden, the Netherlands and Hungary. Each visit included a group of experts and gave opportunities not only for networking and discussion about different country contexts, but also to look at these particular questions about the development of a profile. Experts were looking at attitudes, knowledge and skills – What initial education do teachers need to develop those? What are the implications for all teacher educators, and then looking at the bigger picture, what systemic changes are needed to allow them to be implemented and what policy framework is needed to allow all of this to happen? So it's a large agenda that we are trying to tackle between now and spring 2012.

In terms of future activities, all the country reports will be uploaded to our website and data base. We will be writing a summary report – a synthesis of all the country information. We are planning another series of country based meetings next spring to look specifically at the validation of the profile – to discuss the profile in more detail, to look at the competencies, to look at the implications for teacher education and to agree dissemination strategies. We will have an end point international conference in spring 2012 to launch the project outputs and the profile, and we will be translating and printing all the materials in our member country languages.

So all the information about the project is on our website (www.european-agency.org) . Contact details are there – please feel free to contact us for more information. Here are some shots of our website - the Teacher Education for Inclusion Project web area – which again outlines information about the project and will give you access to country reports, the data base and also the international policy statements and the research literature review.



WORKSHOP 1 - RACE

Dr Karl Kitching University College Cork

Dr. Kitching facilitated the workshop by discussing different classroom 'scenes' from his ethnographic research where race is re-constructed in a new migrant school context. Various issues were drawn out by the participants as important to educate teachers at all points on the professional development continuum. They particularly included the need for meaningful and extended academic English language support for certain minority language students, in tandem with recognition of the languages that minority ethnic and migrant children may use in the home or with peers of shared ethno-linguistic heritage in the school. Other points that were raised included a need to challenge the normalising and reductive manner in which teachers may discuss race-focused texts and topics, where representations of racisms as happening 'in the past' can take the focus off how schools and society can be subtly complicit in sustaining race inequality contemporarily.

The importance of teachers understanding the specific issues facing migrant and minority ethnic communities in contexts with particular local and state-level histories (e.g. sectarianism in Northern Ireland, Gaelic Nationalism in the South) was raised. Debates were had over the 'good intentions' on the part of practitioners towards migrant and minority ethnic students. Karl made the point that anti-racism in education needs to move beyond viewing racism as simply an overt, singular and intentional act, one that is always 'obvious' as racist, and one that can be neatly resolved through disciplinary sanctions against isolated students. In other words, the patterned outcomes of practitioners' actions for minoritised students need to be considered the gold standard for critical judgement, not their intentions.

Critical attention must be given to how schools structure assessments and learning experiences for minority and migrant students, on the how and *whom* of disciplinary sanctions, on how meaningfully the school seeks out and listens to the voices of minoritised parents, and on how the stereotyping of different ethnic groups as if their educational outcomes were embodied 'traits' is a form of culturalist racism. Curricular approaches and school policies need to interrogate how racism is adapted and race is re-constructed in particular locales through their histories, through housing provision, through school access and tracking procedures, and also through the manner in which 'class' or 'gender' issues can be used to mask what are actually - or also - issues of racism in school. The social and historical construction of race needs to be meaningfully explored through the curriculum, as such discussions are markedly lacking. Teacher education must take seriously the research-based, emergent narratives of first and second generation migrant children as well as the documented experiences of Traveller and other minority ethnic children across Ireland in order to inspire creative curricular and school policy anti-racism.



WORKSHOP 2 – SPECIAL EDUCATION

Mr Pat Curtin
National Council for Special Education (Rol)
Dr Jacqueline Lambe
University of Ulster

The editors did not receive a report from this workshop.

WORKSHOP 3 – ACCESS AND TRAVELLERS

Dr Lisa Keane
Trinity College Dublin
Dr Joe Travers
St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

Addressing the barriers and challenges to inclusion in schools

The presentation in this workshop addressed the issue of **how schools addressed the barriers and challenges to inclusion**. It reported on a DES funded research project, which examined this question through six case studies of three primary and three post-primary schools in the Republic of Ireland (Travers et al, 2010). The schools were chosen based on feedback by key informants in the system. The data set included 72 interviews with school personnel, 314 questionnaires and 10 day-long student observations. The definition of inclusion used incorporated students with special educational needs, students experiencing educational disadvantage and ethnic minority students. Key findings were presented at the school level, teacher/class level and child/family/community level and the implications for teacher education were also outlined.

LEVEL ONE: THE SCHOOL

Leading and supporting inclusive practices: the principal and coordinators

A key finding of the study was the force for inclusion created in the schools by the combined power of the principal and leadership-oriented coordinators working together. The effect of this duo working together galvanised support for change in the direction of inclusive policies and practices.

Prioritising support through flexibility in models of provision

A key feature of all the case study schools was innovation and flexibility in models of support and organisation. The following sub themes emerged: Early intervention; Flexibility in timetabling; Team teaching; Moving towards collaborative cultures.



Early intervention

In two of the primary schools early intervention was interpreted as occurring in Junior Infants where intensive in-class support was provided in literacy and numeracy.

Flexibility in timetabling

In one of the primary schools the barrier of coordinating timetabling and reducing disruptions to the mainstream classes was overcome to a great extent by providing support for the junior, middle and senior sections of the school at different times of the day. This ensured greater certainty for the class teacher around the timing of support, less disruption to the mainstream class timetable, more concentrated time for support work and a maximising of the time the whole class was together, which aids planning, curriculum coverage and monitoring of progress and tracking of pupil attendance. The concentration of support was aided by the pooling of all of the support teachers together as a team.

One of the post-primary schools solved the dilemma of providing intensive tuition to a small group in the key subject areas without withdrawing pupils from another subject area by offering learning support as a subject option. This has many advantages in terms of the status of the option and the fact that what the students are getting is supplementary and not replacing subject work in English and Mathematics.

Team teaching

All of the schools had embraced team teaching as part of a flexible model of support. There was evidence of the coordinators and special education team assuming a leadership role on the issue and being very successful in selling it to the wider school in the interests of the students. In one of the post-primary schools the coordinator was very clear that teachers had a professional obligation to collaborate in team teaching when it was in the best interests of the students. There was some contradictory evidence in comparison to the literature in relation to streaming. In one of the post-primary schools the interaction of a lowest streamed class with virtually full-time in-class support led to the class academically surpassing the next stream up. The level of in-class support seemed to be facilitated by the concentration of allocated resource hours in that single class. However, some of the teachers alluded to the social disadvantages for the students in the streamed class.

Moving towards collaborative cultures

There was very strong commitment across all of the schools to building a team approach to inclusion. In one of the schools the importance attached to planning was very evident, particularly between teachers working at the same grade and between teachers and support teachers engaged in team teaching. The barrier of doing this formally and adequately without eroding teaching and learning time was overcome by doing it outside pupil-contact time and school hours. In this school there was also a culture of teachers of all levels of experience mutually observing each other teaching and sharing resources on the school server. The practices in the school of formally planning as a team outside school hours at grade level and with support teachers, providing structured opportunities for colleagues to observe each other teaching and sharing and allowing access to each others' resources on the school server, amount to the beginnings of new cultural practices that have not



been the norm in Irish schools. Another of the primary schools was involved in an inter-school collaborative support project enabled by using the virtual learning environment, Moodle.

Providing social and emotional support to students: buddy systems, pastoral support

There was a deep appreciation of the role of social and emotional supports to students across all six schools. There was evidence from one of the pupil observations of the benefits of the buddy system in the classroom. There was a very strong emphasis on pastoral support across all six schools. There was a focus on a number of aspects: the impact of the school philosophy and environment, the potential impact that teachers can have on students, and the work of specific staff such as counsellors and chaplains. The absolute importance of building a relationship with the children was stressed by many.

Intercultural awareness

Intercultural awareness is an important aspect when including minority ethnic and minority language students. Eighty references are made to intercultural awareness in relation to themes of cultural weeks/days, celebrating and appreciating diversity, and issues relating to Travellers.

Curricular relevance

Certain curricular areas were highlighted as facilitating inclusion. These included Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE), including different religions in Religious Education, and Environmental and Social Studies (ESS) – in giving students the opportunity for project-based rather than exam-oriented work. The wider role of the Junior Certificate Schools Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied was also stressed.

Continuing professional development

Another important aspect for teachers was the need for continuous professional development, which was most frequently mentioned in relation to SEN by class and subject teachers. All of the SEN coordinators in the six schools had specialist qualifications and in some cases led professional development initiatives in the school. In addition they helped staff to prioritise areas of need and arranged on-site professional development to address these needs.

Inclusive policies

Several policies were mentioned that facilitate inclusion. Particular attention was paid to enrolment policies to ensure they are inclusive. To overcome the barrier of discriminating in favour of members of their own faith, one of the Catholic primary schools does not prioritise Catholic children. They include all the children in the area in age order.



LEVEL TWO: THE TEACHER/CLASS

Varied and differentiated teaching methodologies

This overarching theme of teaching methodologies captures the practices that teachers use in the classroom to allow for the successful inclusion of students in the school and the class. These include behaviour management, differentiation and anchored instruction.

Support from special needs assistants

An important factor reported in facilitating inclusion for children was the deployment of special needs assistants.

Time and emphasis on preparation and planning

Planning and preparation was seen as a means of facilitating inclusion. While all the schools had formal planning procedures in place, the most striking system of planning described was the one used in primary school C. Teachers at each class level collaborate to plan fortnightly and termly. They use a planning template and stay back after school to plan. Language support and learning support/resource teachers and class teachers also meet after school to plan for team teaching.

Teaching resources

References were made to the teaching materials that teachers avail of, with the majority of these references being specific to children from a minority background, which highlights the strengths that the six schools have in using materials to target and help this specific group of students. Having access to libraries, books and interactive whiteboards were also mentioned as important resources.

LEVEL THREE: CHILD /FAMILY /COMMUNITY

A number of issues arose at the level of parents/family in terms of practices to include all students. These issues were further broken down into the following themes: engaging parents, collaboration with other schools and agencies, and extra-curricular engagement.

Engaging parents

Within the theme of engaging parents a number of sub themes emerged: communication with parents, helping in the classroom, support of the Home School Liaison officer and the support of parents' associations.



Collaboration with other schools and agencies

These included links with primary schools particularly around transition, links with local businesses, community agencies and social services.

Extra-curricular engagement

All of the schools offered extra-curricular activities to students to enhance their school life and provide them with extra opportunities. Activities included breakfast / lunch clubs, a bedtime reading club, homework clubs, vocational opportunities, and sporting and musical clubs.

CHILDREN'S VOICES

The perspectives of students on what makes them feel included or not included in their schools, based on the findings from questionnaire responses and individual interviews, indicated the importance of the social aspects of inclusion for students across all ages and educational settings in the study. In response to questions about feeling not included, the most common theme to emerge in the questionnaire responses, but not in the individual interviews, related to the issue of bullying. There were explicit references to physical and verbal aggression. However, exclusion and isolation in terms of being left out of a game, left alone, having no one to play with or not being invited to join in games, were viewed by students as contributing to making children feel that they are not included or do not belong in school. Other themes that emerged as barriers to inclusion included not having friends, negative teacher-pupil relations, negative impact of support from the special needs assistants and difficulty with schoolwork. Minor themes included the presence of rubbish affecting the physical environment of the school and inequality.

The most common theme to emerge when students were asked what makes them feel included in their schools was the theme of 'playing games together'. The positive atmosphere in the school and the social aspect of having friends for playing, talking, and listening also contributed to making all children feel included. Art and PE were the only school subjects specifically mentioned with any frequency by the students in addition to practical tasks and activity learning in the classroom.

In general, students portrayed their teachers in a positive light, but suggested that teachers could help to make all children feel included in school by engaging in more group activities and by responding to individual needs. Students view the principal as a caring benefactor who has an influence on discipline issues. One theme that occurred across all the schools to make students feel that they are included was the need for the principal to communicate with the students and listen to their voices.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Teacher education

A philosophy of inclusion needs to permeate all teacher education programmes based around the right of children to benefit from an appropriate education.

Programmes of teacher education should be permeated by principles of differentiation and emphasise collaborative planning, active pedagogy, use of digital and e-learning technologies and curricular and assessment relevance.

There is a need for a reconceptulisation of early intervention and prevention strategies for oral language, literacy and mathematics.

The concerns of teachers dealing with students with behaviour difficulties need to be further addressed.

The provision of social and emotional support systems for students needs to be further strengthened as a means of increasing attendance, reducing behaviour difficulties and providing alternatives to suspension.

The facilitation of team teaching in mixed ability classes needs to be strengthened. Professional development for principals and coordinators should include an emphasis on leading and supporting change for inclusion. Expectations need to be higher: Do we need performance management indicators of inclusion? Regulars audits of inclusion?

Professional development for coordinators should include an emphasis on leading and supporting change for inclusion.

There is a need for a comprehensive system of professional development for teachers in inclusive education that allows for differentiated levels of specialist expertise across the system.

Programmes of professional development should address, inter alia, pedagogy for active learning, differentiation, collaborative planning, use of resources, assessment and the use of digital and e-learning technologies.

Given the integral role that class and subject teachers play in English language development in addition to the support provided by language support teachers, all should have an opportunity to attend professional development courses on teaching minority ethnic and minority language students.

Measures to develop the use of formative assessment such as assessment for learning need to be promoted at all levels of teacher education.



There is a need for further guidance in the area of early intervention in primary schools.

There is a need for specific modules on teaching and learning in multi-ethnic and multi-lingual classrooms in teacher education programmes at all levels.

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WORKSHOP 4 – DISABILITY

Dr Bronagh Byrne Queen's University Belfast

This well attended workshop gave colleagues the opportunity to explore what an 'inclusive education system' looks like in practice for children with disabilities, drawing on some of the current debates in the fields of education and disability. The workshop also sought to explore the kinds of support teachers felt they need in order to facilitate the development of an inclusive education system for children and young people with disabilities.

The session began with a short presentation on conceptualisations of inclusion in a disability context. It highlighted that the terms 'integration' and 'inclusion' were often used interchangeably in a disability context, but that these in fact refer to very different practices. Specifically, 'integration' is merely an issue of location and one which positions the disabled child as the 'problem' and as a barrier to their own learning. Here, the emphasis is on the child adapting to an existing and unproblematised education system. This approach suggests that, rather than adapt premises or teaching strategies, schools could effectively continue as they are. In contrast, 'inclusion' focuses not on the quantity of disabled children in the education system but on the quality of their experience. This approach focuses on identifying the barriers which disable children within education and finding solutions to these.

The adoption of a new international law – the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – which came into force in May 2008, was discussed. Participants were informed that Article 24 of this new international treaty clearly establishes the right to education for all people with disabilities, including children, without discrimination and on the basis of equal opportunity. Significantly it requires States to ensure an 'inclusive education system' at all levels. To achieve this, States are required to ensure that effective individualised support measures and reasonable accommodation are provided in environments that maximise academic and social



development and which are consistent with the goal of full inclusion. States are also required to facilitate the learning of Braille, sign language and alternative means of communication, and to ensure that staff in education settings receive a range of training in, for example, disability awareness and the use of communication approaches and educational techniques to support children with disabilities in the classroom.

This rights-based approach to inclusion formed the basis of the discussion in the remainder of the session. Participants shared their own experiences and challenges in facilitating an inclusive education system for children with disabilities. The new obligation of States to develop an inclusive education system by, inter alia, employing teachers with disabilities was identified as a key issue, and delegates discussed the increasing numbers of students with disabilities enrolling in teacher education courses. This trend was felt to be an important component of an inclusive education system and in ensuring that the teaching profession was itself diverse and representative of the pupil population. It was felt that the education system needed to be inclusive not only for pupils, but also for student teachers and teachers with disabilities.

With respect to children and young people with disabilities in the classroom, participants highlighted that sometimes pupils remained cautious about disclosing information or requesting assistance and that this was challenging for teachers who wanted to ensure that their classroom was fully inclusive. It was argued that a balance needed to be struck between respecting pupils' privacy and ensuring that they were able to fully participate in the classroom. Ultimately, participants considered that it was crucial to focus not on 'dis-ability' and on what pupils could not do, but positively on pupil 'ability'.

WORKSHOP 5 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

Professor Marie Parker Jenkins University of Limerick

Located within the context of increasing diversity in Ireland, as elsewhere, this workshop explored the concept of 'inclusion' with reference to the professional development of teachers. We defined the broad area of social inclusion as including race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and social class. Consideration was given to the related and overlapping issues of:

- · equality and equitable treatment
- raising aspiration
- the role of the teacher
- the quality of pre-service and in-service provision in teacher education

These themes were examined drawing on the work of three contributors: Marie Parker-Jenkins, Professor of Education, University of Limerick; Joan McCombe, St Mary's University College, Belfast, officer for increasing participation in HE for students from low socio-economic backgrounds and



those with disabilities; and Deirdre O'Connor, Equality Officer, the Legal, Industrial Relations and Equality Section of the Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO).

Discussion within the workshop focused on the experience of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual students and teachers, and the extent to which they are included and supported in the teaching profession. It was acknowledged that aspiring teachers may find it difficult to disclose their sexual identity or personal issues, or to challenge policy and practice within their professional community. Students with disabilities were another key group finding difficulty in terms of inclusion in the teaching profession. Raising aspiration to the profession is commendable, but students with a disability were reported as finding it particularly difficult to find employment opportunities.

It was concluded that whilst progress had been made in several areas of social inclusion, there remain aspects of discrimination and unequal opportunity which have not been given adequate consideration. This raises concerns over the extent to which the teaching profession is seriously committed to widening participation and inclusion, through both initial education and in-service professional development.

Ms Deirdre O'Connor

Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO)

At the outset, I wish to thank SCoTENS for the opportunity to address your conference. I am currently a Senior Official and Equality Officer with INTO. Previously I worked as a primary school teacher for 13 years in Monaghan. I spent 3 years with the National Primary Curriculum Support Programme and I have been working with INTO since 2002.

First of all can I acknowledge that the INTO Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) Group were asked to fill this slot and were very anxious to do so. Unfortunately none of them were available to come to Belfast today, so I would like to extend greetings to the Conference, especially from Sheila Crowley, the current chair of the LGB Group.

The INTO is the largest teacher trade union in Ireland. We were founded in 1868 and represent almost 40,000 primary and post-primary teachers in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Our Equality Committee is made up of 16 members from around the country and has a wide ranging remit, which covers all of the 9 grounds of the Equality legislation. The Committee has been involved in organising various Equality conferences, including *The Inclusive School in 2004, Tackling Workplace Bullying: Dignity at Work* in 2007 and *Fáilte – Inclusion in the Teaching Profession* in 2010. This most recent conference focused on the civil family status, sexual orientation and disability grounds. As a result of that conference, the Committee is currently working on guidelines for teachers with a disability.

The INTO LGB Group was founded in 2004. The first meeting of the group was attended by 14 members. The group built on the experiences the Separated Teachers Support Group which was



formed in the late 80s when there was a perception of hostility to separated teachers. This was borne out of the Eileen Flynn case in the early 1980s, where a teacher was dismissed as a result of her relationship with a married, separated man. The current membership of the LGB group is about 50 and it meets 6 or 7 times a year and provides a forum for discussion and campaigning on LGB issues. The group works on and continually revises goals and also invite guest speakers to address the group on a regular basis.

The INTO is proud of its link with the LGB Group, and to quote from its chairperson, addressing the 2007 INTO Equality Conference, 'the group are proud of the support of the INTO'. There are also active links with LGB Groups in the other teacher unions and in the other unions, and that link is facilitated by the Gay Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN).

The issues of concern to the LGB Group include promoting and expanding the group to continue to support for all members, and to work with the INTO Equality Officers to support all members. The concerns of the group are expressed by themselves as the 'twin hallmarks of invisibility and silence which mark out the experience of lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers in primary schools'. They are concerned about their inability to discuss their social or personal life and a lack of acknowledgement in their workplace of LGB orientation.

The group works with the INTO Equality officer and the Equality Authority in seeking the deletion of Section 37.1 of the Employment Equality Act 1998 to 2004. Section 37.1 of the EEA allows religious run institutions to take action which is reasonably necessary to prevent an employee or perspective employee from undermining the religious ethos of the school. This is a matter of great concern to the INTO who have been campaigning against this section of the Employment Equality Act since its inception. Another issue of concern to the LGB Group is conditions of employment issues arising as a result of the Civil Partnership Act. The first civil partnerships are expected in the Republic in 2011. INTO are seeking to ensure that condition of employment issues pertaining to spouses will extend to civil partners. The group also make submissions in relation to issues such as tackling homophobia and challenging the heterosexual bias in curricula.

The INTO LGB group has also taken part in the Dublin Pride and Cork Pride parades for the last couple of years. While I walked with them this year, I was taken by two aspects of the experience. One was the reception from people, particularly young people along the route, when they recognised teachers taking part in the march. Also the fact that the members of the group pointed out that fellow members still did not feel they were in a position to walk with the group and instead were watching from the footpath as the parade went past.

In 2009 the INTO LGB Group organised the Anseo Conference. At that conference the chairperson, Sheila Crowley, said that the name of the conference made a statement that LGB teachers belong in classrooms. The conference was addressed by, among others, Senator David Norris, the writer Colm Toibín, the INTO General Secretary and the INTO President.



Arising from this conference, the *Anseo Good Practice Guidelines for Inclusive Staffrooms* were issued. These guidelines set out good practice in relation to including all colleagues in the staffroom, and while they refer specifically to LGB teachers and LGB issues, there is no doubt that they are applicable for many situations in relation to language, respect and an anti-bullying culture in staffrooms.

For lesbian, gay and bi-sexual students, there have been developments, particularly *Guidelines for Teachers Supporting Diversity*, which was published by ASTI, TUI and GLEN. There are many studies which show worrying trends in relation to LGB students in school. Various studies show that they are more likely to self harm and are more vulnerable to depression and suicide. 28% of the LGB students dropped out of school and 80% of LGB students reported severe isolation. The most common age for young people to realise they are gay is 12 and their most common age to come out is 17. The ASTI, TUI and GLEN guidelines recognise diversity, and call on schools to recognise that there are LGB people in their classes and that this is mentioned where appropriate. The schools are encouraged to affirm the value of diversity, including sexual orientation, by modelling respect, using news stories to provide respectful messages in relation to LGB people and discouraging stereotyping.

Schools are also called on to support LGB students through not allowing homophobic bullying and in that regard they are asked to challenge name calling and homophobic bullying as it occurs in schools.

Conclusion

I think it is important to say that equality and inclusion are key to quality in education. There is recognition within the Irish National Teachers Organisation that recognising and supporting diverse groups, for example, the LGB teachers and separated teachers, makes us a better and more effective union. I think the same could be said for the education system.



DAY TWO

THE INCLUSION AGENDA: CHALLENGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

Professor Sir Tim Brighouse

[This is an edited transcription of Sir Tim Brighouse's address]

Have you noticed who is gathered in the next room? They are called 'rich dads'. I have suggested to Tony Gallagher that perhaps we need a kind of inter-generational equity tax, which would mean all those aged 45-70 should pay in perpetuity a graduate tax if they were graduates – but not the younger generation. Because I worked out that my benefit from higher education in that respect was £100,000 in grant and fees at present levels – so the state gave me £100,000 to become a graduate. I can see you are all very enthusiastic about that, but you would only pay it if you are on the 40% rate, and only if you are a graduate.

However that is taking inclusion too far it seems to me, and I wanted just to say something about a notice I am sure you are familiar with. At least I know secondary schools in England often have this on their staff room notice board, although it is rarely on a primary school notice board:

I have come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom.

It's my personal approach that makes the climate.

It's my daily mood that makes the weather.

As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.

I can be a tool of torture, or an instrument of inspiration.

I can humiliate, or humour, hurt or heal.

In all situations it's my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated, a child humanised or dehumanised.

On the primary side, I find this on a primary school staff room notice board – which is a focus on the child rather than the teacher.

Mankind owes to the children the best it has to give. Their life is fragile.

If they are to have a tomorrow their needs must be met today.



Many things can wait, but not the children.

Now is the time: their bones are being formed, their blood composed and their senses developed.

We cannot answer their 'tomorrows'; their name is 'today'.

I have put these two notices up, because the battle for inclusion is won or lost, it seems to me, during those years when 15% of children's waking time is spent in schools and 85% of their waking time is spent at home or in the community – and that 15% has got an extra value, as we all know, because there is absolutely focused effort at developing the child during those periods. Therefore the attitudes that the teacher strikes, and the view that he or she takes of the child needing something today rather than putting it off, is crucial in the inclusion agenda, and that is where it seems to me most of our battles are won or lost. That is where our adult attitudes come from – I am not denying of course that we change with time, but nevertheless it is there that it has to be won.

A group of us were talking the other day about leadership, and we were discussing those things where you can profile people and you decide in your leadership team who has got what and where your gaps are. I was working with somebody in Birmingham and she reminded me, and I have never forgotten it, that really on the whole leadership can be clearly analysed. She said: 'Look Tim, what we are doing is crap; what we really ought to be doing is something quite different, doing what the infant teacher does, in that she focuses on whether a child is developing and thinking and learning as they develop their speaking skills, their listening skills, their reading skills and their writing skills. If you think about leaders, unless they are doing all of those four things then you are in trouble.'

I thought that is quite a good description actually, because you know that at 11 or 12 on transfer kids' reading is better developed than their writing – their writing is lagging behind. And if you think about the role model of the teacher in a later primary school – if you were a child of 11 you would think, what an amazing speaker, what an amazing listener, what an amazing reader – seems to have read everything. However the very best teachers are also models for writing, and there are very few of those, at least in England – that's the neglected art of the skill of a teacher. And I think that the great danger, not here as much as across the water, is that the reading and the writing tend to get neglected, and that is why people taking third level qualifications have problems, and this is a really important factor. How many of us, when we have had teachers who come to do a postgraduate qualification, they are always very hesitant about their writing, saying 'I haven't written anything for years.' That is a really serious issue.

This is one of the things that we got up to in London, and I wonder whether it has wider implications – I think that the Scots are doing it, although I am not absolutely sure that they are doing it the same way. We decided that what we had to do in order to effect improvement was to get the teachers to become less isolated. They had become isolated because the Inner London Education Authority had broken up into 32 London boroughs – the outer London boroughs were fairly large, but then there were 10 inner London boroughs, and under the impact of choice and diversity provision, schools had become incredibly competitive one with another and they had become isolated. So the solutions to





Speakers at the 2010 SCoTENS Conference. From left to right: Sir Tim Brighouse, Dr Tom Hesketh; Mr Paul Sweeney, Permanent Secretary, Department of Education, Northern Ireland; Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Sean Haughey TD, and Professor Teresa O'Doherty.

particular issues in London schooling were in the schools but they were closely guarded secrets. And schools were not prepared to share. So one of the issues was: how do you get people to share? We approached it by providing them with data that they never had before, about performance in different schools: whether it was attendance, whatever it was, we came up with a families and schools document that enabled them to go and look at each other's practice.

However we also decided – and this was a contentious thing to say outside London – to say to a group of teachers 'look, you clearly need a lot more skill, and a lot more knowledge, to be an effective teacher in London, than you do perhaps in rural Suffolk'. That is unfair to rural Suffolk, but what I was getting at was this: there were 300 languages, and there were almost as many different cultures in the classroom in London, and frankly if you were going to succeed as a teacher you were always trying to provide illustrations in a way which would resonate with an individual child, and if you struck only one image, than you would be unintentionally excluding others. So at the heart of the inclusion agenda is an ever widening knowledge of cultures and of race and – you could argue as the inclusion agenda moves forward – of barriers to kids' learning.

So what we decided to do was to set up a thing called the Chartered London Teacher – so that in their first two years of teaching teachers would be expected to extend their knowledge and skill in the following five areas. One was the generic teaching skill, another was their subject knowledge, the third was whole school improvement issues, fourth was barriers to children's learning and a fifth was frankly culture and race. And the way that they would do it would be in groups of two and three, building a portfolio of their work in this respect and gathering their reflections on how they had extended their skills over a period of two years. We immediately had a huge interest: 30,000 teachers decided to take it up out of a workforce of probably 40,000. So three-quarters decided that



they wanted to do this – it was open at that stage to all existing teachers so that there would be an inter-generational solidarity in working with it. I want to make this point right at the beginning: if we are going to make a dent in taking further the inclusion agenda, it is essential that we make sure that teachers in their first two, three or four years of teaching keep up the habit of reflecting and research in those five areas, because they are their bread and butter.

And then I wanted to move on to - I don't know what they are - are they values, are they principles, are they beliefs, are they prejudices? I started on this when one of our quangos - it's almost a moment's silence here because so many of our quangos are now in their dying days - the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, asked me: 'Could you write something about values? You are always on about shared values.' This by the way was after I had left Keele University - I was in the middle of being Chief Education Officer for Birmingham. I said 'I am not really an academic'. I had gone to Keele - forgive me for saying this - I had only gone to Keele as an administrator who had been Education Officer for Oxfordshire and I was only at Keele for a short time. Keele made me feel like a PE teacher in a grammar school! So when I left, and went to Birmingham, I was thinking, I can shake off all of this academic stuff, and I can get back to being my old administrative self. But the chief executive said: 'You know you were a professor in Keele, and you know they have asked you to carry on as a visiting professor, so don't drop the title, will you'. I said 'What do you mean?' He said 'I want you to carry on calling yourself professor'. I said 'Why is that?' He said 'Well, the population of Birmingham will think we have got the real deal if we have a professor'. So I have been saddled with it forever - I have perpetually held on to that title, even when I don't really deserve it, because I am only a very occasional visiting professor at the Institute of Education in Keele.

Anyway, I was at the point where somebody said to me: look you are going on and on about shared values and values being essential to schools - do you think you could write 3,000 words on it? I said 'That's a hell of a lot of words to write about values - I'm not an academic'. So he said 'It's alright, it's only for head teachers'. So I wrote it and I realised they are not values - Are they? Are they beliefs? Are they prejudices? I came up with the proposition: Are you really interested in success for everyone and not failure? I got into terrible trouble with Tony Blair, because when he came to power, he had a slogan which was 'Success for the many - not the few'. It was one of 17 propositions, and I wrote to him and said, this is absolutely brilliant, but if it's success for the many can you tell me the ones I can forget about. It has developed since then, and the story of English New Labour Ministers is that they slowly but genuinely moved towards - at least in beliefs - a realisation that we should be aiming for success for everyone. You're going to say hold on, that is unrealistic - but what I am trying to say is that failure is fine in the sense of it being an essential part of learning, i.e. I failed to learn something new but my teacher is going to help me to overcome that barrier to learning and go on. So there is a difference between failing to learn - which is fine - but learning to fail, which you wouldn't want for anyone. And that is where inclusion comes in, it seems to me, because if you are trying to be inclusive, you are trying to offer the prospect of success – or at least not learning to be a failure – to everyone.

So I think that is an important principle, and you could think of lots of school practices where you could say – hey, wait a minute, are they doing as much as they might do to eliminate the chance of a



kid learning to be a failure? Or if they adjusted that practice would that increase the likelihood of that kid not failing? At the end I want you to think of the small things that you could do that you are not doing, or that are getting in the way of inclusion in your daily practices.

Secondly, do you believe in intelligence as multi faceted - the Howard Gardner notion? Do you believe in that kind of intelligence without limit as opposed to it being generally inherited and predictable? The predictable, I think, is tremendously important - who would dare to put a limit at an early age given what we know about the sudden changes that can occur during adolescence, for example, in attitude and in apparently cognitive grasp? How would you dare to say it's predictable? You go to almost any form of activities – I take my grandchildren to athletics, and the athletic coaches are absolutely adamant that what is happening with kids of 7, 8, 9 or 10 is not a good predictor of where they will be when they are 18, 19 or 20. Not just simply whether they stick with it, but there will be changes in what they can do, so they are not prepared to put predictability on it.

I see secondary schools in particular being absolutely preoccupied by tests of different sorts at 11 which then subliminally put a limit on what a child might expect. So I definitely want to say: Are teachers surrounded by practices that reinforce, if not the generally inherited and predictable, certainly the predictable, because I think the use of data by schools is often with predictability in mind. Even though intelligence is multi-faceted and without limit. Then of course the heart of your debate - Is a school inclusive, not exclusive? - I don't know how it is over here, but frequently in England I would dare to say that when we had those debates about inclusion, it was entirely about whether the kids with Special Education Needs could or could not be included within the mainstream. We had those endless arguments, which I am sure you are familiar with - Are we talking on a locational basis; are we talking on a social basis; or are we talking on a functional basis in terms of inclusion? And people get comfortable with the locational - that is not too threatening - the social is a bit more threatening, while functional gets devilishly hard to do given the circumstances we have got. But what I am getting at is what SCoTENS has been about for years, which is being inclusive on a wide scale, focusing on all the issues I mentioned earlier, such as the teacher's use of language, the teacher's dispositions in the morning, the way kids are welcomed into the classroom or not and how we know that affects their performance and so on.

