



Celebrating 10 *Years*
Ag Ceilúradh Deich mBliana

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS
2008-2018

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DEDICATION

This book seeks to document the initial 10 years of the Instructional Leadership Programme. We have tried to include as many of the rich experiences and personal journeys of the participants as we could. We hope there are no significant discrepancies or omissions.

We dedicate this book to the participants of the Programme.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book, tracing the journey of the Instructional Leadership Programme, would not have been possible without the work of Sharon Coffey, Member of the Instructional Leadership Steering Committee. As Chairperson of the committee, I am especially indebted to Sharon who gave endless hours of her time in gathering the data, as well as editing and formatting it.

Thank you also to Sarah Buckley, Siobh  in Grogan and Paula Fitzpatrick, also members of the National Steering Committee, who assisted Sharon.

Thanks, also, to all those who took time to write articles, sharing their expertise and experience as well as extending their good wishes for this publication. In addition I wish to take the opportunity to extend my appreciation to you for your ongoing support over the past ten years.

I hope, as a reader and a graduate of the Instructional Leadership Programme, the contents bring back many happy memories and inspire you to continue to develop as Instructional Leaders. As a non-Instructional Leadership Graduate, I hope it inspired you to join us on our journey to make our classrooms vibrant and happy places of learning for all.

JOAN RUSSELL

Chairperson
National Steering Committee
Instructional Leadership Programme



FOREWORD

JOAN RUSSELL

As I sit down to write this introduction I can hardly believe that we are celebrating our tenth year of the Instructional Leadership Programme. I remember vividly the day that I was introduced to Barrie and the ensuing animated discussions around the possibility of changing the classroom practice in all schools across the country or as Barrie puts it, 'changing a country'!

I have very happy memories of my years working with IL, as we fondly called the programme. I was Education Officer with Co. Cork VEC at the time of commencement and was so excited to be involved in an educational programme that would support teachers and affect change in classrooms, to the benefit of both teachers and students. I think it befitting at this stage to thank my CEO at that time, Mr Barry O'Brien, for the support and encouragement he gave me.

After the initial introductions and discussions with Barrie Bennett and Finn O'Murchu, Fionnula McGeever, then CEO of Tipperary South VEC and now CE of Tipperary ETB, Martin Phillips, Education Officer with Co. Wicklow VEC at that time, and myself met in the offices

of Co. Cork VEC to plan a series of workshops for schools in the VEC sector as a means of introducing the programme and inviting schools to participate. This plan took Barrie and myself on a tour of the country, starting in Adare, Co Limerick, before heading to Sligo, Cavan, Kildare and Laois, Barrie's first introduction to the Irish countryside and the 'laneways', as he called them, between the various towns. It was a very successful few days, we received tremendous support and the energy and enthusiasm was hugely motivating for us to forge ahead with developing plans to commence an Instructional Leadership Programme in Ireland. How we were going to do it was not even on the cards at this stage, all we knew is that we would do it.

So, the story began, we started with Cohort 1, and to be truthful, we were one page ahead of them as we drafted a programme. A programme that has since be refined and delivered to eleven other Cohorts. Chapter 5 of the book traces the developments of the programme over the past ten years. As I look back now I regret not having documented some of the developments and the experiences as we travelled the journey, rather than relying on our memory for much of the story.

The Instructional Leadership Programme has had a significant impact on my career. Obviously, it has enhanced my pedagogical practice and even though I am no longer practicing in the classroom, it has transformed my way of facilitating workshops and discussions. It has also opened up the wider world of education to me; I have the privilege of meeting teachers, school management and policy makers as I engage with the development and delivery of the programme.

Watching teachers engage with the programme and seeing them develop as confident, enthusiastic and engaging professionals, collaborating with each other, regardless of their school or sector, is a satisfying experience for those of us involved in the IL Programme. While, it is regretful that we don't have any formal research that describes to us the impact of the programme on the professional identity of teachers, anecdotal evidence suggests that the impact is phenomenal. Comments such as; *'I cant wait to get back to school to try out what I have learned'*, *'Why didn't we have the opportunity to do this programme years ago'*, *'I feel invigorated as a teacher'*, *'this is the best professional development programme that I have ever completed'*, *'IL has awakened the understanding of what it is to be a leader'*, *'my classroom is a very different place now, students sit in pods and actively engage in the lessons'*, *'I can't wait to share my learning with my colleagues'*, regularly heard as teachers engage with he programme.

Our evidence of the impact of the programme on schools comes from the various MLL Reports and Subject Inspection Reports, published by the Inspectorate of the Department of Education & Skills. Chapter 5 of the book highlights some of these comments and it is wonderful to see words such as 'collaboration', 'teacher confidence', 'innovative teaching strategies', and 'reflective practice', being aligned with the impact of the Instructional

Leadership Programme.

I remember a graphic we used at our first National Conference in 2012; it depicted the Instructional Leadership Programme as a central point and highlighted how it could support future Irish educational policy; Teacher Education, Teacher Induction, Curriculum Change, Professional Development and School Self-Evaluation. That was 6 years ago and now, in 2018, we are proud to believe that the Instructional Leadership Programme has supported teachers and school management across the country in the implementation of all of the more recent ‘big ticket’ policy changes; School Self-Evaluation, *Droichead* and Junior Cycle Reform.

The IL programme has contributed enormously in giving teachers and school management a language and a proficiency in pedagogical practice; skills that have assisted them to navigate their way through a period of demanding change and has resulted in a reform of school and classroom practice that supports Irish education policy.

Unique in that it focusses totally on pedagogy and effective change management, I believe that the concentrated attention of such has enormously contributed to the implementation of the changed curriculum at Junior Cycle and will further support the implementation of the impending curriculum change at Senior Cycle. Teachers who have engaged with the IL Programme are equipped with the pedagogical skills, as well as having the capacity to understand the science behind each of the skills, thus allowing for more reflective and creative lesson designs that facilitate student learning in a motivating, engaging and less intimidating manner. It is interesting to observe the number of our graduates that now work with the JCT, either in a full-time capacity of as an associate, and note it as being of mutual benefit, IL influencing the implementation of Junior Cycle Reform and the Junior Cycle Reform Team (JCT) influencing the implementation the skills, strategies and tactics associated with the IL Programme.

As a team, we were delighted to work with the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT), in communicating the message around the importance of being systematically and effectively inducted into the teaching profession and how *Droichead*, as a Teaching Council Policy, would facilitate that process. We were honoured to have Mr Tomás O’Ruairic presented an overview of the policy at one of our National Conferences, while two of the National Coordinators at that time, Mr Billy Redmond (post-primary) and Ms Mary Burke (primary) facilitated an engaging workshop with our delegates the following morning to develop an understanding of what it would look like in putting policy into practice at school level. Our work continued with the NIPT to influence the development of the support workshops and materials as part of the *Droichead Programme* and as time progressed we have been delighted to welcome some of the key NIPT personnel as members of the IL Cohorts.

In 2008 three primary school principals graduated from the programme. It was our first time ‘dipping our toes in the water’ in terms of working with the primary school sector. Our graduates, Seamus McGowan, Caroline Colleran and Rory Kinane. Since 2008, we have progressed significantly in terms of developing a partnership approach with primary schools. This progress was supported by Cork Education Centre, Donegal Education Centre, Carrick on Shannon Education Centre, Limerick Education Centre and Kilkenny Education Centre. It is with great vim and excitement that we have worked together to develop a professional programme for teachers at primary level. Utilising the expertise and experience of all parties in the partnership, we have developed a ‘pilot programme’ that will result in the training of a number of facilitators, specifically primary teachers, who will in turn deliver the programme as part of the suite of ‘Summer Courses’ offered to primary teachers, at *local Education Support Centres*, in July 2020.

The collaborative nature of the programme supports the professional growth of teachers and the learning experiences of their students. In support of the development of Cosán, the framework for teachers’ learning, we are delighted to be in a position to work with the Teaching Council in embedding a reflective approach as part of the learning from the programme. This partnership has commenced with the delivery of the programme to the primary school teachers and we will embed it as part of our ongoing delivery of the programme to post-primary teachers.

When we started the programme, Barrie told us that he would work with us for ten years, I am delighted to say that he has already committed to stay with us a little longer! We will commence the training with Cohort 12 in March 2019 and already have a waiting list for Cohort 13. Our challenge now is to craft a plan for the next ten years so that we can continue to support teachers across the country in their professional development. We have had a very exciting first ten years and we look forward to the next ten, not just in term of the programme delivery and development but also in terms of meeting new colleagues and making new friends.

I thank Michael Moriarty, former General Secretary of ETBI, (previously IVEA) and the then President Cllr. Noel O’Connor, for their vision in supporting the development of this programme of professional development, a programme that has offered significant support to teachers in their classroom practice and that of implementing national policy.

On a personal level, it has been a privilege for me to work with Professor Barrie Bennet and to lead the programme delivery over the past ten years.

I thank Barrie for the enormous influence he has had on my professional practice and indeed my career, but most importantly I thank him for his commitment and his enormous generosity in sharing his expertise, his experiences and the resources he has developed *and collected* and so generously share with us, all in the interest of improving

the experience for teachers and students in our classrooms.

Of course, no programme could be delivered with the administrative support that is sometimes invisible. Thanks to Clare Creedon who was the first administrator for the programme, Clare took on the organisation of the IL Programme as her ‘extra-curricular’ activity’ back in 2008, outside of her normal duties. She was instrumental in developing an administrative structure that remains hidden behind the scenes and always gave very generously of her time! Paula Fitzpatrick has since taken up the administrative function. Paula and I find it amusing when members of Cohorts muddle up our names, but I see it as indicative of the contribution that Paula makes to the success of the programme.

I thank the members of the Steering Committee and all those who supported the programme during the past ten years, as a participant of the programme and/or as a supporter of the programme. Have no doubt your contribution that has had an impact on what we have achieved in the development of Irish education.

JOAN RUSSELL

Chairperson of the IL National Steering Committee

Director of School Support Services, ETBI

THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Joan Russell (Chairperson)	Director of School Support Services, Education and Training Board, Ireland (ETBI)
Tadhg Long (Hon. Secretary)	Deputy Principal, Carrigtwohill Community College, Cork
Gerard O’ Sullivan (PRO)	Education Officer, NCCA
Finn Ó Murchú	Head of Education Department, Mary Immaculate College, Thurles, Co. Tipperary
John Kearney	Chief Executive (Acting), Cavan Monaghan ETB
Rosaleen O’Neill	Principal, Avondale Community College, Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow
Carmel Kelly	Principal, Castleisland Community College, Co. Kerry
Ann Marie Killen	Deputy Principal, Coláiste na Sceilge, Cahersiveen, Co. Kerry
Eugene Power	Retired Principal, St. Declan’s Community College, Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford
Anne McHugh	Chief Executive, Donegal ETB
Gerry Maloney	Teacher, St. David’s Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, Co. Wicklow
Sharon Coffey	Deputy Principal, Athy College, Athy, Co. Kildare
Siobhain Grogan	Teacher, Dominican College, Griffith Avenue, Dublin 9
Sarah Buckley	Deputy Principal, Naas Community College, Naas, Co. Kildare
Paula Fitzpatrick	Education and Training Board, Ireland





A MESSAGE FROM NESSA WHITE

GENERAL SECRETARY ETBI

It is with great pride and pleasure that I write this brief introduction to the *History of the Instructional Leadership Journal*. I have kept a very close eye on the development of the programme over the past ten years and have always been mesmerised at its' capacity at building a professional learning community across the country, at teacher level and senior school management level.

The level of demand for the programme among established and newly qualified teachers, across all sectors has proven that educationalists have an appetite to develop professionally, enhancing their practice to the betterment student outcomes.

Sometimes in the Irish Education System we can be quite territorial, all minding 'our own patch'; as management bodies, as patrons, and as schools. As General Secretary of ETBI, I am particularly proud that the Instructional Leadership Programme (IL Programme), transcends all such practice; all professionals are working together as a community of educationalists, with the sole focus on pedagogy and effective change management.

Teaching is a vocation and we all enter the profession to make a difference in the lives of the young people in our classrooms and to be the best we can be as educationalists. As Professor Barrie Bennett says '*what teacher gets up in the morning to be a*

mediocre teacher and what parent wants to send his/her son/daughter to a school with mediocre teachers'. ETBI is honoured to be leading a programme that is having such a significant impact on the Irish Education landscape, as is evidenced in School Inspectorate Reports and testimonials from teachers.

With a more intense focus on the transition from primary to post primary school, it is particularly welcoming that the IL Programme is developing to include our primary school colleagues. I believe that this focus will ultimately lead to a greater partnership between the primary and post-primary schools at local level, and between the teachers as professionals at National level.

I wish Joan and the Steering Committee every success for the 10th Anniversary Celebrations and for the many great ideas they have planned for the development of the programme into the future, with a view to further impacting on the quality of teaching and learning for teachers and students alike.

NESSA WHITE,

General Secretary,

Education and Training Boards Ireland.

10 YEARS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

DR. HAROLD HISLOP

I am delighted to have an opportunity to contribute to this newsletter which celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Instructional Leadership journey. This innovative programme, initially supported by the IVEA (now ETBI) and expertly nurtured and steered by Joan Russell, Barrie Bennett and Finn O'Murchú and many others, has become an important professional development initiative for teachers, students and school leaders within an ever-growing number of Irish schools. Instructional leadership focuses primarily on learning and on the learner, and how we as educators can create a context within which rich learner experiences and outcomes can be maximised. As Minister Richard Bruton said earlier this year *'the biggest influence on a child in a school was the quality of their teachers and the leadership within the school'* and Instructional Leadership programme can be a powerful enabler to improve the practice of this leadership.

A decade ago, Instructional Leadership came to Ireland at a time when there was a growing awareness of the key role that leadership plays at all levels in an effective school and within an effective education system. It was becoming clear to all of us that leadership in schools was crucial and that it should be fostered, developed and provided with professional supports in all our schools. Instructional Leadership provided a perspective and a professional development model for teachers and school leaders, which encouraged a focus on leadership of learning throughout our schools.

The principles and practices embedded in the Instructional Leadership programme support Department of Education and Skills policy in many ways. Firstly, the Quality Framework document *Looking at our School* (2016) emphasises the importance of teachers' individual and collaborative practices in shaping the experiences and outcomes for their students. The Framework also outlines the flexible and distributed roles which school leaders have

in leading learning and teaching, leading school development and developing leadership capacity within their school. Secondly, *school self-evaluation* is the process through which schools are enabled to focus on implementing change and effecting improvement in teaching and learning. Finally, the recent middle leadership Circulars (63/2017 [primary] and 03/2018 [post-primary]) provide a flexible model for leadership in schools which focuses on student learning experiences and outcomes. The reform of the Junior Cycle has also led to a greater level of collaborative practice among teachers at both subject department and whole-school levels, especially in the areas of planning for, and assessment of, student learning.

The work of Instructional Leadership also complements the work of the Centre for School Leadership. CSL was initially set up as a three year pilot project, partnered by the DES, NAPD and IPPN. The Centre has responsibility for overseeing a mentoring service for newly-appointed principals, a coaching service for existing principals, the development of a graduate diploma programme for aspiring school leaders, the development of a leadership continuum and the provision of quality assurance for leadership programmes. The Centre's pilot phase has been extended for another two years which demonstrates that DES commitment to leadership development, at all levels in our schools, will be sustained into the future.

When I addressed the Instructional Leadership Conference in 2012, I was impressed by the enthusiasm of teachers and the collaborative culture which had been (and is still being) created through the Instructional Leadership programme. At the time, I praised the Instructional Leadership model as being an appropriate vehicle for transmitting to schools the benefits associated with successful school self-evaluation and I suggested that a team teaching model would also have major benefits. I encouraged us to imagine a school system where teachers took responsibility for each other in refining and enhancing schools as genuine sites of learning and where professional networks and communities supported each other through a common language of learning. It is satisfying to see that, six years later, we are much further along that path and that the Instructional Leadership programme continues to make an important contribution at post-primary, primary and adult education levels.

Congratulations on achieving so much in the past 10 years and I encourage you to develop and sustain the Instructional Leadership model into the future.

DR HAROLD HISLOP
Chief Inspector
Department of Education and Skills



IMPRESSIONS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

TÓMAS Ó RUAIRC

One of my most vivid memories of attending the Instructional Leadership events in Ireland is of leaving the hotel in Tullow, Co. Carlow on a cold, windswept Friday evening in October 2013. My mind was racing from all the professional learning which teachers had shared with each other and me during their IL training. I was very taken with the generosity of spirit of the teachers who were facilitating workshops. And I was even more taken with the hunger of teachers participating in those workshops for the insights into teaching and learning which their peers were offering them.

But beyond that, the question I asked myself as I stood in the hotel carpark was – who else knows about this? How many parents, how many members of the public, are aware of the innovative professional learning which had taken place that day? Here was yet another example of where teachers were pursuing high quality professional learning at the weekend in order to help them be the best professionals they could be. Yet the national narrative around the teaching profession seemed to take little if any account of this – probably because it was not aware of it.

Thus were the seeds sown for FÉILTE – the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence – an event which has now grown to be one of the largest gatherings of teachers in Ireland.

It would be true to say that other events attended by myself as Director and by my colleagues helped spark the idea of FÉILTE. But it would be equally true that IL helped to draw those various sources of inspiration together. From its inception, IL has reflected

one of the guiding stars for teacher education from the Teaching Council's point of view – this idea of a nexus where research, policy and practice can meet in such a way as to leverage the best from each other, all in support of top quality teaching and learning. My understanding is that a chance encounter between Finn Ó Murchú, then an Inspector with the Department of Education and Skills, and Prof. Barrie Bennett was the catalyst that ultimately led to the launch of IL in Ireland. And by drawing on graduates of the programme to teach their peers as new cohorts embarked on it, IL drew these strands together even more tightly in a self-propelling virtuous cycle of learning.

The extent to which IL has woven the personal and professional aspects of teachers' identities together, all underpinned by rigorous research, may well be responsible for the tone and style which I have adopted in my keynote addresses to IL conferences over the past 6 years. This relationship between the personal and the professional is arguably an issue which every person should reflect on. It certainly is one on which I have reflected quite often over the past 6 years, and it has been a strong theme in my addresses to IL conferences and indeed, to other audiences.

But I think that it is fair to say that this relationship between the personal and the professional is particularly important, if not acute, for teachers. Teaching rests on relationships in a way that no other profession does. Every day, each teacher must form and re-form relationships with 30 individuals, sometimes up to 5 or 6 times a day, 5 days a week, for the full school year. It is noteworthy that for a programme that is ostensibly focused on teaching a particular repertoire of methodologies to teachers in a particular sector, it has made ample room for the person in the professional.

Leadership alone would take some time to unpack and discuss. Instructional leadership of processes of teaching in an environment where relationship dynamics are so fluid and sometimes overwhelming are infinitely more complex. The wonder is not that IL has been such a success and continues to go from strength to strength. The wonder is how long it took for that chance encounter between an inspector and a teacher educator to happen. As IL continues to grow, we should see less of a reliance on such serendipity; and we should see a greater sense of coherence and cohesion accrue to our collective efforts across the education system to bring teaching and learning alive for all learners.

In this context, we can take great heart from how teachers all over the country have taken the potential of that chance encounter, and nurtured it to grow in ways that I could scarcely have imagined on that Friday night in Tullow, Co. Carlow. I wish those teachers, and everyone involved in IL, every success as they continue on their pathway of professional learning – for themselves, their peers and for all learners in our education system.

TÓMAS Ó RUAIRC

Director, Teaching Council, July 2018

INSTRUCTIONAL WISDOM ACROSS THREE CONTINENTS, TWO DECADES AND ONE PROJECT

FINN Ó MURCHÚ

Over the years I have had both the pleasure and the honour to work with Barrie in his native Canada, here in Ireland and more recently in Australia. In celebrating 10 years of the Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) in Ireland I am taken by how much has been achieved in a relatively short period of time. I particularly wish to pay tribute to Barrie for all that he does and continues to do for the programme and given we now know each other 17 years this summer I also wish to acknowledge his friendship and guidance over that time. Furthermore, congratulations to Joan for her steadfastness, resilience and belief in the programme. Without Barrie there would be no project, without Joan there would be no project of such import in Ireland.

Readers will agree that significant inroads have been made and ILP it is now an integral part of our post-primary landscape with further promising developments emerging including engagement at undergraduate level in my own institution, MIC Thurles, and with the primary sector via a number of Education Centres.

I have sought out and witnessed Barrie's work and impact across three continents over nearly two decades the quality of the work is the common denominator. Irrespective of location Barrie's work and Barrie's personality bring each of us to a better place and a better understanding of the importance of our profession as teachers and leaders of learning. The reach of ILP is not always as easily measured as counting schools involved. More subtle influences are found in the work of teachers working alone or collectively in classrooms and schools; it's found in teachers who take up new positions or advance

curricular reforms, as well as among inspectorate and support service personnel who have completed or accessed the programme and draw on it repeatedly.

All involved in the ILP are deserving of much praise with a lot to celebrate including the celebration of knowing that there is more to do. A review of steering committee minutes remind me of the journey travelled and as we pause to take stock and celebrate it is clear that part of the celebration lies in the excitement of what remains to be achieved as much as in what has already been achieved. Here's to the next ten years, which while they cannot be exactly the same as the last 10, will be grounded in the good work done to date.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

MICHAEL MORIARTY

*PRESIDENT, EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF
EDUCATION EMPLOYERS*

On this 10th anniversary of the Instructional Leadership Programme it is indeed time to celebrate with some considerable pride the impact which this unprecedented programme has had in Irish schools. Indeed it was fortunate that Joan Russell and Barrie Bennett teamed up a decade ago to develop the innovative Instructional Leadership Programme which has been truly transformational in Irish education as thousands of Irish teachers have benefitted from the visionary leadership of Joan Russell and the international expertise of Professor Barrie Bennett. Working together they have provided ten years of extensive in-service on the key principles underpinning Instructional Leadership particularly in the area of systemic change and the theory of instructional intelligence.

Irish education can be grateful that Professor Bennett, one of the world's leading proponents of instructional Leadership travelled to Ireland twice yearly for the past decade to inspire our teachers to enhance their teaching technique thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and learning in Irish schools.

I have been General Secretary of ETBI for over 20 years until my retirement in April 2018 and for the past decade I have been an enthusiastic supporter of the IL programme. I was always conscious of the massive potential for change in terms of classroom and teaching technique that could be effected by this unique in-service programme and so

it has transpired. The unwavering commitment of Joan, her Steering Committee and the professional educational leadership of Barrie has been truly transformational for both schools and ETBI. The firm support of former education minister Ruairi Quinn also played a key role in the initial nurturing of IL and his role must also be acknowledged.

I have always seen this Instructional Leadership Programme as a driving force for change in Irish education and also enhancing for the reputation and image of ETBI. Previously I have described this programme of Instructional leadership training as the quiet revolution in Irish education as it uniquely was a “grassroots movement”. It has now evolved into a key element of the Irish educational in-service regime for Irish teachers who attend two sessions each year in the ideally located Mount Wolseley Resort in Tullow Co. Carlow.

With one decade of Instructional Leadership behind us I sincerely hope that another decade of systemic change awaits us. How this all began was fortuitous, but its ongoing development has been driven by those who want change and who strive to be the best they can be. Our teachers have expressed massive support for the IL programme and I am sure it will continue to have the full backing of ETBs and schools across all sectors of the Irish education system.

My hope for the future is that leaders in Irish education across all sectors and within the Department of Education and Skills will continue to acknowledge and appreciate what has been transformational for teachers and schools across Ireland. I was so glad to have been associated with this initiative and I remain deeply appreciative of what Joan Russell and Barrie Bennett have achieved over their 10 years of fruitful collaboration and aided by a hard-working Steering Committee. We can be grateful for what has been achieved and we hope for another decade of transformational, systemic change in Irish classrooms driven by our highly valued IL Programme. Rath leanunach sna blianta amach romhainn.



WHAT IS THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME?

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME IS A PROGRAMME OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AIMED AT DEVELOPING THE PEDAGOGICAL SKILLS OF TEACHERS AND SUPPORTING A SYSTEMIC CHANGE ACROSS ALL CLASSROOMS.

THE PROGRAMME WHILE LED BY ETBI, IS SUPPORTIVE OF AND SUPPORTED BY POST PRIMARY SCHOOLS ACROSS ALL SECTORS.

Professor Bennett has emerged as one of the world's leading proponents of Instructional Intelligence, having devoted much of his life to researching the ideas and principles that inform the theory as a whole. Professor Bennett has written and lectured extensively on the theme of teacher thinking/learning/action focused on instructional practices - how teachers acquire an instructional *repertoire*, how they extend it, integrate it, and what effects this practice has on student learning (pre-school to adult). He is also interested in educational change and has argued that the success of Instructional Intelligence as a project depends on systemic change, involving all of the partners including the DES, principals/ school leaders and across the primary and post-primary sectors. But aside from his undoubted academic prowess, the personality and character of Professor Bennett, together with his passionate commitment to the moral integrity of his ideas, have been central to the manner in which teachers have reacted so positively to Instructional Intelligence.

WHAT IS INSTRUCTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

So what is meant by the term “Instructional Intelligence”? In its literal sense, the notion relates to the extent to which teachers are “intelligent” about their instructional behaviour; or in other words, the manner in which teachers consciously or overtly modify their instructional actions so as to maximise the impact on student learning. More broadly, the theory may be defined as the conscious and deliberate utilisation by the teacher of a range of interventions or teacher actions categorised as *skills*, *tactics* and *strategies* that impact positively on student learning in the classroom, based on extensive research into how students learn. In addition, the theory fosters in teachers a greater awareness of how their actions can impact on critical factors or *concepts* that affect student learning, such as motivation, novelty, authenticity, safety and accountability. Furthermore, teachers who are instructionally intelligent are acquainted with the extent to which learning may be affected by a range of instructional *organisers* such as diverse learning styles, multiple intelligences, brain research, ethnicity, gender or “at risk” environments.

Collectively, the integration of these italicised categories may be defined as pedagogy. While *skills*, *tactics* and *strategies* may be classified or defined as discrete groupings, the ability of the teacher to weave these processes together in a thoughtful manner so as to create a more powerful learning environment constitutes what Bennett characterises as the art of teaching. In order to develop a greater appreciation of the potential of Instructional Intelligence, it may be useful to look at each of these categories in more detail.

INSTRUCTIONAL SKILLS

Skills may be classified as those instructional actions that a teacher uses to enhance learning that are not, of themselves, complex or research-based, but serve to increase the chances that more complex instructional processes are successful. Let us consider some examples. Asking questions is a skill that teachers engage in constantly. Yet, research indicates that many teachers do not frame questions effectively. As Bennett argues, by choosing a respondent from a group of students who raise their hands to answer a question, the teacher can only be sure that the student who responded knew the answer, and cannot be as sure about those who did not raise a hand. A more effective approach is to ask students to think about a question before discussing it with a partner. Such an approach involves every student, thus heightening accountability, while also enabling them to rehearse an answer, thus increasing safety. By choosing students randomly, having allowed them time to think, teachers can “check for understanding” (also a skill) more confidently. Other skills include allowing students appropriate wait-time as they formulate answers to questions, sharing the objective of lessons with class groups, and linking learning with students’ past experiences.

INSTRUCTIONAL TACTICS

Tactics are more powerful interventions than skills. A tactic may be defined as an action used to enrich or strengthen the application of a strategy. Examples of tactical interventions include the employment of “Think-Pair-Share” or “brainstorming”, but a particularly powerful tactic is the employment of a graphic or visual organizer to enable students to learn. For example, the use of a Venn diagram might be thought of as traditionally the preserve of the Maths class. Yet, as a means of helping students to understand the similarities and differences between Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini in a History lesson, it can be a very effective visual device. Many different types of graphic organisers exist which can be applied to various subject areas and enable students to go beyond text or notes-based resources to learn effectively.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

Strategies represent the most powerful and complex teacher-led intervention in the classroom. While skills drive tactics, skills and tactics together drive strategies. Strategies are usually grounded in theory and research and involve a number of related steps. Examples include co-operative learning/ groupwork, concept attainment and team teaching. It is instructive to observe that while many teachers try to incorporate a form of groupwork into their lessons, Bennett observes that teachers should be aware that there is extensive research into the effectiveness of groupwork that suggests that the strategy can be counter-productive if applied wrongly. He cites the work of brothers Roger and David Johnson of the University of Minnesota who have devoted many years to the theme of co-operative learning.

INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS

Bennet contends that tactics, skills and strategies constitute what teachers “do” in the classroom. Concepts and organisers cannot be done, but by bearing them in mind and understanding their importance, teachers can do things to make them come alive. Let us consider the notion of concepts first. Concepts may be defined as “lenses” that enable teachers to understand how, when and where to apply and integrate skills, tactics and strategies. For instance when teachers frame questions effectively (skill) and use tactics such as “Think-pair share”, they are invoking such concepts as student accountability and safety. When teachers take time to relate the learning to students’ experiences (skill), they are helping to make the students’ learning more novel and authentic, as well as promoting student motivation.

INSTRUCTIONAL ORGANISERS

Organisers are frameworks or bodies of research that assist teachers in organising an array of skills, tactics and strategies into a coherent set of teaching methods. They are the lenses that clarify or enhance thought about how we instruct. Organisers increase teacher wisdom about the teaching and learning process, based on the needs and inclinations of the learner. For example, by appealing to students' intelligences other than the traditional logical-mathematical and linguistic, teachers can devise tactics and strategies that can powerfully influence student learning. Similarly, emerging research on the human brain and on diverse learning styles can also inform approaches to more effective instructional practices.

