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ASTIR

Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland



1913-2013

FIGHTING FOR YOUR RIGHTS

Update on Haddington
Road Agreement

Tips for new teachers

Junior cycle update



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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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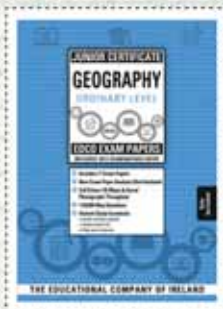
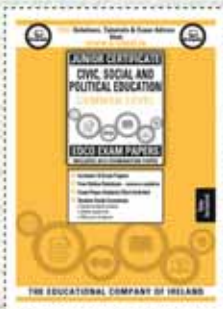
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Guím rath mór oraibh go léir don scoilbhliain nua atá romhainn amach. Chomh maith le sin, fearaim fíorchaoín fáilte romhaibh siúd atá ag ardú seoil don chéad uair ar thuras iontach na múinteoireachta. Go dté sibh slán choíche.

I wish every one of you all the very best for the new school year. I also extend a very warm welcome to those of you who are starting on the wonderful journey that is teaching for the first time. May that journey always be a safe and happy one.

Unfortunately we are once again facing into another year of pay cuts, erosion of working conditions, reduced resources and uncertainty about the future. For many years we've had an education system that has been envied the world over. But continuing austerity is undermining both teaching as a profession and the quality of education in our schools. Despite all the evidence that investment in education is the best way to emerge from a recession, we are presented daily with the latest speculation about what will be cut next from the second-level education service.

It's time to stop cutting and start rebuilding. I am determined to do everything I can over the next year to promote the role and contribution of second-level teachers and education, both in the media and among the wider public. Teachers work every day to develop our future entrepreneurs, scientists, engineers and leaders. Teachers work every day to inspire creativity, innovation, collaboration and leadership. In order to ensure that our young people are best equipped for the challenges ahead of them – including re-building society and the economy following the worst financial crisis in the history of the State – we need to ensure that teachers and schools are adequately supported and resourced.

It is also a time when teachers must be trusted to do what they do best. Research shows that second-level teachers are held in high regard and are trusted by the public and particularly by parents. However, when it comes to reform of the junior cycle, teachers' views are being sidelined by the Minister for Education and Skills. In order to address this, we must ensure that we communicate our concerns regarding junior cycle reform directly to parents. Reform of the junior cycle is vital, but it must be the right reform. The ASTI's publication 'Teachers' Voice' – based on a consultation with up to 10,000 ASTI members – highlights teachers' key concerns as assessment, standards and equity. We hope that you will join us in communicating this message. For more information visit www.asti.ie.

I am urging all members to exercise their vote in the important ASTI ballots. CEC has recommended rejection of the Haddington Road Agreement, and is urging a yes vote to industrial action. We need every member to vote to achieve a strong mandate to challenge cuts and to start rebuilding our education service.



Sally Maguire
ASTI President

ASTI lobbies Government on Budget 2014

It is hard to believe that just as schools are trying to cope with the latest round of education cuts, which came into effect this September, we are already facing into Budget 2014. This year's annual Budget announcement will be made on Tuesday, October 15, and the newspapers are rife with speculation about what will be hit next in education, health and social welfare.

Earlier this year an ASTI/ Millward Brown survey found that 98% of second-level schools have lost an average of two full-time subject teachers since the onset of the education cuts. Many schools have also lost specialist teachers. Some 38% of schools said they had dropped at least one subject at Leaving Cert level as a result of losing subject teachers.

In June of this year the OECD publication 'Education at a Glance 2013' found that investment in education as a proportion of public expenditure has declined significantly in Ireland since 2005. According to the report, in 2005, 14% of Ireland's total public expenditure went to education. In 2010 this had dropped to 9.7%. In comparison, the OECD average in 2010 was 13%. It is alarming that at a time when Ireland's school-going population is increasing significantly, the Government is reducing the share of available public expenditure for education. These are just some of the facts that the ASTI is impressing upon politicians as part of its pre-budget lobbying campaign.

Implications of ballot outcomes

As this *ASTIR* goes to print the ASTI is preparing to conduct two ballots. By the time this edition reaches schools, your ballot papers will have arrived and no doubt you and your colleagues will be considering these crucial decisions.

The ASTI Central Executive Council is recommending that members reject the Haddington Road Agreement and vote in favour of industrial action. The outcomes of these ballots will have far-reaching implications for each and every member. Detailed information is available on the ASTI – website www.asti.ie.

It is vital that ASTI members exercise their right to vote in these ballots. The ASTI is a democratic organisation. Balloting gives every member an equal say on important issues. By returning your ballot papers you can ensure that your voice has the same status as any other member's voice – including the ASTI President! Please use your vote.



Pat King
ASTI General Secretary

Crucial ballots underway

At a meeting on August 15, ASTI Central Executive Council (CEC) decided to put the Haddington Road Agreement to a ballot of members, recommending that members reject the Agreement. A concurrent ballot on industrial action in the event that members reject the Agreement is also being held. Members are being urged to vote yes to industrial action.

What am I voting on?

One ballot paper asks members if they are in favour of accepting the Haddington Road Proposals for a Public Service Agreement as issued by the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) in May 2013.

The second ballot paper asks members if they are willing to take industrial action, up to and including strike action, as directed by ASTI Standing Committee, in the event that ASTI members vote to reject the Haddington Road Agreement and in response to decisions taken by the Government in the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest Act 2013 (FEMPI Act) to cut teachers' pay and worsen their working conditions.

These ballots will have long-term implications for each ASTI member and for their profession. It is vital that all members exercise their right to vote.

Background

Following the rejection of 'Croke Park II' proposals by the ASTI and other trade unions in April, further talks were held between unions and the Labour Relations Commission. Revised proposals, in the form of the Haddington Road Agreement, emerged from these talks in late May, and were put to all public sector unions.

In June, FEMPI legislation cutting public servants' pay and imposing a three-year increment freeze from July 1, 2013, for those not covered by the Haddington Road Agreement, was enacted by the Government.

Standing Committee met again in June and, informed by meetings with Government departments and the Department of Education and Skills, agreed that the Haddington Road Agreement

represented a final offer. In that context, and in light of the now defined alternative in the form of the enacted FEMPI legislation, Standing Committee recommended that CEC be convened to consider the Agreement and the question of a ballot of members. The TUI and IFUT (university lecturers) are also currently balloting on the Agreement. All other public sector unions have signed up to the Agreement.

Vote NO to Haddington Road

ASTI CEC is recommending that members reject the Haddington Road Agreement.

Members of CEC stated that teachers have given enough, including a 14% pay cut, which was imposed on all public servants. Teachers' working conditions have suffered greatly as schools have lost teaching staff and other vital resources.

What are the key differences between The Haddington Road Agreement and the alternative FEMPI legislation?

FEMPI applies to those not in the Haddington Road Agreement – see table.

Make sure you vote

These ballots will have long-term implications for each ASTI member and for their profession. It is vital that all members exercise their right to vote.



	The Haddington Road Agreement	FEMPI impositions
Higher pay cut	5.5% cut if earning above €65k, from July 1, 2013 8% pay cut on earnings above €80k, from July 1, 2013	5.5% cut if earning above €65k, from July 1, 2013 8% cut on earnings above €80k, from July 1, 2013
Cut reduction	Cut amount reduced by up to €1,769	No reduction in cut
Restoration	April 2017 Commitment to restore half of cut amount to annual salary.	No commitment to restore salary
	January 2018 Commitment to restore remaining half of cut amount to annual salary	No commitment to restore salary
Increments	Next increment due after July 1, 2013, paid to all Salary less than €35k: one three-month delay in payment of following increment, meaning a permanent three-month delay in increments Salary €35k to €65k: Three-month delay in payment of following two increments, meaning a permanent six-month delay in increments Salary above €65k: Six-month delay in payment of following two increments, meaning a permanent 12-month delay in increments.	Three-year freeze in increments effective from July 1, 2013, meaning a permanent three-year delay in increments.
New teachers' pay	Revised pay scale for new teachers	No revised scale
	2011 entrants: Average increase of €1,000 per year Top of scale increase of €2,000 per year	No increase
	2012 entrants (and after): Average increase of €1,000 per year Top of scale increase of €6,500 per year	No increase
CID	CID after three years with effect from September 2013	CID after four years (no change from current position)
Fixed-term teachers	Permanency panel with effect from September 2014	No panel
	Expert group to examine casualisation	No expert group
S&S	Compulsory S&S for all No payment for S&S Max weekly S&S: three hours Max annual S&S: 43 hours New entrants' S&S: 43 hours Five periods on rota per week	Right to opt in or out of S&S Payment for S&S (€1,769 or €1,592) Max weekly S&S: 1.5 hours Max annual S&S: 37 hours New entrants' S&S: 49 hours Three periods on rota per week
Circular	New Department S&S circular to issue, reflecting the above	New Department S&S circular to be issued, content not yet known
Payment for supervision and substitution	No allowance payable for S&S Commitment to include additional payment of €796 in the incremental scale in lieu of S&S payment from April 2017 Commitment to include additional payment of a further €796 in the incremental scale in lieu of S&S payment from April 2018	Annual payment for S&S (€1,769 or €1,592), as under current S&S arrangements. However, FEMPI empowers the Minister to change terms, conditions and working time, and a new circular on S&S is due to be issued if Haddington Road is rejected, the content of which is not yet known
Posts of responsibility	Restoration of alleviation of moratorium	No alleviation of moratorium
Redundancy/redeployment	Redeployment scheme continues to operate	No redeployment scheme – possibility of redundancies
Hours	33 Croke Park hours continue	No contractual obligation for the 33 hours. However, FEMPI empowers the Minister to alter working hours

This information is a summary only; members should read full information at www.asti.ie.

