Conference on Special Education 2015

Rebuilding Special Education

Comhdháil ar Oideachas Speisialta 2015
Atógáil an Oideachais Speisialta

7ú Márta 2015
Mary Immaculate College, Limerick

A nation’s greatness depends upon the education of its people
Dear Delegate,

We are delighted to welcome you to Limerick for the 2015 INTO Conference on Special Education.

Since the 1990s the inclusion of children with special educational needs has become the norm in primary schools. Primary teachers have demonstrated their commitment to pupils with SEN and have endeavoured to provide a high quality education to all their pupils, often in large classes with inadequate resources. It is timely that this conference has as its theme ‘Rebuilding Special Education’, as a proposed new model of allocating resources to schools with children with SEN is under consideration. This new model is being constructed and will shortly be piloted. This presents an important opportunity for the development of a quality support system for pupils with SEN. Support in the mainstream class is only one aspect of special education. Our special schools and special classes are a vital part of the continuum of provision for pupils with special educational needs. Curriculum developments for pupils with special educational needs at junior cycle level are welcome but we cannot forget the challenges in special schools arising from the increasing diversity of their pupil profiles. The increase in the number of special classes is a response to the increasing numbers of children being diagnosed with autism. In this changing context of special education, teachers endeavour to provide the best educational experience for all their pupils.

Today you will have the opportunity to listen to presentations, participate in workshops and debate the issues that are of most concern.

We hope that this will be a productive and beneficial day as we face the challenges involved in Rebuilding Special Education.

Yours sincerely,

Sean McMahon                              Sheila Nunan
INTO President                             General Secretary

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Fáilte

Saturday 7 March 2015

9.00 a.m.   Registration

9.45 a.m.   Opening of Conference
Sean McMahon, President, INTO
Prof. Michael Hayes, President,
Mary Immaculate College
Deirbhile Nic Craith, Director of
Education & Research, INTO

10.15 a.m.  Keynote presentation
Dr Patricia Daly and Dr Emer Ring
Mary Immaculate College

10.45 a.m.  Tea / Coffee

11.15 a.m.  Discussion groups

12.15 p.m.  Workshop I

13.15 p.m.  Lunch (cafeteria)

14.15 p.m.  Workshop II

15.15 p.m.  Panel
‘How my primary school supported me.’
Siobhán Munovan
Adam Harris
Fionn Angus

16.00 p.m.  Crioch

General information

Registration
Registration opens at 9.00 a.m. on Saturday, 7 March. We ask you to assist INTO staff by completing your delegate card, which is enclosed in your pack, prior to your arrival at the registration desk. Full coverage of the conference is available on the INTO website.

Conference evaluation
Delegates are asked to supply their email address on their delegate card and they will be contacted after the conference with a link to a short online questionnaire.

Car parking
There is ample car parking available on-site.
Keynote presenters

**Dr Patricia Daly** graduated from UCC and taught for a number of years prior to completing the Post-Primary Remedial course at St Patrick’s College, Drumcondra. She completed an MA in Emotional and Behavioural Disorders (1982), and a Ph.D. in Applied Behaviour Analysis at Ohio State University in 1986. Patricia worked in undergraduate and graduate special education in the US at the Miami University of Ohio, Central Michigan University, and Ohio Dominican University from 1986 until 2006, when she returned to Mary Immaculate College to direct the graduate diploma in special education. Patricia was seconded half time to the Special Education Support Service for five years and is currently Head of Department in Special Education.

**Dr Emer Ring** is Head of the Department of Reflective Pedagogy and Early Childhood Studies at Mary Immaculate College. Emer previously worked as a class, learning support and resource teacher at primary school level and a senior inspector with the DES. She lectures on the BA in Early Childhood Care and Education Programme (BAECE), the B.Ed. programme and the BA in Early Childhood Practice (BAECP). Emer has had recent experiences in Moldova, Dubai, Italy and Scotland in relation to early years education. She has also been joint principal investigator in An Evaluation of Concepts of School Readiness among Parents and Early Years Educators in Ireland, commissioned by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and An Evaluation of Educational Provision for Students with Autistic Spectrum Disorder in the Republic of Ireland, commissioned by the NCSE.