The next thing is ipsative and formative forms of assessment, rather than normative and comparative. I hope some people are puzzling about that word 'ipsative'. I have been writing it for now 20 years and it's my bid for immortality that eventually it will get into the language. What I mean by 'ipsative' is that it is about assessing yourself against your own previous best, so that it is formative assessment against your own previous best rather than normative and comparative assessment. Come on, you will say, you need normative and comparative, and indeed you do, but the judgement of the teacher and the judgement of the school has to be when to introduce assessment of kids which is normative and comparative, but always trying to do the ipsative and the formative, because that is what helps them to focus on exactly where each individual child is and making sure, as their teacher, that they are cutting and chipping themselves into the shape of the key which will unlock the mind and open the shut chambers of the heart. The normative and the comparative is this awful thing – you know it affects our use of language, doesn't it? I don't know whether John



Anderson is going to admit that the inspectorate over here have now made sure that the word satisfactory now means unsatisfactory – is it true John? [JA – 'Satisfactory is not good enough'.] Yes, that is right, I knew really, you have re-dubbed the English language, and that is fine with me – but you know I admire that kind of debate about what satisfactory is, because... have you come across this lovely poem, which I first came across in America.

The Average Child by Mike Buscemi

I don't cause teachers trouble; My grades have been okay. I listen in my classes. I'm in school every day.

My teachers think I'm average; My parents think so too. I wish I didn't know that, though. There's lots I'd like to do.

I'd like to build a rocket; I read a book on how. Or start a stamp collection... But no use trying now.

'Cause, since I found I'm average, I'm smart enough you see To know there's nothing special I should expect of me.

I'm part of that majority,
That hump part of the bell,
Who spends his life unnoticed
In an average kind of hell.

I heard about it from a guy I heard in Kansas, and we traded it and I came over here and spread it around and some of you have heard it. I think it's a fantastic little verse because the first move – we are talking about childhood as opposed to infancy here – for children who are beginning to learn to be failures is often to say, 'Well I am only average', and then to say 'I am not as good as them at anything at all'. So this is important.

And then finally, do we believe that education is lifelong and not once and for all? I think that is a tremendously inclusive proposition, because it avoids you reinforcing the notion of kids thinking 'I have had it', so that the notion that people can be lifelong learners is tremendously important. It would lead you at secondary school and primary school to have on your wall the achievements of



past pupils. You know those lovely graduation ceremonies where everybody is having a wonderful time - will you promise me that next year one thing you will do is to persuade your university authorities to take pictures of all the graduates and send them to the primary school from which they came, so that they can put it on their wall? I know you'll agree it's a wonderful idea, but I know of only one university that has started to do this. However I have got a feeling from the way the people were reacting here, that perhaps there will be more universities on this side of the Irish Sea who will do it, than on the other side of the water.

So there are the values, there are the principles, there are the prejudices, and I have missed out the most important one really, and that is selection. I am not going to talk about selection here, which I gather you did talk about yesterday. Class and wealth – the poverty divide – and now of course there will be a generational divide, because we selfish sods won't pay our graduate tax, and the next generation are going to have to pay for it. Ours is going to be the first generation to promise a worse future for our children than we had. And finally there is gender – I just thought I'd be nasty and get that in, since you were all looking too nice.

One more question would be: Do we assess the child's preferred learning style? Already I can feel lots of minds in the room saying, 'What are you talking about – preferred learning styles – I don't buy all of that nonsense'. I like Howard Gardner's theory, and of course I meet loads of teachers who say that's absolutely right, and they say it from the point of view of seeing kids who excel at and make progress in different spheres of activity. But preferred learning style – you don't mean by it that we put all the kinaesthetic learners in one corner...no, I don't mean that.

What I do mean is that we are perfectly happy, at least in England, to administer a thing called a CAT test (Cognitive Abilities Test). I am sure you don't do it here, because you have selection, but secondary schools want to know in general terms the intelligence factor of their students, and that predisposes them towards doing it. I am making an argument for saying: surely it would be as well to know as much as you could about each individual kid, not in terms of exclusively saturating them with their preferred learning style, but developing every one of their learning styles. But we need to know where they are stronger, and where they are weaker, because we might find that when a kid is not learning something we can resort to some technique that would work well. So the real question underneath this is how does this inform our preferred teaching styles and the organisation of our learning in the school. That is what I wanted to get at really.

Secondly, do we have at least two timetables for the pupils? One reflecting the wish to proceed simultaneously across a broad balanced curriculum, if that is what you want to call it; the other offering numerous opportunities to accelerate and consolidate learning according to the learner's interests and needs. Incidentally I don't know if you have got some fortnightly timetables – I bet you have, but it is an interesting proposition to say 'Is there a difference between a weekly timetable and a fortnightly timetable in terms of the inclusion agenda?' I think there is, and let me advance my reason – or prejudice – as we have the Head of Post-Primary Inspection in the room. I think that when kids transfer – those who have got the most tenuous hold on their learning – we are always very anxious to make sure, given that they have come from a primary pattern, that it's important that



they don't meet too many teachers in their early secondary career. So we often say that in the first year of secondary school it's a good idea that kids don't encounter more than 7, 8, 9 or 10 teachers. However if you ask secondary timetablers, the very last thing they do in drawing up the timetable is to say that they don't mind in first year if they have got to fit everything in – they start with the exams. Then it's perfectly all right to have 2 people teaching history, 2 people teaching geography and so on. And if you ask the question where there are fortnightly timetables, I have never encountered fewer than 16 teachers teaching kids in first year secondary. The timetable is a plea that we don't have timetables that are suspended just for fun, for a week or a day, or whatever it may be, but that inspectors would ask what is the planned set of experiences that are reflected in the week or the day, or the fortnight, and with which year group are they planned, and how are they reviewed. I don't think at the moment we do that – we tend to do it serendipitously.

Thirdly have we an agreed set of experiences which between us, the school and the community we ensure everyone gets. How do these experiences compare with those of other schools, and, for example, would it be a good idea to make sure that kids have an expectation that they have at least one residential, and what would you do with that residential – and when would it occur? It's best if it occurs at the beginning of the school year rather than at the end of the school year when the personnel who work with the kids might have been changed. Are we making sure that they take full advantage of the common wealth of extraordinary treasures that are available within our community? For example, how many kids in Belfast have been to a theatrical performance? How many kids have been to a musical performance? Do our library stock resources reflect the achievements and failures of people of different ethnicity, gender, nationality, intelligence and of course ability? How does that vary for different places? Do we involve in that the whole class? Do we involve the parents? Do we involve the pupils in the debate about how that would happen? Do we encourage competition in settled groups and avoid it in mixed ability groups? I will just leave that hanging in the air – shall I?

Does everyone in our community have access to our eLearning platform? I grabbed two copies of the SCoTENS report [Valuing Education Technology in Schools in Ireland, North and South] introduced by John Furlong because I think he is right – I think some schools have tipped over, they have passed the tipping point, but what we haven't done is serious research into the factors that have led to them going over the tipping point. I am involved a little bit in ICT in education through being on the board of Research Machines. When I say to them – you are peddling all of this stuff and I am totally in favour of it, but where is your evidence of the difference that has been made to the pupils – they haven't bothered to collect it. Just now I am on a campaign with Mike Tomlinson who came after Chris Woodhead as chief inspector. He and I are both on this board and we are in the middle of writing a paper in which we are saying that we have got to devote resources with researchers to look at case studies of the sort in the SCoTENS report that John Furlong was describing.

It seems to me that there might be something to be said for actually doing a controlled experiment with schools in this area. It is pretty important because the government that we have now inherited doesn't actually believe that ICT is key to schools at all. You only have to look at kids who are learning to be failures to see that actually the technology is a come on, an attraction in terms of learning that wasn't there before – but none of us really need persuading of this, do we? In terms of kids with



Special Educational Needs, where would they be without the advances in technology? In terms of access to information? Access to the Library? Where would we be without the technology?

Do we know the names of the children looked after in public care? Who do we think are the other pupils at risk of failure? Do our local schools each year at the end of the year have a little debate about which kids in each year group are at risk – I mean at risk in believing themselves to be failures. And then what do we do in the following year in terms of building resilient practices so that those kids are no longer at risk? I once came across a school that did that, and they had certain guiding principles, and they agreed on the names of 30 kids. They decided that one of the things they could do would be that every member of staff would have a conversation with these kids – every member of staff would be allocated three names and they would talk to those kids and find out as much about them as they could during the course of the next year in conversations, in corridors and so on. By the end of the year, those kids were not considered to be at risk – mind you there were another 10 or 15 who where, but there you go.

How do we ensure that poverty is not a barrier to children who are accessing the curriculum? How do we ensure that everybody has access to materials and trips? What is their performance? Do we know the performance of kids who are entitled to free school meals? And do we know the difference it has made? Did you know that there is a school in Widnes that performs six times better for kids who are poor than any other secondary school in the country. Ofsted has not discovered that, but an interesting guy who runs the Fischer Family Trust – he has discovered that, and we are analysing together what that might mean.

Do we allocate resources on the basis of differentiated children's needs rather than the same share for everyone? I am sure that all schools are rather better at doing this incidentally than those people at government level who are distributing resources. And how far do our pupils engage in restorative activities and practices – you know what I mean by that, don't you. Do we have regrets? Do we have targets? We all have regrets, but do we have CPD targets for each member of staff so that next year everyone can extend their knowledge of inclusive practices – that is back to my anecdote about the Chartered London Teacher.

How do we measure our progress as an inclusive school and how does the detail of our teaching, learning and assessment policy and practice reflect an inclusive approach? Are teachers well informed about the need to differentiate storing and explanation? What is our marking policy? Is that inclusive or exclusive? I think almost every aspect of school is susceptible to this sort of analysis.

I have focused heavily on the schools, partly because I know the speakers from the schools are following me and they can immediately say what rubbish all of this is. But it is also to advance the proposition that it seems to me that those who are in the first i of your 3 i's, initial, induction and inset, are crucial to the whole thing, but those who are involved in the first i – initial teacher training – and those who are involved in the third i – inset – are likely to include lots of those in the audience today. I wonder how far it is incumbent on you as teacher educators to have a debate with those schools who



you work with, either by way of postgraduate students or by way of placements, to say 'come, on, what we are trying to promote is the following, and what are your practices locally in terms of inclusion?' And then there are the dangers ahead: cuts, isolation and separation. My experience of the 1970s and 1980s was that that was exactly what happened around me – that there were cuts, and what followed the cuts was isolation, and what followed that was the 'devil take the high road'.

I am bothered about that, and it leads me into saying that I was very taken with Tony Gallagher's enthusiasm – he is talking to you later – for partnerships with schools working together. I think we must encourage that, and it could be the initial trainers and the inset providers who would encourage such partnerships and lay on opportunities for people to work with one another. I sat at the back of a conference hall once where people were talking about learning, and a guy call John West Burnham put up this slide and I thought I will pinch that: it shows that if you are a dependent learner, it is usually shallow learning; once you become an independent learner, it becomes deep (what joy it is when you become an autonomous learner), and finally when you become an inter-dependent learner, it becomes profound. Ask any of the winners of the Nobel Prize – it is not an individual operation but a group operation – it becomes profound when you have got the confidence to work with others and collectively understand that you are going to come up with new things and you are going to learn things way beyond that. Try applying that to institutions. It is tremendously important that somehow or other we promote inter-dependence of institutions.

And finally, before I set you your task, there is a lovely quote here from Pablo Casals. And then I thought I might end with two more quotes.

Sometimes I look about me with a feeling of complete dismay. In the confusion that afflicts the world today, I see a disrespect for the very values of life.

Beauty is all around us, but how many are blind to it!

They look at the wonder of this earth and seem to see nothing.

Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe,
a moment that will never be again ...

And what do we teach our children?

We teach them that two and two make four and that Paris is the capital of France.

When will we also teach them:

Do you know what you are?

You are a marvel. You are unique.

In all the years that have passed there has never been another child like you.

And look at your body - what a wonder it is! Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move.

I like this next piece. I used it frequently in Birmingham, when they would say that we have got loads of kids from the poor areas, and what more can you expect, they come from illiterate rural



backgrounds. And I used to say, 'Yes, but just think what talent might be there – there just may be another Shakespeare'.

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven.

You have the capacity for anything.

Yes, you are a marvel.

And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel? You must cherish one another.

You must work - we must all work - to make this world worthy of its children

And finally, you know this one too. The Reggio Emilia movement in Italy and this wonderful, wonderful piece, by its founder, Loris Malaguzzi.

NO WAY - THE HUNDRED IS THERE

The child

is made of one hundred.

The child has

- a hundred languages
- a hundred hands
- a hundred thoughts
- a hundred ways of thinking

of playing, of speaking.

A hundred, always a hundred

ways of listening

of marvelling, of loving

a hundred joys

for singing and understanding

a hundred worlds

to discover

a hundred worlds

to invent

a hundred worlds

to dream.

The child has

a hundred languages

(and a hundred hundred more)

but they steal ninety-nine.

The school and the culture

separate the head from the body.

They tell the child

to think without hands

to do without head



to listen and not to speak to understand without joy to love and to marvel only at Easter and Christmas. They tell the child to discover the world already there and of the hundred they steal ninety-nine. They tell the child that work and play reality and fantasy science and imagination sky and earth reason and dream are things that do not belong together. And thus they tell the child that the hundred is not there. The child says 'No way - The hundred is there'.

Loris Malaguzzi (translated by Lella Gandini)

This is a super description of how we should approach the children and put them at the heart of an inclusive practice. I cannot get away from the fact that it isn't merely the knowledge that our teachers and our leaders bring to the system, it isn't merely their knowledge, their learning (and they are learned people), it is their dispositions – are they energy creators or are they people who are essentially energy consumers? You are all by definition energy creators, and your job has never, never been more important than now, faced with the cuts in prospect. It's absolutely plain that you ought to share with one another the secrets of putting an inclusive system into practice.

So now you have got exactly two minutes to do what I said – and you aren't going to do it, so I will let you off the task. But will you promise me later, that you will resolve, as a result of this morning, to get some like-minded people together locally and to debate the practices that you think you could adjust which would have a significant impact on inclusive practice close to you. Thank you for being such a patient audience.



PERSPECTIVES FROM SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

THE VIEW FROM A SPECIAL SCHOOL

Dr Michael Dobbins

Principal, Foyle View Special School, Derry

The presentation made extensive use of video material to outline the main theme that focused on what inclusion means in a special school for pupils with Severe Learning Disabilities (SLD). Exploring the individual progress of one pupil, it traced how he progressed following targets within his IEP and how that progression illustrates the concept of inclusion that we work with in SLD Schools. It went on to reflect on the practicalities facing teachers promoting inclusion and the nature of the responses they need to make to be inclusive practitioners, and finally set out some implications for teacher education.

Progressing one pupil

Having looked at a definition of inclusion and how the concept of enablement should imbue the practical working out of the concept in schools, the presentation went on to explore how one pupil, Matthew, progressed over 6 months in a class led by a newly-qualified teacher. Matthew, a teenager with profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), was shown developing skills in relation to the following Quest for Learning targets:

- Contingency responding/awareness (Quest)
- Observing two presented items (Quest)
- Turn-taking (Quest)
- · Participating in cause and effect activities
- Responding differently to different stimuli (Quest)
- Communicating more (Quest).

For a full copy of the presentation please contact the Principal directly.

Newly Qualified Teacher's views

The newly-qualified teacher's views on inclusion since taking up employment were sought and are set out verbatim below.

To the children I work with inclusion is being part of their school and wider community. It is involvement in a tailored, multi-sensory curriculum. This curriculum enables them to learn new skills and interact with their environment at a more autonomous level. It empowers them, enabling communication and facilitating influence and control over many aspects of their daily lives.



No two children are the same. I feel that SEN courses focus too much on information and characteristics of special needs such as Down's Syndrome and Autism – although this is very important, it is often the main component of the SEN unit on teaching practice. I feel that in order to be prepared to teach children with SEN student teachers should think of the child as an individual. Think about where the child is at, their interests, dislikes etc. Be creative, think about how you can bring your lessons to life in a multi-sensory way, e.g. a sensory story during literacy, using all their senses during cooking activities, sensory maths e.g. a shape hunt, feely bag activities. Think about how you can appeal to all types of learners such as visual, kinaesthetic and auditory. Remember you are not on your own, use your colleagues' knowledge, ask questions, observe others, think about outside agencies and further your knowledge. Enthusiasm and a sense of fun really help. Continuous professional development and dedication to pupil's needs and well being are essential.

Implications for Teacher Education

From this, the presentation went on to look at the wider range of school inputs that are used to support inclusion and the range of personnel involved in ensuring adequate provision is made for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD). These factors were set out as the practicalities of building an inclusive experience for pupils with SLD and it was strongly emphasised that these factors do not fall away by changing the physical location of children with SLD. So, in relation to wider considerations of where and with whom children are included, there is very little that will be transformed by transferring children to other settings, without, in the first instance, ensuring that these basic needs are met. Within any setting, inclusive teachers for pupils with SLD need to be skilled collaborative practitioners as our schools continue to evolve as multi-professional settings. The implications for teacher education were set out as follows:

- Develop core values to support effective practice.
- There is a need for a critical open-mindedness in teachers towards their practice.
- Avoid condition-led, 'one solution for all' approaches that assume the homogeneity of children and generate rigid and technical practices.
- Practice is not fixed, but is an ongoing, continually evolving process of creating insights into how
 the needs of very different children can be met.
- Support the development of a community of practice, developing the skills that will test the conceptual tools we use in our work against their efficacy in relation to espoused beliefs and values.
- Use process-based, interactive approaches that promote the active involvement of the learner.
- Use supportive relationships to enable the development of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- To support inclusive practice, teachers should be optimistic, solution-focused, analytical, research oriented, practical and technologically advanced.

In conclusion, a final wish list was set out in support of greater inclusive and collaborative practice.

- Support SEN specialisms encourage student teachers to attend placements in special schools.
- Develop closer links with the Special School sector use and help to expand local expertise.



- Support cross-school, sector and phase exchanges develop a confident practice community.
- Support practitioner-led research make professionally-located research the norm and not the exception.
- Fund and reward professional development value lifelong teacher education.

Finally, the 'specialness' of the children is rightly no longer enough to sustain the existence of Special Schools into the future. Questions on provision for children should only be answered by careful analysis of the tangible benefits to them.

A NOTE ON FOYLE VIEW SCHOOL

Foyle View School is a controlled special school providing a high quality special education for boys and girls aged 3 to 19 years who primarily live in the Derry City Council area. The school has a current enrolment of 115 pupils and admits pupils who have a statement of education specifying severe learning difficulties. The pupils have a variety of individual needs, including severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties. They may also have additional disabilities, such as autism and/or other disabilities affecting their health, movement, speech, hearing, sight, understanding or behaviour. The school is particularly suitable for children who require individual teaching opportunities, a high teacher-pupil ratio, a multi-disciplinary approach, a caring ethos and excellent resources. The school shares a large, green site with Belmont House School and the campus grounds have been developed as a community play, inclusion and recreational resource (see www.playtrail.com).

Foyle View is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and provides a high quality education in a supportive and positive environment for children and young people with a variety of needs. We strongly believe that education is a partnership between school and home and we seek to ensure parents/carers are involved in their child's learning at every stage. At Foyle View, we personalise every child's education to ensure that they feel safe, supported, and able to achieve and contribute fully to society according to their level of ability and aspiration. The school is proud to have become a hub for the local community, supporting a wide range of inclusive projects through the Liberty Consortium (see www.playtrail.com). Active partnerships are central to the success of our school, and as an 'Investors in People' organisation we strongly support and value our staff. Alongside this, we are an active partner in the Foyle Learning Community, our Extended School Cluster, and the wider educational community. Our school community works to a clear vision, mission and guiding principles.

SCHOOL VISION

The best for all: from each the best

The vision for Foyle View School is one of a high achieving school that is an integral part of the community, providing a first class education for all our pupils while supporting their pastoral needs and encouraging lifelong learning opportunities. This vision is manifested in our mission statement



Mission

We work together as a rights respecting community, committed to the highest standards and guided by agreed aims and values, to provide an enabling environment dedicated to pupils' individual needs and well-being.

Alongside the vision and mission statement, the school community has collectively developed the following guiding principles and teaching and learning aims to lead our practice.

Guiding Principles

- 1. Pupils' needs come first.
- 2. All pupils have a right to learn.
- 3. All pupils can learn with varying levels of support.
- 4. A pupil's experience of being disabled is heavily influenced by the views and structures around him/her.
- 5. All pupils should be enabled to take greater control over their lives according to their ability, aspirations and needs.
- 6. Pupils learn best in a positive, secure and challenging environment that allows each pupil to succeed according to their ability.
- 7. Implementing the UNICEF United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is essential to our school's success.
- 8. The innovative and pioneering use of ICT and other emerging technologies is essential to school development.
- 9. Staff development, focused on implementing best practice, should support the personal and professional development of everybody within the school community.
- 10. Parental views are highly valued and respected; home-school partnership is critical to pupil achievement.
- 11. Foyle View is committed to becoming a learning and resource centre of excellence for our wider professional and local community.
- 12. Collaboration with allied health professionals and others is essential to pupil well-being.

Teaching and Learning Aims

- to create an enabling, learning environment that fosters high self-esteem through high expectations;
- to promote self-determination;
- 3. to provide individualised planning for each pupil where appropriate;
- 4. to provide educational opportunities that meet individual and group needs;
- to meet the individual needs of the pupils, recognising the range of intelligences and learning preferences, using active and agreed approaches;
- 6. to enable our pupils to be happy and autonomous learners;



- 7. to share good practice;
- 8. to deliver the Northern Ireland Curriculum at an appropriate level.

LEARNING AND TEACHING

Foyle View School provides a varied and balanced curriculum for all pupils in the school. Implementation of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at all key stages has been developed to meet the needs of all pupils. It is extended by building therapeutic work and locally available experiences into the provision available. Individual routes through the services available in the school are developed for each pupil, progress monitored and access promoted to those learning experiences provided in school and in partnership with others. Staff use a wide range of adaptable, flexible teaching strategies informed by pupil needs. Regular completion of Individual Education Plans ensures that individual learning needs are catered for through whole class, group, individual and paired teaching approaches. Staff practice has been informed by the 'Every School a Good School' and 'Together Towards Improvement' documents and all other relevant policies, and these have been used to inform and develop the school's strategic view.

For older students, our school works extensively with parents and carers, local transition providers, Foyle Learning Community, colleges and workplace providers to develop and deliver courses appropriate to the needs of an individual. Our school also supports the transition into a work-related or further education environment and ultimately independent or supported living. Wherever possible, achievement is accredited, both to celebrate the progress of the pupils and to provide concrete evidence of that progress at transition and for the student's future.

Assessment is viewed as central to pupil achievement and further information on school policy is available at www.foyleview.com. This policy is subject to review within the current SDP. Specific programmes and practices are in place, and are continually being developed and improved, for pupils with autism, profound and multiple learning difficulties, challenging behaviour, complex medical needs and a wide range of other conditions. Further information is available from the school website in the school information and policies link.

In order that different levels and learning needs can be accommodated, our school works in partnership with a range of other professionals and promotes a strong internal continuing professional learning programme for its own staff based on a well formed performance management process. The development of expertise makes our school a suitable resource for the local community. Staff from other schools and services can draw on knowledge and understanding of practical techniques to improve communication and social skills teaching, develop skills in behaviour management, and find ways to respond to learning difficulties.



THE VIEW FROM A SECONDARY SCHOOL WITH ASD PUPILS

Mr Maurice Doherty

Principal, Ballynahinch High School, Co Down

In 2003 the South Eastern Education and Library Board (SEELB) approached our school and asked if we would be willing to set up a secondary level provision for pupils who had speech, language and communication difficulties. These difficulties are often associated with a diagnosis of ASD (Autistic Spectrum Disorder).

I believe our school was chosen for the following reasons:

- We had a good pastoral system established
- We were a relatively small rural school with a wide range of feeder primary schools and therefore quite a diverse school population
- · Geographically we were well situated in the SEELB area

SEELB had agreed to fund the support by providing the salary for a teacher and classroom assistant. Consequently, after negotiation, a set of admission guidelines were drawn up. From the outset it was agreed that the group would be small so that their complex needs could be met. In addition, if we were to be true to our aim of inclusion in a mainstream school, it was important to ensure that the school maintained its ethos as a mainstream school and not have a disproportionate cohort of Special Needs pupils. SEELB, through the work of psychologists and the Special Needs Section, would identify the children who could best benefit from the proposed support.

A number of reservations were expressed by staff and it was important to address these before agreement was finally reached to undertake the project.

The aim of the provision is to give the pupils access to the Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Curriculum and to provide sufficient support for them to cope in a mainstream school. The first cohort was all boys, but we also have a number of girls receiving support.

Some of the teaching is done by the SEELB funded teachers whom we refer to as 'Home Teachers' in 'Home Rooms'. However the Home Teachers and their classroom assistants travel with their pupils and integrate with other mainstream classes in the same year group. The integrated class is usually a low ability class which is a smaller group and can accommodate the extra pupils more easily. The pace of teaching is also more appropriate. However it should be noted that many of the ASD pupils are very capable and the group which left us last year did extremely well in GCSE: one boy achieved one A*, six A grades and a B grade.



There are various levels of integration:

- 1. The whole group joins the class accompanied by the classroom assistant and/or the Home Teacher.
- 2. An individual joins a class without any assistance this is usually in a subject where they have shown aptitude.
- 3. An individual joins the class with assistance this is usually in a subject where they have shown aptitude, but they require assistance with coping emotionally or managing frustration or organising themselves.
- 4. Two pupils go together to class without assistance they support each other, but at exam times the classroom assistant goes to help them cope with the exam.

The Home Room is used as a 'safe place' where the pupils keep their belongings and to which they keep returning.

Break-time and lunchtime

Break-time is usually spent in the Home Room. This avoids problems in the corridors: noise, movement or confusion. Lunch is eaten in the canteen with the rest of the school but is supervised at a distance by the classroom assistants. They take break at other times. When lunch is finished they usually return to the Home Room, but sometimes prefer to join other pupils in the playground.

If at any time a pupil is upset or frustrated or disruptive, the teacher has the option of sending them back to the Home Room until the crisis is over. Sometimes the classroom assistant recognises the build-up of frustration and will suggest that the pupil should spend some time in the Home Room. The selection of classroom assistants to work with the pupils is extremely important as indeed is the selection of the Home Teacher. When a pupil reaches the Home Room they may be directed to the 'Quiet Corner' to calm down. Pupils usually manage to return to class after a period of time. When a subject teacher is absent the Home Teacher may bring the pupils to the Home Room, as not all supply teachers are aware of their needs. Another teacher covering the class may confuse them and again lead to anxiety.

The Home Room is also used to work with individual pupils who need time to catch up on work or need further explanation. School exams are sometimes taken in the Home Room, especially if they are anxious or need a paper read to them or if they are inclined to ask too many questions.

A home/school book is filled in every day by the Home Teacher and the parent ensures close contact. In this way the parent can see how the day went and we can be informed of anything that happened at home that might affect their mood in school the next day.



Books and timetables are colour-coded to reduce confusion and anxiety and help with the pupils' organisation skills. Any letters of a general nature which go home from the school are also inserted into the Home/School book. Reminders of other events are also written in to this book. Stars are given for 'being kind' and these earn merits.

The groups of children are small, but working with these children is not easy. It is intense and tiring. I will hear no criticism of the size of the groups. Many schools are running small classes for highly gifted or academically talented pupils. If we are investing highly in these children then we can do no less for those who are challenged in other ways. I have been extremely fortunate in the quality of our staff. The planning, organising, success and running of our provision would not have happened without the work of Mrs Gloria Kearney. Most of what I have outlined originated in her mind. Gloria has retired from teaching full-time, but I am glad to say that she is using her skills in the further development with the Department of Education of provision for children with ASD



THE VIEW FROM A NATIONAL SCHOOL

Ms Mary Dunlea Fitzgerald

Principal, St Tola's National School, Shannon, Co Clare

[This is an edited transcription of Ms Dunlea Fitzgerald's remarks]

St Tola's National School has 15 teachers, 9 of those mainstream class teachers. We have 3 learning resource teachers working with children with Special Education Needs and literacy and numeracy difficulties, and we also have a language support teacher working with children whose first language is not English. Unfortunately in our system they only get to work with those children for 2 or maybe 3 years which brings its own difficulties, and we have a resource teacher for Travellers as well.

So we are talking here about inclusion and I think it's a great opportunity to share the practice that goes on in our school. I think some of it is fantastic, I know we have a lot to learn – we are moving towards improving our practice all the time, and becoming a reflective school, and the conversations that we have as a staff and with our parents and our pupils really enable us to move forward and deliver that.

So looking at our school in context - who is there? I think we have everybody. We have quite a number of children with Special Educational Needs and these children have a diagnosed need, some of them in the area of disability. We have children with Down's syndrome; we have children on the autistic spectrum; we also have children with emotional and behavioural difficulties as well.

We have a large number of 'newcomer' children in the school, and this has been a big change in our area in the last 10 years or so. We have about 70 children who have come from another countries or areas, or whose families are coming from other countries or areas, and that brings its own challenges. It has been very enriching and rewarding for our school, and very worthwhile as well.

We have children from the Travelling community as well. These families have settled: they are seminomadic now; they would travel during holiday times and the children would live sometimes in trailers and sometimes in houses – so I suppose their world is changing, they are becoming more settled, but they still would have a very strong Traveller identity and Traveller culture.

We have children from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds as well, children whose parents may not have spent a very long time in education – many of these would have dropped out early in second level education and some may just have a primary education. Similarly we have the other extreme as well – we have parents who are still studying, we have a mum at the moment and she is studying for her doctorate. So we have all ends of the spectrum in the school.

And then we have children with emotional and behavioural difficulties – some of whom may be in the other categories already mentioned, and some of whom may not. I think that sometimes they are the



children whose needs, as a school, we struggle to meet, and to understand where they are coming from. This is a big challenge, I would say, for us.

So when coming to talk to you to-day, I was thinking about what are the challenges for us around inclusion. I should say we would pride ourselves on being a very inclusive school and I am just going to read you a little extract from our enrolment policy:

No child is refused admission for reasons of ethnicity, special educational needs, disability, language or accent, gender, Traveller status, asylum seeker, refugee status, religious or political beliefs or values or family or social circumstances.

So let's hope we have covered all the bases there when I say that in our policy that we certainly strive to be an inclusive school. I should say also that our ethos is Catholic, but we do have quite a large number of children who are not from that background and we make provisions for those children. Whilst we celebrate our different religious feasts and so on, those children are included if they so wish – or if they wish not to be included, we make provision for them and that works generally quite well.

So looking at the challenges, what are they as I see them? I suppose for all of us – staff, parents, pupils, the wider school community – it is a lack of knowledge and understanding of the difficulties faced by the child. The attitude of staff is key, and while I am saying that can be a difficulty, I also think in my particular school it is a huge strength. Our staff are willing and want to go the extra mile and the attitudes are very, very positive in the main. Like us all, there are bad days, and there are times when there are gripes and grumbles and groans, but I would say that generally those very positive attitudes are really key.

The attitudes of parents as well – both the parents of the children who might face difficulties and also the other parents as well – that can be a challenge.

We have a very broad curriculum. Teachers feel under pressure – they have got to cover x, y and z. They have this range of needs in their classrooms, and they wonder if they meeting the standards? Are they progressing – are all the children progressing? That can bring its own demands. Also the relevance of the curriculum, how relevant is it to the actual lives of the children we serve in our local community. You mentioned cuts earlier – lack of resources would certainly be a big challenge as well. I think it is one though that you can also use to blame. I can't do this because we don't have the resources. Sometimes, if you can look at it from another point of view, maybe the resources, while they are important, aren't the only barrier.

