

# ILSA Spring Quarterly E-zine

Irish Learning Support Association

Quarterly March 2017  
Volume 3, Issue 2

## Editorial



Welcome to the spring issue of ILSA quarterly E-zine.

It has been a busy 2016/2017 school year with many changes already introduced in the area of special and inclusive education. At post-primary level we had changes to the Disability Access Route to Education, DARE, application process and significant changes to the Reasonable Accommodations in Examinations process. Primary schools saw the introduction of the New Language Curriculum. Wellbeing and Mental Health programmes are about to be rolled out in all schools. But the greatest challenge facing learning support teachers and co-ordinators is in managing the new model for allocating resources for students with special educational needs.

These changes have informed our choice of seminars/workshops for our upcoming Spring Conference to be held in Carrick-on-Shannon on Friday March 24<sup>th</sup>. Twelve sessions will be offered by leading educationalists.

Terry Reynolds, DES, will speak on the New Model for allocating Resources for children with Special Educational Needs. Kieran Houlihan presents on Redefining the Disability Access Route to Education and we offer a choice of seminars on positive mental health and wellbeing at both primary and post-primary level.

Included in this issue are links to NEPS and SESS where you can access new and tried and tested resources. Also included is a link to UCC Disability Support Service containing information on using technology to facilitate inclusion of all students. Maire Ni Mhurchadha's article gives us an insight into the unique challenges experienced by students with SEN who are educated through the medium of Irish.

Thanks to all contributors to this issue, contributions from our members are welcome and can be sent to our website.

I extend an invitation to you all to join us in Carrick-on-Shannon and avail of the opportunity to network with other teachers and to catch up with what is new in the area of special education.

Looking forward to seeing you all on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March.

Breda Coady,

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### New Website live

[www.ilsa.ie](http://www.ilsa.ie)

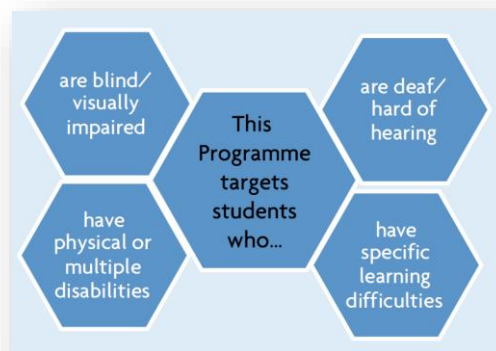
Applications forms for ILSA Spring Conference ready to download

Bush Hotel  
Carrick-on-Shannon  
Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017

## UCC's Disability Support Service



The diversity of students in the classroom is ever changing and if you have students who have learning difficulties/disabilities perhaps you would like to avail of some free training in assistive technology (AT). AT can help make school work and homework easier and more effective for these students when the traditional pen, paper and texts don't suit them. It can offer more choices for how they learn, level the playing field and make them more independent in their work.



UCC's Assistive Technology Outreach Programme offers training in AT to secondary school students in the UCC catchment area who have learning difficulties/disabilities and to their parents, teachers and SNAs. We can extend this offer of training to 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class students and their parents also as this can help with their transition to second level. Parents of younger learners are also welcome to attend to explore the technology that might suit their child's needs. Primary school teachers and SNAs are welcome to book and attend the free training for educators. Student and parent training sessions are run on Wednesday and Friday afternoons (2.30 to 4.30) to accommodate many schools' half days. Training is offered to teachers and SNAs on Friday mornings.

For those who cannot come to UCC to attend the hands-on training sessions we are running hour-long webinars to give an overview of the relevant technologies. You can engage with the webinars from your school or from home. We also have a video gallery on AT and related topics to support the needs of students and educators getting to grips with technology in education:

<http://www.ucc.ie/en/dss/callouts/resources/videos/>

Please visit our website to see the calendars of information evenings, training sessions and webinars: <http://www.ucc.ie/en/dss/atoutreach/>  
Please pass on this information to any other interested students, parents, teachers or SNAs.



**[National Educational Psychological Service. NEPS.](#)**

NEPS has developed A Good Practice Guide and accompanying Resource Pack on Effective Interventions for Struggling Readers. These resources bring together evidence from over four years of action research in NEPS, as well as an up-to-date review of international literature. The resources are full of ideas for teachers who support struggling readers and are available to download free from the education.ie website, follow the links to NEPS.

[www.education.ie](http://www.education.ie)

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NEPS:  
Special points of interest

- Evidence based
- Classroom tested
- Free downloads and links
- Video footage of interventions in action.



### SESS Role;

The SESS co-ordinates ,develops and delivers a range of professional development initiatives and support structures for school personnel working with students with special educational needs in mainstream primary and post-primary schools, special schools and special classes.

