

astir

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



Are politicians hitting the target?

Politicians answer our questions

Confronting discrimination against teachers

Science teachers need laboratory assistants

It's easy to switch to Vhi Healthcare.

CallSave 1850 44 44 44

Teachers can switch to Vhi Healthcare quickly and easily with no break in cover and no additional waiting periods.

Vhi Healthcare offers the widest range of plans and products to suit every budget and lifestage.



To find out more CallSave 1850 44 44 44

Mon to Fri 8am - 6pm, Sat 9am - 2pm



Drop into one of our branches

Mon to Fri 9am - 5pm



or log on to www.vhi.ie

When you need us, we're there



*Vhi Healthcare Branches: Lr Abbey Street, Dublin. South Mall, Cork.
Lr George's Street, Dun Laoghaire. Eyre Square, Galway. Charlotte Quay, Limerick.*

Volume 25: Number 2: March/April 2007
ISSN 0790-6560

astir

Editorial Board

Michael Freeley, President;
John White, General Secretary;
Patricia Wroe, Vice President;
Sheila Parsons, Immediate Past President;
Ray St John, Honorary Treasurer;
Joe Moran, Standing Committee;
Paddy Mulcahy, Standing Committee.

Media and Communications Officer:
Gemma Tuffy.

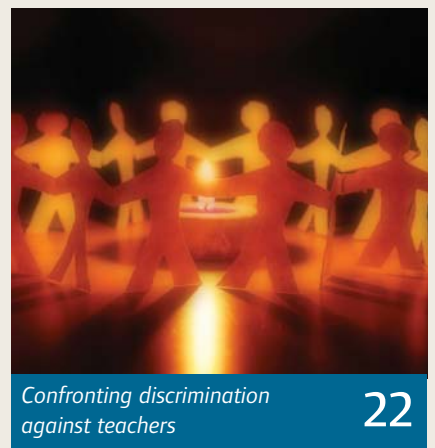
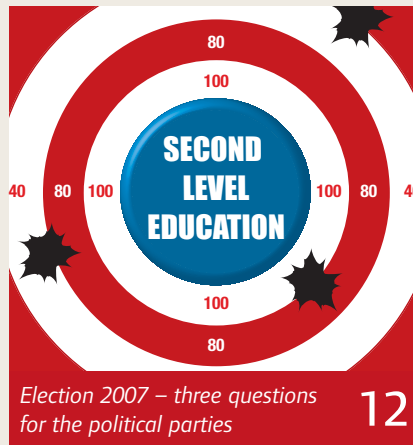
Published on behalf of ASTI by Think Media.
Editorial: Ann-Marie Hardiman, Paul O'Grady.
Design: Tom Cullen, Tony Byrne.
Advertising: Paul O'Grady.

ASTI,
Thomas MacDonagh House,
Winetavern Street,
Dublin 8.
Tel: 01-604 0160
Fax: 01-671 9280
astir@asti.ie

www.asti.ie

ASTIR is published five times annually by the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland. The opinions expressed in ASTIR are those of individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the ASTI. While every reasonable effort has been taken to ensure information published is accurate, the ASTI cannot accept responsibility for articles or advertisements. The ASTI reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

The ASTIR Editorial Board is interested in receiving feedback on ASTIR. Members can email astirfeedback@asti.ie or text 087-9349956.



From the President's desk	5
<i>Are politicians hitting the target?</i>	
News	6
Campaign	12
<i>Election 2007 – three questions for the political parties</i>	
Feature	16
<i>Science teachers need technical assistants</i>	
News report	18
<i>Will Section 29 help you in the classroom?</i>	
Feature	20
<i>Special educational needs</i>	
Feature	22
<i>Confronting discrimination against teachers</i>	
Curaclaim	24
<i>An Ghaeilge: cá bhfuil ár dtríail?</i>	

Members' forum	26
<i>Is there a case for mentoring in our schools?</i>	
Professional representation	28
<i>Concessionary post teachers reinstated</i>	
Frequently asked questions	29
<i>Carer's leave</i>	
ASTI Committee	30
<i>Protect your future, protect your pension</i>	
Noticeboard	32
Archives	33
<i>That was then</i>	
Classifieds	33
Crossword	34



Beat rising interest rates with our free switcher mortgage!

You may be able to reduce your monthly mortgage repayments and if you have any other loans you could reduce your monthly repayments on those too! You'll enjoy one low interest rate on all your borrowings and you can leave your loans over the same period as before.

Compare your variable interest rate to that available through Cornmarket:

Lender	Variable interest rate*
Bank of Scotland	4.74%
BSI	4.75%
AIB	4.80%
Permanent TSB	4.85%
BSI Bank	4.95%
Bank of Ireland	4.84%
ICS	4.84%
Irish Nationwide	4.98%
NIB	4.84%
Ulster Bank	4.99%
First Active	5.03%

*As an independent mortgage broker

Cornmarket 3.5%**

on average rates from

*as at 23rd February 2007 (Source: Advisor Plus)

Call us on 1890 345 789 to speak to a mortgage advisor or you could also drop in for a free consultation.

Making Mortgages Easy

Warning: The cost of your monthly repayments may increase - if you do not keep up your repayments you may lose your home.

Warning: This new loan may take longer to pay off than your previous loans. This means you may pay more than if you paid over a shorter term.

**discounted for 12 months, after which 4.8% applies. A typical variable-rate mortgage of €100,000 over 20 years costs €652.00 per month (APR 5.0%). The payment rates on this housing loan may be adjusted by the lender from time to time. A 1% interest rate rise will increase the payment to €707.80 (APR 5.8%). If you extend the term of your loan the cost of credit will increase over the longer period. All loans are subject to terms and conditions. Your mortgage advisor will be happy to discuss these with you. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd, is regulated by the Financial Regulator and is a member of the Irish Life & Permanent Group. Telephone calls may be recorded.

Are politicians hitting the target?



I am concerned at the continued under-investment in second-level education, which has resulted in poorly resourced schools, large class sizes and overworked teachers.

ASTIR asked all the main political parties and the independent group of TDs to respond to a number of questions relating to the funding of second-level education and schools. This article is part of the ASTI's General Election Campaign 2007, which aims to ensure that education is an election issue. I thank them sincerely for their responses and I wish to comment briefly on their replies.

I am pleased that most of the responses included commitments to prioritise resources for students with special educational needs and students from disadvantaged backgrounds. While the replies give undertakings to increase teacher numbers, there is no specific commitment to reduce the pupil teacher ratio. The current appointment ratio is 18:1 and this results in class sizes of 30+ in mainstream subjects for many pupils. The Green Party would create 1,000 new teaching jobs by investing an additional €1 billion in our education system. They also highlighted the fact that if proper resources are not put into education, it will cost us dearly in the future.

The Labour Party recognised that despite Ireland coming 29th out of 30 OECD countries relative to GDP spending per capita on second-level education, our schools, teachers and students perform extremely well in international comparisons on achievement standards. Some of the replies placed great emphasis on professional development and support for teachers, which is most welcome. Fine Gael would favour giving assistance to schools that voluntarily choose to introduce random drug and alcohol testing. Sinn Féin proposes to increase spending to 6% of GDP and are opposed to public-private partnership schools due to the concern of the Comptroller and Auditor General on their costs being greater than public schools.

Fighting discrimination in schools

I find it disturbing to hear that some second-level schools may be engaging in discriminatory practices by failing to enrol students with special needs

and international students. When some schools renege on their responsibilities it places a much greater burden on the schools that operate an inclusive policy. The Department of Education and Science must act to resource all second-level schools so that they can implement the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act effectively. This includes addressing as a matter of urgency the shortage of psychologists working for the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS). Our education system must support students with special needs, disadvantaged students and international students in a meaningful way. Otherwise teachers will find it impossible to deliver a quality education to the most vulnerable students of the nation.

Michael Freeley



Michael Freeley,
ASTI President

East Galway branch presentation



John White, General Secretary, making a presentation to Mattie Quinn to mark his 20th year as Secretary of the East Galway branch.

New school for Dingle



Bernard Moynihan, Industrial Relations Official, and Frank Killilea, Standing Committee, met Padraig Firtear, recently appointed Principal of Dingle Community School, to discuss the now amalgamated school, which is due to open in September 2007. The ASTI has met staff to discuss the amalgamation, and will meet the Department of Education in the near future.

Student Council inservice



Attendees at a recent Student Council Inservice (l-r): Mary Worrall, Glenamady Community School; Orla McStravick, Scoil Mhuire, Clane; Una Farrelly, St Mary's College, Naas; and Ann Piggott, Kenmare Community School.

Election 2007 – make your voice heard

Decisions about issues such as the funding of second-level education and class size – which affect you in your daily life as a teacher – are made by elected government representatives. This is why the ASTI is undertaking a campaign to highlight key education issues in the run-up to the 2007 General Election.

The ASTI has identified three key issues affecting second-level schools, teachers and pupils:

- funding of second-level education;
- class size; and
- education for pupils with special needs.

The ASTI is engaging in the following activities:

- an independent study of class size has been undertaken;
- every member will be provided with material on the campaign issues to facilitate a nationwide lobby of election candidates;
- a partnership between teachers' unions, parents and school management bodies has been formed to highlight the need for increased investment;
- ASTI representatives have lobbied the education spokespersons for the political parties; and
- the main political parties have responded to questions on the ASTI's campaign issues (see page 12).

Use your vote

Are you registered to vote in this year's election? You can check the register at your local County Council office, public library, post office or Garda station or by visiting www.checktheregister.ie. You are entitled to be added to the Supplementary Register up to 15 days before polling day.

ASTI secures schools' disadvantage supports

The ASTI has secured a commitment from the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, that the provision of resources to combat educational disadvantage will continue in non-Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) schools for the duration of the DEIS. The ASTI had expressed serious concern to the Department of Education and Science that the new DEIS programme for disadvantage would mean that some schools receiving resources under pre-existing schemes would lose out. However, following representations made by the ASTI, the Minister agreed to continue supports for these schools as follows:

- schools will retain additional teaching resources provided under previous schemes for the duration of the DEIS;
- schools that participate in the Home School Community Liaison Scheme (HSCL) will continue to avail of HSCL services for the duration of the DEIS; and
- no school will experience a reduction in capitation grant.

Transition Year radio project

TY Radio is an RTÉ Schools Project whereby Transition Year students are tutored and assisted in presenting, producing and researching their very own hour-long radio programme for transmission on RTÉ 2FM. As part of the project, an RTÉ production team conducts radio broadcasting workshops, giving 'hands-on' training in script writing skills, voice production and recording techniques. The workshops take place in the classroom and the students then record their TY Radio programme using the RTÉ 2FM Roadcaster (mobile studio) within the school grounds. Each student is given a Certificate of Achievement for his or her graduation portfolio. This project is totally financed by the RTÉ Licence Fee Fund. For more information, email Maggie.Stapleton@rte.ie or visit www.rte.ie/2fm/tyradio.

Join up for education



Irish students will join up for education during this year's Global Action Week for Education (April 23 to 29, 2007). Global Action Week offers students and teachers all over the world the chance to draw attention to the goal of achieving education for all the world's children.

In 2000 the Irish Government was one of many to commit to the goal of achieving education for all by 2015. While some steps have been taken, achieving the goal is a long way off. Students and teachers play a significant role in persuading governments, including the Irish Government, to ensure that basic education is promoted as a human right for every child in every country. The Irish Government can contribute to this goal by fulfilling its promises in relation to financial aid for education in the world's poorest countries. In addition, it can play a pivotal role in influencing and pressuring other governments to meet their responsibilities and ensuring that all nations are supported in the provision of education for all.

The theme of the 2007 campaign is 'Chains'. Activities include linking hands to make a human chain, and taking a picture or making a film of this, making symbolic chains for presentation to local and national politicians, and online email chains, which are sent to world leaders. The event presents an ideal human rights educational opportunity for CSPE and Transition Year students. The idea is that students across the world will create a chain of testimony and accountability from local to national to international levels, so that politicians at every level are aware of what violations there are to education as a human right. Global Action Week packs have been sent to all schools. Packs include posters, information on goals in relation to basic education as signed up to by governments, and suggestions for Global Action Week activities.

Currently, at least 80 million children do not go to school and almost a billion adults have literacy difficulties. At the current rate of progression, it will take 150 years to achieve education for all and this goal will require 18 million more teachers throughout the world.

Global Action Week in Ireland is being co-ordinated by the Irish Coalition for the Global Campaign for Education, of which the ASTI is a member. For more information, log on to www.campaignforeducation.ie.

Galway school closure sparks national debate

A motion from the Galway and Tuam branches on the issue of school closures is set to dominate this year's Annual Convention after a majority of branches prioritised it for debate. The composite motion states: "that the ASTI insist that full consultation takes place between all the relevant partners in education when a school's future is at risk". The motion follows the onset of a traumatic period for teachers at Seamount College in Kinvara, Co. Galway, after the Sisters of Mercy announced the closure of the school. The shock announcement came without prior consultation with the staff or other education partners.

In October 2006, the ASTI issued a press release describing the school trustees' decision to "disband" the school's board of management and to announce the closure of the school as being contrary to the Education Act. "Under the Education Act, 1998, schools are required to operate boards of management in a democratic and collaborative fashion. Trustees may only dissolve a board of management with the permission of the Minister for Education and Science," said ASTI General Secretary John White. Speaking at a recent public meeting organised by a group of local parents, ASTI Assistant General Secretary, Pat King, said the absence of any consultation was a deviation from normal acceptable industrial relations practice. He stated that an alternative position mutually acceptable to the trustees and the education partners could have emerged from consultation.



Meeting at Seamount College. Back row (left to right): Margaret Keville; Pauline Carthy; Margaret Murphy; Sinead O'Reilly; Caroline Murphy Hogan; John Sweeney; Liz Galvin; Maighread Mhic Dhomhnaill; and Emer Kilgannon. Front row (left to right): John Molloy, Standing Committee; Christina Kennedy-Hynes; Maura Greaney, ASTI School Steward; Geraldine Connors; Eileen Mulkerrins; Catherine Quinn; and Pat King, Assistant General Secretary, ASTI.

