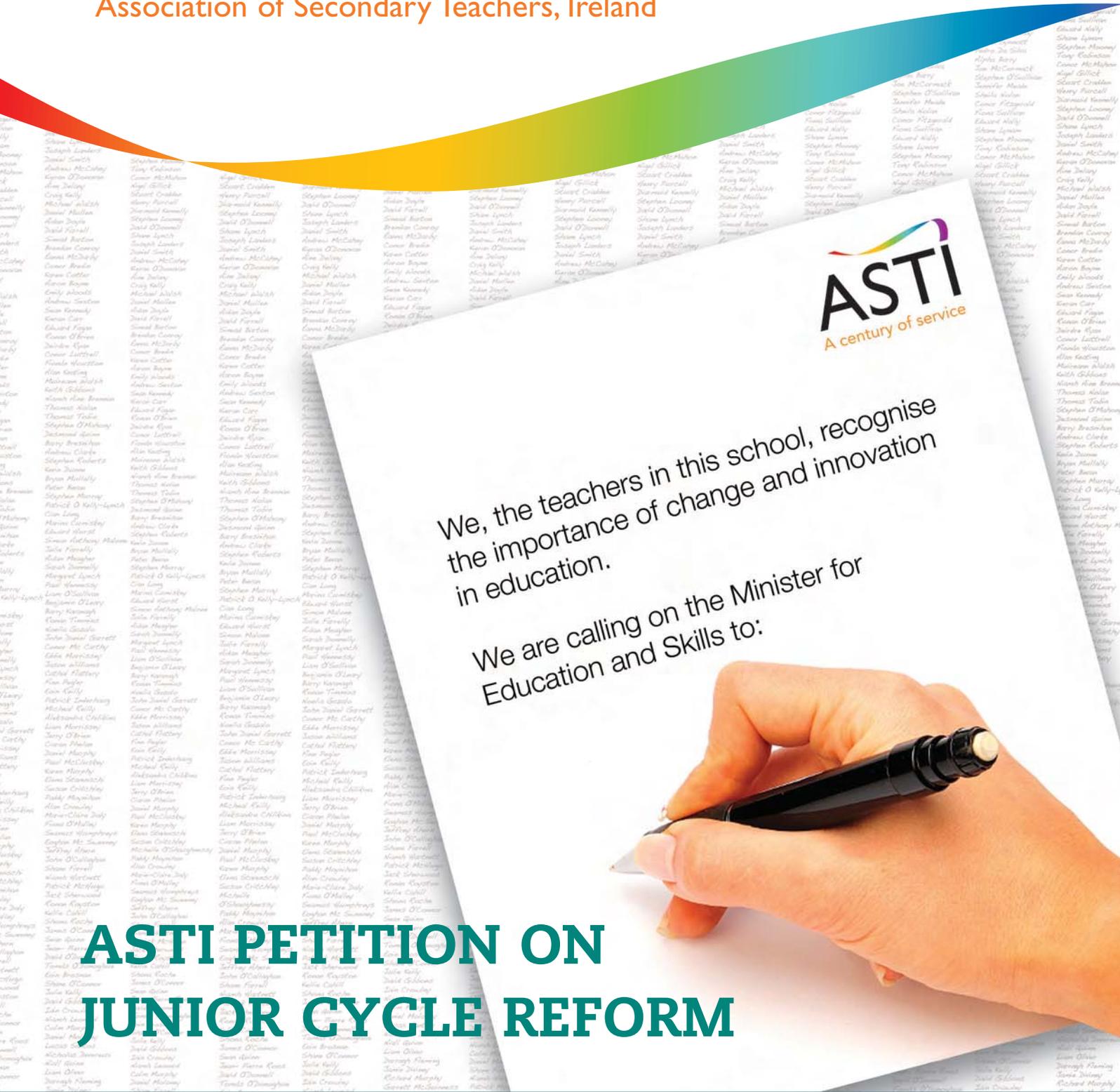


ASTIR

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



We, the teachers in this school, recognise the importance of change and innovation in education.

We are calling on the Minister for Education and Skills to:

ASTI PETITION ON JUNIOR CYCLE REFORM

Budget 2014 – what does it mean for you?

Haddington Road Agreement – an update

An NQT on her new career



Toying with getting your dream car this Christmas?

Talk to us

Car loans @ 6.99% (*apr variable)

*Terms and conditions apply. Must be repaid within 5 years

Example: 128 fortnightly repayments on €10 000 - €92.03 per fortnight

Total cost of Credit €1760.08



We need your help.....

If you feel that ASTI credit union can offer real value and service to your colleagues and you would be happy to act as a point of contact in your school please call the office!!!

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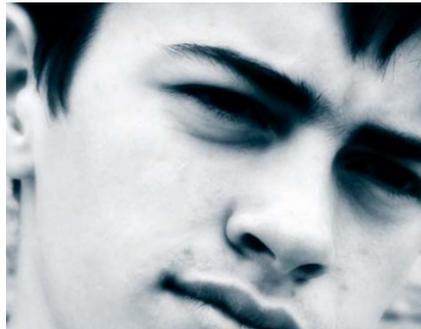
www.astie.ie

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

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Letters, comments and articles are welcome

All submissions will be considered by the ASTIR Editorial Board. Email astir@astie.ie.

Inspector's report positive for teachers

The Chief Inspector's Report 2010-2012 – launched earlier this month – contained an analysis of all inspections carried out in primary and second-level schools during that period, including more than 14,200 separate inspections of second-level classes. Overall the findings represent a very positive affirmation of the work of second-level teachers and schools all over the country (see page 6).

Chief Inspector Harold Hislop stated that data gathered by the Inspectorate – via subject inspections, whole school evaluations, and surveys of 29,000 students and 20,000 parents – revealed a high level of satisfaction among parents and students, and satisfactory or better standards in the great majority of classes inspected.

Almost 90% of parents surveyed agreed with the statement that teaching is good at their child's school. More than 90% said they were happy with the way their child's school is run and that their child felt safe and looked after at school. In relation to students, the report found that 87% felt their teachers encouraged them to work to the best of their ability and 82% felt safe and cared for at school. This is a very positive message for teachers and one we should remember – particularly during the present difficult times. However, despite all of the good news contained in the report, most media coverage focused on what the report describes as "weaknesses" areas of the education system. As teachers we understand the importance of valuing students' work and the difference between constructive criticism and denigration. And while teachers must always strive to improve our students' educational experiences, we also work in a particular context. Right now that context is one of severely stressed schools, which have been stripped of vital resources including personnel and funding. This is why I encourage all of you to read the Chief Inspector's report for yourselves and to note that the vast majority of findings contain good news. We are, as always, doing a great job in the most adverse of circumstances!

Junior Cycle reform

As in-service for junior cycle reform gets underway, the ASTI continues to represent teachers' concerns (see page 12). Politically propelled reform is often sincere, but it is teachers who have the experience and skills to know how the reform will play out in classrooms and schools, and whether it will address or exacerbate educational inequality. It is foolish to bypass teachers' views, which have the long-term best interests of education and students at heart. We ask the Minister to recognise that, take our views on board, and place the same trust and value in us that parents and students do.



Sally Maguire
ASTI President

Schools cannot take more cuts

Budget 2014 – announced in October – is the first recognition by the Government that second-level schools cannot take any more cuts. The fact that second-level education was not targeted in this year's Budget announcement vindicates the ASTI's five-year campaign to highlight the impact of Budget cuts on schools. Our campaign to reverse the worst of these cuts continues.

Since 2009 second-level school communities have had to cope with more than 20 separate identifiable cuts (see page 10). These cuts have included withdrawal of subject teachers, guidance counsellors, specialist teachers, in-school management posts and support services. There have also been cuts to school funding, including to the school capitation grant.

Prior to these cuts, during the 'Celtic Tiger' era, Ireland invested less of its national wealth in second-level students than most other OECD countries. What this means is that even during the boom years, Irish second-level schools were operating on a shoestring. Since April 2009 schools have been reduced to covering over the cracks caused by cutbacks. A number of studies undertaken or commissioned by the ASTI over the past five years have found schools dropping subjects from the timetable, amalgamating classes, cutting back on extra-curricular and pastoral care activities, reducing counselling services for students, and increasing fundraising. During this time, a number of complex new initiatives and reforms have been introduced in schools with little or no regard to resource requirements or the additional strain on teachers as a result of cutbacks. Earlier this year an ASTI survey found that schools were suffering from initiative overload, with 40% saying that they had little or no capacity to prepare annual reports and School Improvement Plans, and nearly 50% saying they had little or no capacity to implement the proposed Junior Cycle Framework. This is the context in which ASTI members voted to reject the Haddington Road Agreement and embark on a campaign of industrial action. This action has been necessary in order to take a stand against unilateral actions to worsen teachers' working conditions and diminish the learning environment of students. While Budget 2014 acknowledges that schools are at breaking point, it isn't going to undo the damage.

The Minister for Education and Skills has indicated that he or his representatives would be willing to discuss some of these issues with the ASTI. The coming weeks are crucial to the ASTI as a trade union representing the second-level teaching profession. Your participation in union discussions, debates and decisions whether at school, regional or national level, will have lasting consequences for the ASTI, the teaching profession and second-level education.



Pat King
ASTI General Secretary

Getting the message across

While embarking on industrial action is difficult and challenging for trade unions and their members, the inevitable media attention can provide opportunities to highlight the reasons behind industrial action.

On October 2, 17,000 ASTI members teaching in more than 70% of Ireland's second-level schools began industrial action. This includes withdrawal from out-of-school meetings, non-co-operation with in-service training for the new Junior Cycle Framework and a refusal to undertake duties arising from middle management posts which are vacant due to a Government moratorium.

In the run up to, and during the first days of the action, the ASTI experienced intensive media attention. ASTI representatives sought to use this media spotlight to set out the rationale for the ASTI's decision to embark on industrial action. This involved describing what had been taken from schools, students and teachers since the onset of the recession, and the impact that this has had on second-level education in Ireland.

In an article in the *Irish Examiner* on October 2, ASTI President Sally Maguire stated that the reasons why ASTI members had voted to reject the Haddington Road Agreement and embark on industrial action were complex: "For many teachers, the reasons for voting No extend well beyond what is contained in the [Haddington Road] Agreement. Nearly five years after the first round of education cuts there is a sense amongst ASTI members that education is seen as a soft touch when it comes to austerity. While school communities continue to express outrage at ongoing attacks to education services, they also continue to do whatever they can to compensate for the damage".

"Meanwhile, teachers' pay has been cut, duties and responsibilities have increased significantly and younger teachers – who cannot find decent work – have been placed on an inequitable salary scale. On top of this

teachers entered into and delivered on the Croke Park Agreement only to have the Government breach the agreement. The sense of distrust of Government amongst teachers is palpable."

Significant media coverage

Between September 24 (the day on which the industrial action was announced) and the end of October, close to 350 separate ASTI statements and interviews appeared in the national and regional media. These included appearances on almost every national TV and radio news/current affairs programme (see below).

While it is not possible to control the final content of any article or broadcast item, key messages – such as that second-level schools have been severely impacted by education cuts – have been relayed. Efforts were also made to counter some of the negative (and often biased) media coverage. This included counter-statements and letters to newspaper editors for publication.

The ASTI posts links to media coverage of the ASTI on its website. Visit www.asti.ie and click on Media Centre: ASTI in the Media.

ASTI voices nationwide

ASTI Standing Committee representatives play a crucial role in spreading core ASTI messages in the regional media. During October Standing Committee members participated in a significant number of interviews for local radio programmes and regional newspapers. In addition, articles written by Standing Committee members appeared in a number of regional newspapers.

