



# news

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APRIL '06



Opposition Parties Vow to Implement McIver Report

Task Force on Student Behaviour Report

Equality Conference • Youthreach

COVER PHOTO: CLOCKWISE, FROM TOP

DEPUTY FINIAN MC GRATH, INDEPENDENT  
 DEPUTY PAUL GOGARY, GREEN PARTY  
 DEPUTY OLWYN ENRIGHT, FINE GAEL  
 DEPUTY JAN O' SULLIVAN, LABOUR  
 DEPUTY SEAN CROWE, SINN FÉIN

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# A Word From The President

PADDY HEALY PRESIDENT



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### Buy Additional Pension Before Imminent Deadline!

The cost of purchase of notional service on an annual basis is to increase in the very near future. Those in a position to do so should purchase immediately.

### Receiving A Hearing

Half of Dáil time in the first week of March was spent discussing TUI issues. There was a three and a half hour debate focusing on the Mclver report courtesy of Tony Gregory TD and a private members motion on indiscipline put down by Olwyn Enright TD.

When the coverage we succeeded in getting on the TUI survey on Indiscipline and our Response to the Report of the Task Force is taken into account, it is clear that we have succeeded in making key TUI concerns a matter of public and political debate.

The task now is to convert this achievement into real improvements for our members and for the education system. Our Congress must take up this challenge.

### Disadvantage At Second Level

Anger is growing among teachers on hearing the misleading spin from the Minister on combating disadvantage as the unfair burdens placed on schools grow daily.

TUI has sought the support of ICTU in resisting the downgrading of support for the disadvantaged as a priority in the Budget. Accordingly, following detailed discussions, ICTU General Secretary David Begg accompanied me as President of TUI on visits to disadvantaged second level schools in Dublin where he spoke to TUI Representatives, principals and teachers generally.

Detailed discussions have also taken place with ICTU on the implementation of the Mclver Report and on Life long Learning objectives.

As part of our strategy of building alliances TUI hosted a meeting with CORI in the person of Fr. Sean Healy. It was agreed that any new partnership agreement should include clear “early deliverables” to combat disadvantage and above all enforceable and measurable commitments by government.

### Growing Inequality Of Opportunity

Within the context of universal access to primary and secondary education, inequality is now growing once again. This was the consensus reached at a recent seminar hosted by the Church of Ireland College of Education. Schools seeking to make special provision for the economically disadvantaged and for special needs students are becoming more *inclusive* while the second level system as a whole is becoming more *exclusive*. A two-tier system has developed. The Minister for Education has publicly taken some school authorities to task for refusing to shoulder the burden of disadvantage and disability. But words should be followed by remedial action.

The Department of Education is now freely admitting that upwards of 30% of children leaving disadvantaged primary schools have serious literacy problems and a greater proportion have numeracy problems. Almost all these children choose the local second level school designated as disadvantaged while a significant proportion of the more successful students are enticed to by-pass it by predatory competitors. The outcome is that disadvantaged second level schools have an intake of students, of whom at least 50% have serious problems. When a flawed and under funded disciplinary regime is taken into account, it is clear that the disadvantaged second level school is faced with overwhelming problems. Many of these schools are now faced with a new challenge. Numbers of students without English as a first language are growing daily while the Department maintains a cap of two on the number of additional teachers provided irrespective of the number of students.

Despite the best efforts of teachers, all students attending the disadvantaged second level school are being denied equality of opportunity.

The national partnership agreement, Sustaining Progress (2003), sets out the following objectives in relation to disadvantage:

- Halve the proportion of pupils with serious literacy difficulties by 2006;
- Reduce the proportion of adults aged 16-64 with restricted literacy levels to 10-20% by 2007; and
- Ensure that participation rates to completion of upper second level education or equivalent increases to 90% by 2006.

The Department of Education and all the social partners now agree that there has been very little progress towards meeting these targets in the past three years. The response of CORI, led by Fr Sean Healy, to the most recent education budget makes some important points.

“While the increased allocation for education in recent years is most welcome, we continue to be disappointed at the inadequate overall allocation for first and second level education. Equally disappointing was the failure to increase the allocation for special initiatives in adult education.”

The Budget provided an increase of approximately 9% in money terms for education as a whole. The inflation rate is about 3% and the growth in GNP in money terms in 2005 was over 10%.

While this means that extra resources are being provided, the increase is less than the growth rate which means that the



DAVID BEGGS

Government continues to give low priority to education. The exception to this generality is provision for Fourth Level which coincides with a pressing economic development goal.

Most importantly, the increase in provision for disadvantage was a mere 6% in money terms. This includes provision for the roll-out of the new Department of Education programme (DEIS) to combat disadvantage in the current year. This programme is totally inadequate to meet the burdens of disadvantaged schools.

The increase in provision for Youthreach, VTOS, Travelers Centres and Adult Education was a mere 3.8% in money terms. The National Adult Learning Council has not met for two years. This is indicative of government commitment in this area. Within the Education Budget, the Government has de-prioritised disadvantage.

This is a shameful decision on the 90th anniversary of the 1916 proclamation. Rather than cherishing all the children of the nation equally the disadvantaged are being burdened with further inequality in a competitive world.

*Paddy Healy*



# Report of Task Force on Student Disruption

by Paddy Healy, President, TUI

720 of the total of 750 second level schools, including 170 of the 200 schools designated as disadvantaged will receive no benefit from the Minister's commitments arising from the report in the foreseeable future.

Some 30 schools may benefit from a "pilot scheme" under which a learning support classroom will be provided. It is not at all clear what level of extra resources will be provided to staff the new unit and how quickly the actual unit will be provided.

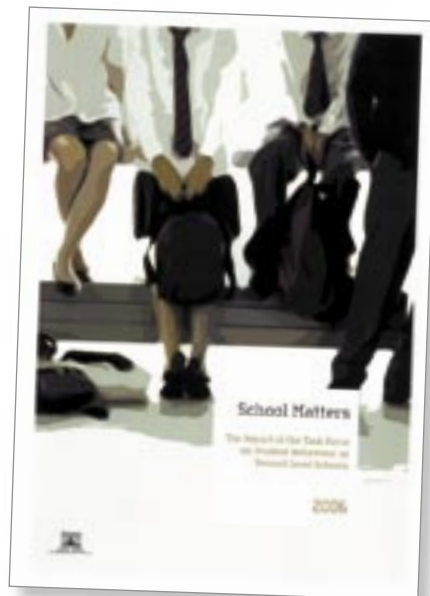
TUI welcomes the positive aspects of the Report, which are set out elsewhere in this edition. But judging by the Minister's response to the Report, there is a serious danger that it may not bring any significant relief to teachers and compliant students anytime soon. We are determined to ensure that this does not happen.

The preliminary findings of the TUI survey published recently show that the problem is far more widespread and severe than the

minister accepts. In a given week, 50% of teachers witnessed intimidation of students by other students. Such intimidation often involves bullying of compliant students not to engage with the teacher or not to hand up homework.

Students only go through second level education once in a lifetime. It is certain that the vast majority of students in the system will never benefit from this Report. Very many of them will continue to have their studies disrupted on a regular basis including at high pressure periods immediately before examinations.

The Minister's response to the Report is determined mainly by the decision of Government to allocate no more than



a paltry €2m to fund remedies for indiscipline in the December budget.

**The taskforce underestimates the extent of the problem and the urgency of providing remedial measures. The Minister displays even less urgency and reduces a key recommendation to a pilot scheme.**

**The taskforce recommends that learning support classrooms be provided to schools which meet objective criteria. It is the minister who has decided to confine the provision to 30 schools in a "pilot scheme".**

The suggestion that trials are necessary to test the effectiveness of the system is mere spin to conceal underfunding. Such provision has been discussed in Ireland for many years and has been "piloted" in many countries throughout the world. Indeed, there have been a number successful "pilots" within Ireland.

No one measure will provide a complete remedy for the problem of indiscipline. However the provision of a staffed facility to which a persistently disruptive student



TUI SECOND LEVEL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE 22/2/06

can be removed is self-evidently necessary in all schools **to allow the majority of students to learn**. There is a requirement for specialist staff to help and remediate the student in such a facility. The number of staff will clearly depend on the extent of the problem within the school. But there is no objective need for a pilot scheme.

TUI welcomes the commitment to amend existing legislation to enable the rights of the majority of students to be taken in to account in the course of appeals against expulsion. But even this is being long-fingered by the Minister. This matter had been under discussion long before the establishment of the taskforce and should be enacted before the summer recess. However the Minister's commitment to legislative change falls far short of TUI demands for legislation giving positive rights to the majority of students and to teachers.

Many of the recommendations of the task force are welcome if not new. It recommends the implementation of the five year old McGuinness Report. That Report recommended a major increase in resources including teacher numbers in second level schools and a targeting of resources to disadvantaged schools. It lies largely unimplemented on a shelf in the Department of Education. Yet the task force sets no target date for its implementation! It is difficult to believe that the necessity for target dates could have escaped the much experienced members of the taskforce.