WHY INVESTIGATE INSTRUCTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Therefore, it is the conscious and informed integration of these five areas that constitutes instructional intelligence. Bennett argues that teachers need to move from being tacitly skilled in a limited number of instructional methods to being explicitly skilled in a higher number of instructional methods so as to increase learning and to facilitate teachers in differentiating their instruction to meet diverse students' diverse needs. He cites David Perkins: "It is an everyday observation that often people do not develop robust intelligent behaviours in areas where they have a great deal of experience. We do not automatically learn from experience, even extended experiences. For instance, people play chess or bridge for years without ever getting better at it". Bennett characterises as a "tragic flaw" the notion that our deep knowledge and passion for our subject is all that we need to foster effective learning. He refers to such a view as naïve and urges teachers to rethink their instructional repertoire in terms of how they engage students, arguing that there is an ethical imperative on teachers to do so.



PROFILE OF PROFESSOR *BARRIE BENNETT*

Professor Barrie Bennett taught for many years at the Ontario Institute for Studies at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT) until his recent retirement. In addition to his third level teaching, Barrie has taught at secondary, middle school and elementary school levels in Canada. He also worked with ‘at risk teachers’ in Canada as a consultant for six years, focusing on instruction and classroom management so as to enable such teachers to revitalise their careers.

However, Barrie’s main areas of interest relate to the theory of instructional intelligence. This broad area refers to the intersection of existing wisdom and knowledge related to curriculum, assessment, instruction, how students learn, the nature of change and the importance of systemic change. Barrie’s work in these areas has developed his international reputation and he is currently leading systemic change projects in three countries: Canada, Australia, and Ireland. In the case of Ireland, the Instructional Leadership Programme has emerged from Barrie’s initial contribution.

Barrie began the Irish project with 150 teachers drawn from the vocational school sector throughout the state. Over the course of six residential seminars spanning three years, in collaboration with the Irish Vocational Education Association and led by County Cork VEC CEO Joan Russell, these teachers undertook extensive in-service on the key principles underpinning instructional intelligence. Perhaps the most distinguishing feature of this experience was that for most of those involved, it was their first engagement with professional development focused solely on generic Teaching and Learning rather than a subject-specific model of in-service. A further two cohorts of teachers have also commenced training on the project while those in the first cohort have critically engaged

with the project in their own classrooms. A significant number of this group have also facilitated in-service in their own schools.

It is anticipated that as the Instructional Leadership Programme develops and progresses, Barrie's legacy in terms of his contribution to improving the quality of Teaching and Learning in Irish schools will be a rich one indeed.

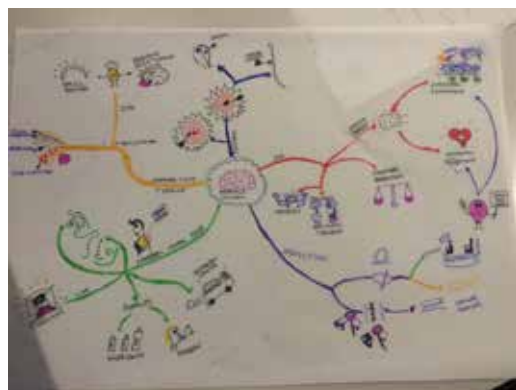
Select Publications: The following is a select bibliography focusing particularly on key texts written or co-authored by Barrie Bennett relating to instructional intelligence:

Bennett, B. (2009). *Graphic Intelligence*. Toronto, ON: Bookation.

Bennett, B., & Rolheiser, C. (2001). *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration*. Toronto, ON: Bookation.

Bennett, B., Rolheiser, C., & Stevahn, L. (1991). *Cooperative Learning: Where Heart Meets Mind*. Toronto, ON: Educational Connections.

Bennet, B. and Smilanich, P. (1994). *Classroom Management: A Thinking and Caring Approach*. Toronto, ON: Bookation.



03

HISTORY OF THE PROGRAMME



AN OVERVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME 2008-2018

AIMS OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME:

- Assist teachers in becoming ‘consciously competent’
- Develop teacher’s ‘instructional repertoire’ of skills, tactics and strategies
- Develop a common language among teachers that will support and enhance professional conversations
- Foster an awareness of how a teacher’s actions can impact on student learning – motivation, novelty, authenticity, accountability and safety
- Re/Acquaint teachers with the extent to which learning is affected by; diverse learning styles, multiple intelligences, ‘at risk environment’ etc.

AS A PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT?

1. It is aimed specifically at improving pedagogy.
2. The Principal/Deputy Principal must engage.

*School Leadership is the second greatest influence on student learning,
second only to teacher effectiveness.*

Leithwood & Riehl, 2003

3. A Model that provides for;
 - » Engagement & Submersion
 - » Modelling & Practice

The development of professional networks, local, regional and national level, as a means of support and encouragement.

The Instructional Leadership Programme began in the Vocational Education Sector (VEC) in 2008. The table below highlights the location and level of attendance at the Introductory Workshops, facilitated by Professor Barrie Bennett.

Workshop number:	Location:	Number of VECs represented:	Number of VEC schools /Colleges represented:
2	Adare, Co. Limerick	4	38
3	Cavan	3	13
4	Naas	3	27
5	Portlaoise*	This session was for the CEOs and EOs of VECs. The Chief Inspector was also present.	

THE AGREED PROGRAMME GROUND RULES

It is important to note at this point that initial discussions with Professor Bennett resulted in the following ground rules being set;

- The programme was to be focused on instruction and systemic change, Professor Bennett outlined his lack of interest in delivering workshops that would not make a difference to classroom practice. He was particularly interested in ‘changing a country’ and pledged his support to work with us for ten years.
- Each workshop would be of 2.5 day duration and be residential based.
- The programme would focus on upskilling three members of the school team, one of which, had to be the principal or deputy principal. The other two members were at the discretion of the school management.
- Two workshops per year would be held.
- The programme would be organised through CCVEC, the Education Officer would take responsibility on behalf of IVEA and the finance would be managed by the Irish Vocational Education Association (IVEA). IVEA would also be the branding authority and the awarding body for the Certificate of Completion.
- No substitution was available to schools/college, attendance at the workshops had to be met from the school Substitution & Supervision allocation or by other means at the discretion of the school.

A letter of invitation to participate in the programme was issued to all VEC schools/colleges and copied to the CEOs and EOs of the VECs. This invitation generated the first Cohort of participating schools. The table below list the participating VECs and schools/colleges in Cohort 1.

VEC:	School/College
Co. Cork VEC	9 schools
Co. Wicklow VEC	10 schools
Tipperary South Riding VEC	3 schools
Co. Kildare VEC	2 schools
Co. Kerry VEC	8 schools
Co. Galway VEC	2 schools
Co. Donegal VEC	3 schools
Co. Waterford VEC	2 schools
Co. Cavan VEC	3 schools

ONGOING PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAMME.

As time progressed our colleague sectors, JMB and ACCS, showed significant interest in being involved in the programme. The table shows the number of participating schools and centres across all sectors.

Cohort	ETB Schools	Voluntary Secondary Schools	Community Schools	Comprehensive Schools	Youthreach Centres	FE Colleges
1	44	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	45	4	2	2	N/A	N/A
3	16	4	4	0	5	3
4	24	4	2	1	13	1
5	22	8	3	0	7	1
6	21	11	7	1	3	1
7	18	8	7	1	3	0
8	15	7	4	1	1	2
9	25	13	5	0	0	1
10	35	6	3	1	0	1
11	12	26	2	0	1	2
12	Registration for Cohort 12 is now closed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We announced on the 10th March 2018 that we were enrolling for Cohort 12 and responded to over 70 expressions of interest to register. ● Registration for Cohort 12 is now closed. 					

Cohort:	Period:	No. of Participating teachers:
1	2009/2011	117
2	2010/2012	139
3	2011/2013	90
4	2012/2014	107
5	2013/2015	108
6	2014/2016	120
7	2015/2017	97
8	2016/2018	109
9	2017/2019	115
10	2017/2019	138
11	2018/2020	133
12	2019/2021	141

THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPATING TEACHERS IN EACH COHORT

As the Cohorts progressed schools/centres new to the programme were prioritised over schools that had previously engaged in the programme. However, two significant facts resulted in the need to review the enrolment procedure; the rapid changes to the public sector, with teachers, principals and deputy principals retiring resulting in the depletion of the core trained ‘Instructional Leadership Team’ in a school/centre and the need for a larger core team in the bigger schools, which is becoming a feature of post-primary education in Ireland. The programme is now available on a first come first served basis. Interestingly, at present we no longer need to produce promotional material, the programme is generating a ‘waiting list’. It was policy that two cohorts would be hosted simultaneously but as of spring 2016, three cohorts were hosted simultaneously to meet the demand.

THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE PROGRAMME

A website was developed and a host of material was uploaded. In 2011 the then Minister for Education & Skills, Mr. Ruairí Quinn T.D. officially launched the programme and the website at the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS:

1. CONFERENCES:

The inaugural National Instructional Leadership Conference took place in September 2012 and has since become an annual event in the IL calendar, with teachers coming from all over the country to share practice and experience as well as to gain insight from the keynote speakers.

Conference:	Keynote Speaker:	Title of the Conference
2012	Dr. Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector with the Department of Education and Skills	Opening Classroom Doors – Instructional Leadership: Nurturing Excellence in Teaching & Learning
2013	Mr. Tomás Ó Ruairic, Director of the Teaching Council of Ireland	Let's talk about learning Instructional Leadership Supporting Teachers along the Continuum of Teacher Education
2014	Professor Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario Dr. Padraig Hogan, Senior Lecturer, NUIM Mr. Anthony Malone, Lecturer, NUIM	Instructional Leadership: Building Professional Learning Communities
2015	Mr. Clive Byrne, Director of NAPD	Instructional Leadership Leading, Learning Together: Showing, Sharing, Engaging
2016	International Conference – guest speakers from Canada, South Western Australia, Germany, Italy and Ireland	Teachers Leading Systemic Change
2017	Professor Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario	Moving Towards a Whole School Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning
2018	Tómas Ó Ruairic, Director of The Teaching Council Dr. Becky Saunders Barry Slattery, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA	Instructional Leadership Supporting Practice and Policy

2. INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP NETWORKS

A number of graduates of the programme have established support networks. These networks facilitate the meeting of teachers in various schools/colleges across the sectors, on a regular basis, outside of school time, to share their experience and learning. (Such Networks commenced in Cork, Donegal, Dublin, Kerry and Wicklow).

3. LOCAL AND REGIONAL DELIVERY OF THE PROGRAMME

Graduates of the programme are facilitating the delivery of the programme in their own schools/colleges, with fellow schools and/or with groups of teachers at national and regional level. Donegal ETB (DETB) hosts a number of professional development days for teachers, for which the schools are closed and the staff is clustered into working groups around the county. Graduates of the IL Programme deliver elements of the programme on these occasions.

4. NEWSLETTER

Newsletter are produced and issued to schools.

5. A DAY FOR PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS

A conference was facilitated for principals and deputy principals on June 9th 2017, to assist them in their role as Instructional Leaders. In June 2018 the conference developed to support principals, deputy principals and middle management.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME AND WEBSITE IS LAUNCHED BY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS

GERARD O’SULLIVAN

The contribution of IVEA as a leader in promoting excellence in teaching and learning was acknowledged at the launch of the Instructional Leadership Programme(ILP) at the Mount Wolseley Hotel in Tullow on Monday 5 March 2012. A programme of modules based on the key principles of instructional leadership and an accompanying website, www.instructionalleadership.ie, were formally launched by the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn TD, in front of an audience of teachers, students and various partners in Irish education, including representatives of the DES, various VEC s, initial teacher education providers and the NCCA, among others. The event took place at the beginning of a week-long series of workshops involving teachers from various parts of the state engaging with the Instructional Leadership Programme.

This significant development follows on the successful engagement of some 400 teachers with the IVEA-led series of seminars facilitated by Professor Barrie Bennett of the University of Ontario over the last four years. These seminars have explored how teachers can generate more powerful learning experiences in the classroom by extending their instructional repertoires of skills, tactics and strategies and by acquiring a common language that enables them to articulate and deconstruct their practice. The content of the seminars is based on extensive research into effective pedagogy and how students learn. It is a unique model of continuous professional development in the Irish context as it is focused on leading systemic change through focusing not on subject specific content but on pedagogy and practice. Its

uniqueness is also evident in the model whereby participants are empowered to facilitate others in engaging with the programme at local and regional level, and are supported to do so through the website and other resources.

In 2011, 150 teachers from the vocational sector became the first graduates of the programme which has subsequently been expanded to incorporate the community and comprehensive and voluntary sectors as well. Teachers and tutors from further education schools/ colleges and Youthreach centres have also engaged with the programme. Many of the participants have since led their colleagues in their own school settings in engaging with the key principles of the programme at local level, thus ensuring that the full richness of the programme is being accessed throughout the country.

Addressing the gathering of guests at the launch, IVEA General Secretary Mr Michael Moriarty paid special tribute to CEO of Co Cork VEC and chairperson of the ILP national steering committee Ms Joan Russell, acknowledging her particular role in leading the development of the project to the stage where it is now formally recognised by the Minister. He praised Joan's tenacity and vision in steering the vocational sector to lead such a striking and innovative programme in teaching and learning. Cllr Noel O'Connor, President of IVEA, echoed these sentiments in his address to those in attendance and reminded the audience of the potential of the sector to play an important and vibrant role in Irish education at a time of great change. Joan Russell reminded the Minister of the capacity of the programme to dovetail neatly with the ambitious reforms that have characterised the Minister's own tenure thus far. In acknowledging the Minister's supportive presence at the launch, she noted how the principles of the programme chimed with such current policy-driven themes as the reconceptualisation of initial teacher education, the increased focus on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, the emphasis on the cultivation of critical thinking skills in terms of junior cycle reform and the formalisation of models of school self-evaluation.

Joan also thanked the national steering committee for its efforts to ensure that the ILP project had reached such a momentous stage and paid a special tribute to Professor Bennett, whose personality, enthusiasm and wisdom had endeared him to all involved in the project since its inception. In return, Professor Bennett praised Joan's role in leading the project and also congratulated all involved, reminding the gathering of the absolutely critical role of teachers and the teaching profession in society particularly at a time of such turbulence and change. He said that he was privileged to be part of the project and that while he was involved in similar projects in Canada, Australia and Chile, it was a source of great satisfaction to him that the Irish experience was proving so influential at national systemic level.

The Minister Mr Quinn spoke of his genuine sense that the programme had enormous potential to meaningfully impact on teaching and learning. He welcomed the presence of a number of students from Athy College whom he witnessed being taught according

to the principles of instructional leadership upon his arrival at the launch event earlier in the morning and also indicated his appreciation to those teachers whom he observed being trained in a similar setting for his consideration. The Minister also welcomed the opportunity to see the website, www.instructionalleadership.ie, and to view aspects of it upon his arrival, including a number of video clips of teachers practising in the classroom, and a sample of PowerPoint presentations that were devised to assist trained facilitators to acquaint teachers at future in-service events at local level with key aspects of the various programme modules. The Minister praised the contribution of Professor Bennett to the fostering and promotion of excellence in teaching and learning and, in a telling remark, the Minister indicated that while he was very pleased to have been invited to launch the programme, he was even more pleased that he had come to see for himself the sense of positivity and vibrancy associated with it.

In conclusion, Joan Russell and Michael Moriarty presented the Minister with a gift to signal the appreciation of those involved in the ILP for his support. The gift was an artistic rendering, employing the motif of jigsaw pieces, by Niamh O'Neill, a teacher in Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig, Co Cork, representing the close alignment between the principles of the programme and aspects of the Minister's current educational policy agenda. In articulating the rationale behind the gift, Joan cited the notion of 'drivers of change' as espoused by Michael Fullan and asserted that the ILP was well-positioned to be such a driver in the Irish system. She signalled that the steering committee was due to engage with the third level sector on devising a role for the programme in initial teacher education and also indicated that the programme would reach out formally to the primary sector in the near future. Michael Moriarty, in proposing a vote of thanks to the Minister, stated that the project would ensure that the IVEA, representing the vocational sector, would remain a key strategic partner in the changes ahead for Irish education.



TO CELEBRATE... OR NOT: A REFLECTION ON OUR CHANGE EFFORT IN IRELAND

PROFESSOR BARRIE BENNETT

I will start with a question: “Are all *celebrations* created ‘equal’? For example, we celebrate birthdays and weddings and years of being in business etc., etc., and ironically we often celebrate regardless of whether or not we’ve ‘earned’ that celebration. In terms of birthdays, we simply get celebrated; and each person gets, on average, about 75 ‘celebrations in a lifetime...regardless of being naughty or nice. Of course when we get up to our 50th and 75th wedding anniversaries...we sense those celebrations as somewhat magical. So, in terms of our efforts in this program, how should we position our ‘ten-year’ celebration of our collective change effort...business as usual or somewhat magical?

For this article, I will begin by stepping back and sharing two quotes, one recent and one historical. From that I will shift to briefly explaining change research so you understand where our change program ‘fits’ into the change process. I follow that with illustrating how we’ve attended to that research in terms of how we initiated, implemented and worked at building the internal capacity to sustain our change efforts. I’ll end with sharing why we should treat what we’ve accomplished as moving *towards* magical and what we need to consider as we move forward.

The quotes. Recently, I was on a historical tour of a Hacienda in the Yucatan that produced sisal (a rope made from the henequen plant) during the mid 1800s to the mid 1900s. The Mayan tour guide was reflecting on the use of slaves on the Haciendas in the production of ‘sisal’ and stated that, “*Slavery is part of our history, and unfortunately, you can’t change history, but you can reflect on it, understand it and learn from it...and that is life.*”

Reflecting on what the tour guide said, I was reminded of a much earlier quote from 1863 by George Santayana. He stated that, “*Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*”

Over the last 47 years that I’ve been a teacher and teacher educator, the one constant I’ve experienced as I’ve worked in educational systems on ‘change’ is how consistently we collectively ‘forget’ or ‘ignore’ the history/wisdom of educational change...in classrooms, schools, and systems. Interestingly, however, in all that time I’ve never found an evil plot; I’ve simply found misguided plots or more frequently, no collective plot at all. We seem to specialize in not learning from or attending to past efforts; we ignore that history on change. And in all that time, I’ve consistently found good people working hard to make a difference in the life chances and learning chances of students. In addition, I’ve rarely found a teacher that does not want to make a difference in their students’ lives. And yet (interestingly or sadly) we individually and collectively represent Santayana’s warning...we ignore history...we fail to effectively act on the relentless ‘constant’ of change.

Change Research Classified. This is boring, but important. Arthur Ellis (2001) classified change research into three types (Type I, II, and III). *Type I research* is known as grounded research; here, researchers have a hunch and start to collect data through observing and interviewing etc., and following that data collection, they start to look for patterns and relationships from which an innovation emerges. An example would be Howard Gardner’s work on Multiple Intelligences and another example would be identifying the critical attributes of effective group work, and another example would be the use of wait time in questioning etc., etc. A lot of educational researchers at universities operate in this world of *Level 1* research; they get a grant, collect the data, write a paper and move on to the next question and the next grant. Important research but it does not result in much change systemically.

We then move onto *Level II research* where we look to see what impact that innovation has in a classroom or a few classrooms or a school. Teachers and administrators doing research as part of a masters or doctorate often play with this type of research. Teachers doing *action research*, sometimes on their own (and they may or may not write a paper) also enact *Level II* research. University researchers also enact Type II research; again, they get a grant, collect data, write a paper and move on to the next question, the next grant, the next paper... and again, not much happens systemically. This is the trap (the folly) of ‘publish or perish’. Unfortunately, because of the pressure to get grants, university researchers in education rarely engage with the third type of research known as *Level III* research.

Level III research relates to the impact that an innovation or innovations have on a system (in this case, our Instructional Leadership program here in Ireland). Ellis’ research shows

that *Type III* research is the rarest of all types of research; we have few examples of long-term systemic change efforts...and none that rigorously focus on merging instruction, curriculum and assessment. Cuban & Usdan (2003) wrote about this dilemma in their text, *‘Powerful Reforms With Shallow Roots: Improving America’s Schools*. They discuss the issue of when the grant disappears...the project disappears. Interestingly, our project which all of you are helping to celebrate (*Type III*) is one of the largest and long-lasting systemic change efforts focused on teaching and learning in the industrialized world. Interestingly, we have no grants and no external/additional funding. School budgets somehow make it work. A wee bit magical.

Our change effort: Year 1. Twelve years ago a group of three individuals (Finn O’Murchu, Joan Russell and myself) had a conversation focused on the possibility of a systemic change effort for Ireland. The impetus for our conversation emerged from the efforts of the Durham Board of Education...who after ten years won an international award (The Bertelsmann Prize of about 250 000 Euros) as one the best school districts in the world. And importantly, Durham’s efforts were built on the efforts of Edmonton Public Schools in Alberta, Canada. Key here is that the efforts of Edmonton and Durham were guided by the existing wisdom on educational change and the literature/wisdom on what made a difference in the design of powerful learning environments for both students and teachers/administrators.

From that conversation we initiated our ideas by running five workshops around Ireland to see what others thought of the possibility of enacting a systemic change project in Ireland. One such workshop was provided for the CEO’s of the ETBs and the then Chief Inspector of the Department of Education & Skills.

Influenced by the feedback from those engaged and juxtaposing that with what we’ve learned from other change efforts/change research, we decided to run the programme over six sessions, two 2.5-day workshops a year for three years. Over forty schools in the ETB (then VEC) sector signed up to participate. A number of principles of participation were set out, including; substitution was not available to schools, resulting in the school needing to provide cover for teachers from their substitution and supervision budget; the school would need to meet the cost of participation from their school budget; the programme delivery would be based on a residential basis; attendance by three from the school was compulsory, one of these participants must be the principal/deputy principal.

One of the key reasons we were firm on working with the same group from a school over a protracted period is based on what we all of know...it takes time and practice to get better at anything that is even reasonably complex. Hall and Hord’s (2011) research illustrates how we can assess our change efforts over time. This is described in their *Concerns Based Adoption Model* that provides insights to change.

In our project we employ one aspect of Hall and Hord's model known as *Levels of Use of an Innovation (LoU)*. With LoU we discuss how teachers shift in expertise over time...that when they go back and implement change, things will most likely get worse before it gets better (known as '*mechanical level of use*' ... at this level there is little to no impact on student learning. With practice and support, skill level shifts up to *Routine*, then *Refined* and finally *Integrative*. As teachers, we need to get to *Routine Levels of Use* (as do our students) before we find emerging evidence of impact on student learning.

Connected to *CBAM*, the workshops were informed by the research on the *Skill Training Model*, that contains a series of components that merge to create what we know as 'peer coaching' (a concept developed by Joyce & Showers, 1982). The *Skill Training Model* involves the presentation of theory, demonstrations, practice and feedback. Key to peer coaching is the additional component where the 'team' returning to the school enact the innovation(s)...with the understanding that they would assist one-another by helping to co-plan lessons or observe each other teaching or sharing at lunch time or after school etc. We encouraged them not to go back and run workshops with other staff members until after they had taken the time to practice it first a few times in their classrooms... to work out the 'bugs' and gather beginners' expertise. (Note: you can see how 'team teaching' in Ireland fits perfectly with the process of peer coaching and 'up-shifting' teachers' levels of use.)

One interesting shift (that connects to the process of peer coaching mentioned above) was having the participants of the cohort finishing their workshops then running a workshop for the cohort about to start. Each school team selected their own instructional content, and then, working with their school team planned and then ran their workshop. In addition, they participated with the new participants and engaged with two other teams from their cohort taking their turn at running a workshop. One benefit of this is that the cohort finishing gets the opportunity to plan and run a mini-workshop to get the idea of what they might do back at their school.

Importantly, having school leadership involved as part of the cohort team was and is critical. Leithwood et al.'s (2009) ten-year study in three countries found that the second most powerful predictor of student achievement is the extent to which the principal supports teachers becoming more instructionally skilled. (Becoming instructionally skilled was the most powerful predictor of student achievement in their study.) Interestingly, Leithwood et al., could not find one example of a less effective school being turned around by anything less than a highly skilled principal. The message here is that it is difficult for principals to support instructional change if they are themselves unskilled (at least conceptually) in instruction. We've had to inform a few schools that they could not send a team as their principal (or deputy principal) was not attending. This is a decision based on research and ethics.

That said, if someone misses a session because of sickness or prior commitment etc., in order to get their certificate of completion, they must make up that session with the next cohort (which almost everyone who misses does).

Our Change Efforts: Years 2 to 10. Over the next nine years, that Skill Training process was refined based on feedback we received from participants. Interestingly, demand to participate was such that Cohort 2 saw the participation of Colleges of Further Education and Youthreach Centres. Cohort 3 saw the participation of schools both from the Voluntary Secondary School Sector and the Association of Community & Comprehensive Schools. As Cohorts continue to enrol they are now made up of a mix from all sectors.

Arising from our learning from Cohort 1, we reduced the number of sessions to 4 (two 2.5-day workshops a year for two years). Now commencing our 11th year, we are working with cohorts 10, 11, and 12 and have involved approximately 45 percent of post-primary schools in Ireland. Each school has approached the shift in their school in their own ways. Some teams are running mini-workshops in their schools; some post-primary teachers are running workshops for the teachers in their feeder schools; some teachers are assisting us with aspects of implementing the program for the cohorts.

As we work towards shifting to developing the internal capacity to deal with the inexorable press of change, we can sense how aspects of the program are taking on a life of its own. Some schools are doing extensive work in their schools and are integrating aspects of the program with their own learning and experiences, making the teaching and learning process so much more effective and dynamic. Some of the the educators who enact the National Teacher Induction Programme (NIPT) also weave in aspects of the Instructional Leadership Programme with new teachers, as do the facilitators of in-service for teachers of the new junior cycle within the JCT. What we are seeing is other stakeholders becoming involved. For example, one branch of one of the post-primary teacher unions recently offered a scholarship to support educators in that county to participate in a programme of professional development.

Another example is how Finn O'Murchu, Head of School, Post Primary, Mary Immaculate College, St. Patrick's Campus, is also engaging aspects of the Leadership Program in their teacher-training coursework.

Shifting into the future. To put our 'change' efforts in perspective, all we've done in this program in Ireland is simply attend to what logic and research informs us to do; to guide our thinking and actions. Basically, we are simply adding '*working smarter systemically in terms of the history of change research*' to educators already working hard; we are trying to stay with something long enough to get 'good' at it. But like the Mayan tour guide said to also '*...learn from it.*' And we've certainly learned a lot about how a large system engages in change over time.

One of the key pieces of wisdom was observed by Finn O’Murchu. Joan Russell, Finn and myself had talked at the beginning of the process that we needed to engage/involve as many stakeholders as possible. Finn noticed, somewhat ironically, that perhaps it was because we did not involve stakeholders that we arrived to where we are...to engage in a ten-year celebration. We did not get caught up in the inevitable complexities within the politics and personalities of change...we floated between and amongst those organizations...they left us alone yet we kept them informed and invited them to travel with us. Now, however, as the program starts to take on more of a life on its own, we can see that we need other stakeholders to extend the program in more innovative ways.

Last year three principals from the primary schools graduated from the programme. These graduates will guide and assist us in tailoring the programme and the delivery to ensure that it meets the needs of the primary school curriculum and the contextual setting of a primary school, as an organisation focussed on leading learning. We are looking at possible ways to engage more with primary.

Joan Russell has engaged with six Education Centres with a focus on providing training and support for the primary sector. The proposed model will provide for a number of primary teachers, in partnership with the Education Centres, to participate in the IL Programme and to be trained as facilitators, who in turn will facilitate the delivery of the programme as a summer course for primary teachers in July 2019. The training of the facilitators will commence in October 2018 and conclude in March 2019, running alongside the post-primary/FE Cohorts in Tullow, Co Carlow.

Tomás O Ruairc, Director of the Teaching Council has provided a larger systemic voice to our efforts to change the dynamics in classrooms and has afforded endless support. We are delighted that Tomás and his colleagues will be working with us as we journey with the primary school sector. It is our intention to work, with the Teaching Council, alongside the development of Cosán (the new national framework for teachers’ learning) and overtly guide the participants in engaging in ‘self-reflective learning’.

In a parallel programme to our own, the Teachers’ Union in Western Australia, has, for the last twenty years been a powerful provider of ‘system’ teacher training in the area of instruction and classroom management. They shifted to include working with their members in the design of more powerful classrooms. Pat Burns, the past president of the Australian Teachers’ Union and now the president of the Western Australian Teacher’s Union came and spoke to us last year at our first International Conference. The focus of her talk was on the role of union in the professional development of teachers over the last twenty years.

We also see the school inspectors as powerful agents of classroom and school change; to have them involved in providing feedback to teachers related to aspects of the programme

would be a powerful change force; we know of no other country that has this potential with school inspectors; countries like Canada, Australia, and Finland (one of the highest performing countries in the world) do not have school inspectors. We have witnessed some subject inspection and MML reports that have lauded the school's engagement with the programme. Imagine the powerful conversations that could take place if there was further engagement between the IL Programme and the inspectorate.