The ASTI appeared/featured on/in the following in October 2013

Irish Times
Irish Examiner
Irish Daily Mail
Irish Independent
Evening Echo
Irish Sun
Evening Herald
The Star
Fingal Independent
Sunday Business Post
Sunday Independent
Irish Mail on Sunday
The Journal.ie
Limerick Leader
Offaly Independent
Gorey Guardian
New Ross Standard
Wexford People

Enniscorthy Guardian
Evening Echo
Connacht Tribune
Galway City Tribune
Meath Chronicle
Galway Independent
Irish Mirror
Waterford News and Star
Kerry's Eye
Tuam Herald
Clare Champion
Industrial Relations News
 RTÉ: One News
 RTÉ: Six One News
 RTÉ: Nine O'Clock News
 RTÉ2: News2day
 Today FM: Five News

Today FM: The Last Word
 RTÉ TV: Six One News
 Radio Kerry: Kerry Today
 RTÉ Radio 1: Morning Ireland
 Midlands 103: Midlands Ireland
 East coast Radio:
 The Morning Show
 Mid West Radio:
 Tommy Marren show
 TV3: 5.30 pm news
 Newstalk Radio: The Right Hook
 RTÉ Radio 1: Drivetime Programme
 RTÉ Radio 1: The Late Debate
 Newstalk Radio: Pat Kenny Show
 RTÉ Radio 1: This Week
 RTÉ Radio 1: Nine News
 RTÉ Radio 1: Marian Finucane
 RTÉ News: Oireachtas Report
 Newstalk: National Lunchtime news
 Newstalk: Lunchtime show
 Newstalk: Breakfast

East Coast radio: Morning Mix
 RTE Radio 1: Today with Sean O'Rourke
 Q102: News
 FM104: News
 Today FM: News
 RTÉ Radio 1: News at 1
 RTÉ Radio 1: News at 1
 FM104: One news
 RTE Radio 1: Five news
 LMF: Michael Reade show
 Newstalk Radio: Lunchtime show
 WLR FM: Deise AM
 Radio na Gaeltachta
 98FM: One News
 98FM: Nine News
 Q102: Nine News
 FM104: Eleven News
 FM104: Nine News
 Highland Radio: News
 Clare FM: Morning Focus.

Remembering Seamus Heaney

Poet and Nobel laureate Seamus Heaney sadly passed away in August. Mr Heaney addressed the ASTI's Centenary Education Conference in 2009, where he spoke about his own education experiences and the importance of education to society. He told attendees: "It is in these classroom experiences, in the quality of those early encounters between students and teachers, that we can often locate the roots of an adult's adaptability or disaffection. The roots of that trust, which is the basis of social solidarity, of that distrust, which eventually hampers fulfilment in the individual life and in social relations ... If all I have is a voice this morning I want to use it to remind you of something you already know, namely that each and every one of you will figure indelibly on the inner map of each and every one of the pupils at those desks in front of you. You will remain a marked presence in their psychic life and inevitably, therefore, you will play some part in the development of their attitude as citizens, in their sense of the acceptability or otherwise of the social system into which they are being integrated". Watch the full speech at www.asti.ie.



Pictured at the ASTI Centenary Education Conference in 2009 are (from left): John White, former ASTI General Secretary; Seamus Heaney; and, Joe Moran, former ASTI President.

Parents, students and inspectors positive about schools and teaching standards

The Chief Inspector's Report (2010-2012) shows that parents, students and inspectors recognise and value the work of teachers and schools. The report, which was published earlier this month, once again demonstrates the high accountability and transparency of schools and teaching.

Speaking following the publication of the report, ASTI General Secretary Pat King said:

"The report will provide reassurance to all the partners in education – including parents, teachers and school managers – that not only are second-level schools open and transparent, but that the vast majority of schools are clearly focused on meeting the needs of their students".

Key findings:

- inspectors found teaching satisfactory or better in 87% of lessons;
- 87% of parents agreed that teaching was good in their child's school;

- 91% of parents said their child felt safe and looked after at school;
- 70% of students agreed that their classes were interesting; and,
- 74% of students agreed that their teachers explained things clearly for them.

For more see www.asti.ie and read the full report at www.education.ie.

Important dates

Motions for Annual Convention 2014 must be submitted by November 30. Delegates to Annual Convention 2014 must be elected by January 31.

ASTI Retirement Seminars are continuing this term and next – see page 21 for dates

This issue in numbers...

70

Percentage of children who reported liking school in the most recent HBSC study (P.7)

1,000

Number of outlets offering discounts to ASTI members through the Membership Plus scheme (P.8)

Monaghan retirement



Pictured at a Monaghan Branch retirement function are: Back row (from left): Michael Todd, ASTI Deputy General Secretary; Diarmaid de Paor; Ann Teague; Ann Lillis; Mary McCarvill; James Gannon; ASTI General Secretary Pat King; Dan Murphy; Eamonn Kelly; and, Michael Halton. Front row (from left): Geraldine Kelly; Patricia Dillon; Hilary McLoughlin; ASTI Immediate Past President Gerry Breslin; Gloria Doohan; Kathleen Tinnelly; ASTI President Sally Maguire; and, ASTI Standing Committee representative Elaine Devlin.

Corporate social responsibility award for Global Schoolroom

Cornmarket was awarded a Chambers Ireland Excellence in Community for Partnership with Charity Award for its work with Global Schoolroom in September. Cornmarket, along with the ASTI, INTO and TUI, has worked very closely with the Global Schoolroom charity over the past seven years, encouraging Irish teachers to share their educational experience with their counterparts in Northeast India. Since 2006, 130 Irish teachers have travelled to India with the project, which has facilitated training for 1,129 Indian teachers. The results have been astounding, with a 300% increase in children attending school in the region, and over 250,000 Indian children and 292 schools benefiting from a better quality education. Read about one ASTI member's volunteer experience on page 20.

Students positive about school life

Over 70% of children reported liking school in the most recent Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Ireland study. The study, which collects data from children aged 10-17, also found that students are taking a more active role in school life, with the percentage of those who reported that students help to organise events rising from 56% in 2002 to 61% in 2010. The full study is available at www.dohc.ie.

SEC appointment of examiners

The State Exams Commission is currently recruiting oral and practical/project examiners for 2014 State exams. Application forms are available at www.examinations.ie and in all second-level schools. The closing date for application is Friday, December 6, 2013.

20

ASTI Credit Union will automatically lodge €20 to your account when you join (P.11)

14,300

Number of young people surveyed about mental health in the My World Survey (P.18)

New anti-bullying procedures issued

New anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools were published in September. Each school must ensure that their anti-bullying policy fully complies with the new procedures and is readily available to all school personnel, parents and students, including via the school's website. The procedures include protocols for the reporting and recording of bullying behaviour, and for investigating and dealing with bullying incidents. The ASTI welcomed the publication of the new procedures but has pointed out that they do not address the negative impact of the education cutbacks on the capacity of schools to address student wellbeing issues.

Read the full procedures at www.education.ie.

Report on SPHE teaching and learning

The Department of Education and Skills published 'Looking at Social, Personal and Health Education – Teaching and Learning in Post-Primary Schools' in September. The report offers observations about the strengths and areas for development identified during subject inspections of SPHE (including RSE) carried out in the academic year 2010/2011. It is intended as a resource for teachers, school authorities and policy-makers, and aims to promote best practice in the provision of junior cycle SPHE and senior cycle RSE. Read the full report at www.education.ie.

Mental health awareness initiative for teachers

The Association of Teachers/Education Centres in Ireland will deliver a mental health awareness initiative for second-level teachers nationwide this year. Facilitators will promote and deliver the awareness programme in local education centres through a series of workshops aimed at increasing understanding and awareness of mental health among whole school staff, and of teachers' role in promoting and supporting young people's mental health. For more see www.ateci.ie.

Students pay tribute to teacher

Transition year students from Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel, gained huge attention last month for their song written in tribute to their teacher Alice Strain, who was tragically killed in a road accident last year. The students performed their song 'My Hero' on RTÉ's *Big Music Train* and at a charity concert in aid of Barnardos in Vicar Street. The school's TY co-ordinator, ASTI member Noel Buckley, said the song gave the students huge belief in their talent and capabilities. Search Presentation Secondary School on Soundcloud.com to hear the song.

A welcome to new schools!

The ASTI sends best wishes to five new schools, which opened their doors for the first time in September. Continued success to Lusk Community College, Dublin; Colaiste Na Mi, Meath; Ballinamore Community School, Leitrim; Colaiste Baile Chiar, Galway; and, Merlin College, Galway.

Teachers gather for showcase of innovation



Over 400 teachers gathered for the FÉILTE event to celebrate World Teachers' Day.

Over 400 teachers gathered at an event to mark World Teachers' Day on Saturday, October 5.

FÉILTE, the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence, was organised by the Teaching Council as a celebration of teaching and a showcase of teachers who are leading innovative learning projects in their schools.

The event included an address by Fintan O'Toole, who spoke about the ASTI publication *Why Education Matters: The Importance of Education to Ireland's Economy and Knowledge*, which he recently edited. Videos from the event, including this speech and others, can be viewed at www.teachingcouncil.ie. Read an excerpt from the ASTI publication on page 18 and download the full publication at www.asti.ie.

Discounts for ASTI members

ASTI members can get discounts of up to 50% at over 1,000 restaurants, shops, gyms, clubs and venues nationwide with Membership Plus. Membership Plus cards were sent to all ASTI members in September. To start saving and to keep up to date with new offers and competitions, simply register your new 2013/2014 Membership Plus card at asti.membershipplus.ie.

Membership Plus Mobile App

The Membership Plus mobile app lets you see what offers are available closest to your current location. The app is free to download from the App Store for iPhone users or Google Play for Android users.

Suggest a venue

If your favourite place to shop is not yet in Membership Plus, visit the Membership Plus website to "Suggest a Venue" and Membership Plus will work on obtaining a discount with that company.

Teaching Council registration – deadline extended

From January 28, 2014, teachers employed in State-funded teaching positions in Ireland will be required to be registered with the Teaching Council in order to be eligible for payment of salary by the State. The ASTI has been informed by the Department of Education and Skills that the date after which teachers employed in State-funded teaching positions will be required to be registered with the Teaching Council in order to be eligible for payment for salary by the State is January 28, 2014, and not November 1, 2013, as was previously indicated. Section 30 of the Teaching Council Act will commence on November 1, 2013. However, it will only take effect from January 28, 2014. After that date unregistered persons will no longer be eligible to receive salary for State-funded teaching positions. If you have not yet applied for registration, you should apply to the Teaching Council immediately. For more see Circular Letter 0052/2013 or www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Summer Works Scheme reintroduced

The Summer Works Scheme is being reintroduced to fund the improvement and upgrading of existing school buildings during summer 2014. Each school can apply for funding for one small-scale project such as gas, electrical and mechanical works, roof and window upgrades, or structural improvements – works that will improve and upgrade existing school buildings. For more information see www.education.ie.

The ASTI Student Teacher Network

Did you know that student teachers can avail of ASTI membership completely free of charge?

The ASTI has launched a new initiative for student teachers: the ASTI Student Teacher Network, which gives student teachers all the services and benefits that come with being an ASTI member – and more. The ASTI Student Teacher Network offers tailored services for student teachers, such as a negotiated financial package from the ASTI Credit Union, student-centred events, and student-focused advice and information.

A new Student Teacher Network section has been launched on the ASTI website – visit www.asti.ie/asti-membership/student-teacher-network/ – for news and events for student members, advice for teaching practice, job-hunting and induction, and important career information.

The ASTI has negotiated a special offer for student members who also join the ASTI Credit Union:

- €20 lodged to your account;
- low cost loans; and,
- iPad draws.

See the Student Teacher Network section at www.asti.ie for more information about the offer and visit www.asticu.ie to find out more about the ASTI Credit Union.

Consultation on junior cycle subjects and short courses underway

Consultation is now open for a number of subjects and short courses at junior cycle. Have your say on Irish, science, and short courses in CSPE, PE, SPHE and programming and coding at www.juniorcycle.ie. The ASTI is in favour of junior cycle reform but has serious concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle in its current form. Read more about the ASTI junior cycle campaign on page 12.