**Predictably, the Minister flatly rejected the main recommendation of the McGuinness Report that 1200 additional teachers be allocated to schools. This confirms the lack of Government commitment to properly fund education. Ireland languishes at place 21 out of 26 in the education funding league for second level schools in OECD countries.**

While discipline problems occur in all schools, it is seriously compounded by disadvantage.



SEAMUS COAKLEY AND FERGAL MCCARTHY, TUI SECOND LEVEL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE 22/2/06

The McGuinness Report also recommends that teachers in disadvantaged schools be given reduced time-table to enable them to devote more time to preparation and out-of class interaction with students. This is particularly necessary to enable class-tutors to deal with problems arising from indiscipline. Yet the Report fails to recognise this need.

The recommendation that assistant principals be given time to deal with discipline problems is welcome. Even the minister does not claim that this needs "piloting".

Why then is its implementation to be delayed to the end of the year after next? This is a clear refusal to commit resources at a time when the exchequer is awash with funds.

However, where reduction of time table currently exists, this reduction is not taken into account by the Department in allocating teachers to the school. It is imperative that this practice be changed so that class sizes can be reduced to the advantage of students generally.

TUI will be continuing the campaign for urgent assistance to teachers and to schools. We will be holding discussion with representatives of parents and of students.

Our forthcoming Congress at Tralee will consider the matter. TUI has no intention of accepting laid-back long-fingering of assistance to compliant students, teachers and schools.

# Opposition Parties Commit to Mclver Report Implementation



L-R FINBAR GEANEY, JIM DORNEY, DON RYAN, ANNETTE DOLAN, JOHN BOWMAN

A very successful and well attended Questions and Answers session on the non-implementation of the Mclver Report, was held on the 7th March in Dublin.

**Mr John Bowman**, excelled as chairperson on the night, steering a very lively and interesting discussion.

All of the education spokespersons for the Opposition were in attendance, Ms Olwyn Enright, TD, Fine Gael, Ms Jan O' Sullivan, TD, Labour, Mr Finian Mc Grath, TD, on behalf of the Independent Group, Mr Sean Crowe, TD, Sinn Fein and Mr Paul Gogarty, TD, Green Party.

Mr Finbar Geaney, an education expert in the area of Further Education who worked as the Education Facilitator to the PLC Review was also a member of the panel. The Minister for Education and Science Ms Mary Hanafin and the Minister of State Ms Síle De Valera declined an invitation to attend.

**Finbar Geaney** outlined the background, methodology and key recommendations of the Mclver Report. He explained why PLCs cannot be “fitted into the traditional second level school sector.” He stated that “we have a job of work to do to convince people of the rationality of the FE sector.” He stated that “there is still very conservative thinking in this country about education. If we believe in life long education, it doesn't mean you finish your education at twenty two and then go out and get a job.”

Finbar in referring to the impact which FE colleges are having on second chance education stated “that there are more mature students in PLC colleges than in Universities or IOTs.” He stated that “in a Further Education College you can do a one year course, and later on in life you can go back and upskill by doing a certificate or diploma course.”

In responding to the question “why the recommendations in the Mclver Report should be implemented **Deputy Olwyn Enright, Fine Gael** stated that “this sector has grown without huge involvement from the Department of Education & Science. She added “I think it has developed as far as it can go without the Mclver Report being implemented.

The broad recommendations in terms of the staffing structures and technical support are two of the first things which need to be implemented.” She also stated that “PLC students should have access to resources and facilities such as crèches and library supports similar to their counterparts in third level.”

Deputy Enright stated that Further Education colleges are stuck because the sector “has not been put on a statutory basis as a sector in its own right.” She referred to the persuasive economic reasons for investing in





TUI MCIVER IMPLEMENTATION Q&amp;A, 7/3/06

this sector, particularly the adaptability of the sector. For instance she stated if Dell decided tomorrow morning they were going to set up in Tullamore, while we don't have any third level institute in Co. Offaly, "Moate is down the road and they would be able to put on the type of courses that would be required, by next September."

**Deputy Jan O'Sullivan, Labour** stated that from the perspective of "our economy and society a strong further education sector is required". She stated that "there is a need for more skilled people in our economy particularly in services, which is one of the fastest growing areas in terms of opportunities."

She stated that "the Mclver Report should be implemented as a matter of equality because PLC students are as entitled as any higher education student in an IOT or University to have proper standards of libraries, support staff, canteens, properly resourced classrooms, support teachers etc."

In relation to the perception of this sector, Deputy O'Sullivan stated that "there seems to be a media deficit. For instance

when the media report about who goes to college, Further Education Colleges are not mentioned, despite the fact that there are 30,000 students in this sector.

**Deputy Sean Crowe, Sinn Fein** stated that "the Mclver report is about the equality agenda." He stated that "the campaign to

implement the Mclver Report needs to be centred around equality, i.e. further education students should have access to the same facilities and resources as their fellow students in third level."

He stated that "the Mclver Report needs to be explained to the wider public as there is an intellectual snobbery out there regarding the PLC sector."

"At the moment there are no proper structures or support systems in PLC colleges," he stated, and such structures should be put in place." "Teachers in the PLC sector he stated "were therefore working against all the odds."

**Deputy Finian McGrath, Independent** stated that "while Minister Hanafin acknowledged the debate the magnificent contribution of teachers in PLC Colleges, in the Dáil on the 1st March 2006, the question is will she fund the implementation of the recommendations in the Mclver Report." "It's not a huge amount of money" he added, "when you look at the amount of money that is spent on third level education in this



DECLAN FLANAGAN (LONGFORD), ROSEMARY O CONNOR (WESTMEATH), PAT SHANKS (CO LOUTH BRANCH SEC) AT MCIVER Q&amp;A



TUI MCIVER IMPLEMENTATION Q&A, 7/3/06

country. We are talking about in the region of €50 million.” He stated that “if people want to have a debate about finances and spending tax payers money wisely they can think of the €52 million wasted on electronic voting, or the farm up in north Dublin which was bought for €30 million and valued at €4 million or the Dublin port tunnel which is €200 million over budget.”

In responding to a question about the campaign to implement the McIver Report Deputy McGrath stated that “it is hugely important to lobby TDs and Ministers on the issue. I think the way you get politicians to listen is to ensure that the people going on the delegations are registered voters in the TD’s or Minister’s constituency.”

**Deputy Paul Gogarty, Green Party** stated that “further education has grown organically thanks to the dedicated trojan work of all the staff and it deserves better. The €48 million required to implement the recommendations in the McIver Report is only a fraction of the cost of the M50 widening scheme,” he stated.



In referring to the TUI campaign to implement the McIver Report he suggested that “perhaps TUI might take on board some of the UK style campaigning tactics and send around some sort of a cuddly bear with Implement McIver, written on it everywhere Mary Hanafin goes to speak, because she is afraid to be tackled head on, on the issue, which is why she isn’t here.”

**Commitments**

Mr John Bowman asked “Can I take it that any incoming government of Fine Gael and Labour would implement this”. Both Olwyn Enright TD, and Jan O’ Sullivan T.D., responded “Yes” to this question.

Sean Crowe T.D., in responding to a question posed by Mr Bowman on the position of Sinn Fein responded: “Again, we would support the idea of full implementation of the report.

Finian Mc Grath, TD, in responding to a similar question on supporting the implementation of the McIver Report stated that he was mandated to represent the independent group of ten TDs and stated: “Yes, I can give a commitment on behalf of them that they will support it in any Programme for Government.

Paul Gogarty TD, responding to the Green Party’s position on the implementation of the McIver Report, stated that “at a recent National Council meeting of the Green Party they adopted a policy recommendation of full implementation.”

The full text of the recent extensive Dáil debate on the Further and Higher Education is available on the TUI website [www.tui.ie](http://www.tui.ie)



TUI MCIVER IMPLEMENTATION Q&A, 7/3/06



# Institute News



16 March 2006

Philip Marron  
College Section, Department of Education and Science,  
Marlborough St, Dublin 1

## Re: Apprenticeship Summer Courses

Dear Philip

I am writing in connection with the request by the Department of Education and Science to the Union to cooperate with the running of apprentice courses during the summer of this year.

The Executive Committee at a recent meeting considered this matter and a decision has been taken in this regard. In coming to the decision the Executive Committee has taken into consideration the persistent determination of the Department of Education and Science and of Institutes of Technology at the behest of the Department to employ lecturing staff in the trades' area on three-year contracts. The stated reason for such three-year contracts has been an inability to be sure as to the future numbers of apprentices. The introduction of such three-year contracts has been opposed by the Union on a number of occasions and this opposition has been advised both to your Department and to the Institutes. Nonetheless notwithstanding this opposition three year contracts continue. It is the view of the Executive that cooperation with the summer courses will have an effect such as to ensure the early termination of the contract of employment of the members of the Union who are employed on such three year contracts in that the summer courses will reduce the supply of apprentices which will in turn ensure that there is no employment for the members in question on such contracts. Accordingly because of the above situation the Executive Committee has decided that it will not on this occasion cooperate with the summer courses and will be instructing the Branches in all of the Institutes of Technology accordingly.

It is a matter of regret that this decision had to be taken but the responsibility for it must be seen to lie with the employer for persistently continuing to use a form of employment which has not been agreed with this Union.