Full information on the Haddington Road Agreement is available on the ASTI website.

Celebrate World Teachers' Day

Celebrate teachers around the world on World Teachers' Day, October 5. World Teachers' Day is an opportunity for Education International and its member organisations to celebrate the profession and to

promote international teaching standards. Why not get your staff together for a cake break on Friday, October 4? You can recoup the cost of cakes from your ASTI branch by forwarding receipts to your branch treasurer.



Recipients of the Thomas MacDonagh Award. Back row (from left): Joe Moran; Philip Irwin, Vice President; Pat Hurley; Ray St John, ASTI Honorary Treasurer; Brendan Broderick; and, Liam O'Mahony. Front row (from left): Ann Piggott; Pat King, General Secretary; Mary Lysaght; Gerry Breslin, Immediate Past President; Sally Maguire, President; Micheál O'Neill; and, Peter Keaney.



ASTI Immediate Past President Gerry Breslin presents the ASTI Achievement Award 2013 to Colm McFadden. Colm received the Award for his outstanding contribution to his school and for his personal achievements in sport, which include playing a vital part in Donegal's Senior All Ireland Football victory in 2012. Colm teaches maths in St Eunan's College, Letterkenny, where he also coaches the school football team. Colm attended St Eunan's himself, and in 2000 was part of the team that brought the Ulster schools McLarnon Cup back to the school for a third time.

ASTI Award recipients



Maria Kelly, Cork South Branch, was presented with Honorary Life Membership of the ASTI. Ann Piggott was presented with the Thomas MacDonagh Award. Pictured are: back row (from left): Pat King, General Secretary; Ray St John, Honorary Treasurer; John Byrne, Cork South; and, Diarmaid de Paor, Deputy General Secretary. Front row (from left): Ann Piggott; Maria Kelly; Gerry Breslin, ASTI Immediate Past President; and, Sally Maguire, ASTI President.



Helen Meade and Mary Carroll, members of the Clare Branch, were among those presented with the PJ Kennedy Award in May for their contribution to the ASTI.

This issue in numbers...

9.7

Percentage of total public expenditure on education in Ireland in 2010, down from 14% in 2005. (P.12)

735

Number of hours Irish teachers spend teaching students compared with OECD annual average of 686. (P.12)

ASTI policy on oral exams assessment

It is ASTI policy that members do not provide marks to their own students in State certificate examinations. ASTI members are directed not to assess their own students or students in their own school in State certificate examinations. This policy applies to all Junior Certificate oral examinations, including Gaeilge. The ASTI policy on assessment is based on the principle that the State-certified examination system should be valid, objective and equitable.

The ASTI supports the use of a variety of examination techniques in public certificate examinations, provided that these techniques involve external setting of questions, external administration and external marking. The ASTI insists on these conditions to protect the relationship between teacher and student, and to ensure that the Irish examination system maintains its high standard and is perceived as objective and impartial.

For more information on ASTI policy, see www.asti.ie.

What's Your Story?



Pictured with the overall winners of the 2013 What's Your Story competition are (from left): Deputy Principal of St Joseph's College Lucan, Bernadette Fitzgerald; Moira Leydon, ASTI Assistant General Secretary and competition judge; Tessy Ehiguese, winner; Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Frances Fitzgerald; Avril Ronan, Competition organiser, Trend Micro; and, Judith Ehiguese, winner. Judith and Tessy, students at St Joseph's College Lucan, impressed the judges with their video about the positive aspects of technology.

Non-permanent teachers' seminar



Pictured at a seminar for non-permanent teachers in May are (from left): Sarah Brusey; Niall O'Dálaigh; and, Yvonne Rossiter.

Key ASTI issues

As well as ongoing representation and policy concerns, ASTI work over the coming months will focus heavily on:

- ▶ making sure teachers are heard on junior cycle reform;
- ▶ representing teachers in certified sick leave negotiations; and,
- ▶ challenging maternity leave changes.

Keep updated at www.asti.ie.



Members of the Non-Permanent Teachers' Advisory Committee, Dermot Brennan and Gloria Helen, pictured at the seminar in May.

9

Age at which clear indicators of educational disadvantage appear among Irish children.
(P.18)

15.75

Approximate percentage of teachers' income paid as pension contribution when a range of deductions are taken into account.
(P.24)

Local branches honour a lifetime of teaching



At a Nenagh Branch retirement function are: Back row (from left): Ger O'Donoghue, Standing Committee Rep; Sinead Kent, Branch Treasurer; Ray St John, ASTI Honorary Treasurer; and, Beth Cooney, Branch Secretary. Front row (from left): Pat King, General Secretary; Granu Dwyer, Branch Chairperson; Gerry Breslin, ASTI Immediate Past President; and, Margaret Curran, St Mary's Nenagh, retiree.



Pictured at a Longford Branch function to honour retiring teachers are: Back row: Padraig MacAodh, Branch Chairperson; Michelle Keogh, Branch Secretary; Tony Waldron; Tiernan Dolan; Pat King, ASTI General Secretary; Patrick O'Doherty; Padraic McWeeney, Branch Treasurer; and, Pat Clarke. Front row: Una Ledwith; Rheda Quinn; Sally Maguire, ASTI President; Geraldine Quinn; Regina Moloney; and, Marian Duffley.



Pictured at a retirement function hosted by the Clare Branch are: Back row (from left): Peter Quinn, Chairman; Ger O'Donoghue, Standing Committee Rep; Helen Meade; Bernard Moynihan, ASTI IR Official; Anne Cooper; Kathleen Haugh; Gerry Breslin, ASTI Immediate Past President; Pat King, ASTI General Secretary; Miriam Carmody; Michael Loughnane; Colm McDonagh; and, Jack Keane. Front row (from left): Anne Quinn; Kathleen Pyne; Dympna O'Donoghue; Mary O'Flaherty; Helen Cleary; Anne O'Loughlin; Moira Hillery; and, Mary Carroll.

ASTI student teacher network

Do you have a student teacher on teaching practice in your school? Let them know about the benefits of FREE ASTI student membership.

- Student members can benefit from ASTI advice and information by phone, email or on our dedicated website for student teachers.
- They will receive ASTI publications including *ASTIR*, *Nuacht* and the ASTI members' diary.

- They can attend ASTI student network events.
- They have access to low cost car, house and travel insurance, as well as discounted loans and discounts from over 1,000 outlets nationwide.

Most importantly, they have the support of Ireland's biggest second-level teacher union – a union that prioritises new teachers! Find out more at www.asti.ie.

Spend your money where workers count!



This school year, don't forget the Fair Shop campaign, which urges trade union members to support unionised Fair Shop-designated retail outlets. Find out more at www.fairshop.ie.

Teaching Council registration deadline

From November 1, 2013, 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. If you have not yet applied for registration, you should apply to the Teaching Council immediately. Application forms are available on www.teachingcouncil.ie. The Garda vetting process must be completed before registration can be finalised. At periods of high demand, the Garda vetting element of registration may take eight to 12 weeks to complete. Circular Letter 0025/2013 sets out the requirement for teachers in recognised schools to be registered. For more see www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Donation to Concern's Syrian response



The ASTI recently donated €5,000 to help with Concern Worldwide's emergency response in Syria. Concern is supporting vulnerable people in Syria who have been left without electricity or safe, clean water, and those who have fled the conflict into neighbouring Lebanon. Pictured are: Gerry Breslin, ASTI Immediate Past President, making the donation to Brid Kennedy, Concern's regional director with responsibility for Syria at Concern's head office in Dublin.

Festival of Education

The Teaching Council is planning an event to promote, highlight and celebrate innovation in teaching. FÉILTE, the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence, is to take place on World Teachers' Day, Saturday October 5, at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham, Dublin, and will give teachers who are involved in innovative learning projects the opportunity to showcase their work.

Examples of projects that will be highlighted by teachers on the day include: how to create a nurture room for children with behavioural problems; education through craft; apps for children with autism; utilising tablets in the classroom; anti-bullying strategies; communities

of practice for teachers; and, leadership strategies.

The festival will be opened with an address by *Irish Times* columnist Fintan O'Toole and will be closed with a 'chat show' hosted by RTÉ presenter and TCD PhD candidate Aoibhinn Ní Shúilleabháin, and a performance by the National Children's Choir.

All registered teachers will be invited to attend. As space is limited, attendance will be awarded on a lottery basis. Teachers will be emailed in September and asked to indicate if they would like to attend. Those who are selected in the lottery will be contacted with further details. Further information as it becomes available can be found on www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Membership Plus

ASTI members can enjoy up to 50% discount at over 1,000 restaurants, shops, gyms, golf clubs, venues and more through their Membership Plus card.

New Membership Plus cards are being sent to all eligible ASTI members this month. The cards will be sent to schools and distributed by ASTI school stewards. Membership Plus cards are provided free to members; however, as there is a cost to the ASTI in providing these cards, any replacement cards will incur a charge to the

member. Your new card will entitle you to discounts in outlets such as DID Electrical, Argos, Hickey's Pharmacies and XtraVision. You can find the full range of discounts online at www.membershipplus.ie.

To start saving, simply visit www.membershipplus.ie to register your card or to update your account with your new Membership Plus number. Once registered you will have access to over 1,000 offers, and new offers and last-minute deals will be emailed to you throughout the year.

Activate your card for a chance to win €50

Anyone who activates their 2013/2014 Membership Plus card by October 31, 2013, will go into a draw to win a €50 shopping card of their choice from our selection of discounted shopping cards.