So how do we overcome the lack of knowledge and the difficulties faced by the child? I think No. 1 is getting rid of the labels – even though I have just given you a whole load of labels earlier on. Getting to know the child is absolutely crucial. Their family background, their likes and dislikes, where they are coming from, what they are interested in – all of that is absolutely essential.



Greeting the children in the morning: we are lucky we have a big generous purpose hall which is the first space you come into in the morning. I am there as are a good many of the staff every morning, and it's 'Good morning, and how are you?' and the chat between teachers and children – making the child feel welcome is absolutely crucial.

I suppose also that you have to look at a situation from a child's point of view. Sometimes the staff are frustrated; maybe the behaviour is challenging, the child isn't making progress – there is maybe a tendency for us to blame the child when in fact we need to look also at where is the child in this. What is their point of view? Where are they coming from? Could we maybe look at it from a different point of view?

Seeing the child first and the disability or the label afterwards is my own personal bugbear. I hate to hear a child referred to as 'the Down's child' or 'the autistic child'. They have a name, you know – that has to be where we are coming from. Also sometimes we can say as teachers: I don't have training in this, I am not an expert on this – but actually if you break it down, you are actually looking at things like language, like social skills, like accessing the curriculum. That is the same really whether you have a disability or not.

For teachers, there is the need to access to meaningful training in relation to the child. I think the initial training that teachers receive can be very general and very broad (as I suppose it has to be – we can only squeeze so much into those number of years). But continuous professional development has to be key and crucial and meaningful, and you need to be able to access it when you need it. You need to be able to access training, or speak to colleagues who have been in a particular situation, or who have dealt with a situation before, because that is where real deep learning is going to take place for teachers.

Again a huge issue would be access to support services in school. Unfortunately these are lacking in our experience – for example, we don't really have good access to speech and language therapists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists. We are lucky in our school, we have access to the National Educational Psychological Service. But those psychologists are stretched – they can only give us outside advice and assessments. We need those psychologists to be able to come and work and plan programmes for our children in our school.

Translating services is another huge issue for us as well. For example, we currently have a child who is 10. Her mum and dad come from a very small village in Pakistan and speak a dialect that is not spoken outside that village. The dad has some English, but quite limited – the mum has none. The mum is not literate in her own language. Now we would have concerns around that child. We have got to ask that child to translate for those parents – that is not good enough. So that is a huge issue and a huge barrier, and we have become very adept at using international sign language and pictures and so on, but it's not good enough.

Some of our children really need supports like art and music therapy in school, and we don't have access to those. We need to work with Social Services maybe before there comes a crisis – often



its crisis management because again our Social Services are very stretched. Again I think all of these services need to be working in the school, working alongside us, looking at the children in the classroom. Very often our experiences of these services is the children go out of school to be assessed in an unnatural, unfamiliar environment – the assessment might not take place for very long, and then a report is written and the report is forwarded to the school, and dialogue does not really happen. I think the class teacher who knows this child, and who is spending five or six hours every day with this child, and might know the family very well, could contribute to giving a more holistic view of the child.

Progressing the attitudes of staff towards inclusion is a commitment to inclusion at whole school level. It has to be there from the leader, the principal in the school. Our Board of Management is very much progressing that, but that would not be the case in every school. You will find that on some boards there are people – particularly parent representatives who don't want their school going in a particular direction – who say that if we let child x or y in, this is going to impact on my child and my child's education. That is a very real fear, and how we address that is a challenge.

Developing a relationship with the child and the parents can really have a huge positive benefit for staff. What we do for our children with Special Educational Needs is to organise individual education plan meetings: we have one in September, one in February and one in June to review how we have got on over the year. And at those we set targets for the child and the parents are involved, the children (if they are able) are involved, the class teacher and the learning support teacher are involved, and ideally we would like the other professionals involved too, that would be the ideal situation. We sit down and set our targets; we have open and frank discussions, and very often after those meetings teachers will come and say to me afterwards: 'I didn't realise how difficult it is for that parent. That mum is dealing with this every day, all the time. She is looking to the future, I see her fears, and it gives you such a different viewpoint'. I think this process makes staff more sympathetic and aware of where the child is coming from, and that can only lead to good things.

It can be challenging working in an inclusive school, so I think the support of colleagues is absolutely crucial. We got involved last year in a mentoring programme for our newly qualified teachers, where one of our teachers was trained as a mentor, and she worked with the newly qualified teachers for the year, met with them once a week. They looked at things like classroom management, differentiation, inclusion, the routines of school, procedures, and it was a really successful project. It wasn't just the mentor though, it was the whole school community. Those newly qualified teachers got an opportunity to go into their colleagues' classrooms and observe their colleagues teaching a lesson, or got to plan maybe for an area with their colleague. We also got our next door neighbour school involved, where our two newly qualified teachers went down to that school and were able to observe teachers teaching for a morning, and the feedback from the newly qualified teachers was hugely positive and beneficial. They might go in to see a science lesson but what they came out with was: 'I hadn't thought of that way of managing the class; or I couldn't believe the way that teacher grouped the children; or there was a fantastic methodology being used, where there was real active learning, and everybody was engaged and there was a real buzz in the classroom.' I think all of us need that kind of inspiration now and again.



Working as part of a team for teaching and planning, the teachers sit down together, particularly when they are planning for the children with Special Educational Needs. So when they are drawing up their individual education plans, it's two or three heads around a table, and I think the dialogue that goes on is really beneficial to the child. It is also upskilling the teachers as well, both class teachers and learning support teachers, and they are able to see the difficulties in both roles.

However 'whole school' approach around planning for inclusion doesn't just happen: our curriculum plans have to have the focus – How are we going to make every child make progress in all areas of the curriculum? Also in our organisational and access plans, we need to make sure that every child is included, and I think that is where the cultural differences come in. Is a practice that we have in our school actually excluding somebody because it's so alien to their culture or it's too difficult for their culture to take on board. We need to ask when drawing up school plans: Who is in our community? And are we actually meeting their needs?

It's important for overcoming maybe a negative attitude of some staff that we celebrate regularly the achievements of all pupils. We have an assembly every Friday and at that we have a Student of the Week award, and over the course of the year every child in every class will at some stage get that Student of the Week award. And in our assembly the class teacher stands up and gives a little speech as to why the child has got the award this week. They are for all sorts of reasons: it could be academic achievement, or it could be that we have all been working really hard this week to be kind to each other in the yard, and Jack has been fantastic, looking out for everybody, and making sure everybody has somebody to play with. I think that every child achieves in some way, and if we can see and celebrate that, it leads to more positive attitudes from staff.

Tackling the challenges and attitudes of parents is another issue. Our school has an open door policy. I keep my office door open most of the time. Parents are welcome to pop in. I do say to them, 'if it's something that is going to take time, please make an appointment', but generally in the morning or in the evening, they will pop in. I always say to them as well, but they don't often do it – 'come in and tell me the good news stories, rather than just things that are going wrong.' And again we can celebrate those together.

We have an active Parents Association, although it can be hard though to get more parents involved in that. We have a real strong core group of parents involved in that association, and sometimes, through no fault of their own, they can be seen as a little clique by other parents and the others don't want to join in. This year we were delighted that we got two more parents on the Parents Association committee. We have an Open Day in June. Our parents are invited to our Sports Day. We changed the format of the sports day last year, and we thought that we were going to have a lot of parents anxious about that, but when they came in and saw it working, that was it – problem solved. Again we have a shared reading initiative starting in our first and second classes and we are bringing parents in and involving them in that.

Communicating with parents to keep them informed of the successes and challenges is vital – we do it through email; we have a newsletter that goes out every week; class teachers do it informally, and



they do it formally at parent teacher meetings as well, so we are always trying to keep those channels open. And we involve parents in planning – we are only taking tentative steps on that road, but we do look for parents' input into school policy. Last year we updated our code of behaviour which was a huge undertaking, taking a full year to do it. We invited parents at every step of the way to become involved – only about four did, but that was four more than had been involved before. And I think this is a big one: training and support for parents, particularly those parents whose children are facing particular challenges, be it around language, or Special Educational Needs, or the fact that they themselves haven't had much schooling and they want to be able to help their child with the reading and the maths. Can we offer more training support for those parents in a non-threatening way? We are not able to provide that at the moment. Maybe that is something further down the road.

Then there is the curriculum: for example, teachers looking at meaningful and relevant differentiation – not the work sheets, where you have the three different levels, and you do the differentiation, you tick that box. It has to be real and relevant to the child – that is a huge challenge for teacher educators, because you need fantastic skills to be able to do that in a real way. And because the curriculum is so broad, I think we need to train teachers to see if they can use the writing skills gained in certain subjects – for example English, History and Geography – and apply them across the curriculum? I think that all of us throughout our careers need up-skilling on that one.

Again there is the child centred approach, and sharing resources. There is no point me working in isolation in my classroom, and my colleague might have met this same problem last year and come up with a fantastic theme of work – sharing that. We got interactive white boards about 18 months ago and they have been a huge benefit, because people are uploading files and flip charts on them, and sending round emails – 'l've found a fabulous website on whatever'. We tend to work in isolation: I am in a town where there are six primary schools and we are only beginning to talk to each other and find out that we are sharing the same difficulties, we are sharing the same challenges.

The last issue is the lack of resources, and how we could share those at local level. A big one is reducing pupil/teacher ratios. We have two classes in our school with 33 children. That is a lot of children when you consider all the needs that are there in front of the class teacher. It's a big, big challenge.

Planning for inclusion at the system level should not be fire brigade stuff. We have a little girl who has developed a condition and she is now in a wheelchair, and this only happened over the summer. Now we are trying to access resources for that child, and going through the paperwork and the red tape and everything else that you have to go through, when they should just be automatic and slotted in there for her.

And I suppose the greatest resource we have are the people in our school and our local community. I see our parents, our pupils and our teachers as our greatest resource, and if we all have the attitude that we want to include everybody, and that we are rooted in our community and we are serving the needs of our community, then I think inclusion will happen and the challenges that I have outlined can be overcome.



THE VIEW OF A NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHER

Ms Anna Fitzgerald

Newly qualified teacher, Limerick

As Teresa mentioned, my name is Anna Fitzgerald and I am a recent graduate of the B.Ed and Psychology course in Mary Immaculate College. From an early age I dreamed of becoming part of the teaching profession. I was enticed by the sheer importance of the teacher's role in the holistic development of children. Therefore as a newly qualified teacher (NQT) the world of teaching is very exciting but also very daunting. In general my ultimate aspiration regarding inclusion would be that every child could be included in all subject areas at his or her level, and that they can all experience success. However despite the benefits of this inclusive world many challenges also prevail. I believe that the biggest challenge for teachers is that each class and every child is unique.

The Initial Teacher Education programme enabled me to view diversity within the classroom as a positive factor, promoting growth and interaction, rather than a negative influence. While we had a specific programme which looked at SEN, inclusion was a core part of all pedagogical modules such as the teaching of PE, music, drama, as well as literacy and mathematics education. In addition the education modules – philosophy, sociology and psychology – all examined the importance of creating an equitable, inclusive environment in our classrooms.

We were encouraged to embrace diversity from the outset. The activities throughout the programme required us to plan for inclusive classrooms. Firstly, we were required to specify how we would differentiate the curriculum to cater for the needs of all children. Additionally, we were encouraged to observe individual children, plan and review their learning successfully. Furthermore we were encouraged to collaborate with cooperating teachers in the implementation of the Individual Education Plans (IEPs). One specific practicum involved placement in an alternative educational setting, or a school-based setting, but not in the role of class teacher. Many students selected to shadow resource teachers, speech and language therapists or work in Special Schools, to experience at first hand the wide range of professions involved in the support of children with SEN. I witnessed how the role of a teacher within a Special School can differ from a mainstream teacher. Huge emphasis is placed on the organisation and development of positive collaborative partnerships between parents, teachers, special needs assistants and associated health professionals. Overall the programme served to sensitise us to the qualities and nature of an inclusive classroom. It highlighted the importance of being open to the unique potential of each child and it challenged us to be flexible and responsive to children in our planning.

At the stage where I am just qualified and engaged in casual substitute work, I am not able to experience continuity with classes. However it is a wonderful opportunity to get inside different classrooms; meet children with differing talents and abilities, and consider the challenges faced by teachers each day. Subsequently, the level and range of diversity within classrooms is much greater than I had previously thought – in addition to children with specific learning needs, children for whom English is not their first language, children from socially and economically disadvantaged



backgrounds, children from a variety of family circumstances and Traveller children are all part of our classrooms. Our multicultural classrooms embody a variety of values, expectations, cultures, and levels of achievement. I believe that children themselves are aware of these differences, and the portrayal of children with differing abilities within the media is to be welcomed. I believe it would be beneficial to the children we teach and to society in general if Special Educational Needs were portrayed more in the media, e.g. Arty the student in the TV programme Glee, who is valued for his singing skills rather than the fact that he is in a wheelchair.

However the development of inclusive environments encounters many challenges. Additionally the professionals involved also express many concerns, particularly newly qualified teachers.

Firstly I recognise the importance of context for each child: getting to know them, their personalities, their dreams and aspirations. Knowing children and building relationships with them is crucial to developing a learning environment. Each child is first and foremost a child with hopes and dreams and we need to thread softly upon them. As a substitute teacher I may ask children to show their work to their 'mammies and daddies' without knowing the particular circumstances of children, their personal histories and individual stories. I need to be aware of my use of terms, language and phrases so as not to exclude or marginalise children or families. Personally I am aware of the privileged role of the teacher who is privy to personal information about children and their families. I am conscious of my role under the Education Act to provide appropriate education for all children, but also my ethical commitments. Sometimes it can be difficult to share information with colleagues while not divulging inappropriate data to other children. We live in small classrooms, with no private space or time to consult professionally with other teachers/principals.

Furthermore, the variety of identified needs within each classroom is phenomenal. The challenge of personalising the work in the classroom and engaging all the children, for instance: both the early finishers and the children who find responding to teacher's questions too intimidating. This presents classroom management issues. Even though I aspire to include, marrying the theory and the practice is a challenge. From my experience to date, I have found that this challenges me in a variety of ways. Firstly, during whole class teaching children may feel alienated when they have to listen to others being asked questions that are too easy/hard for them. Furthermore, early finishers/ children of exceptional ability also pose a challenge. as it is difficult to keep each child intellectually challenged without making them feel punished by using extra worksheets.

The availability of resources can also be a challenge. It is often very difficult to locate materials that are designed for the child's ability level and that have not got a particular class level specified on them. It is inappropriate to use material with children which has been specifically designed for a more junior class – while academically this may be appropriate, it does not enhance their self esteem. Therefore the holistic development of all children is paramount to their well-being. The importance of ensuring that all children are given appropriate access to the curriculum and opportunities to develop their talents, while not focusing exclusively on the perceived deficits, is one of the many challenges to the development of inclusive education practices.



Since becoming a substitute teacher I am aware of the level of emotional and behavioural difficulties within classrooms. This can be quite problematic and may affect the engagement of other children with the learning process and the social inclusion of the child in question. The challenge is to handle the behaviour appropriately, while being positive in my approach and successfully managing the teaching and learning for other children. This requires a lot of skill which I know I am developing, but it is a process.

Challenging the culture in some schools is also problematic, particularly where the children are withdrawn for one-to-one work with the resource teacher. I have observed that some children enjoy the opportunity while others resent the fact that they are singled out, and withdrawn from their class. I would welcome an opportunity to work with children, parents and staff to design the specific support required by them, in the format which best suits them. This may mean co-teaching with the class teacher in the classroom.

However, dynamics within each school are different. It is evident to me that the development of a positive relationship between the class teacher and the resource teacher/learning support teacher is very important. Each must feel that they are equal partners in the endeavour of supporting children, and that the approach taken is an agreed one. The independence and autonomy of staff must not be a barrier to providing the most appropriate teaching for the child.

I am aware that the role of teachers has changed dramatically over the last ten years. Some teachers have embraced this change more enthusiastically than others, while some teachers have a more traditional approach to classroom management and planning. The levels to which teachers have engaged in their own up-skilling and professional development is an important indicator of the extent to which they are willing to be flexible. Similarly, working in collaboration with special needs assistants (SNAs) in the classroom is also influential in the success of inclusive classroom practices. While establishing a positive working relationship is necessary, recognising the appropriate role of the teacher and the SNA, some of whom are highly experienced within the specific SEN context, is essential also. Thus as an NQT who is thrust into the micro-politics of schools, I am challenged to deal sensitively with the teachers and SNAs on staffs, to navigate the roles within schools, and to be emotionally aware and resilient.

All in all I am aware that I do not have the required expertise to meet the needs of all children. I acknowledge the gap in my knowledge. NQTs ask themselves the following questions: What if I meet a child for whom I cannot identify the most appropriate response? Where will I seek that support? As many of the Continuing Professional Development programmes available can be more generalised, I am concerned that when specific needs emerge in my classroom I will not be aware of how to find appropriate skill development. I know that teaching can be lonely and isolating. As an NQT it can be difficult to blend with staffs and to consider oneself to be part of a team.

I recognise the importance of critical reflection in my professional life by asking questions such as: How can I be a more effective teacher? What actions in my classroom are beneficial, and for whom?



How can I create a positive, creative environment which promotes the growth and development of all children? I hope that this questioning aspect of my professional development will continue to empower my teaching.

Finally, inclusion is a process in terms of how to live with difference and how we learn from difference. Both in my substitute work and my teaching practice I have been constantly impressed by the wisdom of the children in my classes – they know one another, accept one another, see the strengths of one another. They practice inclusion in so many different ways. As a NQT I am fearful that I will not be able to successfully achieve this. I appreciate that support is available, although while I may perceive asking for help as a NQT as a strength, it may not be perceived so by my established colleagues. At the beginning of my career I am empowered by initial teacher education. I know that there will be progression in my skills and abilities. But while I acknowledge my expertise, I am hopeful that the system will support me in my continued learning and commitment to teaching inclusively.

Following on from my teaching practice experience, I know that I spend many hours each night preparing new and appropriate materials for the children in my classes; I plan in detail for their needs, to the best of my ability. I want each day to provide authentic learning experiences for each child. I am hopeful that I will retain my level of enthusiasm and understanding as a teacher. One of my objectives is to build up a range of materials which will be age appropriate for the children I teach. Furthermore, I personally hope that I will always set aside my pride as a teacher for the overall good of the children entrusted to my care – whether in a resource or a mainstream room – and I hope all teachers can do this also. I know what type of teacher I wish to be, I hope that I will have the courage to pursue my ideals and the professional support from colleagues and others to enable me to do so.

Overall it is my ultimate aim to promote a positive loving atmosphere where the children and staff alike would be understanding of SEN.

Thanks for being such an attentive audience.



COLLABORATING TOWARDS INCLUSION AND RECONCILIATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Professor Tony Gallagher Queen's University Belfast

[This is an edited transcription of Professor Gallagher's address]

Whenever I think about inclusive education or inclusive schools, I am always struck by the image of the 'little red schoolhouse', a central image of the US public school system, and how it embodies an idealised notion of inclusion. Part of the whole ideal of the little red schoolhouse was that the United States was a place that took people from all over the world, from different languages, religions and nationalities, and brought them together as US citizens – the little red schoolhouse was a key engine of the melting pot that helped to form the United States.

But in Northern Ireland we do things differently. We divide kids on the basis of age, which I suppose isn't that big a surprise because many places do it. We also divide them on the basis of gender – there are lots of single sex schools for young people. We divide them on the basis of ability, and given the way the system works it is often also on the grounds of social background. We then divide them by religion, and by language in Irish medium schools, and then in Special Schools. So the ideal of the little red schoolhouse rapidly breaks down quite significantly in systems such as ours, which seems to be based on extensive structural divisions. And that is really the starting point for the comments I want to make.

We have in Northern Ireland, I think, one of the most structurally divided education systems in the world, and I think this has important consequences that cover a whole range of different areas. One of the consequences can be seen in the most recent data from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), looking at area-based social disadvantage and its different dimensions. The NISRA data show very clearly the extent of inequality in Northern Ireland, in terms of education, employment, income and health. More startlingly, however, the data also show a very strong correlation between disadvantage in all these dimensions. In other words, areas where there are high levels of educational disadvantage are also areas which are characterised by very high levels of unemployment, low family income and poor health. Thus not only is our society highly unequal, but those who suffer the most disadvantage in our society also face multiple sources of disadvantage. Part of what I want to suggest, part of what I want to argue, is that the way we organise things here in Northern Ireland reinforces those disadvantages, so that some people, the people at the bottom of the pile if you like, have all of these multiplier effects of different aspects of disadvantage piled in on top of them. And in some sense, if we want to talk about an inclusive education system, if we want to promote a rhetoric for inclusion in education, then we have to engage with the actual realities on the ground.

We can also see these levels of inequity also when we look at other aspects of the system – international comparative data from PISA 2006 let us see where Northern Ireland sits in comparison



with other OECD countries. If we rank Northern Ireland in terms of the average score – the mean score on the different measures used in PISA – then we sit around the middle of the distribution. These data are based on 50 different jurisdictions, so ranking the mean scores of the countries' performance levels, Northern Ireland is sitting round about the middle. But if you look at the extent of inequality in performance levels, you will see that Northern Ireland is close to the bottom of the rankings. In other words, even though our mean performance levels are about average in the OECD, we have one of the highest levels of inequality in education outcomes in the OECD countries. So we have a profoundly unequal pattern of outcomes in relation to what goes on in our education system. And sometimes, mainly because of the particular indicators we tend to privilege when we talk about education outcomes in the system, we delude ourselves that the system is working fine – we hide or ignore the problems arising from the massive inequality in our education system.

If you look at individual schools it is relatively easy to see this pattern of inequality writ large. Data for individual post-primary schools in Northern Ireland which compare performance – as measured by the proportion of Year 12 pupils with five or more good GCSEs – and social disadvantage – as measured by entitlement to free school meals – show this starkly. When these data are put onto a scattergram I am always shocked at two features: firstly, the huge variation in social position of the schools, with the most privileged having only a handful of pupils entitled to free school meals, while in others the vast majority have such entitlement; and secondly, the equally extensive range of educational outcomes. The grammar schools sit in a relatively privileged position, with generally high levels of performance and low levels of social disadvantage. Many secondary schools face much more challenging circumstances, and the consequences of this – or perhaps the consequences of the systemic failure to correct this – has an enormous importance for any attempt to create a genuinely inclusive system. We have already heard this morning examples of schools, principals, and teachers struggling to promote inclusive practice. How can a system which is so structurally unequal support what they are trying to do within individual schools?

You have got such wide levels of experience in the schools here in terms of disadvantage, but allied to that is the huge variation in terms of performance outcomes – which reflects the point I was making earlier from the PISA data, that this level of inequity is something that we are not addressing enough. It it is not as if there have not been initiatives trying to deal with this over the last 30 year or so: in fact there has been a plethora of initiatives and policies put into place to try to address these issues, But one of the things that I find quite striking about a lot of these policies is that we quite often develop new ones before we have finished evaluating the old ones. So the extent to which any lessons are learned from one policy initiative to help influence the shape of future developments seems to me to be relatively limited. And all of these new initiatives are developed and created and implemented, and eventually ended and new ones come along, but the problem that we are trying to address is sustained and keeps going on. Nothing fundamental seems to change in the system, despite the fact that there is an endless blizzard of policy initiatives put in place to try and deal with it.

So if that is the situation, if the system itself is 'excluding', or unequal, what are some of the reasons for that? Let me suggest some reasons. I think key problems are that we often focus on short-term goals, we often focus on inputs, and we usually see problems as if they are



disconnected or separable, and so solutions are developed that are trying to deal with specifics, rather than recognising that they are connected with other things. What we need is a more strategic approach, which recognises the persistent and long-term nature of the problems that we are dealing with, and therefore tries to develop genuinely long-term strategies to try and deal with those problems. We need approaches which focus rigorously on outputs rather than inputs, and so look for things that are going to change – not simply looking at the things that we do, without any attention to whether they make any difference. And we need to recognize the 'joined up' nature of the problems we are addressing and therefore the need for 'joined up' solutions when we are trying to take these things forward.

So, following from this, here are three other ideas that might help us start to think about changing the way we address these issues and take them forward. One is based around the Pareto principle which I will talk about in a second. The second takes ideas from the literature on communities of practice, and the third is an idea which has been developed by Mark Granovetter, when he talked about the strength of weak ties. And I want to say a little about each one of these and where this has taken my thinking about how we might seek to develop an inclusive system of education.

First of all the Pareto principle, which can be illustrated by photographs taken from the flicker data base – I am sure many of you use flicker as a way of uploading your photographs onto the web and sharing them with family and friends, and lots of people use flicker – it has a huge data base. If you go onto flicker and search for photographs of Queen's University Belfast, you will find 1,622 photographs uploaded by 262 different photographers, an average of 6 photos per photographer. That notion of 6 photos per photographer is obviously mathematically correct: it is the average number of photographs put up by each one of the people who put photos of Queen's on the site.

However, if you actually look at the distribution of photographs that each photographer actually put up, the real pattern is very different. Huge numbers of people put up one or two photographs, and a very small number of people put up a very large number of photographs, and that is where the Pareto principal comes in. Because in a lot of big databases, the Pareto principal predicts that it takes an 80/20 division. In this case we find that 20% of the photographers put up 80% of the photographs, thus, the 80/20 division. Now you may be wondering what on earth I'm talking about, and what has this got to do with anything about inclusion. Well, the reason I am talking about this is because the Pareto principal, the 80/20 split, gives a very good illustration of the difference between old and new business models. Old business models institutionalise producers and focus on the 'experts' or 'professionals', in this case the 20% of photographers who produced the 80% of photographs. These old business models give up and forget about the 20% of the photographs that 80% of the people are producing.

In a digital world, in which everything is moving very, very fast, and in which innovation has to be a priority, we cannot afford to give up that extra 20%: we have to find ways of tapping into the 20%. And that is why new business models have developed, such as open source approaches which try to get beyond the boundaries of institutions to tap into the wider set of ideas that are necessary to try



to develop innovative solutions. In the same way, in education we need to find ways of tapping into the other 20%, to break out of the institutional boundaries that we set for ourselves, and that have served us for a very long time, but which I think now have gone beyond their sell by date. So, the first idea I want you to think about is the need to extend beyond the limits set by institutions to seek innovative solutions to complex, persistent problems.

The second idea is focused on communities of practice. We know from the literature (mainly through the work of Wenger) that, in order to develop learning within a community, it is necessary for that community to develop a strong sense of identity, a clear sense of boundaries, agreed goals within the community, and strong intra-group communication as they drive forward to try and achieve learning. We also know that while these are good starting conditions, if the community of learning stays like that then there is a risk of stagnation, because eventually things that people are familiar with will also be familiar to all of those within that strong bounded community. So in order to advance learning at later stages it is also necessary to find ways of challenging assumptions, and introducing new ideas into the whole learning process. The best source of new ideas is other learning communities, people who do things differently, think about things differently, have different experiences and different sorts of assumptions, who can act as a challenge. But in order to do that, in order to advance learning in this situation, you have to break away from some of the conditions that are necessary at the start in order to initiate learning in order to develop new models of practice.

In this situation the priority is building bridges, making connections with other learning communities and changing the boundaries so that they are no longer strong boundaries that help to define the community, but become porous boundaries that allow ideas to break through the otherwise strong divisions which have been created. And so this is the second idea I want you to think about – how do we create porous boundaries, with bridging processes between communities of learning, and move beyond approaches which served us in the past, but which no longer do so.

The third idea is from Granovetter's notion about the strength of weak ties. And this arises out of work on networks, a growing area because of the rise of digital technologies, and the rise of digital systems in a whole variety of ways. One of the things that Granovetter tapped was a profoundly simple idea: that whenever we want to try and get new information, there is little point in talking to the people who we know very well, because chances are that the people we know very well already know most of the things that we already know. In order to get new information, you need to talk to people that you are loosely connected to, because they have access to other networks and new, unfamiliar sources of information. Thus his point about the strength of weak ties is that the best new information comes from people that we are weakly connected to, rather than people that we are strongly connected to. So this is the third idea.

All three of these ideas - open source thinking, trying to create porous boundaries between communities, trying to make use of weak ties – are based on the idea of giving us access to new information, to promote innovation and new ways of doing things. To me all this leads to the idea that we should be promoting collaboration between schools and trying to break boundaries between them, and to get schools connected as a way of trying to develop innovative models to deal with



the sort of problems that we are working with, and the sort of challenges that we are facing in the present time.

Within Northern Ireland we are fortunate to some extent that we do have a collaborative agenda that has been around for a number of years, and has been advanced in a variety of ways. There have been a number of influences over the last decade that have helped to create a context where a collaborative agenda has become more important. Part of it arose out of the post-primary review where we were struggling with ways to maintain a diversity of school types, in terms of curriculum specialism, yet avoid the unfair status differentials and inequities that it established between them under the old competitive arrangements – and collaborative networks was one way of trying to address that particular issue.

The Bain Strategic Review in 2006 pointed to the economic challenges of a system where we have more schools than we need and a pressing priority for more effective delivery of education with the available resources. Added to that, one of the consequences of large numbers of relatively small schools was the situation where a relatively arbitrary and diverse curriculum mix was available to young people whenever they were making key decisions at points in their educational career.

So in order to try and find ways to give as many young people as possible access to as wide a range of curriculum as possible, the idea of collaboration was highlighted in the Bain report. One other element of George Bain's report struck a chord with me, because one of the things he also wanted was that those collaborations should also be across the denominational sectors, and we could use that mechanism as a way to promote reconciliation processes and make the institutional boundaries that we create among our young people more porous.

All this links to work we are doing in the Sharing Education Programme, where we are trying to support the development of collaborative networks across the religious divide, initially to support key educational goals, but also to support reconciliation outcomes. However a large part of the official collaboration agenda at the moment seems to me to be too narrowly focused on aspects of the revised curriculum and the entitlement framework. Sometimes I think there is still a form of linear thinking that implies that when we are trying to address issues around collaboration, we can do it around specific things, but we don't have to do it around lots of things: the notion, if you like, that we can treat collaboration as if it is comprised of separable units of activity, so that it is possible to set boundaries around the type of collaboration which is taking place.

A doctoral student in the Queen's School of Education has carried out an absolutely fascinating analysis of Education and Library Board documents on collaboration and the advice provided to schools on how they should go about collaboration. One of the things that leapt out from this analysis was the message to the schools that 'we want you to collaborate – but don't worry, it is not going to change you very much, you are going to be able to maintain the boundaries of who you are and what you are'. That to me is exactly the wrong way to think about collaboration, because if it is going to work, it has to be dynamic, it has to be given more freedom to expand, it has to be allowed to reach out into other areas, and that is what we are trying to do within the Sharing Education Programme.



So what are the potential implications for teacher education in all this? On one level, teacher education in Northern Ireland has been subject to recent evaluations, and all of the evaluations have been very positive. That does not surprise me in the slightest, because the people who work in teacher education across all the different institutions are deeply committed to what they are doing, deeply committed to their students, and deeply committed to providing the highest quality programmes to them. However all of the evaluations are based on criteria of best practice, and best practice is all about what worked in the past. That to me is the wrong way of thinking about what we should be doing because, as I have already tried to argue, most of the ways we have organised our system structurally have been characterised by extensive division and massive inequality.

So to talk about the current system as being the system that promotes inclusion seems to me to be a nonsense. And if we continually judge everything in terms of what we used to do and whether it matches up to what we used to do, than I don't see any way of breaking out of that. What we need to do is to use a different form of benchmarking around the idea of 'next practice', or innovation. We need to recognise that we are dealing with new problems that will require innovative solutions, so that we think up new ways of trying to address these. That is where all the stuff around open source thinking, networking and the consequences of networking, and the different type of approach to learning communities, needs to come in to try and develop new ways in which we want to think about the education system generally, but also about teacher education in particular.

That leads me to the conclusion that if we want to think about priorities for teacher education going into the future, then we need to begin by asking whether we are serious about the rhetoric on inclusive schools and inclusive education. Earlier we heard examples of schools that are doing amazing things trying to incorporate inclusive processes within their own schools. But those efforts are always going to be hampered, or limited, if the system as a whole is dragging everyone in a different direction. So if we are serious about an inclusive education system, or a system in which inclusion is one of the core values and core practices that we want to see developed, then, given the structural divisions that exist within education in Northern Ireland, we need to try and find ways of connecting schools and getting schools engaging with one another in these collaborative, open source approaches.

