



EDUCATION NEWSBRIEF

APRIL 2010

WELCOME... KEN FENNELLY

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Dr. Ken Fennelly as Secretary to the Board of Education and Education Officer, to succeed Rev Canon John McCullagh who has returned to pastoral ministry as rector of Rathnew, Co. Wicklow. Ken joins us from NUI Maynooth where he worked with the University's Human Resources office. Prior to this he was with the DIT Library service based in Mountjoy Square and Rathmines, Dublin. He is a graduate of St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, from where he holds a degree in Theology. He also holds an M.A. in Culture, Religion and Society in Modern Ireland from the Department of Sociology at NUI Maynooth. Ken has recently completed a Ph.D., also with NUIM's Department of Sociology on the area of redevelopment, change and future prospects of the provision of secondary education to the Protestant community in the Republic of Ireland. His research focused on various issues in relation to Protestant schools such as: ethos, funding, demographic change, minority status and the social role of the secondary school for the Protestant community. He hopes to apply this research in the role of Education Officer and Secretary to the Board of Education. Originally from Kilkenny, Ken is married to Dr. Eilish Fennelly and they live in Maynooth. Readers in the Dublin area might know Ken from his involvement with Christ Church Cathedral, where he serves as honorary membership secretary of the Friends of the



Dr Ken Fennelly - Secretary to the General Synod Board of Education and Education Officer (RI)

Cathedral. In his spare time, he enjoys reading, attempting to garden and walking his black Alsatian dog Uisce beatha, but not at the same time!

FOLLOW ME

The revised editions of the *Here We Go* and *On Our Way* Teachers' Books will be printed during the summer and despatched to all schools early in September 2010 free of charge. Both pupils' textbooks will remain as at present. The new Teachers' manuals will present the lessons with a fresh, clear design and will include new Bible stories, fiction, prayers and worksheets. Several schools have taken part in piloting the new lessons and the response has been very positive. A big thank you to those schools who helped with this task and provided the editor with feedback!



CHURCH OF IRELAND
BOARD OF EDUCATION (RI)





Circulars published since last edition in December 2009 and other Department news...

Please refer to the actual circular as the following are necessarily abbreviated.

0001/2010 Combined Post-Graduate Diploma programme of continuing professional development for Teachers involved in Learning Support and Special Education 2010/2011

0002/2010 Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) for teachers working with pupils with ASDs in Special Schools, Special Classes or as Resource Teachers in mainstream Primary and Post-Primary Schools – 2010/2011

0003/2010 Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development in Special Educational Needs (Autistic Spectrum Disorders) for Teachers

0004/2010 Revision of Teachers Salaries with effect from 1 January, 2010

0005/2010 Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants with effect from 1 January 2010

0006/2010 Revision of Salaries for Clerical Officers employed under the terms of the Department's 1978 Scheme with effect from 1 January 2010

0007/2010 Revision of Salaries for Caretakers employed under the terms of the Department's 1979 Scheme with effect from 1 January 2010

0012/2010 Teacher Fee Refund Scheme for 2009

0018/2010 Public Health Alert "Measles Outbreak" 2010

0021/2010 Regulations Governing the Appointment and Retention of Teachers in Primary Schools for the School Year 2010/2011

0022/2010 Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE): Best Practice Guidelines for Primary Schools

0025/2010 Arrangements for the 2010/2011 School Year in Relation to Learning Support/Resource Teacher (LS/RT) and Resource Teacher (RT) Posts - Full and Part time Posts

0026/2010 1. Conclusion of the Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 (SWINE FLU) school vaccination Programme from 31st March 2010. 2. Measles, Mumps and Rubella - MMR Vaccination

WELCOME MINISTER...

We welcome the Tánaiste, Ms Mary Coughlan, as the new Minister for Education and Skills.



Speaking at the Annual Congress of the INTO Ms Coughlan told delegates: *"I...consider it a huge honour to have been appointed as Minister for Education and Skills. I'm looking forward to the challenge that this portfolio presents and to playing my part in the development of education, training and skills policy over the coming months and years."*

The Minister referred to the challenges ahead:

"...A further €3 billion of adjustments will be required in the next budget. €1 billion of this is likely to come from capital expenditure and the remaining €2 billion will have to be achieved through reductions in the cost of public services and through taxation. The reality is that this country will have less to spend on public services for the foreseeable future. This is a fact and we cannot afford to underestimate the challenge it will pose."