ASTI supporting Fair Hotels

Fair Hotels is an initiative to support and promote quality employment in the hotel industry in Ireland. As part of the Fair Hotel campaign, ASTI will be using a 'Fair Hotel' for ASTI Convention 2014. Jacqueline Kearns (pictured), Executive Officer, is responsible for organising Convention 2014, which takes place in Whites Hotel, Wexford – look out for a booking form in the next issue of *ASTIR*. Find out more about Fair Hotels at www.fairhotels.ie.



Improvement in school attendance

New figures from the National Education Welfare Board (NEWB) show an improvement in the numbers of students attending school every day. The report, 'Analysis of School Attendance Data 2010/11', shows that the number of days lost through absenteeism was the lowest for the five-year period from 2006. The report also shows that from 2009/10 to 2010/11, about 300 more post-primary students attended school each day. Read the full report at www.newb.ie.

Youth Connect promotes workers' rights to students

Supported by the ASTI, Youth Connect is a programme to inform and educate young people about their rights as students and workers. The programme has six trained 'champions' who can visit schools to talk to students frankly about the world of work, workers' rights, trade unions and the law in a way that is interesting, informative and memorable. Most of the 'champions' are recently qualified teachers. If you would like to find out more or book a champion to visit your school, visit www.youth-connect.ie.

Budget 2014

Budget 2014 affirmed the message that second-level education can take no more, but did nothing to address the difficulties being experienced by schools in struggling to meet students' needs.

Five years of savage cuts have left schools at breaking point. Since 2009 second-level school communities have experienced more than 20 separate identifiable cuts including the withdrawal of subject teachers, guidance counsellors, specialist teachers, in-school management posts and support services. There have also been cuts to school funding, including to the school capitation grant, which is due to be cut by a further 1% in January 2014. Budget 2014 does nothing to reverse these cutbacks, which continue to impact in schools.

ASTI lobby

The ASTI lobbied all political parties in advance of Budget 2014, stressing that second-level schools could not take any further cuts, and that any further increase in the pupil-teacher ratio would have a devastating effect on second-level education. The message got through and, despite media speculation, the pupil-teacher ratio was not targeted in Budget 2014.

Teaching jobs

It was announced in the Budget that 500 additional teaching jobs at second level were to be funded. The ASTI has pointed out that these additional teachers will only keep pace with the significant increase in the number of students entering second-level schools next year. There has been no reversal of changes to the pupil-teacher ratio, nor of previous decisions to remove support teachers.

Education needs investment

In reaction to Budget 2014, ASTI General Secretary Pat King said: "It is universally acknowledged that during an economic crisis, education acts as a shield. The best way to protect the futures of the children and young people who are growing up during this economic crisis is by investing in quality education.

"The 2013 OECD report 'Education at a Glance' found that investment in education as a proportion of public expenditure has declined significantly in Ireland since 2005. In 2005, 14% of total expenditure went to education. In 2010 this had dropped to 9.7%. In comparison, the OECD average is 13%. What does this say about the value we place on our children and young people?"

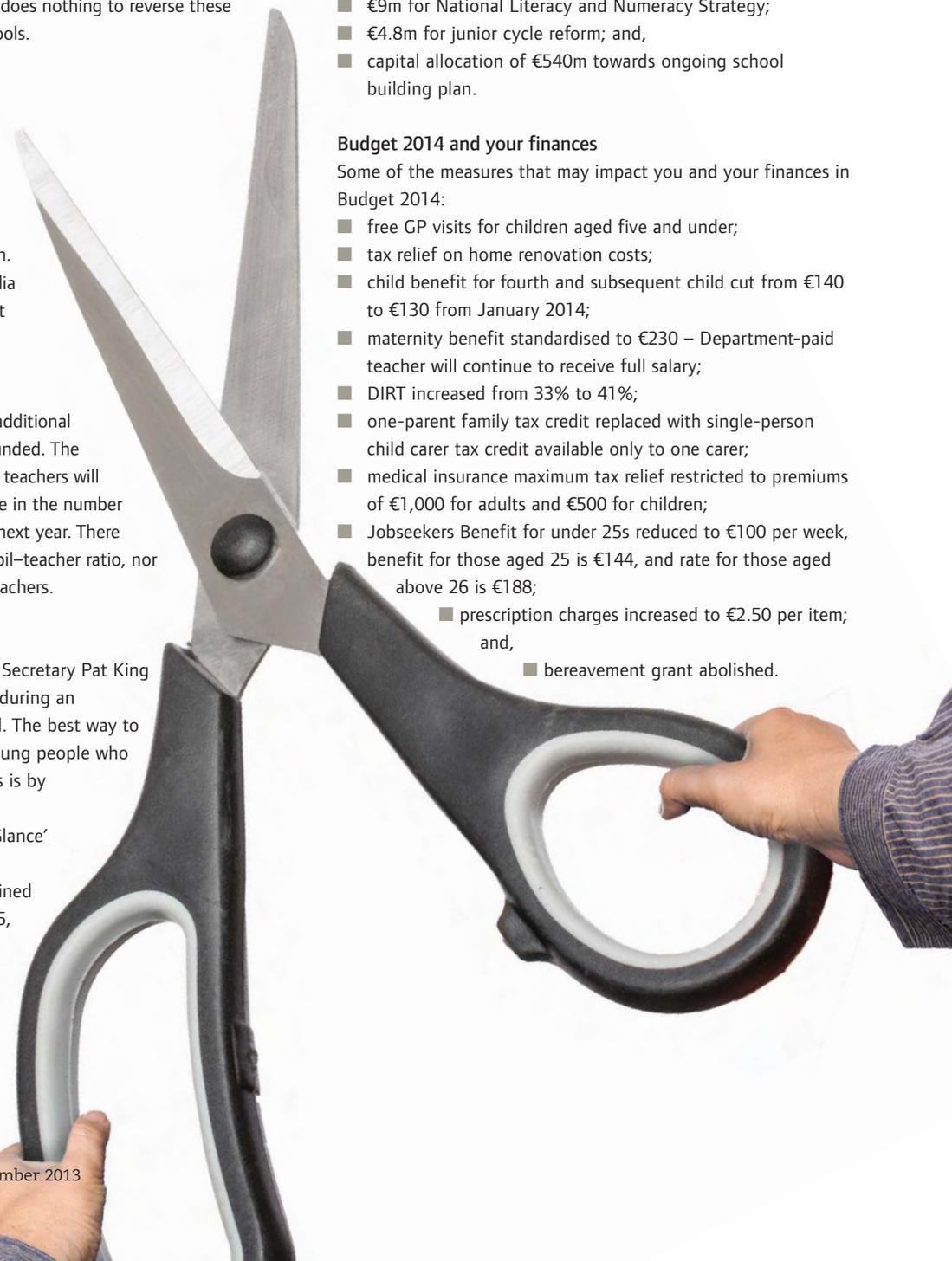
Main Budget measures for second-level education:

- no change in the pupil-teacher ratio;
- funding for 500 teaching jobs at second level to keep pace with increased enrolment;
- as signalled in previous budget, 1% cut in capitation, reducing rate to €301 per student for 2014;
- €9m for National Literacy and Numeracy Strategy;
- €4.8m for junior cycle reform; and,
- capital allocation of €540m towards ongoing school building plan.

Budget 2014 and your finances

Some of the measures that may impact you and your finances in Budget 2014:

- free GP visits for children aged five and under;
- tax relief on home renovation costs;
- child benefit for fourth and subsequent child cut from €140 to €130 from January 2014;
- maternity benefit standardised to €230 – Department-paid teacher will continue to receive full salary;
- DIRT increased from 33% to 41%;
- one-parent family tax credit replaced with single-person child carer tax credit available only to one carer;
- medical insurance maximum tax relief restricted to premiums of €1,000 for adults and €500 for children;
- Jobseekers Benefit for under 25s reduced to €100 per week, benefit for those aged 25 is €144, and rate for those aged above 26 is €188;
- prescription charges increased to €2.50 per item; and,
- bereavement grant abolished.



Managing your finances in difficult times

A little post-budget advice from SELINA GILLEECE of the ASTI Credit Union.

As the impact of austerity affects all secondary school teachers, it is timely to take a closer look at how we can budget and make savings. Personal budgeting takes a little time but it is time well spent. It allows you to get an overview of your spending, to see what you need to live comfortably and to eliminate the expenses you can do without. A free online personal budget is available on www.moneycoach.ie and from the National Consumer Agency at www.nca.ie. These help us to take stock of our outgoings and our income. It is important to prioritise certain expenses such as mortgage, food and utilities.

Mortgages

Most mortgage holders have very little leeway to make savings. If you want to save on the cost of your mortgage (and are in the lucky position to have additional cash), then it is possible to pay a lump sum off the mortgage. Alternatively, paying a little more each month will save money in the long run (this applies to variable mortgages). The National Consumer Agency also has online mortgage and loan calculators, which can help you to plan such savings. If you are struggling to pay your mortgage, are in arrears or in danger of going into arrears, you should contact your mortgage lender as soon as possible. The Central Bank has issued a binding Code of Conduct on Mortgage Arrears, which details how lenders must deal with borrowers who are in arrears. There is also a Mortgage Arrears Information Helpline available through the Central Bank at 0761 07 4050, or you can visit the website www.keepingyourhome.ie.

Food, utilities and motoring

Food bills can be curtailed with visits to low-cost supermarkets. Shop around to make savings. www.valueireland.ie is worth a visit to see the special offers available at the larger stores. Buy only what you need; make a shopping list and stick to it. Be aware of special offers and use coupons where possible. To cut down on food waste, it's worth looking at www.stopfoodwaste.ie, which claims that about one-third of the food we buy ends up in the bin – approximately €1,000 per annum.

If you are looking to make savings on your TV and telecoms costs, try www.uchoose.ie for a comparison of what is available. Real savings can be made by 'bundling' together some aspects of these utilities. The National Consumer Agency's website also has an online tool with tips on groceries, TV and telecoms, mobiles, energy and motoring.

For energy requirements, there is every reason to switch your supplier to avail of a saving on gas and electricity. You can find information on www.energycustomers.ie about the Commission for Energy Regulation's accredited price comparison websites: www.bonkers.ie and www.uswitch.ie. Some consumers have purchased electricity monitors to check the usage and cost of appliances. Remember that items left on standby use electricity!

For most teachers, motoring is an unavoidable expense. The increasing cost of petrol can be monitored at www.pumps.ie. For car insurance, to compare the deals that are available: sites like www.bonkers.ie are helpful.

Insurance

Speaking of insurance, one of the most helpful sites for comparing health insurance is www.hia.ie, which is run by the Health Insurance Authority, the statutory regulator of the private health insurance market. The number of plans on offer by the four main players in the market (VHI, Laya, Aviva and Glohealth) is mindboggling, and the website helps the consumer to choose wisely while only accessing the cover you need. When you are insuring your house, remember that you don't need to insure the building for its market value, but for its reconstruction cost. The Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland publishes a guide on these prices and you can use their online calculator at www.scsi.ie to calculate the cost of reinstatement. Insuring your buildings and contents with the same company will save money, and it pays to shop around for quotes.

Use your credit union

ASTI Credit Union has been providing a range of quality financial services to second-level teachers for 30 years. We encourage you to try and save a little every fortnight for the rainy day or special occasion. The big advantage of saving just €5 per fortnight with the credit union is that if and when you need to access credit for whatever reason, you will have built up a relationship with the credit union that will allow you to access funds when you need them most. The credit union offers several very attractive loan rates – see www.asticu.ie for further information. Remember that in the credit union your loan is insured at no extra cost. Deductions can be made directly from your salary and, importantly, there are no transaction costs or fees. Your savings, however small, earn a dividend, and life savings insurance is provided at no cost to you. By joining the credit union before the end of 2013 your account will be credited with €20 to get your savings started. If all this seems just too much to take on board, start small and make one or two adjustments to your budget. Small changes over time can save you a lot of money!