In conclusion, a large number of educators are working wisely to make a difference in the life chances and learning chances of students. We have a lot to celebrate; what we accomplished is amazing. Nonetheless, although we are doing a lot 'right' we have a lot left to do to refine and extend our efforts. The challenge is to continue to pay attention to what we are doing, to analyze and assess our efforts, and to continue to listen to those involved and to always read about and learn from the efforts of others.

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NATIONAL CONFERENCES

THE INAUGURAL NATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE TOOK PLACE IN SEPTEMBER 2012 AND HAS SINCE BECOME AN ANNUAL EVENT IN THE IL CALENDAR, WITH TEACHERS COMING FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO SHARE PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS TO GAIN INSIGHT FROM THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS.

Conference:	Keynote Speaker:	Title of the Conference
2012	Dr. Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector with the Department of Education and Skills	Opening Classroom Doors – Instructional Leadership: Nurturing Excellence in Teaching & Learning
2013	Mr. Tomás O Ruairic, Director of the Teaching Council of Ireland	Let's talk about learning Instructional Leadership Supporting Teachers along the Continuum of Teacher Education
2014	Professor Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario Dr. Padraíg Hogan, Senior Lecturer, NUIM Mr. Anthony Malone, Lecturer, NUIM	Instructional Leadership: Building Professional Learning Communities
2015	Mr. Clive Byrne, Director of NAPD	Instructional Leadership Leading, Learning Together: Showing, Sharing, Engaging
2016	International Conference – guest speakers from Canada, South Western Australia, Germany, Italy and Ireland	Teachers Leading Systemic Change
2017	Professor Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario	Moving Towards a Whole School Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning
2017	Professor Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario	Moving Towards a Whole School Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning
2018		
2018	Tómas Ó Ruairic, Director of The Teaching Council Dr. Becky Saunders Barry Slattery, Director of Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA	Instructional Leadership Supporting Practice and Policy

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2012

OPENING CLASSROOMS DOORS - INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP: NURTURING EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

The first annual conference of the Instructional Leadership Programme was held in the Mount Wolseley Hotel in Tullow on the 12th and 13th October 2012, with the theme: “Opening Classroom Doors – Instructional Leadership: Nurturing Excellence in Teaching & Learning”. This theme was chosen in the context of policy developments in Irish education, including the focus on school self-evaluation.

In her opening address, themed ‘The Big Picture’, the chairperson of the Steering Committee and CEO of Co Cork VEC, Ms. Joan Russell, reminded delegates of the extent to which the programme dovetailed neatly with the proposed self-evaluation model, particularly in relation to the emphasis on teachers in schools learning from and with each other, as peers and as teacher educators.

The Chief Inspector of the DES Inspectorate, Dr. Harold Hislop gave the keynote address on the 12th October. A series of workshops followed the keynote address facilitated by participants of the programme.

Reflecting on Instructional Leadership in our Schools for teachers	Gerard O’Sullivan, Davis College
Reflecting on Instructional Leadership in our Schools for management	Breda Sunderland, Deputy Principal Athy College and Rosaleen O’Neill, Principal Avondale Community College
Instructional Leadership & Team Teaching	Sarah Buckley and Maire Ni Laoire of McEgan College
Instructional Leadership & Self Evaluation	Eugene Power, Principal of St. Declan’s CC, Kilmacthomas, and Carmel Kelly, Principal of Listowel CC



NATIONAL CONFERENCE – INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP
**"Opening Classroom Doors – Instructional Leadership:
Nurturing Excellence in Teaching & Learning".**

Mount Wolseley Hotel, Spa & Golf Resort, Tullow, Co. Carlow
12th & 13th October 2012

PROGRAMME
FRIDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2012

5.30pm	Tea/Coffee & Registration
6.00pm	Steering Committee Presentation
	"The Big Picture" – Ms. Joan Russell, Chairperson of the IL National Steering Committee
6.30pm	Key Note Speaker
Self	"Driving the Effective School – IL as the foundation for Evaluation & Team Teaching"
	Dr. Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector, DoESk
	Followed by Plenary Session
8.30pm	Dinner



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2013

*LET'S TALK ABOUT LEARNING; IL CREATING THE CULTURE
TO ENHANCE PROFESSIONAL CONSERVATIONS ALONG THE
CONTINUUM OF TEACHER EDUCATION*

The second annual conference of the Instructional Leadership Programme took place in the Mount Wolseley Golf Club, Tullow, Co Carlow, on Friday 11 and Saturday 12 October 2013.

The Director of the Teaching Council, Tomás Ó Ruairc, delivered the keynote address on the Friday evening while workshops on Saturday explored the role of the ILP to support teacher professional development in schools and centres.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE

LET'S TALK ABOUT LEARNING

*INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SUPPORTING
TEACHERS ALONG THE CONTINUUM OF
TEACHER EDUCATION*

PROGRAMME

FRIDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2013

5.30pm-6.30pm	Registration
6.30pm-8.30pm	Welcome from the President of ETBI Address from the Chairperson of the National Steering Committee Key Note Speaker - Mr. Tomás Ó Ruairc, Director, Teaching Council
8.30pm	Plenary Session chaired by Ms. Joan Russell Dinner



SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER 2013

9.00am-9.30am	Registration
9.30am-9.45am	National Picture of the Continuum of Education – Finn Ó Murchú, DoESk Inspector
9.45am-11.00am	Instructional Leadership supporting the work of NIPT – Mr. Billy Redmond
11.00am-11.30am	Tea/Coffee
11.30am-12.30pm	Workshop – Reflection on the following: As an IL school, how are we responding to the needs of the NQT or the newly appointed teacher and 2 the continuous professional development of the existing teacher in terms of learning?
12.30pm-1.15pm	Lunch
1.15pm-1.30pm	Instructional Leadership: The Foundation for a Professional Learning Community – Dr. Breda Sunderland, Deputy Principal, Athy College, Co. Kildare
1.30pm-2.30pm	School Presentations: IL & the NQT – Ms. Orla Cronin, Avondale Community College, Co. Wicklow IL Creating & Developing Effective Learning Environments – Mr. John O'Connor, Principal, Coláiste na Sceilge, Co. Kerry IL Supporting a Professional Dialogue – Mr. Eugene Power, Principal, St. Declan's Community College. Co. Waterford
	Reflection
2.30pm-4.00pm	Change Management – Mr. Gerard O'Sullivan, Deputy Principal, Davis College, Mallow, Co. Cork

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP: BUILDING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

The theme reflected the focus of leading change in our schools, a change that is central to the successful realisation of the goals of Instructional Leadership.

Professor Barrie Bennett delivered the keynote address at the Instructional Leadership Programme National Conference in October 2014. The title of Barrie's keynote

'Managing change is chess; Exploring the key patterns that you have to respect if you really want to do something that works.'

- Dr Pádraig Hogan of Maynooth College also attended and delivered an address entitled: 'To fresh woods and pastures new: opening up the landscapes of teaching and learning'
- Jerry McCarthy, working with the JCSP support service, facilitated a workshop on how IL can support the implementation of a numeracy strategy in schools

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

2014



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Education & Training
Boards Ireland
Boird Oideachais &
Ollsúna Éireann



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP programme

“Instructional Leadership: Building Professional Learning Communities”


FRIDAY, 26TH AND SATURDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2014

MOUNT WOLSELEY HOTEL, SPA & COUNTRY CLUB
TULLOW, CO. CARLOW

FRIDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

6:00 pm
[Registration](#) - Tea & Coffee available

6:30 pm
[Opening Address](#)
Ms. Joan Russell,
Chairperson, IL Steering Committee

6:45 pm
Dr. Barrie Bennett,
Professor Emeritus,
Ontario Institute for Studies at the
University of Toronto

[“Managing Change is Chess”](#)
Exploring the key patterns that you have to respect if
you really want something to work

8:15 pm
[Close](#)

8:30 pm
[Dinner](#)




SATURDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER

9:00 am [Registration](#)

9:30 am
Instructional Leadership supporting the development and
implementation of a [Numeracy Strategy](#)
Mr. Jerry McCarthy

10:30 am [Coffee](#)

11:00 am
Dr. Pádraig Hogan,
Senior Lecturer, Education Department,
NUIM.

[To Fresh Woods and Pastures
New - Opening up the Landscapes
of Teaching and Learning](#)

12:30 pm
[I.L. leading & informing the Irish Department.](#)
One teacher's experience of using IL to lead and inform the
Irish Department in a school
Ms. Michelle Hession, Davitt College, Castlebar, Co. Mayo

[My experience of Professional Development
through the implementation of I.L. at School Level](#)
One teacher's experience of enhancing her pedagogy
through the professional learning community in her school.
Ms O' Callaghan, Davis College, Mallow, Co Cork

1:30 pm
[Plenary with the Expert Panel](#)

2:00 pm
[Close of Conference and Lunch](#)

REGISTER

Email Ms. Clare Creedon c Creedon@instructionalleadership.ie Places will be offered on a first come first served basis

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2015

*INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP LEADING LEARNING
TOGETHER; SHOWING, SHARING, ENGAGING*

Dr Clive Byrne, NAPD Director delivered the keynote address and graduates of the programme shared their experiences of changing their classroom practice as a result of their engagement in the IL programme. Graduates also shared their experiences of facilitating professional conversations in their school using Instructional leadership as the vehicle.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2015



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP programme

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

LEADING LEARNING TOGETHER: SHOWING, SHARING, ENGAGING

**MOUNT WOLSELEY HOTEL, SPA & COUNTRY CLUB
TULLOW, CO. CARLOW**

FRIDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER

The opening of the Conference will include presentations from Dr. Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus University of Ontario, Mr Clive Byrne, Director NAPD, Ms. Joan Russell, Chairperson, National Steering Committee for Instructional Leadership and a plenary session.

SATURDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER

This part of the Conference aims to give you the opportunity to attend two workshops that would best serve your needs and your experience. There will be four workshops running parallel between 9am–11am from which you choose to attend one. These workshops will be repeated between 11.30am–1.30pm to give you an opportunity to attend another.

1. IL supporting you as a Principal/Deputy Principal or Assistant Principal/Special Duties Teacher

This session will explore how Instructional Leadership enhances, supports and promotes your role as a member of the senior or middle management team.

2. Introduction to Instructional Leadership.

This session will give an overview of the programme through the practical application of some of the skills, strategies and tactics that form part of the programme. It is an ideal workshop for those who have not yet completed the programme.

3. Let's Share: How we are using IL in our Classrooms.

In this session teachers will share their classroom experiences and resources across a range of subjects.

4. IL Cracking the staffroom: facilitating the IL conversation

In this session graduates will share their experience of how they shared their IL experiences within their own school, towards building a professional learning community to enhance learning & teaching.



Cost: €100 pp. This cost includes Dinner & B/B on Friday night 25th Sept, Lunch on Saturday 26th and Conference Registration Fee

REGISTER

You can register or express interest by emailing your details to admin@instructionalleadership.ie



KEYNOTE ADDRESS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2015

CLIVE BYRNE, NAPD DIRECTOR

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to address conference. I know we have a mixed audience but everybody here aspires to be in a leadership role promoting teaching and learning. School climate isn't great at the moment and often it is difficult being an advocate for change. There is still the perception in many schools that the teacher is king in his or her own classroom and it seems to me that the concept of peer support & peer review is the exception rather than the rule. For school leaders to promote instructional leadership the atmosphere in the classroom and the staffroom is key. Although many school leaders may be reluctant to innovate at the moment, my advice to them is to start small and build - sow the seed and it will grow. Create a happy place for students who will love learning and teachers who will love teaching.

I am convinced that there are a number of systemic barriers to enable change. The number of schools in the first instance is a big problem and competition rather than collaboration between schools is a major concern. Unfortunately in many schools there is also a lack of collaboration between teaching colleagues combined with a reluctance to share resources and ideas. In our current curriculum it seems to me that there is little or no joined up thinking but I'm hopeful that this is changing and the movement towards junior cycle reform will encourage the adoption of new teaching, learning and

assessment methodologies. It is regrettable that streaming still exists in many year groups despite research showing that results for the top students are not markedly higher but that the negative effects on students in the lower streams is worrying.

We need to change from exam driven book learning and teaching to the test so that we can reassure parents that the world won't come to an end if their son or daughter is assessed by one terminal exam.

Finland and Estonia are often quoted as role models and there is no doubt that Ireland has things to learn from the experience of such countries but I recall a conversation with a Finnish Professor of Education who remarked that Finnish 15 year old kids don't read books and don't like school.

NAPD is an unashamed supporter of junior cycle reform. Why is my association so in favour? It's because we are convinced that senior cycle reform (which is the great prize) won't happen until junior cycle reform is successfully embedded and embraced by parents.

In my role as President of the European School Heads Association I meet many colleagues from many education systems. Education is a national competence rather than a European one in the EU but I would really like to debunk the myth articulated by many Irish voices that what we're attempting at junior cycle level in Ireland is radical. It isn't. It's the norm in many other countries. We are so lucky in Ireland with the quality of our teachers but we need to ask ourselves what makes a good teacher? What makes a good class? Can we adapt to the challenge of the one hour timetable and what will be the implications for the school day.

We are also very lucky to have a very professional and forward looking inspectorate for our schools. If I'm honest I would have to admit that unsatisfactory teaching as discovered during inspections was enabled to flourish as a result of unsatisfactory leadership in our schools. It may be hard to believe but there have been 700 changes in senior leadership in our post-primary schools in the last 5 years. The attractiveness of the role of principal is often questioned but for the most part school leader colleagues still in the system are for the most part up for it.

The establishment of the Centre for School Leadership as a collaboration between the professional associations and the Department is a tremendous opportunity to develop principals and deputy principals. Support in the areas of mentoring will be of benefit for newly appointed and serving colleagues. Professional dialogue will be further enhanced by a willingness to induct & support new colleagues but it is disappointing to note that funds available for substitution by involvement in the NIPT and Droichead programmes have not been drawn down. There is no doubt that the teaching unions' role during an era of industrial unrest is very important. It may be that many colleagues are unhappy with the role the unions are taking but I'm a great believer in the comment by President Bartlett in the TV drama "The West Wing" when he remarked that "decisions are made by people who

turn up”!

The principal’s role is pivotal to the success of this endeavour but it cannot be done alone. Time must be created for a curriculum relevant to the school context. An innovative timetable must be created for each class. Additional support and teaching resources must be provided. The economic downturn has decimated the middle-leadership post structure in many schools leading to a breakdown in pastoral support for many students and an increase in ill-discipline. The school leader needs to espouse and develop a cooperative culture where coping skills to encourage collaboration between colleagues is the norm.

We need to explain the language of assessment and generate templates in how to do it. We need to generate subject department guidelines where every teacher in the department is a leader in their classroom with the mindset to encourage every student to be a leader responsible for their own learning. Advice on record keeping, developing data gathering techniques, how best to interpret data and information on ways to make the best use of data obtained is also vital.

Who best to spread the message? I believe we should explore a reform advocacy forum involving the likes of Lord Puttnam, Professor Briain MacCraith, Professor Tom Collins, Sr Stan & representatives from big business. Such a grouping needs to be more vocal to explain the rationale for change. The Instructional Leadership Programme is making a difference in how we approach teaching and learning in our schools. I welcome the expansion of the programme to the other second level sectors. Continuing professional dialogue is the way to go and I wish the programme every success.



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016

*TEACHERS LEADING SYSTEMIC CHANGE: COLLABORATIVELY
DEVELOPING POWERFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING
ENVIRONMENTS IN OUR CLASSROOMS TO MAXIMISE
LEARNING FOR ALL*

Teachers Leading Systemic Change: Collaboratively Developing Powerful Teaching and Learning Environments in our Classrooms to maximise Learning for all, was chosen as the theme for the Conference. The Conference aimed to capture how the IL graduates are leading systemic change, at varying levels within the education system, for the enrichment of learning. The programme for the event was designed to offer an opportunity to look out and learn from abroad as well as from what is happening at home. It is about developing a culture of sharing best practice through engaging conversations.

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€325pp if booked and paid on or before June 30th.
€360pp after June 30th.
Price includes B&B, Meals, Resources and access to workshops and presentations.



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP programme

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

ON 20TH - 22ND OCTOBER 2016 IN

THE MOUNT WOLSELEY HOTEL, SPA AND GOLF RESORT, TULLOW, CO. CARLOW



TEACHERS LEADING SYSTEMIC CHANGE:

COLLABORATIVELY DEVELOPING POWERFUL TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO MAXIMISE LEARNING FOR ALL



THURSDAY 20TH OCTOBER 2016

3.00pm - 4.30pm Registration
SESSION 1: 5.00pm - 7.00pm

Welcome & Introductions	Mr. Michael Moriarty, General Secretary, Education & Training Board, Ireland.
Official Opening	(To be announced)
Putting Instructional Leadership in Context - The Curriculum and Future Landscape	Professor John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus of Education, NUI, Maynooth.
Building a Systemic Culture that Facilitates Teacher Learning and Leadership	Professor David Hopkins, Professor Emeritus at the University of London

Dinner will be served at 8.00pm in the Austin Suite

FRIDAY 21ST OCTOBER 2016

8.45am - 9.15am Registration
SESSION 2: 9.15am - 11.00am

Teaching to Learn, Learning to Teach: challenges and opportunities for professional leadership.	Mr. Tomás O'Ruairc, Director of the Teaching Council of Ireland
The Instructional Leadership Programme in Ireland: our journey and how it has made a difference in our classrooms.	Ms. Joan Russell, Project Officer for Instructional Practices, ETBI and Chairperson of the Instructional Leadership Steering Committee
The student Voice, Teacher Voice and the Voice of Management.	Ms. Carmen Druyen, Teacher for English and Languages and Coach at the 'Teacher' Trainer College (ZfSL) in Oberhausen & Counsellor for School Development
The Duisberg Project: Chances and Limitations of Cooperative School Development.	Ms. Carmen Druyen, Teacher for English and Languages and Coach at the 'Teacher' Trainer College (ZfSL) in Oberhausen & Counsellor for School Development
Plenary session	

11.00am Tea/Coffee Break

SESSION 3: 11.30am - 1.00pm

The Role of Teacher Unions in the Professional Development of Teachers, the Canadian Experience.	Ms. Joanne Myers, Elementary Teachers' Federation, Ontario, Canada.
The Role of Teacher Unions in the Professional Development of Teachers, Western Australian Experience.	Ms Pat Byrne, President, State Schools Teachers' Union of Western Australia
Plenary session	

1.00pm - Lunch

SESSION 4: 2.00pm - 4.30pm

Workshop	Five Missing Things Re-Student Assessment
	Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario, Canada

7.00pm - Drinks Reception in the Aeron Lounge
Courtesy of the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Spa and Golf Resort

7.45pm - Dinner in the Austin Suite

SATURDAY 22ND OCTOBER 2016

9.00am - 9.30am Registration
SESSION 5: 9.30am - 11.30am

Workshop 1	Conversations with Teachers - How to have a rich, deep conversation with teachers about the design of powerful learning environments Professor Barrie Bennett
Workshop 2	Identifying the Barriers to Learning and an Introduction to one tactic to overcome 'Tiredness as a Barrier'. Colaise Mhuir, Curriculum at Carlow School, O'Dwyer Colaise Mhuir, Buttrick's Co. Cork
Workshop 3	Building Identity, Creating Community while having Fun. An exploration of how Dominican College developed an annual Friendship Week. Mr Joe Curry, Ms Stobhill Grogan, Ms. Lorraine McCool, Dominican College, Griffith Avenue, Dublin.
Workshop 4	Skills, Tactics and Strategies to enhance Teaching & Learning in the Modern Language Classroom; a focus on oral skills Ms. Carmen Druyen, Ms. Paola Debernardi, A teacher of English in State Secondary Schools in Italy and American Literature.
Workshop 5	Teacher Leadership in the 21 st Century Dr. Becky Saunders, Murdoch University School of Education, Perth, Australia.

11.30am Tea/Coffee Break in the Riley Suites

SESSION 6: 12noon - 2.00pm in the Austin Suite

Observations and Guidance - Schools creating systemic change in the leading of Teaching and Learning	Professor David Hopkins
Formal Response	Professor Barrie Bennett
Closing Remarks and Presentations	Joan Russell

2.00pm Close of Conference with Celebratory Lunch in the Aeron Lounge





DR. DAVID HOPKINS

Dr. David Hopkins is currently Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Bolton, as well as being Professor Emeritus at the Institute of Education, University College London and the University of Nottingham. David is passionately committed to improving the quality of education for all and has worked at the intersection of policy, research and practice for over forty years. Among a range of educational roles, he has been Chief Adviser to three secretaries of state for education on School Standards in the UK, Dean of Education at the University of Nottingham, a secondary school teacher and Outward Bound Instructor. David helped found the National College for School Leadership, consults internationally on school reform and holds visiting professorships at universities around the world. David is also the founder of the Adventure Learning Schools Charity; and despite two new knees, still practises occasionally as an International Mountain Guide. He has recently completed his school improvement trilogy with the publication of *Exploding the Myths of School Reform*; the previous books being *School Improvement for Real* (2001) and *Every School a Great School* (2007). David was recently ranked as the 16th most influential educator in the world by the American based Global Gurus organisation.



DR. CARMEN DRUYEN

Carmen is a former teacher of English, Pedagogics and Psychology at a Gymnasium in Duisburg. She is a Coach at the Teacher Trainer College (ZfsL) in Oberhausen and a Trainer for Cooperative Learning. Carmen is also a Counsellor for School Development.

Carmen's prestation at the conference was called The Duisberg Project... Chances and Limitations of Cooperative School Development.

The presentation portrayed the attempt to form a network of schools that promote the use of cooperative learning and work in all areas of school life in order to enhance democratic and self-determined learning processes. Between 2002 and 2008 the NRW ministry of education together with the Bertelsmann Foundation started an educational project to give schools more freedom and resources to realize their own profiles. Various kinds of trainings were offered to support school leaders, teachers and steering groups in this process. In this context they were offered trainings in Cooperative Learning and Teaching. In 2006 trainings started for 13 schools, that had decided to make CL an integral part of their school development.

FROM TOURIST TO CITIZEN

A REFLECTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016

DR CARMEN DRUYEN

In October 2016 I was invited to an ETBI conference to present our school development project in Duisburg, NRW, Germany. Similar to ETBI, though at a much smaller scale, we had tried to push school development in schools in the Duisburg area to improve teaching and learning by implementing cooperative learning. I was happy to be able to share our experience with the ETBI community, even though our project had ended less successfully than the Irish project.

After Norm Green from Durham, Ontario, Canada had won the Bertelsmann Prize for Innovative in 1996, he and his wife did a lot of teacher trainings in Germany and finally came to our part in NRW (North-Rhine Westfalia). My colleague Thomas Kremers and I could take part in their *teacher trainings* and then in a *teach the teacher training*. When they presented their Durham process and the systematic implementation of cooperative learning in the Durham schools we realized that it takes more than a few activities to create an environment of successful teaching and learning.

As we often experience that students do not get involved in school life but come and go without taking responsibility for their learning, we had the idea to turn tourists into citizens by implementing cooperative learning and teaching. As it takes more than one or a few teachers of a school to bring about change, we soon understood that doing workshops for only a few teachers from one school was not enough. We envisioned a democratic school where teachers were considered autonomous and collaborative learners who could help students become successful autonomous achievers. In such a

system it is crucial that principals accept their role as committed supporters of teacher and student learning, knowing that the whole process takes time and affords resources from within and without.

In 2005, we were lucky to be asked to become part of the NRW Project “Independent Schools” in Duisburg. The project met our ideas of school development and we could recruit teachers from 15 schools of different school forms. As a first measure we informed school leaders, members of steering groups and interested teachers by presenting short exemplary training sessions of 4 hours. Then the schools could decide whether to send 3-10 teachers from each school and to begin with we did two-days-trainings for teacher teams.

From 2006 – 2007, we were asked to do more trainings and it became obvious that two days of training were not enough support to implement cooperative learning successfully. As a team of two trainers, however, we could not meet all these demands. So we offered the schools trainings for *multipliers* (3 teachers from each school). They were meant to support initiative teams to establish meetings and find opportunities for sharing.

The project ended in 2008. Because of the change of government school policies were altered, the project was abandoned and trainings were not supported any longer. Nevertheless, schools kept asking for trainings and so we went on giving workshops for multipliers and doing trainings for trainers.

In 2014 my colleague interviewed the teachers and head teachers of the schools that took part in the project. The result had a sobering effect: Only 3 schools out of 15 had developed their schools into collaborative systems. *Many of the* teachers, who took part in the trainings, still used cooperative learning but there was no collaboration beyond their own classrooms. Many of the teachers from the initiative teams stood individual gain and got promoted in their jobs. We had to acknowledge that we had succeeded in supporting individuals but had not succeeded in changing school culture.

Looking back, one can name several factors that had us fail in our endeavour to bring about change. As soon as government and principals stopped their investment in social capital the improvement of instruction and learning stopped. There were no more follow-up trainings at a regular basis, no support for team meetings, lack of long term goals and time for development; supportive assessment had been replaced by control and trust by central testing and bench marking. School policy fell back on creating teacher accountability by using standards, rewards and punishment. The result was fading instructional improvement and lack of intrinsic motivation of teachers and students. All in all sad tidings to bring to a conference where everybody was so happily involved in improving learning, but maybe a warning never to underestimate the role of superiors in school policy, principals when it comes to investing in the schools’ social capital.

“From Tourist to Citizen” was the opening phrase I used in my presentation of the “Duisburg Project”, in order to describe our objective to hold students responsible for their own learning. In the course of the conference, however, I realized that I, too, had come as a tourist - on a mission - but after three days of sharing and learning I had become a citizen of the learning community of ETBI.

Professors from universities in Ireland and England, teachers, Union members from Canada and Australia had come to share their research and visions. Students and their teachers told their stories of change in learning and teaching. All those stories created a quilt of success, hope and pride. Key-note speeches, presentations, workshops and time to share views and experiences were inspiring. The will to learn from each other was the undercurrent that had all of us share our objectives, expectations, expertise, dreams and even disappointments and created a feeling of belonging. Joan Russell and her assistant Paula Fitzgerald had organized a conference that made it possible for everybody to feel at ease, involved and appreciated.

Dr. Barrie Bennett, who had supported the Irish ETBI project from the first moment, has most certainly been key to its overwhelming success. He gave us an example of his mastery of juggling with concepts, skills, tactics, strategies and instructional organizers and made everybody wish to learn more and improve their own teaching. Mastery also showed in the presentations in the workshops, where teachers from various schools gave insight into their work with students. Paola Debernardi from Italy and I were happy to share activities wrapped around language teaching with teachers from all kinds of schools and systems in our own workshop.

After three days of sharing values and views of teaching and instructional leadership, I left wishing to learn more and to give something in return to support teachers on their way to form a better school for better learning. And, I’m happy to say that our workshop finally resulted in a workshop on collaborative structures at St. Davies School in Greystones that we held in February 2018 for a group of 15 teachers.

I am grateful for the opportunity of having taken part in the conference and of becoming a member of cohort 9. There I met the many committed people, who are now celebrating the tenth anniversary of their project. The spark of instructional leadership could light a torch that has been handed from school to school and from teacher to teacher. Be proud of your story of success and may you not tire of keeping the spirit of meaningful teaching and learning alive – against all political oddities that might challenge you now or in days to come. I sincerely congratulate the whole ETBI community on their successful work over the last 10 years.

DR. CARMEN DRUYEN,

Krefeld, NRW, Germany



JOANNE MYERS

Ms Joanne Myers is a member of the executive staff in the Professional Learning/ Curriculum Services/Department at the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario. She organises and presents at a variety of professional development programmes for educators across the province. Some of her programmes include:

the Classroom Assessment That Works series, the Inspire and Inquire workshop series, the Professional Learning Chair Training, the Intermediate conferences for teachers teaching grades 6 - 8, and the Financial Management conferences. Joanne also coordinates the ETFO Summer Academy program collaboratively with her ETFO colleagues. She is currently developing an online ETFO assessment website and was a co-writer for the ETFO resource titled I am the Teacher. At ETFO she is the staff representative for assessment and reporting with the Ontario Ministry of Education. Joanne also helps to organise and presents at the Ontario Ministry of Education Program, Teacher Learning and Leadership. (TLLP) Prior to her position at ETFO, Joanne taught in the York Region District School Board. She also instructed courses for the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/ University of Toronto (OISE/UT) for over 15 years. Joanne instructed AQ courses for OISE/UT in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. She enjoys sharing her passion for teaching and learning with educators across the province, and now in here in Ireland, where her family is from.

THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY INSTRUCTIONAL HEART

A REFLECTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE 2016

JOANNE MYERS

I had the great pleasure to attend and take part in the October 2016 International Conference. As a Canadian educational leader and executive staff officer at the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), it was an honour to be included in the conference agenda. The conference programme celebrated the 8 years of collaboration in developing powerful teaching and learning environments in classrooms.

Prior to my position at ETFO, I was an instructional leader in the York Region District School Board. I was closely involved in the 5 year Instructional Intelligence programme led by Dr. Barrie Bennett. My meaningful work with Barrie at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education and in York Region provided me with familiarity around the Instructional Leadership Programme spearheaded by the Educational and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).

