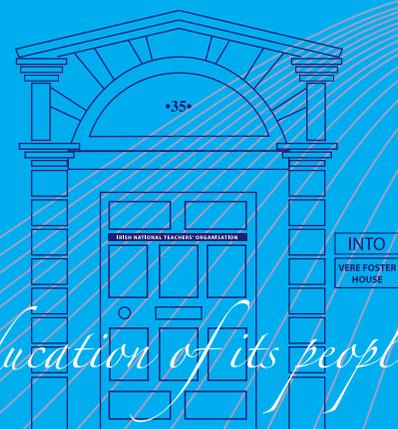


Review of DEIS: Poverty and Social Inclusion in Education

Joint Conference:
INTO and Educational Disadvantage
Centre, St Patrick's College,
Drumcondra

5ú Nollaig 2015

A nation's greatness depends upon the education of its people





Welcome

Dear Delegate,

We are delighted to welcome you to St Patrick's College, DCU, for a joint conference between the college's Educational Disadvantage Centre and the INTO on Poverty and Social Inclusion in Education. In the context that DEIS, now over ten years old, is under review, it is timely to consider how the system supports and includes children with additional educational needs arising from poverty and social exclusion.

We hope that the keynote presentations, discussion groups and workshops at today's conference will be a worthwhile and productive experience for you.

Yours sincerely,



Sheila Nunan

Sheila Nunan
General Secretary
INTO



Paul Downes

Paul Downes
Director
Educational Disadvantage
Centre

Clár

Room E 218 New West Building

Saturday 5 December 2015

- 8.45 am Registration
- 9.30 am Opening of Conference
Minister **Aodhán Ó Ríordáin**
Daire Keogh, President, St Patrick's College
Sheila Nunan, INTO General Secretary
- 9.50 am Keynote address
Carol Coulter, 'Social exclusion and child protection'

The Primary School Experience
Pat Courtney, principal teacher
- 10.30 am Discussion groups
- 11.15 pm Tea/Coffee
- 11.30 am Workshops
(see list on page 3)
- 12.30 pm Final Plenary Session
Panel Discussion
Pat Courtney, principal teacher
Eibhlin Byrne, Tusla
DES representative
Bernie McNally, DCYA
Anne Colgan, CES
Deirbhile Nic Craith, INTO
- 1.45 pm Críoch/Lón



General information

Registration

Registration opens at 8.45am on Saturday 5 December. We ask you to assist staff by completing your delegate card, which is enclosed in your pack, prior to your arrival at the Registration desk.

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 a limited amount of free car-parking available in the grounds of St Patrick's College. The college is well served by public transport from Dublin city centre.

Lunch

Lunch is provided for conference delegates in the College Restaurant at 1.45 pm.

Discussion groups

Saturday 5 December 2015

Delegates are invited to go to the **same room** as their workshop choice for a discussion group at 10.30 am. Discussion groups will be facilitated by members of the INTO national committees and personnel from St Patrick's College.

Discussion Group	Room No	Workshop
A	E 223	Teaching and Supporting Students with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
B	E 224	Multidisciplinary teams in and around schools
C	E 201	A national strategy for hunger prevention in schools
D	E 203	Ensuring Inclusion: The challenges for Traveller and Roma children in Education
E	E 205	Northside Partnership - Implementing evidence based approaches into mainstream systems to improve child outcomes
F	E 206	A community-based approach to addressing educational disadvantage.



Introduction to conference

In considering the DEIS review, currently under way by the Department of Education and Skills, it is vitally important that a range of views and experiences inform the process. The DEIS review should be a holistic review focusing on the comprehensive nature of DEIS supports, the criteria for inclusion in DEIS, and how pupils from socio-economically excluded backgrounds in schools not in DEIS can be supported. We welcome the commitment to establish an interdepartmental group for this review.

The number of children in Ireland at risk of poverty or social exclusion not only increased between 2008 and 2011, but registered the highest increase in all of the EU. There are significant challenges for pupils who are asylum seekers, particularly for those children living in direct provision. A more recent challenge is the increase in the number of children who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation. Addressing the effects of poverty and intergenerational exclusion in schools has to be supported by wider social policies that address socio-economic exclusion in society.

The ESRI's report on *Learning from the Evaluation of DEIS* states that concentration of disadvantage has a negative impact on pupils' progress in schools and social class mix of schools matters. The report raises the question whether learning resources should be directed more intensively at areas of concentrated disadvantage. The Educational Research Centre (ERC) is of the view that urban and rural disadvantage are quantitatively and qualitatively different (Weir and McAvinue, 2013). While academic achievement may not be as great a challenge in rural schools, nonetheless there is socio-economic exclusion that impacts on pupils' holistic development in those schools that must be recognised and targeted for supports.