Yours sincerely

---

Peter MacMenamin  
Deputy General Secretary

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## Arbitration Findings for Apprentice Teachers

The Union made a claim for the small number of teachers working in VECs teaching apprentices. These are teachers who in the view of the Union would be paid as lecturers if they were doing the same job in an Institute of Technology. The two VECs in question are Dun Laoghaire and Co Cork – where apprentices are taught in Davis College, Mallow.

The case was heard by the Teachers Arbitration Board on Monday 21st November and the finding was issued on the 6th December.

The Arbitration Board has awarded each of the teachers of apprentices in VECs an allowance which was set at €7,500 per annum with effect from the 10th December 2002. The Arbitration Board has also clarified that this allowance is subject to all of the normal increases which accrue to salary including Benchmarking increases. With movement of salaries since the 10th December 2002 this figure of €7,500 per annum has now increased to excess of €9,000 per annum.

## Apprentice Term

The Department of Education and Science has made a request to the TUI to consider adjusting the timing of apprentice blocks 2 and 3 in the academic calendar. At present block 2 commences on the first available day in January and depending on the fall of Easter, the Easter break is determined in accordance with this. There is a two week break for Easter and the apprentice block 3 concludes shortly before the 20th June. The difficulty as perceived by Fás and by the Department of Education and Science lies with the apprentice courses which have 11 week blocks, (there being less problem with the 10 week blocks). For these courses there is exactly the correct time for two 11 week blocks between the January start and the 20th June and for a two week break for Easter. However unless Easter falls precisely mid way between these

dates there is a dislocation for apprentices either at the end of block 2 or at the beginning of block 3. They have to take a break when the College is closed at Easter. The Department of Education and Science has advised the Union that this is proving very expensive and Fás has sought that the timing of the break be fixed and that a two week break be given at a fixed time between blocks 2 and 3.

This would entail lecturers moving their Easter holiday period to this time and having the Easter break at a time when it might not

suit their families, particularly if there are school going children. This would cause a further complication for those lecturers who are teaching on both apprentice courses and full time courses where they would have in effect no Easter break, having a partial break between the apprentice blocks and still requiring to take whole time courses and for the normal Easter having to take apprentice classes while the whole time courses have a break.

A meeting has taken place with the Department of Education and Science and

the Department has been advised of the Union difficulty in regard to these issues. As yet no proposal has been made by the Department of Education and Science to address this issue and in the event of any such proposal being made there will be the full consultation through the Executive Committee with all branches involved in the education of apprentices.

### **Apprentice Summer Courses**

The Department of Education and Science has approached the Union again with the view to seeking its cooperation with the introduction of summer courses. This matter has been considered by the Executive Committee and as a result the letter below has been sent to the Department of Education and Science which as can see indicates the opposition of the Executive Committee to the holding of the summer courses. The Executive Committee wishes to make it clear that the reason for the refusal to cooperate is the persistent use of the Department of Education and Science of three year contracts for members of this Union in a situation which is not agreed with the Union and it is the further view of the Executive that cooperating with summer courses will hasten the termination of the contracts of the persons in question.

Accordingly it is the decision of the Executive that all relevant members be advised of this decision and that they be instructed that it is not in accordance with Union policy to cooperate with apprenticeship summer terms for the duration of the year 2006.

In the event of this request being made to the Union on future occasions it will be considered by the Executive Committee at that time.

### **Rights Commissioner Finds for TUI in the case of Part Time Programme Specialist in Tipperary Institute**

A case involving eleven members of the Union in Tipperary Institute has been

successfully processed by the Union to the Rights Commissioner. The Rights Commissioner in a recent finding has indicated that it is his view that the appropriate meaning of the Act in the case of the members in question is that they would have a contract for the full duration of the year and that they would be paid on a pro rata basis over that period.

The Institute had argued that it had no work for the staff members in question over the summer time and had sought that they would be laid off for that period of time and be paid an hourly rate for actual work during the rest of the year. The Rights Commissioner has found that this was in breach of the Part Time legislation and has made a finding to the effect that the Institute should employ the members in question for the full duration of the year.

### **IR Forum Report**

A meeting of the Industrial Relations Forum took place on the 14th February 2006. The following claims have been lodged by the Union:

- That Industrial and other services (including second level teaching) be recognised for the purposes of Assistant Lecturer progression
- That a specified number of years lecturing experience would equate to a post graduate qualification for the purposes of the requirements for appointment to Senior Lecturer 1 teaching positions
- That each hour spent teaching on a masters course be recognised as being in excess of one hour for the purposes of all class contact agreements
- That service and job share count for pension purposes on the basis of payment of the relevant contribution
- That incremental credit be awarded on the anniversary of appointment and that the incremental date be the anniversary of the appointment

Each of the above claims were moved at the meeting and the Official side indicated that they will be responded to at the next meeting.

Other issues dealt with:

### **Pension Issues**

- A claim for the purchase of additional years up to ages either sixty or sixty five
- Claim for the recognition for pension purposes of days lost by TUI members during dispute action

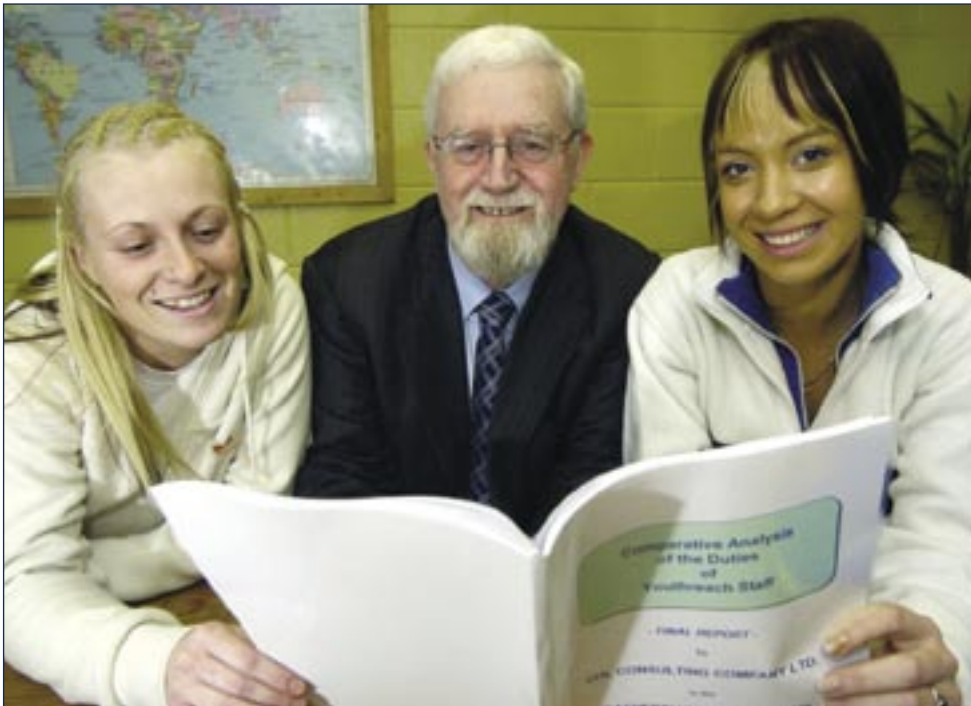
These claims have been also presented in respect of second level teachers at the teachers conciliation council and whatever agreement if any is reached will apply to all members of the Union.

A number of issues have been dealt with at a working party of the IR Forum. These are as follows:

- Claim for immediate progression for Lecturers on the Lecturer 1 scale to the Lecturer scale
- Credit based examination payments
- Additional Senior Lecturer 1 teaching positions
- Protocol under Sustaining Progress 24.5
- Review of selection procedures for all acting posts
- Substitution cover
- Review of the Grievance Procedure

One of the issues raised by the Union at the meeting on the 14th February was the infrequency of meetings. There has now been agreed a schedule of dates covering the remainder of the year and a standardisation of dates to make sure that the situation as occurred with a long gap between meetings does not occur again.

# Youthreach Report Launched



YOUTHREACH STUDENT LISA CHISHOLM, PRESIDENT OF THE TUI PADDY HEALY AND YOUTHREACH STUDENT LINDA JORDAN PICTURED AT THE LAUNCH OF A NATIONAL REPORT ON THE YOUTHREACH SECTOR IN BALLINCOLLIG, CORK.

## Youthreach Report Launched in Ballincollig, Co. Cork

The TUI commended the vital role carried out by the Youthreach programme in Ireland at the launch of the report on the sector conducted out by the CHL Consulting Company. A new report shows that 73% of participants in Youthreach programmes progress to the workforce or further education/training, a glowing endorsement of the sector's work. Speaking at the launch of the report, TUI President Paddy Healy said that in many respects, the Youthreach programme is more forward looking than the traditional mainstream options.

"It is important today to draw attention to one of the key findings of CHL report on the sector, specifically that it is inequitable and discriminatory that Youthreach Co-ordinators and Resource Persons are not paid as teachers, irrespective of their qualifications," he said.