I was immediately impressed by the overall organization of the conference and the pre-conference planning that I was involved in over here in Canada. Joan Russell sent me a wealth of background information about ETBI and the priorities of the programme. It was obvious from the start that it was going to be a valuable partnership as we moved forward sharing our learning and experiences around leadership and systematic change. Joan took the time to spend hours on the phone with me to outline the Instructional Leadership (IL) journey to date and describe where it was heading in the future. Joan's dedication to the programme was inspiring. The commitment to the vision and goals of IL were remarkable and I was also impressed by the length of time that the ETBI/IL team had invested in this

project. The 8 year focus was definitely supportive of the research around sustainable learning. I felt invested in the programme and the conference myself before ever arriving in Ireland.

I was very excited to be speaking about the partnership between the ETFO Provincial Office and the Ontario Ministry of Education. ETFO is the largest teachers' union in Canada with approximately 80,000 members. ETFO is unique in that it is a professional union that has developed a collaborative partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Education in order to organize and run a variety of high quality professional courses, workshops, and conferences across the province with enhanced funding provided by the Ministry. My talk outlined the priorities of our union and the extensive work we do within our Professional Learning/Curriculum Services Department to engage members in educational leadership, promote equity and social justice, and support best practice in our classrooms.

My conference experience was a professional learning journey from start to finish. Michael Moriarty was a very supportive and informative host. His pride and passion for the program was evident in all that he shared. The conference organization promoted international networking and sharing of best practices through motivational presentations and engaging conversations. I was not surprised to observe how much we had in common in terms of building a systemic culture that facilitates teacher learning and teacher leadership. We shared similar challenges and beliefs around the importance of cooperative learning, instructional intelligence, and the development of powerful learning environments for our students.

The inclusion of the student voice, teacher voice and the voice of management brought the learning journey to life and the impact that the programme had on the teachers and students in classrooms across Ireland was motivational and astounding.

The goal to develop stronger connections between primary and post-primary was achieved as observed through the presentations and conversations.

I continue to email back and forth with Principals and Deputy Principals and other conference delegates to share new learning and to discuss relevant pedagogy.

I was also delighted to hear, that following my keynote at the conference, one branch of the TUI had afforded their members an opportunity to apply for a bursary to enhance their professional learning. This is a step in the right direction for the growth of positive professional partnerships.

In closing, my experience at the International Conference at the Mount Wolseley Hotel was a highlight in my career. The worldwide professional learning, networking, and sharing started there on October 20, 2016 and continue on today. I will continue to share educational strategies and tools with new colleagues in Ireland and in Germany. I am so appreciative of the experience and the opportunity I had to share ETFO's role in professional leadership and learning. Thank you from the bottom of my instructional heart!

JOANNE MYERS



DR. BECKY SAUNDERS

Becky has been involved in instructional leadership for over 10 years. Working as a senior project manager for the Western Australian Department of Education and Training, she established and managed the first systemic change instructional intelligence professional development programme for tertiary teachers. The four-year programme resulted in the creation of instructional leadership teams in all 11 vocational and further education colleges across the state of Western Australia.

In 2008 Becky left the department to work as an independent consultant where she designed and lead district- wide systemic instructional change initiatives for teachers in primary and high schools, and adult vocational education institutions. She recently completed her PhD in instructional intelligence, teacher professional

development and systemic educational change and has published research papers in each of these areas. Her work was recognised by the American Education Research Association (AERA) when she won the Outstanding Graduate Student in Educational Change Award in 2013. Becky continues to consult with public departments of education and training, schools, colleges and universities on instruction and change. She's currently based at Murdoch University, Australia, where she is the Academic

Chair for postgraduate teaching qualifications in tertiary and adult education and the Masters of Education programme. She lectures in, and coordinates units on instruction, effective teaching strategies, action research and assessment and educational psychology. She also continues to pursue her research interests in instruction, the relationship between systemic change and complexity theory and teacher emotions in the context of change.

IN SEARCH OF THE HOLY GRAIL OF SYSTEMATIC INSTRUCTIONAL CHANGE:

*THE BITTERSWEET TASTE OF THE QUEST
A REFLECTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE 2016*

DR REBECCA SAUNDERS

It was on flight from Perth to London some years ago that it finally dawned on me that there was something different, something special about the Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) in Ireland. I was travelling with Barrie Bennett, he was on his way to Ireland to work with the ILP folks and I was heading to the north of England to visit my family. As we exchanged farewells at Heathrow airport I realised Barrie had been speaking for almost the entire journey about his work in Ireland. The way he talked about Ireland was different to the way he spoke about other projects, and I had a hunch it wasn't just about the Guinness or the lure of the beautiful spa resort where the workshops took place. It was if the ILP in Ireland had a different kind of magic, a magic all of its own.

I've worked with Barrie since 2004 and whenever he visited the shores of Western Australia he always brought tales of systemic change and instructional leadership initiatives and from afar. I've listened intently over the years as I've come to know individual schools, personalities and politics, all through the lens of systemic change. I've heard of the meteoric rise of districts, administrators, and teachers – accounts of those who achieved incredible things, only to hear years later, of the sad decline of projects that held such promise. Somehow Ireland was never absent from Barrie's stories and the

narrative seem to grow, slowly at first, organically from small unassuming beginnings into something which held a tantalizing glimmer of hope, the potential to reach the Holy Grail of instructional change initiatives – the “institutionalisation” of change. For me, this was bittersweet, sweet because it was uplifting and motivating to hear about the successes but bitter because it was something we had worked so hard to achieve for over 20 years in Western Australia, but have never managed. As I made my way through the airport, I reflected back on the journey I and so many other like-minded and passionate teachers had taken.

In 2005 I was working as a senior project manager at the Western Australian Department of Education and Training (WADET). I was responsible for designing, facilitating and evaluating professional learning projects at a state and national level, for teachers working in the tertiary vocational education and training (VET) sector. At the time, Barrie had been working with his colleague Peter Smilanich in schools across Perth in the area of classroom management. My manager was interested in Barrie and Peter’s work and wanted to see if it might be suitable for teachers in the VET system. As she left for three months extended leave, she provided me with a budget of \$50,000 and told me that by the time she returned she wanted me to present the outcomes of a pilot project which I had to run with all 11 publically funded Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges in Western Australia (WA). My task was to find out if the sector wanted to proceed with a long-term instructional change professional development program.

The experiences that followed completely changed the direction of my professional life and career. Working with Barrie I designed a pilot program based on his program principles that included: (1) gaining support from the managing director of each college; (2) teachers attending in teams; (3) teachers experiencing new instructional methods and engaging with theory and research about instruction; (4) teachers trialing new instructional methods in their classrooms and reflecting on the process; and, (5) teachers meeting in teams to provide peer coaching.

The pilot was tremendously successful with teachers and administrators overwhelmingly voting to go ahead with the long-term instructional change program, and so it began. Teachers came in teams three times a year, for four years to the instructional change workshops, with the goal for each team to develop a sustainable model of professional development within their college. This was no mean feat, considering the state is 2.646 million km², for teachers based in remote communities in the Western Desert it took three days to get to Perth to attend workshops; two days in a car on unsealed roads, followed by a two and half hour flight. They were committed!

At the end of the four years 40 teachers had completed a total of 27 days of instructional training, which included, cooperative learning, instructional skills, tactics and strategies,

classroom management, educational change and Tribes Training Certification. In 2009 I led Cohort 2, another group of 40 teachers, from public and private colleges through the program with Barrie providing guest workshops when he visited each year. In 2011 we held the Instructional Intelligence Forum, which brought teachers from schools, colleges and private training organisations together to celebrate our achievements in Western Australia.

We thought we had done everything right, we had the support of the State School Teacher's Union of Western Australia (SSTUWA), the Department of Education and Training and the managing directors of each college. Teachers were fully funded to attend workshops and participate in activities and the model of professional learning and change used in the program was built on research-based principals. Despite all of this, despite the enthusiasm and momentum, seven years later the program had failed to embed systemically across the TAFE system. Implementation was sporadic across colleges as key people left and priorities changed in response to the latest political agenda. I left the Department to establish my own consultancy business and I finally succumbed to Barrie's call for me to engage in research and I enrolled in a PhD, examining the impact of the VET instructional change program.

Today, only one college has managed to sustain an ongoing instructional professional learning program. I've got my PhD, a job at a University and I've also got the answers to why we failed.

In his work on educational change Michael Fullan suggests that "institutionalisation" or "continuation", that is, embedding change into practice is the most difficult part of change process. Few districts, institutions, schools or organisations reach this Holy Grail of system change. Why? Well, because it's complex, it takes a long time and because we live and work within dynamic systems, which exist in constant flux, reacting to competing political agendas, funding and priorities.

My research identified that there were many things in the TAFE system that worked against us. One of our *fatal flaws* (as Barrie would put it) was a lack of understanding and support from middle management in the colleges. Whilst the managing directors were supportive and signed formal agreements with the Department, program managers who were charged with the day-to-day running of schools, staffing and curriculum, were not. Teachers were frequently blocked from completing program requirements such as peer coaching or attending workshops in Perth. Many teachers found it difficult to find the time to meet with their teams and this left them feeling isolated; they became lone implementers in their colleges. As individuals moved on from key positions in the Department and in colleges, momentum slowly began to wane and we were unable to sustain long-term change. Yes, we had passionate and creative teachers who had transformed their practice as a result of the program; in this sense change had worked perfectly at the individual level, but not the system level.

So when Barrie asked me to present at the Instructional Leadership Programme International Conference in Ireland 2016 that familiar bittersweet taste arose once more. “I’ve put you down for a presentation on instructional leadership and adult learning,” Barrie told me when we caught up in Perth over coffee, on a cold wintery day in mid 2016. I’d been resisting his powers of email persuasion for the past 6 months. I had no funding to travel to Ireland; I was in the middle of finishing my PhD and busy getting new units on instruction and Tribes up and running at the University. What could I present on? Did we really achieve much? Jealously crept in, “Why weren’t we as successful as Ireland, what could we contribute?” It certainly wasn’t due to a lack of passionate, skilled, hard working teachers and administrators or a lack of acting on what the research told us. I figured there was only one way to find out, and before too long, I’d submitted my conference application and my flight to Dublin was booked.

I decided to share one of our TAFE success stories at the conference. Central TAFE is one of the 11 colleges that has managed to create a sustainable model of instructional professional development and change across the whole institution. The *Instructional Intelligence Master Class Program* has been running for over 10 years and hundreds of staff have graduated from the training. The fully funded program is available to all academic staff and takes two cohorts a year, each program running over a semester. I wanted to share with the ILP community, what success could look like at a college or school level. It was clear what this college had done differently, what enabled success where others had failed. It was down to a managing director who took the time to meet and talk with Barrie and ask what he needed to do at a college level to support his staff. He developed a long-term vision for creating sustainable change within his institution and created fully funded a salaried staff position in the college to establish and run the program and coach staff. The position remains today and staff are released from duties to attend the program. Teachers are appropriately supported and the model is “institutionalized” within the organisation and there is an active and instructional leadership community within the college – teachers supporting teachers.

During the three days at the ILP International Conference I was welcomed into the Irish ILP community as if I was family. The generous hospitality of the ILP National Steering Committee and the teachers I met was humbling. One thing I have always enjoyed about the instructional leadership community is that regardless of what country you are in, you immediately feel like you belong. We speak the same language, we share the same purpose and vision for instruction and we all want to create the most powerful learning environments for students. At the Conference I was lucky enough to meet Dr Finn Ó Murchú from Mary Immaculate College and Dr Joseph Moynihan from University College Cork (UCC) and we have since established wonderful collegial relationships. I have conducted virtual online workshops from Australia in coaching with students undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Educational Leadership (PDEL) with Joe at UCC. Beaming into a classroom at UCC in Cork from half way around the world to run a workshop worked perfectly - much to all of our

surprise. In late 2017 when I returned to Ireland to attend the ILP National Conference, Joe invited me to UCC to run some face-to-face workshop on educational change and change agents for the PDEL course. Finn, Barrie and I began research work together and submitted a joint paper comparing the Irish and Australian system change experiences, which we presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) in New York in April this year. Without attending the ILP International Conference these collaborations and friendships would never have happened.

And so the journey for the Holy Grail continues, some of us are closer than others, and along the way we learn from each other and make some delightful connections. With the bitter comes the sweet, and with the sweet comes the bitter, because without one we would not know the other.

DR REBECCA SAUNDERS

Scholarly Teaching Fellow
School of Education
Murdach University
Western Australia


NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2017

MOVING TOWARDS A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING


The 2017 National Conference was held in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Carlow on the 13th and 14th October. The Theme of the Conference was Moving Towards A Whole-School Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning. Professor Barrie Bennett delivered the keynote speech - outlining the international experiences of leading teaching and learning in a whole school approach. This was followed by a series of workshops facilitated by graduates who shared how the Instructional Leadership Programme supported change in practices in their schools.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

Moving Towards a Whole-School Approach to Effective Teaching and Learning



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP programme



etbi
Education Training
Research Institute
School of Education &
Professional Development

Friday 13th October 2017

4.30pm	Registration
<u>Session 1:</u>	
6.00pm	Welcome & Official Opening
6.15pm	Workshop
	Instructional Leadership; Moving towards a whole-school approach - An International Perspective.
	Professor Barrie Bennett
8.00pm	Dinner

Saturday 14th October 2017

9.00am	Registration
<u>Session 2:</u>	
9.30am	Panel Discussion
	<i>The Instructional Leadership Programme and Me.</i>
10.45am	Professional Conversations over Tea & Coffee
11.30am - 1.30pm	Workshops
1.30pm	Plenary and close of Conference
2.00pm	Lunch


Delegates will attend one workshop.
Please email admin@instructionalleadership.ie

Workshop 1	<i>Leading Effective Change in Teaching & Learning; Moving Towards a Whole-School Approach</i>
Workshop 2	<i>The Instructional Leadership Programme; A Driver of Effective Feedback and Reflection in and across Classrooms</i>
Workshop 3	<i>Instructional Leadership Programme and Information Technology; An Approach to Leading Effective Teaching & Learning</i>
Workshop 4	<i>Instructional Leadership Programme; Maximising Learning in Extended Lesson Time</i>
Workshop 5	<i>Instructional Leadership Programme; Dynamic Examples of its Contribution to Initial & Ongoing Professional Learning</i>

National Conference 2017

Friday 13th & Saturday 14th October

The Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Carlow

 @ILProgramme
www.instructionalleadership.ie

ATHY COLLEGE

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY; AN APPROACH TO LEADING EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

RICHARD DALY

In his closing remarks at Mount Wolseley this year Barrie Bennett made reference to Google Classroom and how he was awestruck by it. Yes, IL and IT run in parallel and the pedagogy, concepts and strategies of Bennett's philosophy can be enhanced and delivered by harnessing the realm of technology.

We use Google, or G Suite for Education as it is now called, and through its diversity and simplicity we attempt to deliver a 21st learning experience. Collaboration, shared knowledge and teamwork are delivered through shared documents and shared folders.

As we move to changing the physical layout of our classrooms into groups of tables have we looked at our computer rooms? Once the envy of other departments, the legacy of design has left us with long industrial lines of networked computers sitting on laminate worktops with a myriad of cables, sockets and data points. But digital literacy demands that every classroom is, or can be, a computer room with the inclusion of portable devices. We have just attacked our first computer room and taken out the jungle of data and electric wiring, removed the kitchen worktop and replaced it with folding tables, chairs, Chromecast televisions and Chromecast. Now the former computer room is a modern digital space where students can sit in groups and collaborate on projects and present them on their group television. Group responses can also be cast to the larger teachers screen or the HDMI data projector.

Through Google Classroom students can work on individual versions of the class material either at home or in the classroom with each students work individualises. This differentiation is not public as each student can work independently.

Google Forms can receive and coordinate responses from individual students either for examination or for research. Each response is private and can be delivered without embarrassment.

The chosen device? We have a range of devices which the teacher controls by handing to the students when required. Devices do not need to be permanently on the students desks and should never be a distraction. We explored with MacBooks, iPads, Surface tablets and netbooks before settling on mainly Chromebooks. The attraction of these devices is that they are simple and can be exchanged between students. Once a student logs out of their account their information also vanishes and a new user, once logged in, can use the machine as their own.



CARRIGTWOHILL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME; A DRIVER OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION IN AND ACROSS CLASSROOMS

TADHG LONG

We opened our doors as a new school in Sept 2016 & welcomed 43 first year students. Currently we have just 1st and 2nd years onsite with 14 teaching staff. We have a fantastic opportunity to establish & engrain a teaching & learning framework within our College.

CURRENT STEPS:

1. Developing and implementing IL as the key driver in catering for student diversity within our student population

2. Aim to make teaching & learning within our College:

- Central
- Collaborative
- Engaging
- Enjoyable
- Purposeful

3. Staff meeting incorporating a brainstorm session regarding the central pillars to supporting teaching & learning framework in our College was conducted

- Enabled us to identify how IL fits into this framework

- Staff provided a list of skills & tactics, frequently used within their classrooms, that they would be happy to discuss, share & demonstrate in practice
- 3 tactics (placemat, ranking ladder and mind maps) were chosen as practice to focus on by all staff or remainder of term 1
- Development of a common language within our classrooms
- Build student awareness of & exposure to tactics
- Enrich teacher and student learning experience

Our belief: by developing & using a broad range of tactics & strategies in support of multiple intelligences it will, by default, lead to greater student engagement within the classroom & subsequently assist them in reaching their potential, i.e. achievement of our mission.

Going Forward:

1. Reflect on tactics and how they support & accommodate diversity
2. Use of IL as a common language through which we can deconstruct & analyse our practice



COLÁISTE CHOILM

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME; A DRIVER OF EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK AND REFLECTION IN AND ACROSS CLASSROOMS

MARIE O’SULLIVAN

Classroom observation was not an initiative that was new to Coláiste Choilm- in fact for many years, as part of our teacher induction programme, student teachers observe and are observed by their mentors and other staff members. Also, the introduction of team teaching to the school in 2011 provided opportunities for teachers to look at what is happening in their classrooms, alongside their colleagues. It has already been widely accepted in the school that teachers learn as much by observing others as by being observed themselves.

In early 2013 we were invited to participate in this NAPD and DES joint venture to explore the possibilities of creating a culture of observation in schools. We decided to grasp the opportunity, and to use it as a means to also enhance and extend two other projects already in motion, namely team teaching and the Instructional Leadership Programme.

In Coláiste Choilm eight members of staff were involved in this project which we decided to call ‘Sharing Best Practice’. (We were slightly concerned that the use of the word ‘observation’ in the title might prompt an association with the fear of being judged.) Many teachers are currently team teaching in two pairs and a significant cohort of staff have completed the Barrie Bennett programme. A team meeting in October of that year started the ball rolling. The team teaching pairs visited each other’s classrooms before Christmas. The instructional leadership graduates each chose a strategy to use with a class and invited their project colleagues to observe, again before Christmas. We decided to focus on student engagement and just simply identify ‘two things which worked well’ and ‘two things I learned’ from each class.

This template focused attention on the observer and the learner, it did not stand in judgement and led to openness and transparency. Additionally senior management are also teaching and were part of this group opening their doors to observation firstly.

Teachers recognised the importance of mutual trust, they gained confidence by showcasing their expertise and were greatly affirmed in their practice. The template prompted focused reflection and the organised post observation meetings led to great opportunities for professional discussion and professional learning.

In 2017 we re engaged with the process through a Leading Learning project with a second year cohort where we focus on learning styles and instructional methods with a particular grouping.

We have decided to visit each others classrooms post Christmas to view instructional methods at work and to learn as co conspirators through best practice, post observation discussions and dissemination of instructional practice.

We have found Peer Observation works where the focus is solely on learner benefit from instructional methods at work, where it is about the embedding of best practice conducted in a supportive collegial way.

CASTLEISLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME; DYNAMIC EXAMPLES OF IT'S CONTRIBUTION TO INITIAL AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

CARMEL KELLY

Here at Castleisland Community College we looked at “Dynamic examples of how Instructional Leadership supports Initial and on going Professional Learning .

Our vision is to hear all the voices of our stakeholders, using the Language of Pedagogy. We strive to use the Language of Pedagogy to support all the layers of school planning. These include:

- School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Croke Park time
- Kerry ETB Initiatives, including Induction for New Teachers
- Teaching and Learning school team
- Junior Certificate for Teachers, including embedding Key Skills and Statements of Learning in all subjects.
- Developing Schools Enriching Learning (DSEL) initiative, in conjunction with Kerry ETB .

Our goal, is to use one common Language of Pedagogy, from which all school planning emanates. We endeavour to streamline all the layers of planning, that come to our school door, using Instructional Leadership as the pulse from which all school planning is embedded, to support the initial and ongoing professional learning of teachers.



ST DAVID'S HOLY FAITH SECONDARY SCHOOL

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME; DYNAMIC EXAMPLES OF IT'S CONTRIBUTION TO INITIAL AND ONGOING PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

LORNA WILSON

“The presentation was aimed at giving the audience a snap shot of the Instructional Leadership Programme from the perspective of a first year PME student teacher and how it impacted my approach to teaching practise. Each slide represented a step in my journey as I travelled from my initial exposure to the Instructional Leadership Programme courtesy of being introduced to the concept of Instructional Leadership by my mentoring teacher in St. David's Secondary School Greystones Mr Gerry Maloney, right through to the conclusion of my first year's teaching practise. What I saw caused me to completely modify my approach to teaching in order to enhance student engagement and student learning. The presentation also featured adjustments that I made to established AFL techniques and methodologies such as adding a fourth 'blue' traffic light to identify students who not only understood the subject material, but felt confident enough to teach it to their peers. It also showed how the Instructional Leadership Programme changed my role in the classroom from being a teacher to a facilitator of student learning. This major adjustment, which resulted directly from my exposure to the Instructional Leadership Programme, has helped me to adapt my lesson plans to improve not only my classroom management techniques and teaching methods, but it has also helped me to elevate students' engagement and subsequently improve their learning.”



NAAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

LEADING EFFECTIVE CHANGE IN TEACHING AND LEARNING; MOVING TOWARDS A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

NCC runs a teaching and Learning club one morning a month in order to support teachers in the whole school implementation of IL practices. The 30 minutes session starts at 08.15 and is organised by the teaching and learning committee. This voluntary session is well attended and breakfast is provided as a means of encouraging staff to come along.

The approach is informal and teachers are encouraged to engage in conversation and share best practice. A different focus is chosen each month, for example; placemat, framing questions, concept attainment.

The morning begins with some brief input from one of the teachers who has completed or is currently engaged in the IL programme. The discussion then opens up as teacher discuss how they might implement this practice in their own classroom.

Each month, we also revisit the previous topic and have teachers share their experience of playing with it, in their own classroom. Teachers often bring along examples of student work or photographs to share with colleagues.



ST LEO'S COLLEGE, CARLOW

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME; MAXIMISING LEARNING IN EXTENDED LESSON TIME

VIVIENNE O'NEILL

St. Leo's College in conjunction with Killarney Community School presented a two hour workshop on maximising learning in extended lesson time. Our remit explored the use of Madeline Hunter lesson design.

Our school's specific focus was examples of lesson design through Maths, Modern Languages and Wellbeing. We included various Instructional Leadership strategies throughout each lesson and demonstrated how we were in the process of using the template for collaboration within departments in our school.

Instructional Leadership strategies have been presented to all staff through various workshops and staff have been provided with a toolkit of Instructional Leadership resources. The strategies form the basis of professional dialogue within our school.



NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2018

*INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME;
SUPPORTING PRACTICE & POLICY*

Celebrating 10 Years

Deich mBlíana ag Fás



**INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP**
programme



etbi
Education & Training
Boards Ireland
*Baird Oideachais &
Olltúna Éireann*

Instructional Leadership Programme Supporting Practice & Policy

NATIONAL CONFERENCE
THURSDAY 11TH & FRIDAY 12TH
OCTOBER 2018

Mount Wolseley Hotel
Spa and Golf Resort
Tullow, Co. Carlow

Thursday 11th October 2018

4.00pm	Registration
	Welcome and Opening Remarks
5.00pm	Official Opening by Mr Jim Daly TD Minister of State at the Department of Health
6.00pm	Keynote Address: "Nurturing Spaces for Teachers to Learn" Mr. Tomás Ó Ruairc; Director of The Teaching Council This session will be followed by a Panel Discussion Close of Session
8.00pm	Dinner

Friday 12th October 2018

9.00am	Registration
9.30am	Keynote & Workshop: 'Reflection - Models and Mindsets': Dr. Conor Mellon; Teacher, Learning & Research Associate Teaching Council
10.30am	Continuing the conversation over Tea/Coffee
11.00am	Keynote and Workshop: <i>Understanding and Leading Instructional Change in a School Setting</i> (to include understanding change, leadership, emotional intelligence, CBAM etc)" Dr. Rebecca Saunders, Scholarly Teaching Fellow, Murdoch University, Perth This session will be followed by a Panel Discussion
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Keynote Address <i>"Senior Cycle: Purpose and Future Thinking"</i> Mr Barry Slattery; Director of Curriculum and Assessment NCCA This session will be followed by a Panel Discussion
3.30pm	Instructional Leadership Programme beyond 2018
4.00pm	Reflecting on Our Learning Close of Conference
7.30pm	Drinks Reception
8.00pm	Gala Dinner & Dancing - Celebrating our 10th Birthday

REGISTRATION DETAILS

To Register your interest and to request an
application form please email:
admin@instructionalleadership.ie

CONFERENCE DETAILS

"EARLY BIRD RATE" - €325 Booked & Paid for by Friday 28th September, 2018
CONFERENCE FEE - €360 Booked & Paid for after Friday 28th September, 2018

www.Instructionalleadership.ie

@ILProgramme

PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE 2017

The inaugural Principals and Deputy Principal Conference took place in June in 2017 with the theme of Supporting our Roles as Instructional Leaders.

A Day for Principals and Deputy Principals; Supporting our role as Instructional Leaders

The following schools shared their experience;

- Dominican College, Dublin
- Abbey Vocational School, Donegal
- Athy College, Kildare
- Naas Community College, Kildare
- Kinsale Community School, Cork



IL Programme: A Day for Principals and Deputy Principals to Support your Role as Instructional Leaders

19th June 2017

Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Agenda

10.00am	Registration
Session 1 10.30am	Overview of the Programme for the Day <i>Instructional Leadership – Building Capacity</i> Ms. Joan Russell
	Teach-Meet Presentations (A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Schools Kinsale Community School Dominican College Athy College
	Round Robin – participants are given 20 minutes to visit two of the presenting schools
	Teach-Meet Presentations (B): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Schools Castleisland Community College Abbey Vocational School Naas Community College
	Round Robin – participants are given 20 minutes to visit two of the presenting schools
1.00pm	Lunch
Session 2 2.00pm – 2.30pm	<i>The Important Role of the Principals & Deputy Principals in Teaching & Learning</i> International Video Link with Professor Barrie Bennett
2.30pm	Outline of Intentions for Session 2 Workshop – schools work individually to craft a plan, for their school, for the academic year 2017/2018. Feedback and Sharing of Ideas
4.00pm	Close
6.30pm	BBQ

Email: admin@instructionalleadership.ie for details and to request a registration form

Programme Details & Costs

- | | |
|---|--------|
| Option 1: Full access to Conference with B&B, including lunch & BBQ | - €150 |
| Option 2: Full access to Conference including lunch & BBQ | - €90 |
| Option 3: Full access to Conference including Lunch | - €60 |

A Day for Principals and Deputy Principals: supporting your role as Instructional Leaders



"Many thanks. The Conference on Monday last was extremely enjoyable, an inspiring day and impeccably organised! Well done!!"

Aine Muldering, Deputy Principal
Presentation College, Tereure

"It was a very worthwhile day."

Sheron McGrath - Principal
Fingal Community College

"Thank you so much for inviting myself, Christopher and Michael to speak at the Principals and Deputy Principals Day. As Always, it was exceptionally well organised and extremely insightful. It is great to be part of such an engaging programme and I look forward to reconvening with our staff in September to make further plans for this coming year. There was a lot of food for thought from the many presentations so it was great to see!"

Aine Cunningham
Abbey Vocational School

"Thanks for organising today"

Shane Comiskey, Deputy Principal
Adamstown Community College

"Yesterday was a great day - so much fantastic information. Thanks for sorting me out with a place too."

Monica Whites, Deputy Principal
Mountbrath Community School

"Thanks for yesterday"

Yvonne MacSweeney, Principal,
Collieste Shíoflín Daofa

"Thank you for your email and congratulations on organising the session for the Principals and the Deputy Principals last week. It was an excellent event."

Fogal MacCarthy, Principal, Kinsale Community School

"We enjoyed the day very much"

Lillian McDermott, Acting Principal,
Crumail College of Further Education

I found the Principal's Conference on June 19th very enlightening. Apart from the input from the schools and Barrie Bennett, I became acutely aware of the difference Instructional Leadership is making to the enhancement of the quality of teaching and learning in schools. As a Principal in a school that is fully engaged with JCT and IL, the conference provided me with time for reflection. Listening to observations and comments from my group members, on the day, I realised that the support provided by Instructional Leadership is amazing. The Methodologies promoted by IL remove the old style dependence on rote learning and memory. IL has brought creativity and excitement to the classroom where there is now learning and understanding. In my view, Instructional Learning methodologies place the student at the centre of all classroom activity. Is a quality learning experience for students not the core business of any school? As I reflected and listened to the observations of members of my group, who had not yet engaged with JCT and IL, I was surprised to see how they struggled with concepts and methodologies that are so embedded in an Instructional Leadership school. I was also delighted and proud to see how ETBI is now a leader in Education, attracting that attention of the Voluntary Sector. ETBI and Instructional Leadership take a bow!

