

# Printout

into   
Irish National Teachers' Organisation  
Cumann Múinteoirí Éireann

June 2024

## STRONGER TOGETHER

*Pay deal successfully  
over the line*

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**Pension Portal**

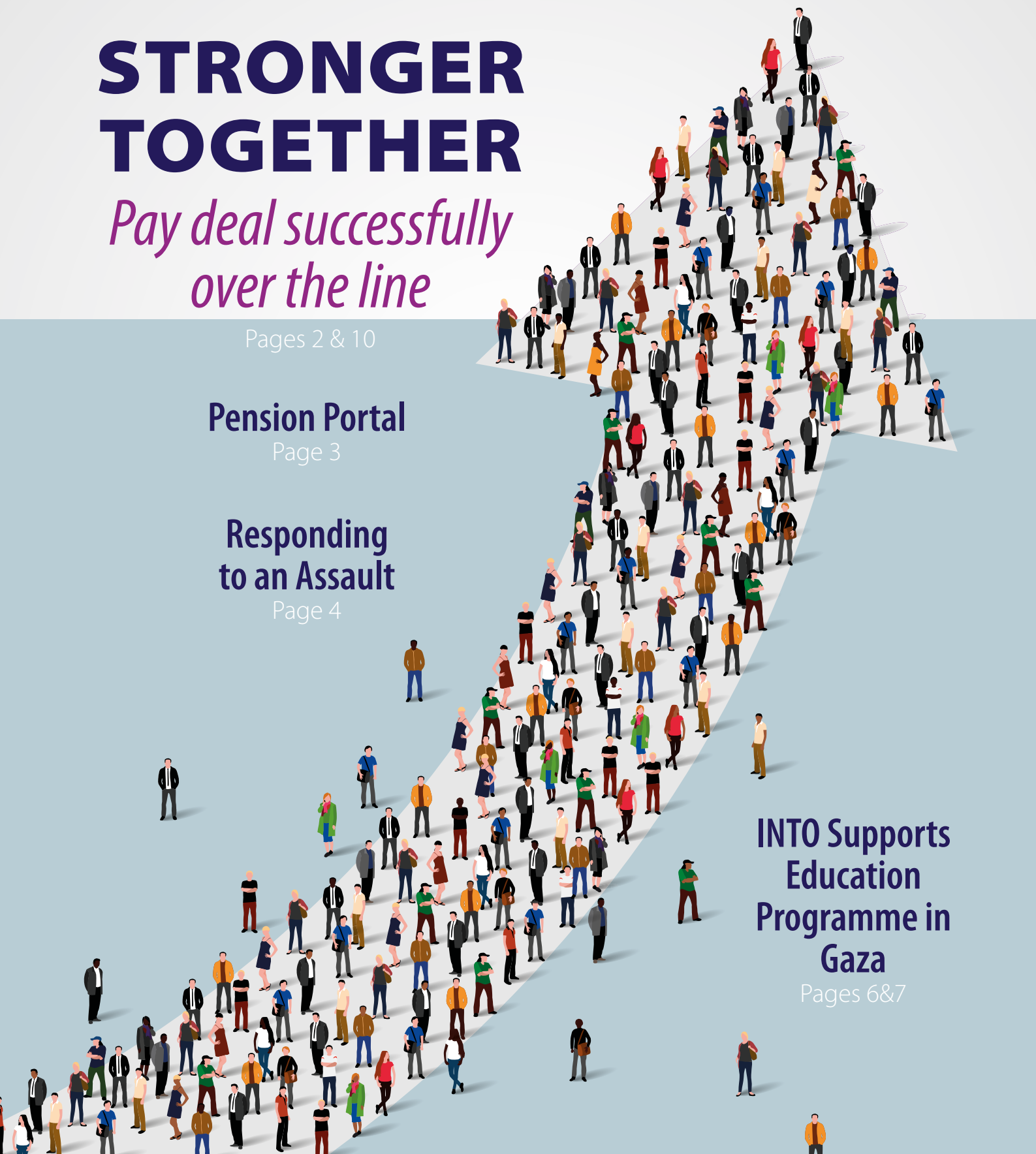
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# Work continues to bring about improvements in teachers' pay

Despite the signing of a pay agreement for 2021-2023, the campaign for fair pay for teachers continues. The Northern Ireland Teachers Council (NITC) will lodge a pay claim for September 2024 before the end of May.

The long road to the latest pay settlement began in earnest in October 2022 when in an historic move, all five constituent members of NITC balloted members for strike and action short of strike. The outcome demonstrated the feeling among teachers and school leaders, and all five unions delivered a mandate to progress.

On behalf of the Northern Committee and the INTO Central Executive Committee, I would like to thank all of our members who took part in this joint action, and the outstanding turnout by our members at rallies and strikes across the north on the five days of action culminating in the ICTU joint day of action on 18 January 2024.

There can be no doubt that the solidarity shown by the trade union movement in their call for fair pay for public sector workers on that day was the catalyst for the return of the Stormont Executive, and the subsequent settlements on public sector pay.

With the return of the executive,

and the appointment of an education minister, real progress was made and following several engagements with management side a pay deal was formulated and INTO members surveyed.

With 68% of members who responded to the survey in favour of accepting the offer, we proceeded with the approval of the Northern Committee and the CEC, to



**MARK MCTAGGART,**  
Northern Secretary

formally ratify the offer with the other members of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Council (NITC) on April 8th at the Teachers' Negotiating Committee.

While the deal is not perfect, the uplift in salaries of between 24 and 11.5 percent gives the unions a solid platform for the next pay claim.

The updated workload agreement (TNC2024/2) reflects the working practices agreed as part of TNC

2020/1 which was agreed as part of our previous pay agreement, and this will be implemented from 1 August 2024. In addition to this, work has now begun to develop a framework to address the recommendations contained in the 8 completed workforce reviews before 31 May 2024. This framework will include a timetable for the implementation of those areas which can be progressed,

both immediately and over a short to medium term.

Central to contractual rights and the conditions of service for teachers is the provision of directed time budgets. In practice this means the principal will be responsible for determining an individual time budget for each member of staff.

Through this work it is expected that the workload of school leaders can be reduced. It will be important that teachers and school leaders are honest with themselves, and that Directed Time Budgets will be based on work that is capable of being completed within the available directed time. All of the associated duties for teachers who are in receipt of Teaching Allowances must also be budgeted for within the 1265 hours of directed time.

