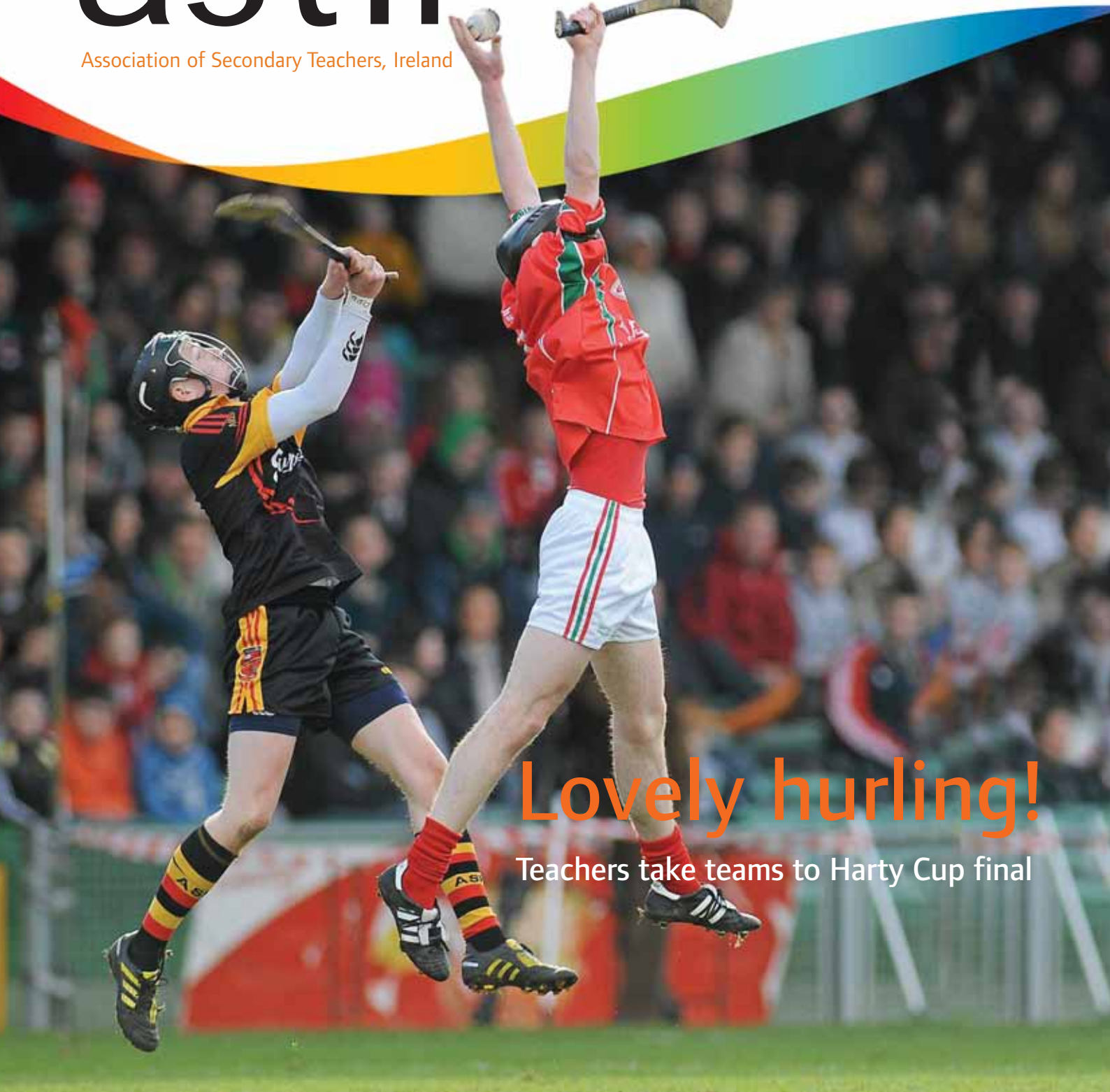


# astir

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



## Lovely hurling!

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*\*Please see website for closing date for applications for this course*

Volume 29: Number 2: March 2011  
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# astir

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Cover photo: Alan Dennehy, Charleville CBS, in action against Mark Ryan, Ardscoil Ris, in the Dr Harty Cup final in February. (Picture credit: Diarmuid Green/SPORTSFILE.)

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Information for non-permanent teachers **16**



Paths to the classroom **22**



Your questions answered **32**



Make sure you are being paid correctly **33**

**From the President's desk 5**

Education is key to recovery

**General Secretary's update 6**

New teachers deserve better

**ASTI news 7**

**News 10**

**ASTI in the media 13**

Spreading the message

**News features 14**

Parents value schools 14

Non-permanent teachers on the web 16

**Features 18**

2011 Seanad Elections 18

Protecting pensions 20

Paths to the classroom 22

Supporting all students 26

New model of inspection – what's involved 28

**Curriculum 30**

ASTI responds to proposed curriculum reform

**School initiative 31**

Just making you aware

**Frequently asked questions 32**

**Professional matters 33**

Your payslip explained

**RSTA news 34**

**Noticeboard 36**

**Obituary 37**

**Crossword 38**

**FOLENS**



**NEW**  
POST-PRIMARY  
TITLES  
FOR 2011

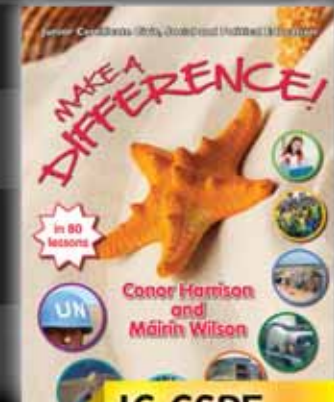
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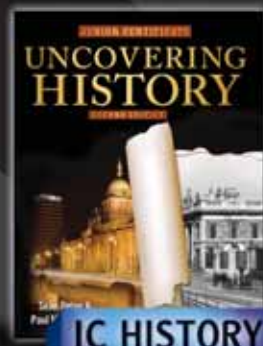
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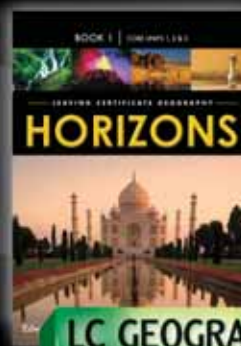
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# The proof that education is key to recovery

“Ireland is fortunate to have a high quality of teacher graduates. But an over reliance on a committed and highly skilled teaching profession only serves to camouflage the lack of government investment, and will lead to a severe drop in levels of teacher and principal morale as disenchantment sets in. Corrective measures in the form of enhanced investment must be implemented if this is not to happen.”

The above statement appeared in a recent *Irish Times* article by Dr Pasi Sahlberg, a senior education consultant to the Finnish Government. It mirrors what the ASTI has consistently stated for many years. In his article, 'How Finland emerged from recession with the best education system in Europe' (*The Irish Times*, March 1, 2011), Dr Sahlberg recounts the significant recession experienced by Finland in the early 1990s, when unemployment jumped from 3% to 18% and GDP fell by 13% in the space of two years. The Finnish Government responded to the recession by increasing investment in education. It now spends 7% of its GDP on education, compared to the OECD average of 5.7%. When a markedly similar recession hit Ireland, the Government response included severe cutbacks to an already under-funded education system (in 2007 – just prior to the recession – the OECD found that only three out of 28 countries were spending a lower percentage of GDP on education than Ireland).

Recently, those defending the low level of investment in education in Ireland have stated: “It’s the quality of the teacher [and not the amount invested in education] that counts”. All of us who work in classrooms and schools know only too well that high quality teaching is inextricably linked to adequate numbers of teachers, adequate resources for teaching and learning, and access to specialist teachers and services, so that students experiencing difficulties can get the help they need.

It is most interesting that Dr Sahlberg juxtaposes high quality teaching and teacher morale. One of the key characteristics of the Finnish education system is the high social status of teachers. Teachers are respected and

trusted as professionals by the Government and society. Teaching is highly autonomous, there is no inspectorate, and there is a strong emphasis on teacher professional development.

An independent survey carried out by the Teaching Council last year revealed that the Irish public values teachers, and that there is a high level of satisfaction with the way teachers carry out their work. Yet teachers often report feeling under-valued and unappreciated by the Government and by the biased commentary on the working conditions, pay and pensions of teachers by certain commentators and sections of the media. While teaching has become an increasingly complex and demanding profession, these groups and individuals are increasingly focused on ‘newsworthy’ or ‘sensational’ aspects of education, while ignoring the daily work and learning that takes place in schools.

We will not achieve the high added-value education service needed for our recovery with an unrelenting round after round of cutbacks, increased class sizes and demoralised teachers. We must have the necessary investment to realise sustainable recovery. We must trust our teachers and stop scapegoating them and other public servants for the collapse in public finances. We must acknowledge and value the work of schools and remember that teachers are working with young people at a critical period in their lives – their journey through adolescence towards a new identity as a young adult. Finally, we must never lose sight of the reality that a school is, at its heart, a community that works together for the common good.



*Jack Keane*

*ASTI President*

# New teachers deserve better

ASTI General Secretary PAT KING says that the teaching profession has come under sustained attack in recent years.



In December 2008, the then Government announced that the pupil-teacher ratio for second-level schools was to be increased from 18:1 to 19:1. This resulted in the loss of up to 1,000 teaching posts in schools, larger classes, less subject choice, fewer job opportunities for recently qualified teachers, and a dilution of the quality of education available to our young people. A range of other education cuts was announced on the same day.

## Cuts, then pay cuts ...

In April 2009, the Government forced through the public sector pension levy, which amounted to a 7% cut in pay for most teachers. A moratorium on posts of responsibility was also unilaterally implemented, which is gradually dismantling the management and pastoral care systems in the second-level sector. The public service pay cut – averaging 7% for teachers – was announced as part of Budget 2010. Further cuts, including the loss of more teaching posts and a cut in funding for schools, were announced as part of Budget 2011. The only reprieve came in the Croke Park Agreement, which committed to no further pay cuts for serving public servants for the duration of the Agreement.

## New entrants

Then came the attack on new entrants to the public service. In January 2011 the already severed teachers' pay scale was cut by a further 10% for new entrants to teaching. In addition, teachers entering the profession are now appointed to the lowest point of the salary scale instead of the third point: bringing the total reduction in pay for these teachers to 14%. Recently qualified teachers also face the proposition of a new pension scheme, which will see them pay more in pension contributions than they will receive in pension benefit. The proposed new public service pension scheme also means a retirement age of 68 for teachers. Put simply, new teachers will have to work more for less.

## Work placement scheme

The decisions regarding the pay and pensions of new entrants to the public service (including teachers) were part of Budget 2011. Shortly before their announcement the then Minister for Education and Skills extended the FÁS Work Placement Scheme to cover schools. The ASTI described the extension of the FÁS scheme as a "cynical exercise in presenting a concern for unemployed teachers at a time when the working conditions, salaries and pensions of newly appointed teachers are under unprecedented attack by Government".

I believe that the measure of a trade union is in how it treats its most vulnerable members. ASTI members and branches all over the country recognise this too. This is why the key theme of this year's Annual Convention – as determined by motions submitted and selected by branches – is the plight of new teachers, young teachers, and part-time and temporary teachers. By choosing this theme, ASTI members at school, branch and national level are demonstrating their commitment to protecting our most vulnerable members. A powerful campaign has already begun.



Pat King

ASTI General Secretary

## ASTI recommendations on teacher education and professional development

The ASTI has made a submission to the Teaching Council's consultation process on the continuum of teacher education.

The Teaching Council policy resulting from this consultation process will provide the framework to guide the Council's work in the areas of initial teacher education, induction, and early and continuing professional development (CPD).