REDEPLOYMENT PANELS

At the time of going to press there were two Dioceses with operational main panels – Kilmore and Clogher. Please note that the redeployment panels administered by this office cover all primary schools under Protestant management – not just Church of Ireland schools. It is important that schools contact this office to ensure the panels are clear before placing advertisements for full time permanent posts. It is also important that this office is informed where teachers are to be placed on panels.

Parents as To vet or not to vet?



This is a regular question posed to this office. This Board is an advisory body and therefore advises what we believe to be best practice.

We have been told that the Child Abuse Prevention Programme has stated that the vetting of parents is unnecessary. Their booklet entitled *Stay Safe: Best Practice in Child Protection Guidance for Schools* states on Page 3 that staff includes parent volunteers.

The Board of Management has a duty to ensure that ALL those undertaking duties on its behalf are suitable persons to do so.

But does that include vetting parent volunteers?

The difficulty for this Board in issuing advices on this matter is that the range of duties undertaken by parent volunteers is vastly different from one school to another. We strive to be consistent in our advices.

If a parent is simply sitting on a bus as an escort on a school trip, then perhaps vetting might be seen as

unnecessary. But is that all that the parent does? Are they at any stage taking charge of a child or children other than their own? Do they undertake toileting duties?

Are they in a position to form a relationship with a child other than their own?

All volunteers must be treated equally. Spot the problem with the following statement 'we are happy with the parents we know, but we want to check those we don't!'

So where do you draw lines? If you decide that you are not going to vet SOME parent volunteers, you must decide where those lines are and ensure that they are not crossed.

A parent might initially volunteer just to sit on the bus, but then offer to help in an after-school activity. When do you decide the time is right to ensure their suitability for the task?

Remember too that vetting is only one piece of a good recruitment procedure. You should be offering some training in supervision as well. We have published articles on this in

the past and given guidance as to how a school might bring parents on board in a positive way. This process is to ensure the safety of their child and to offer some assurance that all those they are working alongside have been checked and trained in a similar fashion.

The wider issue for Patrons is that all volunteers in parishes ARE treated in a similar fashion. References are checked, vetting is undertaken and training is given before they take up their role. Many Sunday School leaders are parents and will have been vetted for that role. Why should it be different at school level?

If a parent has been vetted for a role at parish level or in another Church of Ireland school, they can simply request that a copy of their form be sent from this office to the school for their records, they don't necessarily have to be vetted again.

Remember - this isn't bureaucracy - it's for your protection, volunteer protection and, most importantly, the protection of children.

A plea from the Authorised signatories...

Please put the cover sheet or at least the school compliment slip in with any batches of Vetting forms that you send to us to let us know from where they have come!

Please also check before you send in forms that all the boxes are filled in correctly and addresses from birth to present are complete without gaps. The current time for a Garda Vetting form to be processed is approximately 14-16 weeks so it is important that extra time isn't wasted before the forms even reach the Vetting Unit!

Notes from the IPPN Annual Conference



The former Minister for Education and Science, Mr Batt O’Keeffe, stated at the conference that Child Protection guidelines are to be given statutory footing. He also signalled that the Stay Safe child protection programme should be mandatory in all schools. The Minister stated that it was his intention to have the programme included as a mandatory requirement for all schools as part of new arrangements which are to emerge from a working party currently in place to redraft the guidelines in relation to child protection in schools.

He further stated that training will be available for Circular 60/2009 (Revised Procedures for Suspension and Dismissal of Teachers).

In relation to Special Needs the Minister stated that the review had identified many SNAs who were in continuing employment in schools, but where the pupils they had originally been employed to care for had transferred to second-level. When asked about the apparent narrowing of focus of the review to care needs only the Minister responded that there is an appeal mechanism available for schools and parents who are not happy with their allocation. He was then asked if this was simply another level of bureaucracy? The Minister did not reply, but stated that the review would be complete by the end of March. The next question was whether the figure of a 20% reduction was correct. The Minister indicated that this figure did seem to be correct, but that it would be better to wait until the full review was complete.

Code of Behaviour: Tips from the workshop at IPPN Conference:

Codes are actually meant to be about good behaviour.