### SESS Support;

Apart from the on-line support available through the SESS website, [www.sess.ie](http://www.sess.ie), and through courses that appear on our homepage and events calendar, SESS aims to provide direct support to schools and individual teachers in as flexible a way as possible. Support can be accessed through our online application which includes further guidelines for applicants. To access school support please go to [sess.ie](http://sess.ie)

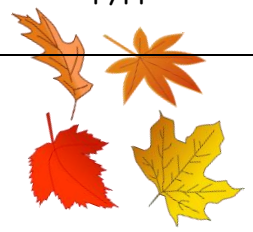
Schools who require advice/professional development relating to a specific special education issue may avail of telephone advice, a school visit from a member of the team or an in service course for the whole staff.

### Book Borrowing Online;

The SESS continues to develop its Book Borrowing Online facility for teachers in order to support continuing professional development in the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs. There is an annual fee of 30 euro per year for this service and a downloadable database of books is available. For further information and to register for book borrowing go to [www.sess.ie/sess-book-borrowing](http://www.sess.ie/sess-book-borrowing)

8.30am to 9am	Registration - Tea/Coffee on arrival			
9am to 10am	Room - <b>Orchard</b> Keynote address: <b>Senator Maura Hopkins</b>	Chairperson's welcome- <b>Michele Dunleavy</b>		
	Orchard 1	Orchard 2	Business Centre	McManus Room
10am to 11.15am	<b>Dr Máirín Wilson</b>  Maths In-Deed	<b>Kieran Houlihan</b>  Re-defining the Disability Access Route to Education, the rationale, the process and initial findings	<b>Dr Margaret Egan</b>  To Independence through Learning to Read: Assessment and Intervention in Language and Literacy	<b>Dr Pauline Cogan</b>  Working Memory
Chairperson	Breda Coady	Noel Fox	Laoise Ní Chuinn	Theresa Woods
Primary/Post-Primary	PP	PP	P	P/PP
11.15am to 11.45am	Tea/Coffee break			
11.45am to 1pm	<b>Angela Martin</b> <b>SESS</b> Assessment: Using screening results for analysis, tracking and planning for students with SEN	<b>Terry Reynolds</b> <b>DES</b> A new model for allocating special education teaching resources to schools	<b>Camilla Marks &amp; Marina Mulquenn</b> <b>(SESS)</b> Developing interventions to promote and support positive and inclusive playgrounds	<b>Fionuala Drudy</b> <b>PDST</b>  Overview of the Primary Language Curriculum
Chairperson	Catherine Flanagan	Noel Fox	Pauline Cogan	Michele Dunleavy
Primary/Post-Primary	PP	P & PP	P	P
1pm to 2.15pm	Lunch			
2.15 to 3.30	<b>Patsy McCaughey</b>  Developing an embedded and holistic approach to positive mental health in post-primary schools	<b>Miriam Colum &amp; Fiona Jennings</b>  Numeracy strategies for the primary school	<b>Dr David McKeon</b>  Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties in P and PP schools: Different systems, Different Understandings	<b>Leanne Traynor &amp; Suzanne Graham (PDST)</b>  Wellbeing & the role of the Professional Development Service for Teachers
Chairperson	Joe Flynn	Bernie Kemple	Theresa Woods	Jackie Whelan

Primary/Post-Primary	PP	P	P/PP	P/PP
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**Comhtháthú Riachtanais Oideachasúla Speisialta agus An Polasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta ag leibhéal na hIarbhunskoile**  
**Comhtháthú Riachtanais Oideachasúla Speisialta agus An Polasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta ag leibhéal na hIarbhunskoile**

*Máire Ní Mhurchadha, BOOG&R (GRETB)*

‘Tá an *Polasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta 2017-2022* ar an gcéad straitéis chuimsitheach don oideachas sa Ghaeltacht ó bunaíodh an Stát, a dúirt an Taoiseach, Enda Kenny, ag seoladh an Pholasaí ar an 28 Deireadh Fómhair 2016. Tugadh isteach an Polasaí i bhfianaise an taighde a léiríonn meath ollmhór ar an nGaeilge i measc na glúine óige agus chun dul i ngleic leis an easpa soláthar oideachais lán-Ghaeilge i gceantair Ghaeltachta.

Is í aidhm an Pholasaí ná a chinntiú go mbeidh fáil ag chuile dhuine óg atá ina c(h)ónaí i gceantair Ghaeltachta ar oideachas lán-Ghaeilge d’ard-chaighdeán agus, ar an dóigh sin, tacaíocht a thabhairt d’úsáid na Gaeilge mar phríomhtheanga phobal na Gaeltachta. Tabharfaidh an Roinn Oideachais cuireadh go luath do scoileanna aitheantas a bhaint amach mar *Scoil Ghaeltachta* agus beidh orthu ansin feidhmiú go hiomlán trí Ghaeilge (seachas i gcás múineadh an Bhéarla agus teangacha eile).