We now have the task of ensuring the Agreement is fully implemented. This is something we at Northern Office, along with the Northern Committee and the members generally, will be focused on. It is only the first step in a series of steps to be completed to bring about continued improvement for members on the pay and workload fronts, but it does represent a significant change for the members. The fact that all five unions have worked so well together in finalising this pay deal is reflective of good practice in the last few years, and it is important that this is how the NITC does its business going into the future. INTO will continue to lead this work.

## NORTHERN COMMITTEE INFORMATION

| Area/Region          | Branches  |                      | Mobile                   | INTO Email   |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| BFC                  |   | Patrick McAllister   | BFC Rep 07828769034      | <a href="mailto:pmcallister@into.ie">pmcallister@into.ie</a> |
| CEC                  | District 1  | Seamus Hanna         | CEC Rep 07720 775425     | <a href="mailto:shanna@into.ie">shanna@into.ie</a>           |
| NE Primary           | North Antrim, South Antrim, Carrick/N'abbey /Larne, South Derry                               | Michelle McCrystal   | INTO NC Rep 07851460682  | <a href="mailto:mmcrystal@into.ie">mmcrystal@into.ie</a>     |
| NE Post-Primary      | North Antrim, South Antrim, Carrick/N'abbey /Larne, South Derry                               | Siobhan McElhinney   | INTO N.Cttee 07915091871 | <a href="mailto:smcelhinney@into.ie">smcelhinney@into.ie</a> |
| SE Primary           | Down & Lisburn  | Eoin O'Lochlainn     | INTO N.Cttee 07752881465 | <a href="mailto:eolochainn@into.ie">eolochainn@into.ie</a>   |
| SE Post-Primary      | Down & Lisburn  | Susan McMullan       | INTO N.Cttee 07736677552 | <a href="mailto:smcmullan@into.ie">smcmullan@into.ie</a>     |
| Belfast Primary A    | Belfast West  | Lisa Magennis        | INTO N.Cttee 07977920536 | <a href="mailto:lmagennis@into.ie">lmagennis@into.ie</a>     |
| Belfast Primary B    | Belfast   | Geraldine McGowan    | INTO N.Cttee 07717277565 | <a href="mailto:gmcgowan@into.ie">gmcgowan@into.ie</a>       |
| Belfast Post-Primary | Belfast & Belfast West  | Caoimhin MacColaim   | INTO N.Cttee 07710234126 | <a href="mailto:cmacolaim@into.ie">cmacolaim@into.ie</a>     |
| CEC                  | District 2  | Annamarie Conway     | CEC Rep 07701049789      | <a href="mailto:amconway@into.ie">amconway@into.ie</a>       |
| S Primary A          | Cookstown, South Tyrone, North Armagh & Dungannon   | Marty Lavery         | INTO N.Cttee 07733207887 | <a href="mailto:mlavery@into.ie">mlavery@into.ie</a>         |
| S Primary B          | South Armagh, Armagh & Newry  | Noreen Kelly         | INTO N.Cttee 07846392235 | <a href="mailto:nkelly@into.ie">nkelly@into.ie</a>           |
| S Post-Primary       | Cookstown, North Armagh, Armagh, South Armagh, Newry & Dungannon, South Tyrone                | David Nolan          | INTO N.Cttee 07714322013 | <a href="mailto:dnolan@into.ie">dnolan@into.ie</a>           |
| W Primary A          | Lisnaskea, Enniskillen, Tyrone Central & Strabane   | Clare Kearney-Kirwan | INTO N.Cttee 07805525062 | <a href="mailto:ckearney@into.ie">ckearney@into.ie</a>       |
| W Primary B          | Derry City, Limavady/Dungiven,  | Amanda Carson        | INTO N.Cttee 07784432788 | <a href="mailto:acarson@into.ie">acarson@into.ie</a>         |
| W Post-Primary       | South Tyrone, Lisnaskea, Enniskillen, Tyrone Central, Strabane, Derry City, Limavady/Dungiven | Dermot Gallagher     | INTO N.Cttee 07746323288 | <a href="mailto:dgallagher@into.ie">dgallagher@into.ie</a>   |

# Recently Elected Northern Committee Representatives



**Top row, left to right:**  
Clare Kearney-Kirwin, Western Area NC Rep, Primary area A, and Eoin O'Lochlainn, South Eastern Area NC Rep, Primary.



**Bottom row, left to right:**  
Lisa Magennis, Belfast Area NC Rep, Primary area B, Susan McMullan, South Eastern Area NC Rep, Post-Primary, and Amanda Carson, Western Area NC Rep, Primary area B.



## Annual Pension Benefit Statements

### Accessing the Pension Portal



DENI Teachers' Pay and Pensions launched an online pensions portal in January 2023. All members of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pension Scheme (NITPS) can now access their

annual pensions benefits statements (ABS) online, through this portal at any time. Paper statements will no longer be issued routinely and such copies will only be sent out on demand.

The information contained on the Portal is vital for any financial planning consultation teachers may engage in when planning for their retirement. The online portal is reported to be simple and easy to use and access.

At this stage most members of the

pension scheme should be signed up, but it has been reported to INTO that NITPS staff have been experiencing high volumes of calls about the portal and ABS. This in turn appears to have affected their capacity to address other queries from members.

There is a guide to registering on the portal here: <https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/publications/launch-northern-ireland-teachers-pension-online-portal>

It is important when registering to keep your login details securely stored for future reference as it has proven difficult to reset login details once forgotten.



**Kevin Daly**  
Trade Union Official

# Responding to an assault



Members regularly contact INTO seeking advice when they have been faced with either a verbal or physical assault. Generally, it is not until they actually face a problem that they realise that they have a lack of knowledge or information in relation to these types of incidents.

Assaults do have different levels of severity, but all are serious. They can range from the experience of pupil's name calling, challenging and swearing, to teachers being deliberately struck with such force that a teacher can suffer facial injuries. These types of physical assaults can result in teachers having to seek medical assistance with the possibility of the expense of dental surgery coupled with having to take time off work.

Some teachers, upon their return to work after being forced to take sick leave because of an assault, feel very uncomfortable teaching the offending pupil. Sometimes, during their absence, the child has still been aggressive towards other staff, and the school seems not to have taken any other substantive action other than a short suspension and an invite to the parent for a meeting to discuss future behaviour. Teachers explain that these incidents leave them feeling quite unsettled and this can actually manifest as a loss of confidence and a questioning of their own ability to teach and manage a class.

Similarly, a teacher employed in a special school with young adults was regularly the victim of pupil aggression resulting in bruises, nips and bite marks whilst attempting to carry out their duties. They felt somewhat isolated because to complain would be to go against the culture at the school which viewed the children's behaviour as run-of-the-mill and part and parcel of how the school operated.