Selina Gilleece

Selina Gilleece is Manager of ASTI Credit Union, and is a Certified Financial Planner® and a Qualified Financial Adviser.

ASTI junior cycle campaign – an update

The ASTI is in favour of junior cycle reform but has serious concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle in its current form.

The ASTI has initiated a campaign to inform politicians, parents and the wider public about teachers' legitimate concerns about the Framework. As well as representing teachers' views at the NCCA and at a Departmental level, the ASTI has taken a number of actions since the start of the school year.

Meetings with politicians

ASTI representatives have met with education spokespersons from various political parties to express teachers' concerns about the Junior Cycle Framework. Representatives told politicians that schools' capacities to implement wide-scale reforms in the context of cutbacks, class sizes and initiative overload are very limited.

Communication with parents

The ASTI has been in contact with the National Parents' Council Primary and Post-primary. In addition, ASTI school stewards have been asked to organise meetings with their school's Parent Association to outline ASTI concerns about the potential impacts of the Junior Cycle Framework on students' education.

Priority issue for branches

ASTI branches were asked to discuss the junior cycle English specification and feedback from school meetings with parents at their next branch meetings.

NCCA representation

A seminar for all ASTI representatives on the NCCA was held in late

September. Representatives provided updates on the NCCA's work on the Junior Cycle Framework and English specification.

More actions are planned in this campaign – keep up to date at www.asti.ie.

A consultation conference on junior cycle English was held in September. We asked two of the English teachers who attended for their views on the new English specification for junior cycle.

Edward Denniston, Newtown School, Waterford

The oral component – and the value put on it – can only be positive, but the practical working of it will create problems that, it seems, have not been thought through.

I feel positive that the changes do allow for differing methodologies in the teaching of English but I'm worried that prescribed texts are coming back. This will narrow teacher exploration and search on texts in their own reading. Many forget that the current junior cycle is an 'open' unprescribed course but the exam has, over the years, 'closed' it – and teachers – to some degree.

The 40% in-house assessment is a move I don't approve of. I want to collude and conspire with the students, but with the new junior cycle I would have to turn around and become their 'final effort' judge. I wonder too will this assessment allow for teachers to 'swap' final marking in house or between schools as a way of avoiding their own students' work.

The learning outcomes are interesting but are they not a re-wording



and high-speed broadband in schools! There is nowhere near equal provision of multimedia and digital resources in schools across the country. How can there be parity in applying these teaching and learning methodologies or parity of students' access to and experience of multi-modal texts?

The school certificates will not, in my opinion, be awarded the same respect or recognition. Too many differentials at local level will lead to an erosion of the public's perception of what exactly constitutes a worthwhile Junior Certificate and where one is likely to have to send one's children in order for them to achieve what is regarded as a credible certificate of achievement.

ASTI petition to highlight teacher concerns

The ASTI's consultation on the Framework for Junior Cycle – the findings of which were reported in *Teachers' Voice* – was hugely successful in generating debate not only among teachers, but in the public arena. The publication of *Teachers' Voice* received significant media coverage and was raised in the Dáil and Seanad on a number of occasions.

However, despite the ASTI's ongoing campaign to highlight teachers' concerns about the Framework, preparations for its implementation continue.

It is in this context that the ASTI has decided to organise a petition of second-level teachers who are concerned about key aspects of the Framework. It is vital that as many second-level teachers as possible sign the petition, which will be presented to the Minister for Education and Skills.

Petition sheets will arrive in your school shortly. Please sign them and encourage your colleagues to do likewise.

Wording of the ASTI petition on the Framework for Junior Cycle:

We, the teachers in _____ school, recognise the importance of change and innovation in education.

We are calling on the Minister for Education and Skills to:

- put our students at the centre of junior cycle reform;
- ensure that the methods of assessment used are fair, impartial and transparent, and are capable of maintaining educational standards; and,
- acknowledge the role of teachers as advocates for their students.

Furthermore, we do not support the Junior Cycle Framework's proposals for school-based assessment.

ASTI's four key asks on junior cycle reform:

- defer implementation;
- include external examination;
- develop a workable implementation strategy; and,
- improve the capacity of schools.

of what we already do? The learning outcome may sharpen classroom methodologies.

The aim of the changes seems to be to undermine and counter the 'your-life-depends-on-this' perception of a State exam. However, I fear this will still be the case. The results of the new junior cycle will be read this way, and there will be comparison between schools and perhaps between English teachers within and between schools.

Brigid Hearn, Ramsgrange Community School, Wexford

Albeit labelled 'assessment for learning', as opposed to 'assessment of learning', formal assessment to the tune of 40% of grade of our own students locally will prove to be an extremely contentious issue for teachers, parents and students. There can be no doubt that publicly, nationally, or regionally certifying your neighbours' children will lead to all sorts of unfavourable complications in the working lives as well as the community lives of teachers. There will be an inevitable erosion of the relationship between students and their teachers as the latter try to be, simultaneously, facilitators and assessors.

Teachers are already doing so much for their students. Now it feels as if we are being asked to do everything for what is, in reality, a pedagogically dolled-up cost-saving measure undertaken by the Department of Education and Skills.

I have concerns about the hit-and-hope nature of the introduction of the new junior cycle, when as yet no teachers have even begun in-service courses – though the new course is to come on stream in less than 12 months. Apparently, erroneous assumptions seem to have been made about the widespread availability of PCs, laptops, tablets

Meet the industrial relations team

Hundreds of teachers contact the ASTI each month; some need ASTI support with an employment issue, others just need some advice or information – the industrial relations team is here to help all members.



Meet the ASTI industrial relations team. Back row (from left): Maire Mulcahy; Desmond O'Toole; Caroline Mohan; and, Maire Collins. Front row (from left): Deirdre Condrón; Sarah Fagan; Ann Marie Ryan; and, Emer Hynes. Missing from picture: Bernard Moynihan.

The ASTI industrial relations (IR) team has extensive professional experience and expert knowledge about the education sector to put at your disposal. The team is here to:

- answer your queries;
- provide information;
- investigate or make representations on your behalf; and,
- support and represent you if you have a workplace issue of any kind.

Answers and advice

If you have a question about your employment rights or you need advice about your job, you can contact ASTI Head Office for an answer. Your call or email will be put through to the IR official or administrative officer responsible for your school. If you have a query about leave, Teaching Council registration, retirement or pensions, you will be put through to a member of the IR team who has specialist knowledge in those areas. In most cases, you will be able to get immediate advice and answers to your questions. Sometimes a query will require further investigation, more specialist knowledge, or for representations to be made on your behalf. You may wish to arrange a meeting with your IR representative to discuss the issue further. In all cases your contact is logged on a computer system, which keeps your query active until it is resolved.

Support and representation

If you have an employment issue that needs to be pursued further – for example, if your rights are being infringed or you want to make a claim under employment or equality legislation – your ASTI IR official can represent you in meetings with school management or with the Department of Education and Skills. Many issues can be resolved through discussion at this level but, if necessary, your IR representative will advise and support you through the next steps. They can prepare your case for, and represent you at, any necessary meetings or hearings.

The ASTI industrial relations team

Maire Mulcahy, ASTI Assistant General Secretary: Industrial Relations
Bernard Moynihan, Executive Officer: Industrial Relations
Maire Collins, Executive Officer: Industrial Relations
Ann-Marie Ryan, Executive Officer: Industrial Relations
Desmond O'Toole, Executive Officer: Development and Organisation
Sarah Fagan, Staff Officer: Industrial Relations
Deirdre Condrón, Administrative Officer: Industrial Relations
Caroline Mohan, Administrative Officer: Industrial Relations
Emer Hynes, Administrative Officer: Industrial Relations

ASTI member Trevor Murray on his CID experience:

When I first contacted the ASTI about the possibility of getting a CID, I was directed to Maire Mulcahy, who is the IR official for my school. I spoke with her and she was very clear on what my chances were. At the time, I was covering for a colleague on leave so the chances were slim, but Maire advised me about what I needed to do and we made the claim to the Adjudicator. Unfortunately, the Adjudicator refused the claim on the grounds Maire had anticipated.

To improve my CID chances, Maire advised me that I should ask for concessionary hours – having any hours in your own right helps your case for a CID. I did that and the following school year I got concessionary hours, so we then made another claim. As the Adjudicator had previously heard my case our only avenue was the Rights Commissioner.

While we waited for the claim to be heard, and while my case was being prepared, the ASTI kept me updated and explained what was going on. I had to provide contracts and other information, and I would

check in occasionally, but the ASTI just took the case and ran with it. There was no stress – even on the day of the hearing.

I turned up on the morning of the hearing and Maire had a thick submission bound and ready to go. She did all the talking, she knew how to orchestrate everything, she knew all the arguments, she knew all the legal jargon – it was really impressive.

It was an anxious period for a few weeks while I waited to hear the verdict, but I remember the day Maire called well. I saw the number on my phone and recognised it straight away. When I answered she just said: "It's good news". I was delighted.

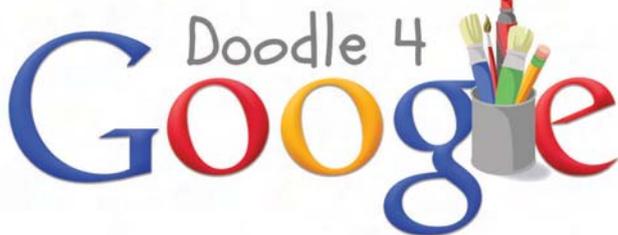
I would encourage anybody who has a query or a concern, or anybody who thinks they may have a case, to get in touch with the ASTI. It's just a case of initiating the process, and gathering some documents and information. The most important thing is the sense that you're not alone and you have somebody on your side who knows the system. The proof is in the pudding – I have my CID!

Got a question or a concern?

Call: 1850-418 400 Email: info@asti.ie

Get in touch!

Find direct contact details for your IR representative at www.asti.ie.



For the sixth year running we're inviting Irish school children to create their own doodle by taking part in the Doodle 4 Google competition. This year's theme is 'My adventure...'

The winning student will have their doodle appear on the Google Ireland homepage for 24 hours. They will also receive a Chromebook for themselves and one for their teacher; as well as a €5,000 college scholarship and a €10,000 technology grant for their school.

To be in with a chance to win these great prizes, enter your school today at www.google.ie/doodle4google



ASTI continues to speak for teachers

The ASTI has continued to speak out in the media on issues including junior cycle reform and concerns about resource allocation.

ASTI speaks out on junior cycle reform

“The president of Ireland’s main second-level teachers’ union says she is ‘deeply concerned’ about the decision by the Minister for Education to abolish the Junior Cert ... ‘Under the Minister’s proposals, young people who spend five or six years participating in second-level education will not experience State certificate examinations until they reach Leaving Certificate’, Ms Maguire said. She said the Junior Cert exam was invaluable Leaving Cert preparation and enabled students, parents and teachers to gauge aptitude prior to making choices about the Leaving Cert.”

Irish Times, September 11

“The Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland disagrees with school certification plans, saying every student is entitled to a fair, impartial and transparent State certificate to record their achievement at junior cycle. Its President, Sally Maguire, said: ‘A school certificate based on grades awarded by students’ own teachers does not have the same status or validity as an independent State certificate’.”

Irish Examiner, September 12

“‘Under the Minister’s junior cycle reform proposals young people will not experience State certificate examinations until they reach the Leaving Certificate,’ said Sally Maguire, President of the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI).”

Irish Daily Mail, September 12

“The big concerns that teachers have would be in terms of the assessment: the standards issue, the equity issue and the absence of State certification at the end of three years ... the pupil–teacher relationship is very important to us as teachers; we see ourselves as advocates for our students and not their judge and, you know, in the laws of natural justice, you don’t examine your own work. I think it would destroy that relationship between students and teachers if we get to a situation where teachers are the sole examiners of their work.”