Among the recommendations made in the ASTI submission are:

- selection of PGDE students should include assessment of non-academic skills such as communication, teamwork, etc.;
- if schools are to have greater levels of responsibility in the student teacher placement process, they will require practical supports including reduced timetabled hours for experienced teachers;
- if plans to extend the PGDE programme to two years' duration go ahead, the extended course should be recognised as partial fulfilment of a Masters degree;



- any approach to teacher CPD that links CPD to registration requirements must take into consideration the range of factors affecting teachers' capacity to engage in professional learning, as well as the range of learning situations – formal and informal – in which teachers engage; and,
- plans for CPD must provide sufficient time for learning and must take into consideration the 21% of teachers who are non-permanent and whose opportunities and financial capacity to engage in CPD may be restricted.

These are only some of the issues raised in the ASTI submission. To read the full submission, see the ASTI website – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).



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## New schools

New teaching positions are due to come on stream over the next five years with the opening of new schools and rising student enrolment.

In the context of shrinking teaching allocations to schools and uncertainty for fixed-term teachers, it is good to know that there will be a steady stream of teaching positions coming into the system over the coming years. This is due to the Department of Education and Skills' plans to develop 12 new, greenfield schools, each with a final target enrolment of 1,000 students and with opening dates between September 2011 and 2016.

There are an additional 64,000 students progressing through the primary system who will have to be accommodated at post-primary. This demographic detail, along with population growth in specific areas, has led to commitments to develop schools in the following areas:

- Gorey (target opening September 2011)
- Ashbourne
- Dublin, West Blanchardstown
- Claregalway
- Naas
- North Co. Dublin
- Clonburris, Lucan
- Dublin, Mulhuddart
- Drogheda
- Maynooth
- Navan
- Kingscourt, Co. Cavan

These schools are scheduled to open between now and 2016 – the majority nearer to 2016.

The new posts created in these schools, together with expected numbers of teacher retirements, offer some prospect of employment for teachers.

## Rationalisation of schools

Aside from new schools, the rationalisation of existing schools continues. Rationalisation refers to the amalgamation of a number of schools into one new school. Many such schools are due to open this September. The ASTI assists members in these schools in terms of job security and continuity of conditions of employment. See the 2011 Convention Handbook for a list of ongoing projects.

## Join us online...

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## Wexford retirement function



At a recent Wexford Tony Boland retirement function were: standing (from left): Mena McNicholas; Angela Cannon; Mary Waddell; Jim Doyle; Geraldine Croke; Kathleen Roche; John Furlong; Irene Irish; Mary-Frances Keogh; John McCormack; and, Gerry Moynihan. Sitting (from left): Michael Waddell; Pat King, ASTI General Secretary; Ann Sills; Nora Clarkin; John O'Neill; Patricia Hennessy; Kai Gahan; Tom Connon; and, Jack Keane, ASTI President.

## Elect a teacher to the Seanad

Graduates of National University of Ireland (NUI) colleges and the University of Dublin (Trinity College) will decide six seats in the next Seanad.

The ASTI is endorsing a candidate in each constituency: Bernadine O'Sullivan will contest the NUI constituency and David Martin will contest the Dublin University panel. Read the candidates' profiles on page 18. The poll will close on April 27. Make sure you take this opportunity to make the teacher's voice heard in the Oireachtas!

## Our cover picture this issue...



Ardcoil Rís took the Dr Harty Cup back to Limerick for the second time in two years in February. Congratulations to the team, and to the runners up: Charleville CBS. Congratulations also to the teachers involved with both teams, especially team managers Niall Moran, Ardcoil Rís, and Kevin Butler, Charleville CBS.

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**NUI MAYNOOTH**  
WISDOM IN EDUCATION WE BUILD

## 12 schools presented with new national STEM award

Students from 12 schools have been presented with awards in recognition of their achievements in science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM).

The prestigious CREST awards, which have been running in the UK for the past 25 years, have been organised for the first time in Ireland by The Galway Education Centre in association with The British Science Association. The awards aim to recognise the creativity in science and technology of work carried out by Irish students in the important STEM subjects in Irish schools.

Three levels of excellence will be awarded to students through the Irish CREST awards scheme. In February, seven Bronze and five Silver Awards

were presented. The Gold Awards are very exceptional and over time will be presented to students aged 16 years and over who present an authentic piece of research linked with industry or academia. Sir Roland Jackson, CEO, British Science Association, says: "The CREST Awards give students a taste for being a real scientist doing actual research. These awards allow students to do more than just aspire to being a scientist!"

The second-level schools awarded were: St Gerald's College, Castlebar; Coláiste na Coiribe, Galway; Castletroy Community School, Limerick; St Mark's Community School, Tallaght; St Killian's German School, Dublin; St Conleth's College, Ballsbridge; Bandon Grammar School, Cork; Blessington Community College, Wicklow; St Oliver's Community College, Drogheda; St Paul's Secondary School, Oughterard, Co. Galway; Roscommon College; and, Ursuline College, Sligo.

## Castlebar students compete in global technology challenge



Students from St Gerald's College, Castlebar, are presented with a CREST award for their robotics project by President Mary McAleese.

Six students from St Gerald's College in Castlebar will travel to the USA in April to represent Ireland and the UK at an international science and technology competition.

To compete, teacher Declan Askin and his Transition Year students have created and programmed a robot, which will battle with other finalist robots as part of the competition. Following victory at the UK and Ireland finals, Mr Askin said: "We are very proud of the boys and delighted that their hard work is being recognised! To represent our country and our county on a global stage is truly an honour".

The FIRST Lego League attracts 140,000 participants from 56 countries around the globe every year. The six Irish students are Paul McDonogh, Luke Benson, Oisín Kyne, Donnchadh Barry, Paul Murray and Adrian Murphy.

## AVC Plan Annual Report

Members of the ASTI AVC Plan should note that the Trustees of the AVC scheme, Irish Life Trustee Services Ltd., have prepared an annual report for the year ending March 31, 2010. A copy of this report is available on receipt of a written request to ASTI Head Office.

## Global Action Week – It's a Right, Make it Right!

The Global Campaign for Education has chosen 'Women and Girls' Education' as the theme for this year's Education for All Global Action Week, which takes place from May 2-8.

During Global Action Week 2011, the Irish Coalition for the Global Campaign for Education, of which the ASTI is a member, will be hosting a major seminar on the theme of women, education and development.

Resource materials on the theme will also be circulated to all schools.

Education campaigners around the world will raise awareness about the education of women and girls. The slogan for the action week is 'It is a Right, Make it Right! – Education for Girls and Women NOW!'



## Cycle to work scheme

Teachers availing of the Cycle to Work scheme can purchase their bike from any approved supplier on the OPW list, which is available on the OPW website at [www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie).

## Get a refund on your course fee

Apply to the Teacher Fee Refund Scheme and you could receive funding towards the cost of your course or examination fees.

Registered teachers can apply to the scheme on successful completion of in-career development courses approved by the Department of Education and school authorities.

Courses should be directly relevant and of benefit to schools, school management or teachers, and should ultimately positively impact on teaching and learning. Certain courses are ineligible, for example funding will not be provided for courses that result in a qualification in respect of which an allowance is payable.

Applications must be made by March 31. For more information contact: The Administrator, Teacher Fee Refund Scheme, Marino Institute of Education, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9; Tel: 01-853 5102, or Email: [refundoffeescheme@mie.ie](mailto:refundoffeescheme@mie.ie).

## Important information about your Teaching Council renewal

From March 2011, your Teaching Council fee can no longer be paid by deduction at source. The fee must now be paid online with credit or laser card, or by cheque, postal order or bank draft made payable to the Teaching Council. The Teaching Council registration fee is regarded by Revenue as an allowable expense on which teachers can claim tax relief. Tax relief on your Teaching Council fee can only be provided when the fee has been paid in full and up front. You must alert Revenue that you have paid the fee each year and wish to have the amount offset against your tax liability. In effect, this will mean that the fee is closer to €53 per annum for those paying the higher rate of tax.

All newly employed teachers must be registered with the Teaching Council. When Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act comes into force, only registered teachers will be paid from State monies.

### Extension to probation period for Teaching Council registration

The Teaching Council has announced that newly qualified teachers who are unable to complete the 300 hours of teaching service required for full registration within the allocated three years may apply for an extension to their probation period.

In order to gain full registration with the Teaching Council, second-level teachers must complete 300 hours of service as a teacher in a recognised second-level school within three years.

The Teaching Council will now allow teachers to apply for an extension if they are unable to complete the requirements within the three-year period. The teacher will be required to outline the difficulties or extenuating circumstances preventing the completion of the required service. Every application for an extension will be evaluated on its own merits.

For more information, see [www.teachingcouncil.ie](http://www.teachingcouncil.ie).

## New maternity leave circular

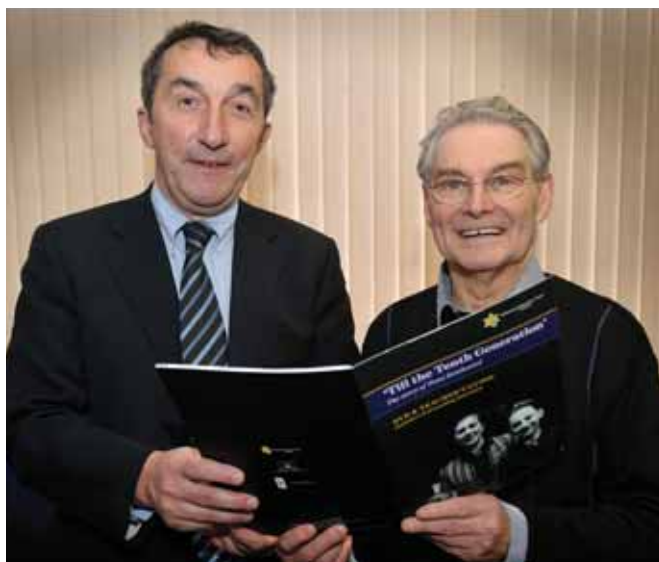
A new Department maternity leave circular contains some important changes to maternity protection entitlements for teachers:

- teachers can now begin maternity leave 22 weeks before their expected due date;
- a period of pregnancy-related sick leave will not be counted towards a teacher's entitlement to paid sick leave;
- the circular makes clear that as State Exam days are not school vacation days, where a teacher's leave in lieu period overlaps with the first 12 days of the State Exams, the leave in lieu days begin during these days; and,
- the notice period required from teachers opting to take non-statutory additional unpaid maternity leave to the end of the school year has been extended to six weeks.

### Non-permanent rights

The new circular explicitly states that teachers on fixed-term contracts have full maternity leave entitlements during the term of their contracts and the granting or taking of maternity leave entitlements should not affect a fixed-term/fixed-purpose appointment or the renewing of such an appointment. This has been the case under legislation but had not previously been set out in a Department circular.

It is important to read the original circular to be sure of your rights and entitlements. Circular 0011-2011 is available on the ASTI website, where you can also find more information on your leave entitlements – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).



## Holocaust education pack launched

Pictured left are ASTI President Jack Keane and Tomi Reichental at the launch of a teaching pack by the Holocaust Education Trust Ireland (HETI). Tomi Reichental survived incarceration in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in Germany and later moved to Dublin. Now, 65 years later, he visits Irish schools to recount his harrowing story. His testimony is available to all schools through an 80-minute DVD, *Till the Tenth Generation*, prepared by the HETI and distributed to schools in January.

The HETI organises specifically tailored courses, which provide teachers with the information, tools and skills to address the subject of the Holocaust in the classroom and to develop pedagogic expertise to complement their knowledge. For more information, see [www.hetireland.org](http://www.hetireland.org).

## Schools mark 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster



Students from St Michael's in Finglas launch the Chernobyl Children's Trust Appeal with the help of Dragons Den star Bobby Kerr.

St Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School, Finglas, is spearheading a nationwide schools appeal for the Chernobyl Children's Trust. April 14 marks the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. On that day schools across Ireland will participate in fundraising activities to mark the event. John Barry, Principal of St Michael's, says: "The school was delighted to launch this nationwide event for the Chernobyl Children's Trust. We will be participating in this campaign by organising a non-uniform day. There is great enthusiasm among the teachers and all the students for it. I am calling on other principals and schools throughout Ireland to lend their support to this educational and fundraising initiative to mark the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster in a real and practical way".