Ellen Delaney, Principal - Archbishop Meehan College, Tuam





DOMINICAN COLLEGE, DUBLIN

SIOBHAIN GROGAN

OUR TOP TIPS TO SCHOOL MANAGEMENT!

- Open the opportunity to attend the IL programme to all teachers.
- Explain in advance that you expect the trio to bring back something at regular intervals to the rest of the staff (perhaps twice a year?). To ensure this happens, the trio need to be hardworking and have a good relationship with other staff members.
- To allow proper sharing of IL skills to happen, you must be prepared to give **time** to facilitate workshops and/or **money** to buy resources. Permanent reminders of IL are worth their weight in gold. eg. Bloom's posters or Learning Intention boards in class rooms. Everything costs money, but it is worth it.
- Ensure a folder is kept to record all progress made.
- Show the folder to every inspector that walks through your door!
- Use the IL progress in your SSE and SIP documents.
- If at all possible, have teachers working in pairs when trying out new methodologies – team teaching/facilitating reduces the intensity for individuals and allows teachers

to try new methodologies out in a safer environment.

- Keep the Board of Management informed of the programme and the value for money that it is. The trio could give them a presentation.
- Keep parents informed of the programme and the impact in school for their children. Articles in school newsletters could give updates. The trio could give them a presentation.
- Take photos of **absolutely everything** and store them somewhere accessible. Encourage people to include photos in their subject plans as evidence of the methodologies employed – much more effective than a written list (which we can all put together in a few minutes.)
- Do not attempt to go from 0 – 100 in one year. Start small and grow gradually. Also basic concepts will need to be revisited again and again as not everyone gets on board with everything first time. eg. in two years, we have revisited Bloom's Taxonomy three times and will do it again at the start of the next school year.
- To ensure the effective continuation of the programme, it is vital that a new group from your school participates in the programme at regular intervals. This will bring new energy and enthusiasm from new faces.
- Thank your hardworking staff! Most of them give more than they have to, most of the time.



ABBAY VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

ÁINE CUNNINGHAM

CPD Three letters that can often illicit groans and eye rolls from even the most enthusiastic of teachers. However, when you have a waiting list within a school for a certain type of CPD, you know it must be effective. The Abbey Vocational School's first foray into the world of Instructional Leadership came in 2015 as our first cohort set off on the lengthy but worthwhile journey from Donegal to Carlow. Following three days of intense, yet fascinating workshops, Instructional Leadership had become like Bowie lyrics to a 1980s teenager, complex, intriguing and leaving them yearning for more. Equipped with Barrie's stern warning against returning to school in an overly enthusiastic fashion for fear of more eye-rolling, our colleagues simply began to incorporate the methodologies that they had encountered at their workshops with Barrie into their daily classes and it wasn't long before enquiring heads began to notice! Subtle changes were taking place in the classrooms of the Abbey Vocational School and many staff members were interested.

A waiting list was soon drawn up as demand was certainly exceeding supply for remaining places on further cohorts. Our Principal and Deputy had the novel idea of creating an Instructional Leadership committee comprised of management and staff members engaging in Barrie's training. The committee meet regularly and have taken a number of steps in the past two years to improve instructional approaches within our school.

The committee conducted a staff survey on Instructional leadership and the extent to which staff were being intelligent about their instruction. We felt that often as educators we are fully aware of 'what' we are delivering but less focused on 'how' we are delivering it. Fortunately, our Instructional Leadership experience coincided with training in Junior Cycle reform and our committee decided to use this training as a vehicle to move our Instructional Leadership plans forward. With the new focus on a skills based curriculum,

we decided to select a series of methodologies that were both promoted by JCT and indeed, incorporated by Barrie into his workshops. Having selected methodologies, our committee collaborated and created an Instructional Leadership booklet which was given to every member of staff in Abbey Vocational School. These booklets provide a detailed explanation of how these methodologies can be incorporated into classes and provide a series of A4 graphic organisers which can easily be photocopied for class groups. Large A3 and A2 poster were provided along with the booklets as visual reminders of the methodologies as were Bloom's Taxonomy posters.

Just two years have passed since our first cohort began their journey to Carlow and since, we have had two more cohorts begin the insightful training with the infectious and accomplished Barrie Bennett. Just a short walk through the corridors of the Abbey Vocational School, Donegal Town, is all it takes to recognise the impact of Instructional Leadership within our school. Traditional classroom seating arrangements have been altered in favour of group arrangements; noise and movement within the classroom signifies learning rather than disruption; the corridors are adorned with reminders of our instructional practices and plans are in place for further departmental collaborations.

On 19th of June, we were given the wonderful opportunity to deliver a presentation displaying our Instructional Leadership booklets and posters at the Principal and Deputy Principal conference in Carlow. As privileged as we felt to be given this opportunity, we were even more thrilled to have the chance to hear the other presentations and to be part of a national collaborative community where an abundance of ideas were shared. We left with a renewed enthusiasm and several plans for the coming year and a knowledge that no longer are the fateful letters CPD something to be scoffed at!



ATHY COLLEGE

LINKING DIGITAL LEARNING AND THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

SHARON COFFEY

Athy College has a strong history and tradition of the Instructional Leadership Programme. Three teachers completed cohort 1 and started an IL journey in the school. Through Croke Park, Staff Development days, Teaching and Learning Club a culture of ILP was embedded in the school.

All Newly Qualified Teachers (NQTs) and newly appointed teachers to the school are supported by an Induction Programme. Weekly Monday morning meetings for these teachers support them to embed teaching strategies such as co-operative learning, placemats, concept attainment, jigsaw, fish-bone diagrams etc. Each week teachers are given an opportunity to share their experiences of how they have incorporated these strategies into their classrooms.

Linking digital learning and Instructional Leadership Programme

Successfully integrating technology into the classroom doesn't just happen - it takes careful planning and preparation. Over the course of the year a group of teacher has devised how the strategies from the Instructional Leadership Programme are linked to digital learning. Placemats, ranking ladders, mind maps and co—operative learning are used and shared by students on our digital platform.

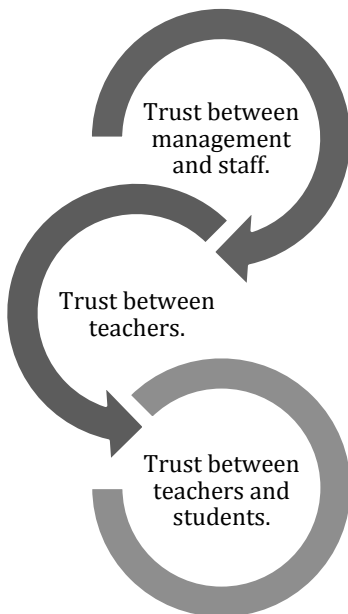
NAAS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

SAMMI DUNNE AND MICHAELA PIARE

Instructional Leadership (IL) has become an integral part of the culture of Naas Community College in just three, short years. It is a prominent part of the teaching and learning in our school, and as such, there is a lot invested in this area in terms of time, effort and finance.

Ensuring engagement in IL on a whole school level requires an abundance of trust.



Our principal, Ciarán Keegan, and our deputy principal, Sarah Buckley, are both graduates of the IL Programme. They have invested a lot of their time, and the school budget to ensure that staff are trained in IL, and in turn, that IL becomes ingrained in our culture. So far, nine of our staff have been involved in the IL Programme.

Trust is evident again, in our management trusting those who are participating in the IL Programme to share their new knowledge and methodologies with the whole staff. This is carried out in our school through a Teaching and Learning club. We meet once a month before school to demonstrate our strategy of the month, be it Teams Games Tournaments, Graffiti, Ghost Walks, etc. and to reflect on the previous month's strategy.

However, we find that explaining a tactic in T&L club is only one step towards sharing our knowledge, and it has proved much more effective to observe teachers using such tactics in class. For this reason, management at Naas CC have allocated two Croke park hours to allow teachers to get involved in peer collaboration and observation, therefore, encouraging the spread of IL strategies and tactics.

For this to work, we have wooden traffic lights outside each classroom, which can be switched from green, to orange, to red, to indicate the teacher's availability for observation.

The traffic lights are a permanent feature of all classrooms, and indicate as follows:



Green: You are welcome to observe this lesson.

Orange: You are welcome to observe, but I am trying something new.

Red: Please do not observe this lesson. (During class tests, etc.)

We also have a green light for each day of the week in the staffroom, where teachers can write the time of the lesson they would like invite others to observe. The IL team also use this space to invite others to see them use the strategy of the month.

Once again, the importance of trust is evident in peer collaboration. For this to work, and for staff to truly learn from each other, we must trust that our colleagues are observing to learn, and to improve. We have a 'no criticism' policy to ensure that teachers do not feel they are being assessed. We hope that once trust is firmly established, that teachers will become comfortable in asking for, and offering each other advice.

With our traffic lights practice prevalent around the school, it's important to make Instructional leadership practice physically accessible to all of our teachers in all of our classrooms to drive our whole school approach. IL boxes have been created for every room, which contain an abundance of physical resources that allow for IL to be used in the classroom. Some materials included are: post-its, laminates of placemats, whiteboard



markers, graphic organisers, playing cards and other essentials a teacher may like to include to make their tools for the classroom characterise their own teaching practice to encourage active learning. These boxes are a vital tool and ever present in all the rooms in the school, which gives a physical presence to allow for consistency in all classrooms.

As well as making IL boxes available in each classroom, we strive to create the interactive classroom by aligning the desks in all the rooms in group settings to replicate peer collaboration and create similar experiences for students in all subject areas.

Schoology is also used for teachers to share resources through our online interface. All of the templates, resources and materials are available to everyone on the IL page, once again strengthening our collaboration, and active learning philosophy within the school.

We encourage all teachers to continuously document their practices using pictures in the class as a means to celebrate our instructional leadership through media platforms such as our twitter page and our school blog, in order to make people outside of our school aware of educational practices that are influencing our students.

Through IL training we are embedding a strong collaborative culture at Naas CC. With a curriculum moving away from the old traditional practices in the classroom, we hope to foster an environment that will help our students become critical thinkers. This environment helps our students develop in our new society and ever-changing culture, and we as educators need to prepare our students for the outside world by creating experiences in classes that develop the skills needed for them to be successful.

By using active and beneficial strategies in the classroom environments, we can strengthen our student's abilities to develop their own skills by encouraging innovation, communication, collaboration and creativity, in line with the new Junior Cycle Key Skills and Statements of Learning. Using these approaches, combined with a support and trust between management, staff, and students, we find our whole school implementation is creating a foundation for our school in the future. As a school community, using collaborative learning allows the classroom experience for students, teachers and management alike, to be more enjoyable and progressive.



KINSALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

FÉILTE SCOILE AS A MECHANISM TO EMBED INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

LEONA FORDE AND ORLA CRONIN



“Those who dare to teach, must never cease to learn”, John Cotton Dana.

Féilte Beaga is Kinsale Community School’s unique in-school teaching initiative that pioneers collaborative practice and Innovative teaching.

In 2015, inspired by the Féilte Festival our school decided to begin our own internal celebration of the teaching and learning that was taking place in our school.

In Kinsale, like many schools around the country, teachers were benefitting from the training they were receiving in the Instructional Leadership Programme and the Programme is making a positive impact on the staff and students in our school. Those involved in IL training returned to our school and began using the skills, strategies and concepts they had learned on the course.

In KCS, along side IL, many of our teachers were attending other courses, studying for masters and undertaking independent research in a wide variety of areas of education. The knowledge they were gaining was invaluable to our school, but what was missing was a space, where teachers could share this knowledge with each other.

A new approach to the sharing of best practice was needed and the idea of *Féilte Beaga* was formed. It was envisioned as an opportunity for collaboration and celebration of the knowledge of our staff.

In 2015, we held our first *Féilte Beaga*. Staff members volunteered to lead a series of workshops about innovative practice for their colleagues. Teachers and visitors were divided into groups and attended each workshop for a fifteen-minute presentation. Six workshops were facilitated by staff on the day, covering a variety of topics. Two of the workshops, one on questioning and another on the use of mindmaps were focused on sharing knowledge teachers had gained as part of Instructional Leadership Programme. Other teachers showcased methodologies such as using Lego serious play and the educational app EdPuzzle both examples of learning from the Edison Entrepreneurial Education Programme, which members of our staff were also involved in.

The feedback from teachers and visitors, which included representatives from the Teaching Council, the principals of local primary schools and University College Cork was so overwhelmingly positive, that we decided to make this an annual fixture in our calendar.

Our second *Féilte Beaga*, was held on October 5th 2016, World Teachers Day. To make it more inclusive we decided to invite our headboy and headgirl along to the workshops. This year our SNA's, also took part in the workshops. Again, teachers volunteered to present on a variety of topics. In 2016, the workshops included: teaching and challenging gifted children, an overview of our school's experience of Droichead, as well as the sharing of pedagogical practice from Business Studies.

Whilst *Féilte Scoile* is an annual event, we felt that it was important to consolidate collaborative practice in our school on a more regular basis. Thus, we decided to hold termly Teachmeets. A Teachmeet is an informal gathering of teachers who come together voluntarily to share instructional resources and reflections on practice. Some of the methodologies

shared at our Teachmeets include: Hexagonal thinking, peer editing and Schoology. We have also established a teaching and learning page on our schools internal reporting system to facilitate the ongoing sharing of resources.

Next year, we plan to base our Féilte Scoile and Teachmeets around four cornerstones of teaching and learning: Questioning, Feedback, Self-directed learning and Challenging the student.

The benefits of collaboration can be enormous, teachers in our school have spoken of becoming aware of the invaluable knowledge their own colleagues possess through the workshops of Féilte Beaga and the TeachMeets. Other have explained how they have been introduced to apps, methodologies and resources that have had a very positive impact on their lessons.

The school has also experienced positive external evaluation of the success of the Feilte Scoile initiative. In March 2017, a WSE-MLL was undertaken and several references in the report recognised the obvious success in the area of continuing professional development in our school.

“Of particular note is the prominence attributed to CPD as a key part of maintaining and further developing best practice throughout the school community. The commitment of the board, the senior management team and the teaching staff to collaborative and enduring CPD opportunities incorporates innovative practice and is of an excellent standard. It is having a discernible impact on student outcomes and experiences.”

Our students have also highlighted the positive impact this collaboration is having on their learning, some of their own thoughts can be read in the image below. Micheal Fullan argues that the role of leaders is to “Foster in others the capacity to innovate, to learn, to collaborate”. Féilte Scoile allows all teachers the opportunity to become leaders of learning in their own schools. It creates a space where the learning of those who participate in the IL Programme can be demonstrated to their colleagues to strengthen a culture of collaboration within schools.

We did Peer Assessment in English using two stars and a wish. Two things you did well on, one thing you could improve on. It really helped with assessing and improving your own writing as you get a lot of feedback.

Clara 2nd Year

In Geography, we did 30 second Jenja. I enjoyed it because you have to think quickly. You have a flashcard with six hints on it and if your team doesn't guess the key term you have to take a piece of the Jenja pile. It helps you learn because it gives you an incentive to learn.

Nick 1st year

We played Socratic quizzes on a Friday to help us learn the basics of short questions in Chemistry. It really clarified the way the examiner wanted the questions to be answered and it was fun on Friday. Jessica 6th Year

7

Féilte Scoile has helped us to harness the knowledge and potential of the teachers in our school. It has allowed us to consolidate local professional expertise and excellence within, resulting in more effective teaching and enhanced learning. We are delighted to be able to share our initiative with you and would be more than willing to provide further information and resources to those interested.

LEONA FORDE AND ORLA CRONIN



PRINCIPALS AND DEPUTY PRINCIPALS CONFERENCE 2018

SUPPORTING PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS & MIDDLE MANAGEMENT TO LEAD TEACHING & LEARNING

Deele College presented at the recent ETBI Instructional Leadership conference and focused on how the College has implemented a variety of IL strategies, techniques and skills into a routine staff meeting, hence modelling best practice. In doing so they identified and incorporated four IL strategies into their presentation which afforded the participants the experience of creatively engaging in ‘learning by doing’.

It was demonstrated how all participants at the seminar could bring collective inquiry in current topics that are appearing on staff meetings throughout the country in an active and productive manner. Contentious issues such as timetabling and curriculum reform were addressed using academic controversy. GDPR, Child Safeguarding, the Junior Cycle reform and Well-being utilised a Jigsaw activity and were then incorporated into a Teams Game Tournament activity as a formative assessment tool. The use of IL in this way allows for an organic growth of a collaborative culture amongst staff with a focus on teaching, learning and assessment.

To wrap up the workshop, the conference participants took advantage of a place-mat activity to plan their start of year staff meeting and identify where an IL strategy could help them model and create “a culture of leading learning” through the application of Instructional Leadership. By modelling best practice, management demonstrate their commitment to continuous development and improvement of both teacher and student experiences in the classroom.

Throughout the seminar the school leaders actively collaborated in modelling the best practice of IL while engaging and creating a vibrant teaching, learning and assessment environment. They applied their knowledge and experience to four key managerial issues through their active participation as individuals and teams. There was elements within the Teams Game Tournament where their competitive spirit was clearly exposed. At all times the focus remained on the learning and the learning experience.

All of the topics covered yielded valuable material that could be used in School Self Evaluation and other areas within the schools planning and development frameworks. The material generated will certainly create an awareness of Instructional Leadership strategies that can be incorporated into the classroom/staff meetings that benefit effective collaboration and maximise active engagement among our staff members.

As a professional learning and development course, Instructional Leadership is an effective model as it is supportive, job-embedded and instructionally focused to name but a few of its attributes. As more and more staff engage with IL, a collaborative culture has established where professional conversations occur both informally and formally to enrich the teaching and learning in every classroom. The educational landscape has changed significantly and instructional leadership is one way to bridge the gap in our knowledge base to create a culture of improvement and collaboration in teaching, learning and assessment.

CONFERENCE DETAILS & COSTS

Option 1: Full access to Conference &
B&B incl. Lunch & BBQ - €150

Option 2: Full access to Conference
incl. Lunch & BBQ - €90

Option 3: Full Access to Conference
incl. Lunch - €60



**INSTRUCTIONAL
LEADERSHIP**
programme

Supporting Principals Deputy Principals & Middle Management to Lead Teaching & Learning

**MONDAY 18TH
JUNE 2018**

Mount Wolseley Hotel
Spa and Golf Resort
Tullow, Co. Carlow

9.00am

Registration
Tea/Coffee available on arrival

9.30am

Session 1: An Overview of the Instructional Leadership
Programme

This session is for Principals and Deputy Principals of Schools /
Colleges that are not involved in the Programme.

10.30am

Official Opening & Welcome
Ms. Joan Russell,
*Director of Schools (ETBI) & Chairperson of Instructional
Leadership Steering Committee*

10.45am

Leading Learning
*Creating a culture of improvement & collaboration in Teaching,
Learning & Assessment.*

12.45pm

Lunch

1.45pm

Developing Leadership Capacity
Sharing Ideas and Examples of Good Practice

3.45pm

Closing Remarks

7.00pm

BBQ

REGISTRATION DETAILS

To Register your interest and to request an
application form please email:

admin@instructionalleadership.ie

www.instructionalleadership.ie

[@ILProgramme](https://twitter.com/ILProgramme)



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Ireland's National
Award for School Leadership &
Effective Learning

Instructional Leadership Programme; Supporting Principals, Deputy Principals and Middle Management to Lead Teaching and Learning - 18th June 2018

etbi

Would love to see more on how to develop Student Voice & Parent Voice

Engage with ED Change

Kinsale
Amazing Afternoon!! So much to Learn: Sixth yr Feedback, Subject Folder Audit

Very Practical workshop, will certainly change the structure of staff meetings going forward to incorporate the IL Strategies used today - all of them. Will be great to model strategies

Will use Jigsaw as part of policy review

Team Games Tournament, Excellent way of Consolidating information In an interesting way!!

Peer/Jigsaw Group discussion re GDPR to highlight the serious issues involved

The development of a Literacy & Numeracy Programme is V good. I would consider introducing this in 2018-2019

Input from Kinsale was v informative & constructive

Use of Félite Scoile—To Placemat Share Skills & CPD

Academic Controversy

Management can set the overall tone within and among staff.

It is up to them to help to develop the Leadership capacity

I can see great potential for the tournament card game

Good Ideas eg Cosan Suite, Notice board, Assistant Postions

Don't re-invent the Wheel!!!

Congratulations on excellent busy active workshop (to Deale College) *Questions difficult but important

Card Game is good, easily accessible for range of subjects. Look forward to trying it in Sept. Thanks!!

Excellent, Liked idea of IL Strategies for Staff Meetings—that was new learning.

Academic Controversy Recording Sheet
For considering roles within a subject department with a focus on collaboration & responsibility

Appointing deputy yearheads
Allowing everyone the space to be a leader.

Cosán Suite
"Fáilte Isteach" Board
Deputy Year Head
Using Encouragement

Would like to use Jigsaw To go through eg GDPR & Child Protection.

Subject Folders and Meetings With Department Heads

Placemat to identify key moments for school year planning

Use Placemat activity to decide core/option subjects

Placemat to identify key moments for school year planning

Excellant, Liked idea of IL Strategies for Staff Meetings—that was new learning.

Academic Controversy Recording Sheet
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Cosán Suite
"Fáilte Isteach" Board
Deputy Year Head
Using Encouragement

Management can set the overall tone within and among staff.

It is up to them to help to develop the Leadership capacity

I can see great potential for the tournament card game





LIST OF SCHOOLS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

LEINSTER

DUBLIN	CARLOW	MEATH
Adamstown Community College	Carlow Vocational School	Dunshaughlin Community College
Mount Temple Comprehensive School	Borris Vocational School	Ashbourne Community School
Notre Dame School	Coláiste Eoin	O' Carolan College
Greenhills College	St. Leo's College	St. Peter's College
Crumlin FEC	LOUTH	Coláiste na Mí
Margaret Aylward Community College	Bush Post Primary	KILKENNY
Malaide Community School	St. Oliver's Post Primary School	Scoil Aireagail
Pleasant Street Youthreach	Scoil Uí Mhuirí	Presenation Secondary School
Deansrath Community College	KILDARE	LAOIS
Youthreach Blanchardstown	Piper's Hill College	St. Fergal's College
Malahide Community School	Athy Community College	Portlaoise College
Lusk Community College	Confey College	St. Mary's CBS
Coláiste Pobail Setanta	Maynooth Post Primary School	Mountrath Community School

DUBLIN (ctd.)	KILDARE (CTD.)	WESTMEATH
Castleknock Community College	Naas Community College	Mullingar Community College
Killester College of Further Education	Ardscoil Rath Iomghain	St. Joseph's Secondary School
St. Joseph's College	Coláiste Lorcaín	LONGFORD
Collinstown Park Community College	Scoil Dara	Youthreach Longford
Dominican College	St. Mary's College	OFFALY
Cabra Community College	Patrician Secondary School	St. Brendan's Community School
Holy Child Community School	Cross & Passion College	WICKLOW
Coláiste Eoin	Youthreach Athy	Arklow Community College
Kishoge Community College	Curragh Post Primary School	Avondale Community College
St. David's CBS	St. Conleth's Community College	Blessington Community College
Ballyfermot College of Further Education	Scoil Dara	Coláiste Bhríde
Loreto College Dublin	St. Farnan's Post Primary School	Gaelcholaiste Na Mara
Fingal Community College	Ardscoil na Tríonoide	St. Kevin's community College
St. Aidan's Community School	WEXFORD	St. Thomas Community College
Coláiste Dhúlaigh Post Primary	Wexford Vocational College	Scoil Chonglais
Clonturk Community College	Coláiste Abbain	Coláiste Chraobh Abhann
Kylemore College	Enniscorthy Vocational College	Coláiste Chill Mhantain
Larkin Community College	New Ross Vocational College	St. David's Secondary School
Marino College	Bridgetown Vocational College	Youthreach Wicklow
Presentation Community College Terenure	Bunclody Vocational College	Glenart College
Ringsend College	Ramsgrange Community School	
St. Kevin's College	Good Counsel College	
CDETB Psychological Services and Curriculum Development Unit	Coláiste Eamonn Rís	
	FCJ Secondary School	

ULSTER

DONEGAL	CAVAN	MONAGHAN
Abbey Vocational School	St. Aidan's Comprehensive School	Ballybay Community College
Deele College	St. Bricin's College	Beech Hill College
Errigal College	St. Mogue's College	
Coláiste Ailigh	Cavan Institute	
Crana College		
Gairmscoil Chú Uladh		

MUNSTER

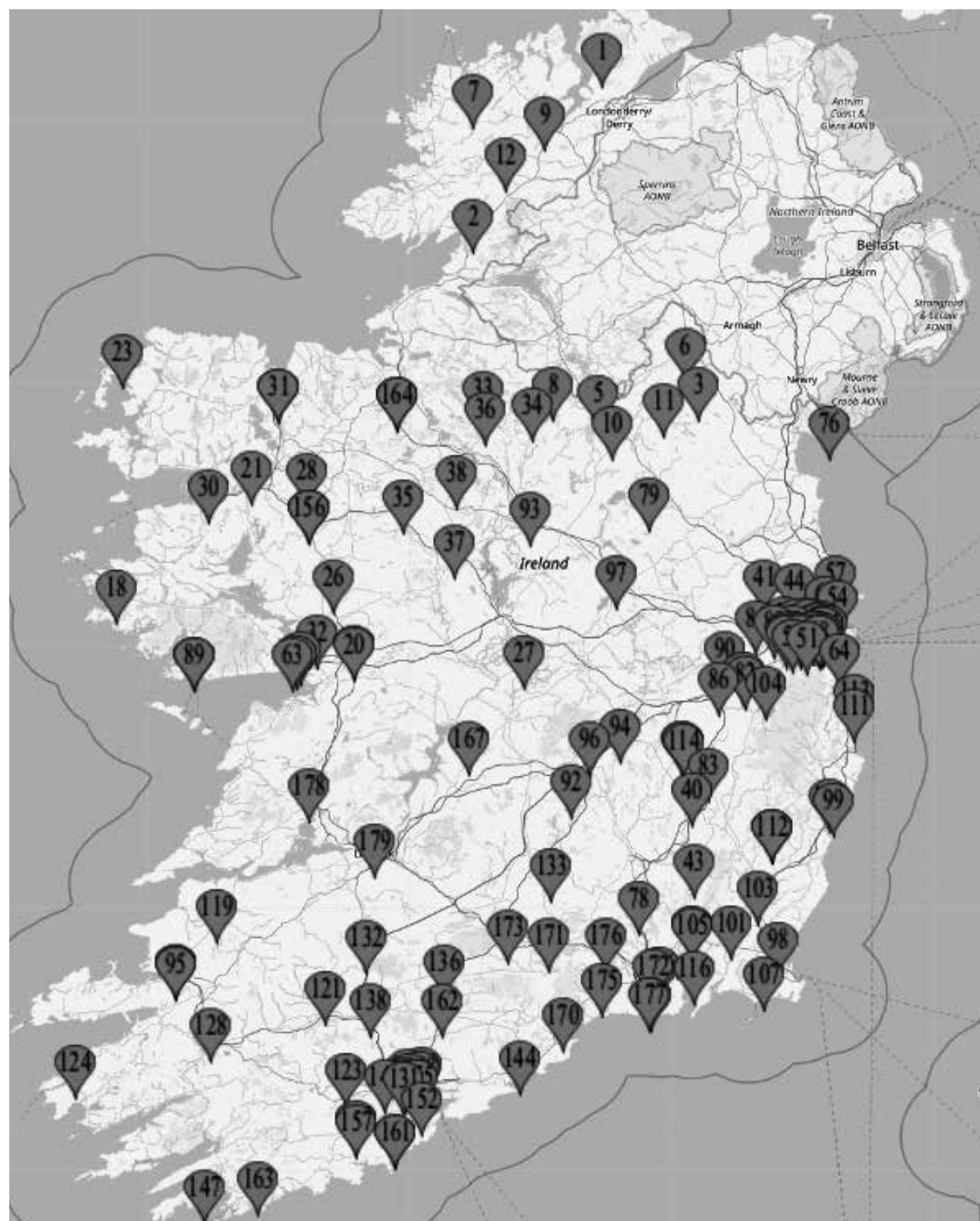
CORK		KERRY
Davis College	Coláiste Mhuire	Listowel Community College
Coláiste Ard Alainn	Coláiste an Chraoibhín	Tralee Community College
Coláiste Treasa	St. Goban's College	Causeway Comprehensive School
Coachford College	Ardscail Phobal Bheanntraí	Coláiste na Sceilge
St Aidan's Community College	St. Colman's College	Killorglin Community College
Mannix College	St. Peter's College	Killarney Community College
McEgan College	Scoil Phobail Bhéara	Gaelcholaiste Chiarraí
St. Brogan's College	St. Mary's High School	Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine
St. Fanahan's College	Christ King Girls Secondary School	Coláiste na Ríochta
Éist Linn	St. John's Central College	Presentation Secondary School
Mallow College of Further Education	Cork College of Commerce	Kerry College of Further Education
Douglas Community College	East Cork Youthreach	Coláiste Mhuire
Schull Community College	Coláiste Choilm	Coláiste na Trócaire
Youthreach Fermoy	Rossa College	Coláiste Iosef
Youthreach Ballincollig	Youthreach Bandon	Coláiste Íde agus Iosef

CORK (ctd.)		LIMERICK
St. Aloysius	Kinsale FEC	Desmond College
Kinsale Community School	Cobh Community College	Thomond Community College
Glanmire Community College	Mercy Heights School	CLARE
Youthreach Mallow	Carrigaline Community School	Coláiste Mhuire
Youthreach Bantry	Coláiste Daibeid	TIPPERARY
Youthreach Macroom	Pobal Scoil Na Tríonoide	St. Ailbe's College
The Glen Youthreach	CBS Secondary School Mitchelstown	Borrisokane Community College
Boherbue Comprehensive School	The Centre For Education	St. Sheelan's College
Youthreach Mahon	Mayfield Community School	Coláiste Chluain Meala
Youthreach Dean Street	Nagle Community College	Coláiste Dun Iascaigh
Clonakilty Community College	Coláiste Pobail Naomh Mhuire	St. Joseph's CBS
Coláiste Ghobnatan	St. Fachtna De la Salle	Comeragh College
St. Patrick's College	St. Colman's College	Scoil Ruain
Gaelcholáiste Charraig Uí Leighin	Coláiste Na Toirbhirte	WATERFORD
Skibbereen Community College	Coláiste an Phiarsaigh	Waterford College of Further Education
		Youthreach Tramore
		Youthreach Dungarvan
		St. Paul's Community College
		Coláiste Chathail Naofa
		St. Declan's Community College
		Ard Scoil na nDeise
		Ardscoil na Mara

CONNACHT

GALWAY	MAYO
Colaiste na Coirbe	Colaiste Chomain
Galway Community College	St. Patrick's College
Gairmscoil Mhuire	St. Brendan's College
Youthreach Portuma	Youthreach Ballina
City of Galway Youthreach	Moyne College
Clifden Community School	St. Louis Community School
Colaiste Bhaile Chlair	Sacred Heart School
Archbishop McHale College	Gallen Community School
Presentation College Athenry	Davitt College
	St. Mary's Secondary School
LEITRIM	ROSCOMMON
Lough Allen College	Elphin Community College
Ballinamore Community School	Castlerea Community School
Drumshanbo Vocational School	Roscommon Community College

MAP OF SCHOOLS WHO COMPLETED THE PROGRAMME





REFLECTIONS

REFLECTIONS FROM SOME OF OUR GRADUATES

COHORT 1 - SHEILA CURLEY

SHEILIA CURLEY WAS DEPUTY PRINCIPAL IN COLÁISTE AN CHRAOIBHÍN IN FERMOY, CO. CORK WHEN SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 1 IN 2010. SHE IS NOW THE PRINCIPAL AT ST. AIDAN'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE, CORK.