Membership Plus card Exclusive discounts from over 1,000 suppliers

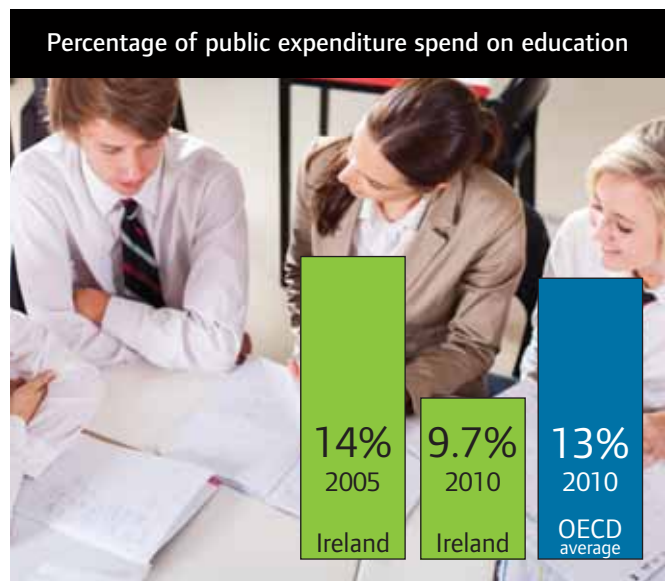
OECD shows Government is failing to prioritise education

The OECD report 'Education at a Glance 2013', published in June, shows that Ireland is performing well in terms of the number of students completing second-level education, in spite of underfunding.

Almost 90% of Irish students complete second-level education compared to the OECD average of 83% and the EU21 average of 84%. Ireland is ranked eleventh out of 27 countries for second-level school completion. In addition, Ireland is performing well above average in terms of the percentage of students progressing from second level to third level. In Ireland, 47% of 25- to 34-year-olds have a third-level qualification compared to the OECD average of 39%. Out of 28 countries, only Canada, Japan and Korea are ahead of Ireland.

Reacting to the report, ASTI General Secretary Pat King said: "The report shows that completing second-level education is highly correlated to employment status, lifetime earnings and health. Countries that fail to prioritise investment in education during this recession are not only risking long-term economic stability, but are storing up a wide range of problems, which will impact on individuals and society as a whole". Following the report's publication, the ASTI expressed deep concern that investment in education as a proportion of public expenditure has declined significantly in Ireland since 2005. In 2005, 14% of total public expenditure went to education. In 2010 this had dropped to 9.7%. In comparison, the OECD average in 2010 was 13%. During a similar period the number of young people in Ireland not in work or education/training grew substantially – from 11% in 2008 to 22% in 2011.

"It is alarming that at a time when Ireland's school-going population is increasing significantly the Government is reducing the share of available

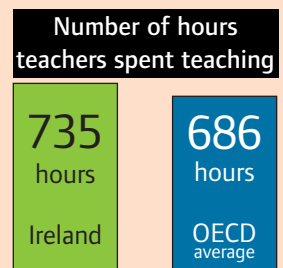


public expenditure for education," said Mr King. "This failure to prioritise and protect young people's education can only be described as reckless and flies in the face of the Government's stated commitment of developing Ireland as a knowledge economy."

Teachers' working hours

Once again, the 'Education at a Glance' report provides the evidence that Irish second-level teachers spend more time teaching than their OECD counterparts. Irish teachers spend 735 hours teaching their students compared with the OECD average of 686. In addition to this, Irish second-level teachers are of course required to carry out a wide range of non-classroom duties, including class preparation, attending subject and school planning meetings, attending parent-teacher and

staff meetings, and fulfilling administrative and legal obligations. Irish teachers are also internationally renowned for their commitment to the delivery of a wide range of extra-curricular activities to meet students' interests.



Junior cycle update

Find out the latest on the ASTI's campaign to ensure that teachers' voices are heard on junior cycle reform.

ASTI members are in favour of junior cycle reform but have grave concerns about the Framework for Junior Cycle in its current form. The ASTI is opposing implementation of this Framework until teachers' concerns about potential impacts on education standards are addressed. While the campaign is ongoing, the ASTI is encouraging members to engage with the planning and consultation process on curriculum reform in order to ensure that those best placed to offer their professional opinions on how workable, equitable and worthwhile reform can be achieved are heard.

Representing teachers' views

The ASTI is represented on the NCCA Board for Junior Cycle and on the Education Partners Consultation Group. Based on the feedback received from teachers, ASTI representatives have highlighted, through these and other channels, the need to ensure that the change model is feasible, and that its implementation is realistic and properly resourced. The ASTI will monitor the Junior Cycle Framework roll-out carefully, including visits to schools participating in the Junior Cycle Network to gauge the views of teachers on the ground.

Advocating for education standards

ASTI representatives are meeting representatives from a number of political parties, the Department of Education and Skills, management bodies and the National Parents' Council (primary and post-primary) to put forward teachers' concerns about the current plans for junior cycle reform.

ASTI representatives will explain that teachers are not opposed to reform, but they have serious concerns about their own and their schools' capacities to implement such wide-scale reform in the current context of cutbacks, class sizes and initiative overload. They will also

ASTI position on junior cycle

'Teachers' Voice', a report of the ASTI consultation with members on the Framework for Junior Cycle, was published in April. Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn TD, has called the ASTI report "immensely valuable", acknowledging that realising deep educational change can only happen through teachers and school management. ASTI Annual Convention 2013 adopted four motions in relation to the proposed framework for junior cycle. These motions opposed the implementation of the junior cycle framework as currently proposed and called for the abolition of proposals for teachers to assess their own students in the junior cycle. They called on the Minister to engage in real and meaningful dialogue with teachers so that necessary changes to the junior cycle programme could be designed and introduced, and a properly resourced implementation strategy put in place.

highlight teachers' concerns about the importance of maintaining high standards in assessment, including ensuring reliability, consistency and objectivity through external marking.

These meetings will be based around the ASTI's four key 'asks':

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

Continuing the campaign

Other actions proposed for the coming months include: an information campaign for parents; research into schools' capacity and workload; focus groups with parents and teachers; and, a national petition. Keep updated and find out how you can get involved at www.asti.ie.

Updates on proposed junior cycle roll out

While an implementation strategy for the roll-out of junior cycle reform has yet to be published, the first phase involves the introduction of a new specification for English and the introduction of short courses in September 2014.

English: More than 250 people participated in the consultation on new curriculum specifications for English, planned for first-year students from September 2014. Look out for the consultation report and final English specification due to be published this month.

Short courses: From September 2014 it is planned that schools can choose to introduce new short courses in CSPE, SPHE and PE or continue to use existing courses. Work is ongoing on draft short courses, which will be available for consultation in the autumn.

CPD: Continuous professional development (CPD) days for principals and English teachers will commence this term. The ASTI has emphasised the need for schools to be given time to hold all-staff planning days for the junior cycle implementation during this school year.

Phase II: Draft subject specifications for the second phase of subjects to be introduced as part of the revised junior cycle – business studies, Irish and science – are to be prepared for consultation by autumn 2014. Phase II subjects are due to be introduced in schools from 2015.

Certificate examinations: Certificate examinations at junior cycle are to be phased out in all subjects except Irish, English and maths by 2020. From 2017, examination papers in CSPE will no longer be set or examined by the SEC.

Be data aware



Data Protection Commissioner BILLY HAWKES, who recently addressed an ASTI seminar for principals and deputy principals, discusses schools' data protection obligations.

We all have rights to privacy under the Data Protection Acts, as well as under other Irish and European laws. My office is responsible for ensuring that data protection law is upheld. Our approach is to assume that everybody wants to comply with the law and we help them to do so. Data protection law is a set of principles that must be applied in particular circumstances. There are eight basic rules of data protection. You must:

1. obtain and process the information fairly;
2. keep it only for one or more specified and lawful purpose(s);
3. process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was given to you initially;
4. keep it safe and secure;
5. keep it accurate and up to date;
6. ensure that it is adequate, relevant and not excessive;
7. retain it no longer than is necessary for the specified purpose or purposes; and,
8. give a copy of his/her personal data to any individual, on request.

What is data?

We tend to think of personal data as information like a person's name, their address, and so on, but data is actually a very broad concept. It refers to anything that can be linked to an identifiable person. Data protection law applies to any data held on file, be it a paper file, an audio file, a video file or a digital file.

Biometrics

Biometric data may be created from physical or physiological characteristics of a person. These include a fingerprint, an iris, a retina, a face, outline of a hand, an ear shape, voice pattern, DNA or body odour. The critical issues to be considered in biometrics are proportionality and consent. A school must conduct an assessment to determine if the use of biometrics is 'excessive'. The signed consent of students and their parents would be necessary, and each student would have to be given the clear right to opt out of using such a system. There is a specific guidance note on the use of biometrics in schools on the data protection website.

CCTV

CCTV monitoring means collecting personal data on a continuous and constant basis. Schools can justify the use of CCTV, but they need to justify it and to justify each point of use. There is a proportionality

Who is responsible for it?

Schools have an obligation to ensure that anything to do with processing personal data is within the law. This includes collecting data, storing it, using it, disclosing it, and destroying it. The school as a corporate entity is the 'data controller' and is, therefore, responsible for ensuring compliance. If the school uses an outside service provider to process data, the responsibility for ensuring compliance remains with the school.

Gathering data

Schools hold vast amounts of data, some of it very sensitive information. They have a corresponding obligation under data protection law to protect that data very carefully. Obtaining information correctly is the best way to safeguard against data protection problems later. It's important to look at the information asked of students when they enroll, or of staff when they are hired, and ask if it is all necessary. Where it is necessary, the student, parent or staff member should be told why the information is needed and how it will be used. It should be made clear that any non-essential information is optional.

Holding data

The safety and security of data is the bottom line for any organisation. It's very important that schools pay very careful attention to how information is stored and who has access to it. A lot of it is common sense but it's worth remembering that as a basic requirement any laptop

test to be met – what is the problem and does dealing with that problem justify significant interference with people's privacy through CCTV? All of the duties that come with holding data apply also to CCTV, including maintaining the data securely and the right of anybody to demand a copy. Specific guidance on the use of CCTV is available on the data protection website.