But both of these examples are

injurious to members and are firmly considered the result of assaults that should have been recorded by the school.

Teachers should take the proactive step in making sure that these types of behaviours are considered totally unacceptable and cannot be allowed to be treated as ordinary and part of a teacher's day. Likewise, abuse on school premises by adults which is likely to be non-physical in nature must also be addressed as firmly and clearly by the school as it would a physical assault because after a verbal assault by a parent, a teacher may be left shaken, feeling vulnerable and lacking the confidence to continue their role as a teacher.

Teachers who actually find themselves in these precarious situations should always remain as calm as possible and try to de-escalate and minimise the threat and when it is safe to do so, try to remove themselves and others from the immediate danger. As soon as possible, they should summon help and try to place a barrier between themselves and their assailant. Where the assault is carried out by a young person/child, any measures that you use to protect

yourself or those in your charge must be proportionate and reasonable to the situation.

The response of school management and colleagues to an assault or incident of violence is an important factor in how the assault impacts on a teacher. In the immediate aftermath, it would be expected that a teacher should be afforded appropriate time in a private quiet place to recover and someone

should stay with the teacher during this time. Where necessary the teacher should be accompanied home or to receive medical treatment. Details of the incident should be recorded, and the assault should be formally reported to the principal/line manager as soon as is reasonably possible.

- All incidents must be entered into the school's accident/incident book.
- An Incident Report Form should be filled in and given to the employer.

- Where an assault/violence is carried out, consideration should be given to reporting the matter to the PSNI, as appropriate, and the school's Code of Behaviour should be utilised.
- Where a teacher is off work for more than three days because of injuries sustained due to a workplace assault/violence there is a legal requirement to report this to the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland.
- A risk assessment/revised risk assessment should be carried out and appropriate action taken to prevent reoccurrence.

In all cases of serious assault advice should be sought from INTO to ensure the protection of teachers' rights.



**Tommy McGlone**  
INTO Senior Official

**... it would be expected that a teacher should be afforded appropriate time in a private quiet place to recover and someone should stay with the teacher during this time.**

# Joint Leadership Seminar

A joint union (INTO-UTU-NEU) Leadership Seminar was held on Wednesday 15 May 2024, in the Armagh City Hotel.

School Leaders, from all three unions, were welcomed by Caoimhin Mac Colaim (Northern Committee Chairperson) and then addressed on the 'Workload Agreement', by Mark McTaggart (INTO Northern Secretary), Marie O'Shea (INTO Assistant Northern Secretary), Jacquie White (UTU General Secretary) and Stephen McCord (UTU Deputy General Secretary).

The main session of the conference involved ETI and was on the development of Inspection. Faustina Graham (Chief Inspector), Barry O'Rourke (Assistant Chief Inspector), Seán Fearon, Susan Haughey and Madeline Mason from the ETI presented the new model of Inspection. Attendees took part in a workshop and had the opportunity to ask questions and seek clarity on some concerns regarding upcoming Inspections. This session was greatly welcomed by the school leaders and the ETI were thanked for their new approach to inspections, with the caveat that 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating!'

After lunch, attendees had the choice of attending one of two workshop sessions: **Directed Time Budgets** with Marie O'Shea and Nuala O'Donnell, INTO Senior Official, and Joseph Wyglendacz, UTU or **Protecting Yourself in your Role as Principal** with Audrey Stewart and Aaron Davidson, both from UTU. In the afternoon session, Aileen Donnelly, from EA (DESS) took the School Leaders through a comprehensive and informative presentation on **Reasonable Adjustments**, looking at RAFT and the considerations and processes involved.



expectations; investment and funding; access to Educational Psychology and other relevant agencies; and the impact on support and provision for the children most in need. The collated responses will be relayed to EA, by the unions, to impress on them how Principals are feeling about the SEND Transformation, the experiences of Principals and SENCOs in relation to this and the issues that we can foresee for September 2024.

Leigh McKay (UTU President) closed the day, thanking all those involved in the organisation, the presenters and the attendees for their participation throughout all of the sessions. Feedback since the event has been very positive, with School Leaders appreciating the opportunity to have their voice heard.

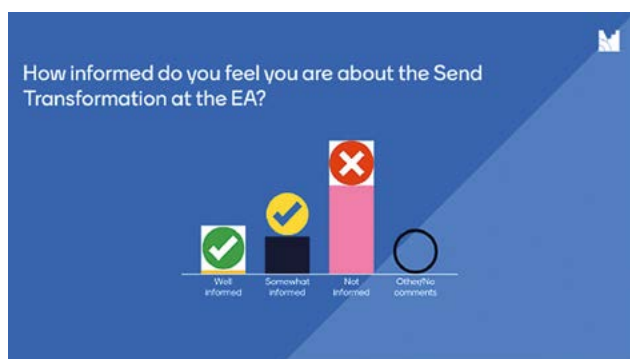
The last presentation of the day, delivered by Marie O'Shea, Edel McInerney (NEU President) and Rebekka Gilpin (UTU Official), included an interactive session giving those present the opportunity to voice their concerns regarding the SEND Transformation.

The majority of School Leaders present said they did not feel informed in relation to the SEND Transformation, with only one feeling they were well informed.

It was clear from the feedback received that School Leaders here have grave concerns, in relation to how this will roll out, in schools in September 2024.

When asked what their single biggest concern was, some of the common responses centred around a lack of clarity, training, and resources; excessive and increased workload; parental

**LISA MAGENNIS, Northern Committee Representative**





# INTO Supports Education Programme in Gaza

In June 2023, the Centre for Global Education, an international non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Belfast, commenced delivery of an education project in the Gaza Strip in partnership with a Palestinian partner organisation called the Canaan Institute. The project was funded by the INTO's Solidarity Fund and involved delivery of an education programme to 400 children in Gaza, aged 6-12 years, that aimed to strengthen knowledge, skills and confidence in the core curriculum areas of literacy and numeracy.

The project was delivered in four locations in Gaza: Beit Lahia in northern Gaza, Deir el-Balah and Maghazi in central Gaza, and Rafah in southern Gaza. It was a

response to an educational crisis in Gaza caused by Israeli restrictions in importing construction materials. As a result, nearly every school in Gaza has to double-shift, meaning that two different school populations share the same building. One school population uses the building in the morning and has to vacate it at lunch-time to make way for a second school that uses the same building in the afternoon. Double-shifting means that pupils receive a part-time

education and struggle to maintain their progression in learning. The INTO-funded programme enabled 400 children to receive additional formal sector classes in a community setting in the morning or afternoon when they were not at school. The community classes were facilitated by staff in local grassroots organisations trained by the Canaan Institute in the use of participative and interactive learning methodologies.