In comparison to previous programmes to support schools in meeting the needs of pupils at risk of not succeeding in school, DEIS had a

more robust approach to target-setting, planning and evaluation. However, it is important to recognise that successes in DEIS built on the cumulative impact of previous programmes. Evaluations of DEIS have tended to have a narrow focus on achievement or outcomes, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and on attendance and retention of pupils in school. A drive for better outcomes cannot be used to obscure or downplay the need for resource inputs. The DEIS review must involve a positive commitment to invest further resources rather than become an exercise in taking from some DEIS schools to give to others. A strength of a previous programme, *Breaking the cycle*, was in foregrounding the role of the arts for engaging marginalised pupils.

While the DEIS programme has been broadly welcomed, there are a number of issues to be addressed in the next DEIS support programme. For example, capitation grants urgently need to be increased as the current grant is insufficient to meet the full running costs of DEIS schools. These schools lack access to parental, community and corporate fundraising that supplement the income of many non-DEIS schools.

The revised teacher pupil ratios introduced in 2012, coupled with the loss of some 'legacy' posts and other specialist posts such as the resource teachers for Travellers, have led to an increase in class size in DEIS schools. There is an urgent need for a reduced PTR for all DEIS schools. The recent reduction in the general PTR was not reflected in the PTR for DEIS Band One schools, an issue that has to be addressed as part of the DEIS review.

The Home School Community Liaison Programme and the School Completion programme play a valuable role in supporting children and families in DEIS schools. Regrettably rural DEIS schools lost their HSCL coordinators as part of the general cutbacks in education. This needs to be addressed in the review of DEIS.

¹ AROPE indicator, EU 2020 Strategy

² Weir, S. & McAvinue, L. (2013). The achievements and characteristics of pupils attending rural schools participating in DEIS. Report to the Department of Education and Skills. Dublin: Educational Research Centre.



Though not a part of the DEIS support programme, the importance of early intervention prior to starting school cannot be ignored. *Early Start*, a pre-school early intervention programme, was established twenty years ago to support children in socio-economic disadvantaged areas, and continues to be a very valuable education support. High quality pre-school education is considered to have a long term benefit for pupils, particularly for those children at risk (Sylva et al, 2008). The possibility of extending *Early Start* to all DEIS Band One schools should be considered as part of the review.

It is unacceptable that some children still come to school hungry (Downes & Maunsell, 2007), an issue of even more concern in light of the dramatic increases in child poverty since the economic crash. Breakfast clubs and after school clubs provided as part of the School Completion Programme assist in addressing this challenge, as does the school meals programme. However, a more systemic solution is required if hunger in schools is to be eliminated to ensure children do not fall through the gaps.

Support for literacy and numeracy programmes and the professional development available to teachers accompanying the introduction of particular literacy and numeracy programmes are welcomed by teachers. However, there are schools currently not in DEIS that would benefit from professional development support around the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

A explicit focus on pupils' mental health, well-being and their social and emotional development has been missing from the DEIS support programme and from evaluations. For some children, behavioural challenges arising from unmet social and emotional needs are the greatest barrier to their learning. The effect of the economic crash on children's and families' mental health makes the need to rectify the omission from the previous DEIS strategy all

the more urgent. Multidisciplinary teams in and around schools are a feature of many European school systems and key to addressing complex needs of children and their families at risk of social exclusion, including their mental health needs.

A longitudinal qualitative study is required to capture the impact of targeted supports on pupils' social and educational success over time. Education is a long term endeavour. We should invest in early years and primary education. That is where we sow the seeds to enable every child to reach his or her potential.

This conference is an opportunity to discuss how the system should better support pupils at risk of not succeeding in school as a result of poverty and socio-economic exclusion regardless of where they are located. There are schools, not currently in DEIS, who should be, given their profile of pupils. A mechanism to do this fairly and transparently needs to be developed.

However, in addition to demanding increased or more targeted resources we must also examine current provision and explore the potential for more effective deployment of those resources. There has been considerable progress over recent decades. A new DEIS support programme must build on the successes of the current programme.

We must also remember that schools alone cannot combat the effects of poverty and social exclusion. That is why it is essential that all individuals, organisations and institutions with a commitment to equality and social justice redouble their efforts to ensure that the adoption of social and economic policies that address socio-economic exclusion wherever it occurs in society.

³ Downes, P & Mansell, C (2007) Count Us In. Tackling early school leaving in South West Inner City Dublin: An Integrated Response. SICCCA and South Inner City Dublin Drugs task Force.



Workshops

Saturday 14 November

Delegates may choose which workshop they would like to attend by signing up for it 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.