I heard about the IL programme when a brochure arrived in the school. As the Deputy Principal in the school I was interested in getting staff involved in training in order to bring back ideas to the whole staff. The teaching staff who were asked to participate were looked at carefully. The first teacher chosen was involved in school planning and it was felt that it would be good to include IL as part of our Teaching & Learning planning. We were then looking for a gender and subject balance and so we asked a male teacher of a practical subject to participate.

We were very unsure about what the programme would involve. It was a big commitment both financially and for substitution cover within the school. It was also very different to anything the school had been involved in before but the teachers were eager to get involved. There was some concern about how other teachers who were not going to be trained would take on board the ideas that were brought back by the trained staff.

I later moved schools to another school which had also been involved in the first cohort. The teachers who had trained had moved to managerial positions and one left the school shortly after that. We made a decision to offer other staff the chance to get involved in the IL programme and there was great staff interest as at this point the programme was very well known. We trained another three staff and they brought ideas and resources back to their colleagues. However, since then only one of these teachers is still on staff as the other two have moved on.

The teachers were engaged from the start of the programme but certainly in the early stages, progress was slow while the trained staff became practiced users. I felt it was important that they became users of the different ideas before trying to share them with their colleagues. It was also important for the teachers to accept that as this was a fairly new concept, they couldn't expect all staff to engage with as much enthusiasm as they had.

We started to bring back some ideas like fish-bones and placemats and used these for a few meetings to get staff input on ideas. The templates were available to staff to use in their classrooms and the trained teachers shared their examples of student work through their subject department meetings and with colleagues they were friendly with.

With more emphasis over the years for learning to become more student centred than teacher led, the various strategies for group work covered by the IL programme have become more useful and more accepted by staff. Looking at educational concepts such as Bloom's Taxonomy enhanced understanding of why different strategies are useful for both staff and students.

Having experienced the programme as a Deputy Principal I feel it gave me an insight into why it is important to keep the agenda of Teaching & Learning at the forefront in schools rather than just getting caught up with policies and procedures. We have also used some of the strategies with staff when working on different planning areas. For example placemats are good to get feedback from groups of staff to ensure that we get input from a number of staff rather than just the vocal staff.

The conference in Carlow was a very nice experience; it gave us the chance to engage with other professionals over the few days as well as gaining experience from the IL programme. I enjoyed the relationship I built up with my teaching staff during the programme. I also got to know a few people during the conference who I have encountered at different stages over the years and it reminds me of those days spent in Carlow. The IL programme was an enjoyable and worthwhile experience.

COHORT 1 - BREDASUNDERLAND

BREDA SUNDERLAND WAS DEPUTY PRINCIPAL IN ATHY COLLEGE, CO. KILDARE WHEN SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 1. SHE WAS A MEMBER OF THE IL STEERING COMMITTEE 2010 TO 2015 - BREDA HAS SINCE RETIRED.

When Athy College was selected by Kildare ETB to participate in the first ILP workshops in Tullow, suffice it to say school was busy. We were about to move into a new building on what was to become an educational campus with 3 adjacent primary schools. Yet even in those details is a core principle of Instructional Leadership – intentionality. Transitioning to an education campus was then a radically new departure in Irish education and it was the perfect time to re-visit pedagogy. Attending as a team and, from the outset, collaborating with teams from other schools built the framework for professional conversations, collegiality and ultimately the foundation for systemic change.

There are moments in the course of a career which one recognises as transformative and that first workshop with Professor Barrie Bennett was one of those. We sat (until, as lettered heads, we got up and moved around!) in the presence of genius. Each session was a perfectly planned lesson and later as we learned to deconstruct our experience we recognised that nothing was left to chance. Barrie taught us to play with new skills and tactics and strategies. Our instructional repertoires increased. While learning was fun, it was grounded on sound instructional concepts and in well-researched instructional organisers. One of the greatest strengths of the programme is immersing a team (2 subject teachers and a senior manager) from a school so that support for each other is embedded and the likelihood of instructional

leadership being cascaded through a whole-school, and eventually beyond, is greater.

I caught the vision and was privileged that our team included Deirdre Murphy and Natalie O'Neill, colleagues who were already impacting at a national level through their formative work with the NCCA on key skills. ILP was cascaded within our own school through a vibrant, voluntary and well-attended Teaching and Learning Club. Skills, tactics and strategies were used in staff and planning meetings. ILP also became the basis of the mentoring and induction programmes for newly appointed staff. In short, momentum built steadily and an eye began to be kept to sustainability into the future. Workshops were built into "Croke Park hours" and more staff trained with Professor Bennett in Tullow.

One of my happiest memories is of the afternoon that Professor Bennett and Dr Finn O Murchu called to our school. Collaborative conversation flowed. There was a magic moment when Barrie disappeared to take a photograph of mind maps scrolling on a monitor outside the Engineering classroom, an initiative he spotted as we strolled around the school.

At a professional level, the ILP was the gateway into involvement into potentially real systemic change at the interface of where the classroom and school meet the national and international stakeholders in education. Initially involvement in the ILP National Steering Committee, under Joan Russell's very capable leadership, lead to our students and teachers presenting IL to the Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn TD. The team began to participate in conferences in teacher training colleges and universities. We ran a workshop at the Teaching Council's first Féilte and co-presented on the role of teacher as teacher educator at an EU Education Conference in Dublin Castle during Ireland's Presidency in 2013.

As Deputy Principal of a small school I was, at the time, teaching 8 hours per week. So much about my teaching and the geography of my classroom changed. The key, however, was once again, intentionality. What I previously practised at an almost intuitive level became the object of deeper reflection, of deconstruction and of consciously working where the research-based science of pedagogy intersects with the art of teaching.

A personal highlight was organising an afternoon workshop on IL for all 74 teachers on campus, incorporating primary and post-primary sectors and a range of 4 management bodies. Dr Finn O Murchu and a team from Athy College shared and recorded "The Principles of Instructional Leadership".

From the perspective of retirement, it was a privilege to be trusted and supported by the staff of Athy College as we rolled out and embedded IL. Professor Bennett earned our trust by modelling the professional integrity that should underpin systemic change.

COHORT 2 - MICHELLE HESSION

MICHELLE HESSION IS A TEACHER IN DAVITT COLLEGE IN CASTLEBAR, CO. MAYO. SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 2.

I heard about the IL programme when the poster and information was displayed in the staffroom and emailed to all staff. All interested staff were invited to speak to our Principal regarding participation but only two staff members showed interest and subsequently attended the training.

I initially expected the Programme to focus on some aspect of School Leadership and leading learning in our school rather than in my own classroom. I think the term 'Instructional leadership' and the fact the attendance of Senior Management was compulsory led to the formation of this expectation.

But I must admit that I had little or no concerns regarding my attendance.

I was interested in the Programme as I had completed the role of Positive Behaviour Liaison (PBL) Teacher with the NBSS the previous year in my school and thoroughly enjoyed introducing new strategies and structures that would impact on students' behaviour across the school. In addition, I find learning, on a personal level, very rewarding and I am always motivated to try to improve my classroom teaching and initiate improvements on a school-wide basis

During the Programme, I endeavoured to engage with the IL strategies and concepts in my classroom. The impact on my practice and career was enormous. My style of teaching has dramatically changed as a result. My understanding of the importance of instructional

language in the classroom has been heightened. I have gained an appreciation for and an understanding of the theory behind the implementation in practice. This has increased my confidence to try out new strategies and sometimes I have learnt more from what went wrong than what went right.

I thoroughly enjoyed every minute spent in Carlow during the course. The relaxed atmosphere enabled collegiality and networking to happen naturally in the restaurant and bar area after the formal sessions had finished.

The rate of implementation of IL in my school was disappointing. I realised that the rate of uptake was much slower than I had anticipated. The degree of resistance to change was grounded in the idea that “I have always done it this way”. I eventually overcame some of these issues by encouraging a small number of like-minded teachers to try out a few strategies. The implementation was greatly aided by students applying them to other subjects and informing teachers of their benefits. This added to the curiosity of a small number of teachers who were not originally engaging and their involvement began to grow as a result.

The greatest impact on a personal level, was the ability to network with like-minded colleagues during the IL programme and National Conferences. The conversations and support gained from teachers and Principals sharing practice in their schools are invaluable as I try to apply them to my own context.

It is very difficult to put into words the impact that IL has had on me professionally. I have developed an ability and a consciousness to evaluate my classroom instruction. I have become self-aware and realise the importance of creating a safe environment for all students. My students are more engaged and empowered as they participate in their own learning. My style of teaching has dramatically changed with a focus on creating an environment of active student learning. I have developed ‘a language’ around instruction and learning that I had not previously anticipated.

The reality of engaging with IL in the classroom is what works with one subject or one group may not work with another.

COHORT 3 - VICKI MANLEY

VICKI MANLEY WAS A TEACHER IN ST. ALOYSIUS COLLEGE, CARRIGTWHOHILL, CO. CORK WHEN SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 3. SHE NOW OCCUPIES AN AP1 ROLE IN THE SCHOOL

I first heard about the IL Programme through my Principal. All information regarding the programme was put up in the staff room and he asked for expressions of interest from staff. There was one condition attached, which was that persons who attended would in turn provide in-service to the remaining staff and I was lucky enough to be selected to attend.

At the time I had just started my Masters in Education Management and I felt this programme would complement it perfectly. I had been teaching for a considerable period of time when this opportunity came about and I felt it would impact positively on my teaching and on the learning experiences of my students. There is something wonderful about having your eyes opened to new and effective teaching methods. I went into the programme with an open mind and the initial three days in Carlow were thought provoking, exciting, exhausting and a little bit overwhelming all at once!

Barrie Bennett is an inspiring speaker who not only talked about different tactics and strategies that could be employed in the classroom but walked us through how to use these effectively. I was hooked from the very first session when he spoke about education and preparing our students for life. He gave the example of an advertisement for a job which in reality you would never see or, if you did you would not apply.

It was: Wanted employees who can sit in a row; and, when stuck on a problem, will raise their hand and wait for the boss to come around and solve their problem.

This made me question the effectiveness of teaching where students are sitting passively, listening to the teacher and taking notes but are not actively involved in the learning process. Was this the most effective teaching method?

The most interesting part of the programme for me was in relation to effective group work and questioning as it afforded me the chance to reflect on my own practice. I had used group work in my class but never felt it was as effective as it might be. There was always the problem of students who did not want to engage with the process and left others to do the work. There were also the students who saw it as a bit of a waste of time. There was also my own insecurity around noise coming from my classroom. What would other teachers and management think? After the first session, I was eager to get back to school to try out these new strategies and tactics.

I was also very lucky that one of the teachers who went with me was also a business teacher. This allowed us to bounce ideas off each other and to try things out together. We started out using Think Pair Share in our classrooms and then looked at framing questions and distribution of responses. We also began the process of looking for feedback from our students and their reactions were very positive. This made us even more determined to ensure that our colleagues were equipped with the same skills and strategies.

Shortly after completing the programme I became an Assistant Principal. My post centres around SSE and policy development. Part of SSE requires schools to examine learning and teaching which we have done through the establishment of our Learning Council. The Council is broken into focus groups which I lead. It was decided to ask staff on the council to share any areas of expertise they might have with other staff during lunchtime CPD in areas such as Instructional Leadership, Classroom management etc. This gives some staff the opportunity to up skill and engage in CPD whilst building leadership capacity in other staff members. The roll out of IL provided us with the perfect opportunity to develop this council. The feedback from the CPD sessions was very positive with all staff agreeing that the best CPD is very often that which you receive from your own colleagues.

The programme was engaging, thought provoking and ultimately changed my teaching style and the learning experiences of my students. The programme has allowed us to cultivate a culture of collaboration, has encouraged both peer and self-reflection and I feel very privileged to have completed it.

COHORT 5 - NIAMH BRODERICK

NIAMH BRODERICK WAS A TEACHER IN ST. LEO'S COLLEGE IN CARLOW WHEN SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 5. SHE IS NOW DEPUTY PRINCIPAL.

My introduction to the IL Programme coincided with the beginning of my Junior Cycle journey in 2013. I look at that period as the second phase of my teaching career, a rebirth of sorts. I had returned from my third and final maternity leave the previous year and yearned for something more in my teaching career, something new and dynamic. I kept hearing about Professor Barrie Bennett and IL Programme from teachers at other CPD events. They spoke about both with such passion and enthusiasm. I knew I needed a piece of the action!

I recall the day a letter arrived in our school inviting three staff members to participate in the IL Programme. I happened to enter the office as our Principal Clare Ryan opened the letter and read the contents aloud. This was definitely fate! The following November I took the first steps on my IL journey with my two colleagues Helen Regan and Alison Doyle. We developed a great working relationship and friendship over the two years, an unanticipated bonus of our involvement in the programme I have to say.

I had high hopes and expectations naturally and was of course a little apprehensive prior to attending. Perhaps I had built the programme up too much, perhaps I would be bitterly disappointed. We've all had that bad CPD experience at one stage or another unfortunately. I hoped to gain knowledge, to extend my instructional repertoire and to develop my ideas of teaching, learning and assessment. Did the programme and Professor Barrie Bennett

deliver? Yes, absolutely!

The programme consisted of four residential seminars over two academic years between November 2013 and March 2015. The drive from my home in Carlow to the lovely Mount Wolseley Hotel in Tullow does not really merit a mention but the professional journey on which I embarked at that point is certainly noteworthy. It has a beginning and a middle but has no end. I will use the analogy of the ripple effect to describe the impact. I see the IL Programme as a pebble thrown into a clam lake, disturbing the status quo, its presence felt instantly, transferring outwards in concentric circles. The initial point at which the pebble hits the water represents the effect it had on me as a person, a teacher, a leader of learning. It forced me to consciously question my own practice and pedagogical approaches, to untwist my thinking about teaching and learning, to identify the negatives and the positives, to extend my instructional repertoire and to modify my instruction actions in order to maximise student learning in my classroom. Oprah Winfrey would refer to it as the 'aha moment' of my teacher career. And so the ripple effect began, firstly within the four walls of my own French classroom and ultimately extended out to other teachers and classrooms in my school and beyond.

Networking with teachers of similar mindsets, with similar enthusiasm for and interest in pedagogy, was a real joy. Conversation about education took place for the most part in the hotel's Austin Suite but continued over dinner and dare I say into the bar until the wee small hours at times. Barrie Bennet expertly facilitated all four seminar and was truly inspirational. He loves to 'play' with strategies and tactics. The combination of fun and learning made this one of the best educational experiences I've ever had.

This residential, complete submersion model of CPD is costly but a worthwhile investment if participants champion the initiative when they return to their own schools. It is highly effective and allows teachers the time and space needed to completely engage with all aspects of the programme and internalise the learning. The selection of potential teachers in a school is a decision which needs careful consideration. I am hugely grateful to my Principal Clare Ryan and the St. Leo's College Board of Management for affording me that opportunity.

My experience and more importantly the experience of the students in my classroom during the early implementation stages of the programme's material were very positive but not without operational issues at times. My students noticed a gradual change in me as a teacher and the way we did things in French class, an injection of new energy I suppose. I began to rethink how I was engaging and motivating them. They say that teaching children is an accomplishment but getting them excited about learning is an achievement. There's no doubt but that embedding instructional leadership practices involves hard work and careful planning on the part of the teacher. I introduced new strategies and tactics - group work, effective questioning, placemat, team games tournament, think, pair, share, mind

mapping, concept mapping...the list goes on. The price of innovation is occasional failure and I had to find my way out of the implementation dip on several occasions. Patience and perseverance are undoubtedly the keys to success.

Through collaboration, the establishment of an AFL Working Group and the facilitation of several whole staff presentations, the message of instructional leadership started to spread throughout my school and continues to do so. In fact, one of the very first in-service sessions I co-facilitated was with my two IL colleagues Helen and Alison. Our workshop on Team Games Tournament and Mind Mapping was very well received by staff. All of the above beautifully complemented and enhanced our efforts to embed Junior Cycle Key Skills.

On a personal level, involvement in this programme provided me with an opportunity to reflect, to evaluate and to grow. It pushed me out of my comfort zone and challenged me. I was exposed to new ideas and new methodologies. It boosted my confidence and motivated me to try new things. I now have a heightened awareness of the importance of my role as an educator and the impact of my instruction.

Since graduation from the Programme I am proud to say that I have been appointed Deputy Principal in my school. I attribute this partly to the knowledge and skills I acquired and refined through the Instructional Leadership Programme and Junior Cycle CPD. I became a Whole School Associate with JCT in 2015 and continue to facilitate Junior Cycle whole staff CPD in schools in the southeast region. I frequently refer to Barrie Bennett and the IL programme during my presentations.

One aspect of my role profile as Deputy Principal is to lead teaching, learning and assessment in my school. Instructional leadership features heavily in the cut and thrust of this work. In conjunction with formative assessment, it forms part of SSE school improvement plan. I am happy to report that I still teach French and continue to consciously amend instructional leadership in my practice.

Our role as teachers is a hugely privileged one. It is our moral duty and ethical imperative to ensure that we provide the best possible learning experiences for our students. In order to do this, it is essential that we ourselves never cease to learn, to improve, to hone our skills, to build our own capacity to engage, inform and inspire the variety of learners we teach. We must seize every opportunity to develop professionally and keep up to date with the newest pedagogical practices. Much like the instructions given by flight attendants to parents and guardians to secure their own oxygen masks first before tending to those in their care, we have to acknowledge that before we help others we must help ourselves. Focused CPD helps us to stay interested and interesting. It opens us up to new possibilities, new knowledge and new skills.

The Instructional Leadership Programme allowed me to do just that.

My IL learning did not stop with the completion of the programme. I grieved a little when I reached the end I must admit. I welcome the opportunity to stay connected thorough the IL website, the newsletters, the annual national conference and my IL colleagues.

Three more of my St. Leo's College colleagues graduated from the programme last year. The ripple effect continues.

Michael Fullan writes about the wrong drivers and the right drivers in whole system educational reform. He mentions four criteria for judging the likely effectiveness of a driver: '1. Foster intrinsic motivation of teachers and students; 2. engage educators and students in continuous improvement of instruction and learning; 3. inspire collective or team work; and 4. affect all teacher and students.'

The instructional Leadership Programme ticks all of these boxes in a very real way.

'I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better'. Maya Angelou.

COHORT 5 - FERGAL Mc CARTHY

FERGAL MCCARTHY IS PRINCIPAL OF KINSALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL AND GRADUATED FROM COHORT 5.

I had heard of the Instructional Leadership programme from a number of teachers from other schools and I had also read of the transformative impact that the programme had on schools in a number of newspaper articles. On taking on the role of Principal at Kinsale Community School I saw great benefit in teachers embracing a programme which was rooted in reflective, innovative practice and which was to be shared with colleagues at school thereby promoting a culture of collaboration.

The teaching profession has always actively engaged in continuous professional development. This has in the past been organised by subject associations or the DES when curricular change was being introduced. So while there was CPD in the 'what was taught' there was a significant gap in the 'how we taught'. This gap has been filled by the provision of the IL programme.

Teachers are professionals and they like to be treated as professionals. It is accepted by all professions that CPD is necessary to meet the challenges of the profession. It is hard to imagine a profession more important than teaching and in that regard it is essential that teachers maintain their focus on lifelong enquiry orientated practice. The need to refresh, reappraise and to reflect are all vital for a teacher.

Therefore the provision of this programme in a beautiful setting, befitting of the profession is to be welcomed, valued and cherished.

The IL programme has also given rise to professional conversations in staff rooms. I have found that there is now a greater appetite to share resources and practices.

The impact of the IL programme is visible on classroom walls, it is audible in the staff room but most powerfully of all it is now evident in student work and in student voice. Students are now beginning to speak and to use the ILP language.

One of the hall marks of the IL programme is the collaborative culture that it generates within a school. At Kinsale Community School we have organised an annual Feilte Scoile where we share best pedagogical practice with each other through a series of workshops. The very first one of our Feilte Scoile events was primarily focussed on embedding IL practices in our school. In that regard I would credit the IL programme for igniting the spark that created a culture of professional collaboration in our school.

When you look at the structure of the Looking at Our School 2016 (LAOS) document it describes two primary 'Dimensions' to the workings of a school, one being the teaching and learning, the second being the leadership and management. Within the IL programme there is a demand placed that the school leadership attend and participate in the programme. This is one of the characteristics of the programme which not only enriches the course itself but it also ensures that the programme is prioritised when the staff return to implement the programme at school level. The involvement of the school Principal fuses the two 'Dimensions' of the LAOS document as it shows that the school prioritises teaching and learning and that it identifies that teachers are instructional leaders within the school community. It also shows that teaching and learning is the most important activity that happens in a school but that it must be supported by good quality management and leadership. In my view, if a school seeks to reach the standard of 'highly effective practice' as set out in the LAOS document the IL programme is an excellent support in getting there.

COHORT 6 - PETER LAURENCE MAGUIRE

PETER LAURENCE MAGUIRE WAS AN AP2 IN ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE, LUCAN, CO. DUBLIN WHEN HE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 6. HE NOW OCCUPIES AN AP1 ROLE.

I heard about the IL Programme from my Principal who encouraged staff members to take part in this programme. As they were only offering four places, it was decided that the first four staff members to apply by a set deadline would be offered a place. I had heard about the programme from a friend in another school and that aroused my interest.

I found the programme very engaging, pragmatic and very useful for classroom teaching and I immediately started to implement the concept attainment ideas after my first session in Carlow and have continued to use them in my classroom. I am currently involved in teaching MFL modules in Trinity College and have been since 2009 and I use the approaches that I have learned from the IL programme while working with PME students, to give them ideas for their classrooms.

From a personal perspective, It challenged certain perceptions that I had before participating in the programme regarding teaching methods and classroom management.

I was able to implement the approaches and introduced more team teaching into my classroom in order to show the benefits to other colleagues.

The IL programme enhanced my teaching and my subject planning my reflections.

One of the key areas was interacting and working with other teachers from around the country and picking up lots of ideas.

COHORT 6 - NIAMH RUSSELL

NIAMH RUSSELL WAS AN UNDERGRADUATE IN UCC WHEN SHE GRADUATED FROM COHORT 6 IN 2016. SHE IS CURRENTLY IN HER SECOND YEAR OF A PME.

I am currently a second-year student in the Professional Masters in Education (PME). At the time of engaging with the Instructional Leadership Programme I was a second-year student in my primary degree of History and Economics. Not long out of the post-primary school setting as a student!

My initial thoughts when I was first asked to be involved in a ‘pilot’ with the Instructional Leadership Programme were ones characterised by trepidation! I was one of two undergraduates offered the opportunity, and I didn’t know the other undergraduate, Ciara, at all at that stage. However, on reflection I think my biggest worry was how would I deal with being in a room full of teachers. My only experience of teachers at that stage was as a student in a student to teacher relationship, and now I was expected to engage with teachers at a whole new level!

I remember going to the first session in Carlow and the first fear dissipated quite quickly, Ciara felt exactly as I did so we were kindred spirits and very quickly became firm friends. However, the fear of working at this new level with teachers took much longer to manage, I didn’t have the experience of teaching, I didn’t have the language of teaching and I knew I wouldn’t have the opportunity to practice what it was that we were learning in Carlow and the ‘teachers’ would! How would I keep up?

But 'keep up' I did. As I progressed through the sessions I made some good friends who helped me, equally the opportunities that we were given to plan and deliver lessons, as part of the programme had a significant impact on my confidence and afforded me the opportunity to more fully engage with the learning.

I am certainly not saying that it was easy. It was hard going right throughout the four intensive sessions, as I developed new pedagogical skills, engaged with the science behind effective pedagogy and developed a new language that allowed me to reflect and share my experience and my ideas.

As I progressed to become a first-year PME student, the IL Programme stood as an invaluable source of comfort and support to me. As a student teacher I stood in front of a class group in September 2017 feeling confident in knowing that I could plan an effective lesson, I understood effective group work, I had a deep knowledge of many of the fundamental Educational theories such as Blooms Taxonomy or Maslows Hierarchy of Needs thus allowing me to further develop my implementation of these theories into my classroom practice, I could effectively frame a question and I had a 'toolkit' of pedagogical tactics from which I could draw from to make lessons more engaging and less passive.

I found the *Madeline Hunter Lesson Plan Template* (7 Steps) as espoused by Professor Barrie Bennett of immense assistance when it was my turn to create my own lesson plans. I was able to pull from college lectures but also notes I took during my time completing the IL conferences. Other aspects of IL such as the appropriate use of different forms of graphic organisers and the large number of situations in which they can be implemented in quickly and easily was of immeasurable assistance to me, not just in my teaching, but also as a PME student.

I also found that talking to other teachers during the course was highly beneficial as I was able to see what they were using in the classroom and find out more about how they are implementing what they were learning throughout the IL program. I seemed to be learning formally in the workshops, but also learning in the social settings in the evenings.

The whole experience gave me invaluable knowledge and the skills that have made my first year of the PME so much easier. The language being used in lectures and in tutorials was familiar to me and the confidence I developed assisted me in opening up other opportunities to develop my teaching skills and enhance classroom experiences for me and for my students.

I know that having completed this course will most certainly stand to me during PME 2 but also in my future as a teacher. It was a truly wonderful and meaningful learning experience.

COHORT 8 - LORNA WILSON

*LORNA WILSON IS A TEACHER AT ST. DAVID'S
HOLY FAITH SECONDARY SCHOOL. SHE
GRADUATED FROM COHORT 8.*

I heard about the programme through teachers and management at my school. Other teachers in my school had already graduated and I had attended a 1 day workshop by Barrie Bennett so I had some knowledge as to what the programme was about. I applied to management to do the course as I felt it would be an informative and engaging experience where I would gain practical knowledge and become part of a culture of change. I felt that it would be beneficial for me, my school and my students.

Initially, I was concerned about the breadth of the material and the language of the programme. I realised it would take time to deepen my knowledge and experience with the strategies. The overall experience was very pleasant and engaging. Going to Carlow allowed time to reflect. It was great to get away from day to day life and become immersed in the programme.

In the beginning I implemented aspects of the programme with trial and error. I decided not be afraid to try out the strategies even if I didn't have full knowledge of them or experience. The programme had a very positive impact on my relationships with students.

Personally, the programme gave me more confidence and made me more positive. A fresh understanding of how students learn and the importance of socially constructed learning and Blooms.

I thought it was great to share experiences with other teachers and management from around the country and from all different subject areas. The was location was always excellent.

The experience was very engaging and resulted in a profound shift in my approach to teaching.