LC Irish website

An interactive website for teachers to support the teaching and learning of Leaving Certificate Irish literature has been developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) in collaboration with the National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE). The website, LIA (Litriocht Idirghníomhach na hArdteistiméireachta), will go live following a pilot phase in a number of schools later this school year. It will feature the text of the prescribed poems and prose, with audio and video clips, including video clips from the short film *Clare sa Spéir*. Sample lesson plans and worksheets, developed by teachers for teachers in support of the teaching and learning of literary works, will also be available on the website, which can shortly be accessed at www.liaarline.ie.

eLearning award for ASTI member



Tony O'Rourke, Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon; and Sylvia Binger, European Schoolnet.

Tony O'Rourke, a Physics teacher at Mercy Secondary School in Ballymahon, Co. Longford, has scooped a major prize at the European ICT eLearning Awards in Bruges. The Longford teacher was one of seven finalists selected out of 510 entries from 30 countries. He was presented with a cheque for €3,000 for his school after winning the 'Oracle Award for Science'.

Tony's project was an animated physics site, entitled 'Ray Diagrams in Physics', and was designed to help students to understand abstract processes.

At an early stage in his teaching career Tony recognised that some students had difficulty in visualising physical processes, which were either very difficult to create in the laboratory or, when models were built, the models operated too quickly and the student was not able to visualise the process as a series of steps. The students thus had a problem transferring theory to practice. An animated website tries to overcome such learning obstacles, in that it allows the students to work independently at their own pace, and to view various processes as a series of steps. Tony's award-winning project can be viewed at: www.teachnet.ie/torourke/flashprojects/raydiagrams.html.

The eLearning Awards, now in their sixth year, identify and reward excellent practice in using ICT for learning across Europe.

More language support teachers

Additional language support teachers are to be allocated to primary and second-level schools this year as part of the Social Partnership Agreement, 'Towards 2016'. Two hundred teachers are being assigned to schools with the largest numbers of international students with English language support needs.

Up to now, schools with 28 or more international pupils have been entitled to a maximum of two language support teachers – even if the

Internet warning for students

The Department of Education has launched a new Internet safety campaign called 'Watch your Space'. The campaign is intended to raise awareness and promote safe, responsible practice by young people when online.

An interactive online service – www.watchyourspace.ie – has been developed as part of the campaign, offering tips and advice for teenagers who use the web. A key feature of the site is the strong peer-to-peer perspective, where advice is shared from teenagers to teenagers on how to cope with the fall-out from abuses and misuse of social networking sites. The site is also integrated with an online helpline service from Childline.

National Development Plan

The Government launched the new National Development Plan (NDP) in January of this year. The Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, outlined the key areas where over €32 billion for investment in education is to be targeted.

Key areas for investment are:

- schools infrastructure and development;
- special needs; and
- information and communications technology.

The ASTI has reacted by stating that given that Ireland is languishing at the bottom end of OECD investment tables on funding of second-level education, it welcomes any additional funding for the sector. However, ASTI General Secretary John White expressed grave disappointment that the NDP does not address the key issue of concern to second-level teachers – class size.

Mr White said funding for special needs was especially welcome. However, he said the implementation of the Education for Persons with Special Needs Act would require serious additional resources and called for full funding for resources as set out in the Implementation Report of the Nation Council for Special Education.

Among the other areas targeted under the NDP are an investment of over €360 million to support the continuing roll-out of the Delivering Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme, a promise of €250 million for a new schools ICT initiative, almost €640 million for language support teachers and over €500 million to be allocated for Traveller education.

The ASTI has said that additional funding for ICT follows the absence of investment in this area for a number of years.

school had significantly more than 28 students needing the support. Now schools can apply for additional teaching resources if they have more than 28 international students.

'Towards 2016' contains a commitment of 550 additional language support teachers for schools before 2009. The ASTI has welcomed the announcement of the allocation of the first 200, but has called on the Government to fast track the remaining 350.

BT Young Scientist 2007

Abdusalam Abubakar, a third-year student from CBS Synge Street in Dublin 8, has been named BT Young Scientist of the Year 2007. His project, entitled 'An Extension of Wiener's Attack on RSA', was concerned with networked computer security and encryption. Science teacher and ASTI member, Jim Cooke, helped Abdusalam with the project. The goal of the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition is to promote science and technology in schools across the country and to highlight the importance of these fields to Ireland's future as a knowledge economy.



BT Young Scientist winner, Abdusalam Abubakar.

Gaeilge badge gets students talking



A group of fifth-year students at Gaelcholáiste Reachrann in Dublin have launched a badge to help young people who are willing to speak Irish to the best of their ability to identify themselves to others.

The students, along with their Business teacher, Ciarán Ó Rodaigh, and principal Fionnuala

NíChaisil, have established a mini company called Béal na nGael. They plan to sell their badge to second-level students and schools nationwide.

Speaking at the launch of their badge in the office of Foras na Gaeilge, teacher and ASTI member, Ciarán Ó Rodaigh, said: "The principal aim of the Béal na nGael project is that many more young people will feel free to converse freely at their own level and speed and talk away naturally in Irish. We want to transform negative attitudes out there to Irish and show that it is not only an integral part of our unique heritage, but that it is great fun as well".

Béal na nGael badges can be purchased for €3.50 each (€3 each for orders over 10) from Gaelcholáiste Reachrann (Tel: 01-8770935, email: eolas@gcr.codubvec.ie) or from Comhdháil Náisiúnta na Gaeilge (Tel: 01-6794780, email: eolas@comhdhail.ie).



At the Béal na nGael launch were (left to right): Noel Treacy TD; Ciarán Ó'Rodaigh, Business Studies teacher, Gaelcholáiste Reachrann, and ASTI member; Fionnuala Ní Chaisil, Principal, Gaelcholáiste Reachrann; and Oisín Geoghan, CEO, Fingal County Enterprise Board.

Road safety DVD

All schools have been sent a copy of RTÉ's *Road Safety DVD: Deaths on our roads in 2006*, based on RTÉ news reports and features during 2006. The DVD exposes young people to the harsh reality of the potential impact of road accidents. It highlights that in many cases excessive speed and consumption of alcohol are contributory factors to these accidents. The DVD is aimed at senior cycle students, in particular Transition Year, LCA and LCVP students. The DVD is complemented by a website on road safety – www.rte.ie/news/features/roadsafety.



ASTI Steering Committee



The ASTI Steering Committee at a planning meeting for Annual Convention 2007. Back row: Maire Ní Chairba; Susie Hall; Pat King, Assistant General Secretary, Health & Safety; Diarmaid de Paor, Deputy General Secretary; and Lily Cronin. Front row: Máire Ní Laoire; Patricia Wroe, Vice President; Michael Freeley, President; John White, General Secretary; and Carmel Heneghan. The role of the Steering Committee is to prepare the agenda for Annual Convention.

May ASTIR

The deadline for May ASTIR is Monday, March 26. Contributions should be forwarded to astir@asti.ie.

Retired Secondary Teachers' Association (RSTA)

News from RSTA meetings around the country.

The Annual General Meeting of the Retired Secondary Teachers' Association will be held in Thomas MacDonagh House, Winetavern St, Dublin, on Wednesday, May 2, 2007. Registration begins at 10am. All members of the Association are welcome to attend.

The group trip to Barcelona takes place on April 16-20, 2007.

There will be a guided walking tour of Drogheda at the end of April.

There will be a day trip to Inniskeen, Co. Monaghan, home of Patrick Kavanagh, to include a visit to The Patrick Kavanagh Rural & Literary Resource Centre and a coach tour of places mentioned by the poet in prose

and poetry. The trip will take place in May; the date is weather-dependent. Anyone interested in the Drogheda or Monaghan trips should contact Michael McMahon, Tel: 042-9661097.

Given that the bird watching event on February 1 was an outstanding success, a representative of Bird Watch Ireland has arranged to take the group to hear the dawn chorus in Marley Park within the next couple of weeks. Breda Connolly will lead a walk in the Wicklow area on the last Thursday of every month.

The AGM of the Wicklow branch will take place in April. Contact Aveen Kilduff, Tel: 01-2760616/087-6641466.

Retirement Seminar



< Eamon Donnelly, The Retirement Planning Council of Ireland; Eibhlín Ní Bhriain, St Vincent's College, Cork; and Phil Hartnett, St John of Gods, Artane.



^ Siobhan Roberts, Presentation College, Carlow; and Sile Gallagher, CBS Carlow.

> Ann Peterson, St John of Gods, Artane; Bríd ní Lúing, St John of Gods, Artane; and Una Hallissey, St John of Gods, Artane.



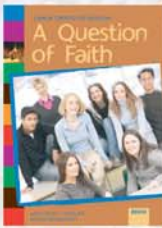
< Eamonn O'Boyle, De la Salle, Dundalk; and Austin O'Callaghan, Summerhill College, Sligo.

A QUESTION OF FAITH

Junior Certificate Religion

Lori Fields-Whelan · Niamh McDermott

- A one-volume text, user-friendly layout with full-colour design
- Language level accessible to students of all abilities
- Covers all major world religions
- A step-by-step guide to 'Journal Work' included
- 'Over To You' and 'Up For Discussion' used to test learning
- Exam focused with lots of Exam Style Questions

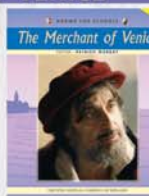


NEW MERCHANT OF VENICE

Junior Certificate English

Edited with notes by Patrick Murray

- A fresh student-friendly design with colour images
- Exam focused, providing detailed annotations on the entire play
- Provides an Outline of events and Points to consider
- An excellent overview of each act
- In depth character analysis and exploration of themes

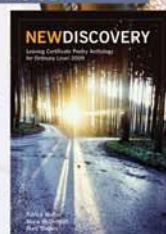


NEW DISCOVERY 2009

Leaving Certificate Ordinary Level Poetry Anthology

Patrick Murray · Kevin McDermott · Mary Slattery

- Biographical introduction to each poet
- Examination-style questions included and detailed guidelines
- Personal response encouraged
- Glossary of terms
- Guidelines for reading unseen poetry and for answering questions

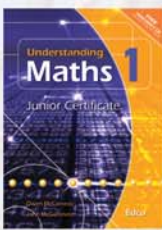


UNDERSTANDING MATHS

Junior Certificate Maths Ordinary & Higher Level

Owen McConway · John McGuinness

- A full-colour text, with simple, clear language throughout
- Graded exam-type questions
- Visual approach to all examples
- Revision exercises in each chapter
- Textboxes explain how a question is approached
- 'Post-it' note remind student of important terms or concepts
- Answers to all questions included
- Free Teacher's CD Rom

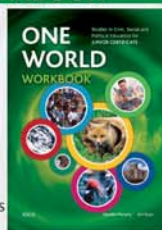


ONE WORLD WORKBOOK

Junior Certificate CSPE

Deirdre Murphy · Jim Ryan

- A new and engaging workbook, for use in class or at home
- Devotes a whole section of questions to each of the 7 concepts in the syllabus
- Revision and exam-focused questions throughout
- Attractive design, including pictures and artwork
- Covers the entire Junior Certificate syllabus



BUSINESS TODAY REVISED EDITION

Leaving Certificate Business Ordinary & Higher Level

Pat McLaughlin & Peter Caulwell

- A revised text, covering all examinable material
- New user-friendly, full-colour design
- Exam-focused questions including actual SEC 2006 questions
- Up-to-date and relevant case studies with relevant web-links
- A bank of ten additional Applied Business Questions (Abq's)
- Chapter Review Diagrams
- Mini-summaries of key points are provided in the page margins



POETRY NOTES 2009

Leaving Certificate English Higher Level

Patrick Murray · Kevin McDermott · Mary Slattery

- Attractive layout with clear and helpful commentaries
- A Snapshot of each poet
- Detailed discussion of each poem: theme; argument; imagery; poetic method and voice
- Detailed and thought-provoking exploration of each poem's themes and techniques
- Exam-style questions and viewpoints of critics provided

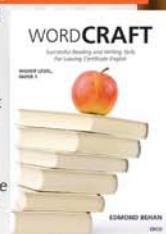


WORD CRAFT

Leaving Certificate English Higher Level

Edmond Behan

- A new and exciting full-colour language book
- Covers all aspects of the Leaving Certificate English, Higher Level, Paper 1
- Essential for strengthening students' reading and writing skills
- Deals with grammar and language use
- A variety of different language use is provided throughout the text
- Exam tips included



TODAY'S WORLD CORE TEXT REVISED EDITION

Leaving Certificate Geography

Liam Ashe · Kieran McCarthy

- Revised and fully up-to-date, student and teacher-friendly text
- Full-colour packed with maps, diagrams, and satellite images
- Covers the three core units
- Exam questions at the end of each chapter
- Additional key questions are provided to facilitate revision and homework
- Updated with the latest statistics and case studies
- Extensive glossary and new and improved diagrams



SOUNDS GOOD!