Going forwards, we will be seeking that this unacceptable situation be rectified. These marginalised, disadvantaged students deserve the best teachers. However, the full-time staff in the centres who are qualified as teachers are unfortunately not being rewarded for

their efforts by the Department. They continue to be paid at a significantly lower rate than their mainstream comparators despite the fact that these centres are open for 226 days compared to the traditional mainstream school year of 167 days. We hear much today about league tables, points races and fees for participation in education. The public light rarely shines on those sections of our education system that serve those who were not compatible with the mainstream education sectors. We hear much from politicians about the challenge of tackling disadvantage, but successive Budgets question the sincerity of such utterances.

The Youthreach programme provides education to young people who typically suffer from economic and social disadvantage as well as educational disadvantage. All participants have left, dropped out or been excluded from mainstream schools and, almost without exception, they have become deeply alienated from schools and the formal education environment. Participants in the programmes therefore receive an education they would not receive elsewhere."

Ms Annette Dolan, Assistant General Secretary, TUI, speaking at the launch stated

that "The CHL Report sets out to determine whether or not the work in Youthreach is similar in nature and equal in value to the work being carried out in second level schools and Senior Traveller Education Centres. The Report finds that the work in Youthreach centres is indeed similar in nature and equal in value to these schools and centres. Youthreach co-ordinators and resources persons provide direct class contact with students in the same way as their counterparts in second level schools. Therefore the learning context is the same and the Report finds that the non teaching duties are also similar. The Report also found that almost all Youthreach Centres offer FETAC programmes and a significant proportion offer the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate Applied with a small number also offering the regular Leaving Certificate. In addition the Report highlights the fact that Youthreach is now achieving greater levels of success in terms of the progression of students to employment and further education and training than was the case 10 years ago."

"In conclusion, Youthreach programmes provide places to 2,900 young people on the margins of society who would otherwise be omitted from our education system. The programmes strictly adhere to the Department of Education's mission statement of providing a high-quality education which enables individuals to achieve their full potential and to participate fully as members of society. It is high time that they received the appropriate recognition." The final report by CHL Consultants on the Youthreach sector is available on the TUI website at [www.tui.ie](http://www.tui.ie)



LAUNCH OF CHL YOUTHREACH REPORT, BALLINCOLLIG, CORK, 9/2/06



# Show Racism The Red Card & Services Directive Demonstration



LAUNCH OF SHOW RACISM THE RED CARD CAMPAIGN, TOLKA PARK. L-R TUI PRESIDENT PADDY HEALY, FORMER IRISH INTERNATIONAL SOCCER PLAYERS CURTIS FLEMING AND NIALL QUINN, ASTI PRESIDENT SHEILA PARSONS, DUBLIN GAA STAR DESSIE FARRELL.



ETUC DEMONSTRATION AT THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, STRASBOURG ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, ATTENDED BY IRISH TRADE UNION DELEGATION INCLUDING TUI'S PADDY HEALY

# Discipline Task Force Analysis – A First View

The Final Report of the Task Force on Student Behaviour in Second Level Schools was launched on 14 March 2006.

A copy of the report will be sent to all second level branches presently. In the interim, the report may be downloaded through a link set up on our website: **www.tui.ie**

The report is wide-ranging and thorough. It sets student disruption in its wider, out-of-school context. In many ways, it affirms our members' excellent work in managing student disruption, often in trying

circumstances, and without adequate support for their tremendous work.

There is much to commend in the report, and we welcome very many of the reports 112 recommendations, the overwhelming majority of which are positive and sensible.

A great many of the specific ideas and suggestions we made in our written submissions and at the oral hearings with the Task Force have been accepted by the Task Force and are reflected in the report, as the following table indicates.



DECLAN GLYNN

TUI Proposals	Task Force Recommendations/Minister's Response
Support for Schools with policy/code of behaviour formulation and updating of DES Circular Letters	A circulars to be issued to schools which reflects the current legislative framework and makes clear the rights and responsibilities of all parties
Charter of rights and responsibilities	Charter to be drawn up by end of academic year 2006/07, to be included in school journals and handbooks
Specialised training for teachers and principals, including training in classroom based strategies and appropriate pedagogies	Pre-service teacher education programmes to be enhanced; Continuing Professional Development (CPD) including training in anger management, conflict resolution, restorative practices, etc, to become an integral part of the teaching profession under a new national framework for CPD
Appropriate and tailored curricula which take account of the diversity of students' needs	JCS programme to become more widely available; consideration to extension of programme in the form of a Senior Certificate School Programme; possible one year Senior Cycle programme with emphasis on pre-employment
More extensive use of "Circle of Friends"/"Buddy"/mentoring systems; activity based, "nurturing"/induction module for all first year pupils related to schools code of behaviour and in-school processes	Induction programme recommended for 2006/07
Establishment of Behaviour Education Support Team service and appointment of expert practitioners to assist schools	Behaviour Support Team service to be established for 2006/07 to assist 30-50 schools
Establishment of Learning Support Units in all schools	Behaviour Support Classrooms to be established in 30 schools
Targeted reduction in class sizes	Task Force recommended implementation of the McGuinness Report to promote more individualised teaching

TUI Proposals	Task Force Recommendations/Minister's Response
Resource handbook of “Best Practice” and Behaviour Management packages	Schools to produce a handbook for staff members on agreed practices and school policies; local education centres to compile accounts of effective practice; website link dedicated to examples of effective practice to be established and posted on the Scoilnet website; dissemination of good practice to be encouraged
Automatic follow-on from primary to post primary of supports for students	Students with special education needs to retain supports at second level comparable to those they received at primary
Application of principle of “prompt delivery” for the provision of special needs and other professional services for pupils; lag time between psychological assessment and allocation to be redressed	Current log jam that exists with accessing psychological assessments and clinical assessments to be resolved
Complement of educational psychologists to be augmented significantly; Service to assist schools in managing pupil behaviour	Additional personnel to be recruited to NEPS; NEPS to play a central role in helping schools develop coping strategies to combat the escalation of disruption; NEPS to assist with CPD and schools with behaviour support classrooms
Additional time for pastoral care and “follow-up” work by teachers and Class Tutors	Time targeted towards Year Heads and hours to be compensated for by the DES in school allocations
New legislation and rights-based legislation for teachers	Section 29 to be amended to stress the rights of the compliant majority to learn and protect the rights of the persistently disruption student to an education; less protracted time frame for the conduct of appeals; improving education provision for a student out- of-school pending an appeal
Alternative educational programmes for students not suited to return to main-stream school based on the Youthreach Programme	Youth Encounter Project model to be extended; extension of Youthreach programme to provide a Junior Youthreach; extension of Youthreach to accommodate referrals in the 16+ age group; review of other educational alternate provision
Development of specific parental involvement strategy in schools, with responsibility assigned to a particular staff member	Parent/school collaboration to be encouraged; Parents’ Rooms in schools suggested; parents to attend school meetings; importance of parents’ responsibility in supporting the school to be highlighted; parents to be involved in compilation, implementation and review of school policies, as appropriate
Pupils to be brought to the centre of decision-making processes on managing pupil behaviour, as appropriate, through Student Councils	Students to be involved in compilation, implementation and review of school policies, especially the Code of Behaviour
Establishment of baseline data on student behaviour through scientific large scale data gathering and analysis; time spent by teachers, in class and out of class ,in dealing with student misbehaviour to be an integral part of future research	Working group to be established to dray comprehensive survey instrument to yield information both of a quantitative and qualitative nature
Establishment of a national strategy on student behaviour and an implementation plan	Senior DES personnel to be nominated to oversee implementation of recommendations



There is much to commend in the report, and we have welcomed what is recommended. Unfortunately, there are some fairly significant lacunae or flaws in the report. One of the great flaws in the report is that it has shied away from considering substantive legislative change. Firstly, the Task Force seems to have been impressed, excessively, as we perceive it, by the view of the National Education Welfare Board that the appeals process (Section 29) against expulsion, suspension and refusal to enrol should not be changed. This is peculiar, as, taken against the submissions of the overwhelming majority of others, it represents a minority position. Secondly, although emergency legislation is being introduced at present in Britain to clarify the legal basis for teachers' authority, the Task Force did not deal at all with rights-based legislation for teachers and setting down in law parents' responsibilities, and students' responsibilities in their own learning. We also consider the section in the report dealing with parental responsibility anodyne and effete. The report has not examined at all the merit of home/school contracts for education appropriate and compulsory measures for parents who will not fulfil their responsibilities on a voluntary basis. It finds itself completely out of synch with the UK, where parenting contracts have been introduced on a widespread basis.

Teacher welfare found no voice in this report. This, too, is a most serious flaw. The application of Health and Safety legislation to schools, and effective strategies and to foster 'health-promoting' schools and alleviate teacher stress, were not given a look in. Clearly, we have more convincing to do on this matter: we will reprise our demands that school safety statements identify teacher stress as a workplace hazard and that safety statements contain strategies for dealing with stress at work. The failure to re-establish a welfare service for teachers must be put to right.

Minister Hanafin deserves great credit for her initiative in establishing the Task Force. She gave the Task Force broad-ranging terms of reference. The Task Force acknowledges, however, that it was influenced by the minister's press statement, issued at the time the establishment of Task Force was announced, in which she stated that she envisaged that the work of the Task

Force would "provide a solid foundation for developing policies and best practice in our schools in future". We stated from the very beginning of this process that the management of student behaviour is a much bigger issue that solid practice at school level: it is a resource-intense matter, a matter of supporting schools, both in new law and in funding interventions for all schools; there is no refuge from that simple truth.