... nearly every school in Gaza has to double-shift, meaning that two different school populations share the same building.

response to an educational crisis in Gaza caused by Israel's blockade of the strip implemented in 2007, which has choked off its economy and created soaring unemployment, rampant poverty and collapsing public utilities. The blockade also created a chronic shortage of school



## Psychosocial support

The project also provided therapeutic learning to young people struggling with mental health problems caused by sustained exposure to extreme poverty and conflict. Israel launched four major military assaults on Gaza in 2008-09, 2012, 2014 and 2021 that have cost thousands of lives and decimated civilian infrastructure with children on the frontline of these attacks. The children selected for the INTO programme were those experiencing the most acute forms of psychological distress and trauma which manifests itself in different forms of behaviour; bedwetting, apathy, fear, loss of appetite, aggression and difficulty concentrating in school. Through carefully facilitated educational activities and the involvement of mental health specialists, the children enrolled in the project received therapeutic learning. The parents of the children also received training workshops on how to extend psychosocial support into the household as the economic stress caused by extreme poverty often creates a difficult domestic environment for children that adds to their mental anxiety and behavioural change.

## Genocide in Gaza

On 6 October 2023, I received an update on the INTO-funded programme with multiple photos of smiling, relaxed children enjoying the education activities delivered by the Canaan Institute and its four community partners. Since the Hamas incursion into southern Israel that resulted in 1,139 deaths and 253 hostages taken, Israel has launched an unprecedented, nearly seven-month attack on Gaza that has killed 34,000 Palestinians, including 13,800 children and 8,400 women. More than 8,000 people are missing, presumed dead under rubble, and 76,980 are injured. Israel has imposed a complete siege on Gaza that includes food, water, fuel and medicines and the United Nations has declared that a famine is imminent. Francesca Albanese, the UN Rapporteur for the situation of human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, has reported that there are 'reasonable grounds' to believe that Israel has committed at least three of the acts proscribed in the Genocide Convention. The government of South Africa has instituted proceedings in the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Israel for breaches of the Genocide Convention. For its part, the ICJ concluded 'that at least some of the rights claimed by South Africa and for which it is seeking protection are plausible'. On

26 January 2024, the ICJ ordered Israel to take six provisional measures to protect Palestinians from genocide. One month after the ruling, Amnesty International found that 'Israel has failed to take even the bare minimum steps to comply'. Despite its obligation as the occupying power in Gaza to provide for the basic needs of its citizens, Amnesty found that Israel has displayed a 'callous indifference to the fate of Gaza's population'.

Gaza's 1.7 million displaced people. There is no way of checking on the welfare of the 400 children from Beit Lahia, Deir el-Balah, Maghazi and Rafah, who were participating in the INTO-funded project. In my last exchange with Issa Saba, the Director of the Canaan Institute, on Facebook in early April he wrote: 'Dear Stephen, marhaba, just to tell you we are trying to help, and we are alive... thanks'. That's how life is measured in Gaza during

'It may be reasonable to ask', the UN report adds, 'if there is an intentional effort to comprehensively destroy the Palestinian education system, an action known as "scholasticide".'

## Scholasticide

The children in Gaza are not only experiencing acute humanitarian suffering including hunger, thirst, disease and trauma, but are being denied an education. With 80 percent of schools damaged or destroyed or used as shelters, and all of Gaza's universities destroyed, 625,000 students have no access to education. The UN has reported that 5,479 students, 261 teachers and 95 university professors have been killed in Gaza, and over 7,819 students and 756 teachers have been injured. 'It may be reasonable to ask', the UN report adds, 'if there is an intentional effort to comprehensively destroy the Palestinian education system, an action known as "scholasticide"'. Page 55 of South Africa's application for proceedings against Israel in the ICJ leaves the reader in no doubt that Israel's deliberate targeting of academics, higher education institutions, publishing houses, museums, historical archives and archaeological sites, represents not only an attack on Gaza's education system but an attempt to erase its historical memory.

Before 7 October, UNICEF estimated that there were 500,000 children in need of psychosocial support in Gaza. Today, that total has doubled as a result of the incessant bombardment of Gaza, the mass displacement of civilians, the destruction of 60 percent of residential buildings and chronic food shortages impacting most of the population. Moreover, 17,000 children are estimated to be unaccompanied or separated from their parents which amounts to one percent of

a genocide. Staying alive. Trying to survive from one day to the next.

## Teachers for Palestine

There has been a tremendous response as always from the Irish trade union movement to Israel's genocide including the many members of the INTO who have marched every week in solidarity with Palestine. There has also been a very welcome educational response from 'Teachers for Palestine', an initiative launched by Irish teachers in solidarity with their colleagues in Palestine. A 'Teachers for Palestine' web site carries teaching resources and ideas on how to extend solidarity to students and teachers in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. An initiative called 'Let's Talk about Palestine' (29 April to 10 May) is urging schools to take action for Palestine over these dates with lots of practical activities suggested. It's an example of education that supports humanism, compassion, solidarity (not charity) and action toward positive change. These are the same values that informed the INTO programme in Gaza. The project was interrupted in the most callous way possible in October, and the Centre for Global Education together with our partner, the Canaan Institute, stands ready to support the 400 children who participated in the project to resume their journey in education.

**STEPHEN McCLOSKEY is Director of the Centre for Global Education. You can find more about the work in support of Palestinians in Gaza and Lebanon at: [www.centreforglobaleducation.com](http://www.centreforglobaleducation.com)**



# District Training Event 2024

This year we held our District Training Event on Saturday 13 April, in the Malone Hotel, Belfast. Members were welcomed from Districts I and II, with the majority of those present being first-time attendees. Considering the lack of any meaningful Professional Development, over the last few years, we wanted to focus on providing members with a diverse range of training opportunities. We had a jam-packed day from 10am until 2.30pm, which kicked off with a brief overview, by Seamus Hanna (CEC District I), of the structure of the INTO and the benefits of joining. Next up was Mark McTaggart, Northern Secretary, who gave an update on the Teachers' Pay Agreement and thanked members for remaining steadfast during action short of strike and the monumental strike action on the 18th of January.