Junior Certificate Music

Mary McFadden · Katherine Kearns

- A well illustrated full-colour text
- Covering the 3 key skills: Composing, Listening and Performing
- All musical concepts and skills are approached from a basic starting point
- A broad range of new choice songs and works, with original recordings
- Examples of completed General Studies
- 2 Free CDs include choice songs, choice works and general study examples
- **New Sounds Good Workbook** and CD
- The **Set Works** and **Set Songs (Set A & Set B)** are provided in separate books with accompanying CD's

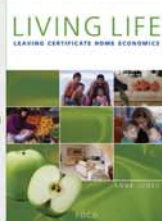


LIVING LIFE

Leaving Certificate Home Economics Ordinary & Higher Level

Anne Jones

- A comprehensive, user-friendly textbook with clear and vibrant full-colour
- New topics explained in detail with practical examples
- Chapter summaries and revision and exam-based questions
- Colour coded for ease of reference and cross-referencing
- A separate Recipe Section - processes and properties are highlighted
- Food Tables and relevant Website links provided
- The textbook is accompanied by a **Free Workbook**



BAC SUPÉRIEUR

Leaving Certificate French Higher Level

Brian Lenehan · Marie Lenehan

- Practical, exam-based approach
- All sections of the exam paper covered
- Sample answers and useful sentences
- Sections include useful hints and tips
- Grammar section with new and varied practice sentences
- Free Student's CD, Teacher's CD's and Script



BAC ORDINAIRE

Leaving Certificate French Ordinary Level

Brian Lenehan · Marie Lenehan

- Practical, exam-based approach to Ordinary Level Course
- Covers all sections of the exam paper
- Sample answers and useful sentences
- Hints and tips provided in each section
- Grammar section includes new and varied practice sentences
- Free Student's CD, Teacher's CD's & script



BIEN DIT

Leaving Certificate French Oral Examination

Mairtin Ó Cathasaigh

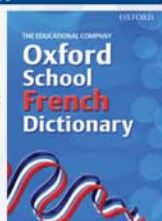
- Revision Notes for the Oral Exam
- Exam section with tips for the four component skills
- 18 topics and 8 current issues with vocabulary and expressions
- Sample questions and answers
- Listening exercises and practice questions
- Tips, vocabulary and sample documents
- Free CDs and Teacher's script



FRENCH OXFORD SCHOOL DICTIONARY

The Educational Company of Ireland

- Compact and up-to-date for students of all levels
- User-friendly clear layout with French verbs numbered throughout
- Hundreds of examples, phrases, and idioms
- Packed full of modern vocabulary and Grammar Notes

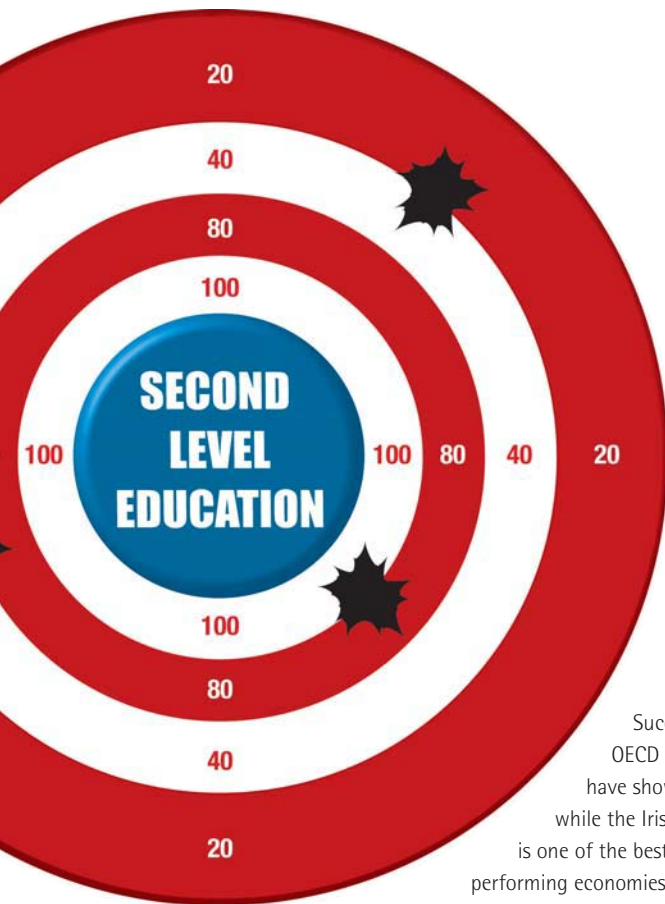


The Educational Company of Ireland

Contact your local representative or telephone Edco on (01) 4500611 or email: info@edco.ie to reserve your free inspection copy

NEW PUBLICATIONS 2007

Election 2007 – three questions for the political parties



We have one of the best performing economies in the world, yet our second-level education system is grossly underfunded. In the run-up to Election 2007, ASTIR sent three questions to the major political parties, and to the Independent Alliance group of TDs. JOHN WHITE introduces their responses.

Successive OECD reports have shown that while the Irish economy is one of the best performing economies in the world, Irish second-level education is not

funded in a way that reflects our economic wealth.

The latest OECD report, 'Education at a Glance 2006', puts Ireland 29th out of 30 OECD countries when it comes to investment in each second-level student relative to GDP per capita. When calculated using GNP per capita, Ireland comes 24th out of 30 OECD countries.

The ASTI is undertaking a campaign to put the issue of underfunding of second-level education on the political agenda in the run-up to this year's general election. Despite under-investment in second-level education, OECD PISA research shows Irish second-level students coming near the top of the international league in literacy skills tests, and performing above average and average in science and maths tests, respectively. How long can we expect high standards of teaching and learning to continue if schools and teachers are continuously exasperated by poor resources and inadequate funding?

The ASTI has identified the underfunding of second-level education, and the consequent problems of large class sizes and inadequate resources for special needs education, as the main concerns among second-level teachers. The union is seeking to create awareness of these concerns

among politicians, parents and the wider public. We are asking all members to become involved in a nationwide lobby of politicians and their canvassers as they visit neighbourhoods and knock on doors seeking votes. User-friendly material for lobbying politicians will be distributed to every member in the coming weeks. It will include useful facts about Irish second-level education, which you can raise with your local politicians.

As part of the ASTI's General Election campaign, ASTIR has asked the main political parties to answer key questions in relation to second-level education and to outline their plans for the future of the Irish second-level education sector. The replies, which we have printed in full, demonstrate that the political parties do acknowledge the case for increased investment in our schools. Reduced class sizes, more teachers, better IT infrastructure, additional special needs resources, and improved professional support for teachers are just some of the objectives expressed by the various respondents.

The run-up to a general election is an opportune time to put pressure on politicians and political parties to identify their true priorities and to make specific commitments for the future. We are urging all members to use every opportunity to ensure that the voice of the second-level teacher is heard during Election 2007.

The message is simple: We have an education service to be proud of. But if we are to offer a world-class second-level education to all of our young people, then Ireland's political leaders must do more to support our schools, teachers and, most importantly, our students.



QUESTION

1 The most recent figures available on class size at junior cycle level show that approximately 30,000 vibrant adolescents are in classes of 30 pupils or more, and a further 95,000 are in classes of 25 to 30 pupils. What are your plans to reduce large classes?

QUESTION

2 What measures would you take to ensure that the mainstreaming of pupils with special education needs in second-level schools is successful?

QUESTION

3 Ireland comes 29th out of 30 OECD countries in terms of investment per second-level student relative to GDP per capita. In government, how would you seek to redress this situation?



Fianna Fail

Minister for Education and Science
– *Mary Hanafin TD*

In government, Fianna Fail has ensured that education is at the forefront of our investment priorities. We have continued to invest in our teachers, our children's education and schools throughout the country.

Spending on second-level education has increased dramatically in the past five years, up from €2 billion in 2002 to over €3.2 billion this year. This increase in funding has continued despite numbers of second-level pupils continuing to decrease each year over the past decade.

The increases provided by this government have allowed for major progress to be made both in the staffing and in the day-to-day funding of our schools. With the record increases provided to schools this year, a typical voluntary secondary school with 500 pupils is getting almost €300,000 in day-to-day funding.

Significant improvements have also been made in the staffing of our second-level schools in recent years. With the creation of over 2,000 additional posts and the retention of over 2,100 posts, which would otherwise have been lost due to the fall in enrolments, there is now one teacher for every 13 students at second level.

In looking at investing in our schools we should take great pride in the fact that international studies – such as PISA – show our second-level students performing very well in a number of key areas. Each year, our Leaving Cert students show the results of their own efforts and the commitment of their teachers, with grades in core subjects improving over the years.

I will continue to prioritise resources for those who most need them across the education sector, including pupils with special educational needs, and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, as well as ensuring that more of our students stay in formal education to the Leaving Certificate, and beyond into further education, third and fourth level.

Funding is also prioritised for areas such as curriculum reform, the introduction of technology subjects, investment in ICT, and continuing professional development and supports for teachers.

We are determined to tackle the challenges that face us in the future, to enable our people, through education, to reach new heights. I want to ensure that our second-level education continues to give all students the foundation they need to live happy and fulfilled lives and play their part in shaping the Ireland of tomorrow.



Fine Gael

Spokesperson for Education
– *Olwyn Enright TD*

Ireland is changing, and nowhere is this more obvious than in the classroom. Schools face new challenges, and Fine Gael will empower them to deliver the best possible education to our young people.

Decrepit buildings remain in place – on lists for years – and change happens at a snail's pace. Fine Gael will

reform the building programme, introduce transparency and devolve power to schools to plan for their future.

In tackling indiscipline, teachers have had one hand tied behind their backs. Fine Gael wants real change – legislative, enhanced resources, behaviour contracts, parent and peer involvement, a network of new schools – to allow schools to deal with behaviour problems.

Schools face problems with drugs and alcohol. We will assist schools that voluntarily choose to introduce random drug and alcohol testing, by resourcing their decision. Reform in curriculum and assessment is overdue. Fine Gael has published detailed proposals regarding the teaching of Maths, Science and ICT, and called for reform in Irish language education. These initiatives will also require an increase in teacher numbers to allow for greater subject choice. The challenges posed by immigration are not being addressed and language support is insufficient. We will reform the rules for sanctioning English language teachers.

Fine Gael will reform the building programme, introduce transparency and devolve power to schools to plan for their future.

In many cases, mainstreaming education for young people with special needs is appropriate, but it will only work if supports are in place. No child should wait more than one school term for access to an educational psychologist, and necessary assistance should follow without delay. Also, supports allocated to a sixth class child should follow through to second level where they are needed. To address these issues, schools need greater funding. Fine Gael will establish a Schools Excellence Fund of €100 million. This will be made available directly to schools to implement their own strategies in tackling problems like literacy and numeracy difficulties, absenteeism and early school leaving.

I know from visiting schools that many have initiatives in place, some without any direct funding, which are helping to keep young people in school and improve their education. We will fund locally developed initiatives, support new thinking in how we approach problems and recognise that those at the coalface – teachers – are often best placed to devise new strategies.



The Labour Party

Spokesperson for Education
– Jan O'Sullivan TD

The Labour Party recognises the central role education has in our society and our economy, and will make it a priority in government. That is why we are committed to restoring spending on education as a percentage of our national wealth to the level it was at in the mid-90s, to bring us up to OECD norms.

We believe that the best way to counteract the growing trend towards fee-paying schools is to properly resource schools that are open to all children. Second level has been the most neglected sector in recent years and the most under-funded relative to other comparable countries. Considering that Ireland comes 29th out of 30 OECD countries in its investment per second-level student relative to GDP per capita, it is a great tribute to schools, teachers and students that we perform so well in international comparisons of standards of achievement.

Integrating a child with special needs into a school should not be a struggle or an ongoing frustration for all concerned.

But the cracks are most definitely showing and urgent resources and reform are needed if we are to respond to the needs of all students. We will invest in second-level schools by way of increased capitation, reduction in class sizes and accelerating the building programme. We are equally committed to investing in the educational experience for students and teachers, including curriculum reform, accompanied by training and support for teachers. Integrating a child with special needs into a school should not be a struggle or an ongoing frustration for all concerned. If the intention of the EPSEN Act was properly implemented, supports would be automatically provided in accordance with the education plan for each child, and a smooth transfer of resources would follow him or her from primary to post-primary level. What actually happens is that the principal of the second level school and the child's parents have to fight to put supports in place, which should be there from the start. The Labour Party stands for equality of opportunity for all and we have committed ourselves to provide the resources and supports to integrate children with learning-support needs into second-level schools and to fund the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) so that it can provide a comprehensive service to schools across the country.



Progressive Democrats

Spokesperson for Education
– Senator John Minihan

The Progressive Democrats' policies are focussed on ensuring excellence in education. This is fundamental not only to Ireland's economic success but also to ensuring that we create a level playing field for all of our citizens to attain their full potential, and to enable them to make a real

contribution to Irish society. Our election manifesto will build on progress made in the last 10 years to deliver a system of education that is committed to and capable of ensuring that each child achieves his/her full potential.

In terms of funding, €5 billion will be allocated to develop our schools' infrastructure, general school services, and information and communications technology in schools. This will help to maintain Ireland's excellent record in terms of spending per student. As spend vs. GDP is not an appropriate measure in terms of our education spending – groups like CORI make this point – it is more useful to say that we will build upon our record of increasing spending on each second-level student to €6,788 in 2004, a rise of 90% in real terms on the level in 1994. In fact, when spending per capita is adjusted to GNP, as is more appropriate for Ireland, we are at or about the OECD average. We want to build on that.

Though the pupil-teacher ratio declined from 16.7 to 13.6 between 1994 and 2004, my party continues to be concerned about large class sizes. We believe it is correct to direct resources to areas of disadvantage and towards those with special needs in the first instance. Nevertheless we are looking closely at how to improve the system for allocating teachers to schools, perhaps utilising some rolling timeframe where current and projected demand are factored in. We will also consider how teacher allocation could better reflect the age profile of students.

Our manifesto will no doubt reflect our determination to focus investment on speeding up the assessment and resource allocation elements of the special needs process. We should build on progress to date on the integration of students with special needs into mainstream classes, with assistance and resources for students with special needs, where appropriate, associated with the individual student. The Party will also consider how best to ensure that resources and assistance for students with special needs can best support the student, while at the same time maintaining the integrity of the class as a unit.

Finally, the Progressive Democrats will continue to look at measures to improve the democratic and accountable nature of school management, with a special focus on parental input, teacher representation and an adequate voice for students from minority groups.



Green Party

Spokesperson for Education
– Paul Gogarty TD

The Green Party takes education seriously. We believe that increased targeted investment in our education system makes sense, not just in personal and societal terms, but also in economic terms. If we do not put the proper resources into education, it will cost us all dearly in the long run.

The Green Party has committed itself to investing an immediate additional €1 billion in our education system.

As a result, the Green Party has committed itself to investing an immediate additional €1 billion in our education system. This is not recycled money. It is a totally new, fully costed investment. It is a package that will be

negotiated strongly as part of any programme for government involving the Green Party after the next election. A significant proportion of this €1 billion funding has been allocated to the second-level sector. Measures include increased investment in school building and maintenance, increased capitation grants for schools and other resource-driven supports in the areas of discipline, curriculum reform, IT, school transport and school attendance.