Insofar as the report does not advocate significant structural and legislative reform, it falls short of the mark. Insofar as the Department of Education and Science chooses not to implement, or not to implement fully, the many good recommendations of the report, the department's response will fall short of the mark – again. Minister Hanafin has not yet indicated her disposition to very many of the worthwhile recommendations in the report but some of the early indications are not good.

The minister has already ruled out implementing the report's recommendation that additional teachers be provided for schools. She is reported as having indicated also that only procedural aspects of the appeals process will be changed. For us, the contrast in approach between Ireland and the United Kingdom (UK) is telling and stark. Between 2002 and 2006/07, £342 million has been devoted to the National Behaviour and Attendance Strategy in the UK. In Scotland, funding of over £11 million per annum over five years has been provided. It has allowed for reduction in class sizes across the board at P1 (first year) and in English and Mathematics at P2 (second year) in all schools, with more expected to follow, to cite only one of many positive outcomes. In Northern Ireland, £5 million per annum was made available to support the implementation of Promoting Positive Behaviour (2001), and almost all the key elements of the discipline strategy are now in place.

The establishment of on-site Behaviour Support Classrooms, and the extension of alternative educational placements through an expansion of Youthreach and the establishment of a Junior Youthreach, which we advocated, are good initiatives. Similarly, the establishment of a Behaviour Support Team Service is most welcome. However,

Support Classrooms are to be established in only one in every 25 schools (30 schools) and only 30 – 50 schools will be assisted by the Behaviour Support Service. We note with some envy that all schools in the UK have access to a Behaviour Education Support service. We must take it that these are only the first tentative steps of what we hope will be a successful longer-term process.

As the focus of the process has now shifted from the Task Force to the minister, we will seek to persuade the minister to implement the report's recommendations in toto. Knowing, as we do, that the minister appreciates that the management of student behaviour is a critical matter for schools and society, we remain confident that the department's modest and small-scale initial response is merely a first, tentative, baby step. We look forward to further consultation and negotiation of significantly grander change through direct discussions with the Department of Education and Science. The desire and enthusiasm of parents, students, managers and teachers for credible, effective, across-the-board strategies and preventative supports to assist families and schools to minimise disruption and enhance learning in school is quite manifest. The public consensus on the matter, which is quite evident, must be harnessed, lead, and driven forward purposefully. And it is the responsibility and privilege of the Minister for Education and Science and her department to do so. It is a matter of political will and government policy, a matter we will test in our further representations.

For our part we will reprise our representations with a view to bringing about real, on-the-ground improvement in our members' professional lives. We are greatly indebted to members, school representatives and Executive Committee members for assisting with our recent survey on student behaviour in 58 schools across the country. The preliminary findings of the survey, which has been a great success, are carried in this edition of TUI. The final report will be sent to all schools and branches. In the interim, we ask members and branches to consider the Task Force report in some detail and look forward to the added impetus to our campaign which the debate on this matter at Annual Congress 2006 will undoubtedly bring.

# Discipline Case Study – The Scottish Experience

Sandy Fowler of the Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) outlined the ongoing Scottish initiatives to tackle student disruption at TUI's recent second level consultative conference.

He affirmed that while disruption was always an issue, "schools [now] reflect societal change and many of the children we teach have increasingly complex lives in which they often communicate their personal difficulties through challenging behaviour."

As part of the creation of the Scottish Parliament and Executive in 1999, an agreement titled *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* was reached with the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers. On foot of this, 3,000 additional support staff were added to remove certain administrative duties from teachers but also with a part to play in supporting better behaviour, such as clerical, classroom assistants SENs etc.

The Scottish Executive established the Discipline Task Force in 2001, which produced the report *Better Behaviour-Better Learning*, which made 36 recommendations aimed at improving discipline in schools. "The Executive provided at that point an additional £10m a year for the *Better Behaviour-Better Learning* implementation and £11m for alternatives to exclusion. Most secondary schools used that money to establish staff 'behaviour' bases within schools – some larger primaries also established bases but in primary it was largely invested in support staff – additional classroom assistants and home-link workers."

However, disruption problems continued and the union side identified the priorities of teachers as being smaller class sizes and the establishment of more off-site units. There was also strong support for more classroom assistants and for improved in-service training on behaviour management.

Following the publication of that report the Minister announced that he would institute regular major surveys on teachers'



L-R DECLAN GLYNN, (ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY, TUI) MR SANDY FOWLER (EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCOTLAND), MS BERNIE RUANE (EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER, TUI). PICTURED AT TUI CONFERENCE ON SCHOOL DISCIPLINE, BURLINGTON HOTEL, DUBLIN, 22/2/06

and pupils' experiences and perceptions on behaviour and discipline in schools on a 3 yearly basis, starting in 2005 – the stakeholders to be actively involved in the design and conduct of the survey. Furthermore the Minister undertook to continue to research 'what works' in promoting good behaviour and to improve communication with teachers on current initiatives.

He also announced an additional £34.9 million over 3 years for BBBL, again with the emphasis on additional support staff."

Teachers in Scotland remain frustrated by the reluctance of many schools to use the ultimate sanction of exclusion which many regard as essential to not only give respite to the teacher, but also to the willing learners.

In essence, the approach starts from the premise that there can be a way back from serious behavioural problems towards more positive behaviour. It seeks to persuade youngsters that they are all part of the school community where respect is

fundamental and that they must face up to the consequences of their actions. It looks at ways of bringing people together to discuss what has happened, why it has happened, and how things can be put right. It allows the views of all those affected to be heard and the youngster to understand the impact their behaviour has had on other people.

Of course, it is easy to be cynical about this and other approaches and suggest, as many teachers do, that this is mere window-dressing designed to camouflage the real problem i.e. inclusion is not working and if it ever is to work then it requires even greater resources in the form of additional teaching staff, additional support staff and just as importantly time. Increased resources are necessary and the EIS will continue to campaign for additional funding.

# Preliminary Findings of TUI Survey on Student Disruption

## One in five teachers faced intimidation, survey shows

SEÁN FLYNN,  
EDUCATION EDITOR

pleted by the Teachers Union of Ire-  
land among 1,100 teachers and 58  
schools

Minister for Education Mary  
Hanafin will launch the report of a  
survey on student

*(What follows is an abridged version of the preliminary findings. A full report on the preliminary findings is on the TUI website).*

Owing to the paucity of authoritative and reliable data on student behaviour in Irish post-primary schools, a primary research process was initiated by TUI to capture the state of student behaviour as experienced by teachers in 2006. The survey should be a valuable input to policy formulation and implementation in vocational, community and comprehensive schools and colleges in Ireland. The survey instrument was devised and overseen by **Declan Glynn, Assistant General Secretary and Tom Fennell, Dublin Colleges Branch, TUI.**

The context of the research was clarified as being concerned with student behaviour that is unacceptable and/or is in breach of explicit school or class rules or regulations. It was not concerned with the normal acceptable and welcome exuberance of youth and was not concerned with student behaviour that is part and parcel of their welcome right to express themselves in a free and robust manner in learning and social exchanges with their teachers.

It was also stressed, in line with accepted best standards, that respondents should focus on what happened in the immediate past (one teaching week, ending on 10 February 2006) so that memories were accurate.

The selected indicative behaviours are as follows:

- Lateness or absenteeism by students
- Disregard by students of the requirement to bring books/materials to class
- Disruption by students talking/shouting out of turn in class
- Damage caused by students to the property of other students or teachers or school property
- Calculated idleness or work avoidance by students
- Verbal abuse directed at teacher by students
- Low attention/participation levels by students in class
- Threatening/intimidating behaviour directed at teacher by students
- Sexual innuendo/harassment directed at teacher by student
- Disrespect and bullying/cruelty to students by other students
- Verbal abuse directed at teacher by parents of students
- Physical violence to students by other students
- Impertinence/defiance of teacher by students

The survey sample was designed to proportionately represent TUI membership by school type, school size, geographic location, and whether designated as disadvantaged or not, using the Department of Education and Science database of post-primary schools, 2004. Fifty-eight schools were sampled in all regions of the country,

in the week ending 10 February 2006. The size and structure of the sample allows for accurate inferences from the sample to the population sampled (such a sample in a survey of the population at large would allow for inferences accurate to plus or minus 3%).

Survey respondents were asked to record whether each of the behaviours had occurred in the previous week. If the behaviour had occurred, they were asked to assess its impact and prevalence. Four-point semantic differential scales were used and their positive and negative polarities were interchanged to eliminate patterned answering. Completed questionnaires were returned to the TUI representative nominated to administer the survey. Questionnaires were sent back, unopened, to TUI headquarters. Once returns were checked, data entry was sub-contracted to an outside agency.