In many senses these themes seem to be entirely appropriate for the type of conference that we are at today – SCoTENS is based on the core idea of reaching across borders. But if we are going to get schools to do that, then we need to find ways of training principals to lead across borders, and ways of training teachers to teach across borders. If we leave them in silos, and train them for silos, then the structural inequalities and divisions I illustrated at the start of this presentation will, it seems to me, render any rhetoric about inclusive education little more than rhetoric.



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION, TRANSFORMATION AND TEACHER EDUCATION IN IRELAND

Professor Sheelagh Drudy University College Dublin

Introduction

Over the past twenty years, Irish society and the education system have been subjected to radical transformation. There are many reasons for this. They include (among others): economic cycles of recession to growth and back to recession; the influence of transnational organisations from multinational corporations to the EU, from the UN to the OECD and, latterly, the spectre of the IMF; cycles of immigration and emigration; the ready availability of information via the internet; the incorporation of international conventions on human rights into our legislation; and the demands of parents.

Inclusion as a concept is a relatively new one in Ireland. It is related to many of the patterns just indicated and its rise has certainly been linked to economic growth, the incorporation of rights and (some) parental demands. Previous analysis of the system in the Republic of Ireland shows that inclusive schools do not exist in a vacuum; they will only develop fully in an inclusive education system. The evidence similarly suggests that an inclusive education system is a precursor of, and in turn is dependent upon, an inclusive social system. An inclusive social system is dependent on an inclusive economic system, i.e. an economic system that is located within a redistributive set of state fiscal policies. The dominance of neo-liberal, anti-welfare state politics globally provides a serious challenge to the political achievement of such redistributive and enhanced funding (Drudy and Kinsella, 2009). Whether the future of inclusion will be negatively affected by the severe austerity measures which will be part of government policy over the next few years is a matter which will benefit from serious research and discussion on an ongoing basis.

As a prelude to such research and discussion, and with a particular focus on teacher education, this paper reviews some of the changes which have taken place, defines the concept of inclusion in this context, summarises key findings of research on teacher education and inclusion, and raises questions about possible future directions for inclusion and teacher education.

Change and transformation in education

Irish education has undergone unprecedented change in the last two decades. Schools and other education institutions today are very different places from what they were at the beginning of the 1990s. Twenty years ago, while the second level system was stratified, to a degree along social class lines, into secondary, vocational and community/comprehensive schools, within those three broad strata, teachers encountered reasonably similar pupil profiles. Now both primary and post-primary mainstream schools serve pupils from a much wider variety of individual needs and backgrounds (Drudy, 2009).



Since the late 1990s government policy has favoured the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream schools and classes, while still retaining a continuum of provision of special schools and classes to meet, in particular, the needs of children with more significant disabilities. Recent research indicates that the proportion of children with assessed disabilities (and thus in receipt of special supports) in mainstream schools varies from just over 5% among the post-primary pupil population to slightly less than 4% among primary level pupils. This figure does not include the many children in mainstream schools who may have special educational needs but do not have an assessed disability. While acknowledging this, a small proportion of both primary and post-primary schools have much larger numbers with assessed disabilities/special educational needs and report that over 20% of their pupils fall into this category (O'Gorman and Drudy, 2009; Drudy, 2009).

In addition, schools now cater for children from a variety of cultural backgrounds. In some schools there may be up to twenty nationalities and linguistic backgrounds, and children from a wide variety of religious backgrounds. By 2007 some 10% of primary school pupils were from immigrant or 'newcomer' families, of whom over three quarters were non-English speakers (Smyth et al., 2009, pp. 44-45). At second level some 6% of pupils were from immigrant families, of whom 70% were non-English speakers. Again, some schools have a much higher proportion of their pupil populations comprising immigrant children. At primary and second level there are some schools with over 20 per cent of their pupils in this category (ibid.).

In the early 1990s no teacher had to work with another adult in the classroom. By 2009, not only was 'team teaching' more common than previously, there were approximately 10,500 special needs assistants (Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditures, 2009), compared to less than 300 in the late 1990s, and some 8,450 learning support and resource teachers, many of whom work alongside the mainstream teacher (Hanafin, 2007), although it seems from recent public policy statements following a DES review that SNA positions have been reduced and are likely to be further reduced.

Finally, socio-economic/social class inequality is one of the most persistent features of the Irish education system. The existence of educational inequalities relating to socio-economic background is well documented. These persisted right throughout the period of Ireland's economic prosperity (Lynch and Moran, 2006). In addition, status hierarchies between different types of schools also serve to make it difficult for schools to become more inclusive or egalitarian. The PISA report argues that more inclusive schooling systems have both higher levels of performance and fewer disparities among students from differing socio-economic backgrounds (OECD, 2004, p.197). I think it can reasonably be argued on the basis of this and other international evidence to date (e.g. Black-Hawkins et al., 2007) that a more inclusive school system has to be part of the solution to Ireland's economic difficulties and to increasing social cohesion during the coming times of austerity.

Inclusion

I think it is important to be clear on what I mean by the concept of inclusion. First, I see it as related to the recognition of the diversity of modern societies. Inclusion has come to mean that schools



should concern themselves with increasing the participation and broad educational achievements of all groups of learners who have historically been marginalised (Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson 2006; Kearney and Kane 2006). In England, for example, the groups who must be included in inclusive schools have been defined by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) as follows: girls and boys, men and women; black and minority ethnic and faith groups; Travellers; asylum seekers and refugees; learners with 'special educational needs'; 'gifted and talented' learners; children 'looked after' by the local authority; sick children; young carers; children from families under stress; pregnant schoolgirls and teenage mothers; learners at risk of disaffection and exclusion (Ofsted n.d., 4).

The groups to be included and supported in the mainstream in the Office for Standards in Education definition is a wide one and one which would present a challenge to any European education system. Even so, the definition does not include all categories. For example, sexual orientation is not mentioned and, of course, children disadvantaged by social class and/or socio-economic background would also have to be included. Ideally, all of the above groups should be educated within inclusive schools. In this paper it will not be possible to focus on all of these groupings. While reference will be made to other groups, many of my comments will refer most particularly to teacher education relating to children with disabilities and special educational needs.

Changes in teacher education

Initial teacher education

If we take the early 1990s as a point of departure, we can see that significant changes have taken place in both the requirements and practice of teacher education in relation to inclusion in the Republic of Ireland. Until the development by the Teaching Council of its regulations, the regulations pertaining to teacher education by the Registration Council, from their inception in 1926, including a number of revisions up to 2005, made no mention whatsoever of any requirement to address special education or inclusion. As late as the mid-1990s initial teacher education gave scant attention to special education – it tended to be regarded as an optional extra (Griffin and Shevlin, 2007). Nor was there a specific requirement to address issues relating to ethnicity or interculturalism, or even to social class disadvantage or to gender. What was mandated was the requirement for courses to offer basic studies in the foundations of education in such areas as philosophy, psychology and sociology which should, it was suggested, provide the basis for those reflective experiences which would enable the student to build up for him/herself a conceptual framework which would help him/her to develop an informed and coherent theory of education for practical teaching and future professional work (Registration Council, 2005).

This broad regulation meant that courses and modules were developed in a number of institutions by individuals who had an interest in, and commitment to, areas related to inclusion. Issues relating to social class, gender and ethnicity were most likely to be found in sociology modules, whereas issues relating to disability or to special needs were likely to be found in psychology modules. By the time the newly established Teaching Council published its own revisions of the regulations for initial teacher education (Teaching Council, 2009), a requirement for higher education institutions to



include inputs on diversity and inclusion was part of the regulations. The Teaching Council regulation specifically mentions 'Meeting Diverse Needs' including: children with Special Educational Needs, disadvantaged pupils, and intercultural education. It should also be noted that in its Codes of Professional Conduct the Teaching Council, under each of three headings on values, professional practice and professional conduct, makes specific mention of social justice, equality and democracy and diversity based on the nine grounds of the Equal Status Act, 2000.

To date there has been little research on the content of initial teacher education relating to ethnicity, race, gender or social class, or, indeed, a number of the other equal status grounds. There has, however, been some research on initial teacher education and special education. A study of inclusion by Kinsella (2009) reveals that school principals and teachers in post for a number of years feel that initial teacher education insufficiently prepared teachers for the challenge of teaching a broad curriculum to increasingly diverse groups of students. While incorporating special educational needs in initial teacher education is extremely important, there is no doubt that in the face of the dramatic changes in pupil composition which took place from the end of the 1990s onwards, the bulk of the teaching profession who were already in post were ill-prepared for the challenges that these changes presented (Kinsella, 2009). This, of course, is not unique to Ireland. Internationally, many teachers have concerns about inclusion and frequently argue that they have not been prepared for the task (Florian, 2010). Shevlin et al. (2008) have pointed out that mainstream teachers need some training in SEN, particularly in the areas of curriculum differentiation and whole school approaches to SEN.

SCoTENS-supported research by Kearns and Shevlin (2006) makes reference to the fact that most ITE courses in recent times make students aware of the social context of achievement, disaffection, subculture, family and peer group influence, social identity, the experience of minority groups, cultural influences upon schooling and pedagogy, intercultural learning, gender and ethnicity. This knowledge is thought to be concentrated within core units focused upon Disaffection, the School and Society or Equality Studies. It appears to be less commonly addressed within core SEN units and electives. Kearns and Shevlin point out that by the time of their study in the mid-2000s, the teacher initial education institutions were making important efforts to incorporate SEN within their units/modules. However, there were limitations – time allocated varied considerably, the overcrowded curriculum challenged many school-university partnerships, and there was a need for CPD for ITE staff. Nevertheless, the culture of a caring profession that is associated with SEN was universally observed to be popular with students.

Continuing professional development/in-service teacher education

It has become clear that in-service education or continuing professional development is the only way to address the changes and challenges faced by ITE in the realm of inclusive education. Research by Shevlin et al. (2008) showed that the short courses and in-service days which teachers and some classroom assistants are currently offered are not adequate: 'hands-on training' is required for teachers to work with children with disabilities and/or SEN. Awareness of disability issues, and skills in teaching and learning strategies suited to children with disabilities, should, they argued, be a compulsory programme element for students in teacher education colleges. Teachers also need



skills in identification and knowledge of assessment processes. Schools reported that the vast majority of resource teachers had received no formal training, though a number of learning support teachers had completed an official training course.

Until the beginning of the 2000s there were a very limited number of SEN courses, with a very small number of places, for serving teachers. In the early 1960s a postgraduate Diploma in Special Education course was established in St Patrick's College of Education in Dublin. Around the same time, a specialised diploma course for teachers of the blind was established and a specialised diploma course for teachers of the deaf was set up in UCD (Griffin and Shevlin, 2007). These courses were designed to be taken by teachers who were already employed in specialist settings. However, recent research by Ware & Travers (2009) shows that by the present day even in the 83 special schools in the Republic only between a quarter and a third of teachers have undertaken specialist training at diploma level or higher.

Research at UCD involving a national survey of the most senior learning support and resource teachers in primary and post-primary schools by O'Gorman showed that over a third of them had no postgraduate qualification in Special Educational Needs (the figure was almost two-thirds at primary level - O'Gorman & Drudy, 2009). The research provided evidence that the adoption of inclusive education will not occur without professional development for teachers who have been familiar with segregated education provision. For example, certain aspects of the roles undertaken by learning support/resource teachers promote practices which withdraw students from the regular education system (O'Gorman, 2009). From this research, it seems that the majority of teachers' requests for professional development in inclusion/SEN focused mainly on supporting current practices insofar as these teachers prioritised training in types of learning difficulty, assessment techniques and teaching strategies (O'Gorman & Drudy, 2010). Important and legitimate as these priorities are, this research suggests that the appointment of learning support/resource teachers to oversee the educational needs of students identified with special needs must also be accompanied by professional development to ensure that the role undertaken is one which de-emphasises withdrawal as the default mode of instruction, and instead takes on a proactive role in supporting colleagues to adopt transformative practices in a bid to expand regular education (O'Gorman & Drudy, 2010).

It is also important to acknowledge improvements. In 2002 the Report of the Task Force on Autism (which I chaired myself) recommended ASD specific teacher education at pre-service and in-service levels and this has improved considerably. Teacher education in Ireland on ASD is provided through three accredited courses for qualified teachers at primary and post-primary levels, a range of shorter courses on specific teaching approaches and methodologies, and brief input at pre-service level. The Special Education Support Service also develops and delivers professional development initiatives for teachers of students with ASD (Parsons et al., 2009). The SESS also delivers a range of short courses on different areas of special education and a number of online courses in association with ICEP Europe.

The universities and colleges of education have been involved in significant developments in continuing professional development in the area of inclusion. In the induction phase of the teaching



career University College Dublin, in collaboration with other universities, has undertaken research and development on induction which has included professional development on inclusion. SEN has been identified as one of the priority concerns for induction programmes and beginning teachers are offered input in this area (Killeavy & Murphy, 2006). Induction is now being rolled out through education centres.

As regards certified courses relating to inclusion, all the universities and colleges of education have made very important contributions to professional development. The seven universities and all the colleges of education (with one exception in a specialist college) offer programmes at postgraduate diploma and/or masters levels for teachers in special needs education, disability studies, diversity and/or intercultural education. All the universities and some of the colleges of education offer opportunities for studies in this field at doctoral level. In addition, staff research is under way in most of the institutions on aspects of inclusion. The findings of research on professional development, undertaken by University College Dublin and Queen's University Belfast with the support of SCoTENS (O'Gorman et al., 2009), suggest that courses which led to additional qualifications had an impact on teacher efficacy. In general, the teachers who were interviewed and had additional qualifications tended to show particular confidence in their ability to carry out their roles.

Conclusion

Our research and our review of the literature on inclusion would lead us to agree with the view expressed by Aimo Naukkarinen of Jyvaskyla University (O'Gorman & Drudy, 2010; Naukkarinen, 2010) that teacher education, special education, multicultural studies and teaching practice should be planned more together. Research-based learning should be increased. The streams of education should have more assignments based on problems; the solving of problems could bind together the central topics of the curriculum. Inclusive teaching practice opportunities should be enhanced (Naukkarinin, 2010).

As we say in our analysis of professional development needs of teachers North and South (O'Gorman et al., 2009), the area of inclusive education is an evolving one. There is evidence of a move from segregated provision for students with special educational needs to a more inclusive system where all students are educated together irrespective of their perceived differences. There is an increasing number of students identified as having special educational needs in the ordinary schools, but also an enormous increase in the numbers of children from diverse ethnic and faith backgrounds. Disadvantage arising from social class and poverty looks likely to increase as the economy worsens. Other equality issues such as sexual orientation are now widely debated. Therefore current practices in this changeover period are likely to undergo further adaptations. The professional development sought by teachers currently may not reflect the requirements of potential situations that will emerge. Furthermore, professional development that merely reacts to situations will not provide the stimulus for informed debate about possibilities of as yet undreamed practices. There is a need for professional development to enter a symbiotic relationship with practice where each informs the other (O'Gorman et al., 2009).



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CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Thursday 28 October 2010

Lagan Suite, Hilton Hotel, Belfast

Chair:	Dr Tom Hesketh , Director, Regional Training Unit, Belfast (Co-Chair SCoTENS)
10.00 am	Registration and refreshments, Lagan Suite Reception Area
10.30 am	Official Opening by Ms Caitríona Ruane MLA , NI Minister for Education, and Mr Sean Haughey TD , Irish Minister of State for Lifelong Learning
11.00 am	Mr Renato Opertti, Coordinator, Capacity Building Programme, UNESCO International Bureau of Education: From Inclusive Education to Inclusive Curricula
11.45 am	Dr Amanda Watkins , Assistant Director, and Dr Verity Donnelly , Project Leader, European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education: Teacher Education for Inclusion - issues and challenges
12.45 pm	Round table plenary discussion
1.30 pm	Lunch
2.30 pm	Teacher Education for Inclusion Workshops:

- Race: facilitated by Dr Karl Kitching, University College Cork (Lagan Suite)
- Special Education: facilitated by Mr Pat Curtin, Chief Executive, National Council for Special Education (Rol) and Dr Jacqueline Lambe, University of Ulster (Boardroom)
- Access and Travellers: facilitated by Dr Lisa Keane, Trinity College Dublin and Dr Joe Travers, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Speakers include Ms Anne Donnellan, Visiting Teacher Service for Travellers, Department of Education and Skills and Ms Mary Forde, Principal of Presentation College, Athenry, Co. Galway (Broadway Suite)
- **Disability:** facilitated by **Dr Bronagh Byrne**, Queen's University Belfast (Brookfield Suite)



 Professional Development of Teachers: facilitated by Professor Marie Parker Jenkins, University of Limerick. Speakers include Ms Joan McCombe, St Mary's University College Belfast and Ms Deirdre O'Connor Equality Officer, Irish National Teachers Organisation (Glenbank Suite)

4.00 pm Refreshments, Lagan Suite Reception Area

4.20 pm Report back from workshops and discussion. Panel: **Dr Amanda Watkins**,

Dr Verity Donnelly, Mr Renato Opertti, **Mr John Hunter**, Managing Inspector for Special Education and Inclusion, NI Education and Training Inspectorate, and

Ms Áine Lawlor, Director, The Teaching Council (Ireland).

5.30 pm SCoTENS business meeting

6.00 pm Close for evening

7.00 pm Launch of reports in Lagan Suite Reception Area - Professor John Coolahan will

launch Reflective Practice - Challenges for Teacher Education, North and South:

SCoTENS 2009 Conference and Annual Reports

Professor John Furlong, University of Oxford, will launch Valuing Education

Technology in Schools in Ireland, North and South

7.45pm Dinner in Lagan Suite - After dinner speaker: **Professor Sir Tim Brighouse**, former

Schools Commissioner for London and Chief Education Officer for Birmingham

Friday 29 October 2010

Lagan Suite, Hilton Hotel, Belfast

Chair: Professor Teresa O'Doherty, Head of Education, Mary Immaculate College,

Limerick (Co-Chair SCoTENS)

9.00 am Professor Sir Tim Brighouse: The Inclusion Agenda - Challenges for Teacher

Education

10.00 am Perspectives from School Principals and Teachers: **Dr Michael Dobbins**, Principal,

Foyle View Special School, Derry; **Mr Maurice Doherty**, Principal, Ballynahinch High School, Co Down; **Ms Mary Dunlea Fitzgerald**, Principal, St Tola's National School, Shannon, Co Clare; **Ms Anna Fitzgerald**, newly qualified teacher, Limerick

11.00 am Refreshments, Lagan Suite Reception Area



11.30 am	HEI Responses to the Teacher Education for Inclusion challenge: Professor Tony Gallagher , Pro Vice Chancellor, Queen's University Belfast, and Professor Sheelagh Drudy , University College Dublin: Inclusive education, transformation
10.00	and teacher education in Northern Ireland and Ireland
12.30 pm	Round table plenary discussion
1.15pm	Lunch and close of conference



LIST OF CONFERENCE DELEGATES

Mr. John Anderson	Managing Inspector	Education and Training Inspectorate, Department of Education
Ms Sally Bonner	Director	Donegal Education Centre
Mr Gavin Boyd	Chief Executive	Education and Skills Authority
Ms. Gillian Boyd	Capacity Building Programme	ETI/DE, Department of Education
Sir Tim Brighouse	Former Schools Commissioner for London	
Mr. Barry Burgess	Associate Head of School	School of Education, University of Ulster
Dr. Bronagh Byrne	Lecturer	Graduate Education, Queen's University Belfast
Mr. Clive Byrne	Director	National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
Ms. Siobhan Cahillane - McGovern	Course Director for Higher Diploma	Hibernia College
Mr. Jim Clarke	Deputy Chief Executive	Council for Catholic Maintained Schools
Dr. Marie Clarke	Head of School	School of Education, University College Dublin
Mr Aidan Clifford	Director	Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin VEC
Ms. Claire Connolly	Director of Teaching Practice	St Mary's University College
Professor John Coolahan		
Ms. Tina Creaney	Administrator	Regional Training Unit, Belfast
Ms. Corinna Crooks	Civic-Link	Cooperation Ireland
Ms. Audrey Curry	Head of ITE (Post-primary)	Stranmillis University College
Mr. Pat Curtin	Director, National Council for Special Education	Department of Education and Skills
Mr. Gerry Devlin	Senior Education Officer	General Teaching Council for NI
Dr. Michael Dobbins	Principal	Foyleview Special School
Mr. Maurice Doherty	Principal	Ballynahinch High School
Ms. Anne Donnellan	Visiting Teacher, Service for Travellers	Department of Education and Skills
Ms. Verity Donnelly	Project Leader	European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education
Prof. Sheelagh Drudy	Emeritus Professor of Education	School of Education, University College Dublin



Ms. Gail Eason	Head of School Partnerships	Stranmillis University College
Ms. Patricia Eaton	Director, Postgrad Dip in Special Education Needs	National University of Ireland, Galway
Dr. Patricia Eaton	Senior Lecturer	Stranmillis University College
Mr. Jim Enright	Director	Laois Education Centre
Mr. Paul Fields	Director	Kilkenny Education Centre
Ms. Anne Fitzgerald	Teacher	
Mrs. Mary D Fitzgerald	Principal	St Tola's National School
Prof. John Furlong	Director	Department of Educational Studies, Oxford University
Dr. Despina Galanouli	Research Fellow	School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
Professor Tony Gallagher	Pro Vice Chancellor	Queen's University Belfast
Dr Conor Galvin	Lecturer in Education	School of Education, University College Dublin
Dr. Mary Gannon	Coordinator, Education for Reconciliation project	Curriculum Development Unit, City of Dublin VEC
Mrs. Lorna Gardiner	Adviser	NE Education and Library Board
Prof. John Gardner	Head of School	School of Education, Queen's University Belfast
Mr. Flan Garvey	National Vice President	Irish Vocational Education Association
Mr. Martin Hagan	Education Co-ordinator	Education Studies, St Mary's University College
Prof. Kathy Hall	Head of School	School of Education, University College Cork
Mr. Seán Haughey TD	Minister of State for for Lifelong Learning	
Dr. Tom Hesketh	Director	Regional Training Unit, Belfast
Ms. Mary Hough	Director	Sligo Education Centre
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PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES OF TEACHING HEALTHY EATING WITHIN THE CURRICULUM

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This report will be launched as a 'stand alone' SCoTENS publication at the annual SCoTENS conference on 29 September 2011

The primary school setting offers an ideal environment for educating children with regard to healthy eating. Information pertaining to food and nutrition is a compulsory element of the primary school curriculum across Ireland, within both the Personal Development and Mutual Understanding (PDMU) curriculum in Northern Ireland and the Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) curriculum in the Republic of Ireland. To date in both jurisdictions there is a dearth of information pertaining to teachers' experiences of teaching the food and nutrition related content of either curriculum.

As a consequence, this cross-border research project was conducted by the Home Economics Department, St. Angela's College, Sligo and the School of Education, University of Ulster (Coleraine) with the assistance of SCoTENS funding. Field research was undertaken between January and June 2009. The main purpose of the study was to ascertain teachers' perceptions of teaching the food and nutrition related content of the curriculum, and based on their classroom experiences to determine the supports required for the enhanced teaching and learning of this area. The study focused on primary school teachers' experiences of teaching food and nutrition in the classroom within the PDMU curriculum in Northern Ireland and the SPHE curriculum in Republic of Ireland. It is envisaged that the results from this study will be useful in identifying areas where further support/continuous professional development (CPD) might be required and may be a starting point for designing resources to meet these needs.

The finding of this study that many of the teachers relied on their initial teacher education for their food and nutrition related subject knowledge is a cause for concern. It highlights the requirement for ongoing in-career development for teachers, especially given that many of the teachers have been teaching for a good number of years. The study also reveals that there is a need for teaching resources such as textbooks, DVDs and interactive computer games to enhance teaching in this area. Furthermore, in order to encourage active learning methodologies, nutritionally balanced recipes suitable for use in the classroom as opposed to the kitchen need to be developed.



BUILDING NORTH-SOUTH LINKS IN WHOLE COLLEGE INITIATIVES IN GLOBAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

Mr Brian Ruane, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Dr Gerard McCann, St Mary's University College, Belfast

In both St Mary's College and St Patrick's College the global dimension in education has been enhanced by the ongoing dialogue between the colleges supported by this SCoTENs project.

1. Following on from a joint college meeting at the start of the project to investigate points of co-operation, St Mary's continued to adapt a number of its modules to integrate the global dimension into the work schemes of the lecturers. Ongoing global justice elements include holding 'Global Days' for students; promoting a number of Irish development non-governmental organisations; facilitating speakers on key development issues, and restructuring the Geography of Global Development module for BEd first years to include case studies of Irish development NGOs working in the field of global justice.

Similarly in St. Patrick's College, a number of initiatives have taken place to integrate the global dimension into teaching and learning in the college. New programmes under the title of 'The Global Teacher' have been introduced for all students in BEd 1. All students are now required to submit a topic with a global dimension as an assignment with one of their curriculum courses – maths, SPHE or digital learning- in BEd 3. A significant support to this work has been the development of a resource centre in the college which allows students to explore, borrow and use a wide range of resource materials in global education. The resource centre was established as a direct result of this collaborative project. We sought from the outset to emulate the model of provision in St. Mary's College and received significant guidance and support in doing so.

2. Respectively, the colleges have been working on research initiatives that have global justice at the core of their work. This has included the production of a textbook, From the Local to the Global, which can be utilised for teaching undergraduates and involves academics from both North and South, Irish development NGO representatives and academics from the developing countries. There is also current work on an edited collection on Development in Sub-Saharan Afric' which will be published early next year. The research aspects of St Mary's College work are brought under the auspices of instilling a global dimension in education, and aim to enhance the partnership with St Patrick's College.

Research in St. Patrick's College has focused on students' understandings of global justice education and their own teaching and learning experiences in this area. This has been in the context of the newly introduced courses in the global dimension in BEd 1 and BEd 3. An intranet resource on the global dimension has been developed and is available to staff and students in the college. It is intended that this will become a shared resource for student collaboration in forthcoming collaborative activities between the two colleges.



- 3. St Mary's have opened a model of work-based learning which includes a global justice option. This has been in part based on the current programme in St Patrick's and includes sending second year undergraduate students to developing countries to work on education projects or in schools. Currently, there are a number of St Mary's students working with the Kabwata Orphanage, the St Lawrence Centre (Misisi), and St Catherine's Primary School in Lusaka, Zambia. In St. Patrick's, students are working out of teacher training colleges in Uganda and Ghana as part of college programmes. These partnerships have been built up within the context of this Global Justice Education project and influenced by the models in each college.
- 4. Resulting from meetings between the colleges, it was decided to include an exchange dimension as part of the core delivery of models in development education in both colleges. An exchange visit took place in Dublin on November 5th and 6th November 2010. For this, 18 students taking the Geography of Global Development module at St Mary's College joined students from St Patrick's College taking the Diversity and Global Justice Education for a two day session exploring global justice education. The first day of the exchange took place in the Irish Aid Information and Volunteering Centre and the second day took place in the Green House (both in Dublin), where the environmental education organization, ECO-UNESCO, is based. The sessions included activities and discussion aimed at: team building, exploring food and hunger, modelling good practice in development education, and exploring the themes of peace, conflict and global development. The students engaged fully and considered the themes from their own backgrounds and perspectives. A rich discussion ensued and relationships were further developed through a social evening.
- 5. 14 students from St Patrick's College participated in the return exchange visit to Belfast on 27th and 28th January 2011. During this visit students further explored the themes of development, peace and conflict and had an opportunity to reflect on these themes in a Northern Ireland and a global context. As on the first occasion, a number of academic staff from both colleges were involved, with the intention of integrating the lessons learned from the exchange into future practice in both collaborative and institutional practice in both colleges.



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

Queen's University Belfast has been working in collaboration with colleagues from St Patrick's College, Drumcondra to develop all-Ireland research capacity in arts-based educational research. Arts-based Education Research (ABER) aims to understand education through arts-based concepts, techniques and practices. Practitioners and researchers use a variety of arts-based methodologies to undertake their inquiries and / or to communicate their understanding through such diverse genres as autobiography, narrative, poetry, visual arts, drama, dance, music and performance. There is a relatively new but rapidly growing body of literature and practitioner knowledge that directly addresses concepts of art as research, the nature of knowing aesthetically and learning aesthetically, the process of making, and the use of art as platform for recording and analysing data.

The SCoTENS project recognised however that expertise has tended to develop in pockets on the island of Ireland and there had been little opportunity to share the rich array of experiences and outcomes associated with ABER. The aims of the ABER SCoTENS project have been to address this by building a sustainable community of practitioners and researchers in teacher education who have a common interest in developing, sharing and disseminating arts-based research. They are doing this in the following ways:

- (i) Offer a 'creative research identities' day workshop every March/April which will be practical and skills-based, to be held in Queen's and to which researchers and EdD and PhD students in education will be invited.
- (ii) Run two seminars, one in St Patrick's in late June and the other in Queen's in November, inviting up to 30 teacher educator participants to attend to share their research and experience of ABER across the sectors and in various subject areas and domains;
- (iii) Develop a web-based resource that will allow sharing of research experience and outcomes on-line, as well as running a JISC email list for those researchers and teacher educators who are developing arts-based educational research. This may be developed and hosted at Queen's and/ or linked through to the SCoTENS website.
- (iv) Consider the case for proposing a Special Interest Group (SIG) for ABER researchers within the Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) and look to a connection with the ABER SIG proposed within the British Educational Research Association (BERA).



(v) In addition to the tangible research-capacity building events and the inception of a dedicated ABER web-based resource for arts-based researchers in Ireland, the main hoped-for outcome of this project is the building of a sustainable community of practitioners and researchers in teacher education who have a common interest in developing, sharing and disseminating artsbased educational research.



SIXTH FORM/SIXTH YEAR RELIGION IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Dr Andrew G McGrady, Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin Dr Christopher A Lewis, University of Ulster

Project aims

The project set out to document and to build on the research tradition established in Northern Ireland by Dr John Greer by his pioneering study conducted in 1968 among sixth-form pupils within the Protestant sector of schools.

The first objective

The first objective of the project was to draw together and to assess the publications following from Greer's original study in 1968 and from the replications of this study conducted in 1978, 1988, and 1998. In the course of this review the connection became clear between Greer's studies among sixth-formers and his work among younger secondary school pupils attending both Protestant and Catholic Schools. These studies have, therefore, been added to the literature review. The full bibliography for this research tradition is presented in Appendix One. Greater details of the 1998 replication are provided in Appendix Two.

The second objective

Following the review of Greer's earlier research, the second objective was to design a survey instrument appropriate and acceptable for use among sixth-form/sixth-year pupils in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. As much as possible, questions used in the 1968, 1978, 1988, and 1998 studies were retained in order to ensure comparability of the data across the 40 year period from 1968 to 2010. Some questions were modified or extended to accommodate the changing climate of the current environment. Some new questions were added to extend the analytic scope of the study and to link it with a wider range of issues.

The following themes were reflected in the questionnaire, and a full copy of the questionnaire is included as Appendix Three.

- 1. Attitude towards Christianity
- 2. Beliefs about the Bible
- 3. Belief in God
- 4. Church attendance
- 5. Images of God
- 6. Life after death
- 7. Life satisfaction and personal happiness
- 8. Life values



- 9. Moral values
- 10. Personality
- 11. Prayer
- 12. Relationship between church and state
- 13. Religious education
- 14. Religious experience
- 15. Views on Jesus
- 16. World views

The third objective

Having agreed on the design of the survey instrument, the third objective of the survey was to collect data from sixth-form/sixth-year pupils within the following range of schools.

Northern Ireland

- 9 Catholic schools
- 9 Protestant schools
- 2 Integrated schools

Republic of Ireland

20 second level schools representative of different sectors.

These targets have been met, delivering data from over 4,000 pupils. Most of these data have now been entered ready for analysis by a range of techniques available through the SPSS programme package.

The new data will enable the following research aims to be realised:

- 1. Profile the religious beliefs, attitudes and practices of sixth-form/sixth-year pupils in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.
- 2. Compare 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).
- 3. Extend the research to sixth form pupils in the integrated schooling sector in Northern Ireland.
- 4. Compare the current situation in Northern Ireland with that of the Republic of Ireland.

The outcome of these analyses will relate to the following areas of education:

- 1. Religious education
- 2. Education for Mutual Understanding
- 3. Church-related educational concerns
- 4. Civic, Social, Personal and Political Education.