ASTI President Sally Maguire interviewed on *Drivetime*, RTÉ Radio 1, September 11

“Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI) General Secretary Pat King said yesterday the abolition of the Junior Cert would leave

students with no State examination before the Leaving Cert. While teachers liked some of the proposed changes, they were concerned that ‘the motivation for students will deteriorate and ... that what is being proposed will change the relationship between students and teachers’. Mr King said on RTÉ’s *Drivetime* that teachers wanted to be advocates for students, not their judges, and believed in an external, independent, objective evaluation of work.

“ASTI sources said there was ‘very substantial’ concern among teachers about the availability of adequate resources and training. The ASTI said the one-day training course for English teachers was ‘totally inadequate’.”

Irish Times, October 29

Highlighting resourcing concerns

“Speaking on RTÉ’s *This Week* programme, Mr King said that for the ‘past four or five years, the fabric of schools has been disintegrating. The staffing cuts, loss of language supports, loss of resource supports, larger classes. And now teachers are being asked to do extra hours and extra work and they’re saying no’.

He said he could ‘guarantee parents that teachers have students’ needs at heart’ and suggested that it was ‘more than likely that the target will be those commitments we made in Croke Park. That was to last until 2014 and guaranteed no pay cuts. If the Government has torn up that agreement, we will have to withdraw our commitment to do extra hours’.

He said administration hours would be disrupted and claimed that it ‘will have some impact, but not directly on students. Teachers haven’t time to deal with everything and are being asked to do more’.”

Irish Times, September 23

“I think the fact that there were no increases in the pupil–teacher ratio [in Budget 2014] is at last recognition by the Government that schools have reached the limit of their ability to cope with cuts. I don’t think there was any room to cut education anyway, but this is recognition of that. Hopefully we are turning a corner in terms of funding available to education.”

News at One, RTÉ Radio 1, October 18

"The ASTI said this year's Budget 'is the first recognition by the Government that schools have reached breaking point because of five years of savage cuts'. But General Secretary Pat King said it did not address the difficulties experienced by second-level schools ... The announcement of additional teachers at second level will only keep pace with the significant increase in the number of students entering secondary schools next year. 'Since 2009, second-level school communities ... have experienced more than 20 identifiable cuts,' he said. 'These have included withdrawal of subject teachers, guidance counsellors, specialist teachers, in-school management posts and support services [and] cuts to school funding. Budget 2014 does nothing to reverse these cutbacks'."

The Star, October 16

Taking industrial action

"This dispute is not about pay. In actual fact the teachers in the ASTI voted for a worse pay situation than Haddington Road was offering. The dispute for many teachers is about their working conditions ... all teachers want to do is go into their classroom, to be valued by those in their society, to be valued by parents and by the wider community. All we are doing is an honest day's work and all we expect for that is to be treated with fairness."

Fintan O'Mahony debates on the ASTI dispute, The Pat Kenny Show, Newstalk, October 3

"We now have one of the highest school completion rates in the world; on a number of occasions the OECD has praised the Irish second-level education service for ensuring that parents can rely on 'high and consistent standards of education' across all types of schools; OECD indicators now show that Ireland's second-level education system is more inclusive than that of most other OECD countries; and OECD reports on literacy levels ... demonstrate that Irish 15-year-olds perform at the OECD average level or higher. While second-level education has continued to evolve ... Ms O'Kelly has continued to use the same out-of-date source to engage in periodic frenzied attacks on teachers: an OECD report, which, contrary to Ms O'Kelly's claims, affirms the work of teachers and schools in tackling literacy issues."

ASTI President Sally Maguire responds to an article about the ASTI dispute, Sunday Independent, October 6

"This is absolutely not about pay, it's not about anything like that, it's about conditions in schools and it's about the fact that the education system is in complete overload. Teachers can't cope, schools can't cope, and education is going to suffer, students are going to suffer."

ASTI President, Sally Maguire, TV3 News, October 22

[ASTI's] action is about ... the dismantling of young people's education, the excessive burden placed on teachers to cover over the cracks caused by education cuts, increased workload and bureaucracy at a time when teachers need to focus more on their students, and – of course – the belief amongst teachers that, having acted in good faith, they have been duped and will be again. Despite all this, we recognise that talks between the ASTI and the Government are the only way to resolve this dispute. We believe an appropriate talks process has the potential to result in an outcome which is acceptable to the ASTI and to the Government, and which ultimately protects our young people's education at this most difficult time.

ASTI President Sally Maguire writing in the Irish Examiner, October 2



eTwinning is a simple and straightforward way to forge partnerships and work on projects with other schools in Europe using information and communication technologies (ICT). It aims to help schools to bring a European dimension to their activities and to integrate ICT into the classroom.

eTwinning is not about creating extra work, but providing a framework for exciting curriculum work with partners in another country.

With eTwinning, you can:

- collaborate with schools around Europe
- join Learning Events
- participate in Professional Development Workshops
- join Online groups
- take part in webinars

Leargas is the eTwinning National Support Service (NSS) in Ireland.

For further information visit www.etwinning.net or email etwinning@leargas.ie



Starting in 2014, Erasmus+ will replace several existing EU education, training, sport and youth programmes with just one. You'll be able to find the current Lifelong Learning (Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Comenius and Grundtvig), and Youth in Action programmes all in one place.

Erasmus+ is open to all learners and educators, through any public or private body active in education, training, youth and sport. It will support both formal and non-formal learning experiences and activities in these sectors.

Erasmus+ has a budget of €14.7 billion over the 2014-2020 period and is part of Europe 2020 - the EU's new strategy for growth and jobs. This plan will boost employment by modernising education, reducing the numbers of early school leavers, and bridging skills gaps.

2014 deadlines for Erasmus+ have not been announced yet but are expected to be in March and April 2014.

Leargas will be managing Erasmus+ programmes in education, VET and youth and community work.

For more information go to www.leargas.ie or ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus-plus/





Teachers play a critical role in supporting young people

The role of teachers in providing positive mentoring support is essential to youth mental health, says DR TONY BATES.

To date in Ireland, we have known very little about young people and their mental health. We know, for example, that one in five of them, at any given point in time, is distressed to a significant degree. However, we know very little about what contributes to their distress and what helps them to face and overcome their difficulties.

The My World Survey

In May 2012, Headstrong, in collaboration with the UCD School of Psychology, published research called 'My World Survey'. The purpose of 'My World Survey' (MWS) was to establish a national youth mental health database in Ireland to deepen our understanding of youth mental health. This database – the first of its kind in Ireland – is focused on 12- to 25-year-olds, and is based on complete data from 14,300 young people. The data produced in this survey is unique in that it is based on a suite of measures that focused on both positive (e.g., optimism, resilience, social support) and negative (e.g., depression, alcohol usage, self-harm) domains in a young person's life. By relating these measures to their overall mood and behaviour, we have been able to identify critical 'protective' factors that enable young people to cope with the challenges they face, and also the 'risk' factors that compound whatever distress they encounter in their development.

Findings

This study found that levels of psychological distress were generally found to increase with school years. Younger adolescents were shown to have more positive levels of well-being, including higher levels of self-esteem, resilience, life satisfaction and optimism, compared to older adolescents, consistent with the international literature. Older adolescents reported higher levels of difficulties and lower levels of positive well-being compared to younger adolescents. Problem drinking,

substance use and behavioural problems were shown to increase across the school years. By sixth year, more than one-third of adolescents were classified as engaging in problem drinking behaviour.

All young people are likely to experience distress at some stage in their development. What was interesting in the MWS data was that it showed how the presence of "One Good Adult" was associated with the likelihood of the young person being able to face their difficulties rather than turning away and trying to avoid them. The presence of such a person in their lives was related to the development of their self-esteem, their sense of belonging, and how they coped or didn't cope with difficulties. The absence of "One Good Adult" was significantly related to their level of depression, suicide and self-harm. When a young person reports a very high level of support from a special adult when in need, the level of support they perceive from their family and friends is significantly above the average and, in particular, significantly higher than a person with very low levels. Therefore, the presence of "One Good Adult" promotes a young person's connectedness with family and friends.

The role of schools and teachers

When consideration is given to the environment within which young people live (in particular the 12- to 18-year-olds), the school environment is one of the most primary aspects of a young person's life. The role of guidance counsellors and teachers as mentors is pivotal in this environment. In light of the research outlined in MWS, the influence of "One Good Adult" cannot be understated or undervalued. Based on the data from the emerging themes, MWS indicates that by asking a young person a number of key screening questions, we may be able to determine their mental health status. These questions include the following:

- Have you had any serious problems in the past year that you felt you needed professional help with?
- Do you have a special adult who is there when you are in need?
- When you have problems, do you talk about them with anyone?
- Do you enjoy your family life?
- Do you cope well with problems?
- Have you ever been bullied?
- Do you feel angry a lot?

Young people who report agreeing with some or all of the above statements are highly likely to be experiencing mental health difficulties. This is where the role of schools and teachers, not just as educators, but as those who are in a position to provide positive mentoring support to young people, is essential. Schools, service providers and other professionals working with young people who need to identify those at risk for mental health problems should consider asking these very simple questions as an initial screening for a young person's mental health status. Young people who do not feel connected or bonded to those around them are more vulnerable in experiencing mental health difficulties. A teacher or guidance counsellor can make the difference by stepping across the classroom and reaching out a hand of friendship and, more importantly, a listening ear to a young person experiencing difficulties. The level of difficulty and the type of support that a teacher can provide, of course, is something to be considered seriously; however, in many cases, it is important to realise that issues faced by young people can perhaps be resolved by simply listening to them and offering genuine sympathy, advice and time.

Teachers are playing a critical role

From our experience across the country in carrying out MWS, it became very clear to me that teachers are playing a critical role in supporting young people, many of whom are facing significant challenges. Teachers, who were happy to go the extra mile for these students, spoke of their instinctive goodwill turning to frustration and helplessness when they reached beyond the walls of their school and tried to access specialist community mental health services. The lack of a link between schools and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services poses challenges for teachers and at-risk students. Teachers may be reluctant to get involved with a troubled student because they are fearful, as one principal put it, of "opening a can of worms".

Some schools have "care committees", which meet weekly to discuss at-risk students and to support teachers who are personally supporting those students. Many teachers know that they can access the support of their guidance counsellor, but this invaluable resource is now threatened and needs to be protected, for the benefit of both students and teachers.

Options

What schools need is a menu of options to support a young person, depending on his or her level of need. These will range from natural peer and teacher support that they encounter daily, to social, personal and health education (SPHE) teaching that introduces them to basic ideas about how to develop and take care of their mental health and their interpersonal relationships. On other occasions a student may

have need of more one-to-one support with the guidance counsellor or perhaps a National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) psychologist. When a young person is exhibiting high levels of distress, or when she or he is felt to be at risk of behaving in a destructive manner, referral to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services is indicated.

In an ideal world all of these services should be knitted together within some form of care committee, under the leadership of the school principal. Without such integration of support services, young people can get lost between the cracks and teachers can end up carrying more than their appropriate share of responsibility. Sadly, we hear reports of system fragmentation everywhere. But there are also schools that have drawn together the critical supports needed by students into one co-ordinated jigsaw. Several of these "jigsaw schools" initiatives, supported by Headstrong, are currently being evaluated and undoubtedly will have much to teach us into the future (see Headstrong.ie for regular updates).

Each of us holds a key role in the lives of young people. We are all potential "Good Adults" in the lives of those young people we know in our families, our communities, our schools and youth services. Many of us may not appreciate the power we have in influencing a young person's self-belief and how they learn from us the fundamental skills they need to live. The findings of MWS highlight how all young people, especially those who are not coping with their lives, need our support, now more than ever.

This article was originally published in the ASTI publication *Why Education Matters*. Copies have been distributed to each school and the publication is available for download at www.asti.ie.