Cloud storage

Storing information online or in third-party data centres is tricky territory. The information must, of course, be held securely and schools must ensure that data storage providers have put in place measures to comply with data protection law. If the data is hosted outside of the EU, schools should be conscious that European data protection law imposes strict restrictions on shipping information out of the EU.

Sensitive data

Some categories of data require special protection, including generally requiring very explicit consent to do anything with them. These include data on: physical or mental health; racial origin; political opinions; religious or other beliefs; sexual life; criminal convictions; alleged commission of offence; and, trade union membership.

or smart device on which data is kept must be encrypted to a high standard; all files, including paper files, should be kept securely; and, access to sensitive information should be restricted, on a need to know basis. It's important that there is good oversight of IT systems, which ideally should have an audit trail so that you know who is accessing data.

In the normal course of events, consent is necessary to disclose information to anyone who does not need it within the school or to an outside person or organisation. There are situations where consent does not apply, for example the obligation to report reasonable suspicion of abuse to the HSE or the Gardaí, but it's important that this is done only where covered by the guidelines.

If a breach of data security occurs, schools need to be able to show that they have documented procedures in place for treating data correctly. We would recommend that there is somebody within the school assigned the function of taking care of personal data. I would also suggest that schools carry out their own data protection audit to ensure compliance – in many cases you'll be very surprised about the amount of information you hold.

Everybody has a right to access data held about them and the right to correct any inaccuracies. If a person asks for a copy of the information held on them, that information must be provided to them.

Disposing of data

It's important that schools have a clear policy on how long they will retain certain information and how they will dispose of information securely when that time is exhausted. Retention should be thought through by the school board and decided on the basis of experience. Obviously, schools must comply with legal retention obligations but always remember that the longer you hold on to information, the more at risk it is.

More information

The Data Protection website has a specific education section. You can find a data protection audit manual on the website, as well as The Code of Practice for Protection of Personal Data in VECs, which is a very good template for any school. See www.dataprotection.ie.



Billy Hawkes

Data Protection Commissioner

What I did for the summer

BETH COONEY describes her summer of learning in Coventry and Cambridge.



Beth Cooney at Homerton College, Cambridge.

Earlier this year, I attended the Teaching Council's 'Research Alive' seminar and was inspired by keynote speaker Philippa Cordingley. Philippa is CEO of the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE – www.curee.co.uk), based in Coventry in the UK. One of CUREE's many areas of expertise is the use evidence-based research to create tools for teacher professional learning and school development. Wanting to know more, I contacted Philippa and was delighted to accept her invitation to visit CUREE at a particularly interesting time in July. I accompanied her to the final seminar in the series 'Understanding Teacher Learning' in Homerton College, Cambridge, and attended an evaluation meeting, where seminar organisers and critical friends discussed the seminars and the book that will follow them. I also visited CUREE's offices in Coventry and was included in a meeting of the National Teacher Research Panel, whose mission is to foster practitioner research that is robust and evidence based. What did I learn from all this? Well, there are benefits in reconceptualising the teacher as learner and, in doing so, ensuring that the school environment is a learning one for both teachers and students. Continuing professional development (CPD), transmitted by an expert outsider (and perhaps unsustainable) gives way to learning that is context specific and enables those who engage in it. Philippa Cordingley challenges us to make our "professional learning visible at structural, operational and practical levels". Learning the skills of evidence-based research and sustained collaboration, with specialist scaffolding and positive leadership, can create a dynamic learning environment where we practise what we preach. I am so grateful to Philippa and her team for a warm welcome: it is true that those who are passionate about education want to share their knowledge, and the visit was a deep and challenging learning experience for me. CUREE's website is a rich source of information if you want to discover more.

Beth Cooney teaches French in St Mary's Secondary School, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary.

New teachers – getting

ASTIR has some information and advice as you begin your teaching career.

Teaching jobs

The number of teacher appointments in a school is linked to the number of students attending the school: this is known as the pupil–teacher ratio. Schools can also apply to the Department for ‘concessionary’ teaching hours. These extra hours are granted depending on a school’s individual needs. Some schools may also pay for teaching hours directly from their own funds.

You’ll find that most of the teaching jobs on offer are temporary or part-time, covering for teachers on leave or covering concessionary hours. Most new teachers begin their careers in this way. The good news is that an expected rise in enrolment and the establishment of new schools means that more teaching jobs should soon open up.

Searching for work

Second-level teaching jobs are advertised on www.educationposts.ie or in newspapers. A post for a period in excess of 24 weeks must be advertised and filled through a formal recruitment process, including an application and interview. Schools may also employ substitute teachers for short-term work. From November, all those employed to teach must be registered with the Teaching Council.

You can also join the ASTI substitution service, which matches suitable substitute placements with available teachers. This service allows you to find substitution work, gain valuable experience, and become familiar with schools and school staff in your area – see www.asti.ie or Tel: 01-604 0163.

The ASTI website is a great resource to help you to prepare for interviews. It has comprehensive information on every aspect of being a teacher and second-level education.

Your contract

The type of contract you hold depends on the reasons for the vacancy and the type of hours you will cover. A non-permanent contract should only be given when the need for the teacher’s service is genuinely a temporary one, for example where you are replacing a teacher on leave. You should make sure you receive clear written information on the terms

and conditions of your job, either in the form of a letter of appointment, a written contract or a written statement. You are entitled to this information and it’s important that you keep a copy of all documents, as they may be important in future.

Permanent teachers are contracted to teach a maximum of 22 hours per week.

Non-permanent contracts

There are four categories of non-permanent teaching contracts:

- ▶ A regular part-time teacher is appointed where the need for a teacher for a certain number of hours is viable for at least a year. For example, you would have a pro-rata contract where you are covering concessionary hours or for a career break.
- ▶ A temporary whole-time teacher is appointed to work full hours on a temporary basis, normally for at least one year, for example where you are replacing a teacher on secondment or where the Department has not sanctioned a permanent position.
- ▶ A non-casual part-time teacher is appointed where there is a specific need for a teacher for less than a year but for more than 150 hours in total in the year, for example if you are covering for a teacher on maternity leave.
- ▶ A casual part-time teacher is appointed where there is a casual need for hours to be covered, for example where you are replacing a teacher on short-term sick leave.

Temporary whole-time, regular part-time, and non-casual part-time contracts are types of fixed-term contracts.

Permanent contracts and contracts of indefinite duration

If you find a permanent job, you may receive a probationary contract initially, but once the probationary period has been served you should receive a permanent contract.

A contract of indefinite duration (CID) affords the holder the same rights and entitlements as a permanent teacher, except that many CID holders do not have full hours.



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“The ASTI gives a voice to teachers. That’s important to me.”

**Yvonne Rossiter,
Biology and Science teacher,
Dublin.**



**I'M
IN
ASTI**

“More than ever, young teachers need a strong union behind them.”

**Gloria Helen,
English and French teacher,
Co. Cork.**

your bearings

In order to qualify for a CID you must:

- be registered with the Teaching Council;
- hold appropriate qualifications; and,
- have in excess of four years' continuous teaching service, under two or more successive written contracts of employment, with the same employer, that were paid for by monies provided by the Oireachtas.

Teachers who meet the above criteria will be entitled to a CID unless:

- their post will not be viable within a reasonable period, and this was set out as an objective ground in writing in the previous contract; and,
- they are covering for a teacher on an approved scheme of leave of absence and this was set out as an objective ground in writing in the previous contract.

The hours of a CID will be the same as those held in the contract immediately prior to receiving a CID.

The ASTI assists many teachers in making CID claims – read about three recent cases on page 22 or see the casework section of www.asti.ie.

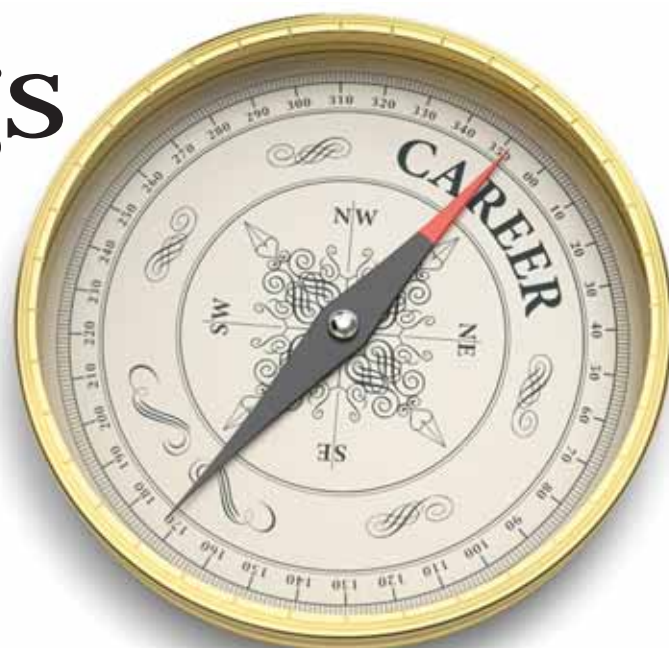
Salary matters

How much you are paid will depend on:

- when you first start teaching;
- your contract;
- your hours; and,
- your teaching experience.

Teachers are paid based on an incremental salary scale or according to hourly rates. Which scale or what rate you are on depends on when you first began teaching in a Department-paid position. Different scales and rates operate for teachers who started:

- before January 1, 2011;
 - after January 1, 2011; and
 - after February 1, 2012.
- ▶ Permanent teachers/full-time CID teachers are paid over 12 months and their salary is based on the relevant point on the appropriate salary scale plus any allowances.
 - ▶ Regular part-time teachers, part-time CID teachers and temporary whole-time teachers are paid over 12 months and their salary is



based on a pro-rata fraction of the relevant point on the salary scale plus any allowances, depending on how many hours they teach.