Eleven different scaled items were designed to assess the teacher's perception of the impacts of each behaviour that they had experienced in the past teaching week. The impacts assessed were:

- Effect of the behaviour on the learning of the students involved, the learning of other students, and the effect on teaching
- Time taken during class and outside class in dealing with the behaviour
- Difficulty of dealing with the behaviour
- Frequency of the behaviour and its prevalence among the students
- Effect on health and safety of the students involved, the health and safety of other students, and the health and safety of teachers

Once they had assessed the impacts of each behaviour they had experienced in the immediate past teaching week, respondents were asked to consider all the selected indicative behaviours and to then rank the five 'worst' in order of their disruptive impact on both learning and teaching.



Respondents were then asked to record their overall view on discipline, keeping in mind their experience in the previous week. Again, four-point semantic differential scales were used. Teachers' overall view of student discipline was assessed in terms of:

- The extent to which discipline is a problem
- The effect of student discipline on the teacher on a professional level, on a personal level and on the teacher's health
- The effect of student discipline on the morale of students, on the morale of the respondent teacher and on the morale of teachers generally

Each element of the teachers' perceptions of student behaviour was analysed separately using frequency distributions to establish the proportion of the sample that exhibits

each response. Each element will also be cross-tabulated with the respondent categories to establish whether differences in response propensities are associated with any of these categories.

### Preliminary Findings

97% of teachers reported experiencing some form of student misbehaviour or disruption in the classroom or in the school during the immediate preceding week, the 21st week of the school year. Five of the thirteen forms of student disruption that were mentioned in the questionnaire were reported as occurring in that week by more than 70% of respondents and no form of student indiscipline was reported as occurring by less than 8% (slightly less than 7% reported verbal abuse from parents). The unacceptable behaviours reported as occurring in the preceding week are shown below along with

the proportion of respondents who reported experiencing them (**see chart below**).

### Impact Of Selected Behaviours

To take *one* of the indicative behaviours, 67% of those who reported experiencing talking/shouting out of turn in class, were of the view that this particular behaviour either disrupted the learning of students in question "to a major extent" or "completely. 70% said it disrupted the learning of other students to the same extent, and 39% said it took more than 10 minutes of class time to deal with it. Albeit that it is exhibited by a "minority of" or "very few" students, 63% of teachers who report it, state that talking/shouting out of turn occurs daily or even every class (11%). The final report will contain an analysis of the impact of each behaviour.

### Overall Views

Moving on to the views that teachers developed about discipline, but keeping in mind their experience during the survey week, respondents reported as follows:

- 50% said that overall, discipline among students is either a "serious" or "very serious" problem
- 51% said that overall, on a professional level, discipline among students leaves them either "quite frustrated" or "very frustrated"
- 51% also said that, on a personal level, discipline among students leaves them either "quite drained" or "completely drained"
- 44% said that overall, as regards their health, discipline among students leaves them either "quite stressed" or "completely stressed" (14% rated themselves as "unaffected")
- 56% said that discipline among students affects morale among students in a "major way" or "very seriously"
- 73% said that discipline among students affects the morale of teachers generally in a "major way" or "very seriously"

A full report on the data is being written at present. The final report will be sent to all schools as soon as possible. TUI is extremely grateful to our members for their collaboration with this important research. We are indebted also to the teachers who participated in the focus group, to Mr. Tom Fennell and to our TUI representatives and Executive Committee members for their assistance with the survey.

Behaviour	% Respondents
I encountered unacceptable lateness or absenteeism by my students during the last week	77%
I encountered unacceptable disregard by students of the requirement to bring books/materials to my classes) during the last week	81%
I encountered unacceptable disruption by students talking/shouting out of turn in my class(es) during the last week	77%
I encountered unacceptable damage caused to the property of other students or teachers or school property by students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	30%
I encountered unacceptable and calculated idleness or work avoidance by students in my class(es) during last week	83%
I encountered unacceptable verbal abuse directed at me by students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	36%
I encountered unacceptably low attention/participation levels by students in my class(es) during the last week	77%
I encountered unacceptable threatening/intimidating behaviour directed at me by students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	21%
I encountered unacceptable sexual innuendo/harassment directed at me by students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	8%
I encountered unacceptable disrespect and bullying/cruelty to students by other students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	50%
I encountered unacceptable verbal abuse directed at me by parents of students during the last week	7%
I encountered unacceptable physical violence to students by other students in my class(es) or in the school during the last week	21%
I encountered unacceptable impertinence/defiance by students in my class(es) or in the School during the last week	63%

# Notices

## TUI's Annual Congress (Tralee, April 18th-20th)

Congress Activities Available  
on Wednesday 19th April 2006.

These activities will be scheduled from  
2.00pm to 6.00pm.

1. [Tour to Muckross House and Gardens](#)
2. [Tour to Dingle](#)
3. [Tour to Sliabh Luachra](#)
4. [Walking Tour of portion of the Dingle way](#)  
The following are recommended for this walk: walking boots, jacket, hat (warm), knapsack (small), water, snack, camera.

5. [Golf in Ballybunion](#)  
Please note that the Golf Competition will be held in Ballybunion old course – one of the top ten in the world!

Tee times are from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m.  
Booking forms will be available from the Information Desk at Congress.



DECLAN GLYNN (TUI), CONOR LENIHAN TD, MOIRA LEYDON (ASTI) AT LAUNCH OF EDUCATION FOR ALL CAMPAIGN, ST AIDAN'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL, TALLAGHT

### 'Creating Opportunities To Excel For People With A Learning Disability'

Introduction and Legacy of the World Games  
In 2003, the Special Olympics World Summer Games made a real difference to the lives and attitudes of Irish people.

Currently, just over 10,500 people with a learning disability accommodated in 384 affiliated groups are registered participants in Special Olympics Ireland programmes.

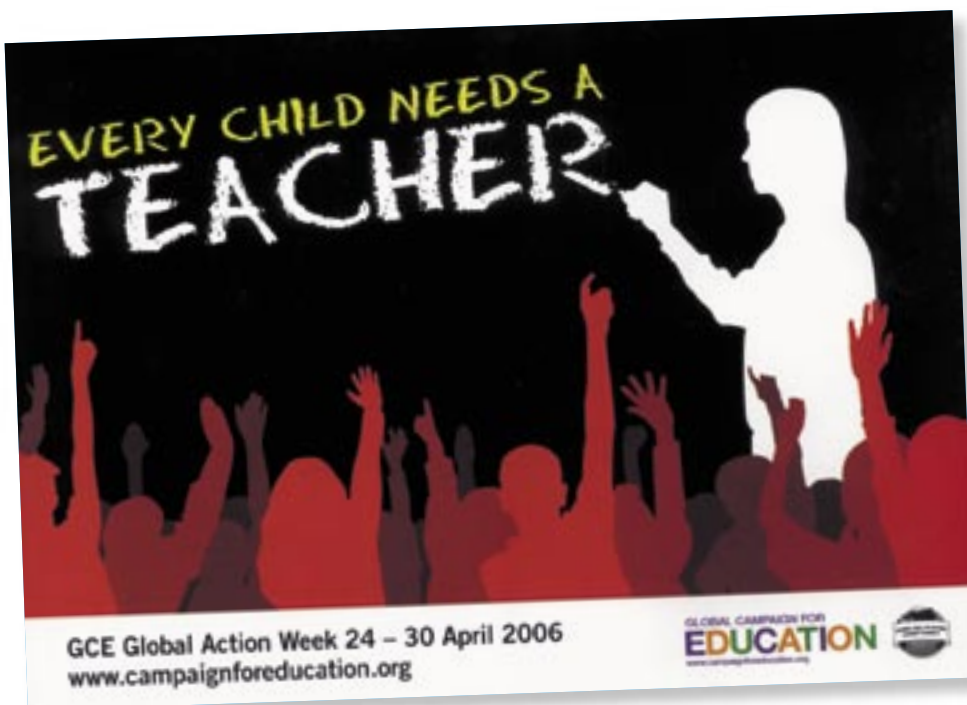
Special Olympics Ireland's main aim is to double the number of participating athletes from 8,000 athletes in 2004 to 16,000 in 2007.

### How does a person with a learning disability get involved in Special Olympics?

If you know a person with a learning disability who may be interested in a chance to excel in a Special Olympics club please encourage them or their family to contact us.

Special Olympics Ireland  
4th Floor, Park House,  
North Circular Road,  
Dublin 7

Telephone: 01 8823972  
E-mail: [info@specialolympics.ie](mailto:info@specialolympics.ie)  
[www.specialolympics.ie](http://www.specialolympics.ie)



**Bodywhys CD-ROM**

Bodywhys is the national voluntary agency providing support and information to people affected by eating disorders. We get over 100 requests a year to deliver workshops in secondary schools. As a result we have launched a new CD ROM resource to be used in schools. It has been presented to SPHE teachers around the country but there was a suggestion that we should let all teachers know about it.

There is a full press release on the resource at [www.bodywhys.ie](http://www.bodywhys.ie)

We would be grateful for any help you might give us in promoting this free resource to teachers. They can order a free copy by contacting Sinead Hardiman on 01-2834963.

**The True Physics Roadshow**

The roadshow is a hassle-free, self-contained, learning experience. We de-mystify basic physics principles, while promoting the study of physics. The use of everyday objects makes the show a meaningful experience for students. The True Physics Roadshow is designed to appeal to the junior cycle and transition year students. We want to build on and support the introduction of the new Science Curriculum at second level.