Headstrong education and training

Headstrong is currently rolling out a youth mental health awareness initiative for post-primary school teachers. The initiative is designed to support schools in their development of a whole-school approach in the promotion of positive mental health for all students, as outlined in the recent Department of Education and Skills publication 'Well-Being in Post Primary Schools'. Headstrong also runs workshops for adults and for young people. Find out more about Headstrong's work at www.headstrong.ie.

The Department of Education and Skills has issued 'Well-Being in Post-Primary Schools, Guidelines for Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention' to all schools.



Dr Tony Bates

Dr Tony Bates is Founding Director of Headstrong, the National Centre for Youth Mental Health.

Teachers helping teachers

Two teachers tell us about how they spent their summer helping others, to the benefit of their own teaching.



Elaine Cronin with some of the children she met in India.

Elaine Cronin spent last summer training teachers in India

Last September I spotted an article in this very publication describing a teacher's trip to north east India, volunteering with Global Schoolroom, a teacher to teacher training initiative. The article caught my imagination and I thought, "why not?" So I closed my eyes, held my breath and took the Global Schoolroom plunge. After six intensive and supportive preparatory sessions and lots of fundraising – an abundance of cake sales, non-uniform days and mini marathon sessions – we embarked on our Indian summer. We arrived in Tuikarmaw in the Tripura State of North East India – think *Slum Dog Millionaire* meets *The Sound of Music* and you've got the picture! Immediately, we were overwhelmed by the welcome and warmth we received. We were prepared to work and knew we had a syllabus to deliver but we were humbled by how much the Indian teachers were willing to work and learn. The work was difficult at times but thoroughly rewarding. I was in awe of the teachers' and students' work rate and continual striving for a better education. They were an inspiration.

We spent the initial two weeks workshoping with the teachers. This was followed by two weeks of teaching practice where we evaluated the teachers' own lessons. A positive open dialogue existed between us, where the philosophy of teaching and learning thrived. It was a privilege to be a part of this programme and I felt further enriched each day. The weeks passed quickly and most weekends we met up with colleagues and travelled to each other's centres, soaking up further diverse elements of Indian life: curries, coconuts, colours and cows were in abundance!

I left India with a battered notebook full of ideas and tips that I would use in my own classroom but more than that, with newly forged friendships and a wealth of memories. The surprising thing was that it gave me confidence and reaffirmed me as a teacher and as a person. They say in theatre that you have been 'bitten by the bug'. With India I feel that it has crept under my skin. Would I do it again? In a heartbeat! Global Schoolroom is now recruiting volunteer teachers for Summer 2014. For more details or to complete an application form, visit www.globalschoolroom.net.

Elaine Cronin teaches at St Colman's College, Fermoy, Co. Cork.

Rachel Lenihan on her summer introducing teachers from overseas to Irish culture

In July 2011, I began working with 'English Matters', an organisation based in Spain that has been providing professional development courses in Ireland since 1999. The course I have been facilitating, 'Exploring English and Culture in Ireland', allows participants to gain an insight into a range of areas of study such as fiction, drama, poetry and film, society, education, music and dance. As an English and history teacher with an avid interest in music, dance and drama, I was excited about the prospect of getting involved in such a fantastic programme.

I have spent the last three summers working with teachers from all over Europe and I must say that it is not only an exciting experience, but an enlightening one. These teachers are giving up two weeks of their holidays to travel to the University of Limerick to engage in professional development. Teachers also disseminate ideas about projects that they have participated in with partners in schools across Europe through Comenius Life-Long Learning Programmes. Such a collaborative environment promotes reflection, critique and discussion of various issues in education at local and global levels.

The teachers I have worked with are enthusiastic and inspiring individuals from whom I have learned a great deal as a professional. I have gained an insight into education systems in other countries, a greater awareness of how people learn language and witnessed the benefits of creating an international learning community. I have made a number of lifelong friendships with teachers from across Europe. Indeed, my experience since I started working on these courses has been so profound and thought provoking that it has encouraged me to further my own education and professional development as an educator. As a result, I started a Structured PhD in Education in the University of Limerick in September 2012.

Rachel Lenihan teaches English and history in Scoil Mhuire agus Ide, Newcastle West, Co. Limerick.

RETIREMENT SEMINARS FOR ASTI MEMBERS RETIRING IN 2013 OR 2014?

In order to facilitate members who are considering retirement during 2013 or 2014 the ASTI is providing seminars for those who have **not** yet attended an ASTI retirement seminar.

This two evening programme is for members considering retirement during 2013 or 2014.
Attendance is required on **both** evenings from 4.30pm to 7pm.

You must pre-register with Eileen O'Rourke on 01-6040170 or eileen@asti.ie

VENUE	DAY 1	DAY 2
DUBLIN Clarion Airport Hotel	Monday 4 November	Monday 11 November
	You must attend both days	
TULLAMORE Tullamore Court Hotel	Tuesday 5 November	Tuesday 12 November
	You must attend both days	
SLIGO Radisson BLU Hotel	Monday 25 November	Monday 2 December
	You must attend both days	
CAVAN Hotel Kilmore	Tuesday 26 November	Tuesday 3 December
	You must attend both days	
DUBLIN Stillorgan Park Hotel	Monday 20 January	Monday 27 January
	You must attend both days	
KILKENNY Newpark Hotel	Tuesday 21 January	Tuesday 28 January
	You must attend both days	
CORK Silver Springs Hotel	Monday 3 February	Monday 10 February
	You must attend both days	
LIMERICK Southcourt Hotel	Tuesday 11 February	Tuesday 25 February
	You must attend both days	
GALWAY CITY Clayton Hotel	Wednesday 12 February	Wednesday 26 February
	You must attend both days	

TEA/SANDWICHES WILL BE AVAILABLE ON ARRIVAL

You may only attend if you have pre-registered with Eileen O'Rourke on 01-6040170 or eileen@asti.ie

ASTI RETIREMENT SEMINARS

Beginning my career

A newly qualified teacher tells us how she's finding the first few months of her new career.



When I was approached to write this article, my initial response was: how on earth am I going to find the time?! I have been doing a lot of this lately: I have become a yes woman. 'Yes' has become an automatic response to any task I am presented with, my eagerness to please and make an impression always outweighing anything else. So here I am, my only day off, pondering the past two years and anticipating the year to come.

Reflecting upon the past two years has been insightful and perhaps in hindsight it wasn't the nightmare it once seemed to be. But what a rollercoaster it has been. Personally, the road to get here has been a

tumultuous one. It has been a four-year journey to date, having faced many rejections during the application process. The main attribute I have developed is resilience. There were days when I wanted to give up and contemplated many other careers but my love for the profession wouldn't allow me to do that. I finally got accepted to the PDE course two years ago and thankfully I have not regretted my decision.

From PDE to NQT

So far, the experience of being a fledgling newly qualified teacher (NQT) hasn't been too painful, but as we all know the transition from being a

THE ASTI CENTENARY SCHOLARSHIP – APPLY NOW!



The ASTI offers an annual scholarship to assist members in undertaking further third-level studies. Each year, the scholarship of €4,000 is awarded to one ASTI member.

The scholarship is open to ASTI members who are planning to undertake or are currently undertaking further studies on a full-time or part-time basis.

Download an application pack at www.asti.ie.

The closing date for entries is January 31, 2013.

PDE student to an NQT is a turbulent one, and even the most dedicated teacher has moments where they question their chosen career. The new school year has proven to be the challenge I knew it would be, but I am finding the workload somewhat easier. It obviously helps that I don't have hours of lesson plans, daily evaluations and self-reflections to complete. I am really enjoying spending my free time planning and preparing resources for my lessons rather than creating overly ambitious lesson plans, which appeared great on paper but rarely went according to plan. I am finding that I have more time to enjoy my subjects and my students rather than stressing about whether my lesson went exactly as I had planned.

Becoming a very different teacher

My main focus this year lies in developing my own teaching style. I felt somewhat restricted last year in trying to emulate all the experienced teachers I had shadowed but never quite feeling I did it justice. This year I'm free from all those constraints and, through a lot of trial and error, I feel I am finally finding my own personal identity as a teacher. I think we can all admit to being envious of that teacher who has perfected their classroom management, with not a peep out of their students. That was me last year: I thought that was the teacher I wanted to be, or should be. However, I have learned that silence is not always golden and as a language teacher I have come to accept that noise and energy in a classroom are not bad things. I used to think a good lesson was a quiet lesson, but how wrong I was. I have seen a huge transformation in my attitude towards how students learn and I am certainly a very different teacher than I was a few months ago, having the confidence to place responsibility in the students for their own learning. The main aspect I am focusing on is active learning and I have taken a step back while encouraging students to become active participants during their lessons.

“My main focus this year lies in developing my own teaching style ... through a lot of trial and error, I feel I am finally finding my own personal identity as a teacher.”

Job anxiety

Moving beyond the classroom, the biggest concern for all NQTs is job uncertainty. I am thrilled to be staying in my current school for the next year, but I can't help remembering that I am, yet again, only on a one-year contract, and that I'm likely to face the same anxiety next year. Who knows where I will be this time next year? Unfortunately, emigration might very well be my only option. However, I am exactly where I want to be for the moment. I have finally earned my qualifications and I can feel the newly acquired confidence that comes with my title. I feel taller, more able and definitely more resilient than I did last year. The endless paperwork, the anxiety the night before those dreaded inspections, the challenging behaviour, criticism from the media and friends are all worth it in my opinion. I couldn't imagine a more fulfilling, enjoyable career, and I look forward to many more years to come, wherever they may be.



Holocaust Education Trust Ireland

Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2
Tel: +353 1 6690593 www.hetireland.org

STUDY VISIT TO BERLIN

22-25 April 2014



Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, Berlin

Teacher Education Programme Continuous Professional Development

This programme involves visits to authentic Holocaust sites and is an intensive course, which will introduce teachers to some aspects of the complex and challenging subjects of the Holocaust.

VISIT INCLUDES: Tour of Jewish Museum, Berlin, Topography of Terror Exhibition, Walking Tour of Berlin with a focus on Jewish historical sites and commemoration of Nazi victims, Memorial for the murdered Jews of Europe, House of the Wannsee Conference, Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial, Anne Frank Centre, Otto Weidt House, Silent Heroes Centre

Cost: Price on application.
Places limited.

Further information: 01 6690593 info@hetireland.org



CHURCH OF IRELAND COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

Master of Arts (Education)

Applications are invited for the Master of Arts (Education) in the Church of Ireland College of Education, focusing on Learning Support/Special Educational Needs. This course is open to graduates of the Postgraduate Diploma in Learning Support and Special Educational Needs or equivalent and is university-accredited.

Applications are invited from suitably qualified candidates, who will be short-listed for interview on the basis of information supplied in their application forms.

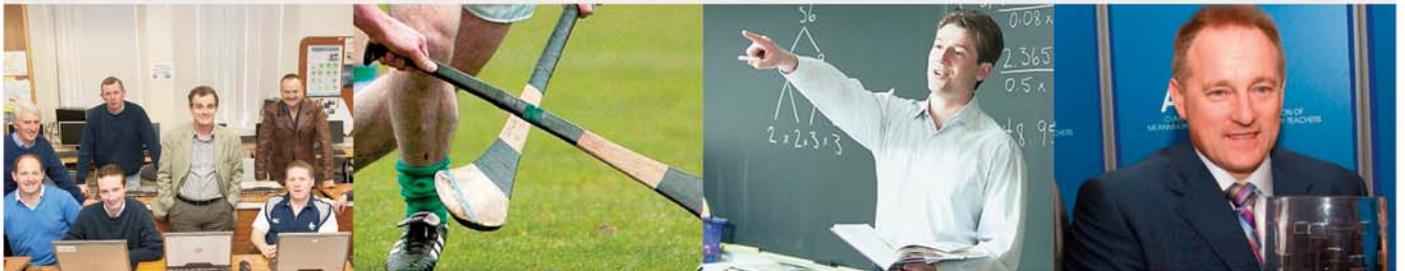
Application forms and further information can be obtained from:

The Church of Ireland College of Education
96 Upper Rathmines Road, Dublin 6
Email: info@cice.ie Telephone: (01) 497 0033 Fax: (01) 497 1932
or can be downloaded at www.cice.ie

Completed application forms should be returned to the above address, clearly marked **MA (Education) Application**.
The closing date for receipt of applications is **Monday 13th January 2014**.