The campaign is as much about educating young people about the Chernobyl disaster and its legacy, as it is about raising funds. As Mr Barry says: "There is a responsibility on us all to raise awareness for today's victims of what the United Nations has described as 'the worst environmental catastrophe in the history of humanity'. We hope that the young people of Ireland will embrace this initiative by reaching out to the young people of Belarus in this simple act of solidarity and support". The Chernobyl Children's Trust is an Irish charity dedicated to helping children and families most affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster. For more information on the school appeal, text: 087-926 7302 or visit: [www.thetrust.ie](http://www.thetrust.ie).

## Teachers elected to the Dáil

Congratulations to all former second-level teachers who were elected to the 31st Dáil last month:

- Joe Costello, Dublin Central;
- Jimmy Deenihan, Kerry North-West Limerick;
- Micheál Martin, Cork South Central;
- Michael Noonan, Limerick City;
- John O'Mahony, Mayo;
- Maureen O'Sullivan, Dublin Central;
- Brian Hayes, Dublin South West;
- John Lyons, Dublin North West;
- Gerard Nash, Louth;
- Jerry Buttimer, Cork South Central;
- Tommy Broughan, Dublin North East;
- David Stanton, Cork East; and,
- Fergus O'Dowd, Louth.

## Learning from abroad

Ireland can learn from countries with histories of immigration, according to a recent seminar on immigration and education.

The seminar's findings support the ASTI's calls for specific supports for children from migrant families to tackle the barriers they may face, today and in the future. Unless such supports are provided, children could suffer disadvantage in later life, which would have significant cost implications for the State and the individuals concerned, according to the Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI), which hosted the public seminar on the educational challenges faced by the children of migrants in February. Recently, budgets to assist migrant children to compete more equally within the education system have been slashed and the provision of English language teachers to schools has been cut. According to Denise Charlton, Chief Executive of the ICI: "While these budget constraints frustrate teachers, parents and students alike, the more worrying outcome of such regressive cuts is the long-term implications they will have on the educational outcomes ... Rather than closing down small, but important, budget lines, we need to make investments that will ensure these children are facilitated to contribute very positively to Ireland's society and economy over the coming decades".

## Employee Assistance Service helps hundreds of teachers

The Employee Assistance Service (EAS) for teachers received more than 700 calls between September 2009 and June 2010. During the last year, emotional health issues have increased in number, particularly due to financial concerns, transition, ill health, family issues such as bereavement, and anxiety about the future.

The EAS is a **free and confidential** counselling and support service exclusively for teachers and their family members to provide them with assistance in coping with a variety of issues. The service provides easy access to confidential counselling support 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

### Who can access the service?

The EAS is available to Teachers and SNAs whose positions are funded by the Department of Education and Skills, their spouses or partners, their dependents above the age of 16 and their mother and father. Teachers can access telephone counselling or up to six face-to-face counselling sessions.

Counselling is provided on issues such as health, relationships, addictions, bereavement, stress, conflict, critical incident and trauma. Freephone 1800 411 057, or Email: [eas@vhics.ie](mailto:eas@vhics.ie).

# Spreading the message

The ASTI continues to represent the views of teachers in the national media.



Equal access  
tops cherry-  
picking

## ASTI President Jack Keane responds to an article on school enrolment policies

"...the ASTI wishes to assert unequivocally that the best schools are those which welcome all pupils from their locality, regardless of needs, backgrounds or abilities. An audit of second-level schools carried out by the Department of Education and Science in 2008 found no evidence of widespread discrimination in the enrolment practices of schools, but found 'pockets of inconsistency' where some schools had 'disproportionate shares of pupils of all backgrounds and needs' ... The compilation of [league] tables supports a culture of 'cherry-picking' above one of equal access." *Irish Independent*, January 11

## League tables

ASTI General Secretary Pat King said school league tables of examination results provided no information about the performance of a school and presented a distorted picture of the second-level school system. "Regardless of how this information is packaged, it will be presented in a crude and incomplete fashion and used to mislead parents into thinking that in order to give their child/children an educational advantage they must gain access to schools at the top of the table," he said. "It would be grossly naive of any political party to expect otherwise." *Irish Independent*, February 15

## Extracurricular activities

Last year, the ASTI surveyed teachers on their attitude to extra-curricular activities and found that those involved in sport or other skills got a

greater sense of wellbeing.

And for pupils various studies in recent years have identified the following as among the principal benefits of involvement in extra-curricular activity at second-level schools: better attendance at school; higher grades; higher self-esteem; less likely to display behavioural problems; lower drop-out rates; lower substance abuse rates; and, more likely to attend further education. *Sunday Independent*, January 31

## Anger among teachers

Ann Piggott, Cork South representative for the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland, said the anger among teachers will be heightened when they get their pay packets next week.

"We have already taken two pay cuts, so this is [tax increases] on top of those. A lot of teachers are upset too at the changes to child benefit as well as the reduction to minimum wage."

*Evening Echo*, January 10

## Look out for your union in the media

In the past two months, the ASTI has featured on each of the national radio stations as well as on many local stations. We have appeared regularly in national daily and weekly newspapers.

But it's not all about the spokesperson's voice – your view counts.

Text, call or write in support of your union and the teaching profession.

# Parents value schools

An ESRI survey has highlighted the importance parents place on schools, as well as the importance of parental involvement for student achievement.

All of the parents interviewed for the survey, entitled 'Behind the Scenes? A Study of Parental Involvement in Post-Primary Education', said that they value the benefits of second-level schools, and that they are broadly satisfied with their children's education:

- parents were particularly positive about the range of subjects on offer; and,
- they were also happy with the benefits schools offer in relation to social and personal development.

Speaking in reaction to the report, ASTI General Secretary Pat King said: "The fact that parents are particularly positive about the benefits of education to their children's social and personal development is a reflection of the commitment of Irish teachers and schools to delivering a holistic education, which values and nurtures the whole individual". Parents and students alike were, however, less positive about the extent to which their children leave school prepared for the world of work and with the necessary life skills and computer skills. Pat King urged that: "Promised funding for IT in second-level schools must be allocated in a timely



*In making decisions about programme and subject options, young people are more reliant on their parents than on school-based sources of advice.*

manner to enable schools and teachers to integrate IT across the curriculum and ensure that all young people have opportunities to increase their IT literacy".

## Importance of involvement

Parental involvement has been found to have a significant impact on how students fare in school: young people who discuss education with their parents tend to make greater academic progress relative to their initial ability. The evidence, therefore, suggests that schools should make efforts to inform and involve parents in order to maximise student choice, results and achievements.

"It is well recognised that participation by parents in their children's schooling leads to educational and other benefits for those children. The ASTI believes that participation by parents benefits the entire education community," said Pat King.

The report recommends that schools plan for good relationships with parents and use a range of information sources for parents tailored to the student mix.

- The study reveals that schools have been communicating effectively with parents and that parents are broadly satisfied with the information they receive from schools.
- However, many parents would like more detailed information, particularly in relation to career paths and subject requirements.
- Talking with teachers is seen as the most helpful source of information in this area.

The full report is available from:

[www.esri.ie/publications/latest\\_publications/view/index.xml?id=3141](http://www.esri.ie/publications/latest_publications/view/index.xml?id=3141).



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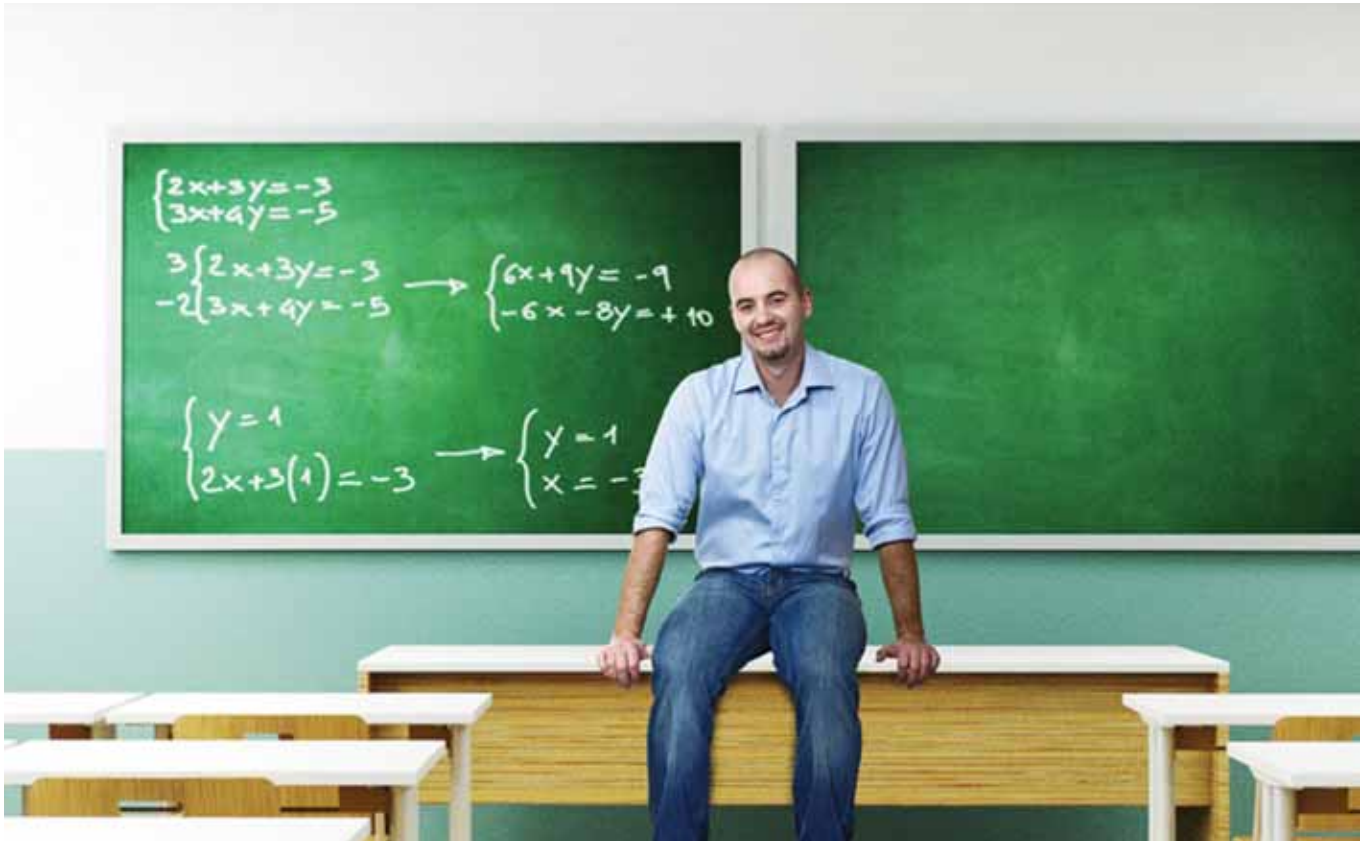
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# Non-permanent teachers on the web

The ASTI has launched a dedicated section on its website for non-permanent teachers.



## Confused about your contract?

Find out about the various types of non-permanent contract; identify which contract you have and what it means for your salary, entitlements and teaching career.

## CIDs explained

Find out about contracts of indefinite duration (CIDs) and learn about the criteria you need to meet in order to qualify.

## Understand your salary and payslip

Make sure you are being paid the correct salary, understand your payslip and deductions, and read some money-saving tips.

## Your questions answered

Find the answers to frequently asked questions from non-permanent teachers and submit a question of your own.

## ASTI support for non-permanent teachers

Discover the support the ASTI can offer and how you can get involved to help achieve for non-permanent teachers.