There were two workshop sessions before lunch, lasting 45 minutes each. Attendees chose two from the following:

- **Menopause Awareness with Naomi Connor**, looking particularly at the symptoms, the range of treatments/

remedies available and how Menopause can impact the workplace. *"Today was excellent. I thoroughly enjoyed it all. I'd definitely like more time with Naomi Connor on menopause awareness and the opportunity to talk about it all."*

- **Enhance Your Chance with Nichola Lynagh**, looking at how to 'show up' for job interviews, how to know and name our strengths and how to speak with clarity and conviction on the day! *"Nichola Lynagh was fantastic!"*
- **AI In Education led by Nicole O'Connor and Bernard Noble**, 'Learning Me' co-founders, exploring practical examples of how AI is being used in schools to enhance learning experiences and streamline teaching practices and workload. The risks and some things you can do right away to safeguard your school were also discussed.
- **Mid-Career Financial Planning with Platinum Finance**, a workshop aimed at teachers in their mid-career wishing to review their financial position in relation to their pension, mortgages, savings, etc. Members received guidance through the maze of retirement options available.





- **Adobe Express for Education led by Emma McCaugherty** (Adobe Express Trainer), learning about the new updates to Adobe Express on desktop web browsers and exploring some of the fantastic creative capabilities of this resource for inspiring and engaging learners.

After lunch, we had the pleasure of listening to the Keynote Speaker, the highly acclaimed Shane Martin (Moodwatchers).

7. Overall how would you rate the Keynote Speaker session?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Satisfactory
- Unsatisfactory



9. How likely are you to recommend this training event to a friend or colleague?

- Likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely



100% of attendees said they were likely to recommend this training event to a friend or colleague.

Shane enthralled us with his insights on the ‘Psychology of Bouncibility’ and how to build resilience within ourselves, outlining some evidence-based strategies linked to more positive outcomes during times of challenge and change. 82% of attendees rated the keynote speaker as excellent!

**Attendee Feedback**

According to the evaluations, many of the attendees appreciated the opportunity to engage in some useful, meaningful and enjoyable training sessions with practical takeaways they could use in their teaching.

We would like to thank all those in attendance for their time and engagement, the positive feedback we received and for all the great ideas for future training events. If anyone would like any further information on any aspect of the day or if you have other ideas for future training, please don't hesitate to contact me. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the organising committee, Siobhan McMullan, Bronagh Mallon and Seamus Hanna, for all their help and support in making the day such a success!

**LISA MAGENNIS, Northern Committee Representative**

10. Have you attended any of our District Training Events before?

- Yes
- No

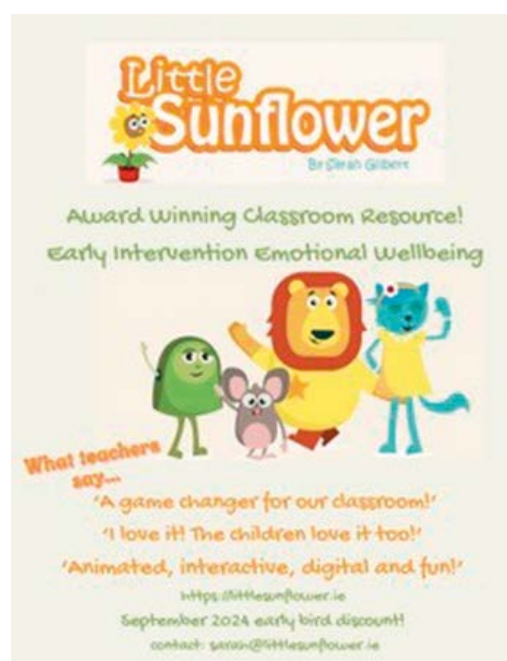


80% of the Attendees hadn't attended any of our previous District Training Events.



Little Sunflower is an award winning, early intervention, animated, interactive, digital, emotional wellbeing resource for the classroom whiteboard with 90% to 100% positive feedback.

Contact Sarah to book a demo for your school:  
[sarahgilbertni@gmail.com](mailto:sarahgilbertni@gmail.com)



# Stronger Together

The 156th Northern Conference was held in the Europa hotel, Belfast. Our theme was Stronger Together – celebrating the solidarity, cohesion and strength of teachers, educators, and working people during a year of industrial unrest, political stasis, and financial crisis.

The conference fell in the shadow of the 18th of January – the largest union action in the state’s history, and one in which INTO played a significant role. This ‘generalised’ strike converged the thoughts of politicians on the focal point of fair pay, and singularly forced the restoration of the Assembly.

The anger delegates brought to conference, at three years of pay erosion, was contained only by the hope that a pay deal was imminent. Their frustrations momentarily tempered by the promise of what Westminster’s treasury pot could deliver. The return of the devolved government only weeks previously, after a 24-month hiatus, substantiating this belief.

Northern Conference was the first ministerial-trade union encounter of the newly established government and was covered widely in the media – as an inaugural test for the legislature. The conference was officially opened by Northern Committee Chairperson, Caoimhín Mac Colaim, as delegates were greeted to Belfast by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Belfast, Councillor Áine Groogan, and with music from local schools Gaelscoil na bhFál and Scoil na Fuiseoige. The Chairperson addressed conference, lauding teachers, and our comrades in the other unions for their resolute stance



in the face of government ineffectuality and disinterest while workers suffered an inflationary crisis. INTO President, Dorothy McGinley, welcomed guests and delegates. She gave a compassionate and supportive speech to the members in the North for their commitment during the action. Dorothy then spoke of pay, the slashing of services and how schools are nothing if they are not places of laughter and song.

The Minister of Education, Paul Givan, despite the frustrations of conference, received a respectful welcome. In his speech he committed his term to resolving the industrial action and recognised that teachers should be paid for the outstanding job they do. He highlighted the increasing demands on the Barnett formula and the recurring

cost of pay. Despite this, he committed the Department of Education to resolving the budgetary issues that face schools, progressing the Landscape Review, restoring Fresh Start funding, and implementing the End-to-End review.

The Northern Secretary, Mark McTaggart, responded to the Minister, calling on him to address the crisis in pay. He brought to the minister’s attention that despite the teaching profession becoming devalued they have remained committed to delivering first-class teaching and learning. The Northern Secretary then called on the minister to address the substantial issues relating to governance in schools, and to deliver for children in specialist settings.

INTO branches submitted a substantial number of motions to this year’s clár.



Mark McTaggart (Northern Secretary), Caoimhín Mac Colaim (Chairperson) and Marie O’Shea (Assistant Northern Secretary)



Left: Mark McTaggart, Northern Secretary, Dorothy McGinley President, Paul Givan Education Minister and Caoimhín Mac Colaim Chairperson



**Twasul Mohammed (PPR Education Activist) and Caoimhin Mac Colaim (Chairperson) and Saher Idris (Equal Access to Education and the Anaka women's collective)**



**Shane Ruane, INTO LGBT+ Teachers' Group Secretary pictured with President Dorothy McGinley**

Delegates spoke passionately to motions concerning the funding of the SEND implementation strategy and of the inadequate training and resourcing of these settings. Primary teachers spoke of the impact large class sizes are having on their workload, health, and welfare. The discontinuation of the Engage funding, the inappropriate use of NISTR, and the unpaid expectations on teachers in the

delivery of external examinations were all topics teachers brought to the attention of conference.