COHORT 9 - TOIRDEALBHACH Ó LIONÁIRD,

*INA LEASPHRÍOMHOIDE I COLÁISTE
GHOBNATAN A BHÍ TOIRDEALBHACH Ó
LIONÁIRD. INA CHÉIMÍ Ó CHOHOIRT 9, TÁ SÉ INA
PHRÍOMHOIDE Ó SHIN I LEITH.*

Chuala mé faoi ó Ger O' Sullivan nuair a tháinig sé chuig an scoil chun ceardlann a reachtáil leis an bhfoireann uile. Chuireas mé féin chun tosaigh mar dhuine le suim sa chlár. Bhíos ag súil le hidirghníomhaíocht mhacánta, choinsiasach a chuirfeadh foghlaim na ndaltaí chun cinn.

Bhí buairt éigin maidir leis an am a bheadh le hinfheistiú chun freastal ar an gclár agus an ionadaíocht a bheadh le n-eagrú. Admhaím nach rabhas an-dóchasach go mbeadh daoine chomh sásta sin le bheith páirteach ann.

Mheasas i dtosach go mbeadh impleachtaí ama agus airgid chun cur isteach ar an gclár go leanúnach ach ní mar sin a bhí. Tá an t-ábhar saibhir agus suimiúil ach bíonn am chun machnamh ag teastáil chun na straitéisí a thuiscint, a ullmhú agus a chur i bhfeidhm. Ní fhéadfá a rá ach gur fiú go mór an infheistíocht airgid.

Tá an t-ionad i gCeatharlach ana-shásúil idir oiriúint chun foghlama, comhoibriú agus am a chaitheamh. Tá sé compórdach ach dúshlánach sa mhéid is go bhfuil go leor le clúdach.

Is próiséas mall atá ann chun an dea-chleachtas a roinnt agus a scagadh tríd síos na scoile. Braitheann sé ar an gcomhthéacs ach inár gcás féin, is anois atáimid ag oscailt na ndóirse agus ag tabhairt cuireadh chun foghlama do chomhleacaithe. Is léir go bhfuil guth breise faighte ag na daltaí ón aiseolas atá faighte againn, chomh maith le roinnt mhaith ceisteanna taghta isteach ó thuismitheoirí maidir leis an gcur chuige “nua” atá in úsáid.

Féachaim ar an gclár mar éabhlóid seachas réabhlóid go fóill. Tá rudaí ag athrú im’ chleachtas (tá tionchar breise ag an tSraith Shóisearach ar seo gan dabht) ach is cosúil go bhfuil na súile oscailte agam i slí nach raibh roimhe seo ionas nach raibh “oiliúnt múinteoireachta” san oideolaíocht déanta agam in aon tslí go struchtúrtha cheana féin. An rud is mó atá difriúil ná go bhfuil dearcadh na ndaltaí lárnach anois agus is dul chun cinn atá ansin.

Tá sásamh ón ngairm ag cur le mo shaol pearsanta. Bím anois oscailte do pé rud a thagann im’ threo, ach go háirithe an éifeacht a bhíonn ag rudaí a deirim agus a dhéanaim le daoine eile.

Ní cuireann na dushláin laethúil isteach orm an méid sin a thuilleadh.

Tá cumhacht an chomhoibrithe idir dhaoine tar éis dul i bhfeidhm orm agus tá’s agam go mbíonn an fhreagra agus an cumas ag duine éigin, ach a bheith oscailte dó/di. Tá an tábhacht a bhaineann le bheith coinsiasach faoi do chuid chleachtas mar bhuncloch mo shaoil mar mhúinteoir ó shin.

Tuigim níos fearr ná riamh go bhfuilimid uile ar thuras foghlama agus go mbeidh go deo. Thug IL / CTH an deis sin dom.

Nuair a chuala mé faoi IL an chéad lá, is i gcomhthéacs “socrú” nó “fix” don tSraith Shóisearach nua a bhí sé. Tá i bhfad níos mó i gceist. D’fhéadfadh tionchar níos leithne a bheith ag an gclár amach anseo má leanfaimid le guth an scoláire a chur chun cinn, sásamh proifisiúnta na múinteoirí a fhás, comhoibriú nadúrtha, oile, oscailte, fiúntach, leanúnach a shuí go daingean i scoileanna agus córas oideachais na tíre. Mar a deir Andy Hargreaves, is tré “ardú meanman agus stádas na ndaoine atá ag soláthar an tseirbhís do dhaoine eile” a bheidh an éifeacht is mó. Tugann IL an deis do seo im’ thuairim.

Tháinig athdhúiseacht oideolaíochta orm agus tá tuilleadh fós le teacht!

REFLECTIONS OF PME STUDENTS IN INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP SCHOOLS

*EXPERIENCE OF WORKING IN A SCHOOL THAT
EMBODIES INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP –
FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NQTS AND A PME
STUDENT*

*JENNIFER GLENNON, NQT KATIE MELDRUM, NQT
AOIFE CAREW, PME STUDENT*

Every teacher likes to think that they are the most innovative teacher, trying their best for their students. This is true for many teachers but being an active teacher helps ensure that your students are at the fore front of your thoughts and decisions. After spending a year teaching in Naas Community College, a school that has adopted Instructional Leadership as a whole school approach, this statement is not only true, but it has become the norm in each of our classrooms.

Entering a new school is daunting, and the experience is made even more so, when you overhear teachers discuss things such as “TGT” and “Ghost Walks” and you don’t know to what they are referring to. The classrooms we grew up in, places where students sat in rows, were suddenly eradicated and replaced with students sitting in pods of four often collaborating with each other. What we didn’t anticipate was the collaboration and support within the staff and the general open atmosphere created in the staffroom.

Modules in university aided us in developing our understanding of various methodologies but it was the in-school CPD sessions on IL tactics and strategies which soon eased our embarrassment of not knowing everything.

The school organized various staff workshops throughout the year and there were also monthly breakfast mornings, each one focused on a different aspect of IL. These sessions helped in our immersion into both the school and the ILP. We soon discovered that many of the tactics used were methodologies we were already exposed to and in some cases already implementing in our classrooms. The ILP however, made us stop and think, “yes, we may have been using these tactics in our classrooms but were they effective?”. Participating in peer observation gave each of us knowledge on how to use tactics effectively in the classroom. Peer observation is a deeply embedded practice within NCC which allows teachers to share best practice and it was incredibly helpful for our professional development, to watch more experienced teachers implement IL in their classrooms.

IL is more than just a bank of pedagogical tactics and methodologies, it gets teachers to rationalise why they are implementing a tactic in their classroom. This reflective practice is something we have all embodied in our teaching. It has highlighted the necessity of rationalising why you are doing something in the classroom rather than just implementing a tactic because someone said it was a good idea.

As teachers we all aspire to have a “safe and inviting” learning environment for our class but this isn’t always easily created. Being a reflective practitioner, we feel, helps in creating this aspiration. One thing we all felt was important was creating safety in the classroom. To achieve this, we use tactics such as randomisers and think-pair-share for questioning. We began to ask ourselves if we leave enough wait time between each question asked or if we rush through the questions, asking only the student that has the answer or the student that has dozed off. These simple things we feel have made our teaching more effective.

In our first year we feel that we have learned a lot, but we are aware that there is much more about IL that we need to uncover. We are not saying we are “perfect” teachers but that we are more aware of our actions in the classroom and how they impact our students sitting in front of us. We have developed a set of pedagogical tools that we can implement and adapt in our classrooms with confidence and we feel IL has had a tremendous impact on our teaching styles at this initial stage in our careers.

INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN DOMINICAN COLLEGE

MEGAN OLIVER

It's been four years since I was a student at Dominican College, Griffith Avenue. This year I returned as a PME (Professional Masters of Education) student. While it has been wonderful to come back to the familiar, it was clear to me from the first day back that a positive change had taken place. The staff have made efforts to continually improve the teaching and learning – a change that is affecting the entire school community.

The first aspect of the school that immediately struck me were the increased emphasis on using Bloom's Taxonomy when planning and teaching. Teachers are encouraged to set tasks and ask questions that involve the higher order stages of Bloom's such as evaluating and creating. Each classroom has a small whiteboard, clearly visible to the students where teachers can write the learning intentions of the lesson on the board. Posters displaying the six levels of Bloom's hang in every classroom as well as in the staffroom. There are posters on every teacher's desk to remind them to incorporate Bloom's taxonomy into their questions. Simple physical changes in the classroom have encouraged new teachers such as myself and more experienced teachers to bring these techniques into their class.

From my own experience as a student, groupwork was viewed as something frivolous and inconsequential. It was the chance to have a chat with your friends and look busy when the teacher was near. Teachers perhaps were reluctant to carry it out in case the noise levels disrupted others. From my first day of observing classes in Dominican College I quickly realised that this was no longer the case! Groupwork now is highly structured and often involves students analysing, evaluating and creating material thus tying in with Instructional Leadership techniques as well as the new Junior Cycle key skills. Teachers are framing

questions in such a way that all students are accountable yet are more likely to participate in class because of the safe learning environment created.

From observing a number of classes in the school and chatting to various teachers about IL, these practices quickly became integrated into my own lessons. Think, pair, share methods have been particularly useful in my own teaching practice as an English teacher as well as increasing the wait time when asking questions.

While Dominican College is still the same friendly and welcoming school that it always was, there is an even better learning atmosphere apparent since I graduated four years ago. It is great to see such progress in a short space of time and the work I've seen here will certainly act as a standard which I will measure myself against during my teaching career.

EXPERIENCES OF A PME IN ATHY COLLEGE

OLIVIA DALY

BEFORE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

I was fortunate enough to attend a post primary school which adopted the skills and strategies of Instructional Leadership during my time there. For most of my Junior Cycle in school the classes were very traditional. The teacher was the instructor at the top of the classroom, the students listened and gave answers when asked. We sat at desks in lines, all facing the whiteboard. We took down notes from the board, read text and answered questions. Although we were always encouraged and supported by our teachers there was always a fear of saying the wrong answer in front of everyone in the class. To us this was a natural follow on from our primary education and this was the method that we had expected. Silence in the classroom was equated to learning and what was expected in the classroom. The teacher was always at the top of the classroom as information appeared line by line on the whiteboard or powerpoint.

AFTER INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Once Instructional Leadership was introduced to the school my educational experience was very different. The layout of the classroom changed. Desks were placed in groups of four. We started participating in group work during lessons, taking part in Placemats, Think, Pair, Share; creating Fishbone and Venn Diagrams. Class became more enjoyable as we were more active in the lessons and were developing answers with our peers. The atmosphere in the classroom changed completely, discussion and conversation were encouraged. Wait time and group answers relieved the pressure and embarrassment. The

biggest change I found was having the support of a group when asked a question in class. The teachers instead of asking individuals questions would give us a minute to discuss the answer with our group. Just having time to think about an answer and collaborate with others really developed our knowledge and we had more confidence in voicing our response in class. We also felt like it was a 'group answer' so the fear of answering on your own and being wrong disappeared.

Sitting in these groups also made us grow closer with our peers as we had to engage and chat with one another. This seating arrangement improved social engagement throughout the school as familiarity in the classroom spread to the corridors.

Lessons took on a completely different challenge and for the first time classes were even fun and looked forward to. Homework also started to take less time, as I knew the answers from taking part in activities in class. Prior to this I would be searching through pages of text trying to find the correct answer. The teacher no longer instructed from the top of the room but moved around engaging with each of the groups as they collaborated on the task in hand. The teacher felt like one of us on this journey of exploration. Our teacher felt more approachable as we were engaging and collaborating with them during every lesson.

These tactics helped me to develop my own opinion and become a more active participant in my own learning. The new approach meant that learning became more exciting, there was more exploration, sharing of ideas and collaboration with others in preparing work. Most importantly it aided me in becoming an independent thinker. The benefits of these methods were proven during the Leaving Certificate. When it came to examinations I felt I could develop my answers and draw from previous knowledge. Many of my peers in other schools did not have the same ability to form their own answers and opinions as they could only recite what was previously read.

PME

Currently in my final year of the PME I appreciate the impact Instructional Leadership has had on both my second and third level education. The skills I experienced in school are now the pedagogies I adapt into my lesson planning. Attending a school that uses Instructional Leadership has given me a great advantage during the PME as the skills I learned from my colleagues have proved successful during inspection. I have found that my experience and knowledge of Instructional Leadership has in many cases been more useful than some of the lecture material which still relies on more traditional approaches. My classroom more resembles the IL classroom of my senior years in school. With the inclusion of more digital elements I have been able to expand the strategies of Instructional Leadership in my classroom. I know that the students are getting more enjoyment and almost learning unknown to themselves. Can they have fun in the classroom while learning? I certainly

hope so, because I am having fun engaging and learning with them.

EXPECTATIONS

I am very lucky this year to be part of Cohort 10 which I am immensely looking forward to. Up until now I have been relying on second hand information and personal experience to form my pedagogie. Attending this training will allow me to learn first hand the concepts and strategies of Instructional Leadership. I look forward with anticipation to hearing the author of *Beyond Monet* explain the rationale behind the pedagogy which I have been studying and practicing throughout my teaching experience.

A PERSPECTIVE FROM A NEWLY APPOINTED DEPUTY PRINCIPAL

TRACEY KENNEDY

“One thing is certain – even after just three days of Barrie Bennett and this programme, I could never again go back and teach exactly as I did before.”

That was my reaction to Session 1 of the Instructional Leadership Programme, which I began in March 2016, as part of Cohort 8. There’s something wonderful about having your eyes opened to new and effective teaching methods sixteen years into your career as a teacher.

What exactly is Instructional Leadership? I don’t profess to be any sort of expert in the field, but so far I understand it to be a professional development programme aimed at, among other things, enabling teachers to better understand their role, to utilise skills, tactics and strategies which will improve both teaching and learning and to improve classroom management.

Our initial three days were exhilarating, exciting and exhausting. Barrie Bennett is an inspiring speaker and teacher, and I found his concrete examples of what we needed to do to improve our effectiveness in the classroom fascinating.

Most interesting for me was our work on the concepts and skills associated with effective group work. I had used group work in my classroom for years, and saw many benefits to it, particularly in a subject like English. However, I’ve never been entirely convinced that I was making the most effective use of group work. I had students who simply opted out, who didn’t fully engage or who were dependent on others in the group, but I wasn’t sure

exactly what to do about this, and it was still more effective than constant whole-class teaching. In terms of questioning students, I knew it wasn't easy to strike the balance between accountability and fear of failure. What we've learned in relation to effective group work over the three sessions I've now completed has been incredibly valuable to me.

I returned to school after Session 1 the day before Proclamation Day in March 2016, and all the English teachers in our school had undertaken to teach a 1916-related poem to each of their classes. This provided me with the perfect opportunity to test my new-found strategies and skills, so I tried out think-pair-share, framing questions and distribution of responses. Student feedback on these lessons was really interesting: "It was fun," "It kept us on our toes," "We really had to listen to what others were saying." Just what I wanted to hear! I could see its effectiveness myself too, and this continued as I increased my application of what I had learned from Barrie Bennett.

Since commencing the IL programme, I've changed schools and moved into the role of Deputy Principal at Carrigaline Community School, where all of the senior management team and five other teachers are involved in the programme. My focus has now changed from improving my own teaching to embedding the principles of IL in the school, and I look forward to a positive impact on teaching and learning.

REFLECTIONS OF A EUROPEAN GRADUATE

VISITING “WONDERLAND”

PIERRE MONIER

Currently there is something going on somewhere. Something that is unparalleled in the whole world. It is the Instructional Leadership Program - the largest educational program ever undertaken in the industrialized world. This alone makes it something very special and wonderful.

When I left for Ireland in October 2017, following the invitation of Barrie Bennett and Joan Russell, I had no idea of how much I would like to become part of these trainings. Today I can say that ever since my training as a trainer in cooperative learning by Norm and Kathy Green in Germany more than 10 years ago, there has not been any training that has influenced my way of training and teaching at school so profoundly as the “Instructional Leadership Program”.

My gain from the trainings can be considered from three perspectives: The first perspective is that of cooperative learning. Barrie has not only opened up new perspectives of cooperative learning for me, but has also led me to a deeper understanding of cooperative learning. Secondly, the Instructional Leadership Program has given me new perspectives and topics beyond Cooperative Learning that help to make lessons more efficient and successful. Bloom’s taxonomy is one of those topics, I have become very committed to, because I have realized that the way students get cognitively involved depends on the chosen level of framing questions. Third, the art of presenting a workshop. Here Barrie displays his full mastership. He has made me become more aware of the importance of

the opening of a training. In the course of his workshops he artfully uses strategies to make participants understand and memorize its contents. He knows how to present cognitive challenges and emotional moments.

The depth of my involvement has always become obvious in the days after the trainings. Single sequences of the training constantly come up in my head and I actually remember them by heart.

I would also like to thank everyone for their open and friendly reception. We had a lot of fun during the days of the trainings and I can say that I found friends.

Finally, a little anecdote from the Barrie's "Wonderland". In one of the modules, Barrie gave us a group assignment. Even though our group found many possible solutions, there was one person in our group, who immediately insisted on knowing *the* answer. This group member was so domineering that we found it hard to consider better solutions. Right from the beginning each new solution was stifled. This personal experience made me deeply aware of the importance of 'suspending judgment' and listening to all ideas before making a joint decision.

Dear Joan, dear Barrie, I cannot thank you enough for having me participate in this wonderful program.

REFLECTION FROM DONEGAL ETB

*ISSUED ON BEHALF OF DONEGAL ETB.
PREPARED BY SANDRA BUCHANAN*

Donegal ETB schools have been involved in the Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) from the introduction of the programme in Ireland in 2008. What began with the involvement of three schools has grown to the involvement of elements of the programme in all of the fifteen of Donegal ETB's schools a decade later.

In 2008, three Donegal ETB schools, Mage Ene College, Bundoran; Moville Community College; and St Catherine's Vocational School, Killybegs participated in Cohort 1 of the Instructional Leadership Programme. In the ensuing years a further five schools completed the programme. Mary Ann Kane, our former Education Officer (EO) and Acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO), was an enthusiastic supporter of the programme. Following her untimely and sad passing in 2012, Anne McHugh, on becoming Education Officer, was very anxious to continue with the work she had started. Anne wanted to 'spread the word' about the programme and encourage more schools to participate but in speaking with individual Principals it was clear that the distance from Donegal to Carlow was a factor inhibiting this.

Donegal ETB was very fortunate that four members of staff from Cohort 1 completed a Post Graduate Diploma in Leading Learning in partnership with the Education Department of NUIG. This group provided Donegal ETB with a rich source of expertise in and facilitation of Instructional Leadership (IL) seminars, thus lessening the burden of travel to Co Carlow. In early September 2013 Donegal ETB launched the Instructional Leadership Network. Principals, Deputy Principals and teachers from all Cohorts were present. Cascading the learning was a key topic of conversation. The size of County Donegal was another topic of discussion as we tried to find ways to make the cascading easier to manage.

Shaun Purcell, Chief Executive (CE), founded the Donegal ETB Teaching and Learning Council in September 2014 and this seemed like the perfect vehicle to move the IL project forward. Following discussions at the Council and a subgroup meeting of a small group of Principals, it was decided to run a series of IL workshop days around the county during October and November 2014.

The schools were closed for instruction and the county was divided into four regions; between three and five school staffs attended at one nominated school for a full day of IL workshops. In this way teachers from all of Donegal ETB's fifteen schools were exposed to a full day of Framing Questions, Lesson Design and Graphic Organisers delivered by our NUIG graduates. The feedback was extremely positive as the day was interactive and included different groupings at different times. Some sessions involved subject teachers from different schools working together and others got subject departments from the same school to work together.

Following discussion at Principals meetings during 2014/2015 it was agreed that the workshops would take place for 2015/2016 as part of the Croke Park Hours. The subgroup met in late August and work began on planning four cluster afternoons. The facilitation team was expanded to include graduates of all Cohorts and those who have not yet completed, staff from ten schools. Workshops were held in classrooms and facilitated in the main by two IL graduates. Topics taught included Team Games Tournament, Concept Attainment and how IL links with the new Junior Cycle. Principals assisted with preparation time and hosting schools provided much needed refreshments for teachers on arrival. From September 2015, Education Officer, Dr Martin Gormley and Anne McHugh, who was now Chief Executive, attended all sessions and the feedback was very positive.

The introduction of the new Junior Cycle in post-primary education throughout Ireland presented a valuable opportunity to integrate the many IL strategies with the key skills and statements of learning underpinning the Junior Cycle reform. During 2015, more of Donegal ETB's schools also began IL training in Carlow, including the Abbey Vocational School, who created an Instructional Leadership committee comprised of management and staff members. English Teacher Áine Cunningham, highlighted how, 'The committee conducted a staff survey on Instructional Leadership and the extent to which staff were being intelligent about their instruction. We felt that often as educators we are fully aware of "what" we are delivering but less focused on "how" we are delivering it. Fortunately, our Instructional Leadership experience coincided with training in Junior Cycle reform and our committee decided to use this training as a vehicle to move our Instructional Leadership plans forward. With the new focus on a skills based curriculum, we decided to select a series of methodologies that were both promoted by JCT and indeed, incorporated by Barrie into his workshops. Having selected methodologies, our committee collaborated and created an Instructional Leadership booklet which was given to every member of staff in the Abbey Vocational School. These booklets provide a detailed explanation of

how these methodologies can be incorporated into classes and provide a series of A4 graphic organisers which can easily be photocopied for class groups. Large A3 and A2 poster were provided along with the booklets as visual reminders of the methodologies as were Bloom's Taxonomy posters.'

Speaking about her school the Abbey Vocational School, Áine has noted that while just two years have passed since the first cohort of Abbey VS teachers began their journey to Carlow, since then we have had two more cohorts have begun the journey, 'Just a short walk through the corridors of the Abbey Vocational School is all it takes to recognise the impact of Instructional Leadership within our school. Traditional classroom seating arrangements have been altered in favour of group arrangements; noise and movement within the classroom signifies learning rather than disruption; the corridors are adorned with reminders of our instructional practices and plans are in place for further departmental collaborations.'

Dr Martin Gormley, who became Director of Schools in September 2016, has stated that, 'IL has provided Donegal ETB teachers with a range of key strategies and skills to complement the more traditional approaches to teaching and learning. We have seen clear evidence of effective change taking place in our classrooms with the teacher facilitating active learning by our students resulting in much better understanding.' As part of ongoing work on curriculum planning and content creation within Donegal ETB, the many graduates of the IL programme have made significant contributions to the process.

The introduction of the new Junior Cycle has been timely in terms of embedding IL strategies in our schools. Each year as part of a review of Teaching and Learning many schools plan on how to further embed and disseminate the principles of IL throughout the staff. As Chief Executive of Donegal ETB since January 2016, Anne McHugh would like to congratulate the Instructional Leadership programme, those teachers who have participated in it and those who support it on reaching its tenth anniversary. It is safe to say that Instructional Leadership is alive and well in Co Donegal and we are looking forward to the next ten years.





07

THE IMPACT OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME



L to R_ Professor Barrie Bennett, Seamus McGowan, Caroline Collieran, Rory Kinane and Michael Moriarty, General Secretary of ETBI

REFERENCES TO INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME IN DES REPORTS

The school is very supportive of teachers' continuing professional development. Teachers have engaged with an extensive range of relevant in-service training. Whole-school initiatives such as **instructional leadership**, peer review, and mentoring of student teachers have impacted positively on the quality of teaching and learning of science subjects.

It is highly commendable that the sharing of good teaching practice is promoted both at subject department level and through whole-school initiatives. The school's engagement with **instructional leadership** was reflected in the many examples of innovative teaching strategies observed in lessons visited.

CPD is very well supported and promoted in the school as is evident in the participation of staff in national events such as the **Instructional Leadership Programme** and TL21.

Continuing professional development (CPD) is actively promoted and supported by management. The deputy principal, along with other members of staff, has completed the **Instructional Leadership Programme** (ILP). It is commendable that the learning from this CPD programme has been shared with interested colleagues to support and expand their instructional repertoire. The school's willingness to be involved in the National Induction Programme for Teachers (NIPT) is indicative of its commitment to supporting and mentoring colleagues new to the profession.

School management places commendable focus on facilitating positive student learning experiences through staff training. Staff has shown a willingness to embrace new approaches to teaching, learning and assessment. These approaches are promoted through involvement in **instructional leadership**, the use of information and communications technology (ICT) and through membership of subject associations.

Instructional leadership practices have had a positive impact on levels of staff collaboration and innovative teaching practices and have improved the quality of student learning.

The excellent practice observed in some lessons was underpinned by elements of **instructional leadership** which resulted in improved learning experiences for students.

The board has overseen the implementation of strategies to enhance teaching and learning such as the increased use of **instructional leadership**, team teaching and peer mentoring and observation. The school feels that the use of these strategies, together with the school's use of the magenta principles, are having a positive impact on teaching and learning. It is clear that a critical mass has been reached with regard to the number of teachers involved in these initiatives, and that the consequent sharing of resources and ideas has been beneficial to all.

.....very good work has been carried out by working groups from the staff to progress teaching and learning. Initiatives include peer mentoring, **instructional leadership** and teach meets within the staff.

Two TY teachers have completed a course on '**Instructional Leadership**' and the benefits of this were evident in the lessons observed. Very effective techniques were used to ensure that all students participated fully. This ensured that all students engaged meaningfully with the lesson's activities.





INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME ON A NATIONAL STAGE

IRISH TIMES ARTICLE REFERENCING PROFESSOR BARRIE BENNETT'S PRESENTATION, TEACHING: JUST HOW COMPLEX?, DELIVERED AT THE TEACHING COUNCIL FEILTE IN OCTOBER 2013.



Take five: big ideas from Féilte festival

Féilte festival of education, now in its second year, is establishing itself in the educational calendar. Here's a sneak preview of some of this year's innovations



Peter McGuire

The life of a teacher: short working days and long holidays interrupted only to complain about Junior Cert reform. That's the popular narrative about what Ireland's teachers get up to, but, behind the scenes, educators are always working on innovations and ideas, developed through online networks, local education centres, and teacher union groups.

Some of those ideas will be on display at the annual Féilte Festival of Education, which will feature more than 50 workshops and showcases from across the primary and second-level sectors.

Visitors will also find a selection of speakers and panelists, including journalist Matt Cooper of Today FM's *The Last Word*. Prof. Barrie Bennett of the University of Toronto, and Tomás Ó Duairín, director of the Teaching Council. This is just the second year of Féilte, but it is already establishing itself as a significant and popular event in the educational calendar, with demand for tickets outstripping supply.

We had an advance look at just some of the most interesting innovations and ideas in Irish education today.

1 Ten easy ways to use technology in the classroom. How can teachers use Twitter hashtags for class project work? Can computer programming make PE fun? How can a mobile phone be used for maths trials?

Technology is no longer an optional extra, it is an essential resource for effective teaching, but some educators have struggled to stay afloat in a rapidly changing landscape. Wife and husband Rozzy and Simon Lewis, both practising primary-school teachers, have been running the popular education website *Anso.net* for eight years. During this time, they have used the internet and social media to encourage children to creatively collaborate and communicate.

"Technology has transformed the way we do everything, and primary schools are no different," they say. "Even with a lack of infrastructure and resources, however, there are creative ways to use technology to enhance learning. We get 100 classrooms around Ireland tweeting about visual arts during Digital Art Week. Children created games that responded to their body movements using the Scratch computer programme, which we used to film effect during PE class. We also used mobile phone technology to take photos of shapes, caption them, and upload them to the blogging platform Tumblr (see classroomconnections.tumblr.com)."

During Féilte, they will showcase 10 easy ways to use technology in the classroom. There will also be an online brainstorm, where teachers can post their ideas for using technology in the classroom. All the ide-

as will be collated and developed into a crowd-sourced user guide for schools. *anso.net*

2 Next Steps: moving from primary to secondary school

While he was minister for education, Ruairí Quinn focused on the disjunction between secondary school and third-level, rightly pointing out that many students were not adequately prepared for the very different demands of college life.

Several studies also point to the difficulties facing young people moving from primary to secondary school, as they adjust from short days with one teacher in one classroom to longer days with multiple teachers across multiple classrooms. The next Step (second-level transfer educational programme) is a unique and interactive project to get sixth-class pupils ready, delivered by trained volunteers from outside the school and involving parents, grandparents and others from the school community. Eight modules – covering topics such as fears and feelings, decision-making, self-esteem and bullying – are delivered over eight weeks.

The Next Step programme, developed and refined over the past five years by three home school community liaison teachers from New Ross, Co. Wexford, has been running in two New Ross schools for the past five years, and has just begun in two schools in Wexford and three in Cork. Materials are presented in folder and CD format, and are available free of charge to schools.

Milo Walsh, one of the teachers involved in the programme's development, says they are waiting to gauge reaction at Féilte, but that it may be rolled out nationwide over the coming months. *climdesse@gmail.com*

3 Arts in the classroom: The Marrog

"My kids at the back of the class And nobody nobody knows I'm a Marrog from Mars With a body of brass And seventeen fingers and toes..."

—Extract from *The Marrog* by RC Servien

This peculiar poem has inspired an equally peculiar arts project. Last year, six primary teachers wanted to build artistic ideas based on the poem. Visual artists included asking pupils to plan a picture of the creature, and asked them to construct a rocket for his journey, to build a character profile that allowed him to develop from hostile to friendly; to create a drama around him whereby a child tries to convince his or her parents that the Marrog is at the window; and to research myths and legends about famous monsters such as the Yeti or the Loch Ness monster. The creative possibilities showed what can grow from one simple idea.