**The Physics Show**

This show is designed to inspire junior cycle and transition year students to take physics in the senior certificate and third-level. We use safe household items to demonstrate various physics principles found within the current junior and senior curriculum. We cover areas such as pressure, flight, density, waves, sound, light and magnetism. This show is a mixture of multimedia presentations, experimental demonstrations and group participation. The Physics Show lasts one hour and is setup for a maximum of 60 students.

**The Rocket Workshop**

This workshop aims to raise the interest of junior cycle and transition year students in physics by demonstrating the advantages of working as a team on physics activities, designing a rocket to achieve maximum height and to carry out a controlled rocket launch. Students will be taken through a presentation on the history of the earliest rocket designs to today's advanced rockets. Dedicated mission-control teams are set-up to simulate a realistic rocket launch experience. The Rocket Workshop lasts 90 minutes and is setup for a maximum of 30 students.

If you wish to contact us, please ring Declan Holmes at 098 41007 or 087 917629 or email at [declan@physics.ie](mailto:declan@physics.ie) For more information, please visit our websites [www.truephysics.com](http://www.truephysics.com) or [www.physics.ie](http://www.physics.ie)



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# Embedding Equality in Education – TUI and Equality Authority Joint Conference

The TUI and the Equality Authority held a very successful Joint Conference on the Theme of Embedding Equality in Education on the 25th February 2006.

In opening the conference, Mr Jim Dorney General Secretary of TUI outlined that the key objective of the Conference was that “all schools and colleges should become inclusive educational institutions. An inclusive educational institution” he stated “is one that prevents and combats discrimination, values and accommodates diversity; seeks positive experiences, a sense of belonging and positive outcomes for all students and staff.”

Ms Annette Dolan, Assistant General Secretary, TUI, outlined that the union together with teachers and lecturers has an important leadership role to play in combating all forms of discrimination in the learning environment.

As a teacher union, with approximately 50% men and 50% women in membership, the organisation’s structures, practices and procedures need to be examined, to ascertain what we, as an organisation need to do to embed equality, she stated. For example “in TUI how can more women be



ANNETTE DOLAN, TUI, CATHAL KELLY, EQUALITY AUTHORITY, JIM DORNEY, TUI 25/2/06

encouraged to go forward for officerships of TUI branches and positions on the Executive Committee? Do branches try to ensure that there is gender balance in delegations to conferences. For instance 66% of the delegates to last year’s annual congress were men and 34% were women.” She asked “how could more women be encouraged to speak at this year’s annual conference in light of the fact that 80% of those that spoke at Congress last year were male and 20% were female.”

In referring to the issue of race Ms Dolan stated “that the government and the Department of Education and Science have paid a great deal of lip service to accommodating diversity in our schools but that they are simply not providing resources to the schools most in need and are failing dismally in their obligations to these schools.” She stated that, “if a school has 28 students for whom English is not their mother tongue, who require language assistance the school will get two additional resource teachers. However if they have 100 minority ethnic students, as do many of our vocational schools, the level of resource teachers will not increase above those two teachers.”

She went on to add that “the situation is even worse in PLC schools where no matter how many non English speaking students there are they receive no additional support.”

Mr Niall Crowley CEO, of the Equality Authority, stated that “Embedding Equality in Education is valuable for students, for teachers and for educational establishments. It is also valuable for the wider Irish society.”

He stated that “educational establishments have emerged as the second highest area in their case files under the Equal Status Acts. This suggests that non discrimination and compliance with equality legislation must be an immediate priority in any pursuit of the objective to embed equality in education.” The equality legislation Mr Crowley stated “establishes the need for a broad focus on equality that encompasses all nine grounds. This suggests the need for integrated approaches to equality.”

Mr Crowley stated that “an inclusive educational institution is characterised by a culture which emerges from systems, structures and practices.” He stated that “there are three key indicators for such culture:



DR. ANNE LODGE, NUI MAYNOOTH

1. The presence in the educational establishment of students and staff from across the nine grounds. This focuses attention on student access and ensuring that the diversity within the target population is reflected in student intake. It focuses attention on recruitment strategies and promotion strategies and the capacity of these to attract and secure the contribution of a diversity of staff at all levels.

2. The participation by a diversity of students in all areas of activity within the institution. These areas of activity cover the full range of learning experiences, the various sets of relationships that make up and drive the institution, decision making and cultural initiatives that shape and define the ethos, norms and values of the institution. This focuses attention on the capacity of the institution to accommodate and take account of the practical implications of diversity among students and staff.

3. The educational outcomes achieved by a diversity of students. These outcomes include both educational credentials and personal development. This is the key indicator of success. Presence is mobilised through participation. However participation is only effective where observable results are achieved.”

Mr Eilis Barry legal advisor to the Equality Authority provided clear and comprehensive material for the informative session on the Equality Legislation and Educational Institutions.

Dr. Anne Lodge, a lecturer in the Education Department at NUI Maynooth gave an inspirational key note presentation. She defined equality in terms of redistribution, recognition, representation and relationships. She then presented two case studies, one on the disability ground and one on the sexual orientation ground.

In relation to the disability ground she stated that the key equality concerns for learners or parents of young learners were access, participation and exclusion. She highlighted some evidence of harassment on grounds of disability. She also outlined the difficulties in accessing system supports and invoking rights on this equality ground.

With reference to teachers she stated that their key concerns are firstly the fear of difference. She stated that teachers were also concerned about their own skill and were aware of their knowledge deficits when dealing with the issue of disability. She added that there is a real problem for teachers in accessing system supports for themselves or their students.

In the context of disability Ms Lodge stated that embedding equality means recognising and valuing difference, esteeming different voices, sharing power, and allocating resources. She stated that it was important that there be wide ranging listening and consultation as part of development and review of policies and practices on the issue of disability.

However teachers needed to be supported to recognise and address their fears in relation to dealing with the issue of disability. They also need to be assisted to develop skills to deal with this issue. Ms Lodge highlighted the important role that institutions and unions have to play in the area of disability. She also stated that there is a requirement to have coherent policies and practices between government departments.

There followed a series of workshops which produced lively discussion and debate on a wide range of issues. A comprehensive report on these workshops will be made available after Easter.



ANNETTE DOLAN, ASSISTANT GEN SEC TUI SPEAKS AT EQUALITY CONFERENCE 25/2/06

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# Stop Press

## Re: New Performance Management/Probation Procedures for Newly Appointed Teachers

It was agreed by all parties to the Teachers' Conciliation Council that a proposed new probation process for newly appointed teachers introduced recently by VECs should not be invoked or implemented pending the outcome of discussions on this matter amongst the parties involved including the DES, IVEA and teacher unions. The IVEA has informed VECs in writing of the council's agreement on this matter.

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EQUALITY CONFERENCE, BURLINGTON HOTEL, 25/2/06



DELEGATES AT TUI/EQUALITY AUTHORITY JOINT CONFERENCE, 25/2/06



# RMA News



While the TUI is celebrating their 50th year as a Union, we in the RMA are celebrating our 25th year. We hope to do this in style in Killarney at our AGM and Conference in the Great Southern Hotel in May.



We have just started the celebrations with a three-day break in Carlingford, Co Louth. Forty members of the RMA gathered in the Four Seasons Hotel in Carlingford last Monday for the start of our spring break, the location on the shores of Carlingford Lough, is beautiful. Next day off to the Folk Park and Transport Museum in Belfast.



There was so much interest for everyone that we could have spent two days there. Back to Carlingford for dinner and entertainment supplied by George with accordion. Day three off to Downpatrick and Armagh, in Downpatrick we were fortunate to be guided by Dr Jim Campbell, Director of St Patrick Centre, this was a most fascinating tour and all agreed that a return was required. In Armagh we toured the city and both cathedrals, for this we were accompanied by a city guide. Home again for dinner and a table quiz organised by Michael.

I need to remind you of the importance of booking now for our Killarney Break, this is taking place in the Great Southern Hotel which was restored to its former glory for its hundred and fiftieth anniversary in 2004.

On the pensions front a constant vigil must be kept at all times. This is the responsibility of the Union but with our specific interest in

TUI PRE RETIREMENT SEMINAR, ABBEY COURT HOTEL, NENAGH, MARCH 2ND/3RD 2006-03-22

this matter we have a large role to play. As Paddy Healy, (TUI President) said recently we are fortunate in that our pension is related to teachers' salaries and not to the rate of inflation, as is the case in many countries including Northern Ireland. For this to continue we must be alert at all times to developments in pay and conditions.

Two items, among many for individuals, which have dominated the scene this year, one is the late payment of pensions increases due since last June and December. Retired teachers previously employed by Co Kildare VEC have not yet received their increase due last June and many retired teachers previously employed by VECs have not yet received their increase due in December.

This matter has been taken up by the Union and we have made representations in regard

to it and continue to do so. The Pensions branch of the Department of Education and Science has informed us that the problem arises by the fact that monies paid is from the relevant local authority and not the VEC, but the VEC must inform the local authority first. We have also been informed that Post-Primary Administration Section is reviewing the current arrangements with a view to terminating the involvement of local authorities in the process as soon as possible (and thereby simplifying and expediting the process).