The conference welcomed guests from the Donate for Daithí Campaign,

the Anaka Education Project, and the INTO LGBTQ group. Well, that's all folks for another year, and we look forward to seeing all our delegates in the Europa hotel for Northern Conference 2025.



**Chairperson pictured with Mairtín Mag Gabhann, Teacher, INTO member and founder of the Donate for Daithí**



**Above: Northern Office Staff**



**Ceoltoirí Scoil na Fuaiseoige agus Gaelscoil na bhFál**



**Branch Chair Darragh McCloskey and CEC Rep Annmarie Conway present flowers to former NC Rep Moira O'Kane (left of photo) and Joan Guthrie, former Branch Chairperson**



**Chairperson Caoimhin Mac Colaim, Nicola Corner (School Rep in Belfast Model School for Girls, Belfast) and Mark McTaggart Northern Secretary**

# MAY DAY RALLY



Thousands of trade unionists, along with their families and friends, gathered on Saturday 4th May 2024 at Writer's Square, Donegal Street in Belfast for the annual May Day Rally and March.

Belfast Trades Council hosted a series of events to celebrate May Day 2024 'Our Work, Our Lives, Our Place'. The Community Arts Partnership and the ICTU were supported by unions and Belfast City Council.

The annual May Day March followed the route down Royal Ave, to Belfast City Hall and returning to Donegal Street, Belfast.



**MAY DAY  
MARCH & RALLY**

**SAT 4 MAY**

12 noon Rally at Writer's Square  
12.30pm March Off

@betterinaunion  
UNIONS.IE

STRONGER TOGETHER  
**CONGRESS**  
Irish Congress of Trade Unions  
Northern Ireland Committee

**BETTER IN A  
TRADE UNION**



## Tributes

# Sheila Shanagher RIP



Members will be saddened to learn of the recent death of former INTO Northern Committee Chairperson, Sheila Shanagher.

Sheila was a member of the Loreto Order from 1951 until 1974 when she moved from Omagh, where she taught, to live in Derry city and joined the staff of the newly opened St Brigid's PS, Carnhill where she eventually became Principal in 1989 until her retirement in 1999.

Her time as Principal was a difficult period for everybody involved in education with the implementation of reforms arising from the Jordanstown Agreement but in spite of all the changes Sheila's focus was always on the children under her care.

As Monsignor Andrew Dolan, who was Chairman of the Board of Governors at that time, said in his homily at her funeral Mass:

'Sheila always saw beyond. When it came to people, especially children in her care, she definitely looked beyond to ensure that no matter their achievements, failures, behaviour, background, each child was special, each child deserved the best and was encouraged


to develop their talents and the gifts given by God in order to reach their full potential and develop into people feeling valued and loved.'

This was the case too for the many young teachers with whom Sheila came in contact. Her advice and encouragement were hugely valued and greatly appreciated. She encouraged them to see beyond the paperwork and to continue to develop their own talents in the best interests of the children in their care.

Sheila represented the INTO Derry, Limavady and Dungiven Branches on the Northern Committee and was elected Chairperson in 1997. She was the INTO representative on the Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA) for six years where her views, particularly on early childhood education, were highly valued and respected.

Sheila died peacefully in Culmore Manor, Derry on 29th April, aged 91.

**DES RAINEY (Former INTO President)**




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

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IMAGINE MORE

# 'The Derry Lessons'

## A Congress 2024 Fringe Event

Congress 2024 in the Millenium Forum in Derry city was a vibrant, exciting and sometimes exhausting experience for the hundreds of delegates who attended. While the business of INTO was at the forefront, there was also an opportunity to attend two fringe events.

One of these Fringe events was 'The Derry Lessons', a workshop-led exploration of teaching resources focused on enhancing an LGBT+ Inclusive Classroom in the Primary and post-Primary sectors. This was a unique opportunity to showcase at Congress a selection of tried and tested diversity lessons for primary and post-primary learners. Dr Jeff Evans from Liverpool John Moores University led this busy and informative session. Hosted at the inspiring Museum of Free Derry, the signature project of the Bloody Sunday Trust, this fringe event had the teachers on their feet and feeling like the students.

Alongside 'The Derry Lessons' was a working table to explore some of the inclusive resources from 'Unveiling Our Past' produced by the Centre for Human Rights and Citizenship Education, DCU.

The event was sponsored by INTO's LGBT+ Teachers' Group and organised by the Belfast Pride Team. The resources used are available by contacting [intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:intolgbtgroupsecretary@gmail.com)

**BRONAGH MALLON**



## INTO Pride Flag Campaign goes to West Belfast

In April the Pride Flag was presented to St. Gerard's School and Support Services in West Belfast. The flag was presented to Principal Stephen Ramsey and his staff by Bronagh Mallon, Chair of District 1, as part of the INTO Pride Flag Campaign.

Bronagh thanked the staff reps Julian Morgan and Bill Kelly for the invitation and thanked all the staff for their very warm welcome. She highlighted that the displaying of a Pride flag is a strong and significant emblem of inclusion. Bronagh also took the time to encourage the staff to participate in INTO's 'Different Families, Same Love'. Further details and lesson ideas are available on to the INTO website.



If your school would like to receive a Pride flag from INTO contact your branch secretary, equality rep

[equality@into.ie](mailto:equality@into.ie) or the Belfast office.

**BRONAGH MALLON**

# New INTO podcast!

Brand new podcast focussing on the issues that matter most to you, our members.

Available on all podcast platforms.



## Teacher Talk

WITH THE INTO



## Vere Foster Lecture 2024

The Annual Vere Foster lecture will commemorate the life of this great educationalist and philanthropist.

This year's lecture will be delivered by Professor Siobhan O'Neill, Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland, and is entitled: Mental health in children and young people: the role of education

It will take place on Thursday, 20 June 2024 at 6.30pm in The Malone Hotel, Belfast. The winner of the Brendan Harron INTO Art Competition (2024) will be announced on the evening.

**Caoimhín MacColaim, Northern Committee Chairperson**



## Printout

PRINTOUT is the Organisation's full colour magazine distributed to all members in the north.

PRINTOUT is also distributed to our education partners and students in our teacher training colleges.

PRINTOUT has a readership of approximately 8,000 members and is available on the INTO website.

PRINTOUT provides up-to-date information on professional and trade union issues.