In the key area of special educational needs we will provide additional training and resource supports for teachers to assist in the mainstreaming of pupils. We will substantially increase the number of NEPS educational psychologists. We will also create a number of integrated services mobile units, consisting of psychological and healthcare professionals who will go directly to the schools to carry out vital assessments. Taken as whole, these and other targeted measures will significantly increase the investment in education at second level.

But that is not all. We have also committed to putting extra teachers into our classrooms at the earliest opportunity. As Education Spokesperson, I have met with ASTI representatives on several occasions. It is clear from discussions that the largest single issue of concern to members is class size. Taking ASTI representations on board, the Green Party has committed itself to creating an additional 1,000 teaching posts as early as possible. A total of €37 million has been ring-fenced for this purpose to cover salary and training costs.

The Green Party's proposals are currently being rolled out as part of its '50 Steps to a Better Education System' (www.50steps.com).



Sinn Féin

Spokesperson for Education
– Sean Crowe TD

Although this state is one of the wealthiest in the world, our education expenditure lags behind almost all OECD countries. Sinn Féin proposes to increase education spending to 6% of GDP, a level similar to that in a number of successful

Scandinavian economies, and use this money to

increase capitation and develop the school building programme. We currently have some of the largest class sizes in Europe. In addition to this overcrowding, many buildings are in dire need of renovation and repair. The Government's willingness to allow schoolchildren to be accommodated in prefabs or converted toilets is unacceptable. Funding should be used to recruit more teachers, modernise school buildings and there should be co-ordination to ensure that new residential developments are provided with the necessary amount of schools.

We oppose the use of public-private partnerships to deliver new schools, which has been proven by the Comptroller Et Auditor General to be more expensive than public provision, and which hands the schools over to the private sector.

The dedication of teachers must be rewarded with fair pay and working conditions. Sinn Féin supports the payment of allowances to those teachers working in disadvantaged schools and increased funding for continuous professional development.

The Government must allocate the necessary supports to assist schools and teachers in promoting discipline in schools and ensuring a positive learning environment. Sinn Féin believes that all schools should be

accessible to students with special needs and will work for more resources for NEPS; the provision of direct supports to the child, parent and school; the adequate provision of special needs assistants; and appropriate provision of supports within mainstream classrooms for children with special needs where it is judged in the best interest.

Sinn Féin also supports the right of students to receive their education through the medium of Irish and supports progressive all-Ireland initiatives such as supporting teacher exchange schemes between the two jurisdictions on the island and harmonisation of curricula.

We would ensure that these proposals are paid for by adjusting the taxation system to ensure that the wealthy make their fair contribution, as laid out in our pre-budget submission, available on www.sinnfein.ie.



Independent Alliance

Spokesperson for Education
– Finian McGrath TD

1. First of all, it is not acceptable to have 30,000 adolescents in classes of 30 pupils or more. The country is awash with money and investment in second-level education is a priority of mine. At each level of education, pre-school, primary and secondary, Irish spending per student is below the OECD average. In spite of Ireland being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, our paltry expenditure on education – 5.2% of GNP – leaves us languishing at the bottom. The Independent TDs in the Dáil have been pushing this agenda. In our group of 10, we have four teachers. Investment in second-level education is a priority and we will continue to fight hard on the issue.

2. I am a parent of a daughter with a disability. I know at first hand the issues and I strongly support funding and extra staff for all pupils with a disability. My sister, Marie Whelan, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, is an ASTI member and works with these students. I believe they have rights and that these students should have the opportunity of all appropriate services. To be successful in mainstream education, it is essential that all children with a learning difficulty or disability have access to the back-up resources that are available. Teachers too have to be open, creative, flexible and above all professional in their work with these students. Then we all can achieve success.

3. Quite simply there is a huge need for more investment in education. Let's remind ourselves that it is the past pupils of ASTI members that have created the Celtic Tiger in this country. Education creates wealth and ends the cycle of poverty. My Independent colleagues, Marian Harkin TD MEP, and Tony Gregory TD, have been strong champions in the Dáil on second-level education. We have put ASTI members first and will continue to do so in the future. If we are re-elected, second-level education will be a major part of our programme for government. Class size, students with disabilities, educational disadvantage and funding are our key areas. A quality education service is our vision for the future. We will redress the situation by listening to ASTI members and investing in education. Let the philosophers interpret the world. Our job, as Independent members of the Oireachtas, is to change it. Respect for pupils and teachers is the way forward. Investment in education shows that you respect teachers, pupils and parents. Education that is built on equality is the future.

Science teachers need technical assistants

An independent survey, 'Implementing the Revised Junior Certificate Science Syllabus – What Teachers Said', carried out by the Educational Research Centre for the Department of Education and Science has backed the ASTI's campaign for technical laboratory assistance for science teachers. MICHEÁL O'NEILL reports.

Seventy-one percent of Junior Certificate science teachers who participated in the Educational Research Centre survey believed that not having technical assistants greatly impeded their teaching of the subject and a further 17% felt their teaching was somewhat impeded.

It is almost seven years since the Government established the Task Force on the Physical Sciences to consider Ireland's science education crisis and in particular the low numbers of young people opting to study science subjects. In its submission to the Task Force, the ASTI called for technical support for teachers. The survey, 'Implementing the Revised Junior Certificate Science Syllabus – What Teachers Said', states: "The employment of technical assistants was one of the recommendations of the Task Force on the Physical Sciences. It remains a relevant recommendation".

While the ASTI welcomed the review of the Junior Certificate Science syllabus, the revised syllabus – introduced in 2003 – involves a significant increase in mandatory practical work for students and this has resulted in unreasonable demands on science teachers.

The survey is based on questionnaires completed by 688 teachers in 163 second-level schools, administered in early 2006 to those teaching Junior Certificate in conjunction with PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). The aim of the survey was to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised Junior Certificate Science syllabus.

The survey states that the revised syllabus places greater emphasis on student investigation and practical work, designed to help students develop an understanding of science concepts as well as acquire the necessary science process skills. For the first time, 35% of students' marks in the Junior Certificate Science examination are based on their performance on two practical elements on the course.

The main published findings of the survey are:

- 56.8% of teachers indicated that they were carrying out experimental work in at least half of their lessons;
- 71% cited lack of technical support (e.g., a technical assistant) as the greatest impediment to effective science teaching;
- 52% felt that they had insufficient lab equipment;
- More than 80% felt that the revised syllabus (at least to some extent) helped students to understand science in the real world and to develop a positive attitude and curiosity about science;



- 75% were very satisfied with practical elements of the new course; and
- 63.5% reported a major increase in the amount of work involved in preparing science lessons.

In summary, the survey shows that science teachers are quite positive with regard to practical work. However, the implementation of the revised Junior Certificate Science syllabus without adequate technical support and resources for schools has hampered the effectiveness of the new syllabus.

Leaving Cert practicals

At a recent meeting, ASTI Standing Committee discussed the survey. Standing Committee members expressed serious concern about practical assessments in Leaving Certificate Science subjects. Standing Committee passed the following motion:

"That the ASTI refuse to co-operate with any proposal for practical assessment of Leaving Certificate Science until it can be established by an agreed independent body that facilities, resources and personnel have been made available in all schools offering these programmes."

'Implementing the Revised Junior Certificate Science Syllabus – What Teachers Said' was published in February 2007 and can be downloaded from www.erc.ie.



*Micheál O'Neill,
Standing Committee
Representative for Region 8.*

*Micheál teaches Science and Physics in
Good Counsel College, New Ross.*



Get more out of your SSIA Windfall

You were smart enough to take advantage of the government's Special Savings Incentive Account (SSIA) five years ago, so now you'll want to make the right decision about getting the most out of your SSIA windfall! In fact, because you've now built up a substantial amount, making the right decision this time around is even more important.

Cornmarket's SSIA Advice Service has already helped thousands of ASTI members make the most of their SSIA Windfall. Whether you want to SAVE, SPEND or PLAN, your local Cornmarket consultant can advise you on a whole range of saving and investment plans, loans & mortgages and retirement planning options - all designed specially for teachers.

Make sure you don't miss out.

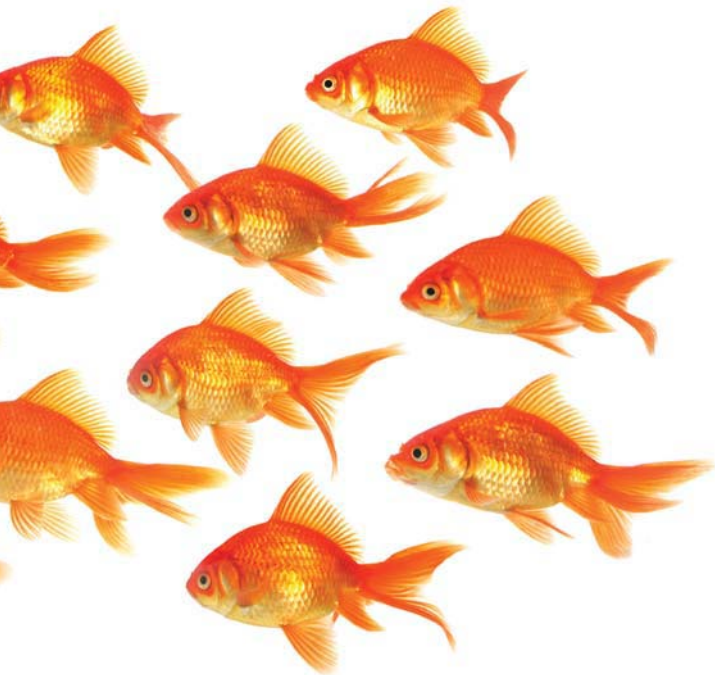
Talk to us - our door is always open
Cornmarket SSIA Advice Service 01 4084028



Christchurch Square Dublin 8.

Telephone calls may be recorded. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. is regulated by The Financial Regulator.
A member of the Irish Life & Permanent Group.

Will the reformed Section 29 of the Education Act help you in the classroom?



JOHN WHITE reviews the proposed amendments to Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998.



What is Section 29?

Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, allows parents, and students over the age of 18 years, the right to appeal decisions by a board of management in relation to suspension or permanent expulsion from a school and in relation to refusal to enrol.

ASTI survey

In March 2004, the ASTI published the results of an extensive survey on discipline in schools, which provided clear evidence that schools were experiencing serious problems caused by the behaviour of a significant minority of pupils. The findings of this survey included the fact that a majority of teachers (71%) stated that, in the current school year, they had taught classes in which some students engaged in continuous disruptive behaviour. Such behaviour was confined to a small group of students, according to 81% of teachers.

At a meeting with the Department of Education and Science in September 2004, the ASTI sought the establishment of a Commission on Student Discipline, which would analyse the problem and issue recommendations. In December 2004, the Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, announced the establishment of a Task Force on Student Behaviour. The 'Report of the Task Force on Student Behaviour in Second-Level Schools' was published in February 2006.

In a submission to the Task Force, the ASTI sought a review of Section 29 of the Education Act, 1998, to ensure a rebalancing of rights within the school community.

Rebalancing of rights

While all students are entitled to natural justice, there seems to be a perception that boards of management were now so constrained by the bureaucratic procedure of Section 29 appeals that disruptive behaviour was not being dealt with. Those involved in dealing with Section 29 appeals acted in a fair and transparent manner.

The ASTI believed that there was a need to generate a public atmosphere which recognised that the rights of the majority of well-behaved students should not be subverted by the minority of disruptive students.

In its Report, the Task Force recommended that legislation should be introduced to amend Section 29. On publication of the Task force Report, the ASTI sent a poster to school stewards requesting staff and boards of management to adopt the following proposal on student behaviour as a fundamental principle:

This school endeavours, to the greatest possible extent, to provide an appropriate education for all pupils and, in that context, the right to education of the overwhelming majority of pupils must not be subverted by a disruptive minority.

The ASTI encourages all staff members on boards of management to ensure that this motion becomes board policy.

In addition, we stated that boards of management should note that, while expulsion is a last resort and should only be used when all avenues have been exhausted, there is no legal prohibition on suspension or expulsion.



STATISTICS ON SECTION 29 APPEALS – POST-PRIMARY

Refusal	Withdrawn at hearing	Local resolution	Facilitator resolution	Upheld at hearing	Not upheld at hearing	Totals
2003	29	0	7	14	8	58
2004	27	10	20	31	30	118
2005	18	39	13	31	36	137
2006	25	8	3	30	27	93

Expulsion	Withdrawn at hearing	Local resolution	Facilitator resolution	Upheld at hearing	Not upheld at hearing	Totals
2003	3	1	8	8	14	34
2004	8	1	16	10	17	52
2005	9	1	6	10	42	68
2006	9	2	9	21	43	84

Suspension	Withdrawn at hearing	Local resolution	Facilitator resolution	Upheld at hearing	Not upheld at hearing	Totals
2003	1	0	1	2	1	5
2004	2	0	0	1	2	5
2005	3	0	0	4	4	11
2006	1	0	1	0	2	4

Interests of all students

Subsequent to the publication of the Report of the Task Force, the Minister for Education and Science gave a commitment to bring forward amending legislation, and on January 25 this year the new Bill was published. The amendment requires an appeals committee, operating under Section 29 of the Education Act, to take account, inter alia, of the educational interests of other students in the school, as well as the student who is the subject of the appeal; the maintenance of a school environment supportive of learning; the safety, health and welfare of teachers and staff; and the safety, health and welfare of other students.

The ASTI recognises that in a democratic society, pupils (and parents) are entitled to fair procedures with regard to important decisions relevant to their education.