Start with a mission statement.

Keep it simple and child centred.

Ensure adequate and positive response to good behaviour and don’t forget to occasionally let parents know that their children ARE well behaved.

Ensure that you don’t leave a child with no choice.

Avoid getting entrenched over minor issues.

Greater responsibility for behaviour rests with the adult.

Expand the policy to staff – i.e. don’t have a rule in relation to mobile phone use for children that is broken by staff.

Let class teacher sort the problem initially, have the principal as the next level.

Think about your school trips – do the children actually

want to go there or is it you making them go there? If you bring them somewhere they don’t want to be they are going to be bored and misbehave.

Keep your policy a little fluid.

Take care that your policy does not result in an otherwise well behaved child going straight to suspension or even expulsion.

Rehearse problems you know will happen so you know how to react when it actually does, i.e. role play for teachers.

Are your teachers nervous of parents – how do you prepare for pupil/teacher meetings?

Parents can be very defensive of their children – use careful language when there is a difficult matter to discuss.

Behaviour is learned – it can take time to change.

Your Code should always be a work in progress.



Guidelines for Discipline and Procedures for dealing with alleged misbehaviour on school transport



We often get queries regarding behaviour on school buses and where the responsibility lies in terms of discipline. Generally speaking, the school shouldn't have to get involved in minor incidents which occur on the bus – the pupils only become the responsibility of the school once they are through the school gates! However, in more serious cases the Chairperson/Principal may have to co-operate with an investigation into alleged serious misconduct.

Bus Éireann has produced a leaflet which deals with this issue:

Bus Éireann is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school transport scheme under the general direction of the Department of Education & Science. Bus Éireann is responsible for the discipline and safety of pupils while travelling on school buses.

Pupils availing of transport are expected to behave in a responsible manner having regard for their own safety, that of other passengers, the driver and other road users. In cases of

misconduct, sanctions will be imposed by Bus Éireann. These have been agreed in consultation with the DE&S.

Misbehaviour

In the event of misbehaviour by pupils the bus driver will:

Seek an assurance from the pupil(s) that there will not be a repetition.

If there is a recurrence, the driver may ask the Inspector to speak to the child.

The matter will be concluded at this point.

Serious Misconduct

Serious misconduct consists of behaviour which poses a threat to the safety and well-being of pupils, the driver, or the safe operation of the service generally. Intimidation of pupils, damage caused to fixtures and fittings on the vehicle or to the property of others, and behaviour which may endanger other road users is included in this definition. A pupil who disregards the instructions of the driver/Inspector or does not

respond to discipline and continues to be a source of misbehaviour may likewise be charged with serious misconduct.

When the alleged misconduct is of a serious nature, the driver will report the matter to the Inspector, who will inform the local Bus Éireann Manager immediately and instructions will be given as to what action should be taken. The Inspector will also inform the school authorities of the position.

The matter will be fully investigated by Bus Éireann personnel in consultation with the Transport Liaison Officer/Chairperson of the BOM/Principal and with the assistance of the school authorities.

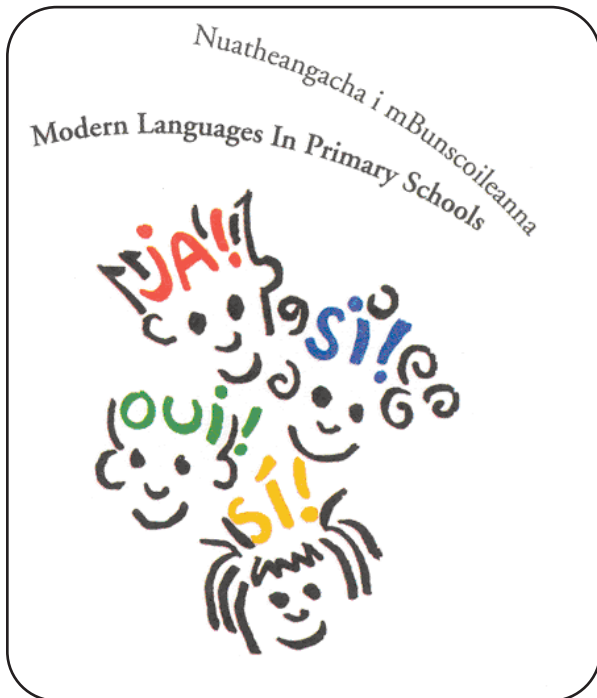
The full procedure for the investigation of serious misconduct is available on the DE&S website www.education.ie. Follow the link to *About the Department* then click on *School Transport* where you can download further information on the procedure, sanctions which Bus Éireann may impose and the appeal mechanism should the outcome be unsatisfactory.