PRINTOUT is published 3 times a year – Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term in line with the academic year.

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Printout is published by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation and distributed to members and educational institutions. Articles published in Printout are also available on our website [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie).

The views expressed in this journal

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# How to Survive the Last Term of School

You've probably heard the advice, put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others. This is true both in airplanes and in classrooms. You must take care of yourself before you can help someone else. If teachers are stressed out and exhausted, how can they have the patience, positive energy, and enthusiasm to provide the best instruction for students?

You already know this, but I'm going to say it anyway. You can't do it all in these last weeks of school. Go ahead. Admit it. You have too much planned, and you know no one is going to come along and give you more days.

There's a good chance you'll lose some days through, sports days, assemblies, end-of-year celebrations, inter school football tournaments and school trips. These events seem to appear every other day or so it feels in these final weeks and days when we're already trying to do too much.

To add to the stress, your class's wheels are coming off the wagon. Normally motivated and in-control students are losing their mojo, and students who grew so much socially and emotionally seem to be right back to where they were in September. Never mind winding down, the whole place is getting 'wound up'!

To make matters worse, you're exhausted! It's the final mile of the marathon, and you're not sure if you can make it.

So, what's a well-intentioned but completely overwhelmed teacher to do? How can you not just survive these last weeks, but succeed—making the end of the year positive and productive for you and your students? Here are a few ideas to consider.

## Prioritize

If you can't do it all, make decisions about what's most important and what's realistic.



**Marie O'Shea**  
Assistant Northern Secretary

Also decide what not to do. Take a deep breath and don't feel guilty. There are only so many working hours in the day.

## Reinforce routines

Even the most even-keeled students feel squirrely as the end of the year approaches. Tempers are frayed and everyone is ready for a break from each other. For students who often struggle to stay in control—especially ones who count on school as their safe place—the last few weeks can be really hard to handle. Familiar routines will help students feel safe.

## Be consistent with discipline

It can be tempting to let small things slide as the end of the year approaches, but this can spell disaster in a classroom and elsewhere in the school. Small misbehaviours, if not handled swiftly and respectfully, can quickly lead to larger ones as students feel the safety of the room slipping. Be strong and firm—clear and kind.

## Tackle fun academic challenges

The best way to keep students engaged at the end of the year is to take on some fun and challenging academic work. [Try student-led research projects](#) or create a class movie. Analyse a fun movie for character development or put on a learning celebration for families. Give students more choices about what and how they learn, and keep these choices directly aligned with the content you're teaching.

## Take care of yourself

Eat well. Sleep. Hydrate. Exercise. These practices will boost your energy levels and [help you handle this naturally stressful time](#) of year more positively and professionally.

## Focus more on how school feels and less on cramming in the last few bits of content

The way your year ends can make a lasting impression on your students and can help set them up for a positive outlook on next year. Make a list of the ways you want your students to feel as the year ends.

I want students to feel confident, relaxed, connected with others, nostalgic, proud, and excited for next year. What does your list include?

Students will quickly forget facts anyway, so cramming content (just so we can say we "covered" it?) is a waste of time.

So, in these final weeks and days, be realistic about what you can accomplish and make sure to stay joyfully engaged yourself. Your students will take their cues from you, so make sure to set yourself and them up for a fantastic finish!



# Vere Foster – Ní bheidh a leithead ann arís!

Leis an fhírinne a dhéanamh, chuala mé ainm Vere Foster agus mé ag teacht i méadaíocht in iarthar Bhéal Feirste. I gceantar New Barnsley, bhí bunscóil ann Vere Foster Primary School. Chuala mé an t-ainm ar uairibh agus mé i mo bhall den chumann óige, i mo dhéagóir, bhí cúpla cumann óige d'arbh ainm Vere Foster ann. Tamall ina dhiaidh sin, agus mé mar mhac léinn, i m'ábhar múinteora, chuala mé an t-ainm arís.

Le deanaí, tháinig ainm Vere Foster aníos agus mé ag obair ar thionscadal nuálaíoch staire i gcomhar leis an staraí Fheirsteach, Tom Hartley, saineolaí na reiligí Bhéal Feirste. Tugaim féin agus Tom camchuariteanna sna reiligí agus pléann na scéalta agus na pearsantachtaí atá faoi chré na cille iontu.

D'éirigh liom dhá leabhar a scríobh mar chuid den tionscadal, leabhar faoi Reilig Chathair Bhéal Feirste agus eagrán eile faoi Reilig Bhaile an Mhuilinn. Roghnaigh mé a bheag nó a mhór fiche duine clúiteach a chur i ngach leabhar. Daoine clúiteacha a d'athraigh an domhan, a d'fhág a lorg ar an tsaol!

Ba í Margaret Byers duine acu, oideachasóir, daonchara. Chuidigh sí le bunú na hotharlainne, RVH ar Bhóthar na bhFál. Bhí sí ina síntiúsóir don otharlann, bean shaibhir a chabhraigh le cosmhuintir na cathrach. Throid sí ar son cearta na mban agus cearta na gcaillíní a bhí ag sclabhaíocht sna muilte i Linenapolis!

Laoch an oideachais, Margaret Byers (a bhunaigh Victoria College), atá faoi chré na cille ag bun Reilig Chathair Bhéal Feirste.

Bhí laoch fir an oideachais ag teastáil uaim anois! Cothromaíocht!

Bhuail mé le Tom i Reilig na Cathrach ag iarraidh an fhadhb a réiteach. Bhí sé de nós againn bualadh ag an bhinse bheag in aice leis an phríomhgheata ar Bhóthar na bhFál. Shiúil muid suas an cnoc, príomhbhóthar na reilige, Tom ag insint fiche scéal domh faoin am a bhain muid ár gceannscríbe amach, leacht chuimhneacháin Vere Foster.

Bhí an leacht seo suite ag taobh an phríomhchosáin, furast teacht air, dath liath air agus suaitheantas Chumann Múinteoirí Éireann greannta air. Seo an áit a raibh Vere Foster faoi chré na cille. D'ínis Tom roinnt scéalta domh faoi shaol Vere. Cad chuige nach raibh a fhios agam faoin fhear seo?



Rugadh Vere Foster ar an 25ú Aibreán 1819 i gCóbhanhávan, an Danmhairg. Teaghlach saibhir a bhí i dteaghlach Foster agus d'fhreastail sé ar ollscoil agus fuair sé oideachas den chéad scoth, ach d'imigh sé ón ollscoil gan chéim.