Take a bow



The ASTI Achievement Awards
recognise the outstanding contribution teachers make to
schools, students and society.

Nominate an outstanding teacher or teaching team for their achievements
in school or outside their professional life

The ASTI Achievement Awards recognise teachers in three categories:

The Outstanding Teacher Achievement Award
recognises the contribution of individual teachers to their schools and education

The Outstanding Teacher Team Achievement Award
recognises the contribution of a team/group of teachers to their school and education

The Outstanding Individual Achievement Award
recognises the outstanding achievement of individual teachers outside their professional life

Log on to the ASTI website to find out more or to nominate a colleague.

The closing date for applications is
Friday, January 31st, 2014

www.asti.ie
1850-418400
www.twitter.com/astionion
www.facebook.com/astiteachers

**ASTI**
A century of service

Meet your Committee chairs

ASTI committees are integral to the running of the union and contribute to the overall policy of the organisation. *ASTIR* introduces some more of your ASTI Committee chairs.



Deirdre MacDonald

Chairperson of the Safety, Health and Welfare Committee, and maths and SPHE teacher

Wexford Tony Boland Branch

I got involved because ... I believe education to be the most potent force in the world. Teachers' health is education's wealth.

Wexford (1912 lock out – the workers won!) and the Wexford branch of the ASTI have a

long and inspiring history of taking a lead in relation to workers'/teachers' rights and welfare. I hope to progress teachers' health and welfare with the support and assistance of the Safety, Health and Welfare Committee.

The biggest issues for our committee right now are ... Our committee has as one of its priorities the establishment of a properly resourced project to 'Create a Healthy Teaching Environment – Stress Prevention for Second Level Teachers'. Stress, whatever its genesis, is the single biggest issue that militates against a healthy teaching environment for classroom teachers. The committee also wants to put in place protocols for schools to support the legal entitlement of staff to a school environment and culture that promotes their health and well-being, thereby supporting teaching and learning in the school. The development of a comprehensive safety, health and welfare policy for the ASTI is also on our list of things to do.

People may not know ... I hold a BSc and masters in health promotion, specialising in mental health, from the University of Wales. The biggest ever study of occupational stress in Britain found the most stressful occupations to be front-line social workers and classroom teachers. The European Trade Union Committee for Education and The European Federation of Education Employers in a research paper on teacher stress in 2011, states: "Teacher unions need to address work-related stress as one of their priority issues in their union agenda activities".



Jimmy Staunton

Chairperson of the Education Committee and geography teacher, Sligo Branch

I got involved because ... My first involvement in the ASTI was as a non-permanent teacher over 20 years ago. I just wanted fairness for all teachers. I got involved in the Education Committee because of a general interest in overall educational policy. The ASTI Education Committee gets to

review all issues pertaining to the life of the teacher in the classroom.

The biggest issues for our committee right now are ... the proposed changes to the junior cycle and the literacy and numeracy proposals. We are concerned at the speed at which the Minister is trying to implement the changes, the lack of information on assessment, and especially school-based moderation. We are concerned with the ending of a State certificate in 2016 and the introduction of a school certificate. The whole storage of examination scripts and data on students will create extra work for teachers and management in schools, at a time when middle management in schools is being eroded, due to budgetary cuts.

People may not know ... I studied theology in TCD after completing my BA in maths and geography in Galway in 1989. I also completed a Postgraduate Diploma in Education Leadership in Maynooth in 2010. I am passionate about rugby and coach in Sligo Grammar School. I am also a long-suffering Mayo man who hopes one day to see 'Sam Maguire' captured by the green and red.




Online Certificate/Diploma in Education (Special/Inclusive Education)

The Special Education Department of St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra and the Institute of Child Education and Psychology Europe (ICEP Europe) invite applications for the online Certificate/Diploma in Education (Special/Inclusive Education)

Commencing: January 2014

ENROL NOW

- ★ Open to all qualified teachers and other graduates
- ★ Option to take individual modules
- ★ Study around your existing schedule
- ★ Individual support from expert tutors
- ★ Live online classroom sessions
- ★ Advance your skills and enhance your career

This programme was funded by the Special Education Support Service, Teacher Education Section, DES, under the National Development Plan

For further information & application forms contact
Admissions Office, St. Patrick's College on (01) 8842025
Email: courseinfo@spd.dcu.ie or log on to www.spd.dcu.ie
Information also available from ICEP Europe on (01) 6510618
Email: info@icepe.eu or log on to www.icepe.eu



Remembering James O’Toole

“A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.” (Confucius)
As the news broke early on the morning of June 20, 2012, it was with great shock and immense sadness that we learned of the death of our colleague and friend James O’Toole. James arrived in St Colman’s College in 2010, and immediately set about becoming an integral part of life in St Colman’s.



James taught woodwork and tech graphics to junior and senior students, and was a very encouraging, engaging and popular teacher. His efforts did not end with the bell either and he immediately volunteered to help out with the football. The players of the first-year team were the recipients of his experience and enthusiasm, and the team showed much promise and great improvement under his guidance.

He also became a loyal, trusted and popular member of staff. In the days after his tragic passing the foremost word on everyone’s lips was ‘gentleman’. His professionalism, willingness to help out, and not least his good humour, were qualities that made him an outstanding colleague and friend. He showed many of his qualities in the annual teachers versus students charity soccer match. His commanding, box to box performance, as well as committed tackling, left a lasting impression. The general consensus in both dressing rooms but especially the (victorious!) teachers’ dressing room was that playing with James would be much more enjoyable than playing against him. Outside the College, James was a keen sportsman and while he played soccer and rugby for Dunmore, he often spoke of his GAA club Dunmore McHales. He had just that weekend played a vital role in helping Dunmore to victory over Monivea Abbey in the Intermediate Football Championship. He was also managing the club’s U-16 team at the time of his death.

In September 2012, all of us here at St Colman’s were honoured to have James’s family attend our opening school mass. They were told of the special place James will always have in our hearts. At the time of going to print, plans are underway to commission a commemorative portrait of James and a first year Dunmore/Claremorris soccer blitz was held in his honour last May.

James O’Toole was laid to rest on June 22, 2012, in his native Dunmore. The huge crowds who attended his removal and funeral mass were testament to the standing in which James and his family are held. The evidence of his standing among staff and students of St Colman’s College was shown by the large numbers who attended, in school uniform during the school holidays, and stood respectfully in the guard of honour that accompanied James on his final journey. Our loss in St Colman’s, while significant, is dwarfed compared to the loss of his parents Seamus and Sally, his five younger brothers and sisters, and his girlfriend Annie. To them we offer our most heartfelt sympathies.

Ar dheis Dè go raibh a anam dílis.

A tribute by Ray Brandon and Rory Hynes.

Pádraig Feehan – an appreciation

A great sense of sadness and loss was felt by the staff and students of Coláiste na Trócaire, Rathkeale, on hearing of the death of Pádraig Feehan, who was a former principal and great friend to the school. Pádraig taught English and history for many years before becoming Principal in 2000. A dedicated and committed teacher and history scholar, he continued to teach Leaving Certificate history while in his management roles.



Pádraig was born in Newmarket, Co. Cork, and a great love and loyalty towards his home place shone through whenever Cork was centre stage in sporting events. After his secondary education he joined the Augustinian Order and spent a number of years in the Novitiate in Dublin before completing his philosophy studies in Ballyboden. He attended UCD where he studied English literature and history, and completed his degree in Divinity in the Irish College in Rome. While in Rome, he developed a love for Italian culture and a fluency in the Italian language.

As a young man Pádraig was a great athlete and won a Cork County Medal in football at Intermediate level. He was a very good handballer and loved following his native Cork through good days and bad. His teaching career began in Dungarvan before being offered a post in Scoil Bhanríon na hEagna, Rathkeale, where he taught English and history for many years, before its amalgamation with the local vocational school to become Coláiste na Trócaire.

Pádraig encouraged and fostered a love of learning and scholarship while also encouraging the students to partake in sports at every level. He was a wonderful promoter of the concept of holistic education and the benefits this type of education would give to the student and the community. Pádraig was remarkably generous and trusting, open and friendly. He was a very good listener and loved to engage in conversation covering a wide range of topics: his skills in communication reflected his love of people in general.

While making an enormous contribution to the educational life in Rathkeale, Pádraig also gave himself wholeheartedly to the entire community. He was actively involved in the establishment of the Rathkeale Credit Union and a number of other local community organisations.

In 2012 Pádraig accepted and coped with the diagnosis of motor neuron disease with courage and dignity. He received wonderful care and support from his family and some very close friends. He is greatly missed by all who know him, and by his many friends in Coláiste na Trócaire and the wider community, which he served so selflessly for many years. He has left a wonderful legacy of learning, which will benefit all who knew him. Coláiste na Trócaire, Rathkeale, extends its deepest sympathy to his wife Mairghr ad, his daughters Eil s,  na, Eimear and Maeve, his sisters and brother. May he rest in peace.

A tribute by Rosaleen Liston, West Limerick Branch, Coláiste na Trócaire, Rathkeale, Co. Limerick.

Padraic Campbell, 1956-2012

History is like a novel. It has twists and turns, the unexpected and the banal. But, unlike a novel, we're unsure where it started and don't know the ending. Nevertheless, it has its chapters and one of these sadly closed with the death of Padraic Campbell on August 4, 2012. Padraic was appointed to his first – and last – teaching job at the Presentation College, Galway, in September 1977 and retired in December 2011. It could be said that his career defined a chapter in the story of Irish education. He came with a tidal wave of young teachers at a time of expansion in post-primary education, when decades- and even centuries-old certainties were crumbling. His working life was set against a background of continuous change in education and society. His leaving corresponded with a tidal wave of teachers departing, at a time of uncertainty in education and beyond.

Pres Galway is an all girls school. In September 1977 Padraic was one of only two whole-time male teachers on the staff – a novel situation at the time. He quickly established himself as an accomplished teacher of business subjects, a department he dealt with successfully to the end. He unselfishly gave free time in the evenings and at weekends to the development of basketball in the school. Nor did he lose his interest when qualified PE teachers were appointed to the staff. Continuing to manage teams for years, on one occasion he coached a basketball team as far as contesting an All Ireland final. Among the staff he was recognised as a sporting expert.

Music wasn't his subject but he could play the guitar, something that came in very handy at school functions and staff events. Indeed, he sometimes played around Galway in the summertime and, one night, was introduced to Peggy O'Halloran, a young primary school teacher. They married in early January 1982 in the wake of a countrywide blizzard described in one newspaper as the "weather gone mad". Both of them had been out of Galway a few days earlier and, when the snow struck, there was a doubt as to whether they would make it to their own wedding.

Disaster averted, they settled into married life and had three children – Karen, Michelle and Alan. Karen and Michelle came to the Pres and were loved by staff and students alike. They are now employed in physiotherapy and business. Alan is following a course in sport science at UL.

Padraic was missed by the school community on his retirement. It is a great source of sadness to everybody that his time out of teaching turned out to be so short. Peggy, Karen, Michelle and Alan have lost a wonderful husband, father and friend. To them we can only extend our sympathy. They had looked forward to having his companionship for many years ahead. It wasn't to be.

One definition of a successful life is that you leave the world a better place than you found it. No question about Padraic's success there.