## Read more about the issues important to you

We have compiled a number of articles highlighting the concerns of non-permanent teachers and the ASTI's campaigns to protect conditions and improve job prospects and job security for all teachers.



Check it out at [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie)





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# ASTI members to contest 2011 Seanad elections



DAVID MARTIN is contesting the  
**Dublin University** constituency

The ASTI has endorsed two candidates for the Seanad Éireann elections, which will take place next month. The following are the candidates' statements to *ASTIR*. Use your vote to make the teacher's voice heard in the Oireachtas!



BERNADINE O'SULLIVAN is contesting the  
**National University of Ireland** constituency

David Martin has been a teacher in Mount Temple Comprehensive School on the north side of Dublin for the past 32 years. He teaches religious education, history, media studies, SPHE and Leaving Certificate Applied in the multicultural, multid denominational school, while serving as staff representative on the board of management there.

David also serves on the board of management of Drumcondra Education Centre, which is part of the network of the Association of Teachers and Education Centres of Ireland. This is the framework for the national provision of in-service education for serving teachers.

In the Dublin North Branch of the ASTI, David has served as Secretary and Chairperson, and is currently Vice-Chairperson. As CEC representative, he was elected National Convenor for Religious Education and as part of that function, served as ASTI representative on the NCCA syllabus committee for religious education during the development of religious education as an examination subject at Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate levels. He also serves as a regional representative on the Community and Comprehensive Sub-Committee.

David is married to Eithne, who has retired from teaching German in Rathdown School. They have two children, James and Rachel, who have emigrated to become part of the Irish diaspora, and he also has two grandchildren living in Scotland.

David became actively involved in the ASTI while serving as school steward, concerned about the plight of part-time teachers back in the

early '80s. He served on the sub-committee for part-time teachers until CIDs were established. He has also served on sub-committees examining the role of boards of management and branch development, and on the rules sub-committee. With the encouragement and endorsement of the ASTI, he has stood for election to the Seanad in the past three elections. This election represents the best opportunity in the past 20 years for the ASTI to make an impact in the constituency of the University of Dublin. As this is the first time in 20 years that the election ballot will be held during term time and not in the summer holidays, ASTI members will be able to canvass graduates in their staffrooms and wider communities. Those entitled to vote in the Dublin University constituency are graduates of Trinity College, including primary school teachers trained in Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines, and graduates of DIT colleges whose degrees are validated by Trinity College.

Seanad speakers can ask hard questions and focus public attention – if they want to. The Senate need not be a waste of time, as David Norris and Mary Robinson have proved.

This may be the last opportunity for teachers to use this platform.

Please use your vote and encourage other graduates to speak up for education!

[www.martindavid2011.com](http://www.martindavid2011.com)

### Why are you contesting a seat in the Seanad election?

In 2009 public service workers, including teachers, paid €3.1 billion in pension contributions, but just €2.6 billion was paid out in pensions. A Senator saying this would receive coverage in the media.

### Will people bother to vote for a Seanad candidate if the Seanad is to be abolished?

Since Irish citizens stand to suffer from the cutbacks in public services, including education, I think they will want someone to defend them in this national forum for as long as it lasts.

### What have teachers around the country been saying to you on the campaign?

They want it known that their take home pay has been reduced by up to 22% since 2008 due to various cuts and charges, while the cost of living is 31% higher than the EU average. Statements like “the best paid and best pensioned public service jobs in Europe” (*Sunday Business Post*, February 13, 2011) must be challenged.

### You have referred to the Government's divide and conquer strategies in the past. What are they?

Firstly, since early 2008 public and private sector workers have been deliberately polarised by misinformation about alleged advantages in the public sector. This has camouflaged the real divide between high earners and those less well off in both sectors. Secondly, there is now a strategy to divide those in the public sector itself, for example:

- a reduction of the starting salary (of over €5,000 per year) and pension provision (based on career average earnings linked to CPI and keeping

“deferred salary” at face value for up to 40 years) for new teachers:

- the Fás scheme for no-pay graduate placement instead of real employment for new graduates; and,
- the embargo on promotion posts despite legitimate expectations, thus reducing many teachers' lifetime earnings and their pensions.

### As chair of the ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee, what are your concerns on the issue of public service pensions?

- The Trident report shows that the current pension scheme is already sustainable but Government plans would see new teachers pay more into their pension than they would receive in benefit.
- The triple income cut to retired teachers' pensions completed a 10% cut in pension in real terms since 2008. This is even more difficult for those on reduced pensions because they did not teach for the full 40 years.
- Pension parity has been broken. After Margaret Thatcher broke pension parity in England retired teachers there became “the new poor”.
- The proposal in Budget 2011 to cut tax relief on both pension contributions and on the “pension levy” would result in a reduction of up to €1,700 per annum for existing teachers.

### How important is education in the current economic crisis?

Investment in education is vital for quality jobs, for personal development, for the future of Ireland. Failure to invest in education can lead to a much bigger cost, “picking up the pieces” through emergency services.

*Bernadine O'Sullivan is a former ASTI President and current Chair of the ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee.*

# Protecting pensions

The ASTI and the other teacher unions continue to mount a campaign of opposition to plans to introduce a single pension scheme for all new public servants.



*Teachers from the three unions at an important meeting on pensions held in Limerick last month.*

This inferior pension scheme would be based on career average earnings, with increases linked to the Consumer Price Index rather than to increases in salaries.

## A flawed scheme

The three teacher unions commissioned an independent report from the actuarial firm Trident to assess the impact this new pension scheme would have on new teachers' pension prospects. This report pointed out serious flaws in the last Government's proposals:

- A teacher entering the new pension scheme at the beginning of their career would pay more into their pension than they would ever get out. This means that the compulsory scheme may well be open to legal challenge.
- The conditions afforded under the new scheme would not allow it to be approved by the Revenue Commissioners or recognised by the Pensions Board if it were proposed in the private sector.

The three unions presented the Trident report to the Department of Finance, which did not take on board any of its recommendations; however, neither did they take issue with any of its findings. The unions also met with the main political parties to outline our justifiable opposition to the scheme.

## Political promises

The legislation required to introduce the new public service pension scheme had not been published when the last Dáil was dissolved and the General Election called.

In advance of the election, the teacher unions wrote to the main political parties to seek a commitment that, if in government, they would revisit the new public service single scheme and listen to the unions' legitimate concerns.

While Fine Gael has publicly stated that it will proceed with the outgoing

Government's new pension scheme, it has also indicated to the teacher unions that it would review the Trident report and engage with the concerns of unions on the matter.

## What can we do?

With a new government willing to hear our concerns, now is our chance to take a strong stance in opposition to the proposed pension reform and in favour of protecting the teaching profession.

These pension proposals are just one part of an attack on new teachers' conditions. New teachers' starting salaries have also been slashed by 14%, meaning that we have teachers working side by side in schools on two different salary scales. This is a decisive moment for the future of teachers' pensions and for equality in the teaching profession.

We need to ensure that the new government knows that the ASTI's 18,000 members are strongly resistant to the new pension scheme. Play your part by informing yourself and by getting involved in the ASTI campaign to protect teachers' pensions.

A series of regional meetings have taken place around the country by the three teacher unions. Members were given accurate information about the current public service pension and updated about the seriously disimproved pension terms that are threatened for new entrants. Make sure your friends and family are fully and factually informed and look out for other ways you can get involved in the campaign on the ASTI website and in *Nuacht*.

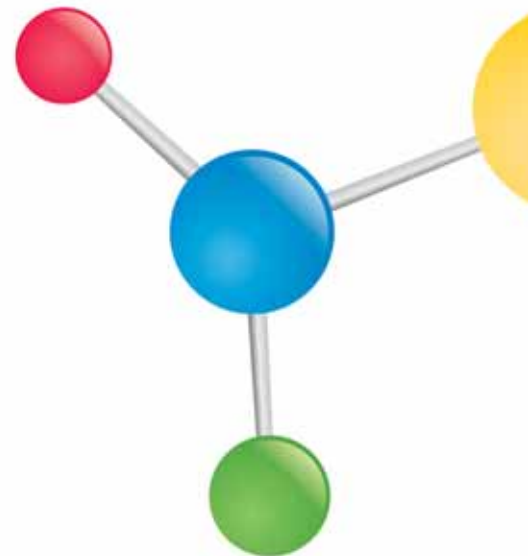
The campaign will grow over the coming months as we continue to lobby the new government on the issue. A joint teacher union symposium on pensions will be held on March 23. Look out for more information on this event and on the pensions campaign on the ASTI website.

Defending young and newly qualified teachers against unprecedented attacks on their terms and conditions of employment is a key theme of this year's Annual Convention in Cork.

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# Paths to the classroom

With many teachers finding it very difficult to get work, ASTIR talks to some recent graduates who are developing their skills pending their return to the classroom.



## Five recent graduates are teaching in Tanzania

The idea of volunteering abroad appeals to many teachers, but what is the reality of such a big step out of your comfort zone? Five NUI Galway teacher graduates are this year finding out that, along with strange food and 'interesting' toilet facilities, the experience offers huge fulfilment and great opportunity.

Aisling Mitchell, Belinda Crossan, Aine Staunton, Aaron Cunningham and James Lovett are spending a year teaching children in Suji Village, Tanzania, as part of an Irish charity initiative run by Tanzanian Village Renewal.

Set in beautiful mountainous terrain, Suji is a rural community with no industry. Its inhabitants survive by growing vegetables or bananas. Those who are lucky enough to get an education find jobs away from the village and send money home to their relatives. Nobody owns a car and access to the village is by minibus on a steep dirt road.

Aine Staunton recalls the day the group first took that trip: "The welcome we received will live with me forever. I was overwhelmed by what I saw and heard; our bus was surrounded by students, screaming and shouting for us. They sang and danced for us and their dances and songs were amazing!"



The local excitement is understandable when you realise that before Tanzanian Village Renewal's involvement in Suji, the local Malindi Secondary School had 450 students and only two teachers. The graduates' first job on arrival to Suji in December was to take part in building an extension to the school, along with 10 other volunteers. In between laying bricks, the students taught classes and got acquainted with their new surroundings, which caused some of them more than a

little stress. Aine says she would be lying if she said she didn't cry when she saw what was to be her home for the next year. The house the teachers were to share was bare and basic: the kitchen consisted of a sink, there were some beds and chairs and that was it. In contrast, however, James was expecting worse!

As well as teaching a variety of subjects including science, geography, history and English in the school, the five also teach English to adults in the village. Aaron even manages to find time to coach the school soccer team, who play in Manchester United jerseys. "The students are keen to learn, which makes it quite easy for us to teach," says Aine. "But facilities are not great – there is a serious lack of school books, or anything that resembles a school classroom really."

The commitment shown by the Irish teachers has caused many pupils who had left the school to return and the numbers enrolling in the school are rising. For the first time there is a fourth form in the school – prior to this students simply left education.