Tháinig sé go hÉirinn agus An tOcras Mór (1845-1850) i mbarra réime. Nuair a chonaic Foster go raibh daoine ag fáil bháis d'ocras, go raibh easpa bia ann, go raibh rialtas na Breataine ag tarraingt na gcos maidir le cúnamh agus cuidiú. Chuir sé isteach go mór air.

Shocraigh Vere Foster agus a dheartháir Frederick cuidiú le muintir na hÉireann teacht slán ón Drochshaol agus bia agus cuidiú a thabhairt dóibh. Chuidigh sé fosta le muintir na hÉireann a d'imigh ar imirce go Meiriceá ar na longa báis. Thaistil Vere Foster é féin ar long bháis lán le himircigh. Chuaigh sé i bhfeidhm ar Westminster, dáil na Breataine, le



Seán Fennell cois uaigne Vere Foster

coinníollacha ar na longa a fheabhsú agus a dhéanamh níos fearr.

Ach, tá clú agus cáil ar Vere Foster in Éirinn mar gheall ar an tionchar a d'imir sé ar chúrsaí oideachais.

Chuidigh sé le hairgead a chur ar fáil do thithe scoile agus d'fhoirgnimh scoile fud fad na hÉireann. Chuir sé tús le Vere Foster Copy Books le caighdeán na scríbhneoireachta a chur chun cinn.

Ón bhliain 1867 ar aghaidh, chaith Vere Foster mórchuid dá chuid ama i mBéal Feirste. Bhí sé ar an chéad uachtarán de Chumann Múinteoirí Éireann. Níor phós sé riamh. Fuair sé bás ar an 21ú Nollaig. Cuireadh é i Reilig Chathair Bhéal Feirste.

I ndiaidh domh labhairt le Tom an lá sin faoi shaol Vere Foster, bhí a fhios agam go raibh seoid agam don leabhar agus don chamchuarit. Bhí iontas orm fosta nach raibh saol Vere níos mó i mbéal an phobail. Nuair a bhím ag insint scéal Vere Foster ag béal a uaigne agus an leacht chuimhneacháin ag mo thaobh, mothaím go mbíonn an stair beo, go mbíonn a ainm ar ais i mbéal an phobail mar a ba chóir.

Imirceach a bhí i Foster a tháinig go hÉirinn. Throid sé ar son na ndaoine bochta. Throid sé in éadan an Ghorta Mhóir. Daonchara a bhí ann a mhaoinigh tionscadail oideachais fud fad na tíre. Oideachasóir a bhí ann a thuig an tionchar a d'imir áiseanna foghlama fiúntacha agus tithe scoile sábhailteacha ar oideachas na bpáistí. Fear a bhí ann a chuir luach ar na healaíona agus ar an fhoghlaim don saol. Dá mbeadh sé beo inniu, is cinnte go mbeadh sé ag cur fáilte roimh theifigh go hÉirinn, ag troid ar son na ndaoine bochta, agus ag cur in éadan ciníochais.

Mar a dhéanann gach staraí páirt-aimseartha nó múinteoir lán-aimseartha, tógann agus goideann muid scéalta, fianaise agus eolas. Glacann muid iad agus cuireann ár lorg féin orthu. Nó sa lá atá inniu ann, leis an teicneolaíocht, téann muid ar Google!! Rinne mé Google ar Vere Foster. Tháinig na gnáthrudáí aníos, Wikipedia agus Amazon.

Ach, ansin, phreab alt amháin amach.... **Vere Foster; One of the Greatest Men You've Never Heard Of!** Tá sé de dhualgas orainn uilig sin a athrú.

[Sfennell419@gscoil.org](mailto:Sfennell419@gscoil.org)

**SEAN FENNEL, Múinteoir, Gaelscoil na bhFál, agus staraí áitiúil**



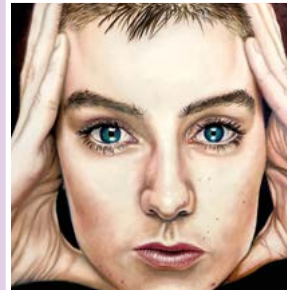
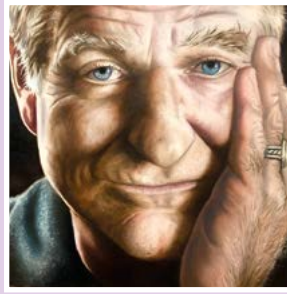
Thank you to all the members who have entered this year's Competition, now known as the Brendan Harron INTO Art Competition.

Your support for the Competition is much appreciated as is your fantastic talent as artists.

The collection of art in Northern Office is entirely member created and we are delighted with how it continues to grow, 2024 being the twelfth year of the Competition.

All our entries and winners can be enjoyed online, by viewing past editions of Printout.

We very much look forward to announcing this year's winner on the evening of the annual Vere Foster lecture.

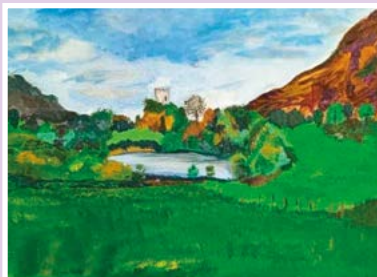


David Bell – Belfast West  
Robin Williams, 24 x 24 inches, Oils  
Sinead O'Connor, 24 x 24 inches, Oils  
Mandela, 36 x 36 inches, Oils

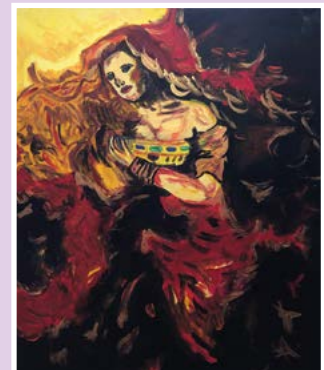
Roisin Mc Laughlin – Belfast West  
Ballycastle, 28 x 35 cms, Oils  
Ballintoy Harbour, 20 x 20 cms, Acrylics  
Cushendun Caves, 21 x 30 cms, Acrylics



Anne-Marie Ritchie – South Antrim  
Above left: Mournes from Murlough, 20 x 20 cms, Acrylic on canvas  
Above right: Through the Trees, 20 x 20 cms, Acrylic on canvas  
Right: Beyond the Summit, 30 x 40 cms, Acrylic on canvas



Julie McCreesh – Newry  
Just A Moment! 12 x 16 inches, Acrylic



Helen Mairs – North Antrim  
Left: The Blues, 24 x 34 inches, Acrylic on canvas.  
Right: Phoenix, 24 x 34 inches, Acrylic on canvas.

Shane Loughran – South Antrim  
Teddy Bears Picnic, 20 X 16 inches, Oils



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