The fourth objective

The fourth objective of the project was to strengthen the research base of the Mater Dei Institute, a College of Dublin City University. The project has achieved this aim in three ways:

- The project has drawn together for the benefit of the Mater Dei Institute a group of internationally recognised researchers in the field of religious education, including: Dr Tania ap Siôn, St Mary's Centre, Wales Dr Philip Barnes, Kings College, London Professor Leslie J Francis, University of Warwick Professor Christopher A Lewis, Glynd r University (formerly of University of Ulster)
- 2. The project was highlighted and discussed at the following conferences:
 - The International Society for Empirical Research in Theology, Salesian University, Rome, April 2010.
 - The Inter-University Research Symposium on Religion and Education, Glynd r University, Wales, May 2010.
 - The International Seminar on Religious Education and Values, St Pauls University, Ottawa, Canada, July 2010.
- 3. The project will form the basis for a major conference planned at the Mater Dei Institute for early 2012.

The fifth objective

The fifth objective of the project was to strengthen collaborative research in Ireland, involving both North and South. The project has been successful in modelling excellent collaboration between the Mater Dei Institute (Dublin City University) and the University of Ulster at Magee.

Moreover, the research findings within the field of religious education will be important for promoting better understanding between the communities of Ireland, and for developing shared understanding in the fields of teacher education and continuing professional development in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

The sixth objective

The sixth objective of the project was to see the crucial funding provided by SCOTENS as generating a serious source of data that would be attractive to other funders in order to enable the full riches of these data to be turned into a series of quality academic papers and more popular presentations.

In May 2010 a follow-on funding application was submitted to an independent trust that has awarded a grant of €20,000 for the calendar year 2011 to enable ongoing work on the project. A further application will be made for similar funding for the calendar year 2012.



It is in this way that the relatively modest investment from SCOTENS of £6,000 has led to research outcomes commensurate with those achieved by some of the projects much more substantially funded by Research Councils.

Appendix 1

Publications emerging from John Greer's research (and subsequently continued by his colleagues) conducted among sixth-form and secondary school pupils attending Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland between 1968 and 1998.

- Greer, J.E. (1971). Religious belief and church attendance of sixth form pupils and their parents. *Irish Journal of Education*, *5*, 98-106.
- Greer, J. E. (1972). Sixth-form religion in Northern Ireland. Social Studies, 1, 325-340.
- Greer, J. E. (1980). The persistence of religion: A study of adolescents in Northern Ireland. *Character Potential*, 9(3), 139-149.
- Greer, J. E. (1980). Stages in the development of religious thinking, *British Journal of Religious Education*, 3, 24-28.
- Greer, J. E. (1981). Religious attitudes and thinking in Belfast pupils. *Educational Research*, 23, 177-189.
- Greer, J. E. (1981). Religious experience and religious education. Search, 4(1), 23-34.
- Greer, J. E. (1982). A comparison of two attitudes to religion scales. *Educational Research*, 24, 226-27.
- Greer, J. E. (1982). Growing up in Belfast: a study of religious development. *Collected Original Resources in Education*, 6, 1, fiche 1, A14.
- Greer, J. E. (1982). The religious experience of Northern Irish pupils. The Irish Catechist, 6(2), 49-58.
- Greer, J. E. (1983). Attitude to religion reconsidered. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 31, 18-28.
- Greer, J. E. (1983). A critical study of 'Thinking about the Bible'. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 5, 113-25.
- Greer, J. E. (1984). Moral cultures in Northern Ireland. Journal of Social Psychology, 123, 63-70.
- Greer, J.E. (1985). Viewing `the other side' in Northern Ireland: Openness and attitude to religion among Catholic and Protestant Adolescents. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 24,* 275-292.
- Greer, J. E. (1988). The churches and educational provision in Northern Ireland. In V. A. McClelland (Ed.), *Christian Education in a Pluralist Society* (pp. 135-159). London: Routledge.
- Greer, J. E. (1989). The persistence of religion in Northern Ireland: A study of sixth form religion, 1968-1988. *Collected Original Resources in Education*, 13(2), fiche 20, G9.
- Greer, J. E. (1989). The importance of religion: A study of adolescents in Northern Ireland. Search, 12(2), 22-31.
- Francis, L. J., & Greer, J. E. (1990). Measuring attitudes towards Christianity among pupils in Protestant secondary schools in Northern Ireland. *Personality and Individual Differences,* 11, 853-856.



- Francis, L. J., & Greer, J. E. (1990). Catholic schools and adolescent religiosity in Northern Ireland: shaping moral values. *Irish Journal of Education*, *24*, 2, 40-47.
- Greer, J. E. (1990). The persistence of religion: A study of sixth-form pupils in Northern Ireland, 1968-1988. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 130, 573-581.
- Greer, J. E., & Francis, L. J. (1990). The religious profile of pupils in Northern Ireland: a comparative study of pupils attending Catholic and Protestant secondary schools. *Journal of Empirical Theology*, 3, 2, 35-50.
- Francis, L. J., Greer, J. E., & Gibson, H. M. (1991). Reliability and validity of a short measure of attitude towards Christianity among secondary school pupils in England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. *Collected Original Resources in Education*, 15, 3, fiche 2, G09.
- Greer, J. E., & Francis, L. J. (1991). Measuring attitudes towards Christianity among pupils in Catholic secondary schools in Northern Ireland. *Educational Research*, 33, 70-73.
- Francis, L. J., & Greer, J. E. (1992). Measuring Christian moral values among Catholic and Protestant adolescents in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Moral Education*, 21, 59-65.
- Francis, L. J. & Greer, J. E. (1992). The teenage voice: the religious profile of pupils attending Catholic and Protestant secondary schools in Northern Ireland. In P. Brierley (Ed.). *The Irish Christian Handbook*, pp 20-23. London: MARC Europe.
- Greer, J. E., & Francis, L. J. (1992). Religious experience and attitude toward Christianity among secondary school children in Northern Ireland. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 132, 277-279.
- Greer, J. E., & Francis, L. J. (1992). Measuring 'rejection of Christianity' among 14-16 year old adolescents in Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland, *Personality and Individual Differences*, 13, 1345-1348.
- Francis, L. J., & Greer, J.E. (1993). The contribution of religious experience to Christian development: a study among fourth, fifth and sixth year pupils in Northern Ireland, *British Journal of Religious Education*, 15, 38-43.
- Ap Siôn, T. (2006). Looking for signs of the presence of God in Northern Ireland: Religous experience among Catholic and Protestant sixth-form pupils. *Archiv fur Religionpsychologie*, 28(1), 349-370.
- Francis, L. J., ap Siôn, T., Lewis, C. A., Robbins, M., & Barnes, L. P. (2006). Attitude toward Christianity and religious experience: Replication among 16- to 18-year-old adolescents in Northern Ireland. *Research in Education*, 76, 56-61.
- Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Barnes L. P., & Lewis, C. A. (2006). Sixth-form religion in Northern Ireland: The Protestant profile 1968-1998. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 28, 3-18.
- Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Barnes, L. P., & Lewis, C. A. (2006). Religiously affiliated schools in Northern Ireland: The persistence of denominational differences in pupils' religious and moral values. *Journal of Empirical Theology*, 19, 182-202.
- Francis, L. J., & Robbins, M. (2007). God images and moral values among Protestant and Catholic adolescents in Northern Ireland. In P. Heggy (Ed.), What do we Imagine God to be? The function of 'God images' in our lives, pp 109-122. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Francis L. J., Robbins M., ap Siôn T, Lewis C. A., & Barnes, L. P. (2007). Psychological health and attitude toward Christianity among Protestant and Catholic sixth-form pupils in Northern Ireland. *Pastoral Psychology*, 56, 157-164.



- Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Lewis, C. A., Barnes L. P., & ap Siôn, T. (2007). Attitude toward Christianity among secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland: Shifts in denominational differences. *Educational Research*, 49, 431-436.
- Francis, L. J. Robbins, M., Lewis, C.A. & Barnes, L.P. (2008). Prayer and psychological health: A study among sixth-form pupils attending Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 11, 85-92.

Appendix 2

Abstracts of publications emerging from the 1998 study conducted among sixth-form pupils in Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland, including comparisons with earlier studies.

Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Barnes L. P., & Lewis, C. A. (2006a). Sixth-form religion in Northern Ireland: The Protestant profile 1968-1998. *British Journal of Religious Education*, 28, 3-18.

The aim of the present study was to build on John Greer's systematic set of studies concerned with teenage beliefs and values conducted among samples of sixth form students attending County and Protestant voluntary schools in Northern Ireland in 1968, 1978 and 1988. The present study replicated the earlier surveys for a further time in 1998. The results provide a unique snapshot of the persistence of religious affiliation, belief and practice across the latter part of the twentieth century in a nation which has continued to resist the secularisation process so eroding the place of religion in the neighbouring nations of England, Wales, and Scotland.

Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Barnes, L. P., & Lewis, C. A. (2006b). Religiously affiliated schools in Northern Ireland: The persistence of denominational differences in pupils' religious and moral values. *Journal of Empirical Theology*, 19, 182-202.

Northern Ireland has been and remains a country deeply divided, and this division is focused by the denominational distinction between Catholics and Protestants. The division is reflected in and supported by separate educational systems for Protestant and Catholic children. Between the late 1960s and early 1990s, John Greer pioneered a series of empirical enquiries concerning the distinctive religious, moral and social cultures of pupils educated in the two school systems. This study replicates earlier research he carried out in 1984 that investigated the religious beliefs and values of both Catholic and Protestant pupils in schools. The data provided by 1,099 Protestant pupils and by 1,270 Catholic pupils confirm Greer's earlier conclusion that there are significant and consistent differences in the religious profiles of the two denominational groups. Some of the implications of this finding for accounts of the nature of the process of secularisation and for education and schooling in Northern Ireland are considered.

Francis, L. J., ap Siôn, T., Lewis, C. A., Robbins, M., & Barnes, L. P. (2006). Attitude toward Christianity and religious experience: Replication among 16- to 18-year-old adolescents in Northern Ireland. Research in Education, 76, 56-61.

A sample of 2,359 sixth-form (16- to 18-year-old) pupils attending Protestant and Catholic schools in Northern Ireland completed the Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity



together with a question about religious experience, in order to examine whether findings from earlier studies conducted in 1981 and 1991 would be replicated at the end of the 1990s, at a time when commentators have suggested that the religious climate of Northern Ireland was undergoing significant change and erosion. The data suggest that the acknowledgement of personal religious experience is associated with the formation of a more positive attitude toward Christianity. The fact that the findings have remained stable over a period of nearly 20 years suggests that the psychological mechanism linking acknowledgement of personal religious experience with a more positive attitude toward Christianity is well-founded.

Ap Siôn, T. (2006). Looking for signs of the presence of God in Northern Ireland: Religous experience among Catholic and Protestant sixth-form pupils. *Archiv fur Religionpsychologie*, 28(1), 349-370.

A sample of 2,359 sixth-form pupils (between the ages of 16 and 18 years) in Northern Ireland (1,093 attending seven Protestant schools and 1,266 attending nine Catholic schools) responded in 1998 to Greer's classic question 'Have you ever had an experience of God, for example, his presence or his help or anything else?' Religious experience was reported by 29% of Protestant males, 29% of Catholic males, 39% of Protestant females and 38% of Catholic females. Compared with earlier data, these figures reveal a particularly marked decline in reported religious experience among Catholic females (64% in 1981, 56% in 1984, 61% in 1992 and 38% in 1998). The content of the reported religious experience is analysed and illustrated within nine descriptive categories characterised as: help and guidance, exams, God's presence, answered prayer, death, sickness, conversion, difficulty in describing, and miscellaneous.

Francis L. J., Robbins M., ap Siôn T, Lewis C. A., & Barnes, L. P. (2007). Psychological health and attitude toward Christianity among Protestant and Catholic sixth-form pupils in Northern Ireland. *Pastoral Psychology*, 56, 157-164.

Northern Ireland remains both one of the more religiously active and also one of the most religiously divided countries in Europe. In this context 1,093 sixth-form pupils attending Protestant schools and 1,266 sixth-form pupils attending Catholic schools (aged between 16 and 19 years) completed the abbreviated Eysenck Personality Questionnaire Revised (EPQR-A), as a measure of psychological health, alongside the Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity (FSAC). The findings demonstrated that a positive attitude toward Christianity was associated with neither higher nor lower neuroticism scores, but was associated in both religious communities with lower psychoticism scores. There is no evidence, therefore, to associate a positive view of Christianity with poorer levels of psychological health among adolescents in Northern Ireland, and some evidence to associate a positive view of Christianity with better levels of psychological health.

Francis, L. J., Robbins, M., Lewis, C. A., Barnes L. P., & ap Siôn, T. (2007). Attitude toward Christianity among secondary school pupils in Northern Ireland: Shifts in denominational differences. *Educational Research*, 49, 431-436.

To build on a series of studies conducted over the last thirty years charting the changing



pattern of attitude toward Christianity within the segregated school system in Northern Ireland, a sample of 2,359 pupils attending the lower and upper sixth forms of Catholic and Protestant schools completed the Francis Scale of Attitude toward Christianity. The data demonstrate that, while males attending Catholic schools maintain a more positive attitude toward Christianity than males attending Protestant schools, females attending Catholic schools report a less positive attitude toward Christianity than females attending Protestant schools. These findings are compared with studies conducted during the 1970s and 1980s when both males and females attending Catholic schools recorded a more positive attitude toward Christianity than their peers attending Protestant schools.

Francis, L. J., & Robbins, M. (2007). God images and moral values among Protestant and Catholic adolescents in Northern Ireland. In P. Heggy (Ed.), What do we Imagine God to be? The function of 'God images' in our lives, pp 109-122. Lampeter: Edwin Mellen Press.

The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between God images and moral values, building on earlier research concerned with God images and empathy. A sample of 2,359 sixth-form (16- to 18-year-old) pupils attending Protestant and Catholic schools in Northern Ireland completed short indices of moral values and of God images together with the abbreviated form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire and a measure of frequency of church attendance. The data demonstrated a significant correlation between positive God images and moral values, after controlling for individual differences in sex, age, personality, denominational affiliation and frequency of church attendance.

Francis, L. J. Robbins, M., Lewis, C.A. & Barnes, L.P. (2008). Prayer and psychological health: A study among sixth-form pupils attending Catholic and Protestant schools in Northern Ireland. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 11, 85-92.

Eysenck's dimensional model of personality includes two indicators of psychological health, defined as neuroticism and psychoticism. In order to examine the association between psychological health and prayer, two samples of sixth-form pupils in Northern Ireland (16- to 18-year-olds) attending Catholic (N = 1,246) and Protestant (N = 1,060) schools completed the abbreviated Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire alongside a simple measure of prayer frequency. The data demonstrated a positive association between prayer frequency and better levels of psychological health as assessed by Eysenck's notion of psychoticism. Among pupils attending both Catholic and Protestant schools higher levels of prayer were associated with lower psychoticism scores. Among pupils attending Catholic schools, however, higher levels of prayer were also associated with higher neuroticism scores.



GAEILGE LABHARTHA NA BPÁISTÍ I SCOILEANNA LÁN-GHAEILGE IN ÉIRINN (THE SPOKEN IRISH OF PUPILS IN IRISH-MEDIUM SCHOOLS)

Mr Pádraig Ó Duibhir, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin Ms Jill Garland, St Mary's University College, Belfast

This report describes a broad-based study of the spoken Irish of Year 7 pupils in Irish-medium schools in Northern Ireland. The purpose of the study was to investigate the linguistic features of Irish-medium pupils' spoken Irish and to try to explain why these features are present. The study comprised a corpus-based analysis of the use of Irish in a naturalistic, task-focussed setting. 24 students, drawn from four different Irish-medium schools, were video-recorded while engaged in a collaborative task. Extracts from these recordings were used in a stimulated recall activity where pupils were prompted to comment on the quality of their spoken Irish, to correct their mistakes and to discuss factors that influence linguistic performance more generally. Results from these sessions show that pupils were surprised and disappointed by the level of code-mixing in their Irish. They reported that they do not critically monitor their spoken output when speaking Irish, and they gradually consolidate these errors through habitual use. On reflection, immersion pupils were able to correct some kinds of errors but not others. The findings indicate that it is difficult to improve immersion pupils' spoken accuracy in the target language once communicative sufficiency has been reached.

Irish-medium education has experienced continual growth in Northern Ireland since the first such school was established by parents on Shaw's Road in West Belfast in 1971. This school, Bunscoil Phobal Feirste, has now grown from its humble beginnings with originally nine pupils to become the largest Irish-medium primary school in Northern Ireland with almost 300 pupils.

There are currently more than 80 centres in Northern Ireland providing excellent standards of education through the medium of Irish, for children and young people from the early age of three years right through to 18 years, and this number continues to grow. Of these 80 or so centres, 43 are at nursery level, 34 are at primary level and there are presently four centres providing Irish-medium education at post-primary level in Northern Ireland (http://www.comhairle.org/school_listing.php).

According to the Northern Ireland Census 2001, 0.167 million people have some knowledge of Irish, representing 10.4% of the total population (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2004). Approximately 1.5% of pupils received their education through the medium of Irish (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, 2004)

As can be seen from in Figure 1 below, Irish-medium settings cover a wide geographical area throughout Northern Ireland. This growth has seen a movement from mainly urban based Irish-medium schools initially, in the cities of Belfast and Derry, to a large growth in Irish-medium provision in many rural areas across Northern Ireland. Irish-medium primary and post-primary provisions follow



the models of either independent free-standing Irish-medium schools or as Irish-medium units based in English-medium schools, although the four schools chosen for the purpose of this study are all free-standing Irish-medium schools.

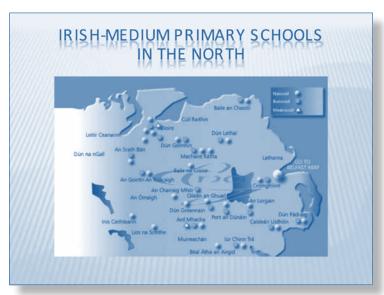


Figure 2: The Location of Irish-medium Schools in Northern Ireland

All Irish-medium schools in Northern Ireland employ a total early immersion policy for the first three years of primary schooling, with the majority of the children having also attended an Irish-medium nursery school for at least one year prior to starting primary school. Although Irish-medium pupils follow the same curriculum as their English-medium peers in Northern Ireland, there is a version of the Northern Ireland Curriculum Document specifically for Irish-medium schools in which all of the learning areas have been developed to reflect the unique context of the Irish-medium learning environment (www.nicurriculum.org). Irish-medium literacy development begins with a two year nursery programme. In nursery and foundation stage classrooms the children are totally immersed in the Irish language and early reading skills are developed and consolidated in Irish before the children are introduced to English reading and writing in years 3 or 4, depending on the school language policy. The introduction of the Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum, which became statutory in 2006 initially for Years 1 and 5 (www.ccea.org.uk), didn't change the approach in the Irish-medium schools to the same degree as in English-medium schools. There was always an emphasis on oral language development and language through play in Irish-medium schools. An important feature in the Irishmedium literacy curriculum is the emphasis on 'Listening, Understanding and Talking' in contrast to 'Talking and Listening' in the English-medium curriculum (www.nicurriculum.org).

Irish is the communicative language of the school and pupils are expected to converse in Irish at all times within the school environment including the school playground at break-time. This provides the pupils with opportunities for output and social interaction outside the classroom.

Full report available on http://scotens.org/?p=1781.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF CASE STUDIES IN 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

Northern Ireland has been home to minority ethnic people for centuries. Irish Travellers are an indigenous minority ethnic group. The Indian community have been here since the 1920s and there have been significant numbers of Chinese people here since the 1960s. More recently there has been an influx of migrant workers from Portugal and from Eastern Europe, particularly Poland, Lithuania and Romania.

The 2001 census put the size of the minority ethnic communities at 14,279. However, some minority ethnic representatives have suggested that the non-indigenous population is closer to 45,000 (A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland, p.27). The issue of how best to educate children who do not have English as their first language has become a more urgent question for schools over the past decade. Equally important is the need for schools to encourage pupils from the indigenous population to accept, respect and befriend 'newcomer' pupils who may not have English as a first language. There have been important curricular initiatives which have been designed to help young pupils have a better understanding of people from different cultures and traditions and to have respect for people who are different for whatever reason. For example at primary level, Personal Development and Mutual Understanding in Northern Ireland and Social, Personal Health Education in the Republic of Ireland address some of the issues around diversity. Both jurisdictions also run a programme of citizenship education at post-primary level.

Curricular initiatives alone are not sufficient however to meet the specific needs, linguistic, social and emotional, of newcomer children. Schools in Ireland, North and South, are currently catering for growing numbers of pupils from ethnic minorities. Anecdotal evidence from students on school-based work suggests that some teachers are struggling to deal with pupils who do not have English as a first language, and the children can spend long periods of the day without support. Even where resource teaching and other supports are offered, there is a wide diversity in models and approaches employed within the primary school systems in both jurisdictions. There are examples of very good practice where newcomer children are made to feel welcome and secure and where there is a lot of day to day support for each child, but there are other schools which are barely making any provision for these pupils.

In particular, schools which have very small numbers of pupils from different ethnic groups often do not see the need for specific strategies or staff training for situations which haven't arisen, although they may arise in the future. Such attitudes are short sighted in that although the pupils may not meet many newcomer children in the school, they may well be meeting them outside the school. Inconsistencies in approach by schools, and inconsistent patterns of training for teachers and classroom assistants to deal with the learning needs of ethnic minority children, highlights the need



for centralised policies to ensure a more coherent approach to teaching newcomer children, and to the training of both serving teachers and student teachers for such a task.

The policy debate on diversity was given impetus by the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement (1998), where all parties to the Agreement committed themselves to 'partnership, equality and mutual respect as the basis of relationships within Northern Ireland, between North and South, and between these islands'. Later on in the document all parties recognised 'the right to equal opportunity in all social and economic activity, regardless of class, creed, disability, gender or ethnicity' (section on rights, safeguards and equality of opportunity, para 1). Since the Agreement was signed, in Northern Ireland a number of initiatives have addressed the issues surrounding diversity – ethnic, cultural as well as religious – and specifically how to promote a more inclusive, tolerant and equal society in the midst of increasing diversity. The proposed initiatives are much wider in scope than the strictly educational domain, but education remains at the core of the vision for such a society to emerge.

In 2010 the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) produced a Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland 2005-2010. It identified the following educational priorities (p. 80):

- The need for additional support for children who have English as a second language;
- · A multicultural and anti-racist curriculum;
- Relations between teachers and parents (difficulties of language and meeting times);
- Serious underachievement of Traveller children.

The strategy encapsulated the following vision (p.32);

'A society in which racial diversity is supported, understood, valued and respected, where racism in any of its forms is not tolerated and where we live together as a society and enjoy equality of opportunity and equal protection.'

Also in 2010 a Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration consultation document was produced by the OFMDFM. It claims that:

All sections of our community should feel comfortable expressing and sharing their cultural identity. We recognise that there needs to be greater sharing and understanding of the diversity within our community and respect for cultural manifestations where they are compatible with human rights norms. (p. 29).

Although the aims of the programme are worthy, there has been much criticism of it for its lack of detail. With regard to education, the Consultation document acknowledges that the Department of Education has a 'statutory duty to encourage and facilitate the development of integrated education' (p.16), but there is no strategy outlined for bringing this about. It is anticipated that the Programme will be revised in the light of comments and criticisms coming from the public responses to the consultation.

Another recent document which has important implications for education is the Community Relations, Equality and Diversity in Education (CRED) consultation (2010), produced by the



Department of Education. The proposed aim of the revised policy is to 'contribute to improving relations between communities by educating children and young people to develop self-respect and respect for others, promote equality and work to eliminate discrimination, and by providing formal and non-formal education opportunities for them to build relationships with those of different backgrounds and traditions' (paragraph 6.2).

The objectives of the revised policy will be to:

- Ensure that learners, at each stage of their development, have an understanding of and respect for the rights, equality and diversity of all without discrimination;
- Educate children and young people to live and participate in a changing world, so that they
 value and respect difference and engage positively with it, taking account of the ongoing
 intercommunity divisions arising from conflict and increasing diversity within our society; and
- Equip children and young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours needed to develop mutual understanding and recognition of, and respect for, difference (paragraph 6.3).

The revised policy is designed to place community relations and diversity at the core of education, integrated into the formal and informal curriculum of education settings, with guidance provided by the Department of Education and the implementation potentially monitored by the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI). This would be a marked departure from the present situation where community relations work is perceived by some schools as an optional extra and not part of their core business. The CRED document also raises important questions about the training of the existing teacher workforce and student teachers. The issue of how to prepare student teachers adequately for culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse classrooms was the main motivation behind this project. It is clear that a significant aspect of the work of teacher educators, now and in the future, is to prepare students to teach in diverse classrooms.

This is a problem shared by institutions across Ireland, North and South. The two institutions involved in this project, Stranmillis University College, Belfast and St. Patrick's College of Education, Drumcondra are major centres for teacher education and share a common concern to prepare students effectively for such classrooms. Conscious of the need to review and revise current approaches to diversity education, both institutions agreed that an important foundation was to establish clearly what constituted good practice in schools in integrating newcomer children into the school community and teaching them effectively. It could not be assumed that good practice was obvious, given the varied range of approaches evident in different schools.

Some research has already been carried out in this area. In Northern Ireland, two reports have recently been produced for the Department of Education. In both cases the research was positivistic in approach, mainly concerned with objective fact finding. A 2006 report, English as an Additional Language (EAL), summarised a series of principal and teacher interviews which focused mainly on resources and support services available to schools. There were no case studies and little specific comment about classroom based strategies. A second report, Review of English as an Additional Language, did contain some case studies but these focused mainly on resources and support



available to the school. There was some classroom observation, but the report does not identify specific classroom strategies which were considered effective in assisting the learning process. In the Republic of Ireland, a number of reports have also been commissioned or published by the Department of Education and Science (now Department of Education and Skills) and by others, but with a similar emphasis on policy and perspectives rather than classroom practice. McGorman and Sugrue (2007) offer a very valuable insight into the challenges and opportunities brought about by significant ethnic diversity in West Dublin. The research design relies heavily on focus group interviews with teachers and pupils, as well as case studies of parental experiences, rather than focusing on classroom practice. Although the Department of Education and Skills has prioritised the provision of English language support teachers in its response to growing ethnic diversity, significant budgetary cutbacks to this provision were announced in late 2008. This will have significant implications for policy and practice in primary schools, which warrants monitoring and investigation from the outset.

Aim of the Project

The main aim of this project is to develop case studies identifying the key characteristics of good practice in the teaching of pupils from ethnic minorities. The case studies will inform and provide a resource for college based courses on citizenship, multicultural education and the teaching of children with English as a second language.

There were a number of pivotal questions which interested the research team.

- Did the school have a clear policy on the teaching of newcomer children?
- How were the children welcomed to the school when they first arrived?
- How did the school create an inclusive environment?
- How did the teachers encourage friendships and relationships between the newcomer children and the indigenous pupils?
- Were there specific learning/teaching strategies employed in the classrooms to support the newcomer children?
- What kind of individual support was given to the pupils socially and emotionally as well as linguistically?
- How did the teachers communicate and interact with the parents?

The school sample

In the North, two primary schools were selected. Two criteria were applied when selecting the schools: they had to have at least 30% of their pupils from non-indigenous families and they had to be deemed outstanding in the provision of an inclusive learning environment for all children, as evidenced by inspection reports carried out by the Education and Training Inspectorate. One of the primary schools chosen (school B), was located in Belfast. 50% of its pupils were from ethnic minority backgrounds. The other primary school (school D), located in Dungannon, currently has 36% of its pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds. The two schools had different profiles in that in school B the largest ethnic groups were Chinese and Roma, originating in Romania, whilst in school D the largest groups were the Polish and Portuguese with small numbers of Lithuanian, Russian, Romanian



and Chinese. The Polish and Portuguese formed a settled community, some of them having been there for 10 years or more. The Romanian group in school B, by contrast, was a more transient group, and these differences in the populations of the schools had a significant impact on the policies and strategies adopted by each school.

The Department of Education NI (2010) issued guidelines for schools 'Supporting Newcomer Children'. The document recommended a change in terminology from 'EAL pupils' to 'Newcomer pupils' on the grounds that the term EAL seemed to focus on language difficulties and didn't cover pastoral or cultural issues. Some teachers and principals do question the term 'newcomer' because many of the families are established in the area for some time. This was the case in school D, one of the schools used for the research. For the purposes of this report, the researchers have used the terms EAL pupil and newcomer pupil interchangeably. Many of the school policy documents continue to use the term EAL pupil.

Another initiative by the Department of Education was to fund a regional support service across the Education and Library Boards called the Inclusion and Diversity Service (IDS) to strengthen and improve support to newcomer pupils. Both schools investigated in this project made extensive use of this service.

Methodology

The methodology was mixed but was predominantly qualitative, using an interpretive paradigm. Initially there was a desktop study of relevant documentation (from the two Departments of Education, area boards as well as specific school policies). Inspection reports were consulted to ensure the quality of the provision in each of the schools. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in the schools with key informants, the principal, language assistants and the SENCO or EAL coordinator where appropriate. There was a focus group discussion with a small group of EAL pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. There was some informal classroom observation which took the form of participant observation where the researcher worked with a small group of pupils on some literacy tasks. The researchers were aware of the risks in participant observation of the researcher unduly influencing the responses of the pupils, but it was decided that the advantages outweighed the disadvantages in that this method enabled them to interact one to one with the pupils while they worked and discover what the pupils found easy or difficult and also who their friends were in the class.

The interview schedule included questions which were open and some which were closed. The closed questions were largely designed to ascertain basic facts about the school, resources and the background of the pupils. More open questions were used to encourage judgements, assessment and evaluation of current practice in the school.

Ethical considerations

The research ethics committees of the two participating institutions gave their consent to the research proposal. Letters were sent to the principals of the participating schools requesting their



permission to undertake research in their schools. Approval was given by all the participating schools. Parental letters were sent to the schools to be forwarded to parents. Only those children whose parents had given written consent were used for the focus groups. Assurances of confidentiality and anonymity were given to all participants and the data was stored in a computer protected by a password. The pupils in the focus groups were assured that they could leave at any time if they did not wish to participate. Interviews and focus group discussions were digitally recorded and the teachers and pupils were asked if they consented to have their views recorded. A laptop was used, with the consent of the teachers, to make notes on the classroom observations.

Results

Principal Interview, School D (Dungannon)

Question - Is there a school policy that outlines provision for EAL pupils?

Principal – A school policy has been in place since 2005 and we are currently in the process of updating it. Staff were involved in drafting and setting up the original policy which has been disseminated to parents. The Inclusion and Diversity Service have been involved in helping them to redraft the policy.

Question - What do you think has been the impact of EAL pupils on other pupils?

Principal – I think that it is two-fold. In the community the impression is that a lot of the resources are being used to help these children, and particularly with the SEN resources that the money and the time has to be spent with those children. Well, I have really found the opposite. The focus that we place on language, on speech and language, on written communication, oral communication and so forth has really benefitted our indigenous children here, and we think that focus has raised the standards of literacy, language and communication throughout the school, and because the staff have had to develop particular skills to teach older children the English language and the written language, those skills are then being used for the other children as well, so I certainly see that it has had a very positive effect.

Question – Are the parents convinced of this or is it a work in progress?

Principal – It is a work in progress, and I did notice on Open Night – and the staff would confirm this –that it is a common question from parents 'How many EAL children are in the class and what impact will this have on the teaching?' This year I was able to say with confidence that I felt it was having a very positive impact as we have been through an inspection very recently and we got outstanding in our literacy. So there has been an external assessment to back up our claims.

Question - Who carries out the initial assessment of the EAL pupil?

Principal - Until this year it has really been the teacher who has done that, but we are now going to use the European framework for assessing newcomer pupils which is recommended by the Department of Education. A link officer from the Inclusion and Diversity Service will be coming into the school to work with each teacher and take them through the framework. In future the assessment will be made by the class teacher in consultation with the SENCo, using the European framework.

Question - Would the EAL pupil be placed immediately on the Special Needs Register?

Principal - We are currently discussing this issue with senior management. The children who have



language difficulties will be put on the SEN register, but they are going to be coded so that it is purely a language issue. We use the term additional needs rather than special educational needs for these children. We have a language support teacher and I want to identify the children that she will need to work with immediately. I then want to assess the level of English, if any, that they have when they come in and track how long it takes them to acquire the English language. After that I have to decide at what stage we can say they have acquired the language and no longer need the support. When that stage is reached they are taken off the register. Some of our EAL pupils do, of course, have underlying special needs and they would remain on the SEN register.