- ▶ Non-casual part-time teachers are paid salary for the duration of their contract. They are paid an hourly rate (inclusive of 56% holiday pay), determined based on a pro-rata fraction of the relevant point on the salary scale plus any allowances.
- ▶ A qualified casual part-time teacher is paid an hourly rate for each hour of teaching. After 150 hours at the casual rate in one school year, the teacher is paid a personal non-casual hourly rate based on his or her qualifications and previous experience for the remainder of that school year.

The ASTI website has a dedicated section for NEW TEACHERS – check it out at www.asti.ie.

Check that your contract:

- sets out the nature and duration of your employment;
- clarifies the type of contract under which you are employed;
- clarifies the number of hours per week you are contracted to teach;
- names the subjects and levels you will be teaching;
- gives the reason for the vacancy you are filling; and,
- tells you whether you will be paid by the Department of Education, the VEC/ETB or the school.



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“I’m kept up to date on the issues which affect me and my career.”

**Sean Roberts,
PE and Maths teacher,
Co. Meath.**



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“I can get advice from an expert over the phone.”

**Marian O'Neill,
English and Geography teacher,
Dublin.**

Education and equality

FINTAN O'TOOLE argues that Ireland cannot hope for economic recovery without equality in education.

When people talk about what makes a decent society, the argument often comes down to a clash between economic growth on the one side and social justice on the other – as if the two are separate from, or even in conflict with, each other. But they're not – especially not now. After the collapse of a model of the Irish economy that embraced the idea that large-scale inequality is a tolerable, perhaps even necessary, consequence of prosperity, there is a need to think differently.

And in that process of re-thinking, two things are immediately obvious. The first is that Ireland has no hope of long-term recovery unless it becomes one of the best-educated societies in the world. The second is that it has no hope of becoming such a society if it leaves behind a large proportion of its young people. It is not just basic justice that demands a vision of education that has equality at its heart. It is also hard, pragmatic calculation.

Mother knows best

Educational inequality starts early. The 'Growing Up in Ireland' study is a large-scale national project, tracking the progress of 18,500 children over seven years. In its first snapshot of nine-year-old Irish kids, it found that most of them were broadly happy at school. But it also found something rather striking. Even at this tender age, the scores that these kids were getting for reading and maths were very heavily influenced by their mothers' level of education. The kids' scores went down dramatically just as their mothers' level of education declined. A child whose mother is a graduate scored 63 and 78 in maths and vocabulary, respectively. If the mother had only lower secondary education, the child scored 45 and 59. In a real sense, these children are being taught, not just by their present teachers, but those who taught – or failed to teach – their mothers.

In other words, even at the age of nine, there are clear winners and losers in the Irish educational system. The reasons why some children are disadvantaged are obvious enough. There is no mystery as to why better-educated parents are more likely to be able to give their children an environment rich in intellectual stimulation and to help them with problems at school. But the children of more poorly educated mothers were also found to have been absent from school more often (7.6 days in the previous year, compared to 5.4 days for those from well-educated households). They are also more likely to be sick: 76% of nine-year-olds from professional/managerial groups were reported to be "very healthy", compared with 69% of those from semi-skilled/unskilled manual backgrounds. And they are almost three times more likely to be obese: 11% compared to 4%. This suggests that the kids from better-educated backgrounds are also better fed and have more access to sport and play.

Closing the gap by 2020

Now, if you read current official strategy documents, you will discover that part of the State's plan for recovery is to get more than half of these struggling nine-year-olds into third-level education in less than a decade's time. This intention is not driven purely by an altruistic belief in equality, or by the notion that a republic ought not to be able to



stomach the idea that the winners and losers in its education system have already been pretty much chosen at the age of nine. It is driven, above all, by collective self-interest.

If Ireland is to have a successful economy in 2020, it will be one in which levels of education are outstandingly high. But, according to the National Skills Strategy, "in the absence of policy change, a significant proportion of Ireland's workforce will remain low-skilled in 2020, with their highest level of educational attainment below upper secondary level. This is because, even in the boom years, Ireland's workforce remained relatively unskilled: in 2004, only six out of 27 OECD countries had a worse performance than Ireland in terms of the percentage of the labour force who had attained no more than a lower secondary qualification".

This gap between aspiration and reality was clear, it should be noted, even before the banking crash of 2008 and the consequent loss of investment in education. If anything, the likelihood that, without a radical change of policy, a large part of the Irish workforce will still be low-skilled in 2020, must be even higher now.

So how is this gap to be closed? This is where the equality issue becomes so urgent. Ireland can upgrade, to some extent, the skills of those who are already highly skilled. But this doesn't solve the problem. To meet its economic goals, the real upskilling has to come from the obvious place – those who are not currently skilled enough to benefit from a 'smart economy'. The benchmark set by the National Skills Strategy is to have around three-quarters of young people participating in higher education by 2020. To reach that figure, Ireland will have to get over half of its children from poorer socio-economic groups into third-level colleges.

Which raises the obvious question: how likely is this to happen to the nine-year-olds who are already so far behind their peers?

Social justice as economic necessity

Looked at in the most brutally mechanistic way, it is probably true to say that the Ireland of the last 20 years could just about afford to leave behind the equivalent of our nine-year-olds. Doing so may have been deeply unjust and shameful, but Ireland could get away with it because the middle and upper classes were extremely good at taking advantage of the new educational opportunities. Social injustice has not prevented Ireland from managing a very real achievement in improving the overall levels of education.

But this is no longer true. What's happening now is that rates of participation among the middle and upper classes are pretty much at saturation point. Children of higher professionals reached what is effectively full participation in 1998 and have maintained that situation ever since.

Farming households have participation approaching 90%. About two-thirds of 17- to 18-year-olds from households headed by lower professionals,

employers, managers and the self-employed now enter higher education. There are certainly gains to be made in these latter groups, but they will have a limited impact on the overall goals.

A large-scale further expansion of educational attainment, of the kind that Ireland will need in the next decade if it is to have any chance of recovering its status as a world-class economy, simply can't come from the social groups who are already fully plugged into the system. It has to come from those who have been left behind. In essence, the big challenge in upskilling the Irish population lies with two groups – those who are not currently getting to third level and those older workers who have relatively low skills and levels of education. In other words, Ireland can't close its skills gap unless it closes its social justice gap.



Fintan O'Toole

Fintan is a columnist and literary editor with *The Irish Times*. He has written on a wide range of cultural and political issues.



Holocaust Education Trust Ireland

Learning from the past - lessons for today

LEARNING FROM THE HOLOCAUST

STUDY VISIT TO KRAKOW
29 October - 01 November 2013



A six-day programme for teachers that includes a four-day study visit to Krakow and Auschwitz-Birkenau

This programme is supported by two separate seminar days, in preparation (19 October) and reflection (09 November) on the study visit. The seminars will introduce teachers to the complex and challenging subject of the Holocaust and help them develop programmes suitable for their pupils.

VISIT INCLUDES: Tours, lectures and seminars. Kazimierz, Galicia Jewish Museum Schindler's Factory, The Jewish Ghetto, Plasow concentration camp, Oswiecim and Auschwitz-Birkenau, Testimonies from Holocaust survivors and Polish *Righteous Amongst the Nations*.

Fee: €595 (PPS) inclusive of flights, hotels, seminars, lunches and tours.

This programme can be taken independently or as part of the Certificate in Holocaust Education

Enquiries: HETI, Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2
T: 00 353 1 669 0593 E: info@hetireland.org www.hetireland.org

Read the rest of this article

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



Remembering the 1913 Lockout

FINTAN O'MAHONY, history teacher and ASTI representative on the 1913 Lockout Schools Committee, looks at the 1913 Lockout and a new initiative to examine the event in schools.



In 1911, 26,000 families in Dublin lived in one-room dwellings, making Dublin the most overcrowded in Europe.



Dublin tenements, photographed in 1913.

Images Courtesy of Dublin City Library.

The 1913 Lockout was a key moment after which the position of labour in Irish life was set for a generation. It marked a watershed in what workers wanted and in the public perception of trade unions.

Establishing the principle of solidarity

Most trade unions at the time were based in Britain and dominated by skilled workers. The concentration on the land question here meant that the concerns of urban workers were neglected. Their living conditions were awful: over 70% of Dublin workers were unskilled and, as today, one-fifth were unemployed. Some 30% of families lived in single rooms in tenements; disease and death were a daily reality.

James Connolly and James Larkin exposed these living and working conditions, and by 1913 they had organised 10,000 ITGWU unskilled workers. Larkin wanted to break the anti-union stance of Dublin United

Tramway Company owner William Martin Murphy.

The Lockout was more than a struggle between those personalities. It was a protracted, often violent confrontation between workers and the establishment: the employers, the Dublin Metropolitan Police, the Catholic Church and the press. Despite the support of influential figures such as Pearse, Yeats, ASTI founder Thomas MacDonagh and Countess Markievicz for the workers, Larkin was portrayed as the villain by Murphy's three newspapers, the *Irish Independent*, the *Sunday Independent* and the *Evening Herald*.