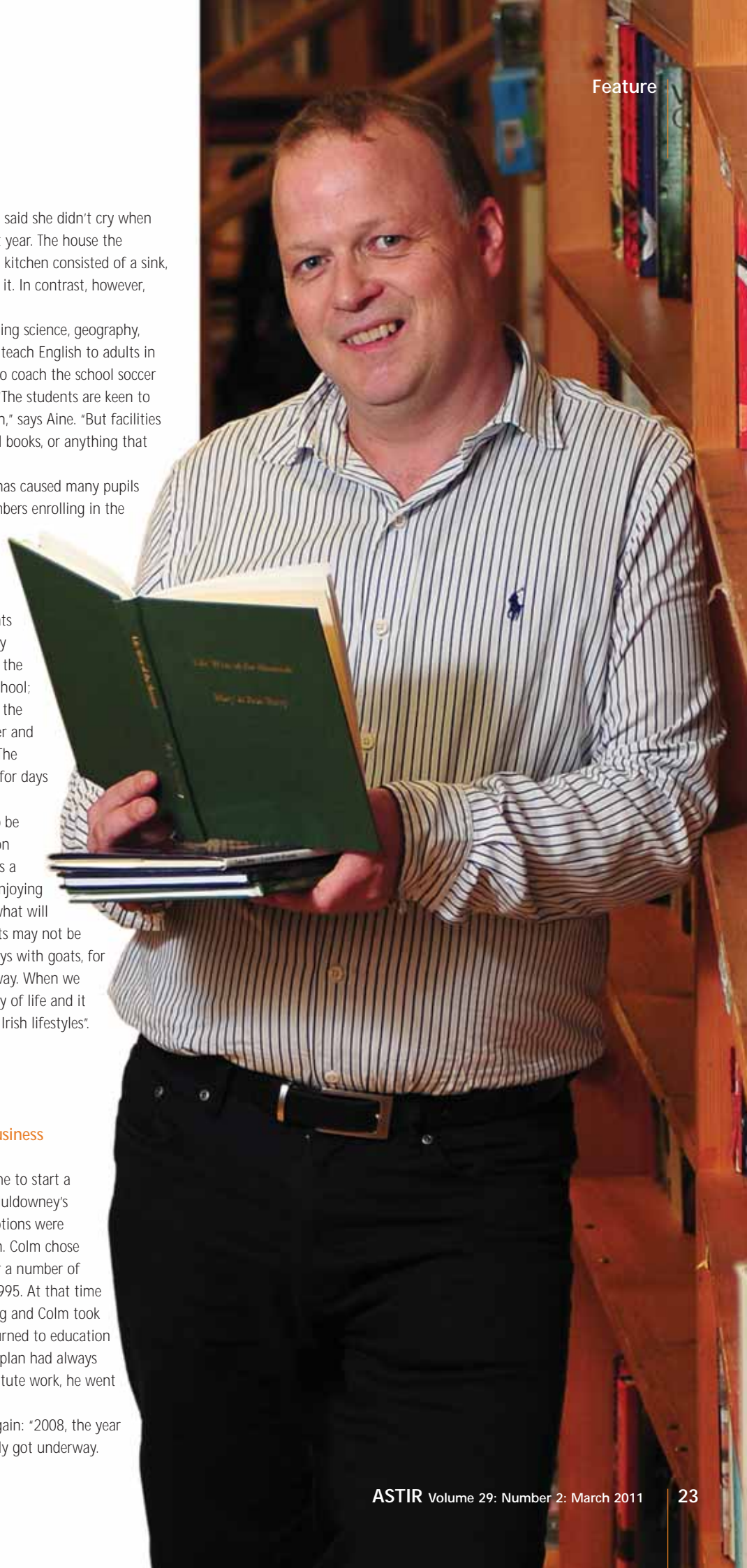
'Struggle' is a word the headmaster of Malindi Secondary School uses regularly, telling students they must "struggle to pay fees, struggle to pay for uniforms and struggle to learn throughout the year". The children's struggles continue after school; they leave early on Fridays to climb further up the mountain into the forest where they cut timber and carry it back to the village for use in cooking. The village does have electricity, but it is often off for days and is used only for light, and not to cook.

As well as a lack of what we might consider to be basic necessities, the teachers also face isolation and loneliness. But, Aine says, none of this puts a damper on their adventure: "All in all we are enjoying our time here and we are looking forward to what will unfold along the way. Our memorable moments may not be traditional – hunting rats, or taking bus journeys with goats, for example – but we will not forget the African way. When we return to Ireland we'll have adapted to this way of life and it will probably be a shock to return to the crazy Irish lifestyles".

For more information see  
<http://tanzanianvillagerenewal.blogspot.com>.

### Colm Muldowney has started his own business – Tell Tales

Right now may not be the most opportune time to start a business, but timing has never been in Colm Muldowney's favour. When he left school in the late '80s, options were largely limited to unemployment or emigration. Colm chose the latter, moving to England and Australia for a number of years before returning to settle in Galway in 1995. At that time the first green shoots of recovery were showing and Colm took advantage. He found work in logistics and returned to education part-time to study history and economics. His plan had always been to teach and, after taking on some substitute work, he went on to complete his teacher training in UCC. Unfortunately, bad timing struck Colm once again: "2008, the year I started my PGDE, was the year the crash really got underway.



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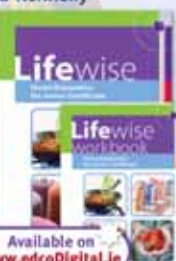


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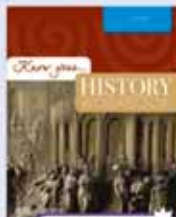


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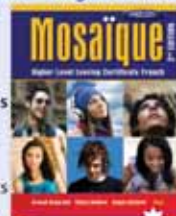


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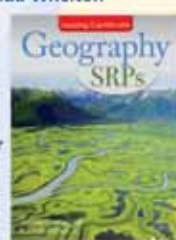


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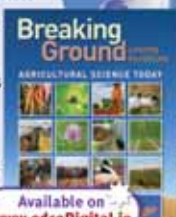


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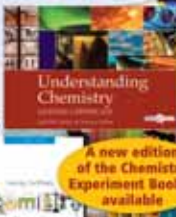


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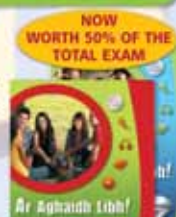


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When I took up teaching, there was little fear about gaining employment: before I even finished my first degree, I was finding subbing work. By the time I finished, opportunities were very few and far between". Colm persisted, taking up subbing and exam correction work last year, but examining the situation – with his economist hat on – he didn't see things getting much better. He decided it was time to take a different route. Colm has channelled his educational and academic experience into a new business venture, Tell Tales, which records family stories and experiences in the words of those who lived them. It is not an ideal time to start a business, admits Colm, but it's something he felt he had to do: "I needed to take control of my work life and the opportunities just weren't available. This is a very exciting service and I am happy to be doing it, even though I had always hoped to teach. I can't see a return to teaching being a viable option for at least two to three years. With small children I need stability, so if the teaching landscape doesn't change, it would be brilliant if this business became a success".

Colm's business crafts family stories and experiences into personalised hardbound books for future generations to enjoy and treasure: "In today's society families are more disconnected, geographically and emotionally, and our family heritage is in danger of being lost forever. People don't think their stories are worth telling, but everybody has extraordinary stories and we all like talking about ourselves. You hear fascinating stories. It's about capturing and preserving our own histories and passing that legacy on," explains Colm.


### Return to the classroom

Not giving up on the classroom just yet, Colm is hoping to organise workshops for Transition Year students to teach them to capture their own family stories: "It is the little stories that really bring history to life. How emigration really affected people in the 1950s, how people were treated abroad, the sadness of leaving, the sacrifices that generation made for us – all of that really impacts through individual stories. This social history isn't covered in history books, but they are great stories that tell you something important".

Colm recorded his own grandmother's story 15 years ago. It's on tape somewhere, he says, but what good is it there? Cassettes and CDs are obsolete, while books, the oldest medium there is, will be around for a long time to come: "For young people today, media is so instant, but when they turn 25 or 30, they will want to know about their parents or grandparents. No matter what, in future years, you will be able to hold a book and look back – and so can your children. These stories are about more than genealogy: they're about why people lived the lives they lived, they're about keeping in touch from generation to generation".

Each generation of teacher has something new to offer to education and to the next generation, says Colm: "While you get better at any job over time, new graduates have distinct things to offer too – ICT skills is just one practical example. If we are to truly incorporate ICT in teaching – as they say we should – we need to have teachers who have used it for years and learned through it themselves. There is a lot of scope for taking on more teachers, even for a one-year placement following graduation. New teachers need that and the profession, like all professions, needs fresh faces".

*Tell Tales records family stories and crafts personalised hardbound books for future generations to treasure. For more on Colm's venture see [www.telltale.com](http://www.telltale.com).*



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For all other enquiries please contact the course administrators on 01 896 3568/1290 or by email to [master.education@tcd.ie](mailto:master.education@tcd.ie)



# Supporting all students

New guidelines for supporting the learning, behavioural, social and emotional needs of all students in second-level schools were recently issued. We take a look at the guidelines and see how they fit with existing procedures for accessing NEPS services.



All students have needs, including the need to feel a sense of belonging, the need to communicate and to be communicated with, and the need to be respected and valued. That is the basis of new guidelines from the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS), which offer advice to schools on ways of meeting such needs in all students, including those with additional requirements.

The guidelines draw from good practice observed by NEPS staff in schools, and their overarching concern is to help schools and teachers to create structures and systems that are supportive of all students, and in doing so to identify and meet the needs of students who require additional support.

## Support for all – the whole class stage

The first stage approach outlined in the guidelines relates to the need to offer all students high-quality learning and behaviour support, within the context of mainstream classes and everyday schooling. The idea is to create positive environments that encourage learning and to monitor students in that context, in order to identify those who require extra support.

Creating this environment will involve reacting to student needs and requirements as a group, and considering how best to accommodate and encourage all students effectively in the classroom. While this will largely be through non-intrusive elements and good practice teaching methodologies already employed by teachers, teachers should also at this stage monitor student progress, share concerns with colleagues and collaborate with specialist teachers to identify students requiring additional support.

An initial step in identifying such students is the school-wide screening of student attainments, aptitudes and behaviour. The guidelines suggest ways to do this and point out that collaboration between primary and post-primary schools will be important in helping to identify those students who might be at risk.

This first stage is really an in-school phase and NEPS would be involved only in a consultation role. Schools may ask NEPS psychologists to advise on appropriate means of identifying at-risk students, and about further developing whole-school policies, or NEPS staff may brief school personnel on relevant information.

## Schools without access to NEPS

The original aim of the NEPS service was to provide local and accessible psychological services to all schools in the country. To date, however, resources have not been provided to accommodate this aim and Budget 2011 has now capped the number of psychologists employed by NEPS at the current level of 178.

As an interim measure, schools without access to NEPS psychologists can commission individual psychological assessments for students to be paid for by NEPS. Schools may only commission psychologists who are on the Scheme for Commissioning of Psychological Assessments (SCPA) panel and they may only commission them for assessment purposes. Schools may commission one assessment per 50 students enrolled. For more information see the NEPS section on [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

### Support for some – school support stage

For some students, general support may not be enough. Where students are identified as needing additional support, relevant teachers – including the learning support or resource teacher, head of year or guidance counsellor – will collaborate to determine a solution. At this stage a NEPS psychologist may be involved in consulting with staff about individual students or groups of students. It is important that there is one person responsible for the overall development of the intervention plan.

The approach used will then depend on the individual student or student group. Interventions should be planned in consultation with the students and their parents, and may include in-class accommodations to support learning and social interaction, participation in learning support, a reduced subject load, participation in a social skills group, etc. The possibility of addressing the students' needs within the mainstream classroom should be fully explored before any withdrawal is decided upon. Subject teachers will contribute at this stage by implementing agreed strategies in their classes and by communicating progress and concerns to the co-ordinating teacher.

### Support for a few – consultation and assessment stage

Typically, 2-5% of the school population will have significant difficulties and may require intensive, individualised interventions. These students may or may not fall within the terms of the EPSEN Act and may or may not have been identified as requiring additional support in primary school. It is at this stage that specific student interaction with the NEPS psychologist and psychological assessment may come into play. Students will be referred to NEPS through the school principal and the NEPS educational psychologist will play a key role, in collaboration with teachers, parents and students, in clarifying problems and finding solutions. Other professionals external to the school, such as speech and language therapists or specialist doctors, may also be involved in working with the students directly or they may act in an advisory role.

*Interventions should be planned in consultation with students and parents, and may include in-class accommodations to support learning and social interaction, participation in learning support, a reduced subject load, participation in a social skills group, etc.*

These external professionals will collaborate with teachers, parents and students in planning and monitoring interventions that take account of the student's strengths and address their identified needs. Interventions and plans should be reviewed regularly and parents should be invited to contribute to this review.