We have also been informed that in order to obtain interest arising from delay in paying increases the delay must be for a period of twelve months from the date due.

The other item is the Income Continuance Scheme. Teachers paying into this scheme

after the age of 59 years will not benefit from the scheme in respect of those years. Anyone who has made these payments are entitled to a refund of the contributions made for this period.

We have had a request for retired teachers in the Dublin area who would like to contribute to the good of society by giving their service to Citywise. Citywise is an education, not for profit organisation providing educational support to young people living in difficult communities. If you would like to help in the education of young school non-attendees then contact:

John Keogh, Citywise,  
Fortunestown Way, Dublin 24.  
Tel 01-4049736 or e-mail info@citywise.ie

Christy Conville,  
Secretary

## Do you want to get a Recognised Teaching Qualification?



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# Book Reviews

## **Dyslexia: An Irish Perspective**

**M. Ball, A. Hughes and W. McCormack**

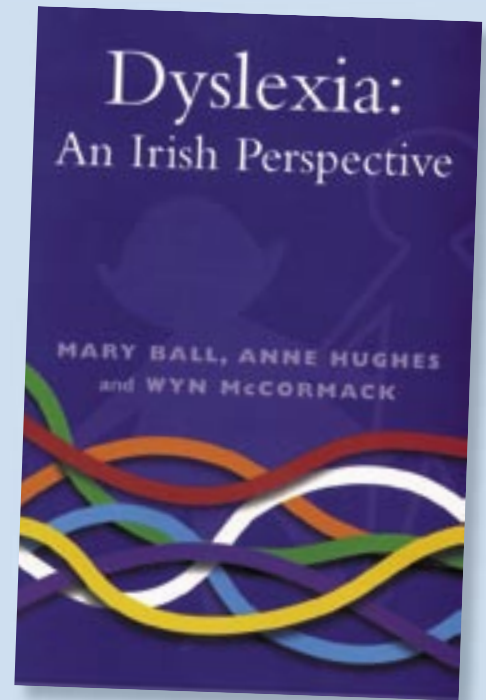
This book is written for parents and teachers and adults with dyslexia in an Irish setting. It aims to highlight the importance of recognising dyslexia and dealing with it. Dyslexia is a learning difficulty that may affect up to 10% of the population and is being increasingly recognized by the Department of Education and Science with initiatives such as the Task Force on Dyslexia which reported in 2001 and the publication in 2005 of the CD ROM Understanding Dyslexia.

The authors come from different disciplines and bring to the book their varied experience and training. Mary Ball is a psychologist working with the Dyslexia Association, Anne Hughes is the Director of the Association for many years and Wyn McCormack is a guidance counsellor and resource teacher at second level. The mix of practical knowledge, professional expertise and teaching experience will, it is hoped, offer information, understanding and advice about the services that are available and how dyslexia can be set in context.

Topics included in the book are:

- What is dyslexia?
- Understanding the assessment
- Legislation and other provision by the Department of Education and Science
- How parents can help the child
- Dyslexia at primary and second level
- Key educational choices for the student
- Dyslexia and Maths
- How computers can help the student
- Dyslexia in adulthood

The positive message to people with dyslexia, their families and teachers is that dyslexia is a hurdle that can be overcome with appropriate understanding and support. Acquiring information about dyslexia, putting it in perspective and taking control of the learning situation can turn a potentially damaging disability into a manageable difficulty. It is hoped that this book will, for some, be the first step on the road to that achievement.



**Paperback Price: €17.00**

## **Faith & the Nation**

**Kevin Williams**

**Paperback Price: €12.99**

Can Ireland's Christian tradition accommodate the demands of diversity? This question arises in many areas of contemporary life, and with particular urgency in education.

Faith and the Nation examines the role that the Irish state, through the educational system, has adopted and continues to adopt towards promoting religious identity. Written by a philosopher, Faith and the Nation offers an analysis of an aspect of contemporary Irish cultural history by drawing on diverse literary sources.

Dr. Kevin Williams works in Mater Dei Institute of Education, Dublin City University.

A former president of the Educational Studies Association of Ireland, he is author of several books and many articles in Irish and international journals. Distinguished commentators have already welcomed the publications of Faith and the Nation. Professor Colm Lennon, of the department of history at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, sees it as offering 'a close analysis of a significant element of Irish cultural history. As well as being learned and knowledgeable, the book is lively, engaging and balanced.'

For Louise Fuller, author of Irish Catholicism since 1950, 'Faith and the Nation provides a nuanced, searching and exciting exploration of Ireland's socio-cultural landscape. The book should be read by anyone interested in the history and politics of modern Ireland.

It will also be found invaluable by anyone involved in school management or in the teaching of religion'. Gerry Whyte, associate professor in the School of Law at Trinity College Dublin points out that the arguments made in Faith and the Nation are 'supported by close analysis of relevant historical and contemporary documents'.

John Walshe, Education Editor with the Irish Independent, said that Dr Williams makes the valid point that a Catholic education does not have a monopoly over civic and moral virtue and argues that it is misguided to suggest that Catholic schools alone have a concern for the welfare of others. In this country, he points out, the Vocational Education sector has "a long and distinguished record in the education of the poor".



# Appreciations

## Pádhraic Ó Conaire (1950 - 2005)

Tá trí bliana fichid ann ó sheas Pádhraic os comhair ranga don cheád uair i nGairmscoil Fheichín. San am ó shin i leith chaith Pádhraic go fial flaihtíúil leo siúd ar fad a casadh air - idir mhúinteoirí, scoláirí agus tuismitheoirí. Duine fíor-chumasach ab ea é agus cé gur le Gnó agus Mata a cáilíodh é, rinne sé Gaeilge, Béarla, Fraincís, Stair agus C.S.P.E. a theagasc nuair ba ghá.

Go deimhin, ní raibh sé i bhfad sa scoil gur tugadh árdú céime dó nuair a ceapadh ina leas-phríomhoide é i 1989 – ghlac sé agus chomhlíon sé a chuid dualgaisí go fonnmhar agus go díograiseach, go foirfe agus go críochniúil go dtí lá a bháis.

Bhí meas ag Pádhraic orainn ar fad agus bhí sé i gcónaí sásta am a chaitheamh linn idir óg agus aosta. Bhí sé dílis dúinn agus don scoil.

Ba é a bhíodh roimh na daltaí chuile mhaidin - ní den uaireadóir a bhí Pádhraic ceangailte ach díobh siúd a ndearna sé freastal orthu - ní go moch ar maidin amháin a d'fheictí é ach deireanach tráthnóna freisin, tar éis am dúnta, ba mhínic Pádhraic i mbun ranga.

Mar a deirim thug Pádhraic a chuid ama dúinn - sa saol seo 'sé ár gcuid ama an achmhainn is luachmhaire atá againn - tabharfar breithiúnas orainn ar an gcaoi a chaith muid ár gcuid ama. I gcás Phádhraic chaith sé an t-achar gearr a bhí aige mar fhíor-Chríostaí - ag cuidiú, ag treorú, ag tacú de shíor - ag tabhairt uaidh i gcónaí, gan iarraidh gan chúiteamh - smaoinimid air mar mhúinteoir den scoth - cara dílis - duine uasal. Maireann a athair, Piaras, agus a dheirfiúr Máire.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.



PÁDHRAIC Ó CONAIRE

## Jim Flanagan

The first anniversary of Jim Flanagan's death will occur in Holy Week. A year on he is still missed by his colleagues at St. Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare, where he taught Engineering and Metalwork for close on twenty years. He came to live and work in the Miltown Malbay area in 1968 and taught in Ennistymon and Miltown Malbay Vocational schools, eventually been assigned solely to Miltown.

He was instrumental in initiating a phase of cooperation between Spanish Point Secondary and Miltown Vocational schools in the late seventies and early eighties whereby students from the Vocational school took the academic Leaving Cert. subjects at Spanish Point while the practical subjects were taken at the Vocational.

After the Vocational closed he transferred to Spanish Point on secondment from the VEC where he remained for the rest of

his teaching career. Jim was a committed member of the TUI in a predominantly ASTI institution and this often led to interesting exchanges, particularly at times of crises.

A dedicated teacher who loved his subject he was adept at getting the best out of his students in project work and at the state exams. He instilled in them a love of the craft of metalwork, its intricacies and possibilities, and the necessity for close attention to detail.

The large attendance of pupils past and present at his funeral was indicative of the respect felt towards him personally and professionally. He was always direct and open in the classroom and his sense of humour lightened any sanction that might have to be applied.

Jim was a native of Tuam and trained in the Ringsend Technical Institute in the sixties. While in Dublin he was an enthusiastic

follower of the ballad scene when groups such as the Dubliners, Sweeney's Men and Emmet Spiceland, and venues like the Abbey Tavern, the Old Shieling and Slattery's, were staples of the Dublin Folk circuit. He was never at a loss for a song, and possessed a strong clear voice and large repertoire ideal for staff functions and social occasions.

He married Breda in the early seventies and was a devoted husband to her and father to Eamonn. Unfortunately their time together came to an end just a day after their 33rd wedding anniversary, in March 2005.

Jim Flanagan made an immense contribution to education in the schools in which he taught, and he is remembered with affection by those of us who were his colleagues and friends.