**Workshop presenters**

**Dr Michele Lavin** has a number of years experience of teaching in both primary and special education settings. Michele has also worked on a part-time basis at third level, designing and presenting courses on SEN. At present she is on secondment to the Special Education Support Service (SESS) as a special educational needs advisor. Michele has a particular interest in autistic spectrum disorders and completed a D.Ed in 2012 on the inclusion of pupils with ASD within the mainstream primary schools.

**Dr Margaret Egan** is a faculty member of the Department of Special Education at Mary Immaculate College. In a former life, Margaret was deputy principal of an all boys’ school where she was the SEN co-ordinator for many years. For the past nine years, she has taught with the Special Education Department at MIC on the Post Graduate/Masters in Special Educational Needs and also on the B.Ed. Programme. Her main teaching and research interests are in inclusion policy and practice and language and literacy for students with special educational needs.

**Trevor O’ Brien** is a faculty member of the Department of Special Education at Mary Immaculate College. Prior to joining the Special Education team, he spent many years working as a classroom teacher and as a resource teacher and has also lectured in the Department of Adult Education, UCC. Trevor’s areas of expertise include high incidence learning disabilities, differentiation, learning styles, ICT in special education and e-learning.

**Carol-Ann Ó Sioráin** is a primary school teacher with research interests in early years education, inclusive/special education and autism. She is currently pursuing a PhD in Literacy Skills Development among Pupils with Autism in an Irish Context. Carol-Ann is an associate researcher in the School of Education, TCD.

**Máirín Barry** is currently principal of Catherine McAuley School for students with Specific Learning Disability / Dyslexia in Baggot Street, Dublin. She lectured for a number of years on inclusive education and special educational needs at UCD School of Education where she was assistant co-ordinator on the Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs, lecturing also on the MA in Educational Psychology and the Post Graduate Diploma in Education. She served on the executive of the Irish Learning Support Association (ILSA) and is a former editor of their professional journal Learn. Her current research focuses on dyscalculia and early interventions for students with learning difficulties in mathematics and the impact of behavioural issues on learning.
Fionn Crombie Angus has a charmed life. He loves the natural world, and is the youngest person to be recognised as a heritage expert on the Heritage in Schools Programme, presenting workshops on Ireland’s fauna and flora. He loves music and has played traditional fiddle music to dozens of audiences, here and abroad. He loves film making, often interviewing interesting people about their passions in life, and has won awards and been interviewed on RTÉ’s Saturday Night Show for short films that he and his dad have produced. Fionn is happy to share his optimistic and ambitious journey with everyone. In short, he intends to change the world.

Siobhan Mungovan is from a small village in west Clare called Connolly. The last six months have been a whirlwind for her as she has published her first book called Me and My Back Bone: My Journey with Spina Bifida. Siobhán has spoken on a number of national and regional radio shows. With this book Siobhan wants to show readers that “We must never underestimate human potential.” It has always been a dream of Siobhán’s to put pen to paper and to tell her own story giving people an idea of what it has been like for her living with Spina Bifida. Even though it has brought its ups and downs, Siobhán’s motto in life in the face of it all is to “Keep Smiling Always”.

Adam Harris is the founder-CEO of AsIAm.ie, an online support and advocacy organisation for those with autism. Adam established AsIAm based on his own experiences of living with Aspergers Syndrome. Today AsIAm is in schools, organisations and communities across Ireland, working to increase societal understanding of the condition. A winner of a Social Entrepreneurs Ireland Elevate Award, Adam is a frequent commentator on autism issues in Irish media and at national and international conferences on the topic.

Delegates are invited to choose their two workshops by signing up for both at registration. Signup sheets with a brief description of each workshop will be available on tables in the registration area. Please be aware that as there is a limit to the number each workshop can accommodate, these will be filled on a first come, first served basis. Your discussion group will be in the same room as your first choice workshop.