Room	Topic and presenter
E223	<p>Teaching and supporting students with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties</p> <p>Students with SEBD require a multifaceted approach to their education. This workshop will examine what schools are adopting as effective practices for teaching and supporting students with SEBD.</p> <p><i>Mary Keane, National Behavioural Support Service (NBSS)</i></p>
E 224	<p>Multidisciplinary teams in and around schools</p> <p>This workshop looks at: 'Working towards equality of outcome in areas experiencing education inequality: A case for multi-disciplinary work with and around schools'. The workshop will contain input on a model in operation in Dublin 10. Themes discussed will include equality, social justice, engagement of the most marginalised/hardest to reach, the interface of family work and education and key features of a community based approach. A small group discussion will be facilitated based on the input and specific key questions.</p> <p><i>Fiona Kearney, Familibase, Ballyfermot.</i></p>
E 201	<p>A national strategy for hunger prevention in schools</p> <p>This workshop examines the need and recommended features of a national strategy for hunger prevention in schools. Children going hungry in Irish schools impacts upon their well-being, concentration and attention levels, learning and motivation, as well as heightening risk of aggressive behaviour in class and with peers. Current initiatives include the School Meals Programme funded by the Department of Social Protection and Breakfast Clubs facilitated by School Completion Programme through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Yet these are not systematically available for all children in need.</p> <p><i>Sinead Keenan, Healthy Food for All</i></p>



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Room	Topic and presenter
E 203	<p>Ensuring inclusion: The challenges for Traveller and Roma children in Education</p> <p>This workshop will look at the current issues faced by Traveller and Roma pupils in the Irish education system and the role that ethnic data can play in improving educational outcomes for all children. In line with the current review of DEIS, the workshop will also ask what supports do schools need to ensure inclusion, and improve educational outcomes for Traveller and Roma students?</p> <p><i>Hilary Harmon, Pavee Point</i></p>
E 205	<p>Northside partnership</p> <p>This workshop will look at the work being carried out in the Dublin 17 area with families, health services, early years settings and schools in an integrated fashion to improve child outcomes. This is a co-ordinated effort to embed evidence based approaches across families and services for children and families.</p> <p><i>Noel Kelly, Northside Partnership</i></p>
E 206	<p>A community-based approach to addressing educational disadvantage.</p> <p>The Early Learning Initiative (ELI) in the National College of Ireland is a community-based educational initiative aimed at addressing educational disadvantage. Operating as a partnership between local parents, primary schools and other organisations, ELI has developed innovative programmes to raise the educational aspirations of families and to improve the literacy and numeracy skills of children and young people in the Docklands. This workshop will share how a community can work together to address poverty and social inclusion in education, thereby improving educational outcomes for children.</p> <p><i>Josephine Bleach, NCIRL</i></p>



Keynote presenter



Carol Coulter is a former journalist, having worked with *The Irish Times* for 28 years, the last ten as its legal affairs editor. During her career she won a number of journalism awards, including Campaigning Journalist of the Year, Legal Print Journalist of the Year (twice) and Overall Legal Journalist of the Year in 2012. In 2006/2007 she took a year out from journalism to run a pilot project reporting private family law proceedings for the Courts Service. In 2012 she left journalism to direct the Child Care Law Reporting Project. She is a graduate of Trinity College

Dublin, holding the degrees of BA (Mod) and PhD in English, and also has a Diploma in Legal Studies and an M Phil in family law. She is the author of a number of books and essays on family law and social and cultural affairs.

The primary school experience

Pat Courtney is currently the principal teacher in St Vincent's Infant Boys' School, North William Street (DEIS Band 1), in Dublin City Centre. He has been in this school since 2000. Prior to this, Pat taught in O'Connell Primary School (DEIS Band 1), Dublin City, from 1978-2000.



Workshop presenters



Mary Keane is the national co-ordinator of the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS) and is seconded from St Dominic's College, Cabra where she is principal. Previous to her current school Mary worked in ETB and community and comprehensive schools. She has served as a council member on the National Council for Special Education and has been an associate member on the Leadership Development for Schools support service. She has also served on many local area communities for national programmes including the Demonstration Programme

for Educational Disadvantage and the 8-15 Early School Leavers' Initiative. She was a founder member of ACE (Accessing College Education) for schools in the West Tallaght area.

Sinead Keenan has an MSocSc in Sociology (UCD) and a research and policy background in food poverty, social exclusion, homelessness and advocacy. She has worked in the community and voluntary sector for over ten years with a focus on food issues and homelessness. She was involved in the establishment of the Healthy Food for All initiative and managed the developmental phase of the initiative. Sinead is the project co-ordinator of Healthy Food for All. Her role is to implement the Healthy Food for All programme, as well as ensuring HFfA's work has an impact on relevant policies that address the issue of food poverty in schools and communities across the island of Ireland. She is responsible for identifying and promoting best practice regarding food policy at local, regional, all-island and international levels.