There are also issues surrounding the bureaucracy of the conduct of appeals. The ASTI, for example, is aware of principals and teachers administering the process of appeals in the period between Christmas and the New Year. Furthermore, if a school has a number of appeals, the volume of paperwork, meetings, consultations, and conciliation and mediation sessions can be extremely burdensome. The new Bill states that

the Minister may provide by regulations that no appeal shall be heard during a specified period, being a period in the year when the schools are closed. The latest statistics on Section 29 appeals are published in the table above. The ASTI recognises that in a democratic society, pupils (and parents) are entitled to fair procedures with regard to important decisions relevant to their education. However, many teachers were of the view that society, in its efforts to cater for individual rights, had neglected the need for schools to operate in an orderly, harmonious manner. Amending Section 29 of the Education Act in the manner proposed should give support to schools who are faced with difficult behaviour in their daily attempts to provide the best possible education for all their pupils. Of course, amending Section 29 is only one of numerous initiatives that need to be taken to ensure that our schools provide the best possible education for pupils.



John White,
ASTI General Secretary.

Special educational needs

MOIRA LEYDON asks: what does the EPSEN Act mean for secondary teachers?

The integration of students with special educational needs (SEN) into mainstream education is the greatest challenge facing the education system over the next decade. The estimated number of children with special educational needs in Ireland at the moment is equivalent to 18% of all children – a total of 190,303. In this context, the publication of the 'Implementation Plan for the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act', 2004, by the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) is a seminal development in second-level education. Commenting on the publication of the Plan, the ASTI General Secretary John White said:

"The publication of this report, by the statutory body established under the EPSEN Act, places an absolute obligation on the Department of Education and Science to keep faith with special needs pupils and their parents by implementing the recommendations in the report".

The Implementation Plan presents the most comprehensive data on students with special needs to date. It also contains a detailed analysis of the system's deficiencies in meeting the needs of students and provides a package of recommendations on how best to meet the needs of these students. A core theme running through the Plan is the need to support schools: "The main thrust of our analysis points to the need to strengthen the capacity and the resources within schools so that they can respond early and quickly to the special needs of the child as they present within the school setting".

Deficiencies in the system to date

The EPSEN Act is rights based. This fundamental fact provides the context for the analysis of the system to date, which has all too often been determined by the 'resources permitting' approach. One of the Report's main criticisms is that the decision to allocate resources to assist the student with SEN is only made at Stage 3 of the NEPS (National

Educational Psychological Service) assessment model. At this stage, the child is formally assessed by external experts and, depending on the result, the child will or will not be described as having a SEN.

This model of resource allocation is problematic. Apart from the fact that schools are not given resources to assist these children in developing appropriate educational programmes at Stages 1 and 2 of the assessment model, many children fall marginally short of the current eligibility criteria and do not draw down additional resources. At primary level, some of these issues are being rectified by the availability in all schools of a special needs teacher, based on the watershed 2004 General Allocation Model. At second level the situation is critical; schools are not getting the resources to help them meet the needs of students who 'fail' to be assessed as SEN students. The NCSE Plan states that:

"In short, categories and labels may be of more benefit to professionals than to children, and by virtue of emphasising the child's deficits, may shift attention from the deficits in the capacity of the school to provide a more inclusive education".

The Plan recommends more resources to schools at the very outset of a teacher having concerns about the progress of a child and the activation of Stages 1 and 2 of the assessment model.

Is the system equitable?

The NCSE Implementation Plan states that the current system of resources only being released to the school after a formal assessment is not only inefficient but is also potentially inequitable. The highly specific nature of the assessment criteria determining if a student has a disability means that many



students at the lower end of the disability scale are not formally defined as having a disability and are, therefore, not getting any resources. Research for the NCSE found that applications for resources in respect of special learning difficulties, and speech and language disorders, are the largest categories of applications that fail to meet the criteria.

Is the system outcome-focused?

Ireland is not unique in having a system for SEN that is largely focused on resource inputs rather than the outcomes that the funding is designed to bring about. As elsewhere, the system in Ireland is described as one in which: "Efforts expended on identifying needs are not matched by similar efforts in meeting needs". The NCSE is very concerned that less attention is being given to supporting schools to meet needs, and all too often "the learning environment or the capacity of the school to meet needs is not identified" (the Plan makes the point that too little attention is given to the relationship between funding and outcomes across all areas of education). The Plan states that the focus should be on supporting the school to develop the child's capacities as distinct from their deficits as identified in the assessment process.

The estimated number of children with special educational needs in Ireland at the moment is equivalent to 18% of all children

Individual education plans

The NCSE Report estimates that every year there will be 8,800 students with special needs requiring individual education plans for the first time. According to the NCSE, the demands on schools and teachers to provide these plans will be significant. A common theme throughout the report is the additional time and resources necessary to allow teachers and schools to implement the EPSEN Act. The Report states that:

"There will be need for substantial in-service for all teachers in the process, content and use of IEPs ... each teacher will need at least two days in-service per year on inclusive education, including the IEP process".

Supports for schools

The NCSE Report is unequivocal in terms of its focus on the need to improve staffing levels in schools:

"It is the view of the Council that the staffing structures in schools must reflect the demands placed on it by legislation and increased emphasis on inclusive education including the school-based assessment and the IEP process".

The NCSE also advocates that schools adopt a team approach to meeting the needs of SEN students. Such an approach is vital so that:

"Responsibility for key actions will be undertaken by those who have the level of leadership, qualifications and competence in the provision of special education programmes".

Type of disability	No. of Children	Prevalence
Physical and Sensory Disabilities	13,035	1.21%
Intellectual/General Learning Disabilities	20,597	1.91%
(i) mild	16,141	1.50%
(ii) moderate, severe & profound	4,456	0.41%
Specific Learning Disabilities	64,562	6.00%
Autistic Spectrum Disorders	6,026	0.56%
Mental Health Difficulties	86,083	8.00%
Total	190,303	17.68%

Estimated number of children, who may have Special Educational Needs Under EPSEN Act, 2004.

Specifically, it recommends that consideration be given to the allocation of a special educational needs programme co-ordinator in schools. The ASTI has formally sought such a post in its discussions with Departmental officials.

ASTI response

The ASTI has strongly endorsed the recommendations in the NCSE's Report. The union made a comprehensive submission to the NCSE's consultation process in which it argued strongly for schools to be given more teachers to enable them to meet the needs of SEN students. Following the launch of the Report, the ASTI General Secretary said:

"The Report recognises that the education system has had to respond in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner in meeting the needs of special education pupils. It states that a fundamental re-orientation of the education system is required if the system is to have the capacity and competency to meet the challenge of providing an inclusive education. The report states explicitly that we must 'fund, resource, train, develop, build capacity and support schools for the task ahead'".

NCSE	National Council for Special Education.
EPSEN	Education for People with Special Educational Needs.
SEN	Special Educational Needs.
IEP	Individual Educational Plan.



*Moira Leydon,
Assistant General Secretary,
Education and Research.*

Confronting discrimination against teachers

MÁIRE MULCAHY provides an update on ASTI's activities in the area of equal opportunities.



The right to equal treatment for teachers with a disability, discrimination against gay and lesbian teachers, and homophobic bullying among students are just some of the issues the ASTI is highlighting in 2007. In February this year, the ASTI Equal Opportunities Committee held a training seminar for ASTI Honorary Equality Officers on promoting equal treatment for gay and lesbian teachers, and teachers with a disability. The seminar was addressed by two teachers with disabilities who are ASTI members. ASTI Assistant General Secretary Maire Mulcahy defined disability as set out in the Employment Equality Act and said that teachers with disabilities must not be excluded from the teaching profession. The partial return to work scheme and examples of reasonable accommodation by schools enable teachers with disabilities to work. The ASTI will be investigating whether the state policy of offering 3% of positions to persons with disabilities is being implemented in schools.

Cathal Kelly of the Equality Authority spoke about discriminatory practices experienced by gay and lesbian teachers. He referred to Section 37 of the Employment Equality Act, which states that a religious institution (including a school) can take action to prevent an employee or a prospective employee from undermining the religious ethos of the school. While the Equality Authority has called for an amendment of Section 37, Cathal assured teachers that the Act as it currently stands does not permit harassment of gay, lesbian or bisexual teachers. The ASTI has written to

other trade unions with members employed in religious-run institutions suggesting a campaign to amend Section 37.

Ciaran Flynn, General Secretary ACCS, outlined schools' obligations to promote equal treatment.



A group of attendees at the Equality Seminar held on February 10 (left to right): Tony Waldron; Susie Hall; Jim King; and Patricia Wroe.

2007 has been designated as European Year of Equal Opportunities for All by decision of the EU Council and European Parliament, as part of a concerted effort to promote a programme designed to ensure that discrimination is tackled effectively, diversity is celebrated and equal opportunities for all are promoted.

The Irish national strategy sets out six priority areas of activity:

- information and advocacy;
- equality mainstreaming;
- equality competence;
- equality debate;
- burning issues;
- and
- multiple discrimination.

ASTI gay, lesbian teachers' network

The first meeting of the ASTI Gay and Lesbian Equality Network took place in February in ASTI head office.

In addition to the members of the Network, the inaugural meeting was attended by: Michael Freeley, ASTI President; Maire Mulcahy, Assistant General Secretary; and representatives from the ASTI Equal Opportunities Committee and the Standing Committee.

The meeting resolved to:

- develop proposals to support gay and lesbian teachers' right to equal treatment in the workplace;
- act as a support and advice structure for gay and lesbian ASTI members;
- publicise the existence of the Network to members;
- develop a work plan and decide on a launch; and
- report to the Equal Opportunities Committee and the Standing Committee.

The right to equal treatment for teachers with a disability, discrimination against gay and lesbian teachers, and homophobic bullying among students are just some of the issues the ASTI is highlighting in 2007.

Under employment equality legislation teachers cannot be discriminated against on the following nine grounds:

- gender;
- family status;
- disability;
- race;
- membership of the Traveller community;
- marital status;
- age;
- sexual orientation;
- and
- religion.

Support for members who believe that they have been discriminated against on any of these nine grounds is available from the ASTI.

Homophobic bullying

In December 2006, an information leaflet and poster designed to challenge the attitudes and behaviour of some second-level students towards gay and lesbian students was issued to schools by the Equality Authority and the BeLong To Youth Project. This initiative was supported by the ASTI and the union has been promoting the leaflet through its publications and through its Equality Officer network. Schools are also being encouraged to display the poster.

A survey of second-level teachers, carried out by DCU and published in 2006, found that 79% of respondents were aware of instances of homophobic bullying in their schools, and 30% of these teachers had encountered homophobic bullying on more than 10 occasions.



*Maire Mulcahy,
Assistant General Secretary,
Industrial Relations.*

An Ghaeilge: cá bhfuil ár dtriall?



Tá athbheithniú ar siúl ag an gComhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta ar na Teangacha go léir sa tSraith Shinsearach. Dar ndoigh, tá aird a díriú ar an nGaeilge í ndiaidh ráitéas Enda Kenny maidir le Gaeilge a bheith ina hábhar roghnach tar éis an Teastais Sóisearaigh agus i ndiaidh an tAire Oideachais a dúirt gur bhreá léi 50% de mharcanna na Gaeilge san Ardteist a dháileadh ar chumas labhartha na ndaltaí. Féachaimis ar dtús ar na cuspóirí a bhaineann leis an Athbheithniú ginearálta seo sna teangacha go léir. Is iad na cuspóirí atá leis ná:

1. Forbairt a dhéanamh ar chumas cumarsáide na bhfoghlaimeoirí sa teanga.
2. Eolas an fhoghlaimeora faoi theanga agus cumarsáid a chur chun cinn.
3. Foghlaimeoirí a chumasú ar chonas teacht ar eolas ó réimse leathan foinsí agus an t-eolas seo a phróiseáil.
4. Eolas a chothú ar chonas teanga eile a fhoghlaim.
5. Cumas na ndaltaí a fhorbairt ar chonas na deiseanna a sholáthraíonn na teicneolaíochtaí eolais is cumarsáide a úsáid.

Tríd an bpróiseis seo go léir tugtar tosaíocht don phríomhscileanna seo a leanas:

- ag dul i mbun cumarsáide;
- ag obair le daoine eile;
- a bheith éifeachtach go pearsanta; agus
- smaointeoireacht chriticiúil agus chruthaitheach
- 'próiseálú faisnéis'.

Cuireann na habairtí seo ó thurascáil an Phríomhchigire an obair go léir atá ar siúl i gcoimhthéacs. "Go bhfuil caighdeán maith ag baint le teagasc agus le foghlaim na Gaeilge agus gur léirigh scoláirí eolas maith ar na téacsanna a bhí idir lámhá agus gur ghnóthaigh said tuiscint ar gach gné

de shiollabas na Gaeilge. Bhí na cigirí buartha, áfach, nach raibh an Ghaeilge in úsáid á theagasc go hiomlán trí Bhéarla...Mhol siad nach mór úsáid a bhaint as straitéisí measúnachta a spreagann rannpháirtíocht labhartha níos fearr ó scoláirí".

Sa chomhthéacs seo go léir chuir an Chomhairle Plépháipéar le chéile. I réamhrá an Phlépháipéir, luaitear fíric 46% de dhaltai meánscoile a deireann gurb í an Ghaeilge an t-ábhar is lú suime agus praiticiúlachta sa chóras. Is freagra é an Plépháipéar ar iarratas an Aire athstruchtúr a dhéanamh ar sholáthar na Gaeilge sna scoileanna ag díriú go mór ar an gcaint. An meon a bhí taobh thiar den cháipéis go léir ná an Ghaeilge a bheith mar thionscadal poiblí (public project). Sa mhéid sin táthar ag iarraidh go bhféachfar ar Ghaeilge mar theanga agus ní mar ábhar. D'fhéadfaí go muintí ábhair eile trí Ghaeilge. Tá súil go bhfeicfean an Ghaeilge mar rud a bhaineann le pobal na scoile go léir agus nach rud a thosaíonn agus a chríochnaíonn laistigh den rang Gaeilge.

Is é príomhholadh an Phlépháipéir ná go mbeadh ceithre rang/réimniú ag an nGaeilge san Ardteist. Is iad san ná:

- Ardleibhéal 1 – T1;
- Ardleibhéal 2 – T2;
- Gnáthleibhéal; agus
- Bonnleibhéal.