Where a psychologist's report is prepared, all teachers should be made aware of it. Teachers should also be made aware of the student's individualised and specialist programmes, and any strategies to be implemented in class, such as differentiated homework, waiver in spelling, etc.

To read the guidelines or access the related resources see [www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie).

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# New model of inspection – what's involved

The first Management, Leadership and Learning school inspections begin this month. We let you know what to expect and how schools that took part in the trial phase found the experience.

Last year the Inspectorate began a pilot programme to examine school management, leadership and learning in a whole-school context. This pilot forms the basis for the newly established Whole School Evaluation – Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE-MLL) inspections to commence this month. WSE-MLL is not a replacement for the standard WSE model, which has operated in schools since 2003. It is a separate and new inspection process with a focus on management and leadership and the quality of teaching and learning.

## WHAT'S INVOLVED?

### Before the inspection days

Your principal will be notified of the planned inspection three weeks prior to the in-school evaluation. The assigned inspector will outline the format of the evaluation and arrange dates for the administration of questionnaires, meetings and evaluation visits. The principal will have to provide some school-related documents such as minutes of recent board of management meetings, the school's code of behaviour, the school timetable, etc.

### Pre-evaluation meetings

In advance of the in-school inspection, the inspection team will meet with members of the Board of Management and the Patron/Trustees to find out about the operation of the school and the school context.

### Parent and student involvement

Questionnaires will be distributed to a sample of parents and students in order to gauge their impression of the operation of the school. Representatives of the Parents' Council or the parents' nominees on the Board of Management will also be invited to meet with the inspection team.

### Teacher questionnaires

Questionnaires may also be distributed to teachers to gather their perspectives about their own work and about aspects of management, leadership and learning in the school. Confidentiality is assured and only aggregate data resulting from the questionnaires is provided to the school.

### In-school inspection

The in-school inspection phase of the evaluation normally lasts three days. The inspection team will use that time to evaluate the quality of school management and leadership, the quality of teaching and learning, the implementation of recommendations from previous evaluations, and the school's self-evaluation process and capacity for school improvement.

### School documents

During the in-school phase the inspection team will examine a selection of relevant school documents. These may include the school plan, documentation relating to child protection, subject plans for each of the subject departments, minutes of staff meetings, etc.



*Over two-thirds of teachers whose classes were observed by an inspector perceived the inspection process as affirmative and supportive of good practice in the school.*

## View from the school

Teachers in schools that underwent WSE-MLL inspections last year as part of a pilot phase were broadly positive about their experience.

An ASTI survey of the schools involved found that most believed the process to have achieved its objectives, and over two-thirds of teachers whose classes were observed by an inspector perceived the inspection process as affirmative and supportive of good practice in the school. While half of classroom teachers reported concern about the short notice for classroom observation, most were satisfied with the manner in which the inspector observed the teaching and learning in their classrooms.

### *Meetings and interviews*

The team will typically meet with senior management, and groups of some of the teachers involved in management and planning activities and student support. A focus group of students may also be convened to give an insight into day-to-day school life from the student's perspective.

### *Classroom observation*

The inspection team will observe teaching and learning in a range of lessons in order to evaluate the overall quality of teaching and learning in the school and to gather evidence on other whole-school matters. A draft schedule of lessons to be observed will be provided at the start of each day while the evaluation is ongoing. The focus of this classroom observation is different from stand-alone subject inspection because there is greater emphasis on general aspects of effective teaching and learning than on subject-specific issues. The focus is on aspects of teaching methodology, classroom management, classroom atmosphere and learning within the lessons observed.

The quality of planning and preparation at individual teacher, subject department and whole-school level will also be reviewed. Teachers may be asked to present written plans or schemes of work on a per term and per year basis. Written plans for individual lessons are not required; however, during classroom observation inspectors will look for evidence that lessons have been well prepared in terms of their content, structure, pacing, and methodology and assessment procedures.

Following classroom observation, the inspector will offer verbal feedback to individual teachers.

### *Interaction with students*

Inspectors will interact with students in a variety of settings. In class, this may involve targeted or open questioning, or the evaluation of skills, or provision of tasks. These interactions are designed to provide the inspector with first-hand insight into the level of students' learning and achievement, and an understanding of student experiences in school. The inspection team may also review samples of students' work.

Three-quarters of teachers felt that inspectors displayed an understanding of the day-to-day realities of classroom teaching and two-thirds felt satisfied that a representative sample of students' work was reviewed. However, only 40% of teachers believe that inspection visits over a limited period provide a valid 'snapshot' of the overall teaching and learning in the school.

The impact of the inspection process on time resources and the stress resulting from preparation for the inspection were major concerns among teachers questioned. While most teachers felt adequately informed of the inspection process by their principal, over half felt ill-informed as to the criteria inspectors would refer to in the observation of classes. One concern expressed by a number of teachers observed was the perceived limited knowledge of inspectors in relation to specific subject areas.

### **After the inspection**

Following the in-school evaluation, the inspection team will compile a draft report, which will be sent to the Principal and Board of Management/VEC. The Principal and Chairperson/CEO will be asked to draw attention to any errors of fact in the draft report.

Post-evaluation meetings will be held with the school's principal and deputy principals, members of teaching staff, members of the Board of Management and a representative of the Patron or Trustees. The main findings of the evaluation will be communicated at these meetings and they will also allow for clarification and discussion on how the school can implement recommendations.

*Teachers may be asked to present written plans or schemes of work on a per term and per year basis.*

The final WSE-MLL report will then issue to the school principal, Board of Management, Trustees, the Parents' Association and the Student Council. The school has 20 days after the issue of the final report to submit a school response.

### **WHAT NEXT?**

The Inspectorate encourages all members of the school community to reflect on the report, giving equal consideration to the strengths identified and to the recommendations for further development. The outcomes of the WSE-MLL should inform and complement school self-evaluation, and should be used by the school to improve the overall quality of the school's work.

*The ASTI will continue to monitor the implementation of WSE-MLL. Please let us know about your experience – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).*

# ASTI responds to proposed curriculum reform

ASTIR offers some recent updates and developments regarding curriculum-related issues.

## Junior cycle review

The consultation process on the junior cycle review discussion paper, 'Innovation and Identity', is now over. The main issues to emerge include the need to retain the junior cycle's breadth of learning and to include subjects that are practical and relevant.

Recommendations resulting from the consultation process include:

- the provision of a core curriculum with choices that include locally devised curriculum options;
- reduced subject content and/or integrated subject content;
- more emphasis on practical/creative subjects and on cross-curricular learning;
- an emphasis on basic and key skills, including ICT; and,
- recognition of learning inside and outside the classroom.

The first draft of the new curriculum framework will be presented to the NCCA later this month. A seminar for ASTI representatives on the NCCA will then discuss the draft curriculum framework. The ASTI has also conducted a series of focus groups with teachers around the country to gauge teachers' views on the issue of junior cycle review. These views will inform ASTI input into the implementation of the revised curriculum.

## Literacy and numeracy plan

Late last year the Department of Education launched a plan to improve student literacy and numeracy. This plan has been the subject of discussion at NCCA meetings, where the ASTI has cautioned against the plan's over-reliance on testing as a solution to perceived declines in standards. It is the ASTI's view that improving literacy standards is a complex challenge and the proposals in the national plan should be considered as a package, which will require external supports to schools as well as increased emphasis on up-skilling teachers and ensuring early interventions for students who are experiencing difficulties.

## Research into differentiation

PISA reports have underlined that schools in Ireland play a significant role in mediating for differences in student backgrounds. PISA 2006 stated that irrespective of school type, only in Ireland and Finland could parents be confident that all schools were performing to a broadly similar level. However, the most recent PISA research has identified emerging trends of increasingly differentiated enrolment patterns between schools, as well as differentiated achievement levels within and between schools. While the decline is not significant, the NCCA has commissioned precautionary research in reaction to this worrying trend.

## Curriculum updates

### PROJECT MATHS

This year nearly 6,000 teachers will again take part in in-service training for Project Maths. Specific training will also be provided to non-specialist teachers of maths. A 'composite' syllabus containing all the strands of Project Maths is being prepared and will issue to all schools in September. Mock examination papers were issued to the 24 Project Maths pilot schools in early February. The NCCA has commissioned an independent survey of students' attitudes to and experiences of the new Project Maths syllabus.

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

A draft syllabus for Leaving Certificate physical education (PE) and a draft curriculum framework for senior cycle physical education are now ready for consultation. It is proposed that Leaving Certificate PE will be examined at ordinary and higher level, with two assessment components: a personal performance project and a written examination.

The assessment for the personal performance project is premised on a model of continuous assessment by the PE teacher. The ASTI will strongly

resist any attempt to have teachers assess their own students for the purposes of allocation of marks in State examinations. This would be contrary to ASTI policy, which is aimed at maintaining and assuring the objectivity of the State examinations.

### LEAVING CERT SCIENCES

An NCCA proposal for second component assessment in the science subjects at Leaving Cert was published in February. The proposed practical assessment would take the form of 90-minute practical tests comprising a series of short tasks, drawn from within the syllabus. Candidates will be required to follow instructions, collect data, make observations and, ultimately, make deductions. Candidates will record their data, observations and deductions on a task sheet, which will be externally marked. It is envisioned that the allocation of marks for the second component should not be more than 20-25%. Draft syllabuses for the three Leaving Cert science subjects have been issued for consultation. The ASTI urges science teachers to read these important documents and communicate their views to ASTI representatives on the NCCA course committees – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).

# Just making you aware

ASTI member KAREN KEOGH is one of many teachers collaborating with students to raise awareness of important issues in their schools and communities.

We hear the phrase 'raising awareness' all the time. It is usually the first step in any campaign for action. In the ASTI, we spend a great deal of time raising awareness about the importance of education, the impact of education cuts, and the need for more teachers.

Of course, schools, teachers and students are all too aware of those issues, so schools around the country engage in initiatives to raise awareness of a whole host of other important issues – issues affecting their own lives and communities, and those affecting people living thousands of miles away.

## Changing society

Such school initiatives can have a powerful impact on public attitude, says Dr James O'Higgins Norman, lecturer in education at DCU: "Research shows that young people in the teenage years start to form and consolidate their opinions and attitudes, and they begin to form their own identities. In that sense, this is the time for schools and society to provide opportunities to promote the values they would like to perpetuate in citizens".

During this time too, young people begin to turn away from the influence of parents and authority figures and towards that of their peer group. So, says Dr O'Higgins Norman, initiatives that work through peer groups are more likely to impact and messages are more likely to last when they come from one young person to another.

## Spreading the word

Karen Keogh is working with students from Newtown School in Waterford to raise awareness of organ donation and the need for donors to discuss organ donation with their next of kin.

The students took on the programme as part of their Transition Year module in holistic health after a visit to the dialysis unit in Waterford Regional Hospital. "They were blown away by what they saw, the information they received and the attitudes of the people they met there," says Karen. "It really highlighted to them the importance of organ donation and the need to get the word out."

While 90% of people are in favour of organ donation, only 30% carry organ donation cards and, as the students discovered, many do not realise that a person's next of kin has the ultimate say on their organ donation.



Students from Newtown School highlight the organ donation text number.



As no curriculum subject specifically deals with the topic of organ donation, the group decided to work with the school's drama department to create a short presentation to spread their campaign message. They presented the piece to class groups and to the health promotion class in WIT. Social media has given a huge boost to spreading the campaign message and that, Karen says, is where the students became the teachers!

## Great support

As well as raising their awareness of organ donation through this programme, the students have also been introduced to marketing, promotions and radio. Before Christmas the group forged a partnership with local radio station WLR FM. They recorded vox pops with the public on organ donation, interviewed dialysis patients and transplant patients, and recorded endorsements from well known personalities. These radio pieces were played on WLR FM on March 10 – the date the students designated as 'Donor Discussion Day'.