Question – What resources do you have in the EAL pupils' mother tongue?

Principal – We do have a range of posters, bilingual dictionaries and books, but because this school has become so familiar with teaching these children over a 10 year period, perhaps these resources have been put to one side and not used as often as they could be. These children are settled here and do speak very good English; their families are settled; the resources may not be needed. In foundation stage, where we have the children coming in without English, it is part of our action plan for this year to look at these resources and possibly reintroduce them where we see the need.

Question – Is there a mentoring scheme in operation in this school, and if not, how is the EAL child helped to integrate?

Principal – There is an official buddy scheme in the school where we would pair up a pupil with a newcomer and that works very successfully, but informally our pupils are so accustomed to having newcomers in school that the whole class will welcome them and look after them. The responsibility doesn't rest on one or two pupils in the class.

Question - Do you hold culture days to encourage cultural awareness?

Principal – The school hasn't held culture days in the past because the newcomers and their families are so well integrated into the community and school. But some parents have suggested cultural evenings where parents from different countries including Northern Ireland could prepare food from their country and bring it to the school. I am very keen on this idea but it would not have been a feature in the past.

Question - Are any of the EAL children granted time off to observe religious festivals?

Principal – Yes, if they request it we would certainly give them time off. We have a range of religions in the school, we have some Jehovah Witnesses who do not take part in any religious festivals, but a lot of our EAL children would be Roman Catholic and we do accommodate that by bringing in a substitute teacher who takes them through the P4 and the P7 and all the necessary preparations.

Question - What support have you received from your Education and Library Board?

Principal – The Inclusion and Diversity Service have given excellent support. An overall officer came to meet me to find out what our needs were and she assigned a link officer who comes into the school once a week. The support is very practical – they don't come in just to give advice but will make posters and signs and help the teachers to produce key words for play activities.

Question - What type of support do you need?

Principal - At the moment we need to refocus what our EAL provision needs to be, because it really has changed since the initial provision 10 years ago. Because many of the children have gone through the school and some have moved on to post-primary, the school is reviewing how our school needs to provide for these children. Is the priority language provision or cultural provision; do they need to know more about Northern Ireland and our local history and geography; do we need



to immerse them more in our culture? So it is a review of where we stand at this moment in time. The whole community issue is important – we need to raise awareness in the community, to build confidence in the community that these people really do have something to add to our community and education system, and to dispel the myth that they are actually taking away.

Question – What sort of in-service training do you think teachers need?

Principal – I believe new teachers need to understand the pedagogy of how these children learn. In conversation with an experienced teacher the other day, she spoke of how she talks to the children about how they feel coming into a new school with no English, how they cope through the day. She also asks them, when they hear a question in English, do they hear it in English and then translate it into Portuguese and then translate the answer into Portuguese and speak it in English. If they do have to go through all of these processes then they obviously need thinking time and answering time. I would assume that young teachers would need to have these conversations; that there is going to be a model of how these children are taught and they would need to be immersed in that. As well as the language, the pastoral and emotional side is very important as well. We need to put ourselves in their place and understand how they cope through the day and ascertain whether any of our systems work, and whether they are what the children want.

Question - Should pre-service teachers be trained to teach in multi-ethnic classrooms?

Principal – As every child is so different, with different strengths and difficulties, I would say that to be within a classroom with different ethnic backgrounds is really the only way to do it. It would need to be built in as part of their teaching practice, perhaps become part of a module.

Question – Do you think that there should be designated training schools which have a significant proportion of EAL pupils and appear to be dealing effectively with them?

Principal – Absolutely yes! Then the students would have hands on practical experience guided by experienced teachers and they would also learn to deal with parents of children from different backgrounds. That is another skill which has to be acquired.

Question - What are your views on one to one teaching? Do you use one to one teaching?

Principal – We use our language support teacher to support a small number of pupils. We would have small withdrawal groups for SEN pupils. The language support teacher would introduce them to key words and phrases from the topics which the teachers are about to start with their class. These words would then be sent home to the parents along with the topic books. In the past more withdrawal teaching would have been used, but I am changing that. I want the language assistant to be more immersed in the classroom, for example at Foundation stage during structured play, so that the pupils are learning the language in the context of the activities in which they are engaged. Similarly I want the language assistant to be with the P5s when they are doing their independent writing. The EAL pupils can write very imaginative well-structured stories, but tense is a particular problem for them.

Question – What are your views on an initial six week immersion in English at the beginning, on entry to school?

Principal – I think that it is a marvellous idea. I can see those children who come to school with no English benefitting enormously because many of them are very able, but language is a barrier for them. That is why I am so keen to use the language assistant in order to reduce and eventually remove this barrier.



Question – What are the advantages to the school and the pupils of having EAL children present in your school?

Principal – I have already mentioned the focus we have on English and how it benefits everyone – equally so in mathematics. We had a discussion recently in a staff meeting about how difficult it was for children to understand the language of mathematics and for us to ensure consistency in the language used in different classrooms: for example whether to use 'naught' or 'zero', or how to speak about decomposition. We agreed that the language was difficult for indigenous pupils, but a member of staff pointed out how much more difficult it was for EAL pupils. I can see from being here just a short time how important and interesting the multicultural dimension is to the school. I talk to the children one to one and they tell me about their home and homeland, granny and grandad. They are doing scrapbooks at the minute about 'who I am'. They have lovely pictures and photographs and it just gives a whole new and very personal dimension about the role these people play in the children's lives. I think that it enriches our whole curriculum.

Question - How do the indigenous children react to the EAL children?

Principal – They embrace them. There is that kind of community feeling in Dungannon and the wider school group just embraces them, they have never known anything else.

Question – Is there an induction process for the new arrivals?

Principal – Yes, we would have an initial induction where we would speak to the parents. We glean as much information as possible about the background of the children, where they are from. We would make contact with schools in other countries to try and get information from them. Especially in primary 1 we have a new 'welcome book' which is for children and parents. It is very visual and tells them about the main features of the school in a visual way. It is part of our action plan this year to review it in the light of parent and pupil comments to see if there is anything more we can do to help these children.

Question – How much contact would you have with parents?

Principal – We would have two parent interviews per year and we would follow up on any parents who didn't come for the interview. We have an open door policy for parents, so all are welcome to come in at any time to see management or teachers. A lot of the EAL parents leave their children to school and pick them up in the afternoon. The teachers would speak to parents as they leave in the afternoon. It's lovely to see the dads coming as well and we try to build up a relationship with them. Some of the parents do not speak much English but they will bring a daughter or neighbour with them to translate. We would use the language assistant a lot to communicate with the parents either on the phone or at the school gate. The parents have a very good attitude to school and want their children to succeed. The children have a very good attitude as well, better than some of our own children.

School B

The interview in school B (Belfast) was a joint interview with the principal and the EAL coordinator.

Question – Is there a school policy that outlines provision for EAL pupils?

Principal – Yes, there is a specific policy for the school. It was drafted by myself and is available to staff through shared documents on the computer system. It can be made available to parents on



request. The policy has not been reviewed, but it is probably timely now to look at it again.

Question - How do other children in the school react to EAL pupils?

Principal – Generally speaking the ethos of this school is of sharing and caring and we do get on well with each other, but there are instances in any school where children are children and there is a bit of bullying.

Question – Who carries out the initial assessment?

Principal – The baseline assessment is done by myself and the EAL co-ordinator.

Question - Would the EAL pupil be placed immediately on the SEN register?

Principal – We need to ascertain whether the child is EAL or special needs or both and that takes a little time to ascertain. We have criteria which we use to ascertain that and we work closely with the SENCo

Question - What resources do you have in the EAL pupil's mother tongue?

Principal – With regards to valuing the mother tongue, we do have our dual language books. Those are books the mother can read for example in Cantonese and it is also written in English. With our dual language books we also have dual language dictionaries. We also have dual language software, a wealth of that actually, so it is important that we do value the mother tongue of each and every child.

Question – Is there a mentoring scheme in operation in the school and, if not, how is the EAL child helped to integrate?

Principal – There is a buddy scheme in the school, but it is mainly done informally and it is left to the discretion of the class teacher.

Question - Do you hold culture days to encourage cultural awareness?

EAL co-ordinator – We are working on the international school award at the moment. We achieved our intermediate last year and we are receiving our full award this year, so that involves a European languages day in partnership with another school and we run projects on other countries. We had our Chinese event last year. Everyone in the school participates in these projects.

Principal – And when we say everyone, we include parents – the inclusion of parents is extremely important. We have adult classes for parents who want to learn English.

EAL co-ordinator – I have adult classes on a Thursday morning. We have a core group of Chinese mothers who come and they love it and they are great to work with. They use a lot of our dual language resources.

Principal – It certainly is valuable if you can build up the parents' confidence so that they are happy with the school environment. Secondly, they are learning a little bit of English themselves in a nice relaxed atmosphere. Thirdly, it also helps the child – it is a partnership between teacher, parent and child.

EAL co-ordinator – You will find that the parent who comes to class is more inclined to come and talk to us about their child and mention things when they are in and maybe borrow a book. I have a slot from 9.00 to 9.30 where I am available just for the parents. They are liable to just walk into my room, talk to me if they want to or select a dual language book. We are one big happy family.

Question – Are any of the pupils granted time off to observe religious festivals?

Principal – Yes, some of the Muslim children will have their Ramadan and Ede. Some will actually fast, not the young ones but at Key Stage 2. We do allow them to take time off for celebrating.



EAL co-ordinator – Then they come in the next day and tell us about it so that it becomes part of our cultural awareness programme. Sometimes they bring in little gifts which is enlightening for the other children.

Question - What type of support do you need?

EAL co-ordinator – The Inclusion and Diversity Service have been very helpful. They don't simply give advice, they come in and help with resources and ideas for culture days. We have another lady who is Chinese speaking and she has been extremely valuable with regards to the Chinese children.

Question - What sort of in-service training do you think that teachers need?

EAL co-ordinator – I think that it would be great to have a great deal more training. At area board level, you go for your day's training, your professional development and your assessment day, your behaviour support day – wouldn't it be great also to have an English as a foreign language day, an EAL day. Had I not spent time here as a student, an EAL student, I would not have had a clue what I was doing, to be honest, so I think that especially for new teachers some input on how to teach English as a foreign language in mainstream classroom settings would be important.

Question – Should pre-service teachers be trained to teach in multi-ethnic classrooms? **EAL co-ordinator** – Hands on experience is essential.

Principal – I think that most people learn a lot quicker if they get hands on experience. At this school what I usually do is throw them into the deep end of baseline assessment: how a class should be organised with regards to EAL. Self esteem and self-confidence need to be there from the outset before any formal education can take place – once a child is happy then the learning process begins. A lot of teachers do panic when they get a foreign child – there is a 'what do I do?' response. Normally what we would say is 'don't panic, let the child settle in, smile, make sure the child has some survival language', that is all it needs from the outset. The inclusion of parents is very important – make sure that they are happy and that creates a happy environment.

Question - What are your views on one to one teaching?

EAL co-ordinator – Where and when appropriate it is valuable: it depends on the child and on the classroom situation. I know that when I have children withdrawn with me, for some of them it is a break because the new language, the talk and the work can be overwhelming for some, especially in the first few weeks.

Principal – It can be a cocktail of confusion and they need a quiet environment where they are given the time to learn some language, and it is quality time.

Question – What are your views on the idea of an initial six week immersion in English at the beginning, on entry to school?

Principal – Well, the theory is good, but the practicality of it may not always materialise – the logistics in this school may be difficult. In our school we have a lot of Roma children and the strategy of getting them all down into one room, regardless of language level and ages, does seem to work because a lot of them have had no formal education – they don't know about rules and regulations so all of that has to be taught in a formal way; so in that instance it is helpful – but you have to look at the logistics.

Question – What are the advantages to the school and the pupils of having EAL children present in your class?

EAL co-ordinator – It is the enrichment of other languages and cultures that they bring and how easy it then becomes to do your big topics, because every term we take a different country and study it as



a whole school, and each class takes a project to do with that country. In the second term last year we had a big push on China due to the principal being away with the British Council and he was in China the previous year. We had the Chinese Welfare Association coming into the school with their dragon and they did a dragon dance – it was brilliant. It becomes so much easier when you have a personal interest or if some of the children in the class are Chinese – then it makes it so much more real for all the pupils; it is not just some far away country you are talking about. We also had the Romanian ambassador last year come to visit us and the Romanian children loved it, but it also made it a bit more real for the non-Romanian children.

Principal – If you are going to value a child's life and culture by celebrating, and indeed embracing their culture, it lifts the child, it empowers the child to develop self-esteem and confidence. It is this whole business of empowering children which I feel is so important.

Question - How do the indigenous children react to the EAL pupils?

Principal – Generally speaking in this school, the ethos of the school is of sharing and caring and we do get on well with each other. That is why our buddy system is informal, because all the children will buddy up to them anyway. Whether they are EAL or not, if there is somebody new in the class, everybody wants to be their friend. We look after each other, not just the children but the staff also, we are very supportive. Of course as in any school there are instances of bullying, but we have an anti-bullying policy and it is nipped in the bud immediately.

Question - Is there an induction process for new arrivals in the school?

EAL co-ordinator – There is an induction programme. Interpreters from the Inclusion and Diversity Service are available if needed. We try to make the family feel welcome and comfortable by using mother tongue greetings. There is a school tour where basic information is provided such as times, uniforms, lunch, teachers' names. We try to answer any questions the families may have. With the help of an interpreter, the parents are asked to complete a profile form to ascertain details such as languages used at home, previous educational experience with evidence, and general issues including any special needs.

Question - How much contact would you have with parents?

EAL co-ordinator – We have a policy of welcoming parents into the school. They have half an hour (9.00-9.30am) in the morning to talk to the EAL teacher, look at resources and borrow books. We also have three open mornings for parents, one for parents of Romanian children, a second for Chinese parents and a third for all other nationalities. In these open mornings we try to explain how we can help their child with reading, for example at home. We also run adult EAL classes for parents.

Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion took place in school D. Unfortunately it wasn't possible to hold one in school B. The four pupils chosen were all in primary 7. Fabio was from Portugal, Kamil from Poland, Leon from Poland and Emmat from Lithuania. Kamil started school in primary 1, the others started in primary 3. All spoke English fluently and had received considerable help from the language assistant. When asked whether their parents were learning to speak English, all of them said yes. All of them said that they had friends from Northern Ireland. Fabio said 'I like it here more than Portugal because in Portugal the teachers are very bad to us, they smack us with rulers.' When asked whether they had been bullied at school, Fabio said yes and the others said no. Fabio is black so there may have been



an element of racist bullying involved. The bullying happened mainly in primary 6 and seemed to centre around one boy who was disruptive in school. Fabio also expressed fears about being bullied in the 'big school' (post-primary). Some of the others also expressed fears about being bullied in the big school. Kamil, for example, said that he had heard 'if it is your first day in the big school you will get bullied, they will put your head into the toilet or put it in the bin'.

The pupils were asked: What is your favourite subject?

Fabio - 'My favourite subject is Art'.

Kamil - 'My favourite subject is probably Art too and PE'.

Leon - 'My favourites subject are Art, ICT and PE.

They were also asked: Are their any subjects that you find difficult?

Emmat - 'I am not very good at time'.

Kamil - 'Sometimes I find literacy difficult'.

Fabio – 'Comprehension is difficult. Some words we do not understand – we get stuck with them because we are not very good at English'.

Kamil - 'I just hate comprehension, it is really hard'.

Discussion

Both schools have created a very positive and welcoming ethos with families, including the new pupils being given a guided tour of the school and an opportunity to meet the staff. There are buddy systems in place in both schools, but they have become almost redundant with every pupil encouraged to welcome and support the newcomer. The approach to teaching and learning is very much child centred, with the needs of each child clearly identified. For example, there is no assumption made that all Polish children entering Primary One will have the same needs linguistically, socially and emotionally.

Teaching/learning strategies are activity based with pupils working together in groups. The groups are mixed, with newcomer pupils working alongside pupils from the indigenous population. It was clear from classroom observation as well as from the focus group discussion that friendships had formed across different ethnic groupings. It was interesting that when one of the researchers worked with a group of pupils, a very articulate Polish girl was supporting and explaining things to her friend who was a local girl – the support and help was not always one way. Visual timetables and dual language resources were much in evidence, with key locations identified by multiple language signs. Both schools acknowledged the help of the Inclusion and Diversity Service in creating these resources. In addition to group work, there were some one to one sessions organised for pupils experiencing difficulties. In each school the language assistant was often used to give one to one assistance.

There was a difference in emphasis in each school on 'culture days'. School B really focused strongly on culture days, with the whole school engaged on project work on a specific country at the same time. Invited guests and parents were occasionally used to support these projects. School D, by contrast, did not focus much on culture days, the rationale being that the families had been in the



area for ten or more years and had become integrated into the community. The principal did indicate, however, that she was rethinking this policy in the light of comments from parents. Both schools agreed that there should be an important focus on local Northern Irish culture; it couldn't be taken for granted that even well established groups had a good understanding of local practices or even of the Northern Ireland education system.

Both schools employed an 'open door' policy for parents, with school B going further and organising consultation time for parents every morning and adult classes in English. Parents were encouraged to borrow dual language books. This was an important initiative in helping parents converse with their children in English and support them at homework time.

Difficulties encountered by the pupils

It was interesting that when asked about their favourite subject, all of the Primary Seven children favoured activity based lessons: art, PE, ICT. This may have been at least partly because they were all boys, but all of them identified problems with English. Many of the newcomer pupils made rapid progress in oral English and all of the P7 group were fluent English speakers, but written English and comprehension seemed to present difficulties to them. These difficulties translated into problems with reading. Such problems are understandable with English being a complex language, where one word can have multiple meanings or two words which sound the same mean something entirely different. Other difficulties involve understanding time and tense. It is clear that many of these pupils, even at P7 stage, still need a lot of help with reading and comprehension.

Bullying emerged as an issue for some, but it appeared to be based more on anticipating bullying in the post-primary school rather than the actual experience of bullying. There is a case for close liaison between the primary and post-primary schools in an area to reassure pupils about their safety and well-being, with appropriate visits to the 'big school' to meet pupils as well as staff.

Issues for Teacher Education

The research does reveal some significant issues for teacher education. The principals and EAL co-ordinator all stressed the importance of hands on experience working with EAL pupils. They suggested that student teachers need to spend some time in a school which has significant numbers of newcomer pupils, to observe the teaching learning strategies. Some of this time could be spent doing one to one work with a newcomer pupil: talking to them; listening to them; finding out the process the child goes through when responding to a question in English (finding out, for example, whether they translate it into Polish, think of the answer in Polish and then translate it back into English, or think of the answer in English). Unfortunately at the moment it is a matter of chance whether a student gets the opportunity to do a placement in an EAL school. Some schools have significant numbers of newcomers, while others have hardly any, so much depends on where a student is placed for teaching practice. One solution would be to designate certain schools, like those in the case studies, as 'training schools' and plan for all students to do one practice or part of a practice in these schools.



The EAL co-ordinator in school B suggested that all student teachers should have to complete an English as an Additional Language course. At the moment in Stranmillis University College this course is an option: some do it but many do not. The case for integrating it into a training programme is very strong.

Within universities there is a case for utilising existing resources more fully in support of a diversity training programme. In Stranmillis University College many of the indigenous students do placements abroad, some in Europe (including across the border in Republic of Ireland as part of a SCoTENS-sponsored programme), others in Africa or the United States of America. The college hosts a range of visiting international students, some recently from China. Some of these students do give presentations, but they could contribute more fully to a diversity course examining the cultures, beliefs and traditions of their home countries. Greater collaboration between the universities and the Inclusion and Diversity Service would also strengthen the university training programmes.

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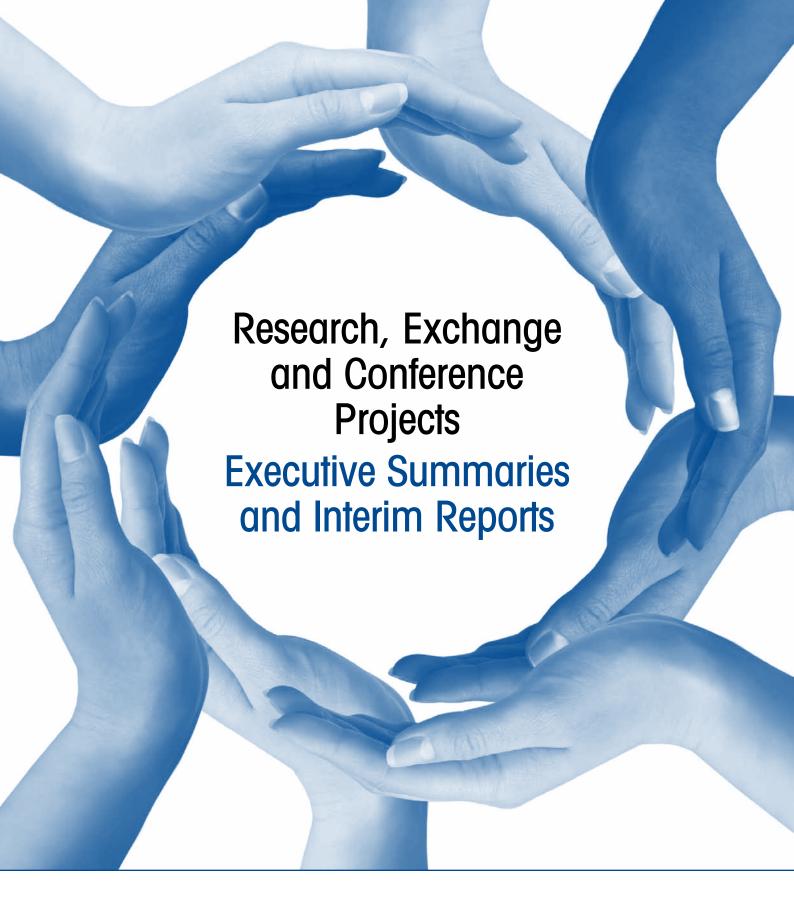
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7th NORTH-SOUTH STUDENT TEACHER EXCHANGE (2010-2011)

Dr Maeve Martin (Evaluator)

Introduction

The 2011 North-South Student Teacher Exchange project which is the focus of this evaluation is the latest phase of a long running initiative that has been very successful over the seven years in which it has operated. It gives student teachers from Colleges of Education in Belfast the opportunity to carry out their spring term teaching practice in primary schools in Dublin, while student teachers from Colleges of Education in Dublin carry out their teaching practice in schools in Belfast. The fact that the project has run over this period of time and has involved nearly 160 students, is testimony to the demand for participation in the exchange, and to the value added that it brings to its beneficiaries.

The teaching practice component of a student teacher's programme of study represents the most vital and developmental aspect of their professional development. It is in the real cut and thrust of classroom life that students hone their skills; establish links between theory and practice; build relationships with the school community and develop their professional identity as teachers. During this North-South exchange the student teachers have their performance evaluated as part of their overall assessment and grading by their supervisors. It is therefore a courageous step for a student to choose to undertake this in a school in the other Irish jurisdiction. It indicates that the students are prepared to leave their comfort zone of locally based practice and embrace a new curriculum in an unfamiliar setting.

They are very well supported in this decision and in the carrying out of all dimensions of the exchange by a team of dedicated people who believe in the worth of the project, and who have embraced the underpinning values that it represents. This team includes the managers of the exchange, based in the Centre for Cross Border Studies (CCBS), where the vision for such an exchange originated; the Directors of Teaching Practice from the participating Colleges of Education, North and South, who take care of the logistics and rolling out of the project; and the principals and staff of the host schools who year on year have welcomed the exchange students and provided them with supportive and exemplary work environments. Without funding the project could not have enjoyed its long run. The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS) generously responded to a request in 2008 for funding to enable the project to continue following the expiry of EU PEACE programme funding, persuaded as it was by the intrinsic educational and cultural capital which the project creates. They can be proud of their response as the feedback from the participants indicates high levels of satisfaction with the exchange experience in terms of professional development and heightened cultural awareness.

Aims and Objectives

In broad terms, the exchange project aims to create mutual understandings and refined sensitivities among participants with regard to important cultural and educational issues on both sides of the





Some of the participants in the 2011 North-South Student Teacher Exchange project.

Irish border. Though it is 17 years since the first IRA ceasefire, one still can find levels of ignorance and prejudice about important issues like religion, political allegiance, socio-economic status, neighbourhood factors and attitudes which are prevalent in the society of each jurisdiction. The project has sought to give groups of bright young teacher education students the opportunity to go and experience life as lived in the 'other' jurisdiction, and thereby gain insights that lead to accurate knowledge and informed perspectives on matters of concern. It is the vision of the project that enduring positive outcomes will ensue from this lived experience.

Alongside the pedagogic and curricular gains which are central to their professional development, the project envisages that positive outcomes for students would include an orientation towards peace and reconciliation, a respect for difference, a reluctance to stereotype, and an elimination of destructive prejudice. Data gathered from the participants in a post-7th exchange evaluation day in April 2011 indicate that the experience contributed to the achievement of many of these objectives. One student from the South wrote:

I will take things that I learnt up North and bring them down South while teaching. I also will not think that the Catholic/Protestant divide is such a big deal anymore. I think that the majority of people are able to put the past behind them.

Another student wrote:

I saw Belfast as a lovely, friendly and welcoming city. My ideas about a city that is filled with sectarian views are now gone.



A student from Stranmillis University College in Belfast wrote:

Being placed in a Catholic school (in Dublin) taught me a lot about the culture. Many different backgrounds were present in the classroom—so different from at home.

The voice of the Directors of Teaching Practice regarding the exchange is very important. It is they who are most closely involved in the nuts and bolts of the project. Though making inroads in their busy workloads, all of the six Directors present at the Evaluation Day expressed the view that the project should be retained in forthcoming years. Examples of the gains they cited were

- · The promotion of cross-cultural understandings
- · An enrichment of ideas based on professional dialogue
- · The development of personal qualities of flexibility, resilience and problem solving
- The breaking down of barriers
- An opportunity to assess the 'home' experience through another lens.

These experienced professionals all commend the worth of the project. The benefits that accrue from it seem to make worthwhile the added work that it inevitably brings. Coupled with the very positive feedback from the student beneficiaries, it is evident that the exchange of 2011 has been yet another successful venture that has been professionally and personally enriching for all involved.

Conclusion

The North-South Student Teacher exchange project is now well embedded in the cycle of activities in the colleges of education on the island of Ireland. It is a respected initiative and it continues to generate enthusiasm among both its collaborators and its beneficiaries. It creates capacity in a way that a local teaching practice placement could not do. Though labour intensive, it pays back a hundredfold all of the energy and time that it consumes.

Some of the outcomes are not amenable to quantification or may not be translatable into a grade on a spread sheet, but they are transformational in subtle and influential ways. The young ambassadors who participated in the 2011 exchange may help to extend the inspirational legacy of reconciliation and friendship created by the visit of Queen Elizabeth II to Ireland in May. The platform for continued growth and consolidation in sharing and mutual respect is now well established. The project enables what have been aspirations to become a reality. It is the recommendation of the evaluator that, if possible, this niche project should be retained as an option for student teachers North and South. It is undoubtedly of value, and it is consonant with values which are as relevant as when the exchange made its first tentative steps in 2003-2004. The flourishing of the project does great credit to all associated with it. Its influence is far reaching and it deserves the support of the education community.



CROSS-BORDER CONFERENCE ON INTEGRATION OF ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL LEARNING IN POST-PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Mr Vincent Murray, St Angela's College, Co Sligo Mr Norman Richardson, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

In the Republic of Ireland the debate engendered by the introduction of post-primary Religious Education examinations at Junior and Leaving Certificate level tends to hinge around the perceived tension between the desire for academic status and the fear that an overly examination-focused approach could detract from the personal development of learners where this development is understood as having spiritual and moral dimensions. In Northern Ireland public examinations in this area are called 'Religious Studies' and are structured to require skills of critical reflection in addition to knowledge and understanding. However some Christian churches prefer a more confessional approach to the teaching of Religious Education, and the four largest Christian denominations have been legally responsible for the joint preparation of a core RE Syllabus in N.Ireland.

This conference (held in St Angela's College, Sligo on 15 July 2010) aimed to explore, both theoretically and practically, the thesis that academic scholarship, supported by public examinations, along with faith development which engages with religious traditions and social action in the public sphere, are best achieved together because each needs the other to flourish. Despite the fact that the island of Ireland is a relatively small area, there has been very little dialogue between those involved in post-primary Religious Education north and south of the border. This conference is one small step in developing this dialogue, with the financial support of SCoTENS, and was based on the hope that, given our different histories and educational contexts, there might be much that we could learn from each other.

Each of the presentations engaged with some aspect of the above thesis by exploring a particular form of integration of academic and personal development. Sean Goan located contemporary post-primary Religious Education within a holistic vision of education inclusive of humanistic and scientific dimensions. Norman Richardson argued that 'learning for life' can be enhanced through a constructive partnership between Religious Education and Education for Citizenship in which each retains their distinctive identity. Donna Finlay and Sean McIlroy described how the approach to Religious Studies within the Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment contributes to the integration of academic achievement and the capacity for critical reflection and evaluation. Sinéad Mannion explained how in her facilitation of students' preparation for the Junior Certificate Religious Education journal she enables learners to meet the assessment criteria of the public examination while simultaneously engaging with their own personal development. Vince Murray and Sr. Moya Hegarty showed how Initial Teacher Education in Religious Education can facilitate student teachers in integrating their own academic and personal development as a model of and a preparation for their future teaching in post-primary Religious Education.



The analysis of the feedback from the four conference workshops based on each of the presentations and the conference evaluations identified emerging generative themes which form the basis for key recommendations to a range of stakeholders in the provision of post-primary Religious Education, North and South.

Full report on http://www.scotens.org/docs/2010-sligo.pdf



DISABLIST BULLYING: AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENT TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE

Dr Noel Purdy, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Dr Conor McGuckin, Trinity College Dublin

This report will be launched as a 'stand alone' SCoTENS publication at the annual SCoTENS conference on 29 September 2011.

Executive Summary

This study set out to explore the knowledge and confidence of student teachers in relation to disablist bullying. Two centres for Initial Teacher Education, one in each jurisdiction, were selected for recruitment of participants. Stranmillis University College provided the sample of both primary and post-primary student teachers from Northern Ireland. The School of Education at Trinity College, Dublin and the University's three Associated Colleges of Education (Marino Institute of Education, Froebel College of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education) provided the sample for the Republic of Ireland.

Adopting a mixed methods approach of four focus groups and a paper questionnaire (n = 257), data were collected and analysed relating first to students' knowledge and confidence in the discrete areas of special educational needs and bullying, and then in relation to disablist bullying. The study highlights the high importance attributed to SEN and bullying by student teachers, but also the sporadic provision and low confidence in meeting the needs of children with SEN. The study also reveals that none of the participants in either jurisdiction have received any guidance at all in relation to disablist bullying as part of their Initial Teacher Education. The study concludes with recommendations to address this shortcoming, including the urgent need for practical, solution-focused and evidence-based courses at ITE and CPD level in both jurisdictions.

Introduction

Although bullying itself is not new, the systematic study of the nature and incidence of school bully/ victim problems is often considered to have begun as recently as the 1970s in Scandinavia. Following this lead, research into bully/victim problems has become an issue of immense and growing international concern in recent years. A number of specific forms of bullying have also emerged.

Bullying related to a child's special educational needs (SEN) is commonly known as 'disablist bullying'. This type of bullying has been defined by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF, 2010) as 'hurtful, insulting or intimidating behaviour related to a perceived or actual disability'. Research into disablist bullying is still very much in its infancy, but international studies have revealed higher rates of incidence among children with SEN than among those without (e.g. Carter & Spencer, 2006; Mencap, 2007; Monchy, Pijl, & Zandberg, 2004; Norwich & Kelly, 2004). In one



recent study Mencap (2007) carried out a survey of 507 children and young people with a learning disability in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The respondents were aged between eight and nineteen and attended special schools or mainstream schools or both. The survey reported that 82% of children and young people with a learning disability have experienced bullying.