A tribute by colleagues



TRINITY COLLEGE
The University of Dublin

Doctorate in Education

Applications are invited for the Doctorate in Education programme in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. The D.Ed. has been running since 2005 and is designed to offer students a different route to undertaking doctoral work which allows students to study in a structured manner, and which has informed professional practice as its primary focus. Currently we are offering the D.Ed. in three areas:

- **Higher Education Studies**
(For further details contact Dr Andrew Loxley loxleya@tcd.ie)
- **Learning Theory and Inclusion**
(For further details contact Dr. Colette Murphy colette.murphy@tcd.ie and/or Dr. Michael Shevlin mshvlin@tcd.ie)
- **School Guidance & Counselling**
(For further details contact Dr. Conor Mc Guckin mcguckic@tcd.ie)

Students are required to take two modules in their chosen area and three modules in the area of Research Methodology in the first three years of the programme. As the D.Ed is a research degree, all students are assigned a thesis supervisor on entry to the D.Ed. and are expected to complete a thesis of between 60,000-80,000 words. The duration of the programme is normally not longer than four-years taken on a part-time basis.

For further details and applications please see: www.tcd.ie/Education/research/degrees/d-ed/

**Closing date for applications is
3rd February 2014**

Contact Details:

Ph: 01 896 3583 (mornings) or
email: lmcguire@tcd.ie or
phdrsrch@tcd.ie



Half price for teachers at Glasnevin Cemetery Museum

Glasnevin Cemetery Museum offers all teachers and student teachers half price admission on Saturdays. Glasnevin Cemetery Museum also runs a transition year tour-guiding programme to encourage public speaking and research skills. For more details or to book, contact booking@glasnevintrust.ie or visit www.glasnevincemetery.ie.

Anti-bullying campaign

An anti-bullying campaign programme is available to schools free of charge at www.antibullyingcampaign.ie. All the tools and resources needed to implement the campaign, including handbooks and presentations, are available on the website.

Students to have their say on transition year

The Irish Second Level Students Union (ISSU) is conducting a survey to capture students' views on the transition year programme. They're asking transition year co-ordinators and students to go to www.issu.ie to give their views on the current programme and how it might be improved or adapted. The ISSU will also host regional meetings for students on transition year this academic year – find out more at www.issu.ie.

New fundraising incentive from CARI

In exchange for students' participation in fundraising events within their school, the CARI Foundation is running a new student training initiative with modules including 'Criminal Law' and 'Introduction to Psychology and Therapy'. The CARI Foundation provides therapy and support for children affected by child sexual abuse. For information contact Grace Jordan, Tel: 01-830 8529, or Email: helpline@cari.ie, or log on to www.cari.ie.

New paper on science fairs for learning

In partnership with the Inspectorate in the Department of Education and Skills, Intel Ireland has developed a paper to support inquiry-based teaching and learning through science fairs. The paper provides information for teachers on how to encourage and support student participation in national and school-based fairs. To download, visit www.intel.ie and search 'Science Fairs in Ireland'.

CLASSIFIED ADVERT

The Gaiety School of Acting is offering a unique programme for Leaving and Junior Certificate students, designed to address the Shakespeare English question. Full productions of Macbeth and Romeo & Juliet will be followed by workshops in Cork, Dublin and Waterford theatres. Email: kate.canning@gaiety.school.com.

Job swap

Permanent English/history teacher in Galway seeking job swap with same in the south Dublin/Wicklow/Wexford area.

Contact i383520@gmail.com.

Home economics and religion teacher in south Dublin seeks swap with same in Louth/Monaghan area.

Contact homeeconomicteacherswap@gmail.com.

The ASTI takes no responsibility for job swap notices.

Research on gender and leadership

A PhD student with the School of Education in UCD is conducting research to explore the relationship between gender and educational leadership, with a specific focus on examining the enablers and hindrances that inform the career paths of female teachers. She is seeking post-primary principals and teachers to take part – anonymity is guaranteed. Contact Mary Cunneen, Tel: 087-996 1662, or Email: mary.cunneen@ucdconnect.ie to express your interest.

Volunteer with Alone

Alone, an independent charity working with older people who are at risk of homelessness, socially isolated, vulnerable or in crisis is hoping to recruit volunteers to deliver schools talks in secondary schools around Dublin. See www.alone.ie for more information and contact details.

Magdalene resource for schools

A new short film based on the story of a Magdalene institution survivor may be of interest to teachers of history, CSPE or RE. The film tells Gabrielle O'Gorman's story and revisits the now derelict institution she was sent to as a teenager. Completed with the help of the Women's Studies Centre at University College Dublin, which led an Irish Research Council project on the Magdalene institutions, the film can be viewed at www.truetube.co.uk.

Free TY module

A qualified teacher currently undertaking a PhD at Dublin City University has designed a module for transition year students that aims to investigate their views on intercultural education and immigration in Ireland. The PhD candidate is now seeking schools to participate for the 2013/2014 academic year. Find out more at www.tyinterculturalmodule.wordpress.com.

Sign up for a visit from an 'Ambassador for Change'

The Immigrant Council of Ireland is planning a programme of workshops for students, where migrant 'ambassadors for change' will tell of their experiences in attending schools in Ireland, the challenges they faced, and how they overcame them and managed to achieve what they have achieved so far. The Council is inviting schools to sign up to participate. Find out more at www.immigrantcouncil.ie.

Representing retired teachers

RSTA members are joining with other public sector pensioners to defend their rights.

Until now, pensioners have not been represented in talks about national pay agreements, even though their pensions have been levied twice in recent years. So members of the RSTA came together with the retired associations of the TUI, INTO and IFUT, as well as retired garda, nurses and army associations and retired members of public service unions, and the Alliance of Retired Public Service Associations was formed. Despite very active lobbying, Minister Howlin would not meet with us while the Haddington Road talks were going on. However, his officials subsequently met with our representatives.

Following this, Minister Howlin met with the representatives of the Alliance and as a result of that meeting, he agreed that as soon as the Alliance was formally constituted, he would accept it as the negotiating body for retired public servants. Members of the Alliance have been working diligently on our Constitution and it is almost ready. This has been a huge achievement for the Alliance and is just one example of how the RSTA is fighting to preserve the pensions and welfare of retired ASTI members.

Co-operation with the ASTI

The RSTA continues to work closely with the ASTI. Officers of the RSTA and the ASTI met during the mid-term break to discuss matters of mutual interest. The RSTA will also be represented at the upcoming ASTI Retirement Seminars.

Congress Retired Workers' Committee

We also work through the Congress Retired Workers' Committee and our Immediate Past President, Marie Doyle, has recently been elected as Treasurer to that Committee, an indication of the high regard in which she is held across the organisations represented on it.

Thinking about retiring or recently retired?

The RSTA specifically promotes the interests of retired secondary teachers. So join today and make your voice heard. Please send completed application forms to the National Treasurer: Muriel McNicholas, Cordarragh, Kiltimagh, Co. Mayo.

Retired Secondary Teachers Association – serving retired secondary teachers since 1962



email: info@rsta.ie

web: www.rsta.ie

Membership Application

Personal Details

First Name: _____

Surname: _____

Address:

Home Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

RSTA Branch: _____

Annual Subscription €24. Payment options:

1. Direct Debit or Online Bank Transfer
To set up payment by Direct Debit or Online Banking please contact the National Treasurer, RSTA (Contact details below).
2. Cheque
Cheques should be made payable to "RSTA" and posted to the National Treasurer, RSTA (Contact details below).

National Treasurer RSTA:

Mrs Muriel Mc Nicholas,
Cordarragh,
Kiltimagh,
Co Mayo,
T: 085 1181330
E: murielmcnicholas@gmail.com

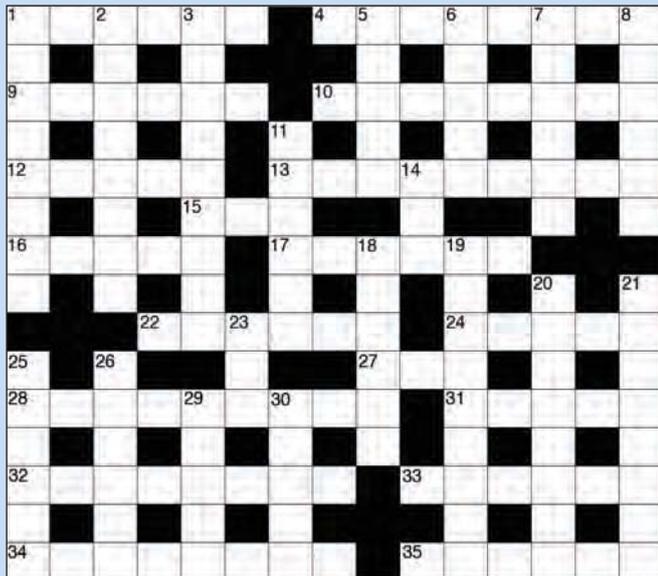


Sponsored by ASTI Credit Union

ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 1305

The winner will receive €200

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. 1305, Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, December 6, 2013

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1 Makes possible in coleslaw (6)
- 4 The PTR decides it in schools (8)
- 9 They're not easily broken (6)
- 10 Euclid is often referred to as its father (8)
- 12 Lay to rest this old exam (5)
- 13 Very complicated – a nice trait (9)
- 15 Drinking vessel for a fall guy (3)
- 16 Caesar's land (5)
- 17 Stick-in-the-mud (6)
- 22 Joint holder! (6)
- 24 Be honest with this tool (5)
- 27 Kind of port but not for a liner! (3)
- 28 Chesterfields for this weather? (9)
- 31 Anger with the kitchen cooker (5)
- 32 Hunting with hawks (8)
- 33 One of six Norse monarchs? (6)
- 34 They're good for a breather! (8)
- 35 A Greek goddess is one of TV's *Friends* (6)

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 They might say, "God, no!" (8)
- 2 Tasty crustaceans, red when boiled (8)
- 3 "Now it's high and floodtide in the heart and time to go" (Heaney) (9)
- 5 A chirping note to an online message service (5)
- 6 It has been described as draconian legislation (1,1,1,1,1)
- 7 "forsleep of death what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil" (Shakespeare) (2,4)
- 8 Sounds like Kildare no longer has this hot spring (6)
- 11 Piece work! (6)
- 14 Boil 2 down and they look thus (3)
- 18 Shun or forward charge (6)
- 19 JK Rowling pseudonym (9)
- 20 Poetic end to the day (8)
- 21 This ailing bird of prey, sounds unlawful (3,5)
- 23 Kind of self-important trip (3)
- 25 A very clever island! (6)
- 26 "Much have I travelled in the of gold" (Keats) (6)
- 29 Sounds like singing sheets of paper! (5)
- 30 Acoustic (5)

Solution to ASTIR Crossword No. 1304

Across	Down
1. Vilify	1. Vocalist
4. Cloister	2. Landlord
9. Canard	3. Forestall
10. Implores	5. Limit
12. Lilts	6. Idler
13. Motorboat	7. Turbot
14. Syria	8. Resets
15. Appear	11. Impact
20. Blithe	16. Pleads
21. Demon	17. Addictive
24. Overdosed	18. Immature
27. Crash	19. In the red
28. Paradigm	22. Torpid
29. Liquor	23. Metric
30. Dockyard	25. Daddy
31. Behead	26. Sugar

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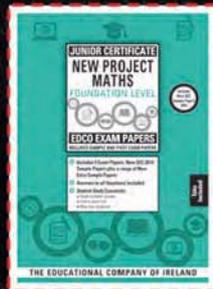
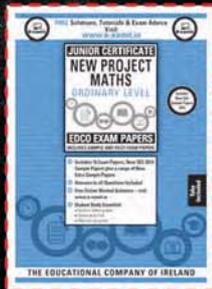
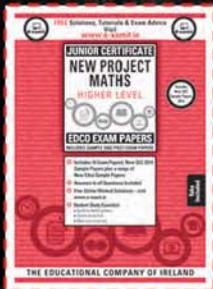
Congratulations

to the winner of Crossword
 No. 1304: Bernadette Daly,
 Presentation Convent,
 Mitchelstown, Co. Cork. Fermoy
 Branch member.

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