Karen says she is not surprised by the students' hard work or by the maturity they have shown, but she is struck by the response they have received: "People are delighted to support us; I think that's really interesting. If people see young people getting involved and taking the initiative, they are happy to support them. The students get a real kick out of that and it spurs them to continue. The students put so much work into the project, but if it makes a difference to even one or two lives, it will be worth it".

Find out more on Twitter [@health\\_messages](#) or at [www.facebook.com/donordiscussion](http://www.facebook.com/donordiscussion).

# Current issues

Members' questions on the Croke Park Agreement, oral Irish and pensions.



Everything you need to know about how the Croke Park Agreement will be implemented is covered in a dedicated section on the ASTI website. See [www.asti.ie/croke-park-agreement-how-will-it-work](http://www.asti.ie/croke-park-agreement-how-will-it-work) or click the link on the homepage.

## I am due to get a CID next year – will the Croke Park Agreement affect my entitlement?

No, a teacher's entitlement to a CID is not affected by the Croke Park Agreement. If you meet all the criteria for the award of a CID, including the ongoing need for your post in your school, you should receive a CID in September.

In March all schools should have informed the Department of Education and Skills of those teachers to whom a CID will be granted in the 2011/12 school year.

## How will seniority be determined for redeployment?

The identification of teachers for redeployment depends on seniority and the needs of the school. Suitable teachers who wish to opt for voluntary redeployment will be identified for redeployment first.

In the first instance the school/VEC should ensure that a seniority list for redeployment purposes is drawn up. In the event that the school concludes that it is not possible to cope without the most junior teacher on this list, it will review the position of the second most junior teacher in a like manner, and so on until a teacher suitable for redeployment is identified.

Old style 'permanent' teachers and teachers on CID contracts have exactly the same employment rights and conditions. The redeployment scheme does allow a more senior teacher to be redeployed where the school can show that it cannot cope without the junior member.

## In relation to the use of the 33 hours, how exactly will a 'consensus' among staff be determined?

School management must consult with staff about the use of the 33 hours. It is envisaged that a meeting of all teachers and the school management would take place to discuss the calendar prior to the commencement of the new school year (for example in May of the previous school year). This planning meeting could also be used to determine whether or not there was consensus to use any of these hours in blocks of more than two or outside the 167 days.

Members should await further information from ASTI Head Office before engaging in local school discussions on any aspects of the implementation of the Croke Park Agreement. ASTI Head Office will update members as soon as possible.

## What is the ASTI's position in relation to oral Irish exams at Junior Cert?

The ASTI supports the use of a wide range of assessment techniques in the State Examinations, providing that they involve the external setting of questions, conduct and marking.

ASTI policy with regard to the optional Junior Cert oral examination is that ASTI members do not award a mark to their own students for the purposes of the State Examinations. This is to ensure that the objectivity and public acceptability of the Examinations is maintained. ASTI members, therefore, should not participate in awarding marks in the optional oral Irish examination in the Junior Certificate Examination 2011. Teachers should not facilitate *ad hoc* arrangements for Junior Cert orals in Gaelige. Following sustained pressure from the ASTI, the Department of Education has now convened a working group to devise a standardised procedure for the conduct of the optional oral examination in Gaelige in the Junior Certificate Examination in 2011. The ASTI will provide clarification on such procedures to its members at the earliest opportunity.

## What changes did the Budget make to pension arrangements for teachers?

Budget 2011 extended the grace period for the 'pre-cut salary pension calculation' to the end of February 2012. This means that teachers who retire before that date will have their lump sum calculated based on their salary before the pay cut. Teachers retiring after this date will have their lump sum based on post-cut salary. There has been no cut to the lump sum and only lump sums over €200,000 will be taxed.

For those teachers who have already retired, Budget 2011 imposed a cut in pension payments of an average of 4%. The first €12,000 of pension will not be affected. Payments between €12,001 and €24,000 are reduced by 6%, a 9% reduction applies between €24,001 and €60,000, and payment above €60,001 is reduced by 12%.





# Your payslip explained

You may have noticed some changes to your payslip since January – not least the reduction in the net pay amount. We explain what's going on.

**1 GROSS PAY DETAILS**  
All teachers are paid fortnightly on every second Thursday.

### Basic pay

For teachers on the incremental scale or those with regular part-time contracts, this will refer to a proportion of your yearly salary, based on a two-week pay period. For teachers who are paid on a pro-rata basis, this will reflect the number of hours you worked during the two-week pay period as you are paid an hourly rate for these hours.

### Allowances

Allowances paid in respect of posts of responsibility, degree allowances, and other special allowances are detailed here. See the salary section of the ASTI website to find out more about salary and allowances – [www.asti.ie](http://www.asti.ie).

**2 DEDUCTIONS**  
Deductions, including tax, PRSI and the Universal Social Charge, are detailed here. Payments towards your pension are also included, along with other at-source deductions such as: additional voluntary contributions to pension; certain savings schemes; and, certain insurance schemes, including salary protection, credit union deductions and ASTI subscription.

PRSI rates remained unchanged in the last Budget. However, PRSI relief for pension contributions was abolished.

**3 PRSI CLASS**  
All employees, whether full-time or part-time, are liable for PRSI. All teachers employed since April 1995 are Class A PRSI contributors. Class

A is the normal rate at which PRSI is paid. Teachers first employed before April 1995 pay D rate PRSI.

**4 TAX CREDIT**  
This refers to the total tax credit you are entitled to for this payroll period, including your PAYE tax credit, individual tax credit, and other credits applied based on your individual circumstances. Notice of your tax credits is sent to you at the beginning of each year by the Revenue Commissioners. Check [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie) for more details of tax credits or to see what you can claim.

Budget 2011 reduced and abolished a number of tax credits, including reducing the PAYE and individual tax credits. As tax credits operate as a discount against your tax liability, this means that you are now paying more income tax.

**5 CUT-OFF POINT**  
Cut-off point refers to the point at which you begin to pay the higher rate of tax. The standard PAYE rate is 20%. You are taxed at this rate on earnings up to your cut-off point. After that point, earnings are taxed at the higher rate of 41%. The figure here indicates the cut-off point for this particular period.

Budget 2011 reduced the standard rate tax band, meaning that you now pay the higher rate of tax on more of your income.

**6 NET PAY**  
This figure indicates how much is actually paid into your bank account after tax, PRSI and other deductions.

**7 YEAR TO DATE TOTALS**  
Year to date totals let you know how much you have earned, paid or been credited to date this tax year. The tax year runs from January 1 to December 31.

## Universal Social Charge

In the last Budget, the Income Levy and Health Levy were abolished and replaced by the Universal Social Charge (USC).

Previously, you would have seen the Income Levy included in the deductions section of your payslip, while the Health Levy was included in the amount of PRSI deducted. From January 1, the USC replaced both and is included as a separate heading on your payslip.

All individuals are liable to pay the USC if their gross annual income is more than €4,004.

For people with income of €4,005 or more the rates will be:

2% on all income up to	€10,036
4% on earnings between	€10,037 and €16,016
7% on any income over	€16,016

Those aged 70 or more and Medical Card holders pay a maximum rate of 4% USC.

# Teacher welfare extended to retired teachers



RSTA President Marie Doyle has been in ongoing correspondence with the Department of Education and Skills (DES) in recent months in relation to the possibility of extending the Employee Assistance Service that is available to teachers so that it would also be available for a period to newly retired teachers. A recent reply from the Occupational Health section of the DES states: "I am pleased to inform you that following discussions with the Employee Assistance Service provider it has been agreed to extend access to the service, with immediate effect, to retired teachers for up to six months post retirement". While it is too late for teachers who retired last September to avail of this service, it will be available to teachers who retire during this school year and in following years. The following, taken from the home page of the Civil Service Employee Assistance Service website, indicates the kind of service that is available.

### Key features of the CSEAS

The Civil Service Employee Assistance Service (CSEAS) provides an internal employee assistance programme to serving and retired civil servants. The service is a work-based professional service, which is designed to assist employees in managing/resolving work-related and personal difficulties, which, if left unattended, might adversely affect attendance, work performance and quality of life.

In recognition of the valued service given by employees to the civil service, the CSEAS is also available to retired staff. Key features of the CSEAS are:

- problem assessment and counselling/referral service for staff;
- advisory service for managers/supervisors;
- information resource; and,
- raising health awareness

CSEAS staff work to a code of practice and are members of the Employee Assistance Professionals Association of Ireland (EAPA IRI). Professional standards apply in relation to confidentiality.

Further details of this service are available at <http://cseas.gov.ie/key-features>.

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### Treatment of new teachers' pensions

The planned cut in pensions for new teachers of over 20% is quite shocking. It could even mean paying into their pensions more than they will get out. Their proposed pay cut (over €170,000 over their career) would reduce 'career average' linked pensions even further. These changes must be strongly opposed.

### Pension cuts explained

Details of how the pension cuts are applied are available in the current RSTA Newsletter and on the RSTA website – [www.rsta-ireland.com](http://www.rsta-ireland.com).

## RSTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, MAY 4, 2011

Thomas MacDonagh House (ASTI Head Office)  
Winetavern St, Dublin 8.

*Please note new time arrangement:*

Reception/tea/coffee at 11.30am

Formal meeting commences at 12 noon

## Seanad election campaign

Even if the Seanad is to be abolished, the Seanad election campaign can still be effectively used to highlight the ongoing Government attack on the pensions of teachers and other public service workers. This attack has nothing to do with current economic problems – it has been ongoing for more than 10 years, an issue highlighted by the ASTI-endorsed Seanad election candidate Bernadine O'Sullivan. In the last Seanad election campaign, Bernadine brought this issue to universal attention and was almost elected on that occasion. Bernadine has been very supportive of RSTA attempts to defend our pensions and has protested with the RSTA outside Dáil Éireann in the past. Now that we have seen how far the Government is prepared to go to attack our pensions, we are glad to know that Bernadine is again running for election. Who will you be voting for?

## Mayo Branch retirement function



*Members of the Mayo Branch of the Retired Secondary Teachers Association of Ireland at their Christmas dinner in Ashford Castle, Cong, Co. Mayo.*



### School of Education

### Post-graduate programmes for teachers

#### Cohort PhD

Students on this four year PhD programme will take six modules spread over three years (three modules in year one; two in year two and one in year three) and complete a doctoral thesis under academic supervision. Modules will run on Friday evenings and Saturdays during years one-to-three of the PhD. There will also be a week-long summer school at the end of years one and three. Candidates with an interest in pursuing this structured cohort doctorate should contact the School of Education directly to discuss their professional experiences and research interests.

Professor Kathy Hall, Head of Education: [k.hall@ucc.ie](mailto:k.hall@ucc.ie)

Dr Paul Conway, Director, Cohort Ph D Programme:

[pconway@education.ucc.ie](mailto:pconway@education.ucc.ie)

Tel: 021 490 2467

Further information is available from [www.ucc.ie/en/study/postgrad/what/acsss/doc/cohort/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/study/postgrad/what/acsss/doc/cohort/)

Applications must be made online at <http://www.pac.ie/ucc> (Course Code: CKH78).

Closing date: Friday, April 1, 2011.

#### M.Ed (Modular)

The M.Ed. Degree (120 credits) is a modularised programme and can be attained through a credit accumulation process. Its focus is on the continuing professional development of teachers at all levels of education. Students can design their own special programme from the available modules to suit their professional specialisation, research areas and personal interests. The programme can be studied in a flexible timescale within a five-year period.

Selection will be based on teaching qualification, academic record, professional experience and the supplementary candidate's statement submitted to the Postgraduate Applications Centre.

Holders of certain post-graduate diplomas are exempt attendance at 60 credits of the taught element of the programme.

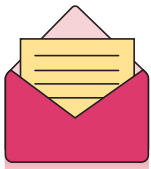
Further information (including a list of modules on offer in 2011/12) is available from [www.ucc.ie/en/study/postgrad/what/acsss/masters/education/](http://www.ucc.ie/en/study/postgrad/what/acsss/masters/education/).