D'eascair an moladh chuig ceithre shiollabas as: "the recognition that the current provision of single syllabuses even differentiated into three levels is a contributory factor to the current difficulties associated with the subject".

Nuair a céadluadh an dá chúrsa ardleibhéil ag an gCoiste Gaeilge deiridh ba léir míshástacht na mball. Níor thuigeamar conas a chuirfí an dá leibhéal sin i bhfeidhm anuas ar dhá leibhéal eile. Níor léir an mbeadh breis pointí ag dul don chúrsa ardleibhéil I-TI. Cuireadh béim ar mí-phraicticúlacht an mholadh.

Ach chuir baill an Cheardchumainn seo ár míshástacht in iúl maidir leis an moladh seo a chiallódh go mbfhéidir go mbeifeá ag plé le trí ghrúpa in aon rang. i Ardleibhéal 1, Ardleibhéal 2 agus Gnáthleibhéal. Chun bheith macánta níl fhios agam conas a éireoidh leis na moltaí seo mar feictear an-chuid deacrachtaí iontu.

Séard a bheadh i gceist ag an mBonnleibhéal ná cúrsa do thosaitheoirí. De réir mar a fheicimse féin é bheadh an cúrsa seo áisiúil mar chuirfeadh sé iachall ar dhaltáí nár rugadh in Éirinn freastal ar ranganna na Gaeilge. Freisin bhainfeadh sé brú de údaráis scoile a bhíonn faoi ionsaí uaireanta ag mic léinn a bhíonn ag iarraidh éirí as an nGaeilge ar fad. Chiallódh an bunleibhéal seo go mbeadh gach éinne ó phobal na scoile ag déanamh staidéir ar an nGaeilge. Fágann sin an Gnáthleibhéal. Bheadh deacracht anseo sa mholadh nua mar toisc go mbeadh tosaitheoirí ag déanamh an Bhonnleibhéil nua, chiallódh sin go mbeadh lucht an Bhonnleibhéil reatha ag dul ar aghaidh chun an Gnáthleibhéal a dhéanamh. An gciallódh sin go mbeadh an Gnáthleibhéal nua níos éasca ná an ceann atá againn faoi láthair?

Aithníonn an Plépháipéar seo an tábhacht a bhaineann le forbairt ghairmiúil na múinteoirí. Chuige sin theastódh infheistiú ón Roinn. Ach tá an infheistiú sin á lorg le fada an lá.

An eagla is mó atá orm faoin athbheithnín ná go dtabharfaí isteach na hathraithe atá molta in ainneoin an mhíshástachta í measc na múinteoirí ar an Coiste Gaeilge. Ba chóir go mbeadh níos mó dispóireacht a mbeadh leis an gCoiste faoi an Phlépháipéar. Sa mhéid seo déanann an Plépháipéar tagairt do thacaíocht don teanga labhartha sa scrúdú teistiméireachta. Caitheadh na scrúduithe: "encourage and foster language acquisition rather than language practice and rote learning by targeting the ability to use language spontaneously in previously unheard contexts". Chun é seo a dhéanamh bhéadh sé thar a bheith tábhachtach béim a chur ar an teanga labhartha sa Teastas Sóisearach. Ach aithníonn an Plépháipéar dhá mhórfhadhb leis seo:

1. Níl an cumas ag na scoileanna faoi láthair scrúduithe cainte ar bhonn na hArdteiste a chur ar siúl sa Teastas Sóisearach.
2. Ní sholáthraíonn an scrúdú cainte céanna a dhóthain deiseanna chun solúbthacht a léiriú sa chomhrá. Chun teacht timpeall ar an dá fhadhb sin moltar feidhm a bhaint as an nuatheicneolaíocht, go cruinn an fón póca! Nach brónach an réiteach é!

Tá sé feicthe anois go bhfuil an-chuid amhrais orm faoi thodcháí mhúineadh na Gaeilge. Tosaígi ag léamh an Phlépháipéir! Cuirigi céisteanna! Ná glacaigi leis na moltaí sa Phlépháipéar gan é a bheith léite agaibh!

Scríobhadh an t'alt seo roimh fhógairt an Aire Oideachas suntasacha i comhréir na marcanna a bhronnfar le haghaidh labhairt an Gaeilge i scrúdú Teastais Shóisearaigh agus is scrúdu na hArdteistiméireachta.



Robbie O'Croinin

Tá Robbie O'Croinin ag múineadh in Coláiste Mhuire, Cois Abhan i nDroichead na Dothra. Tá sé mar Ionadaí an Cheardchumann ar an CNCM.

Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013

The new Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission offers funding for a range of activities for schools and teachers.



léargas

These include:

Comenius In-Service Training

training for staff involved in school education
Deadlines: 31st May and 31st October 2007

Comenius School Partnerships

pupils, students and staff from schools across Europe working together on joint projects

Hosting a Comenius Assistant

encouraging intercultural awareness and language learning

The European Award for Languages

rewarding work in the areas of language teaching, learning and practice

European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz

providing opportunities for language teachers



If you are interested in finding out more about these or any other activities under the new Lifelong Learning Programme, please contact us at:

Léargas, 189 Parnell Street, Dublin 1 (01) 873 1411 education@leargas.ie
Or check out our website at: www.leargas.ie/education



Is there a case for mentoring in our schools?

BRIDIE CORKERY explains how mentoring can benefit both new and experienced teachers, as well as ultimately improving the way students are taught.



At the ASTI Educational Conference in November 2006, Dr Meave Martin, Chair of the Task Force on Student Behaviour, said: "Young people today are navigating lives that are more appropriate for adults than for adolescents. This poses enormous challenges for schools". Dr Martin went on to say that there is an "increased autonomy amongst young people and changing expectations and aspirations of parents and other adults". Added to these new challenges is the continuous change and updating of the curriculum, much of which is initiated by teachers. Amid all this change there is now national recognition that ongoing support of the teaching profession is necessary, although the way forward has not yet been found.

Mentoring is concerned with the personal as well as professional development of the new teacher.

Mentoring and the new teacher

Planned mentoring within a school provides in-school training, support and guidance. It also encourages reflection in practice. Mentoring is not a

new concept in ongoing teacher training. There are many examples of successful mentoring in Canada, the US and in Europe. In Ireland the Lucent Science Teacher Initiative pilot study in the University of Limerick has resulted in a new pathway of accreditation in mentoring being offered for the first time this year. The National Pilot Project on Teacher Induction, based on mentoring, is being run by University College Dublin and the Department of Education and Science in collaboration with the University of Limerick, National University of Ireland, Galway and University College Cork.

Mentoring is concerned with the personal as well as professional development of the new teacher. Mentoring relationships enable teachers to cope with change and also enable change within teaching. Mentors and mentees create new knowledge about teaching as they interact together and this knowledge also leads to change. Through continued involvement, support, guidance, assistance and reassurance, the person who is facing new challenges, working in unfamiliar or new surroundings, going through a difficult period or working to correct earlier problems can be guided to ease them through the transition.

Whole school approach

The issue of teaching and learning is a complex one, for those who have been teaching over a period of time, as well as for those who are new to the job. In this climate of multiple changes in education, it is unrealistic to expect that one person can adequately address the complex issue of training or mentoring new teachers. There is need for a co-ordinated approach to allow for input from general 'experts' and collaborative management. Training of teachers is an active process of learning, involving a number of parties. Mentoring is based on practical experience. While it aims to support beginner teachers in reflecting on their job and their development as teachers, it also encourages those involved in the mentoring to reflect on their own practices. Whole school involvement in mentoring means moving together in a reflective, valuing and co-ordinated way. Mentoring becomes part of the fabric of the school. New teachers can often bring a valuable perspective to a familiar problem that may not have been possible before. Because they come from a different working context, sometimes they can see a way forward in an objective way, which teachers within the school find difficult to achieve.

Teachers bring a wealth of skills and understanding into teaching, and it is important to harness the energies of the staff in order to promote the educational purpose of the activity and to advance reflective practice within subject departments.

Experienced teacher

Involvement in mentoring can provide advantages for subject departments. While the overall process of mentoring is co-ordinated by one experienced teacher, the concept of mentoring should be shared across the school and within subject departments. Teachers bring a wealth of skills and understanding into teaching, and it is important to harness the energies of the staff in order to promote the educational purpose of the activity and to advance reflective practice within subject departments. It is essential to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom is central to any activity that happens in the school. If we want to raise the standard of teaching among our trainee teachers, and the achievements of the students, it will necessitate staff opening their teaching up to scrutiny, and this can be done in a non-

threatening way within the process of mentoring. We can look critically at why we do what we do, and see whether it is as relevant now as when we started to do it. Is it time to change and are there better ways of doing what we do?

While being observed and questioned closely about one's practice in the classroom can be challenging, mentoring gives an opportunity to experienced teachers to review their practice and it enables them to develop as professional educators. It changes not only the outlook of the mentee but also the outlook of the mentor, or any other experienced teacher who is a member of the mentoring team. Collaborative subject planning is now a feature of most second-level schools and this is the ideal opportunity to incorporate mentoring into each department. For staff, experience of change is individually threatening and disconcerting, however, when a team of teachers takes control of this change it can be both invigorating and worthwhile. If successful, mentoring can bring a sense of self worth that enhances well-being in a profession where praise is rare.

Networking and leadership

I believe that mentoring has a pivotal role to play in the ongoing training and professional development of teachers. Strength lies in collaboration. Today most innovation is in the activity of networked teams, not individuals. Mentoring provides support not only for the new/student teacher, it also provides an opportunity whereby teachers within a department support and invigorate each other, as a team. In the 21st Century, it is time for experienced teachers to be leaders in educational areas as well as in administrative areas. A school should be a haven and a nurturing ground for developing life-long learning skills and academic potential – not just among pupils but among staff members also. Mentoring encourages, nurtures and supports this culture.



Bridie Corkery

Bridie Corkery teaches French and English in St Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary. Bridie is currently completing year one of a three-year taught Masters in Educational Mentoring in the University of Limerick.

Concessionary post teachers reinstated

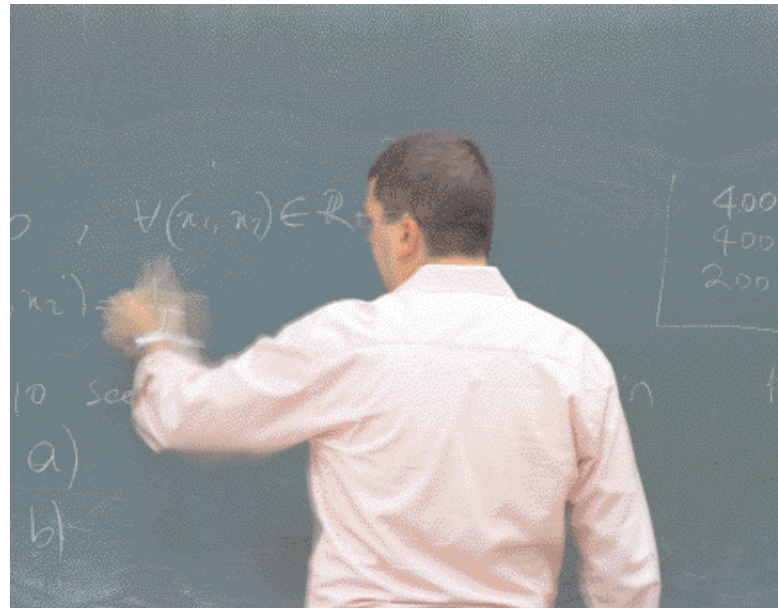
The ASTI has recently achieved reinstatement for two teachers who were dismissed from their teaching positions in September 2005. BERNARD MOYNIHAN, who was involved, outlines the cases, which took place recently.

The ASTI recently achieved reinstatement for two teachers who were eligible for contracts of indefinite duration (CIDs) but were instead dismissed by their school managements. Reinstatement means that the teacher can resume the teaching position he/she held before their dismissal, and it means that he/she is entitled to any income lost between the time of the dismissal and the time of reinstatement. It is the best possible outcome in any case referred to the Rights Commissioner.

The value of a CID is that it is a permanent position and thus, in the event of that teaching position becoming redundant, the holder is eligible for redeployment.

Concessionary hours

The two cases have huge significance for teachers who may be working in schools that are over quota or depend on Department of Education concessionary teaching hours. An ASTI survey carried out in 2003 found that 18% of non-permanent teaching posts included concessionary teaching hours. In both cases the schools maintained that the teachers could not be offered a CID because their posts were based on concessionary hours sanctioned by the Department of Education and Science on an annual basis. In both cases the teachers concerned contacted ASTI Head Office and they were advised to pursue their cases through the Unfair Dismissals Act and the Fixed Term Workers Act. The judgements mean approximately €40,000 and €60,000, respectively, in back pay to the teachers concerned. In one case, a teacher who had worked in a school for seven years was told that their current contract of employment would terminate on August 31, 2005. The school stated that the teacher had been employed on a fixed-term contract and that the termination arose from a reduction in the Department of Education concessionary hours for the school year 2005/2006. The school stated that it was five teachers over



quota. The ASTI argued that since the teacher had been employed on a continuous basis for a number of years, the contract was not in fact fixed term, as the final contract before termination did not contain an end date and was thus not a fixed purpose contract. The teacher had protection under the terms of both the Unfair Dismissals Acts 1977-2001, and the Protection of Employees (Fixed Term Work) Act, 2003. The teacher should, therefore, have been offered a CID by the school. The value of a CID is that it is a permanent position and thus, in the event of that teaching position becoming redundant, the holder is eligible for redeployment.

"In all circumstances of this case I find that the claim is well founded and that the claimant was unfairly dismissed," stated the Rights Commissioner, who concluded that the teacher should be reinstated in accordance with the provisions of the Unfair Dismissals Acts. In another case, a teacher who was employed in a school on 13 fixed-term contracts between 1992 and 2005 found that their final contract was terminated with effect from August 2005. The school stated that it had no authority to offer the teacher a CID in September 2004, as the number of teachers in the school was in excess of the school's teaching staff quota at the time and the teacher's post was dependent on concessionary hours. The Rights Commissioner instructed the school (a) to reinstate the teacher with effect from September 2005, and (b) to deem the teacher to have had a CID since September 2004.