Teacher Application Form

Last year, some selection boards found themselves in a situation where they were opening hundreds of envelopes and sifting through lengthy CVs to ascertain the suitability of candidates to shortlist for interview.

The CPSMA has now produced a Teacher Application Form which selection boards might consider using in order to make the process a little easier. When placing your advertisement you could request completion of the form which would be available from the school. The form will shortly be downloadable from the CPSMA website,

but this office also has a copy which we can send by return email. To get a copy simply send an email to jennifer.byrne@rcbdub.org and we will attach the form by return. If you have a school website, you could upload the form to your site and direct applicants to download and complete the form as part of their application. A similar form is available for the post of Principal and is downloadable from the CPSMA website. We hope to have a dedicated education website up and running by September. These forms will then be readily available on our site.



Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative (M.L.P.S.I.)

'Language Links' (formerly circulated in hard copy to schools) is also now available on the website. Please note that the website is available to anyone interested whether in the Initiative or not.

The co-ordinating team continues its links with key partners: Primary Administration, with Embassies and with Cultural Institutions. Financial details from Primary Administration for 2009 were not available but the same level of support will be given for the current year.

Some further financial support has been received from the French Embassy and sponsorships for training has been received from Consejería de Educación, Goethe Institute and Italiano di Cultura.

Links with third level institutions - teacher training colleges, Hibernia College, TCD and NUIM have been most positive during the year.

Updates from the June 2009 Meeting

The Harris /O'Leary report has been completed and is with the DES and to date no response has been received.

NCCA feasibility report has been received.

The publication of Language Education Policy Profile awaits a report from DES Working group.

Looking Forward

With 505 Primary schools (290 French, 96 Spanish, 93 German and 23 Italian) now in the Initiative, there will be continued monitoring of regional support. There will be an expansion of ICT and Language evening courses for professional development. Collaboration with teacher training colleges is proving very fruitful and provides open access to students.

MPLSI will make presentations at forthcoming conferences in Valencia and later in Greece.

Website: www.mlpsi.ie

Hazel Crawford (on behalf of Church of Ireland Board of Education)

The M.L.P.S.I. consultative group meeting took place in December 2009.

The National Co-ordinator, Tanya Flanagan, reported an excellent start to the school year in terms of team dynamics and team work accomplished.

In terms of development, several conferences were held and in particular CIDREE conference hosted by NCCA in the DES in November. Emphasis was placed on early language learning and also on the importance on whole school approach, language awareness and embedding in language teaching, all of which are significant features of MLPSI work for some time.

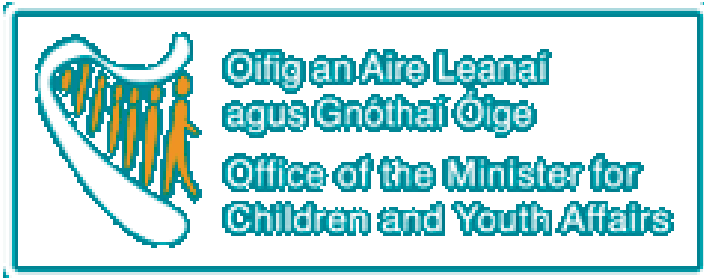
There were induction days for new teachers to the Initiative and it was noted that there has been an increase in the number of staff members teaching the languages as opposed to visiting teachers. This is very positive news and shows a willingness on schools to schedule for such arrangements.

Seven seminars for school Principals were held countrywide and all participants were very happy with the level of support being provided.

An extensive range of resource materials has been developed and uploaded on to the website. There is ongoing updating of the website to include video tutorials, sound files and new language games software. The latest two games 'Tower of Babel' and 'Lingo' are available and can be accessed by anyone. All that's needed is to create the schools /user's own password.