The Lockout ended in early 1914, when most workers, isolated and demoralised, went back to work signing pledges not to join a union. The ITGWU was damaged, and Larkin's departure to the US and the execution of Connolly for his part in the Easter Rising were further blows. The course and result of the Lockout are instructive for any trade union

1913 competition for schools

As part of the 1913 schools programme, students are invited to enter a competition to win a trip to New York by producing a video based on their learning from the resource. Entries for the competition will be taken from October with a closing date of the end of November. Entries must be uploaded to YouTube and a link emailed to the competition line. The entries will be shortlisted, with the winning teams in different categories (best video, best production, best actor/actress, animation, etc.) announced at a special awards ceremony in mid-December. The best overall video will win a trip to New York for their team and teacher, which will be hosted by the Irish Embassy and national US trade unions. The trip will include visits to American cultural groups dealing with immigration issues, trade unions and labour organisations



based in New York, and the New York tenement museum. A similar competition will be run in the US and both teams will meet, once in New York and then again on a reciprocal visit to Ireland for the US team. The US visit is scheduled to take place during mid-term break in February 2014, with the reciprocal visit taking place on the week to include St Patrick's Day 2014.

embarking on a course of industrial action. Larkin and Connolly had different views of what had been achieved. Larkin conceded: "We are beaten. We make no bones about it", but Connolly wrote: "From the effects of this drawn battle both sides are still bearing scars. How deep these scars are none will reveal". Clearly neither side had an exit strategy beyond crushing the other, but although the actions of the union were unsuccessful, it had succeeded in mobilising the power of the labour force for the first time and the principle of workers' solidarity had been established.

Still today, however, Ireland is one of only five EU countries where workers have no legal right to collective bargaining. A campaign like that of the union in 1913 to provide decent work and wages has clear echoes today when economic conditions are used as an excuse to cut pay and worsen conditions.

Schools programme

A new schools programme from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions will focus on the history of the 1913 Lockout and its impact on modern trade unionism. It will discuss the causes of the Lockout, the events surrounding it, and its impact on workers' rights and conditions in Ireland. It will also give students opportunities to learn more about the social, economic and political circumstances of the time, and how they influenced and affected workers and their struggle for decent work. The programme will encourage students to examine the parallels and differences between life and work in the early 20th century and today, explore the importance of decent work, and understand the modern trade union agenda and the impact of this period of history on all of our lives today. It will run from September to December 2013 complementing the current YouthConnect programme, which delivers classes to all second-level schools and students.

The programme will offer all second-level schools the opportunity to receive a free lesson delivered by a trained champion, a recently graduated teacher. The champion will provide a free teaching resource and other resources when they visit the school. Visits can be booked through lockout1913.ie, the YouthConnect site, or by emailing info@youth-connect.ie.

The school will also receive free copies of the new module for use throughout the year, plus additional resources such as educational/documentary videos. It's an interactive resource, which focuses on student engagement and encourages active learning, and it will provide information on the historical and modern trade union agenda, and contain a series of lesson plans, classroom activities and projects.

For students, this is a great opportunity to learn about the history of the trade union movement and how it impacted on modern trade unionism.



Fintan O'Mahony

Fintan teaches English and history at Scoil Mhuire, Carrick-on-Suir.

This excerpt from a lecture by President Michael D. Higgins explains why the legacy of the 1913 Lockout remains important today:



President Michael D Higgins called the 1913 Lockout one of the most significant founding events in the emergence of the Irish State.

We must always respect what James Connolly and Jim Larkin brought to the trade union movement and what they faced in terms of the Lockout of 1913, the social forces that colluded and combined to defeat them. It would later be left, however, to people like William O'Brien in the decades after 1916 to focus on the actual structural aspects of trade union organisation; not a glamorous job but one that was crucial in keeping labour organised in the 1920s and 1930s. The impact the Lockout had on the development of trade union consciousness in Ireland was vital.

... the Lockout also compels us to ask questions about our role in the wider international world of work – we are challenged to respond to the workplace tragedies of Pakistan where 300 textile workers were killed in a fire, or more recently in Bangladesh where over 1,000 textile workers were crushed in a building collapse. Today we learn about such disasters even more quickly than citizens in Ireland's countryside learned of the collapse of Dublin tenements in 1913. As global citizens we are required to respond to such disasters, informed by our own Famine-related past, and those who assisted us, but conscious too of the benefits we have achieved as a result of those, a century ago, who had the courage to struggle for the rights of workers ... Without good history teaching, there is no shared idea of a public past. Now, more than ever, with a contemporary crisis and commemoration of a fascinating and difficult past, we need to empower all our citizens with an appreciation of how we got to where we are. This is not invoking the cliché about learning the lessons of history; rather, it is about seeing history as essential to understanding who we are today and who we might be, in co-operation with others, in the future.

This extract is taken from President Higgins' RTÉ Radio 1 Michael Littleton Lecture. The full speech is available to watch and read at www.president.ie.

Securing members' rights

ASTI industrial relations staff continue to work hard on members' behalf.

ASTI case leads to increase in CID hours

An ASTI member has succeeded in having his contract of indefinite duration (CID) hours increased, thanks to an ASTI-supported case to the Rights Commissioner.

The member had been employed in a Munster school since 2007 and had been awarded a CID for 10 hours from September 2012.

With the support of the ASTI, the member took a case to the Rights Commissioner contending that the CID should have applied from the 2011 contract, as he had the

required continuous service in excess of four years at that point. The ASTI case further contended that the CID should be for hours equal to those in his previous contract: 11 hours and 20 minutes.

The school argued that the fixed-term contract entered into in October 2008 was a separate and distinct contractual relationship with no link to the 2007/2008 employment, which had been on an 'as required' basis. This meant, the school argued, that the aggregate duration did not exceed the four years required for CID entitlement until September 2012. The Rights Commissioner found in favour of the ASTI case, stating that when the teacher was re-engaged in 2008, this was continuous service from October 2007. The teacher's contract for 2011/2012 should, therefore, have been converted to a CID of identical terms to the previous contract by operation of law. The Rights Commissioner awarded a CID for 11 hours and 20 minutes.



The member was represented by Bernard Moynihan, Executive Officer: Industrial Relations.



The members were represented by Maire Mulcahy, Assistant General Secretary.

CID win for two teachers – ASTI proves no breaks in service

Two teachers in the same school have been awarded CIDs after a Rights Commissioner found that they had the required continuous service.

The school had applied to the Department of Education and Skills for sanction to award CIDs to the teachers but the Department had refused. Following unsuccessful adjudication claims, the ASTI supported the teachers in appealing to the Rights Commissioner.

At the Rights Commissioner hearing, the school and Department identified periods during which the teachers were not under contract as constituting breaks in service. Relying upon this, it was claimed that the teachers did not have the requisite continuous service to warrant CIDs. The ASTI argued, however, that these periods neither constituted dismissals nor voluntary resignations, and that in each case the teachers had legitimate expectation of re-employment with the school. The ASTI advanced the argument that the teachers did, in fact, have the requisite continuous service with the school to mandate the award of CIDs. The Rights Commissioner found in favour of the ASTI's argument, stating that, having regard to the First Schedule of the Minimum Notice and Terms of Employment Act, 1973, which sets out the computation of continuous service, the teachers did have continuity of service. The Rights Commissioner therefore awarded both teachers CIDs to commence from their dates of eligibility.

Here to help school stewards

Would you like to get more involved in your union, your school or your profession?

Would you like to play a vital part in the structure and communications of the ASTI? Why not consider becoming a school steward?

ASTI school stewards are the ASTI's representatives in each school, and act as a link between members and the ASTI. They provide important support and information to ASTI members; they are the first point of contact for members in difficulty or with a question; and, they can act as members' representative in discussions with management. School stewards are vital to in-school union development and organisation.

Contact ASTI

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

Training and support

The ASTI provides training courses to equip school stewards with the skills and knowledge they need to represent members and provide support in the school. ASTI Head Office staff are available year round to provide information, advice and support for school stewards. Stewards can also access the support of their ASTI branch, CEC or Standing Committee representatives. Information is always available too on the ASTI website, which has a section for school stewards.

School steward elections are held in May each year, but a number of schools have yet to nominate an ASTI school steward – why not put yourself forward?



Fuelling Their Progress

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Students today require a broad ICT skillset. They not only need user skills such as word processing and file management, but also new technology skills, such as coding, logical thinking and expressing new ideas through digital media.

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This new blended programme will continue to offer all the benefits of New ECDL including quality certification, flexibility and support.

To learn more about our ICT programme for students send your contact details to: computing@ics.ie



More ‘fool’s gold’ than gold-plated

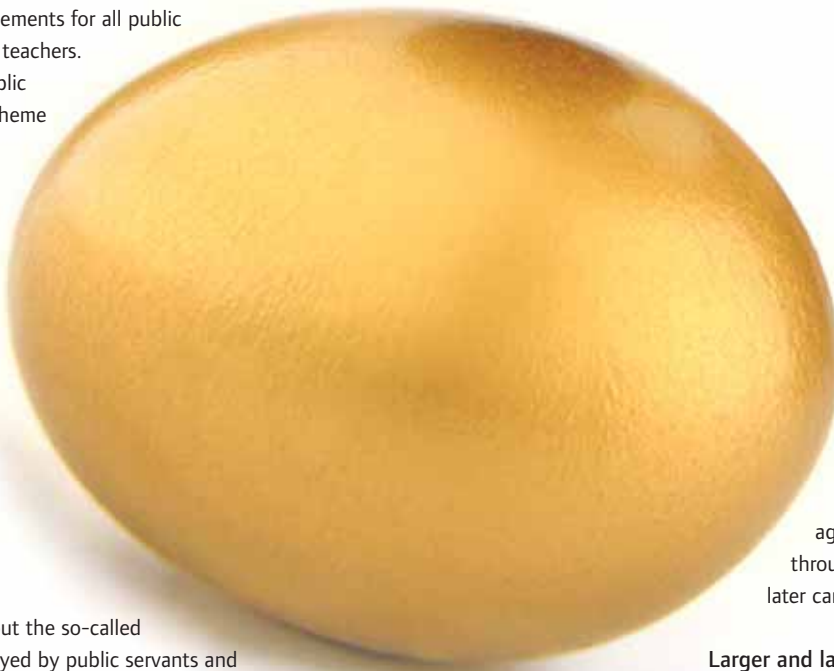
The new pension scheme is a further attack on new teachers, says the ASTI Pensions Sub-Committee.