Bernard Moynihan,
Executive Officer: Industrial Relations, ASTI.

Carer's leave

The ASTI's Industrial Relations Team answers questions on carer's leave.

I am looking at care options for my parent.

How does carer's leave work?

Carer's leave is temporary unpaid leave from work to personally provide full-time care and attention to a person who is medically certified as being in need of such care. Only one person can avail of carer's leave for the purpose of providing full-time care and attention to a person.

To be eligible for carer's leave, a teacher must have worked for a period of one continuous year with the school/VEC. This condition may be waived only in exceptional circumstances and subject to the educational and welfare needs of the pupils. Where a teacher has been appointed for a fixed-term and subsequently avails of carer's leave, the leave shall not extend beyond the day on which the fixed-term contract expires.

Who decides if my parent is in need of full-time care?

The person receiving care must first be deemed by the Department of Social and Family Affairs to be in need of full-time care and attention. The teacher seeking carer's leave must first make an application on the prescribed Department of Social and Family Affairs form (CARB1), which can be obtained from the Carer's Benefit Section of the Department of Social and Family Affairs (Tel: 043-45211 or 01-7043000, Ext. 48787).

According to the Department of Social and Family Affairs, full-time care and attention means that the person must be so disabled as to require:

- continuous supervision and frequent assistance throughout the day in connection with his/her normal personal needs, e.g., help to walk and get about, eat or drink, bathe, dress, etc.; or
- continuous supervision in order to avoid danger to him/herself.

How long is carer's leave?

The maximum period of carer's leave allowable to care for one person is 65 weeks of unpaid leave. The minimum statutory entitlement that may be taken in one period is 13 weeks. Teachers shall have the option of either taking carer's leave as one continuous period of 65 weeks or taking one or more periods, the total duration of which amounts to no more than 65 weeks. Where carer's leave is not taken in one continuous period of 65 weeks there must be a gap of at least six weeks between the periods taken. Applications for carer's leave for less than the statutory 13 weeks will be considered on their merit and approved where possible, having regard to the capacity of the school to meet the educational and welfare needs of the pupils and the number of periods of carer's leave already taken by the teacher in the school year.

When should I inform my school?

A teacher seeking carer's leave should notify his/her board of management/VEC at least six weeks prior to the proposed commencement date of the carer's leave. The standard application form, available from the



school principal, the Department of Education and Science or the VEC, must be filled in and submitted, stating that an application has been submitted to the Department of Social and Family Affairs seeking a decision that the person to be cared for requires full-time care and attention. When the decision of the deciding officer (or appeals officer) of the Department of Social and Family Affairs has been received, a copy of this decision must be given to the board of management/VEC immediately.

Am I entitled to any social welfare payment while on carer's leave?

Teachers may qualify for either Carer's Benefit or Carer's Allowance.

Carer's Benefit is a payment for those with social insurance who have recently left the workforce and are looking after certain people in need of full-time care and attention. You can get Carer's Benefit for a total of two years for each person you are caring for. You can claim it for a continuous period of two years or for discontinuous periods adding up to two years. To apply, complete the relevant application form (CARB1), which can be obtained from the Carer's Benefit Section, Department of Social and Family Affairs (Tel: 043-45211 or 01-7043000, Ext. 48787). You should apply for Carer's Benefit 10 weeks before you intend to leave employment so that the Department of Social and Family Affairs has enough time to check that you qualify and to deal with your claim.

Carer's Allowance is a payment for carers who look after certain people in need of full-time care and attention. There is a means test for payment of Carer's Allowance. You can apply for Carer's Allowance by completing the application form CR1, which can be obtained from the Carer's Benefit Section, Department of Social and Family Affairs (Tel: 043-405211 or 01-7043000, Ext. 48787).

Please be sure to read the full text of the ASTI information leaflet, 'Carer's Leave for Second-Level Teachers' and the Department of Education and Science Circular Letter PPT 17/03 when considering applying for carer's leave. Both publications are available on the ASTI website – www.asti.ie.

Protect your future, protect your pension

BERNADINE O’SULLIVAN outlines the challenges faced by teachers in retaining their pension entitlements, and the work of the ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee on this issue.

Pensions Sub-Committee

The ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee was established in accordance with the following motion, adopted by the Special Convention on Pensions held on October 2, 2004: “That this special convention elect a sub-committee which will monitor the impact of changes to the pensions of teachers. Said sub-committee will report to Annual Convention 2005 with recommendations as to appropriate responses to any change which will adversely affect the pensions of teachers and will be re-elected biennially as and from Annual Convention 2006”.

Operating principle

The Pensions Sub-Committee decided at its first meeting, as its operating principle, that the secondary teachers’ superannuation scheme should be safeguarded against attempts to diminish its value to members. Pension is deferred pay and, as such, members are entitled to the full benefits of the scheme.

The three strands

There was concern that the three-strand early retirement scheme negotiated under the PCW agreement was a pilot scheme and was due for review. The committee was adamant that this scheme be continued and welcomed the recent extension of the scheme for a further two years. However, constant vigilance must be maintained to ensure that the scheme continues.

A two-tier pension scheme

Another catalyst for the calling of the Special Convention on Pensions was the establishment of the two-tier pension scheme for teachers. Since April 1, 2004, new entrants to the profession cannot access full pension until age 65. What this means, in effect, is that even if a teacher has full contributions made at age 62 he or she cannot draw a full pension at that time! A financial penalty will be imposed for drawing a pension three years earlier than the retirement age of 65. The Public Service Commission on Pensions had recommended that the minimum retirement age for new entrants would be 65, and the Public Service Superannuation Act, 2004, was enacted to bring this about. It was a condition of Sustaining Progress that any changes in public service pensions decided by the Government would be implemented as quickly as possible. It is worrying that this reduction of entitlement to pension for new entrants to the profession was executed without any public debate. The report of the Pensions Sub-Committee to Annual Convention recommends the reinstatement of lost pension entitlements to those appointed after April 1, 2004.

Core pay and non-core pay

The other danger facing the maintenance of the pension is the concept of core pay increases, which are pensionable and so will be reflected in pensions, and non-core pay, which will not be reflected in pensions. The Public Service Commission on Pensions recommended that “an increasing proportion of pay be non-core and non-pensionable”. In line with this policy:

- the Long-Service Allowance payable after 10 years of service on the maximum point of the scale, which was part of the revised Teachers’ PWC agreement in 1996, was not reflected in the pensions of retired teachers;
- under the terms of the re-negotiated PPF in 2002 a once-off payment of 1% was awarded, but it was non-core and so non-pensionable;
- and
- teachers who were already in receipt of a pension did not have the payments for supervision/substitution, awarded under the Voluntary Supervision and Substitution Scheme agreed in 2003, reflected in their pensions.

The principle of pension parity – that the pension of a retired member will be half the salary of a serving teacher who has the same service, qualifications, allowances and posts – is being seriously challenged.

Benchmarking and pensions

At our January CEC meeting it was reported that this year the Benchmarking Body would take into account our pension entitlements in calculating the size of pay award we should receive. This already happened during the first benchmarking exercise – consideration of our conditions of work and pension entitlements was used to reduce the size of our award. Public service salaries have always been discounted to take account of pension entitlements. Given



Pensions Sub-Committee, pictured at a recent meeting (left to right): Mike Moriarty; Bernadine O’Sullivan; Dan Healy; Louis O’Flaherty; and Jane Craig Elliot.

that teachers have a 10% claim lodged with the Benchmarking Body, it will be interesting to see if a deduction will be made for pension entitlement this time. As was already pointed out at the CEC meeting, since our pension entitlements have already been factored into the last benchmarking award, there should be no reason for this to be done again.

Pensions under pressure

As Jim O'Brien asked in his excellent article 'Managerialism in Teaching: More for Less' (*ASTIR* January/February 2007; 25 (1): 18-19): "What else could happen the job you once had?" On looking at what has already happened we can see that:

- in a salary review, the size of the award granted has been reduced because of our pension entitlements;
- in order to get that award the pension entitlements of new entrants to the profession were altered; and
- given the emphasis on productivity in recent national pay agreements, the Government could plead that those who are already retired were not so productive and, therefore, not entitled to all increases.

This is what happened in England and in a relatively short space of time retired public service workers in that jurisdiction became the new poor.

Meeting the challenge on pensions

It was these real concerns that led to the establishment of the Pensions Sub-Committee. It is vital that all our members get as much information as possible on pensions and do everything in their power to protect them from further erosion. This is why the Pensions Sub-Committee has endorsed the motion from the Seán Higgins Drogheda branch calling for a comprehensive booklet on pensions. Awareness of the challenges facing young, not so young and retired teachers in relation to pensions will enable us to act together to overcome them.



*Bernadine O'Sullivan,
Chairperson of the Pensions Sub-Committee
and Former ASTI President.*

*She is also the ASTI-endorsed candidate for
the NUI Seanad election.
Bernadine is a teacher in St Mary's School for
the Hearing Impaired in Cabra, Dublin 7.*

OBITUARY

Peter Curran (1946-2006), Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon, Co. Longford.

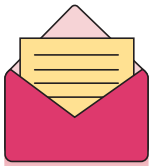
Died August 31, 2006

Peter Curran joined the staff of Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon, in 1972, having previously taught in Ballinamore and Cavan. He was a most popular teacher of English and economics but his generosity was such that he did not limit himself to his classroom duties. He became involved in all aspects of school life, which included debating, drama, musical productions and fundraising. He was also a loyal supporter of the school basketball and football teams. In the past 13 years, Peter proved to be an ideal Transition Year co-ordinator, where he always retained a youthful enthusiasm for new ideas and methodologies. He was highly respected and most appreciated by all students, but especially by those who participated in the Transition Year

Programme. A genuine educationalist, his advice was often sought both by parents and staff in matters concerning the profession. As a teacher, Peter always put the good of the students first even if this incurred considerable inconvenience to himself. He always persevered in doing what was right, and he was compassionate too – never losing an opportunity to visit staff or students if they were sick or hospitalised. The discipline and pleasant atmosphere of his classroom were primarily maintained through his energetic presentations of subject material. The walls of his classroom were always decorated with his favourite quotes from Shakespeare, Keats or Kavanagh. Through his sense of humour he was the life and soul of

the staffroom where his presence is sadly missed. For the duration of his teaching life, Peter was a member of the ASTI, and he served as school steward for many years. He represented the Longford branch at the annual conference on a number of occasions, the last being at Killarney two years ago. Above all, Peter was a very devoted family man, a superb husband and loving father. To Maureen, Marina, Paul and Áine, and grandchildren Darragh and Caoimhe, we the staff of Mercy Secondary School, Ballymahon, extend our deepest sympathies.

*"Ag Críost an siol, ag Críost an fómhar, in
iothlainn Dé go dtugtar sinn."*



Noticeboard

Teacher support line

The teacher Employee Assistance Scheme (EAS) is open to any teacher or a member of a teacher's immediate family seeking advice and assistance on any work-related or personal matter. The service is totally confidential and operates on a 24-hour basis. The EAS freephone number is 1800 411057 or you can email eas@vhi.ie.

Listowel Writers Week

Listowel Writers Week takes place from May 30 to June 3, 2007. The organisers are currently seeking entries for a number of literary competitions and have announced an eclectic mix of literary workshops, including two new courses: 'Popular Fiction' and 'Thriller Writing'. Details of the competitions and workshops can be found on www.writersweek.ie and more information can be obtained by contacting info@writersweek.ie.

Accord course presenters wanted

Accord Dublin would like to meet people who may be interested in training to present its marriage preparation courses. If you are interested, or would like further information, contact Mary at 01-4780866 or email mquinn@dublin.accord.ie.

Gender equality – have your say

The Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Education and Science is currently funding the development of a resource pack for secondary schools on gender equality issues and the formulation of gender equality policies. Suggestions and comments are invited and can be emailed to the project co-ordinator, Delores Gibbons, at dgibbons@ireland.com.

Mini Marathon fundraising appeal

Self Help Development International is hoping to raise funds for a new school building in Eritrea. The charity is looking for runners and walkers to take part in and raise sponsorship for this year's Dublin City Women's Mini Marathon, which takes place on Monday, June 4. For further information or a sponsorship pack contact 059-6471175 or log on to www.selfhelp.ie.

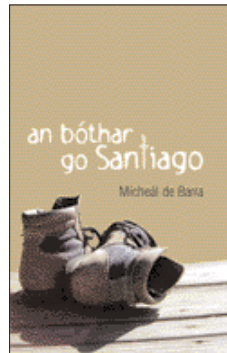
Sponsored beach walk

A sponsored beach walk in aid of the Kerry Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre will take place on Monday, May 7. Leaving at 1pm, the 10-mile walk will take place along the Kerry coast from Maharees to Cloghane. For sponsorship cards and further details contact 1800 633333.

Biology teachers Barcelona trip



A Comenius course for teachers of biology entitled 'Plant Biodiversity and Health' is being held in the University of Barcelona from July 16-20, 2007. The course is EU supported and full economic support is available. The course reference number is ES-2007-127-2 and more information can be obtained from the Irish Comenius office of Leargas, telephone 01-8731411 or email education@leargas.ie.



An Bothar go Santiago

Micheál de Barra has recently published *An Bothar go Santiago*, a full-colour Irish language book recounting his 35-day journey along the pilgrimage route from Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port in France to Santiago de Compostela and Finisterre in Spain. The book contains a brief history of the medieval pilgrimage and a detailed

piece on the Irish connection, which dates back to the 13th Century. It also contains advice for people considering undertaking the walk. Copies can be purchased directly from the publisher's website – www.coislife.ie.

Draíocht Arts Centre events

Draíocht Arts Centre in Blanchardstown is running a number of workshops and productions, which might be of interest to members and their pupils. Among the events are a student showcase of poetry, dance, drama, mime and improvisation in aid of the Laura Lynn Children's Hospice Foundation, a production of *Die Fledermaus* by Ballet Ireland, an end of year concert by Fingal County Youth Orchestra and two theatre workshops involving schools from the local area.