Children First:

National Guidelines for the Protection and Welfare of Children



The above guidelines were first introduced in 1999 and in 2008 the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs published the National Review of Compliance with Children First. The review found that the guidelines had stood the passage of time and needed only minor amendment in order to be brought up to date.

In 2009 the Government published an Implementation Plan on the Report of the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse which set out 99 actions in relation to the welfare and protection of children. Children First has now been revised and should be implemented across the State by all organisations offering services to children.

It is intended that legislation will be introduced to ensure that those working with children through organisations supported by State funds will have a duty to comply with the Children First guidelines.

It is important that the revised guidelines are uniformly implemented by organisations working with children. Remember we all have a duty to protect children and vulnerable adults.

As a response to the revision of Children First, a working group has been established by the Department of Education and Skills to develop new child protection guidelines for schools. Currently there are two booklets in operation, one for primary and one for second-level. It is intended that there will be just one set of guidelines published to cover both sectors. Work is progressing well on this matter and the new guidelines for schools will be available later this year.

Church Education Society for Ireland

Many of you may not have heard of the Church Education Society, founded in 1831, and yet the Society has supported schools through the provision of funding towards the development of the *Follow Me* programme, bursaries for teachers attending post graduate courses, educational resources for small schools (enrolment of 35 pupils or less) and by circulating other relevant publications to schools.

Over 50 of our schools benefit annually from the Small Schools Scheme. Last year 12 bursaries were awarded to teachers in Church of Ireland schools. The CICE PSA receives funding towards their annual conference and new students receive Bibles funded by the Society. Schools placing orders for *Follow Me* were provided with a free copy of the Teacher's book each year while the programme was being introduced. Since my appointment as Assistant Secretary to the Society in 2001, I have written cheques totalling almost €500,000, quite a substantial amount for such a quiet Committee!

Like many other organisations, our pockets have been hit by the downturn in markets and our income has fallen substantially. Nevertheless, through careful management, we are still in a position to fulfil our obligations and, while we have to be careful, we are determined not to cut down or cut out, at least not if we can help it!

Further information on the Church Education Society is available from Jennifer Byrne whose contact details are on the back of this newsletter.

New Board of Education website

What would you like to see on our website?

It will be there for you, so let us know what would be useful.

You can send suggestions to any one of us listed in the contacts box.

Jennifer Byrne

Showing DVDs/videos in School

It has come to our attention that some schools may have received a letter from a licensing company stating that schools may require a licence in order to show DVD's and videos in the classroom. This licensing company has stated that it can provide a licence to the schools for a fee.

Copyright describes the rights given to authors and creators of certain categories of work and copyright protection extends to the following works: Original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works; Film, sound recordings, broadcasts; Computer software and non-original databases; Performances.

The law governing copyright in Ireland is the Copyright and Related Rights Act 2000 ("the 2000 Act"). Under the 2000 Act, the following uses do not infringe copyright law which means that authorisation from the person in whom the copyright is vested is not required:

1. The performance of a literary, dramatic or musical work before an audience limited to persons who are teachers in or pupils of a school or other persons directly connected with the activities of the school:
 - (a) by a teacher or pupil in the course of the activities of the school, or
 - (b) at a school by any person for the purposes of instruction.
2. The playing or showing of a sound recording, film, broadcast or cable programme at a school before an audience consisting of teachers or pupils of the school for the purposes of instruction.

A school does not require a licence from the owner of the copyright to show a DVD or video if it can satisfy the criteria at number 2 above and should not need to avail of the services of a licensing company.

Planning ahead?



School Year 2010/2011

October 2010 mid-term break - All schools will close from 25th to 29th October 2010 inclusive.

Christmas 2010 - All schools will close on 23rd December 2010 which will be the final day of the school term. All schools will re-open on 10th January 2011.

February 2011 mid-term break - Post-Primary schools will close from 21st to 25th February 2011 inclusive. Primary schools will close from 21st to 22nd February 2011 inclusive or 24th to 25th inclusive. (Primary schools may use 3 discretionary days to extend this break to an alternative option of a 5 day break).

Easter 2011 - All schools will close on 15th April 2011 which will be the final day of the school term. All schools will re-open on 3rd May 2011.

It is always wise to have one or two days in hand to cover the eventuality of snow or broken heating as the DE&S will not countenance days of exceptional closure as they erode the school year.

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