Livesey et al. (2007) note that society in Northern Ireland is becoming more diverse both in terms of ethnicity and the full participation of persons with disabilities. They report that their research among 2,312 Northern Ireland school pupils (n = 993 Year 6 [primary], n = 1,319 Year 9 [post-primary]) has raised concerns about bullying on the grounds of, among other things, disability, and has highlighted the need to change attitudes. Specifically, 44.1% of Year 6 Pupils felt that a pupil's disability could make them 'more likely' to be bullied while 34.7% thought that a disability 'doesn't make a difference'. Among the Year 9 Pupils, 49.9% thought that a pupil's disability could make them 'more likely' to be bullied.

However, despite this growing evidence base suggesting the prevalence of disablist bullying and despite legislation in both jurisdictions (EPSEN Act, 2004; SENDO, 2005) promoting the greater inclusion of children with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools, guidance to teachers in dealing with incidents of disablist bullying remains relatively scarce. In Ireland (North and South) there is no specific guidance offered to schools on disablist bullying with the exception of the recently published (and very brief) pamphlet on the subject by the Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum (NIABF, 2010).

Aims of the study

The current seed-funded project set out to investigate student teachers' (North and South) knowledge of, and confidence in, dealing with disablist bullying. In particular the study sought to answer the following research questions:

- 1. What do student teachers in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Northern Ireland and Ireland know about (i) bullying (e.g. definition, nature, prevalence, prevention, policy), (ii) disability / special educational needs (SEN) and (iii) disablist bullying?
- 2. How confident do student teachers feel about dealing effectively with cases of disablist bullying in schools (i.e. reactive strategies)?
- 3. How confident do student teachers feel about adopting preventative interventions (e.g. curricular work) in schools (i.e. proactive strategies)?
- 4. What are the key priorities for ITE in developing students' knowledge of disablist bullying on a North / South scale?

Methods

A mixed methodological approach incorporating both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis was utilised. A staged process began with qualitative analysis of focus group discussions, followed by questionnaires providing a descriptive overview of knowledge and attitudes, which



served to supplement the qualitative data. Two centres for Initial Teacher Education (ITE), one in each jurisdiction, were selected for recruitment of participants. Stranmillis University College (SUC) provided the sample of both primary and post-primary student teachers from Northern Ireland. The School of Education at Trinity College, Dublin (TCD), and the University's three associated Colleges of Education (Marino Institute of Education, Froebel College of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education) provided the sample for the Republic of Ireland.

Following pilot studies in both centres of education, 18 student teachers participated in the focus groups (2 per centre). Clusters of questions were developed on knowledge, attitudes, and confidence regarding, for example, policy, legislation and official publications in each of the key areas of enquiry: (i) SEN, (ii) bully/victim problems and (iii) disablist bullying. A total of 259 questionnaires were also completed and returned for analysis (Northern Ireland: n = 65, 25.3%; Republic of Ireland, n = 192, 74.7% [2 missing]). The majority of respondents (89.96%; n = 233) were studying to become primary school teachers. Only 10.81% were preparing to teach at post-primary level.

Findings

The key findings are summarised below:

- 98.8% of participants felt that it was important for student teachers to be trained to meet the needs of pupils with SEN.
- Only a minority of respondents (45.5%) felt that their ITE prepared them adequately to teach children with SEN in their classrooms and a similar minority (44.7%) felt confident in working with children with SEN.
- A large number of respondents suggested that SEN provision in ITE programmes could be enhanced by, for example, having 'more practical strategies for the classroom' (82.6%); 'advice from practising classroom teachers' (76.0%), and 'more guidance on completing Individual Education Plans for children with SEN' (72.5%).
- All respondents 'agreed' (22.8%) or 'strongly agreed' (77.2%) that it is important for teachers to be trained to deal with bully/victim problems.
- The view that the existence of bully/victim problems in schools is an important issue was endorsed by nearly all respondents (98%).
- Similarly, the vast majority of respondents agreed that dealing with such incidents is part of the responsibility of the classroom teacher (94.2%).
- However, contradictory to the legislation in both jurisdictions, only 47.3% of respondents felt that it was a legal obligation to implement a school-wide anti-bullying programme.
- Whilst 95.3% agreed that it was a legal obligation to have an anti-bullying policy, only 26.8% of
 respondents reported that they knew the relevant legislation regarding the management of bully/
 victim problems in schools (37.4% were 'unsure').
- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (64.8%) reported that they felt confident in their ability to deal with bully-victim incidents should they arise in school (27.5% were 'unsure').
- Whilst 29.8% did not have to deal with any incidents of bullying in the course of their teaching placements to date, over two-thirds (68.6%) had to deal with seven or less incidents. Four respondents (1.6%) reported that they had to deal with between 8 and 12 incidents.



- Large number of respondents suggested that provision for countering bully/victim problems in ITE
 programmes could be enhanced by, for example, having 'more practical strategies for responding
 to incidents of bullying' (81.7%), and 'advice from practising classroom teachers' (70.4%).
- The vast majority of respondents reported that they did not have to deal with any incidents of disablist bullying during their teaching practice placements (87.7%).
- However, 19 respondents (7.8%) had to deal with 1 incident, 9 (3.7%) had to deal with 2 incidents, and 2 (0.8%) had to deal with 3 incidents.
- Nearly one-third of respondents (30.8%) reported that they did not feel confident in dealing with an incident of disablist bullying (45.5% were 'unsure').
- When asked what would guide their response if an incident of disablist bullying occurred, whilst 54.1% reported that they would revert to 'school policy', 43.5% said that they would seek 'advice from a more experienced teacher(s)'. Interestingly, just over one-third (35.3%) reported that they would use 'natural instinct'. More worryingly, only 12.2% reported that they would rely on 'knowledge gained from ITE'.
- In terms of striving to develop student teachers' knowledge of disablist bullying, over three-quarters of respondents (76.9%) reported that ITE programmes should include 'more practical strategies for dealing with incidents of disablist bullying'. Nearly one-half felt that it would be useful to get 'advice from practising classroom teachers' (49.8%) and have 'more background information about disablist bullying' (45.4%).

Conclusions

This study set out to establish student teachers' knowledge and confidence in dealing with disablist bullying and has discovered that to date none of the student teachers in either jurisdiction has received any formal guidance in this important area as part of their ITE courses. Hitherto there has perhaps been an assumption that such bullying did not take place, that it was of little significance or that student teachers would themselves be able to draw the connections between the study of SEN and bullying in order to allow them to deal effectively with such incidents of disablist bullying.

However, this study has highlighted the falseness of any such assumptions of students' knowledge and confidence in relation to disablist bullying for two main reasons:

First, the level of knowledge and confidence of student teachers in the associated areas of SEN and bully/victim problems, even as discrete domains, is variable at best, with provision sporadic across institutions and inconsistent even between programmes in the same college. This study has revealed poor knowledge of legislation relating to bully/victim problems or disability; patchy knowledge of even relatively common SEN, especially among those who had not chosen elective modules in SEN or bullying; and an alarmingly low rate of confidence among students in dealing with children with SEN in their classrooms (less than half of participants felt confident). This is particularly disappointing given that the rise in the number of children with SEN in mainstream schools has been a feature of the education system at all levels and in both jurisdictions for some time: the relevant legislation promoting the inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools in both jurisdictions (EPSEN Act, 2004; SENDO, 2005) has been in force for at least six years.



Second, this study has added further evidence to confirm the importance but also the complexity of the issues which are associated with disablist bullying. Through the interviews and questionnaires, participants spoke of their confusion in knowing how to respond to such incidents which may have involved the deliberate isolation or victimisation of a child with SEN, either by a child without a SEN or by another child with a SEN. This serves perhaps as a useful reminder that children with SEN can be the victim, the bystander, or the perpetrator in incidents of bullying. The level of complexity associated with some of the cases recounted in this study further strengthens the argument for the topic of disablist bullying to be included as part of ITE and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses in both jurisdictions, rather than leaving student teachers to make instinct-led, and potentially damaging, responses to often immensely challenging incidents.

In conclusion, it is imperative that ITE in both jurisdictions acts to address the serious issues raised in this study, taking into account the recommendations made by the participants in relation to SEN, bully/victim problems and their nexus in disablist bullying. As we approach an era in higher education where students are paying ever higher fees, there is surely a need to provide value for money, offering comprehensive, evidence-based practical advice informed by classroom practice, coupled with appropriate placements and grounded in the latest research findings.

This study has highlighted disablist bullying as one of the most challenging and complex issues which student teachers are facing in the modern classroom, an issue which ITE providers surely cannot afford to ignore any longer.

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Full report on http://scotens.org/?s=Disablist+Bullying+



EFFECTIVE MENTORING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

The primary aim of this one-year project funded by SCoTENS was to (a) produce a position statement on Effective Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) Mentoring across the island of Ireland; (b) to compare current mentoring practice in three PETE programmes: University College Cork, University of Ulster, Jordanstown and University of Birmingham, and (c) to consider future directions in PETE mentoring practice.

Methods

Research participants comprised two researchers and ten PE mentor teachers per research site. A range of data collection methods have been used in this project, each of which informed subsequent data collection. The desk study and summary of current evidence on effective mentoring practices to support adults in workplace learning was completed in each jurisdiction in October 2010. This informed the design of the open profile questionnaire which was distributed to all mentors and collected by October 2010. An on-line discussion forum called 'SCoTENS Mentoring in PE', using the Ning website, was launched in November 2010. To initiate discussion, researchers at each university site were allocated a two-week period (a) to provide discussion board questions on mentoring practice informed by the desk study, and (b) to monitor and respond to the discussion thread created by mentors. The Ning discussion board closed in February 2011. A virtual seminar was conducted via conference call on 9th March 2011 linking researchers and mentors at all three research sites. Questions used in the seminar to spark discussion were derived from the Ning discussion board. All data is currently being analysed thematically around the research questions, using grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). A draft position statement was derived from this process and was issued to all study participants for consideration in April 2011. The research project was due to conclude in summer 2011 with production of a final report containing a position statement on 'Effective PETE Mentoring Practice'.



Dissemination

In June 2011 the researchers presented a poster entitled 'The SCoTENS Trilateral Mentoring Project' at the 2011 AIESEP Conference (Association Internationale des Ecoles Supérieures d'Education Physique - International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education) at the University of Limerick.

Future dissemination will include journal articles in *Mentoring and Tutoring and the European*Physical Education Review, teacher professional journals in each jurisdiction and conferences i.e. the
PEPAYS conference and the AIESEP 2012 conference.

Conclusions

Stroot, Kiel, Stedman, Lohr, Faust & Schincariol-Randal (1998) argued that in their research, mentor training led to successful mentors who developed fertile and complex pedagogical content knowledge. The mentors also had strong listening and communication skills with which to motivate and provide emotional support for the mentee. The claim made is that effective mentor training enhances mentor, PETE student and pupil learning in lifelong and life-broad (Larsson, 2009) physical activity. The interim findings of this project would appear to confirm this assertion. The findings also yield rich information on the similarities and differences in mentoring practices across the three institutions that were involved in this project. The dissemination of the project findings should contribute valuable insight into best practices in mentoring PETE students. The recommendations of this research project should therefore be of importance to all teacher educators on the island of Ireland and beyond.



AN EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REALISTIC MATHEMATICS EDUCATION (RME) IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NORTH AND SOUTH OF IRELAND

Dr Pamela Moffett, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Dr Dolores Corcoran, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

This project relates to mathematics education within primary schools in the North and South of Ireland.

Since 1971 the Freudenthal Institute (FI) in the Netherlands has developed a theoretical approach towards the teaching and learning of mathematics known as Realistic Mathematics Education (RME). In practice, the Dutch reform of mathematics education has depended largely on the introduction of textbooks which reflect the principles of RME. This project proposes to evaluate the implementation of RME materials for the teaching of fractions over a sequence of lessons. Two research questions were posed:

- 1. What is the impact of RME curriculum materials on the learning of mathematics by primary school pupils (Key Stage 2) in the North and South of Ireland?
- 2. What are the support needs of teachers introducing RME curriculum materials within primary schools in the North and South of Ireland?

Class teachers from each jurisdiction were involved in the project. Each teacher taught an RME module in his/her classroom. Three joint seminars were held to support teacher collaboration and development in the use of RME materials. The research project is envisaged as a journey of coinquiry and co-learning of which participants have part ownership.

The project researchers are Dr Pamela Moffett, Stranmillis University College, a college of Queen's University Belfast, and Dr Dolores Corcoran, (CASTeL) St Patrick's College, a college of Dublin City University.

Work to date has consisted primarily of preparation and data gathering:

St Patrick's College (31 August 2010)

The researchers met for preliminary planning.

St Patrick's College (26 November 2010)

The researchers selected the lesson materials to be used and agreed a pre-test. Ethical clearance was sought and approved by both colleges. A programme for the first group seminar was drafted.



Stranmillis University College (10 January 2011)

Group seminar 1: The teaching of the first two lessons was discussed and plans were made for the gathering of data.

Field work (January/February 2011)

The researchers visited their respective teachers in their classrooms to administer the pre-tests and make arrangements for further observation of lessons. Researchers made field notes of these lessons and teachers were also invited to record reflections in a journal.

St Patrick's College (21 February 2011)

Group seminar 2: The researchers and teachers reflected on their experiences of the first cycle of lessons and planned the teaching of the next four lessons.

Field work (February/March 2011)

The researchers observed a number of these lessons and some were video-recorded.

Stranmillis University College (29 March 2011)

Group seminar 3: The researchers and teachers reflected on the teaching experiences. Sections of lessons were jointly reviewed and the RME materials were discussed. Video-stimulated recall of sections of lessons was used to discuss and evaluate the effectiveness of RME teaching. The ensuing discussion was audio-recorded and later transcribed.

St Patrick's College (4-5 May 2011)

The researchers met to synthesize the data and to plan analysis and dissemination. A post-test was prepared. Plans for dissemination were also discussed. It is proposed that preliminary findings will be reported at MEI4 (September 2011) and BSRLM (November 2011).



DOCTORAL RESEARCH IN EDUCATION – LINKS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Dr Dympna Devine, School of Education, University College Dublin Dr Caitlin Donnelly, Queen's University Belfast

Report on all-Ireland doctoral conference

A joint committee between University College Dublin (UCD) and Queen's University Belfast (QUB) was established to manage the organisation of this Conference (the third in this series to be funded by SCoTENS), which was held in the School of Education, UCD on May 13th -14th 2011. This committee comprised Dr Dympna Devine and three PhD students from UCD, and Dr Caitlin Donnelly and three PhD students from QUB. A further sub-committee within UCD has been established that consists of an additional five PhD students. Two meetings of the joint committee were held for direct planning purposes: the first in the School of Education, UCD on November 19th 2010, the second in the School of Education, QUB on March 14th 2011. The theme of this year's conference is 'Navigating Pathways for Transformative Action – the role of doctoral research in education' and a conference poster was developed. This was distributed to all colleges and schools of education in December with a call for papers, as well as to the email list of former attendees. Closing date for the acceptance of submissions was set at February 28th and submissions were made electronically through a specially established link doctoralconference@gmail.com

We have received 58 submissions which includes 46 paper presentations and 12 poster presentations. The addition of the poster display format was new to the conference programme this year, and a section of the space in the UCD School of Education was organised to make the most of these posters as an important element of the work of the conference. Submissions were received from QUB, UCD, Trinity College Dublin, University College Cork, NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth, Dublin City University, St Patrick's College of Education and All Hallow's College.

The conference included three parallel sessions running in time slots all day May 13th and the morning of May 14th. It also included one round table session (students divided into groups of five/six and facilitated by academic colleagues) which had as its focus peer learning and research methodologies in PhD research. This was followed by the keynote address, by Professor Diane Reay, Cambridge University. Her presentation was entitled: 'Passion, Politics and Pitfalls: The rocky road of research'. A web site has been developed for the conference which we hope can become a hub and point of connection for Doctoral students arising from the conference (http://allirelanddoctoralconference.wordpress.com/).



IMAGES AND IDENTITY: A NORTH-SOUTH COLLABORATIVE ART AND DESIGN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION PROJECT

Ms Dervil Jordan, National College of Art and Design, Dublin Dr Jacqueline Lambe, University of Ulster

'It's easy to see which side you are on.' 1

Images and Identity: The North South Exchange

This research project examined perceptions of national identity through the attitudes and images of two groups of student art teachers from the North and South of Ireland using the dual lens of art and citizenship. The exhibition 'Passion and Politics' by Sir John Lavery at the Dublin City Gallery (the Hugh Lane Gallery) served as a catalyst to explore the views and opinions of the two groups of student art teachers on their responses to the exhibition. Both groups of students visited the exhibition together and were then asked to create an image which represented their national Identity.

Using qualitative content analysis the students' responses to one another's perceptions of what it means to be Irish/Northern Irish were analysed to examine attitudinal and behavioural communications (Berelson, 1952). The project was known as 'Images and Identity: the North-South Exchange', and aimed to pilot and develop a collaborative art and design education project within initial art teacher education in the two Irish jurisdictions which would support the teaching of citizenship education across the whole island. It aimed:

- To examine how exploring personal, national and international identities through art and design can change student teachers and learners' perceptions of themselves and others.
- To promote cooperation in curriculum development across institutions responsible for Initial Teacher Education in the visual arts in Ireland (with a specific North-South dimension).
- To develop, test and implement innovative pedagogical materials in art and design, curriculum content and methods relating to the development of citizenship education.
- To support the development of innovative ICT-based content services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning.
- To improve motivation for learning, and teaching and learning, through the development of a range of approaches to teaching the visual arts to support transversal key competencies.

Work to date has been in three phases: preparation, data gathering, and data processing and analysis. The researchers met in Coleraine and Dublin in advance of the project starting.

¹ Sir Edward Carson's comment on the paintings of Sir John Lavery



Preparation

Three planning and development meetings in July-August 2010 took place between the PGCE coordinator at the University of Ulster and the Post Graduate Diploma in Art and Design Education (PGDipADE) Coordinator at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD).

These meetings involved: 1. Planning for the joint visit to the exhibition 'Passion and Politics, The Salon Revisited' at the Dublin City Gallery; 2. Planning for the seminar and presentation of student teachers images of national identity in NCAD; 3. Planning the development of the post seminar and post exhibition questionnaire and the citizenship seminar in Coleraine.

Data gathering

Information was gathered to establish the profile of both student groups: biographical details, degree type, experience, other qualifications etc.

- Both groups of students visited the exhibition of the works of Sir John Lavery at the Hugh Lane Gallery in Dublin in October 2010. This was followed up by a questionnaire examining the student teachers responses to the exhibition and their perceptions about the role of the artist as a visual commentator of his times. The exhibition acted as a springboard for generating ideas and discussion around notions of national identity. Sr John Lavery gifted his sizable collection of works to the two cities of Dublin and Belfast the Ulster Museum and the Hugh Lane Gallery in the early part of the century. 'The exhibition is a significant and invaluable record of one of the most turbulant periods of Irish history. From the 1916 Rising through to the War of Independence through to the birth of the Irish Free State and the State of Northern Ireland, his portraits and paintings are a non erasable and vivid account of the nacent States.' (Dawson, 2010).
- Students examined the issues and events which formed the exhibition and looked at the role of the artist as a chronicler of his times through a guided tour and participation in a drama workshop related to the Passion and Politics exhibition.

Prior to any engagement with the project both groups of student teachers took part in a baseline study where they created an image which represents their national identity. Each student was asked to:

Select or make and image YOU feel represents your national identity.

Write a short statement (no more than one page) explaining where the image comes from, why you chose it and why you think it expresses your national identity.

These images were presented to one another and discussed at the NCAD seminar in October 2010. The citizenship element of the day was led by Mary Gannon, from the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) of the City of Dublin VEC and the Education for Reconciliation Project, who spoke on the citizenship curriculum, North and South. Students participated in a workshop on methodologies for dealing with controversial issues in the classroom.



Data Processing and Analysis

Text data drawn from the questionnaire was analysed qualitatively during the period November 2010 to March 2011, with the aim that some initial findings would be turned into a conference presentation. The images and texts created by the student art teachers on their perceptions of national identity were also analysed qualitatively, and these findings were presented at the 'Reimagining Initial Teacher Education: Perspectives on Transformation' conference in St Patrick College, Drumcondra on 30 June-2 July 2011.

Citizenship Day in Coleraine

NCAD student art teachers traveled to the University of Ulster's Coleraine campus for a Citizenship Day in February 2011 where both groups of student art teachers participated in a series of workshops on national identity and citizenship, including an input from Marty Mallarkey, a speaker from the Nerve Centre in Derry who gave a talk on 'Symbols of Identity'. Each student art teacher group, North and South, made a presentation to the entire PGCE subject group at University of Ulster on their responses to the Images and Identity project. The NCAD student art teachers presented a selection of digital video animations which represented their concepts of national identity. The PGCE student art teachers presented some of their pupils' artwork, which had been carried out in their classrooms.

Potential for future collaboration

Some of the student art teachers developed curriculum material based on the Images and Identity project. The intention is that this material will be further developed as curriculum art projects in schools North and South. The digital dimension will be explored through online sharing of project ideas and images through flicker/moodle discussion. The research will conclude by reflecting upon the potential for further research and practice.



DIRECTORS OF TEACHING PRACTICE RESEARCH GROUP: CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR TEACHING PRACTICE SUPERVISORS

Ms Claire Connolly, St Mary's University College, Belfast Mr Séamie Ó Néill, Froebel College, Dublin Ms Gail Eason, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Ms Bernadette Ni Áingléis, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Ms Patricia Slevin, Marino College of Education, Dublin Ms Margaret Farrar, Church of Ireland College of Education Mr Néil Ó Conaill, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

Achieving consistency in the supervision of student teachers by a range of tutors who come to teaching practice with a variety of backgrounds and agendas is a challenging issue for those of us who organise and co-ordinate this essential aspect of the BEd degree. This research project aims to consider a number of important aspects of student teacher supervision and to develop an outline programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) that will assist those involved in the supervision of student teachers in schools.

Through a series of cross border exchanges the project seeks to explore the following:

- What expectations are supervisors bringing to the supervision of student teachers?
- How do we set standard expectations?
- What means have we for developing a more coherent, consistent approach to the supervision of student teachers?
- Can we develop a programme of CPD in this area?

This research group – which grew out of the North-South Student Teacher Exchange – has had five meetings to date and has developed two CPD sessions, one on 'Communication and Feedback Skills' for supervising student teachers and the second on 'Report Writing'. These CPD sessions are intended for use in preparing tutors who will supervise students on teaching practice in both Irish jurisdictions. The CPD sessions are based on good practice and, while generic, are designed to be tailored to suit individual institutional contexts and the specific expectations of each college.

The participants in this study have benefitted greatly from being able to meet on a regular basis, share their own experiences and draw on the range of practices from across the participating colleges, North and South. They have also been able to underpin the CPD sessions with research and readings drawn from current literature, as well as small scale research carried out with focus groups. Considerable thought has been given to the design and delivery of the CPD sessions and they include preparatory readings, group work, role play, examination of materials, and consideration of the impact the supervisor can have on student performance. Both CPD units have been piloted by members of the research group and refined accordingly.



Moving forward, the research project will seek to explore whether 'standard' expectations can be set and examine how to ensure greater coherence and consistency in the role the supervisor assumes. As part of this process, the research group will consider the assessment and grading of students.



EXPLORING JAPANESE RESEARCH LESSON STUDY AS A MODEL OF PEER TO PEER PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

Professor John Gardner, Queen's University Belfast Mr Gerard Devlin, Queen's University Belfast Dr Debie Galanouli, Queen's University Belfast Dr Mary Magee, St Angela's College, Sligo Ms Kathryn McSweeney, St Angela's College, Sligo

Aim of the study

This study is exploring the use of Research Lesson Study (RLS), a long-established professional development strategy in Japan, as a model of school-based and peer-to-peer professional development for teachers which is new to Northern Ireland and the Republic. Broadly stated, RLS involves between 3-5 teachers forming a group that plans lessons, observes them being taught by each other and analyses them with a view to improving practice. There are various approaches to RLS, but this proposal adapts the successful work of Dudley (2005), which was arguably the first formal application of RLS techniques for professional development anywhere in Ireland or the UK.

The key to the process is its peer-to-peer approach that capitalises on several major 'theoretical' approaches to improved professional learning: the development of a 'community of practice', action research, problem-based learning (where the 'problems' are pedagogical challenges) and the concept of trial and error in a risk-free and designed manner.

The focus of this small-scale study is to examine this relatively new professional learning tool in two secondary level schools, one in Sligo and the other in Belfast. The key research questions are:

- 1. Can RLS offer an effective school-based and peer-to-peer approach to staff development in schools?
- 2. What factors facilitate or hinder the improvement of pedagogy and ultimately learning through RLS?

Preparation and bringing the schools together

This phase involved establishing initial contacts with the partners from St Angela's College Sligo and the two participating schools, and submitting a research ethics approval application for the research according to the research procedures of the School of Education at Queen's University, Belfast. Specifically, the following events took place in this first stage of the project:

- 1. **April 2010** Meeting at St Angela's Sligo to discuss selection of schools for project and research process (Prof John Gardner, Dr Mary Magee, Kathryn McSweeney and Dr Debie Galanouli).
- 2. **September 2010** Ethical approval application for SCoTENS research project through the School of Education Research Ethics Committee.



- 3. October 2010 Meeting at St Louise's Comprehensive College, Belfast. Project co-ordinator and teachers meet and the latter are introduced to the SCoTENS research project; they hear about progress with RLS as part of the General Teacher Council Northern Ireland (GTCNI) pilot project; consent issues discussed and forms to be sent to St Louise's for the parents and pupils of those classes involved in the project (Prof John Gardner, Mr Gerard Devlin, Dr Mary Magee, Kathryn McSweeney and Dr Debie Galanouli).
- 4. **October 2010** Meeting at Loreto College Cavan, with St Angela's College Sligo introducing SCoTENS project to teachers (Dr Mary Magee and Kathryn McSweeney).
- 5. **February 2011** Meeting at Loreto College Cavan with principal and explaining research process to teachers. Collecting baseline data regarding classes to be involved in the project and timeframe (Prof John Gardner and Dr Debie Galanouli).
- 6. **March 2011** First contact between the two SCoTENS schools while participating in GTCNI seminar on Research Lesson Study in Bangor

Progress so far

Considerable data have been collected in St Louise's Comprehensive College, primarly because they have previously been involved in RLS and are also currently engaged in a GTCNI project. Their work is primarily focusing on improving language for learning at Key Stage 3 with the implementation of the Literacy and Learning policy through RLS.

It took a longer time to establish a partnership with a school in the Republic of Ireland but eventually agreement was reached with Loreto College, Cavan, who were introduced to RLS in February 2011. They have been working steadily on RLS in several of their Home Economics classes since the end of March 2011. Their focus is on Microbiology elements in Home Economics with Year 6 students and this will continue in the new school year (September 2011) with Year 5 students in the areas of Microbiology and Food Preservation.

Data Collection - future plans

So far we have collected documentation from the two schools. St Louise's has provided us with detailed notes on their RLS lesson experiences while Loreto College, having only recently started work with RLS, has produced an initial report of their work with more detailed accounts scheduled for autumn 2011.

We have met with both school groups, including one occasion in Clandeboye, Bangor, where the schools came together during a larger event. To date we have conducted interviews and focus groups with the participating teachers in order to discuss emerging issues, including some notable successes, surrounding RLS practice in both school settings. Considerable data has been gathered in St Louise's to date and this continued to the end of June 2011. Two teachers have been interviewed in Loreto and a written interim report has been provided. The RLS work for final data collection is continuing into autumn 2011.



A COMPARATIVE STUDY INTO FURTHER EDUCATION TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF IRELAND: TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR FURTHER EDUCATION TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

Mrs Celia O'Hagan, University of Ulster Prof. Gerry McAleavy, University of Ulster Ms Violet Toland, University of Ulster Dr Jennifer Cornyn, University of Ulster Dr Ted Fleming, NUI Maynooth

Rationale

This study was carried out at a time when teacher education in Northern Ireland Further Education (FE) Colleges had undergone much change in terms of professional standards, recognition and regulation. It was designed to work in tandem with the Republic of Ireland stakeholders, in preparation for the launch of new requirements for FE Colleges in the South, together with government targets for the professionalisation of the sector and the introduction of teacher education qualifications by 2013.

Methodology

Syndicate meetings were held regularly and document audits and reviews were carried out amongst key project stakeholders, informing discussions in relation to the project aims. Experts were invited from North and South to review and liaise in relation to the project. All government departments responsible for teacher education in FE Colleges were involved, as were Teaching Council officials (North and South), the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA) in the South, the Irish North East Alliance for FE Colleges and Higher Education (employer forum) and the Northern Ireland Sector Skills Council. University of Ulster and NUI Maynooth were also partners in this project.

Findings and Preliminary Recommendations

The project has found that the very significant models of adult education in the Republic of Ireland are highly valuable in terms of teacher education, both within the FE sector and the wider Adult Education sector, and that much can be learned from future cooperation between leading providers North and South. Equally, the project has elicited much support for the idea of a shared Northern model, whereby the work in Northern Ireland for the alignment of post-14 teacher education models and the inclusion of a tiered system of accreditation to include all tutors in the lifelong learning sector could be used to model good practice in terms of policy direction and teacher education standards. Key HEIs, together with the IVEA, are currently in discussion about partnership in this area as a direct result of the project.



Audits of stakeholder ideas, including employers and teaching councils, have highlighted the complexity of systems and inter-regional policies. It is felt, nonetheless, that the sharing of such esteem and workforce planning could be hugely beneficial both in the North and the South. The main benefits to the development of a co-operation framework could include:

- 1. Opportunities for models to evolve in support of both regions/states.
- 2. High possibility of improved transition for students who may progress between Northern and Southern colleges and universities.
- 3. Partnership opportunities for excellence in FE Teacher Education may arise, carrying strengths for all providers and colleges.
- 4. Regulation and recognition in support of agreed teaching standards, North and South, where policy allows and subject to regional/inter-state requirements.
- 5. Transferability of labour within and across the teaching communities, North and South, as appropriate.
- 6. Department for Employment and Learning (North) and Department of Education and Skills (South) cooperation could inform new programmes.
- 7. Agreement on key components for FE Teacher Education for further discussion at provider level.
- 8. General Teaching Council NI and Teaching Council (Ireland) to continue cooperation in relation to the recognition of inter-state qualifications where possible.
- 9. Further consideration of partnership models, North and South, between existing lead providers, commencing with University of Ulster and National University of Ireland, Maynooth.
- 10. Irish Vocational Educational Association (IVEA) to work with providers and other stakeholders in support of partnerships and cross border alliances for FE Teacher Education.



UNDERSTANDING THE POTENTIAL FOR RESEARCH CAPACITY BUILDING IN INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES NORTH/ SOUTH. A BASELINE COMPARATIVE STUDY: PHASE 1

Dr Jim Gleeson, University of Limerick Dr Ruth Leitch, Queen's University Belfast Dr Ciaran Sugrue, University of Cambridge

Main Research Question

What is the extent, perceived relevance and potential of research capacity-building during initial teacher education (ITE) programmes?

Progress to date

1. Analysis of policy documents in relation to the continuum of teacher education

The policies of the respective Teaching Councils on teacher development have been identified for inclusion in the report

2. Review of relevant literature with particular emphasis on provision in England, Scotland and Wales

This work is ongoing.

3. Current beliefs and practices among initial teacher education providers

Wide-ranging interviews with a sample of initial teacher education Programme (primary and post-primary) Directors in both jurisdictions have been conducted. In view of their relatively short duration, the emphasis of ITE programmes is primarily on professional practice rather than professional formation in the broader sense. However, while research per se does not feature prominently in ITE programmes, there is general and growing recognition of its importance, and respondents emphasised the evidence-based nature of their programmes. It has not been possible, however, in the context of this initial investigation, to establish what such evidence might entail, and how, through engagement with such evidence, ITE students might become more sophisticated users of evidence.

Although there is insufficient time to introduce student teachers to research methods or engage them in research activity during the ITE experience, there is a growing tendency to focus on the development of the reflective practitioner as action researcher in the context of the practicum. It would also appear that there is an evolving sense of the importance of developing a research culture within ITE provider institutions. However, the extent to which teacher educators are actively involved in research activity varies considerably, due to a variety of factors including funding opportunities and the capacity and confidence levels of faculty.