The new Single Public Service Pension Scheme, which was introduced earlier this year, represents a considerable worsening of pension entitlements for all public servants, and especially for teachers.

The introduction of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act, 2012, was the culmination of a sustained attack on public service pensions, which has been carried on in certain sections of the media for many years.

Brought in under the cloak of the financial crisis facing the country, it is interesting to note that it will generate absolutely no saving for approximately 40 years.

Much has been written about the so-called ‘gold-plated’ pensions enjoyed by public servants and it is worthwhile to examine the truth or otherwise of the assertions that public service pensions have, up to now, been unsustainable. A report entitled ‘Future Pension Provision’ commissioned by the ASTI, INTO and TUI from Trident Consulting in 2010 stated that the then existing terms for teachers’ pensions were sustainable. This, coupled with the fact that teachers have been making significant



contributions to their pensions, allowed Trident Consulting to posit alternatives to the Government’s proposals, which would protect teachers’ pensions while also protecting the Exchequer against high pension costs through very high salary growth in later career.

Larger and larger contributions

To return to the issue of pension contributions, teachers have been making larger and larger contributions to their pensions. The value of pension benefits to teachers dropped significantly when their pensions were integrated with the State pension in 1995. Integration with the State pension meant that teachers no longer received a separate State pension, but rather their occupational pension

What teachers pay for their pensions

Teachers appointed after April 1, 1995:	
Pension contribution	1.5% of pensionable pay
	3.5% of net pensionable pay
PRSI	3.25% (approx.)
Pension levy	7.5% (average)
TOTAL	UP TO 15.75%

- The pre-2013 Teachers’ Pension Scheme is sustainable.
- Teachers make significant contributions to their pensions.
- The average pension-related deduction (‘pension levy’) for teachers is 7.5%.
- The new pension scheme may result in teachers paying more in than they will get out.
- The State pension (paid for through PRSI) is integrated into the teachers’ pension scheme – not an additional payment.

was considered to include the State pension. The value dropped again in 2004 when the retirement age was fixed.

A teacher employed after April 1, 1995, makes a pension contribution of 1.5% of their pensionable remuneration and a further 3.5% of net pensionable remuneration. In addition, these teachers pay PRSI at 4% on earnings over €127 per week. This works out at approximately 3.25% of total earnings for the average teacher. This adds up to a total pension contribution of up to 8.25% without taking into account the so-called pension levy – so much for public servants not contributing to their pensions!

A further deterioration in the terms of teachers' pensions occurred in late 2008 when the Government unilaterally announced the abolition of the Early Retirement Scheme for Teachers. This Scheme had been agreed as part of the Programme for Competitiveness and Work in 1997 and was one of a number of measures introduced in return for teachers forgoing a 3% pay increase. The Scheme was abolished but there was no suggestion of any compensation for teachers.

Fool's gold?

In 2009, the Government introduced the Pension-Related Deduction (PRD) or 'pension levy', which amounted to a charge of around 7.5% to the average teacher. While it is important to note that the PRD is not a pension contribution as such and it is, in theory at any rate, a temporary measure, it is also a cost to public servants and a benefit to the Exchequer – a tax on public servants that is based on their having a pension.

So, while the old pension scheme is not by any means gold-plated, the new scheme may well be a 'fool's gold' pension scheme. This is because, according to the Trident Report, members may well end up paying more to the scheme in contributions than they will ever receive in benefits. In a scheme of which membership is compulsory, this may well leave it open to members to take a legal challenge. The ASTI, together with our sister teacher unions, will be examining this option very closely.

The new pension scheme for teachers is part of a sustained attack on young teachers that has been going on for the past numbers of years. New entrants to the teaching profession are being employed on lower salaries, with no qualification allowances, with inferior contracts for supervision and substitution, and now with a considerably inferior pension scheme. The ASTI is committed to prioritising the plight of these most vulnerable of our members and we will take every opportunity to row back these discriminatory and unfair measures.

Grace period

All public servants retiring before August 31, 2014, will be entitled to have their pensions calculated as if the pay reduction or any increment pause applied through the Haddington Road Agreement or the FEMPI Act had not applied to them.

If you have a query about your pension or retirement options, please contact ASTI Head Office, Tel: 1850-418 400.

The ASTI has arranged a free advice service for members from Cornmarket Group Financial Services. Members can contact Cornmarket on 01-470 8074 for advice on calculating their pension benefits.

The report on Future Pension Provision from Trident Consulting is available on the ASTI website.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

REQUIREMENT TO BE REGISTERED WITH THE TEACHING COUNCIL FROM 1 NOVEMBER 2013

Under section 30 of the Teaching Council Act 2001 teachers employed in recognised schools must be registered with the Teaching Council in order to be paid from public monies by the Department of Education and Skills or an Education and Training Board (ETB).

The Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn T.D., has announced that section 30 will commence on

1 November 2013

If you are working as a teacher in a recognised school, but are not currently registered with the Teaching Council, you should **IMMEDIATELY** apply to the Council for registration.

The Department of Education and Skills and ETBs will be prohibited by law from paying unregistered people employed in teaching positions in schools on or after 1 November except in very exceptional circumstances and for very short time periods.

Further details including registration application forms and frequently asked questions are available from the Teaching Council:

www.teachingcouncil.ie

e-mail: primaryregistration@teachingcouncil.ie for primary school teachers

e-mail: postprimaryregistration@teachingcouncil.ie for post-primary school teachers



Your questions on sick leave

As the year begins, we answer some frequently asked questions about sick leave.

How many days' sick leave can I take without a medical cert?

New self-certified sick leave arrangements mean that teachers may take up to seven days' uncertified sick leave in a rolling two-year period. These arrangements are being phased in, and during the phase-in period all teachers may take up to seven days' self-certified sick leave between August 1, 2012, and July 31, 2014. After that period, each teacher will have a personal rolling two-year period counting back from the date of their latest self-certified leave during which they may take up to seven days' uncertified leave.

A medical certificate of illness is required if a teacher is absent for more than four consecutive school days. For example, a teacher who is absent only on a Thursday, Friday and the following Monday does not require a certificate. Teachers under VEC/ETB conditions require a medical certificate after three consecutive days' absence.

All Class A PRSI contributors (all who entered teaching after April 1995) must submit an MC1 social welfare certificate to the Department of Social Protection if they are absent for more than three consecutive school days. The form can only be obtained from a doctor and as you receive full salary during absence you must agree on this form to have your social welfare benefit for the duration of sick leave paid to the Department of Education and Skills.

What changes are planned to certified sick leave?

Currently, 365 days over a four-year period is the limit for teachers' certified sick leave. However, new arrangements are due to be implemented in 2014. A date for implementation has not yet been finalised. The new arrangements will mean that teachers may take up to three months' certified sick leave with full pay, and a further three months' certified sick leave with half pay in a rolling four-year period. This may be followed by up to 18 months of sick leave on Temporary Rehabilitation Payment (TRP). Leave for critical illness will be allowed for up to six months on full pay and six months on half pay in a rolling four-year period; this may be followed by up to 12 months' TRP.

Details of the implementation of these arrangements are under negotiation at the moment but teachers should be mindful that backdating may apply, and certified sick leave used before the new arrangements come into place may impact on sick leave allowance after the arrangements are in place.

Further information will be circulated to members as soon as it is available. For updates, check www.asti.ie.



Full information on teachers' sick leave is available at www.asti.ie.

After how much sick leave will I be referred to Medmark?

At present, any teacher who has four weeks' continuous or 12 weeks' cumulative sick leave in a 12-month rolling period must be referred to the Occupational Health Service. From January 1, 2014, any teacher who has four weeks' continuous or cumulative sick leave absence in a 12-month rolling period must be referred to the Occupational Health Service.

Full details of sick leave, and other forms of leave available to teachers, can be found on the ASTI website – www.asti.ie.

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2. ***Learning from the Holocaust: 29 October- 01 November 2013:** 6 day programme that includes a 4 day study visit to Krakow that includes Auschwitz-Birkenau. The programme is supported by 2 separate seminar days, in preparation for and reflection on the study visit.
3. ***Irish Seminar at Yad Vashem International School: Jerusalem, July 2014:** 8 day programme at Yad Vashem International School for Holocaust Studies. The programme is supported by 2 separate seminar days, in preparation for and reflection on the study visit.
4. **Dissertation or special project:** (5,000 words) or special project to be submitted as Module 4 of the programme.

Fee: €1,495 for registered teachers, includes all tuition, travel and accommodation (p.p.s.)

This programme may be eligible for the Teacher Refund Scheme

Intake for this programme : August and October

The order each module is undertaken may change according to enrolment.

***NB Modules 1, 2 and 3 can be undertaken independently of the Certificate.**

Enquiries: HETI, Clifton House, Lower Fitzwilliam Street, Dublin 2
T: 00 353 1 669 0593 E: info@hetireland.org www.hetireland.org



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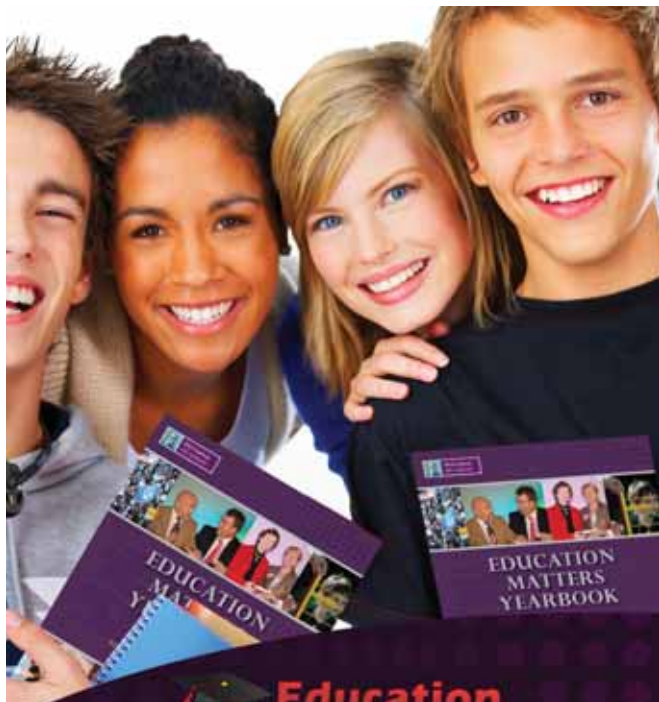
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NOTICEBOARD

Did you graduate from NUI Maynooth?