Cé gur fháiltigh pobal na Gaeltachta roimh an bPolasaí den chuid is mó de, tá inní léirithe go príobháideach maidir le hindéantacht an oideachais lán-Ghaeilge do **chuile** scoláire Gaeltachta. Cuirtear in iúl go minic nach ionann cás na nGaelscoileanna agus na nGaelcholáistí (áit a mbíonn a gcuid scoláirí go hiondúil toilteanach glacadh leis an dúshlán a bhaineann lena gcuid ábhar a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge) agus cás na scoláirí i scoileanna na Gaeltachta, áit nach mbíonn aon rogha ag scoláirí go hiondúil ach freastal ar a scoil áitiúil - cibé a gcúlra teangeolaíoch.

Bíonn níos mó inní arís ar mhúinteoirí faoi bhainistiú scoláirí na Gaeltachta a mbíonn riachtanais speisialta oideachais faoi leith acu agus ar féidir go mbíonn dúshlán faoi leith acu curaclam trí mheán na Gaeilge a láimhseáil: d’fhéadfadh sé, mar shampla, go mbeadh deacrachtaí faoi leith ag scoláirí le neamhord teanga agus nach í an Ghaeilge a dteanga dhúchais, le téarmeolaíocht na hEolaíochta nó na Tíreolaíochta; d’fhéadfadh freisin, go mbeadh deacrachtaí ag scoláirí le disléicse téacsleabhair scríofa i nGaeilge a léamh nuair atá tacaíocht foghlama faighte acu i litearthacht an Bhéarla seachas i litearthacht na Gaeilge. D’fhéadfadh scoláirí le droch-chuimhne fheidhmiúil dúshlán bhreise a bheith acu agus iad ag foghlaim téarmaí nua nach bhfuil atreisiú á dhéanamh orthu taobh amuigh den seomra ranga i gcomhthéacsanna nádúrtha amhail na meáin shóisialta, ailt i nuachtáin, físeáin agus fógraí. Is féidir le scoláirí le neamhord ginearálta foghlama an deacracht chéanna a bheith acu.

Cé go mbeidh a chuid dúshlán féin ag baint le gníomhú an Pholasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta, ba chóir go gcabhródh na hidirghabhálacha seo a leanas lena chur i bhfeidhm: úsáid modheolaíochta *Contanum Tacaíochta (NEPS)* a áiríonn riachtanais theanga na scoláirí; úsáid modheolaíochtaí *Foghlaim Chomhtháite Ábhar agus Teanga (FCÁT/CLIL)*; úsáid éifeachtach na comh-mhúinteoireachta agus forbairt – go háirithe i mbunskoileanna – na dé-litearthachta Gaeilge agus Béarla. Ina theannta sin, chun go n-éireoidh leis na hidirghabhálacha sin, beidh dáileadh breise acmhainní múinteoireachta de dhíth agus beidh ar scoileanna úsáid éifeachtach na n-acmhainní sin a chinntiú. Beidh gá freisin (thar aon ní eile, b’fheidir) le feasacht thuismitheoirí, mhúinteoirí agus scoláirí a ardú maidir le buntáistí an dá-theangachais agus an tumoideachais agus, ina leith sin, *ní neart go cur le chéile*.

## New Special Education Teaching Allocation Model

In January Minister Richard Bruton announced that a new model for allocating Special Education Teaching Resources to primary and post-primary schools will be introduced from September 2017.

The model provides for a single allocation for all special education teaching needs. New Special Educational Support Posts combine what were previously Learning Support and Resource Teaching posts. The additional resources being made available to support the introduction of this model will ensure that no school will lose special educational teaching resources while extra resources will be made available to schools where the profile indicates extra needs.

This new model will allocate teachers to schools on the basis of their profiled special educational need. The Department, in conjunction with the Education Research Centre and The National Council for Special Education, has developed profiles for all primary and post-primary schools for the 2017/2018 school year. These profiles are based on the following criteria:

- A. School educational profile component comprising elements of complex needs, standardised test scores, social context and gender; and
- B. Baseline component provided to every mainstream school to support inclusion, prevention of learning difficulties and early intervention.

The allocations which are being made for September 2017 will remain in place for a minimum of two years.

### **Date for your Diary.**

**ILSA Annual Conference..**

Arrangements for our **Annual Conference** are well underway. It will again be **held in Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow** on September 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

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**Web site address: [www.ilsa.ie](http://www.ilsa.ie)**