Drawing on the experience of these interviews, a survey is currently being finalised for electronic circulation to all teacher educators in both jurisdictions. The main issues raised in this questionnaire include:

- perceptions of the appropriate level of research competence that ought to be developed at ITE stage;
- the extent to which ITE programmes focus on the development of student teachers' skills in respect of quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods and action research;
- the perceived importance of research capacity building in ITE from the perspectives of the practicum, foundation studies, reflective practice etc;
- the providers' views regarding the extent to which ITE programmes should develop appreciation of research, research skills, and capacity and critical perspectives on research reports;
- the proportion of the working week of faculty members devoted to research activity (workload models):
- the nature and weighting of the dissertation in ITE programmes;
- · the availability of funding and opportunities for research within teacher education;
- conference attendance on the part of teacher educators;
- the engagement of teacher educators in research projects;
- · the nature and extent of publications by teacher educators;
- provision for/availability of related staff development.

Work outstanding

Analysis of survey data; focus group with student teachers; interviews with some key policy makers and stakeholders in each jurisdiction.

Conclusion

The researchers are committed to achieving the outcomes stated in the original proposal:

- A reliable knowledge base regarding the nature and use of research and the potential to enhance research capacity-building in the context of ITE in both jurisdictions.
- A reliable knowledge base in relation to teacher educators' attitudes, capabilities and needs
 regarding the role of research in teacher development and the place of research capacity building
 in ITE programmes.
- The implications of our findings for teacher educators and programme developers/leaders in each jurisdiction and across the island of Ireland.



CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC ABUSE: HELPING STUDENT TEACHERS UNDERSTAND THEIR ROLE IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SETTING

Dr Bronagh E McKee, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Dr Stephanie Holt, Trinity College, Dublin

Introduction

This interim report summarises the research design and delivery of a North-South partnership research project on preparing student teachers for their role in domestic abuse recognition and response in primary schools. The primary aim of the study was to design and deliver a tailored programme to address domestic abuse through arts-based education. The full report is due in late summer 2011 and will be accessible on the SCoTENS website.

Research preparation

This aspect of the research was conducted in four stages:

- Audit
- Programme Design
- · Community Partnership
- Rehearsals

The audit was conducted in one of the participating institutions to identify the extent to which the topic of domestic abuse was included in the undergraduate primary teaching curriculum. This informed programme design (learning and teaching content, and dramatisation script) and the creation of a 'Community Partnership' with a Further Education Institution performing arts department. The final stage of research preparation involved the selection of actors and dramatisation rehearsals.

Participants

Participants in this study were third year students from the Northern participating institution engaged in a four-year Bachelor of Education degree in Primary Teaching (n=66); final year students from the Southern participating institution engaged in a three-year Bachelor of Education degree (n=85), and actors with arts-based education experience from the Community Partnership institution engaged or recently qualified in a two-year National Diploma in Performing Arts (n=5).

Research tools

An audit was designed to identify the level of existing domestic abuse training provided in one of the participating institutions. It contained seven themes: context, impact on children, impact on



families, awareness among teachers, responding in school, teaching strategies, and supporting children and families.

A questionnaire was designed to measure participants' knowledge and understanding of the context and impact of domestic abuse e.g. prevalence, recognition, legal/policy context, impact on children, professional roles. A total of 20 multiple-choice questions were devised to address each of these themes. A vignette, describing an interaction between a teacher and a child, was also attached to the questionnaire. Participants were asked to outline an answer that best represented an appropriate response to examine students' anticipated decisions on a hypothetical case scenario.

The main component of the tailored programme was a dramatisation – Closed Doors, Open Minds – written and directed by the first author of this report, co-directed by the Community Partnership performing arts course co-ordinator and performed for participants by the Community Partnership actors. The dramatisation compared the experience and outcomes of one family based on two different personal circumstances. The first act, containing four scenes, portrayed how the family enjoyed a high quality of life attributable to the positive relationship between husband and wife and the positive influence this had on the child's learning and development in school. The second act, also containing four scenes, portrayed a devastated family following repeated and severe domestic abuse in the family home. The aim of the second act was to demonstrate how exposure to domestic abuse impacted negatively on the child's learning, behaviour and social development with peers and adults in school and the role of teachers in domestic abuse recognition and response.

An anonymous questionnaire was adapted from one of the participating institution's Learning and Teaching evaluation forms. This questionnaire asked participants about the overall usefulness and relevance of the programme in relation to three themes: content, arts-based education and self-perceived knowledge and confidence development.

Flip-camera recordings were taken, initially, for rehearsal and potential training purposes only. Due to timetabling difficulties, we were unable to conduct focus groups with participants. Instead, permission was sought and informed consent obtained from participants to video-record and take further flip-camera recordings of the first delivery of the performance, with a focus on the arts-based education approach after the dramatization, i.e. interactive hot-seating between actors and participants.

Procedures

The audit was distributed, using one participating institution's electronic mailing list, to all academic staff. The audit required participants to indicate which themes they included in existing undergraduate curriculum content and to return these to the principal investigator using the same electronic mailing system.



The anonymous multiple choice questionnaire was distributed, completed and returned in person during two specially convened half days: at the beginning of the first day, before the programme was delivered (pre-test), and at the end of the second, after the programme was completed (post-test).

A six-hour programme was designed and delivered over two half days in both institutions. The first half day used lecture presentations, interactive discussions and exercises, and aspects of arts-based education such as role play and hot-seating, to prepare participants for the dramatisation, performed during the second half day. The programme was delivered to Northern partner students in November 2010 and Southern partner students in January 2011.

The anonymous learning and teaching questionnaire was distributed, completed and returned in person by both groups at the end of the second half day, after the programme was completed.

With permission, flip-camera and video-camera recordings were taken during rehearsals, the first delivery of the performance, and the interactive hot-seating activity between actors and participants.

The way forward

Analysis is underway to determine:

- 1. The provision of domestic abuse education in the undergraduate teaching curriculum;
- 2. If participation in the programme increased student teachers' knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse;
- 3. The usefulness and relevance of programme content and arts-based education as a learning and teaching methodology;
- 4. Self-perceived development of knowledge and confidence from the perspective of student teachers:
- 5. Participant engagement in arts-based education.

All findings will be included in the final report due in late summer 2011.





Funded or co-funded by

SCoTENS 2011-2012



EXPLORING AND DEVELOPING SPACES AMONG ADULT EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS FOR ONLINE AND ARTS BASED REFLECTION

Ms Shelley Tracey, Queen's University Belfast
Mr Jim Mullan, Queen's University Belfast
Ms Irene Bell, Stranmillis University College, Belfast
Ms Geraldine Mernagh, Waterford Institute of Technology
Ms Margaret McBrien, Waterford Institute of Technology

This project will:

- · Identify current good practice in reflection among adult education practitioners
- Create opportunities for showcasing and sharing effective examples of reflection through conferences and online opportunities
- · Develop effective online tools for promoting reflective practice
- · Develop and support arts-based reflection among adult educators in Ireland
- Establish a peer-led reflective practice network for adult educators on the island of Ireland.

SCoTENS grant awarded £4,000

ASSESSMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION NORTH AND SOUTH (ATENS)

Dr Tracey Connelly, University College Cork Dr Geraldine Magennis, St Mary's University College, Belfast

This project will:

- Explore the nature and conduct of school-based work assessments within a sample of Primary and Post-Primary Initial Teacher Education degree courses drawn from both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland
- Investigate the links between various school-based assessment techniques and subsequent planning, teaching and learning at degree and postgraduate diploma level
- Examine the extent to which these various methods of assessment of the school-based work element are found to be satisfactory in the opinions of a selection of stakeholders and end-users
- Situate and critically discuss the findings with reference to current thinking, including formative assessment.

SCoTENS grant awarded £5,000



AN EXPLORATION OF MATHEMATICAL IDENTITY USING NARRATIVE AS A TOOL (MINT)

Dr Maurice O'Reilly, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Dr Patricia T Eaton, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

This project aims to:

- Propose an efficient and effective protocol for third level mathematics educators to explore the Mathematical Identities of their students with a view to improving the teaching and learning of mathematics.
- 2. Collaborate with researchers in institutions other than St Patrick's College Drumcondra and Stranmillis University College to explore students' Mathematical Identity.
- 3. Extend the work on Mathematical Identity undertaken in MINT, thus giving insight into how the Mathematical Identities of different cohorts of student teachers compare with one another and with those of students in other disciplines.

SCoTENS grant awarded £4,000

SCIENCE ENHANCEMENT AND LEARNING THROUGH EXCHANGE AND COLLABORATION AMONG TEACHERS (SELECT)

Dr John McCullagh, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Dr Colette Murphy, Queen's University Belfast Dr Cliona Murphy, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Mr Greg Smith, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra

This project will:

- Facilitate teacher exchange and collaboration with respect to best practice in science teaching and learning.
- Use exchange and collaboration to extend and develop the expertise of two groups of teachers. A
 group of Dublin-based teachers who, in partnership with science education staff from St Patrick's
 College, Drumcondra, have developed an expertise in classroom practice relating to the 'Nature
 of Science' (NoS), will disseminate and model their practice to a group of teachers from Belfast.
 The Belfast-based teachers who, in partnership with Queen's University Belfast and Stranmillis
 University College, have developed an expertise in 'Creative Science Investigations' (CSI), will in a
 similar way work to develop this practice with their Southern partners

SCoTENS grant awarded £5,000



A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF NORTH-SOUTH EDUCATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS IN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXTS

Professor Peadar Cremin, Mary Immaculate College, Limerick Professor Peter B Finn, St Mary's University College, Belfast

This project will:

- Initiate a critical review of North-South teacher education partnerships involving Irish and African institutions to assess the contribution of the principles and practice of the partnership model;
- Identify and itemise the key issues to be addressed within sustainable, mutually beneficial teacher education partnerships;
- Organise a conference of Irish and international experts to assess educational partnerships and to consider how future planning and policy decisions nationally and internationally may be improved;
- Produce an edited book of papers to disseminate the lessons learnt and to inform future collaborative projects in development contexts.

SCoTENS grant awarded £5,000

TEACHERS' VIEWS ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THEIR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PERCEPTIONS, EXPERIENCES AND MOTIVATION

Dr Helen O'Sullivan, Trinity College Dublin Dr Barbara McConnell, Stranmillis University College, Belfast Dr Dorothy McMillan, Stranmillis University College, Belfast

This project aims to:

Identify teachers' perceptions and experiences of university level professional development and the motivating factors that influenced that uptake, and the subsequent implementation/non-implementation of learning by the use of a survey and focus group interviews.

SCoTENS grant awarded £3,500



TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL HISTORY: A SYMPOSIUM ON THE TEACHING OF 1916 AND THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

Dr Fionnuala Waldron, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Dr Pauric Travers, St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Dr Alan McCully, University of Ulster

This project will:

- Examine issues relating to the teaching of 1916 and the Battle of the Somme and their implications for teacher education
- Facilitate the development of a major North-South project on the teaching of these and related events

SCoTENS grant awarded £3,000

SPIRITUAL EDUCATION: NEW CHALLENGE, NEW OPPORTUNITY

Dr Anna O'Gara, Marino Institute of Education Dr Bernadette Flanagan, Marino Institute of Education Mr James Nelson, Stranmillis University College

This project aims to:

- Transfer knowledge from international researchers regarding the increased competency in focusing attention; the improved maintenance of emotional balance, and the enriched resilience in the face of life's challenges for children/young people who experience spiritual education.
- Familiarise educators with mediation practice that may provide a simple way to support the
 development of core emotional and social competencies that underlie successful learning and
 help students and teachers excel.
- Introduce educators to an expert educator practitioner in the field of contemplative practices for children/young people.
- Explore an inter-spiritual approach to intercultural and interfaith education in a North-South context through situating exchange in shared practice.

SCoTENS grant awarded £3,750



PROMOTING AN ACTIVE 'RESTORATIVE SCHOOL' LEARNING COMMUNITY NORTH AND SOUTH

Dr Derick Wilson, University of Ulster Ms Delma Sweeney, NUI Maynooth

This project will:

- Address disadvantaged pupils in Dun Laoghaire/Rathdown and North Antrim/Derry through a
 "Restorative School Learning Community" for educators, parents, pupils, governors, professionals
 and community partners committed to restorative cultures.
- Pilot and refine two accredited modules for 'The Restorative School' (University of Ulster) and 'Conflict Resolution in Education' (NUI Maynooth) ensuring their relevance to parents, trainee and experienced teachers, pupils, management, and relevant professional and community agencies.

SCoTENS grant awarded £5,000

WRITING AS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY IN ITE

Ms Rose Dolan, NUI Maynooth
Dr Judith Harford, University College Dublin
Mr Billy McClune, Queen's University Belfast

This project will:

- Introduce professional writing as a professional development activity for a small group of supervisors of teaching practice in three university education schools/departments, two in the Republic and one in Northern Ireland.
- Hold a one day project conference for 50 people.

SCoTENS grant awarded £4,400



2003-2013



RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE PROJECTS FUNDED IN THE AREAS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INCLUSION

	OSION		I			
No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions		
1	Special Education Needs and Initial Teacher Education in	2003-2004	3-2004 Mr Hugh Kearns Stranmillis University C Belfast Dr Michael Shevlin Trinity College Dublin			
2	Preliminary evaluation of a teaching package for children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	2003-2004	Dr Jean Ware Dr Colette Gray	St Patrick's College Drumcondra Stranmillis University College		
3	Together Towards Inclusion: a toolkit for trainers (1)	2004-2005	Ms Mary Yarr Ms Barbara Simpson Prof. David Little	Southern Education & Library Board Trinity College Dublin Trinity College Dublin		
4	Teacher Education for Special Educational Needs in the North and South of Ireland	2005-2006	Mr Hugh Kearns Dr Michael Shevlin	Stranmillis University College Trinity College Dublin		
5	Together Towards Inclusion: a toolkit for trainers (2)	2005-2006	Ms Mary Yarr Ms Barbara Simpson Prof. David Little	Southern Education & Library Board Trinity College Dublin Trinity College Dublin		
6	The Professional Development Needs of teachers working in Special Educational Needs	2007-2008	Ms Elizabeth O'Gorman Ms Mairin Barry Professor Sheelagh Drudy Ms Eileen Winter Dr Ron Smith	University College Dublin University College Dublin University College Dublin Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast		
7	Consulting pupils on the assessment and remediation of their Specific Literacy Difficulties	Dr Michael Shevlin Tri		Bel Dr Michael Shevlin Trir		St Mary's University College, Belfast Trinity College Dublin
8	Student Teachers' perceptions of their competence to meet the needs of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in mainstream primary schools	2008-2009	Ms Mary Greenwood Dr Patricia Daly Ms Anne O'Byrne	St Mary's University College Mary Immaculate College, Limerick Mary Immaculate College		
9	Facing Autism Ireland Conference	2009-2010	Dr Karola Dillenburger Dr Geraldine Leader	Queen's University Belfast NUI Galway		



No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions
10	Conference: Dyslexia, Literacy and Inclusion	2009-2010	Ms Louise Long Dr Therese McPhillips	St Mary's University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
11	Development of North/ South cast studies identifying key features of good practice in the teaching of pupils from ethnic minorities	2009-2010	Mr Ken Wylie Dr Mark Morgan	Stranmillis University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
	EARCH AND CONFERENCERSITY	E PROJECTS	FUNDED IN THE AREA O	F CITIZENSHIP AND
12	North/South Conference on Education for Diversity and Citizenship (1)	2003-2004	Ms Una O'Connor Mr Gerry Jeffers	University of Ulster NUI Maynooth
13	North/South Conference on Education for Diversity and Citizenship (2)	2005-2006	Ms Una O'Connor Mr Gerry Jeffers	University of Ulster NUI Maynooth
14	Bringing School Communities together to promote education for diversity	2007-2007	Dr Ron Smith Prof. Keith Sullivan	Queen's University Belfast NUI Galway
15	Inclusion and Diversity Service post primary initiative	2008-2009	Ms Mary Yarr Ms Barbara Simpson	NEELB Trinity College Dublin
RES	EARCH AND CONFERENCE	E PROJECTS	FUNDED IN THE AREA O	F TECHNOLOGY AND MATHS
16	Current Practice in ICT within teacher education	2005-2006	Dr Roger S P Austin Ms Deirdre Graffin Dr Paul Conway Dr Joe O'Hara	University of Ulster University of Ulster University College Cork Dublin City University
17	Digital Video as a tool for changing ICT learning in schools and teacher education	2006-2007	Dr Roger S P Austin Ms Deirdre Graffin Dr Paul Conway Dr Joe O'Hara Dr Linda Clarke	University of Ulster University of Ulster University College Cork Dublin City University University of Ulster
18	Measuring the value of Education Technologies in Ireland North and South (MVET – Ireland)	2008-2009	Dr Conor Galvin Prof John Gardner	University College Dublin Queen's University Belfast



No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions
19	A cross-border comparison of student teachers' identities relating to Mathematics	2008-2009	Dr Patricia T Eaton Dr Maurice O'Reilly	Stranmillis University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
20	Evaluation of the implementation of Realistic Mathematics Education (RME) within primary schools in the North and South of Ireland	2010-2011	Dr Pamela Moffett Dr Dolores Corcoran	Stranmillis University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
21	An exploration of mathematical identity using narrative as a tool (MINT)	2011-2012	Dr Maurice O'Reilly Dr Patricia Eaton	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Stranmillis University College
	EARCH AND CONFERENCE GEOGRAPHY	E PROJECTS	FUNDED IN THE PEDAGO	GY OF SCIENCE, HISTORY
22	All-Ireland survey of student perceptions of History, Geography and Science (1)	2004-2005	Dr Colette Murphy Ms Fionnuala Waldron	Queen's University Belfast St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
23	All-Ireland survey of student perceptions of History, Geography and Science (2)	2005-2006	Dr Colette Murphy Ms Fionnuala Waldron Dr Janet Varley	Queen's University Belfast St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
24	All-Ireland survey of student perceptions of History, Geography and Science (3)	2006-2007	Ms Susan Pike Mr Richard Greenwood	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Stranmillis University College
25	Conference on findings of all-Ireland survey of student perceptions of History, Geography and Science	2008-2009	Ms Colette Murphy Mr Neil O'Conaill Ms Susan Pike	Queen's University Belfast Mary Immaculate College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra
26	Teaching controversial history: a symposium on the teaching of 1916 and the battle of the Somme	2011-2012	Dr Fionnuala Waldron Dr Pauric Travers Dr Alan McCully	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Patrick's College, Drumcondra University of Ulster
27	Science enhancement and learning through exchange and collaboration among teachers (SELECT)	2011-2012	Dr John McCullagh Dr Colette Murphy Dr Cliona Murphy Mr Greg Smith	Stranmillis University College Queen's University Belfast St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Patrick's College, Drumcondra



RES	RESEARCH AND CONFERENCE PROJECTS FUNDED IN THE AREA OF TEACHER EDUCATION				
No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions	
28	North/South Directors of Teaching Practice Study Group	2004-2005	Mr Paraig Cannon Ms Sandra McWilliams Ms Margaret Farrar	Coláiste Mhuire, Marino Stranmillis University College Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin	
29	Diversity in Early Years Education North and South: Implications for teacher education	2005-2006	Dr Barbara McConnell Dr Philomena Donnelly Ms Louise Quinn	Stranmillis University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Stranmillis University College	
30	North-South Conference on initial teacher education: The Competences Approach to Teacher Professional Development	2005-2006	Mr Barry Burgess Dr Andy Burke Ms Claire Connolly Ms Rose Dolan	University of Ulster St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Mary's University College NUI Maynooth	
31	Developing Reflective Skills in Student Teachers	2006-2007	Dr Gerry MacRuairc Dr Juidith Harford Mr Dermot MacCartan	University College Dublin University College Dublin St Mary's University College	
32	Cross border exploration of CPD needs of heads of year in a sample of comprehensive and integrated schools	2006-2007	Mr Patrick McNamara Prof. Tom Geary Ms Caryl Sibbett	University of Limerick University of Limerick Queen's University Belfast	
33	School based work in the North and South of Ireland: a review of policy and practice	2006-2007	Dr Brian Cummins Ms Bernadette Ni Aingleis	Stranmillis University College St Patrick's College, Drumcondra	
34	A study of work based learning models and partnerships in support of post-compulsory programmes of teacher education	2008-2009	Prof. Gerry McAleavey Mrs Celia O'Hagan Mr Walter Bleakley Ms Sylvia Alexander Mr Harry McCarry Dr Ted Fleming	University of Ulster University of Ulster University of Ulster University of Ulster Belfast Metropolitan College NUI Maynooth	
35	Peer Mentoring in post- compulsory teacher education	2009-2010	Ms Celia O'Hagan Dr Ted Fleming	University of Ulster NUI Maynooth	
36	Directors of Teaching Practice research group for CPD for teacher practice supervisors	2010-2011	Ms Claire Connolly Mr Séamie Ó Néill	St Mary's University College Froebel College of Education	
37	Comparative study into further education North and South: towards a framework for FE teaching qualifications	2010-2011	Mrs Celia O'Hagan Prof. Gerry McAleavey Ms Violet Toland Dr Jennifer Cornyn Dr Ted Fleming	University of Ulster University of Ulster University of Ulster University of Ulster NUI Maynooth	



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No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions	
38	Understanding the potential for capacity-building in Initial Teacher Education programmes. North and South: a baseline comparative study, Phase 1	2010-2011	Dr Jim Gleeson Dr Ruth Leitch Dr Ciaran Sugrue	University of Limerick Queen's University Belfast Cambridge University	
39	Assessment in teacher education north and south (ATENS)	2011-2012	Dr Tracey Connelly Dr Geraldine Magennis	University College Cork St Mary's University College	
40	Teachers' views on the factors influencing their professional development: perceptions, experiences and motivation	2011-2012	Dr Helen O'Sullivan Dr Barbara McConnell Dr Dorothy McMillan	Trinity College Dublin Stranmillis University College Stranmillis University College	
RES	EARCH AND CONFERENCE	CE PROJECTS	FUNDED IN THE AREA O	F LANGUAGE LEARNING	
41	English as an Additional Language in undergraduate teacher education programme in Ireland	2008-2009	Mr Frank Quinn Mr Martin Hagan Dr Anne Ryan	St Mary's University College St Mary's University College Marino Institute of Education, Dublin	
42	North-South Language Educators Conference	2008-2009	Dr Eugene McKendry Mr Patrick Farren	Queen's University Belfast NUI Galway	
43	The spoken Irish of pupils in Irish-Medium Schools	2009-2010	Mr Pádraig Ó Duibhir Ms Jill Garland	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Mary's University College	
44	Lift off Literacy programme for the Irish-Medium School	2009-2010	Dr Gabrielle Nig Uidhir Sr Elizabeth Connolly	St Mary's University College Monaghan Education Centre	
RES	EARCH AND CONFERENCE	E PROJECTS	FUNDED IN OTHER AREA	AS	
45	Art and Science in Education: Moving towards creativity	2006-2007	Mr Ivor Hickey Ms Deirdre Robson Mr Donal O'Donaghue	St Mary's University College St Mary's University College Mary Immaculate College	
46	Building Effective Science Outreach Strategies North and South	2006-2007	Dr V McCauley Dr C Domegan Dr Kevin Davison Dr Sally Montgomery Ms Eileen Martin Ms Emma McKenna Dr Billy McClure Dr Ruth Jarman	NUI Galway NUI Galway NUI Galway W5 Interactive Discovery Belfast Queen's University Belfast	



No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions	
47	Social Justice Education in Initial Teacher Education: a cross border perspective	2006-2007	Dr Marie Clarke Dr Audrey Bryan Prof Tony Gallagher Dr Margaret Reynolds Dr Ken Wylie	University College Dublin University College Dublin Queen's University Belfast St Mary's University College Stranmillis University College	
48	Investigation into the experiences of primary school teachers with regard to their teaching of healthy eating guidelines within the curriculum	2008-2009	Ms Elaine Mooney Ms Eileen Kelly- Blakeney Ms Amanda McCloat Ms Dorothy Black	St Angela's College, Sligo St Angela's College, Sligo St Angela's College, Sligo University of Ulster	
49	Building North-South links in whole college initiatives in global justice education	2008-2009	Mr Brian Ruane Dr Gerard McCann	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra St Mary's University College	
50	Contribution of Primary School Physical Education to health enhancing physical activity	2009-2010	Dr David McKee Dr Elaine Murtagh	Stranmillis University College Mary Immaculate College, Limerick	
51	Developing all-Ireland research capacity in Arts-based Educational Research	2009-2010	Dr Ruth Leitch Ms Shelley Tracey Ms Caryl Sibbett Dr Mary Shine Thompson	Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast St Patrick's College Drumcondra	
52	Digitisation of three volumes of Irish Education Documents	2009-2010	Prof Áine Hyland Prof Tony Gallagher	Church of Ireland College of Education, Dublin Queen's University Belfast	
53	Sixth form/sixth year religion in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland	2009-2010	Dr Andrew McGrady Dr Christopher Lewis	Mater Dei Institute of Education University of Ulster	
54	Disablist Bullying: an investigation into teachers' knowledge and confidence	2010-2011	Dr Noel Purdy Dr Conor McGuckin	Stranmillis University College Trinity College Dublin	
55	Images and Identity (collaborative art and design education project within teacher education)	2010-2011	Ms Dervil Jordan Dr Jacqueline Lambe	National College of Art and Design University of Ulster	
56	Effective Mentoring within Physical Education Teacher Education	2010-2011	Dr Fiona Chambers Mr Walter Bleakley	University College Cork University of Ulster	



No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser	Institutions
110	Titio	Buto	Project leaders	motitutiono
57	Exploring Japanese Research Lesson Study (RLS) as a model of peer to peer professional learning	2010-2011	Prof John Gardner Mr Gerard Devlin Dr Debie Galanouli Dr Mary Magee Ms Kathryn McSweeney	Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast St Angela's College, Sligo St Angela's College, Sligo
58	Children exposed to Domestic Abuse: helping student teachers understand their role in a primary school setting	2010-2011	Dr Bronagh McKee Dr Stephanie Holt	Stranmillis University College Trinity College Dublin
59	Exploring and developing spaces among adult education practitioners for online and arts based reflection	2011-2012	Ms Shelley Tracey Mr Jim Mullan Ms Irene Bell Ms Geraldine Mernagh Ms Margaret McBrien	Queen's University Belfast Queen's University Belfast Stranmillis University College Waterford IT Waterford IT
60	A critical analysis of north-south educational partnerships in development contexts	2011-2012	Prof Peadar Cremin Prof Peter B Finn	Mary Immaculate College St Mary's University College
61	Spiritual education: new challenge, new opportunity	2011-2012	Dr Anne O'Gara Dr Bernadette Flanagan Mr James Nelson	Marino Institute of Education, Dublin Marino Institute of Education Stranmillis University College
62	Promoting an active 'restorative school' learning community North and South	2011-2012	Dr Derick Wilson Ms Delma Sweeney	University of Ulster NUI Maynooth
63	Writing as a professional development activity in ITE	2011-2012	Ms Rose Dolan Dr Judith Harford Mr Billy McClune	NUI Maynooth University College Dublin Queen's University Belfast
	MOTION AND DISSEMINA		i	I
64	Irish Association of Social Scientific and Environmental Education (IASSEE) Conference (1)	2003-2004	Dr Janet Varley Dr Colette Murphy	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Queen's University Belfast
65	Educational Studies of Ireland(ESAI)/British Education Research Association (BERA) joint conference (1)	2004-2005	Mr Denis Bates Prof John Gardner	University of Limerick Queen's University Belfast



No	Title	Date	Author/Organiser Project leaders	Institutions
66	IASSEE Conference (2)	2004-2005	Dr Janet Varley Dr Colette Murphy	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra Queen's University Belfast
67	ESAI and BERA joint conference (2)	2005-2006	Dr Anne Lodge Prof John Gardner	NUI Maynooth Queen's University Belfast
68	Doctoral Research in Education North and South conference – links, challenges and opportunities (1)	Prof Jeanette Ellwood Qu		University College Dublin Queen's University Belfast
69	Doctoral Research in Education North and South conference – links, challenges and opportunities (2)	2009-2010	Dr Caitlin Donnelly Dr Dympna Devine	Queen's University Belfast University College Dublin
70	Cross-border conference on Integration of Academic and Personal Learning in Post-Primary Religious Education	2010-2011	Mr Vincent Murray Mr Norman Richardson	St Angela's College, Sligo Stranmillis University College
71	Doctoral Research in Education North and South conference – links, challenges and opportunities (3)	2010-2011	Dr Caitlin Donnelly Dr Dympna Devine	Queen's University Belfast University College Dublin



PUBLISHED REPORTS

No	Title	Date	Authors and/or Editors
1	SCoTENS Annual Report	2003	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
2	SCoTENS Annual Report	2004	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
3	Teacher Education for Citizenship in Diverse Societies: Conference and Annual reports	2005	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
4	Teacher Education and Schools: Together towards improvement: Conference and annual reports	2006	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
5	Together Towards Inclusion: Toolkit for Diversity in the Primary School (published out of SCoTENS project by Southern Education and Library Board and Integrate Ireland Language and Training)	2007	Mary Yarr, Barbara Simpson and David Little
6	The Competences Approach to Teacher Professional Development: Current Practice and Future Prospects	2007	Rose Dolan and Jim Gleeson,
7	Teaching in the Knowledge Society: Conference and Annual reports	2007	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
8	Education for Citizenship and Diversity in Irish Contexts (published out of SCoTENS conference report by Institute of Public Administration, Dublin)	2008	Una O'Connor and Gerry Jeffers
9	A review of Science Outreach Strategies, North and South	2008	Kevin Davison, Veronica McCauley, Christine Domegan, William McClune, Eileen Martin & Emma McKenna, Sally Montgomery
10	School Leadership Policy and Practice, North and South: Conference and Annual reports	2008	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister
11	Becoming a Teacher: Primary Student Teachers as learners and teachers of History, Geography and Science – an all- Ireland study	2009	Fionnuala Waldron, Susan Pike, Richard Greenwood, Cliona Murphy, Geraldine O'Connor, Anne Dolan, Karen Kerr
12	Professional Development for Post-Primary Special Education Needs in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland	2009	Elizabeth O'Gorman, Mairín Barry, Sheelagh Drudy, Eileen Winter, Ron Smith
13	Valuing Education Technology in Schools in Ireland, North and South	2010	Conor Galvin, John Anderson, John Gardner, Anne McMorrough, Stephanie Mitchell, Kathryn Moyle,
14	Reflective Practice: Challenges for Teacher Education North and South – Conference and Annual reports	2010	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister



15	Disablist Bullying: an investigation of student teachers' confidence and knowledge	2011	Noel Purdy, Conor McGuckin
16	An investigation into the experiences of primary school teachers with regard to their teaching of Healthy Eating Guidelines within the curriculum	2011	Elaine Mooney, Eileen Kelly-Blakeney, Amanda Mc Cloat, Dorothy Black
17	Teacher Education for Inclusion: Conference and Annual reports	2011	Andy Pollak and Patricia McAllister

The Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)





SCOTENS FINANCIAL POSITION

SCoTENS Statement of Affairs	1 Aug 08 - 31 July 09	1 Aug 09 - 31 July 10	1 - Aug 10 - 31 July 11
Balance Carried	47,041.49	103,065.75	56,461.03
Income			
DEL/DE	50,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
DES	50,000.00	25,000.00	25,000.00
Conference Fees	8,495.16	13,358.52	10,338.99
Income Received from SCoTENS Members	69,707.01	52,377.90	55,066.50
Total	178,202.17	115,736.42	115,405.49
Less adjusted figures from Account	6,876.36		
Total Income	171,325.81	115,736.42	115,405.49
Expenditure			
Research Projects	50,296.88	39,569.14	54,096.94
North South Student Teacher Exchange Project	28,456.29	26,004.48	19,555.31
Conferences and associated costs	12,002.66	26,315.21	21,997.89
Research publications and associated costs	7,496.98	19,758.48	10,681.37
Mileage	2,607.17	844.16	646.39
Sundry Expenses and Postage	7.90	301.17	1,089.66
Evaluation			3,500.00
CCBS Admin & Professional Services	57,762.17	37,926.50	37,753.00
Total	158,630.05	150,719.14	149,320.56
Less adjusted figures from Accounts	109,828.50	66,500.00	78,122.00
Total Expenditure	48,801.55	84,219.14	71,198.56
Net Surplus	122,524.26	31,517.28	44,206.93
Evaluation - amount pledged to			4,500.00
Research projects - amounts pledged to	66,500.00	78,122.00	67,605.00
Balance carried forward	103,065.75	56,461.03	28,562.96

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