NUI Maynooth has launched a new online community for its alumni. By registering, you can sign up for alumni events, update your contact details and enjoy a wide variety of free membership benefits including lifelong learning opportunities, access to the library, and invitations to class reunions and networking events. Visit <https://alumni-network.nuim.ie> for more details.

Equality in the classroom training

The Equality Authority is running training for second-level teachers on how to guide discussion and action on equality-related issues. There is no fee for the training, and substitution and travel costs will be covered. The training will be provided in four regions in Ireland between September and December. For further information contact Deirdre Toomey, Equality Authority, Tel: 01-417 3356, or Email: dtoomey@equality.ie.

Volunteer overseas?

G.I.V.E. (Gambia Ireland Volunteers in Education) is seeking retired teacher volunteers to take part in classroom teacher support, trainee teacher mentoring or adult education in The Gambia – more information can be found at www.giveireland.com.

Save the gnome for Autism Action

St Joseph's CBS Nenagh, in association with Irish Autism Action, has launched the Save the Gnome fundraising campaign. Give your gnome a chance to be encased in the time capsule by making a donation at www.cbsnenagh.com and following the links. Every €5 donation corresponds to one ticket in the draw to support your gnome's nomination. Closing date for nomination is Friday November 15, 2013.

Walk in My Shoes



St Patrick's Foundation is urging schools to get involved in their Walk in My Shoes campaign this October in recognition of World Mental Health Day (October 10)

to raise awareness and funds to provide mental health services to vulnerable young adults in Ireland. Students donate €2 and wear shoes they would not normally wear to school – runners, wellies, slippers, whatever they want! Find out more and download a free mental health information pack at www.walkinmyshoes.ie.

Show Racism the Red Card

Show Racism the Red Card is an initiative set up to tackle racism in society through the medium of sport. You can find out more about their education pack at www.theredcard.ie, where you'll also find information on how to integrate the pack into the curriculum and training provided for teachers. The ASTI supports Show Racism the Red Card through donations.

RSTA Annual General Meeting 2013

The Annual General Meeting of the RSTA took place in the Gresham Metropole Hotel, Cork, on May 8.

The AGM was attended by 72 members. Many delegates had travelled to Cork on the previous evening and enjoyed a pleasant meal and fellowship together, which set the mood for the following day.

On Wednesday morning the meeting began at 10.00am with short talks on behalf of The Global Schoolroom, Cornmarket, the St Vincent de Paul Society and the ASTI Credit Union. After that there was a coffee break and then the main business of the meeting got underway.

There was a moment for quiet reflection, during which the names of deceased members were remembered. This was followed by the minutes of the previous AGM, reports from the Secretary and Treasurer, and election of the Officers and National Committee. The new Officers and Committee were elected as follows:

President:	Henry Collins
Vice President:	Carmel Heneghan
Treasurer:	Muriel McNicholas
Secretary:	Susie Hall
National Committee:	Treasa Healy, Mattie Finnerty, Michael Moriarty, Aveen Kilduff, Catherine McHugh and John Cunningham.

Five motions were proposed, seconded and passed. The Cork, Mayo and Midland Branches mentioned trips they are planning, details of which will be posted on the website. Delegates were reminded to check the website – www.rsta.ie – frequently for the latest information on meetings, trips and important information on their pensions. The meeting drew to a close at 1.00pm, when we went to have lunch. In the afternoon, Liam O’Longaigh led a large group on a walking tour of Cork City. We started out in beautiful sunny weather but had several sleet showers during the course of the walk. Despite this, all who participated thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon. Liam has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the history and customs of Cork, which made his tour absolutely fascinating. He was ably assisted by Nuala Buckley, who was also an incredible fount of information on all things Cork. As the tour ended, another downpour offered the perfect excuse (as if we needed one!) to seek refuge in the English Market and indulge in the tempting offerings of the Farm Gate restaurant.

Later that evening we were joined at the Conference Banquet by our invited guests: ASTI Immediate Past President Gerry Breslin; retired TUI Secretary Christy Conville; and, NASUWT/RMA former President Dr David Mahaffey.

Apologies had been received from: ASTI General Secretary Pat King; ASTI Honorary National Organiser Kieran Christie; and, RTA Secretary Denis Desmond.

The following morning there was a wonderful tour of Cork University. The sun came out and the campus looked really splendid. We had a very comprehensive guided tour of the campus, the Quad, the Observatory and finally the Honan Chapel. Several stayed on for lunch in the Students’ Dining Hall before heading home.

Others joined the trip to visit the Famine Museum in Cobh and another group went to visit Blarney Castle and had time afterwards to avail of some retail therapy at the famous Woollen Mills.

It was a really pleasant visit to Cork and our sincere thanks are extended to the members of the Cork Branch for all their hard work in organising the event. The warmth of their hospitality and the wonderful fellowship and collegiality experienced by the delegates as they shared meals and conversation, will long remain in our memories.

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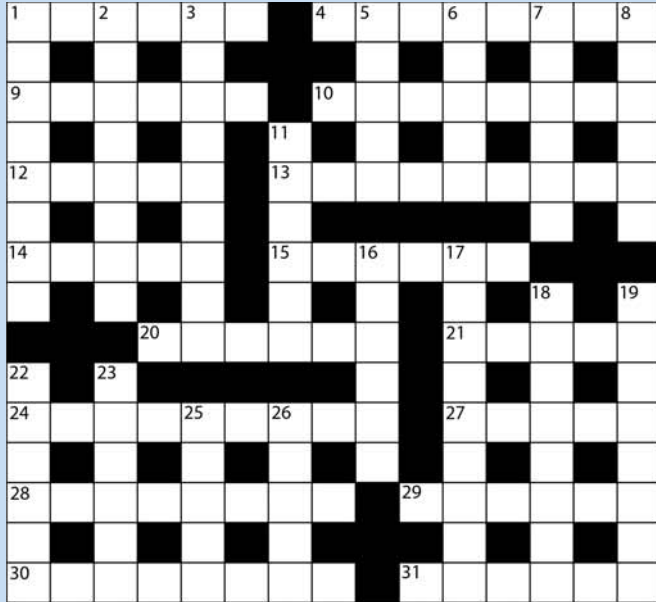


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ASTIR CROSSWORD NO. 1304

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. 1304, Think Media, The Malthouse, 537 NCR, Dublin 1.

To arrive by: Friday, October 11, 2013

CLUES ACROSS:

- 1 Fly V11 to abuse or defame (6)
- 4 Costlier sort of convent (8)
- 9 A false rumour from France (6)
- 10 Simple or mixed up appeals (8)
- 12 Cheerful tunes (5)
- 13 Travel test for car or ship for speeding in the main (9)
- 14 Troubled state, neighbour to Turkey, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, Iraq (5)
- 15 Turn up suddenly wearing a paper (6)
- 20 "Hail to thee spirit! Bird thou never wert" (Shelley) (6)
- 21 Let the devil evade Monday (5)
- 24 Dover Does, and had too much of it (9)
- 27 Computer problem in the market (5)
- 28 Typical example or pattern (8)
- 29 Draw the tongue over drink, by the sound of it! (6)
- 30 Where ships are repaired (8)
- 31 Top teacher's wish? (6)

CLUES DOWN:

- 1 Pavarotti or Rihanna for example (8)
- 2 The peer gets rent on stepping ashore (8)
- 3 Get in first with nothing but trees (9)
- 5 Last straw! (5)
- 6 Riled the lazybones (5)
- 7 B in a trout to be another fish (6)
- 8 Steers start from scratch (6)
- 11 The effect of a trade union (6)
- 16 Implores on bended pedals! (6)
- 17 Cite David for causing compulsive behaviour (9)
- 18 Seems I am almost a true mother, though I'm too young for that (8)
- 19 You'll end up thus if you take too much bread! (2,3,3)
- 22 Sluggish and inactive, so drop it (6)
- 23 Gourmet Ric measures thus! (6)
- 25 See 26 down
- 26 He maintains he's a sweet old man! (5,5)

Solution to ASTIR Crossword No. 1303

Across	Down
1. Poppies in July	2. Oliver
10. Privacy	3. Peel
11. Embargo	4. Elysee
12. Isis	5. Iberia
13. Befit	6. Jobs
15. Glut	7. Lorelei
17. Era	8. Sprinters acre
19. Tirana	9. Foster parents
21. Junior	14. Frantic
22. Francis	16. Infra
23. Reform	18. Muses
25. Geisha	20. Arm
27. MIG	21. Jig
29. Anne	24. Finesse
30. Cycle	26. Seismic
31. Vile	27. Myrtle
34. Respect	28. Glades
35. Doormat	32. Merc
36. Teachers' voice	33. Solo

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Over 1,000 DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE to you page 11
 IRELAND WAY AHEAD for school completion and progression to third level page 12
 FINTAN O'TOOLE says equality in education is vital to Irish recovery page 18

Congratulations

to the winner of Crossword No. 1303: Mary Worrall, Glenamaddy Community School, Glenamaddy, Co. Galway. Tuam Branch member.

“ARE ANNUAL CHARGES MAKING YOU WONDER HOW TO COPE?”



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€4,000	12 months (26 f/n repayments)	€158.54	€121.71
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