Workshop presenters



Hilary Harmon has been the coordinator of the Education Advocacy Initiative in Pavee Point Traveller and Roma Centre for the past four years. She has a BA in Sociology and History of Art and MA in Political Communication and Public Affairs. She formerly worked as human rights education officer in Amnesty International Ireland and as political affairs officer on Amnesty International's mental health campaign. Previous to that, she was a parliamentary assistant in Seanad Éireann.

Noel Kelly developed and manages Northside Partnership's (NSP) Preparing for Life Programme – an evidence based prevention and early intervention programme. A former primary school teacher, Noel has extensive experience in the development and implementation of education and prevention and early intervention initiatives. Prior to his current role, Noel has worked as education manager with NSP, developed and managed an early school leavers initiative and taught in Darndale senior primary school as well as being one of the first home school community liaison co-ordinators in Ireland. Noel graduated from St Patrick's College with a BEd in 1981 and an M.Ed. in 2003. Noel has extensive involvement at board level at both national and local levels. Currently he is a member of the board of TUSLA (The Child and Family Agency), a director of Startstrong, chair of Darndale Community Training Centre, chair of the board of management of OLI Junior NS Darndale as well as being a member of a number of voluntary and community organisations in the North Dublin area.



Josephine Bleach has been director of the Early Learning Initiative at the National College of Ireland since 2008. Prior to this, Josephine worked variously as a primary school teacher and a home school community liaison co-ordinator in Darndale, Dublin 17. She was involved in the development and delivery of the Early Start Pre-School Intervention Programme, and subsequently worked as a facilitator with the School Development Planning Support Service (Primary) of the Department of Education and Science. Her book *Parental Involvement in Primary Education* has recently been published by Liffey Press. Over the course of her career, she has worked with a wide range of schools and educational stakeholders, community groups, voluntary and statutory agencies along with different initiatives. She has facilitated, motivated and mentored others in designing systems and structures that meet the needs of both individuals and the organisations as a whole.

Fiona Kearney received her undergraduate degree in Social Science from University College Dublin. Fiona is currently a research associate of the Education Disadvantage Centre in St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, working with Dr Paul Downes. She is currently working in Familibase, a community based service in Dublin 10 for children, young people and families as a child welfare programme manager. Fiona has led the establishment of a family outreach project that has been cited as a model of good practice in the Joint Oireachtas Committee Report on Early School Leaving (2010) and which was selected by the Irish Department of Children and Youth Affairs as a model initiative for the New Zealand Minister for Social Development, Paula Bennett, to visit in 2013.





Panel participants

Anne Colgan has extensive experience working with public sector bodies, voluntary and community sector organisations and interagency groups at national and local level in areas including education, disability, health and equality. Key areas of work include policy and strategy development, design of stakeholder partnerships, public consultation, organisational strategy and research. Anne has a MSc in Systemic Organisation and Management (University of Sunderland), an MEd (Trinity College, Dublin), a BA in Economics and Politics (University College Dublin).



Pat Courtney is currently the principal teacher in St Vincent's Infant Boys' School, North William Street (DEIS Band 1), in Dublin City Centre. He has been in this school since 2000. Prior to this, Pat taught in O'Connell Primary School (DEIS Band 1), Dublin City, from 1978-2000.

Eibhlin Byrne works with Tusla, the Child and Family Agency where she is Director of Educational Welfare Services. She has previously worked in the areas of homelessness and in therapeutic services. She is a former Lord Mayor of Dublin and has chaired the visiting committee of Dochas Women's Prison and Dublin Rape Crisis Centre.

Representative from the Department of Education & Skills



Bernie McNally was appointed Assistant Secretary General in the Dept of Children and Youth Affairs in March 2015 with responsibility for Early Years Care and Education, Youth Affairs, Research and Participation. Prior to this Bernie was Director General to the combined Offices of the Ombudsman, the Information Commissioner, the Commissioner for Environmental Information, the Secretariat to the Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPOC) and the Commission for Public Service Appointments. In her earlier career she worked as an Occupational Therapist and was later a Director of Therapy and Social Work services in St James's Hospital, Dublin. Bernadette also worked as an Advisor in the Department of Health and Children from 2004 to 2008. She has a BSc and MSc from Trinity College Dublin and completed a graduate Leadership Program with the University of Limerick and the Office for Health Management.

Deirbhile Nic Craith is Director of Education & Research with the INTO and secretary to the INTO Education Committee. She also previously served as Equality Officer and as secretary to the INTO Equality Committee. Her remit includes education issues and policy, including curriculum and assessment, special education, social inclusion, early childhood education and Gaelige. She represents the INTO on many external education bodies including the Council of the NCCA, An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta & Gaelscolaíochta, and the Standing Committee of Heads of Education and Teacher Unions. In addition to her BEd, Deirbhile holds a Masters and PhD in education from University College Dublin.





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