Film education programme

The Irish Film Institute has released its programme of education and access events for spring/summer 2007. Full information is available at www.irishfilm.ie. The programme offers a mix of films, including recent independent releases, foreign language films and films tying in with the junior and senior cycle syllabi. For more information or to make bookings contact Alicia McGovern or Deirdre Quinlan on 01-6795744.

Irish Lebanon Project appeal

The Irish Lebanon Project seeks to establish medical centres, schools, community centres and houses in South Lebanon. The charity is currently seeking volunteer teachers (including retired teachers), particularly in the following subjects: science, English, French and basic IT. Short stays are possible. For further information visit www.irishlebanonproject.com.

Leaving Cert podcasts

Getting it Right is an RTÉ Radio series that helps students to prepare for the Leaving Cert exams in June. The 16-part series is available exclusively as an audio download free of charge through the RTE website – www.rte.ie/radio – and from associated services such as iTunes. The series offers advice on all the major Leaving Cert subjects, along with help on exam techniques. *Getting it Right* is part of a series of RTÉ Radio podcasts for Leaving Cert students entitled *Listening to the Leaving*. More details can be found at www.rte.ie/radio/listeningtotheleaving.

That was then

A look back at the world of teaching in Ireland in 1981.



One of the more memorable events of 1981 was the two-week delay in schools re-opening in September. Examiners had been unable to correct Inter and Leaving Certificate exam papers as usual that summer because of an industrial dispute involving the Civil and Public Services Staff Association. In a Department of Education Circular in August, the Minister stated: "Post-primary school authorities may delay the re-opening of their schools until September 15, 1981...it is hoped to issue the results of this year's Leaving Certificate Examinations during the week beginning September 21, 1981".

The other big news in relation to state examinations was the achievement of a 30% increase in pay for examiners. This followed a lengthy campaign by the ASTI and the TUI, which finally went to arbitration in autumn of '81. Cutbacks in the early 1980s meant that funding for education was a big issue for the ASTI in 1981. The White Paper on Education, issued in late 1980, anticipated that 32,100 additional second-level students would be enrolled over the following 10 years, creating a need for 8,500 new teachers. Ireland's pupil-teacher ratio was now one of the worst in Europe. To make matters worse, there was an embargo on public service appointments.

Redeployment

The cap on public service appointments meant that teachers over quota were not being retained. This was a cause of serious concern for ASTI members as there was no redeployment scheme in place for the voluntary secondary sector. The union, led by Margaret Walsh (who would later serve as ASTI President), held talks and prepared draft proposals on a redeployment scheme during the year and in December held a special convention on the issue. Delegates decided that, due to the Department's failure to finalise a satisfactory redeployment scheme, the union would immediately withdraw members and representatives from all syllabus and other departmental committees. Delegates also voted to take further measures the following February if they were still unsatisfied. Happily, this was averted when the ASTI accepted the Department of Education's offer to negotiate a scheme in February 1982. Crucially, no redundancies would be made while negotiations on a redeployment scheme took place.

Teachers do more than teach!

In late 1981, the Minister for Education announced that corporal punishment in schools was to be banned. Meanwhile, the ASTI publication, *The Secondary Teacher*, published a survey of Galway teachers' views of their profession, which revealed: "[the teacher] feels he is obliged to contribute to the moral, social, intellectual/academic, emotional and physical development of his pupils, and on top of all that, to teach the prescribed course in his subject". Could this be the introduction to the new Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers!

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

ACELS Easter Course for Secondary Teachers

Teach English to teenagers during July/August
Dates: 10th-13th April, 9-6pm (30 hours)
Contact: International House Dublin
Ph: 4789273, info@ihdublin.com, www.ihdublin.com

Master's Degree For MEd (Primary/Secondary),
See CLEO/ Hull MEd course (Cork)
Information from CLEO, Mardyke House, Mardyke, Cork, tel. 021-4271729.

Cote D'Azur, Frejus, for rent:
3 bed apt, sleeps 6-8, pool and gardens.
Nice Airport 40 minutes. See www.Holiday-Rentals.com property No:50797.
Tel: 01-8201514.

Online psychology course as a transition year activity?
Certificates awarded, assessment optional, many new features available for 2007/2008, minimal administration, only €30 per student. Further info: www.eaolach.ie.

Teacher families wanted for foreign students during summer.

Accommodation, meals and lessons required, full immersion format.
Tel: 061 382795 or 087 8289959.

Teachers and friends – spend July 10-19 in Greece.

Visit historical places and shrines.
Price €1,370.
Contact John Fahey, Group Leader, at 01-8472107.
Celebration Travel Ireland - Licence 145, fully bonded.

Fast, cost-effective teacher recruitment.

Log on to www.educationcareers.ie or call us on 091-704842 to place your ad, and receive immediate responses.
The Best in Teacher Recruitment.

Classified advertising is available at a cost of €75 plus VAT (€90.75) for thirty words. These advertisements must be pre-paid. Please send your advertisement with a cheque or postal order (made payable to Think Media Ltd) to:

Classified Advertising ASTIR

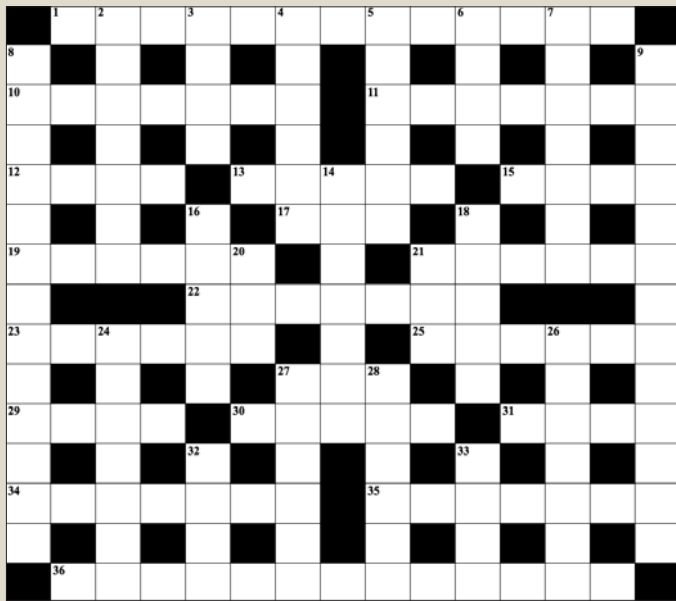
Think Media Ltd., The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.



ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 0702

€150 prize for the first fully correct answer drawn from the entries.

Sponsored by ASTI Credit Union



The winner will receive €150

courtesy of the ASTI Credit Union.

If you wish to keep your copy of ASTIR intact you may send a photocopy of the crossword. One entry only per member.

Name

School

Address

ASTI Branch

Entries to: **Astir Crossword No. 0702, Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.**

To arrive by: **Friday, April 27, 2007.**

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1 Will you be attending it in Sligo in April? (7,6)
- 10 Winged death spirits (7)
- 11 Is this insane person in a cult? (7)
- 12 Am I on an island? (4)
- 13 Those guiding beliefs of a school, say (5)
- 15 Last of the Stuart monarchs (4)
- 17 A popular data compression format (3)
- 19 A drama that unfolded in 1588 (6)
- 21 A tessellation (6)
- 22 A mimic's change of expression could be corrupting! (7)
- 23 "Of whom am I? Not death; who is he?" (Emily Dickinson) (6)
- 25 Luxembourg hosts many an apparition! (6)
- 27 Hope we can find a seat! (3)
- 29 Get from Ballina to an east Galway town with some fruit (4)
- 30 A right pile could mean danger (5)
- 31 No runs in a maiden one! (4)
- 34 To a point the Bible is right for the snacker (7)
- 35 "Soldier, scholar, horseman, he, As 'twere all life's" (WB Yeats) (7)
- 36 His/her election should take place by 1 May each year (6,7)

CLUES DOWN:

- 2 Laser is an example of one (7)
- 3 A witty remark might leave a pique! (4)
- 4 A German substitute (6)
- 5 Loopholed a shapeless lump (6)
- 6 In Greek mythology the number of Muses (4)
- 7 Go into sea for this country (7)

- 8 ASTI representative on NCCA (6,7)
- 9 You'll find the results on the ASTI website (7,6)
- 14 One who possesses tastes, social attitudes and opinions thought cool (7)
- 16 Had mitigation in mind when they concede as true (5)
- 18 Original name of JavaScript or a coffee port (5)
- 20 The IDA might come to your assistance (3)
- 21 Once the might of Russia's airforce (3)
- 24 A rich mob could shape into a diamond (7)
- 26 Our visa could be our rescuer! (7)
- 27 A perfectly contained seabird (6)
- 28 "A little nonsense now and then, is cherished by the men." (Roald Dahl) (6)
- 32 Sing aloft somewhere between a tenor and a mezzo soprano (4)
- 33 Wives make a singular scene (4)

Congratulations to the winner of Crossword No. 0701: Catherine Quigley, Scoil Mhuire, Trim, Co. Meath.

Solution to ASTIR crossword No. 0701

Across

- 1. Scream
- 5. Lonely
- 10. Bravado
- 11. Michael
- 12. Odes
- 13. Lived
- 15. Asal
- 17. CID
- 19. Gauche
- 21. Eponym
- 22. Iguanas
- 23. Cogito
- 25. Search
- 28. DOH
- 30. Navy
- 31. Sisal
- 32. IVEA
- 35. Patella
- 36. Lacunae
- 37. Et 38.
- League tables
- 34. Scab

Down

- 2. Chateau
- 3. Edam
- 4. Myopic
- 5. Limped
- 6. NCCA
- 7. Liaison
- 8. Oblong
- 9. Slalom
- 14. Viragos
- 16. White
- 18. EPSEN
- 20. Ego
- 21. EAS
- 23. Canape
- 24. Gavotte
- 26. Revenue
- 27. Heaney
- 28. Dilate
- 29. Hamlet
- 33. Blog
- 34. Scab

“Today, Tomorrow, Together”



The Top 20

1. I have control over my own finances.
2. My savings are being used to help my fellow teachers.
3. There are no hidden charges or fees, no surcharges for late payment and no penalties for early settlement of loans.
4. I can avail of competitive interest rates some as low as 5.5%APR*
5. I can get a quick decision on my loan application and in many cases can get approval over the phone.*
6. I can lodge or make payments into my account through salary deduction or through direct debit from my bank account.
7. I can view my account online at www.asticu.ie (from April 2007).
8. I can request that transactions be carried out on my account through cu online (from April 2007).
9. I can apply for an ATM card (from April 2007).
10. I can pay a range of utility bills for free.
11. I can enter 13 cash draws and four car draws per annum for only €2 per fortnight.
12. I can apply for funding for my local club or charity through the credit union's sponsorship committee.
13. I can enter a competition to win one of three bursaries per annum.*
14. I can open a junior account for my children.
15. My spouse can open an account.
16. I can earn an attractive return on my savings through a yearly dividend.
17. I can contact the credit union five days a week including lunch time.
18. I can open a tax free 3 or 5 year term account*
19. I can benefit from free Loan Protection Insurance and Life Savings Insurance.*
20. I can be a member of a dynamic member owned Secondary School Teachers' Credit Union.

*Terms & Conditions Apply

The Credit Union Difference...

• Not a bank...but a co-operative

Credit Unions are people orientated financial cooperatives formed by people with a common association such as ASTI.

• Not customers...but members

The members of a credit union are also its owners. This unique structure ensures that the credit union remains focused on the needs of members and leads to better service for all members.

• Not profits...but benefits

Credit Unions earn income by lending the savings of members to other members at reasonable rates of interest. This income covers the expenses of the Credit Union, and any surplus is channelled into providing members with better products and services. This includes better interest rates on loans and savings and value added services such as internet access.

ALIVE in the School Community

...ASTI Credit Union is proud to play a vital role in helping teachers achieve financial independence through regular savings and access to competitive lending and quality financial services.



Why not **OPEN YOUR EYES** to your...
Credit Union and see what we can do for you

Loans made for YOU...

New members can borrow up to €10,000 on receipt of 1 salary deduction payment!

LOANS

‘Once’ Loan - 5.99% (typical apr)-variable

- This loan caters for holidays, car insurance, credit card bills etc...
- Available at a rate a highly competitive rate of 5.99%
- Subject to a maximum of €5,000.
- The ONCE loan is separate from any other loans you may have with us.
- Each member may have only one ‘ONCE’ loan at any time.
- Repayable over 12 months

‘Special Car Loan’ - 6.99%

- (typical apr)-variable
- Car loans are available to members at a fantastic rate of 6.99%.
 - Car loans must be repaid within 5 years.

‘Loans within shares’ - 5.99%

- (typical apr)-variable
- This loan rate is especially for members who have built up their shares over the years and would like to keep their savings in tact.
 - Members can borrow within shares for any reason and repay their loan at this exceptional rate.
 - Approval is immediate.

‘Standard / Personal Loans’ - 7.99%

- (typical apr)-variable
- Our standard loan rate of 7.99% is still highly competitive.

‘House Renovation Term Loans’ - 5.5%

- (typical apr)- variable ECB rate plus 2%
- From 1st April 2007 House Renovation loans are available to members at a rate of 5.5%.
 - This loan type is specifically designed to cater for members who are undertaking major house renovations.
 - Such loans must be repaid with 15 years.
 - Members will be required to submit documentation to confirm purpose of loan and ability to repay.
 - Security may also be sought.
 - Such loans will be for amounts in excess of €30,000.
 - Interest on these loans is calculated at the ECB rate plus 2%.



We bend over backwards to get ASTI members the right car insurance at the right price

See if you can get a great deal with Teachers' Carplan - call today

Dublin (01) 408 4040 Cork (021) 455 3335 Galway (091) 562727



cornmarket
group financial services ltd

Subject to any underwriting requirements.

Insurance can only be provided. Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd is regulated by The Financial Regulator.
A member of the Irish Life & Permanent Group.