If you require any further clarification please contact Claire Dooley or Anita Cronin at (021) 4902467.

Applications must be made online at <http://www.pac.ie/ucc> (select APPLY - EU TAUGHT).

Course Codes: 120 credit (CKE59) and 60 credit (CKE67)

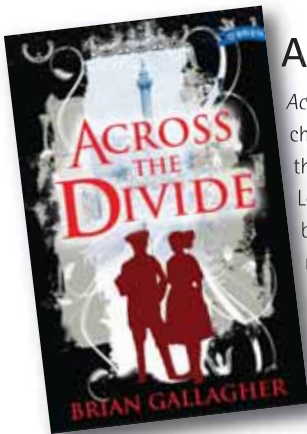
Closing date: Friday, April 1, 2011.



## Noticeboard

### Intercultural calendar

The Jesuit Refugee Service offers a useful resource for teachers who wish to raise awareness and understanding of intercultural and interfaith issues in Ireland. The calendar contains feast days from different faiths, with short explanations, national days, international days, UN celebrations, etc. It is available for €5 from Nicola Morris, Tel: 01-814 8644, or Email: info@jrs.ie.



### Across the divide

*Across the Divide* is a new novel for children by Brian Gallagher that tells the story of Jim Larkin and the Dublin Lockout from a child's perspective. The book and free related teaching resources are available from [www.obrien.ie](http://www.obrien.ie).

### Hamlet podcast

RTE's *Hamlet in Howth* series gives a four-part masterclass on Shakespeare's Hamlet. Check it out at [www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast\\_dramaonone.xml](http://www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast_dramaonone.xml).

### French immersion programmes

Le Français en Ecosse provides French immersion courses for teachers to promote French language and culture throughout Europe. The courses take place in Lyon, Salignac or Rennes, and different levels of French are catered for. All participants receive support from the European Union Comenius/Grundtvig Lifelong Learning Programme available through their National Agency. See [www.lfee.net](http://www.lfee.net) for more information.

### Consider volunteering this summer

Camara Education provides recycled computer hardware and training to schools in East Africa. The charity is currently recruiting volunteers for four- to five-week assignments this July. All training is provided in Dublin, mostly on Saturdays. Fundraising will be required to cover all expenses, including training, accommodation, local travel and flights. For full details, contact Frank, Tel: 01-652 2668, Email: [africa11@camara.ie](mailto:africa11@camara.ie), or log on to: [www.camara.ie](http://www.camara.ie).

### Get involved for autism

World Autism Awareness Day on April 2 will begin a series of national collection days and unique fundraising activities throughout the month of April. Autism Action Ireland would love to enlist the help and support of teachers and students around Ireland to be part of their fundraising team in the community. Find out more at [www.autismireland.ie](http://www.autismireland.ie), or Tel: 087-249 6068.

### Census 2011 for schools

In the lead-up to the 2011 Census, sets of resource materials have been developed for schools to assist teachers and students to learn about the Census and to understand how it impacts on our daily lives in the context of some of the subjects studied at second level. Resources are available in history, CSPE, and geography. See [www.censusatschool.ie](http://www.censusatschool.ie).

### Global exploration

The Global Exploration for Educators Organisation (GEE) is a non-profit organisation that runs professional development travel programmes for teachers. The trips are designed and discounted to be interesting and affordable for teachers. The trips are open to all nationalities of teacher, as well as retired teachers. Teachers are also permitted to bring along a non-educator guest. Detailed information about each trip, including itineraries, costs, travel dates, and more can be found at [www.geeo.org](http://www.geeo.org).

### Fíbín returns

The popular puppeteers are back with their nationwide tour for schools. This year the award-winning company brings you 'An Triail', but this is An Triail as you've never seen it before. A classic, snappy, and at times hilarious production – come and see for yourselves! See [www.fibin.com](http://www.fibin.com) for details.

### By students, for students

Transition Year students from Loreto College Cavan have produced a curriculum-based environmental education pack for primary schools. The pack is available by emailing [TYloreto.2010@yahoo.com](mailto:TYloreto.2010@yahoo.com) or phoning Orla on 086-194 1081.

### The Chemical Sisters

Xperimania is back with two new school competitions focusing on the role of women in chemistry. Secondary school students are invited to produce a portrait of a woman who has made an exciting career as a chemist in their country, or to develop a campaign to bridge the gender gap in chemistry studies. The proposed activities can be integrated either in science lessons or in other lessons such as language and social sciences, or can be organised as a cross-curriculum activity involving several teachers. For more see [www.xperimania.net](http://www.xperimania.net).

### Recognising talent

National Gifted Education Awareness Day will be held on April 8, followed by EU Talent Day on April 9. See [www.giftedandtalented.ie](http://www.giftedandtalented.ie) for more information on these unique events.



## Geraldine Reddan

I first met Geraldine Uniacke when she and her sister Elsie came to Laurel Hill FCJ, Limerick, in September 1955. As it happened, our fathers had been to school together in Cork. Geraldine was born in Portumna, second of five children, but moved to Newcastle West when she was very young, where she attended primary school before spending a year in Ring College. She was a talented student and excelled particularly in languages and maths, which she studied with the greatest of ease. After school, she won a scholarship to UCC where she enjoyed similar success in her studies, finishing with a first-class honours degree in French and Spanish. She and I were in the same French class. When she finished her Higher Diploma in Education in 1964, she started teaching in Laurel Hill Colaiste and spent her entire teaching career there, except for one year in Sion Hill in 1965 when her parents moved to Dublin. In the meantime she had met Don Reddan and started a lifelong love affair, so she returned to Limerick and Laurel Hill and married Don in December 1966. In 1973 we both went to Galway at weekends to study for an MEd in French and, of course, Ger came through with flying colours. To say she was a successful teacher is an understatement. She was diligent and passionate about her work and loved her students. She always remembered each one and delighted in meeting them in their adult life. I worked alongside Geraldine in the French department for a few years, before we both retired in 1998, and it was a very happy time. On her retirement Geraldine became one of the founder members of the Limerick RSTA and was our first secretary under the chairmanship of the late Tim Frawley. She remained a faithful member until illness intervened. Geraldine took up bridge quite early in her married life and applied herself to it with her usual dedication and energy. She became one of the top players in Limerick and was well respected at national level. She decided to start bridge classes in Laurel Hill. These classes became very popular and the students won many of the national inter-schools competitions. Bridge is still being taught, with great success, in Laurel Hill today.

Geraldine's love for her school, work and students was obvious but we all knew what was most important in her life. This, of course, was her love for her devoted husband Don, and her five wonderful sons, Donal, Diarmuid, Alan, Eoin and Cian. All her boys are happy and successful and were always supported by Ger when important decisions had to be made, whether in the fields of work or sport, or matters relating to their personal lives. Their wives became her daughters and her five grandchildren brought her great joy and fulfilment. In a very special way, Ger loved her sisters, Elsie and Carmel, and her brothers, Kevin and Edmund, and was very saddened by Ed's untimely death in 1996. To her many many friends, who loved her very much, Geraldine was a rock. She was honest and practical, loyal and supportive, and always ready to offer sound advice when needed. She had the wonderful gift of giving one her full attention during a conversation, and always seemed to be interested in the most trivial of problems. She became ill with cancer in 1992 to the consternation of herself, her family and friends, and she took a year's leave from school, made a great recovery and enjoyed ten healthy years before cancer struck again in 2002. Happily, with successful treatment, she recovered and enjoyed five good years before her most recent illness. Her patience and stoicism during her last year were exemplary. She never complained and she always greeted every visitor with a lovely smile.

Geraldine passed away on August 22, 2010, about two weeks after her 67th birthday. She was laid to rest in Mungret cemetery near Limerick. She is sadly missed by many. May she rest in peace.

W.R.

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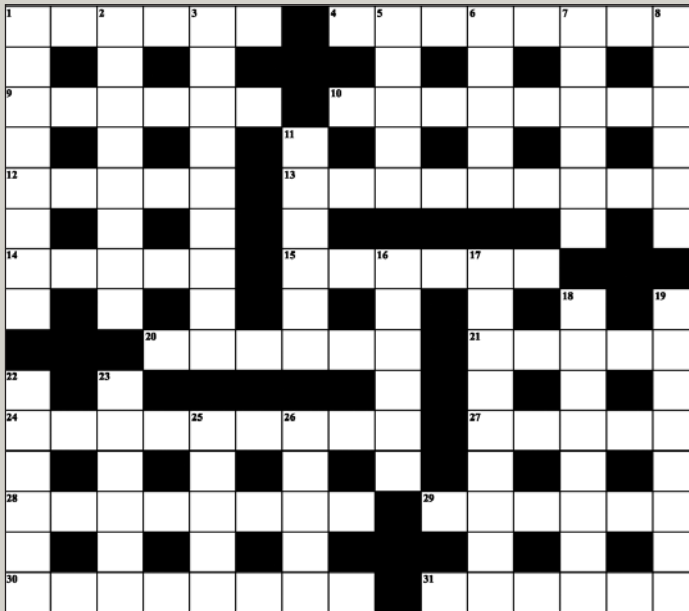
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# ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 1102

€200 prize for the first fully correct answer drawn from the entries.

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## The winner will receive €200

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. 1102, Think Media,  
The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Monday, May 2, 2011

**CLUES ACROSS:**

- 1 See 17 down
- 4 Ham pies put stress on the same hips! (8)
- 9 The Assumption of the Virgin was one of his famous masterpieces (6)
- 10 No bones! (8)
- 12 What kids grow up to be! (4)
- 13 Loner (9)
- 14 Dated (5)
- 15 A minus feeling (6)
- 20 A refugee could be an asylum one (6)
- 21 Is Sue the matter that is in dispute? (5)
- 24 They indicate distance travelled by vehicles (8)
- 27 A seer could wipe out (5)
- 28 Chopin's Prelude No. 15 is also known as the ..... Prelude (8)
- 29 At a guess, customary ways of doing things (6)
- 30 Sal, a rise in your pay cheques, but not in 2011! (8)
- 31 Ed, though late, is joyful and excited (6)

**CLUES DOWN:**

- 1 The grey coat is in a different class (8)
- 2 A magnet ..... iron (8)
- 3 Disraeli was the British PM before him (9)
- 5 I most of all feel the damp (5)
- 6 Response to getting a ring! (5)
- 7 Could be a baby one! (6)
- 8 Seated in a dignified manner (6)
- 11 A greeting you shouldn't use at airport! (6)
- 16 His run into an influx (6)
- 17 down, 23 down, 1 across: You'll find it on your salary slip! (9,6,6)
- 18 It definitely isn't fast food! (8)
- 19 Late (8)
- 22 So drab to be on these management bodies! (6)
- 23 See 17 down
- 25 "We are two lions littered in one day, And I the ..... and more terrible" (5) (Shakespeare: *Julius Caesar*)
- 26 Split to be tied! (5)

### Solution to ASTIR crossword No. 1101

**Across**

- 1. Throne
- 4. Apparent
- 9. Discus
- 10. Existing
- 12. Ledge
- 13. Delineate
- 15. Ado
- 16. React
- 17. Rancid
- 22. Esprit
- 24. Taupe
- 27. Ire
- 28. Atavistic
- 31. Swift
- 32. Debonair
- 33. Canape
- 34. Lonicera
- 35. Aeneas

**Down**

- 1. Toddlers
- 2. Residual
- 3. Nauseates
- 5. Pixel
- 6. Arson
- 7. Elijah
- 8. Tagged
- 11. Adorer
- 14. Inc
- 18. Notice
- 19. Intestate
- 20. Mutilate
- 21. Feathers
- 23. PPS
- 25. Handel
- 26. Carbon
- 29. Ionic
- 30. Trier

Congratulations to the winner of Crossword No. 1101:  
Siobhan Quigley, St David's School, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. Wicklow Branch Member.

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