This group, now called the Methall, meets once a month for a practical workshop where they share ideas and solutions around arts in the classroom. It is a teacher-led model of continuing professional development that includes displays of children's work samples, short demonstrations by some of the teachers, and reflections and planning of classroom work



Prof Barrie Bennett from the University of Toronto has worked on 'instructional intelligence', a focus on teaching and learning in general, rather than subject-specific in-service training

Féilte 2014

The Féilte (the Festival of Education in Learning and Teaching Excellence) is at the RDS, Dublin, on Saturday, from 10am-5pm. The theme is Talking About Teaching: Tearing Down these Walls. The event, which marks the World Teachers' Day, features more than 50 showcases and workshops from across the education sector and is organised by the Teaching Council. It is open to the public, but is heavily oversubscribed; the draw for tickets is now closed.

Féilte will include three panel discussions chaired by journalist and broadcaster Matt Cooper, as well as performances by the National Children's Choir and the Teachers' Musical Society. Choir and the Teachers' Musical Society panel discussions will focus on the wellbeing and needs of experienced and newly qualified teachers. The panel on wellbeing will include contributions from musician Bressie, former Cork hurler Cusack and TV presenter Eoghan McDermott – all of whom have spoken previously about their own mental-health difficulties – as well as Claire Hayes of Aweel and Ann-Marie Ireland, a teacher and facilitator with ChitOut Ireland.

For information at teachingcouncil.ie, Twitter @Feilte2014

■ The National Children's Choir (shown) which will sing at Féilte 2014

for the next Methall.

"We bring evidence of our pupils' learning on an approved topic – usually curriculum-based – to the Methall. This includes photos and samples of student writing and displays," says Helen Halliwell of Macraorta Arts Circle. The group seeks to nurture our own creativity with a view to better understanding of how we can nurture our students' creativity."

4 Health and fitness in schools

Several projects will showcase efforts to improve physical education and general health in schools. About a quarter of children in Ireland are overweight or obese, while four out of five are not getting enough exercise.

At Cardrossham Community, a secondary school in Co. Donegal, teacher Nuala Gee has worked with the entire school community to develop a range of actions highlighting calorie content and the recommended daily amount of exercise for young people.

In another project, Dublin City University's Copset (co-operating physical education teachers) drew together 10 like-minded and passionate PE teachers, and together they are developing their mentoring abilities to work with new PE teachers. The development of consultants like this can offer practical and workable solutions in overcoming the challenges of teacher education. The Teaching Council ought to take note of this, says Marie Cleary, a member of the group and a PE teacher at Margaret Aylward School in Dublin.

5 Instructional intelligence: a leadership programme

How self-reflective are teachers? How intelligent are they about their own teaching, and how can they improve the outcomes for students? Three years ago, Prof. Barrie Bennett, a teacher and academic from the University of Toronto with experience from primary through to third-level, set out to answer these questions. He worked with 150 teachers from the vocational sector in Ireland, and over six residential seminars, the teachers undertook a process to the key principles underpinning a concept called "instructional intelligence".

Broadly, instructional intelligence refers to how teachers can deliberately and consciously develop a range of strategies and techniques to improve learning outcomes, while taking into account the different factors that may affect individual students' intelligence, gender, learning styles, roommates and multiple intelligences.

For many of the teachers involved, this has been their first engagement with professional development that is focused on teaching and learning in general, rather than on subject-specific in-service training. Two more critical teachers have since started the project and many have facilitated in-service in their own schools.

The programme has the potential to continue rolling out across Irish schools in the coming years, and has the potential to dramatically improve the quality of teaching and the educational outcomes for schools.

THE IRISH TIMES
Tuesday, January 12, 2016

‘The great revolution that makes the classes come alive’

A secondary school in Donegal has become one of the top-ranking schools in Ireland after ditching the focus on ‘chalk and talk’ and moving to a student-led model born in Canada

Carl O'Brien
Education Editor

The first thing that strikes you as you enter the classroom. There are no symmetrical lines of desks facing a whiteboard. Instead, there are small pods of four tables grouped together.

In another classroom, chairs are arranged in a big U to facilitate discussion. Then you notice coloured pages open on student desks during class. The so-called traffic-light system – with red, amber and green pages – allows pupils to give unobtrusive feedback to the teacher on whether they are following what is going on.

“We don’t focus on ‘chalk and talk’ any more,” says Pat Tighe, acting principal of Mugh Ene College, a secondary school in Bundoran, Co Donegal. “The old approach was teacher-led. Students weren’t active participants. They were told what to do, and they did it. ... Now, there’s a big focus on partnerships.”

This takes the form of group work and creating an active learning environment where everyone feels involved. “It makes the classroom come alive,” he says.

It is yielding impressive results. Feeder school lists, which rank secondary schools based on the proportion of students that progress to third level, are typically dominated by fee-paying and high-achieving schools in affluent areas.

Yet, Mugh Ene College, a school under the patronage of the Education and Training Board (formerly the Vocational Education Committee) has vaulted towards the summit of this year’s list.

It ranked third nationally out of the State’s 700 plus secondary schools, ahead of long-established bastions of privilege and high achievement.

It was followed in fourth place by another ETB-run school, Coláiste Glenties IL Tralee (formerly Tralee Community College), which is using the same learning techniques.

Both schools put much of their high performance down to a quiet revolution in teaching and learning prompted by a Canadian professor, Barrie Bennett.

Roots in 1980s Canada

The roots of the “instructional leadership” go back to the 1980s in Canada. A ministry of education report at the time found that Durham school district, east of Toronto, was one of the worst in the province of Ontario. Bennett was part of a team that fundamentally changed the way teaching and learning took place in the classroom.

A decade later, Durham was recognised as one of the most innovative of school districts in the world when it was awarded a major international prize by the Bertelsmann Foundation.

At the heart of the approach is research that indicates that a teacher’s “instructional repertoire” is one of the single biggest predictors of a student’s performance.

“I’ve found that vast majority of teachers really do want to make a difference in the classroom,” says Bennett. However, he points out that most training programmes only get teachers out of the starting blocks. They do not place enough emphasis on the repertoire of instruction approaches that can fully engage students.

To do it well, Bennett says, requires time and patience. Research indicates that it takes about 10 years for anyone to become an expert in a field that is reasonably complex.

“Slower is faster, and less is more,” he says. “Most school districts work on the idea of ‘let’s have a good year.’ The key is to say with a long enough to build the instructional capacity to have your own teachers doing the workshops for other teachers.”

Bennett first came to Ireland almost a

decade ago following an invitation from a Department of Education official, Dr Fim O’Murchu, who was impressed by his research findings.

Tighe recalls going to Bennett’s first workshop for teachers in Ireland, at the Mount Wesley Hotel in Co Galway in 2008. Most training days tend to involve changes to subject material or the curriculum, but this was different: the focus was on the very building blocks of teaching and learning.

“It was unlike anything I had come across in my day,” Tighe says. “It was based on students seeking information themselves, sharing it and problem-solving, all under the gentle guidance of a teacher.”

“We didn’t have to tell it,” says Tighe. Teachers found classes were easier and outcomes were better. There were far fewer disciplinary issues.

Now, all 28 teachers at the school are enthusiastic about the new approach and say it makes classroom management easier.

Students are enthusiastic about the new approach and say it makes classroom management easier. “We learn from each other,” says Celine Coghlan (15), a transition year student. “No student can be the best at everything, so we share what we know when it comes to group work, under the guidance of the teacher.”

“The days of teachers closing the door behind them are going. They are sharing their practice and their experience. They have the skill and the courage to try new methods”

Teachers, too, are rediscovering a professional pride in their roles and say classes are filled with energy, experimentation and enthusiasm.

“It’s magical,” says Joan Russell, project officer for instructional practices with the ETB. “The days of teachers closing the door behind them are going. They are sharing their practice and their experience. They have the skill and the courage to try new methods.”

There has been no formal evaluation of the impact of training so far. Anecdotally, however, many teachers say it is transforming the classroom and increasing the confidence of all abilities.

Nationally, more than 900 teachers in about 220 schools have been trained in instructional leadership. There is a waiting list of schools seeking to take part in instructional leadership training, with a series of new sessions due to begin in March.

Bennett says plans to roll out the approach nationally in Ireland are by far the most ambitious of any of the projects he has been involved in. “They are doing an excellent job of attending to the research related to what works; they are also re-searching and re-inventing themselves as they move along,” he says.

The investment of boards of management and education leaders at universities, he says, will be vital to sustaining its success in the longer term.

“What happens at the top is always what makes the project survive or die,” he says. “Staying connected to key players and stakeholders is essential. So, getting messages involved in finding ways they can support teachers to make their work more effective is key.”

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■ From top: Emer McGarran, Isabelle Pawlowicz, Chloe Johnston and Aoife Keegan in science class at Mugh Ene school in Bundoran. Colour-coded pages are left open to signify the students’ understanding of the task. Dylan Bove, Darragh Gallagher, Aoife Keegan and Orla Fallon hold up white boards to show their knowledge of the subject. Below, Pat Tighe, principal of Mugh Ene, and, bottom, Barrie Bennett, who pioneered instructional leadership in Canada. PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES CONNELLY

Why schools are signing up in their droves

Joan Russell is project officer for instructional practices at the Education and Training Board/Ireland

There has been much talk of storms in Ireland over the past few weeks, each of which have left their mark on our towns and villages.

However, one storm that has been hitting the country for the past eight years, relatively silently, yet making a positive impact on our postprimary schools and colleges, is a major change in the way teaching and learning is taking place in the classroom.

The Instructional Leadership Programme is unique to the field of education in a number of ways. It is entirely voluntary. No school is ever compelled to undergo training. Instead, schools and colleges are invited to participate.

In the past, enrolment has been based on waiting lists rather than advertising. Schools and colleges are signing up to participate.

It is not focused on any particular subject. Rather, it is based on ensuring we have active classrooms with high-quality teaching and learning.

In the process, the programme is giving teachers an opportunity to develop a new language around their classroom and their teaching.

For example, it’s about to share practice, resources and ideas, regardless of the subject.

The Education and Training Board Ireland has engaged

with Canadian professor Barrie Bennett to develop a programme of professional development for school and college management and teachers that focuses on developing these skills. This programme is in its eighth year and has facilitated the training and upskilling of almost 1,000 postprimary teachers, principals and deputy principals.

Annually, a cohort of about 120 participants – including three representatives from each school – attend four workshops over a two-year period.

One really two groups are facilitated consecutively over 200+ hours.

So, why are schools signing up to this? For the students, how the teachers have embraced the methods used to make classrooms active learning environments.

One teacher tells the story of how her students left her classroom and asked another teacher would she “do the stuff that the other teachers do with us?”

This is opening up an opportunity for professional collaboration within the school.

It is also encouraging teachers to consciously adapt

their classroom practice to maximise student learning and to make classrooms a safe and accountable learning environment.

The science behind the learning is a central part of the programme. Teachers learn not just new skills and how to implement them but also the science and reasoning behind them.

The programme promotes and supports the building of internal capacity in schools, where teachers become critical friends of each other. Schools are developing the capacity to provide their own professional development, to meet their own unique needs.

Crucial ingredients

It is much more than another form of learning. There are a number of crucial ingredients required to help ensure it works effectively.

For example, it’s compulsory for the principal or deputy principal to participate in the programme.

This is not only to support them in executing their roles in leading teaching and learning, but also to ensure that effective change takes place right across the school or college.

For example, changing how teachers teach and how students learn across the

postprimary and further education sector.

An exciting aspect of the programme is that those who have completed it are facilitating the delivery of the programme in their own schools and colleges, with fellow teachers and with groups of teachers at national and regional level.

In fact, graduates will facilitate with Prof Bennett at the workshops for the groups due to commence the programme in March.

Many have established support networks. These allow teachers in various schools and colleges across the sectors to meet on a regular basis, outside of school time, to share their experience and learning.

Nothing stands still, however. That’s why a national conference is held annually to support and further promote the skills necessary to meet Ireland’s changing challenges.

We have found that the instructional leadership programme has motivated many teachers to continue their study of this area at postgraduate level. Their insights continue to be shared as valued feedback within the programme.

The programme is working and making a impact. It can be demanding and challenging, but it is of high quality and focused on the core business of any school: teaching and learning, at all levels.

For more information, available by emailing joan.russell@etb.ie or on our instructional leadership site

Learning techniques How the system works

Here are some of the techniques that successful schools such as Mugh Ene – a secondary school in Bundoran, Co Donegal – are using to change the way learning takes place in the classroom.

■ TRAFFIC-LIGHT SYSTEM

Students’ journals are open on their desks with pages colour-coded in green, amber and red. They use them to give teachers real-time feedback on whether they understand what is being taught.

A teacher sees a sea of red, then they know there’s a problem,” says Pat Tighe, principal of Mugh Ene College.

Individual student displays a red page, the teacher can provide one-on-one support.

■ MINI WHITEBOARDS

In typical class an individual student is selected to give an answer to a question. As part of this new approach, all students are required to answer a question by writing/drawing on a mini whiteboard.

which they display simultaneously to the teacher. “In the old classes, students would line up the rightmost person to get picked out to answer a question they didn’t know,” says Tighe. In this new way, everyone’s involved and everyone feels safe instead of being singled out.

■ FISHBONE DIAGRAMS

Instead of transcribing names of notes, students are encouraged to use “mind-mapping” techniques for brainstorming. Fishbone diagrams help students to consider all possible causes of a problem, rather than the most obvious.

■ NO PERCENTAGES

Instead of a list of marks at the end of a school term, which shows how much a student knows or doesn’t know, many are opting for formative assessments.

These involve giving regular feedback to students in the form of constructive comments rather than percentage scores.



EU PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE, HOSTED BY TEACHING COUNCIL, INTEGRATION, INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENTS – THE PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY OF TEACHER EDUCATORS

Dr Breda Sunderland and Gerard O’Sullivan (members of the Instructional Leadership Steering Committee) presented alongside Professor Olaf at the EU Conference, Integration, Innovation and Improvements - the Professional Identity of Teacher Conference in Dublin Castle February 2013. They presented with Professor Olof Johansson of Umea University, Sweden speaking on “National Educational Policies Meet Structures of Implementation at the School District and School Level”.

The focus of the presentation was on locating the work of the Instructional Leadership Programme in the context of rethinking the professional identity of principals and teachers as teacher educators. The extract belows came from the conference programme.

Principals and Teachers as Teacher Educators: two case studies

- Professor Olof Johansson Umeå University, Sweden and European Policy Network on School Leadership
- Dr Breda Sunderland and Gerard O’Sullivan Instructional Leadership Programme, Ireland

This session entails the presentation of two case studies relating to the theme of transformational leadership in education: one set in the Irish context and the other from the Swedish perspective. The presentations seek to locate the experiences in the context of rethinking the professional identity of principals and teachers as teacher educators, and in terms of the theme of transformational leadership. The Irish presentation will seek to locate the emergence and development of the Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) in the context of Irish education policy and legislative framework since the 1990s. It will trace the increasing emphasis on enabling and supporting effective teaching and learning through various developments and initiatives at national and local levels. The role of the ILP in strategically planning for collaborative, sustainable, state-wide, systemic change so as to progress the teaching and learning agenda will be examined, with a particular focus on the model of teacher as teacher educator. The presentation will reflect the key principles underpinning the ILP and on how it attends to the structured support and affirmation of teachers as teacher educators. It will critically examine the extent to which the ILP aligns with aspects of the current education policy agenda in the Irish and European settings.



THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO SUPPORTING LEARNING FOR ALL

*FINN Ó MURCHÚ, JOAN RUSSELL
AND BARRIE BENNETT*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

I found the programme excellent and it has really helped my teaching. I think I was probably doing fine in the classroom but I think I will be better in the future. It's good to try to keep improving.

(Teacher participant in Instructional Leadership Programme, 2017)

As we write this paper we must keep in mind that a range of policy-related initiatives are converging on the concept of what is understood by 'learning for all' in the context of ongoing improvements in practice; *Looking At Our Schools* and *Circular 0014/2017* (DES, 2016, 2017), *Cosán* (Teaching Council, 2016) and the *PISA Report on Students' Well-Being* (OECD, 2017). Such attention 'to try to keep improving' is due in part to the good work already being undertaken in schools and to the growing awareness of just how central the teacher is to the quality of learning and the learning experience that each student encounters on a daily basis. Currently 99.2% of our primary- and post-primary

aged students attending mainstream schools (DES, 2016). Combined with an ever increasing understanding of the diversity of student profile in all classrooms, including special schools, we contend that now, more than ever, we need to understand how best we can support teachers to support each other to support our students.

The purpose of this paper, from a practical perspective, is to illustrate how the Instructional Leadership Programme in Ireland (2006-present) supports professional learning for inclusive learning as captured in the phrase ‘supporting learning for all’. While we are aware that our project continues to grow and attract increasing attention (for example, DES school inspection reports and *Irish Times*, *A teaching revolution that makes the classroom come alive* 12/1/16) we know it is not perfect and our purpose here is not to advocate for our programme. Equally we don’t seek here or in our work to advocate a certain way of teaching or leading, but rather to explore how our work contributes to empowering teachers to make a difference for each and every student in their classroom. In particular, as is evident from the first encounters with Barrie, our focus is on attending to students who are at risk of not learning. On any given day for any number of reasons a student or whole class may be at risk of not learning and therefore the centrality of the teacher once more comes into sharp focus.

The programme we are engaged in was initially guided by the contribution of Barrie who as Associate Professor of Education in Ontario accepted Finn’s invite, then as Senior Inspector for Special Education, to come to Ireland in 2007 and work with schools. Joan, in her then role as Education Officer with Cork ETB (then VEC) was central in establishing the process in 2008 and continues to be central in establishing and embellishing the programme across post-primary and further education sectors, with the assistance of a small steering committee. Currently this voluntary not-for-profit programme has been accessed by over 25% of all post-primary schools and 15 % within the further education sector¹.

The first section of our paper will be devoted to the key principles and features of the project that support inclusive learning. The second section looks at key features of the programme with an eye to inclusive practices. The third section focuses on how the programme is positioned within the context of the current educational landscape. We conclude with a review of our progress to date and the work that remains to be re-visited or undertaken with specific reference to supporting learning for all.

1 Exploratory discussions are underway with the primary school sector. Within the Youthreach sector 19% of centres are involved in the programme

2.0 PROGRAMME PRINCIPLES THAT SUPPORT LEARNING FOR ALL

From the outset of our efforts we *did not* nor *do not* seek to ‘programme’ or ‘instruct’ individuals or schools in ‘what to do’. Our intent is to provide a repertoire of evidence-based actions that can be drawn upon in a context-sensitive, appropriately collaborative and ultimately intentional manner. We seek to professionalise teachers and leaders by asking for a renewed focus on teaching and leadership that attends to all learners and indeed all teachers. We concur with Thomas Good (2010) “Teachers are professionals and need information about practice that they can use to make decisions; they do not need to be told what to do” (p. 56).

Our programme is guided by Barrie’s near 40 years involvement in teaching and the insights accrued in merging curriculum, assessment, instruction, knowledge of how students learn and theories of change and systemic change (Bennett, 2010). Such insights pay attention to the categorisation of instruction such as the range of concepts, skills, tactics, strategies and organisers that can be used to frame what we do and why we do it. Such categorisation in turn allows for a more nuanced understanding of the artful and scientific complexity of instruction. This key feature will be addressed in more detail in the next section.

We believe that inclusive classrooms have a better chance of occurring when teachers perceive themselves as members of inclusive staffrooms and therefore we believe in the potential that is collaborative practice. Furthermore, we believe in the interdependence between collaborative practice and change wisdom. From that perspective we are not in competition with any other professional learning opportunities that teachers can access and indeed we see our success when our programme is aligned with other actions, either explicitly or otherwise. Our focus is on how best to ensure learning for all and as teachers we recognise the importance of judicious lowering of ego so as to heighten and enhance learning.

We also contend that too often it seems there can be a lot of attention given to what needs to change and not enough to understanding change itself. Our work draws heavily on Concerned-Based Adoption Models (CBAM; Hall & Hord, 2014) where we recognise that change is a process requiring a sensitive metric that measures progress in a timely and intelligent manner. In understanding change we acknowledge the work of others in this regard. Patterson, Purkey and Parker (1986) discussed the importance of systems in their text *Productive School Systems for a Non-rational World*. They noted that school staffs might ‘go it alone’ but argue that the power to make a difference is at the level of the organization.

We, as authors, clearly agree that the classroom is where the ‘rubber hits the road’; however, involving a few teachers in a few schools or all teachers in a few schools is not ‘the finish line’. The ‘finish line’ is an ideal that implies all students learning in an endless and collective effort to get all teachers in all schools to continually improve instructionally. That implies educators in the system creating a learning organization that can deal with the relentless press of change, and make realistic efforts to achieve, the oft said but not so oft achieved goal of learning for all. Currently, our take on ‘change’ and by implication inclusive learning, is that ‘educators in positions of influence’ (with few exceptions) collectively prefer to write, research, and talk about the pieces of change rather than *enact* the ‘puzzle’ of change systemically over time ... hence the lack of research on systems successfully sustaining change over time. Finland (Salhberg, 2011) and the Durham Board of Education (Bennett & Green, 1995) would be examples of those exceptions. In addition such work on systemic approaches rarely focuses on the actual systemic implementation of instructional innovations over time, nor the quality of instruction during that time.

In the next section we will describe the programme in more detail and explore the instructional innovations associated with our programme over time. This strikes at the very heart at what we do and whether what we do actually makes a difference for learners.

3.0 SOME KEY FEATURES OF THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME THAT SUPPORT INCLUSIVE LEARNING

The first key feature of the programme is that it is generic and not aligned to a particular subject nor indeed category of need. It is founded on the concept that ‘good teaching is good teaching’ where ‘what is essential for some is good for all’ (Hargreaves and Braun, 2012). By this we understand the need to have in-depth knowledge of identified needs/strengths and the values that lead to how such knowledge is sought (if at all) and used once accessed (to teach or to explain away the need to teach). However, acquisition of knowledge, even with the best of intentions, is not enough and we in turn as professionals are charged with having an in-depth knowledge of our own pedagogical role so as to support the learning we wish to take place.

A second key feature links the transformative dimension for our students with that of our teachers. The programme promotes the involvement of the school principal with two staff members who over time, as a small community of practice (Wenger, 2014), are willing to share their learning with colleagues and build capacity in their own context. The workshops involve the Skill Training Model (Joyce and Shower, 1980, 1982, 2002). This constructivist model involves the presentation of theory/information, demonstration, practice and feedback in the workshop. The workshop process is 2 ½ days twice a year

for two years. Teachers return to their schools and initially work in their classrooms, and with their colleagues who attended the workshops. The topics for the workshops focus on a variety of instructional methods that the research directly or indirectly show impact student academic and social learning.

Importantly, teachers are asked not to go back and ‘do’ workshops or ‘training’ for staff in their school until they ‘played’ with the innovations sufficiently that they felt they could share the innovation and effect it was having in their classroom. One common mistake principals make is to have teachers come back to school and have those teachers present to staff before those teachers have had the opportunity to ‘play’ with the innovation. Having teachers go back and work at the innovation first (with the support of the principal) allows other staff members to see examples of student work and to have their questions answered. Increased use of team teaching has been used to good effect in supporting such practice, though we still need to do more on building in-school capacity and in sharing students’ work within schools and upon return to workshops organised by the programme. Table 1 lists some of the methods used in the workshops and the key is how teachers select from a variety of skills, tactics and strategies to invoke instructional concepts and organisers. (For a more in-depth understanding of the topics see Bennett and Rolheiser 2000).

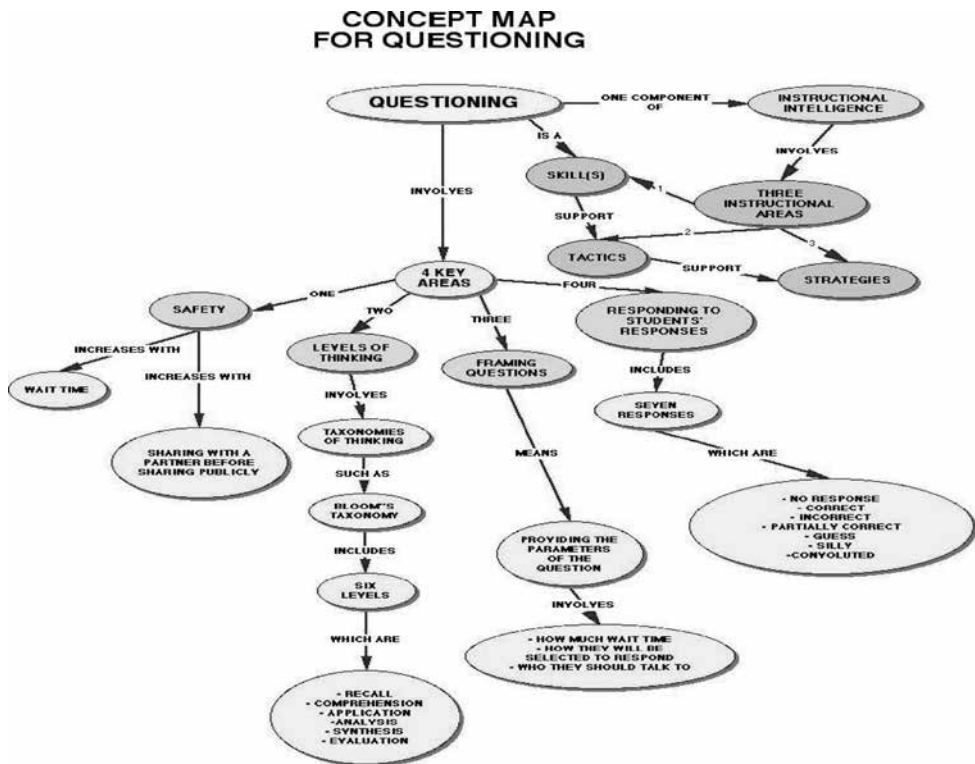
Table 1. Partial List of Workshop Topics from work on Instructional Intelligence*

<i>Instructional Strategies</i> (most complex and most powerful): Concept Attainment, Concept Formation, Jigsaw, Academic Controversy, Team Analysis, 5 Basic Elements, Teams Games Tournaments, Mind Maps and Concept Maps
<i>Instructional Tactics</i> (mid complexity and moderate power): Place Mat, Think Pair Share, Four Corners, 2/3 Person Interview, Snow Ball, One Stray Rest Stay, Ranking Ladders, Fish Bone diagrams, Venn diagrams
<i>Instructional Skills</i> (least complex and least powerful): Framing Questions, Wait Time, Responding to Students Responses, Sharing the Objective and Purpose of the Lesson, Providing Feedback
<i>Instructional Concepts</i> (can’t do but must be invoked): inclusion, safety, hope, social justice, resilience, trust, team teaching, accountability, checking for understanding, guided and independent practice, modelling, assessment for learning
<i>Instructional organizers</i> : Bloom’s Taxonomy, Multiple Intelligence, Differentiation, Brain Research, Research on Autism etc.
<i>Classroom Management</i> : Six genres of skills to respond to student escalation
*Note that the above are integrated and often occur at the same time or are stacked one after another – much more complex than it appears

An additional feature of the programme that aligns with inclusive teaching is a recognition of the complexity associated with learning, teaching and assessment. A complexity that both honours and inspires teachers. Fig 1 below is an example of this complexity as revealed in ‘as simple’ an act as questioning. Firstly we assume content knowledge and knowledge of students is a given. We progress to four key aspects, safety, levels

of thinking, framing the question and responding to responses. As the diagram outlines there a range of factors that need to be kept to the fore if questioning is to achieve the goal intended. That said, the diagram could be extended to include the impact of teacher's responses to each effort, vis a vis classroom management, sense of belonging and how this influences the safety element of the lesson. Nor indeed is attention given to the diversity of learners and learning styles in the class, ie students who prefer not to answer in public, are uncomfortable putting their hand up, students who need more/less wait time or the myriad of other factors such as the relationship with the teacher and the relationships between students in class. Once the complexity is honoured so too is the profession and this in turn enhances the desire to improve in a manner that may be 'essential for some but good for all' (Hargreaves & Braun, 2012).

FIG 1.



BENNETT, 2016.

As can be seen an emerging focus on being 'consciously skilled, rather than merely accidentally adequate' (Bennett, 2010, p. 87) is a central feature of the programme. Reflection on, in and of practice is supported by the acquisition of a language that allows for both reflection and subsequent action, crucially at a collective as well as individual level. Where deemed of use

students can be encouraged to reflect upon their actions and how they enable or hinder their own and their peers' learning. Such reflection and (re)action can be undertaken at an individual or collective level (i.e. more than one teacher, subject department, whole-class level or across an entire year group or school). Please note we understand collaboration to be determined by the learning experiences and learning outcomes for students and not simply measured by teachers' perceptions of the experience. Such a pedagogical understanding aligns with instructional organisers as those associated with student behaviour and cognitive development so that we can match for example what we know about a student with autism and what we know about autism in general with pedagogical responses anchored in deeper professional understandings than might otherwise be the case.

Linked to such a focus is an awareness of where one is at collectively and individually in implementing change. This is not an insignificant point when as teachers we struggle sometimes to see if we are making any progress and on occasion may not be able to see any developmental pathway forming for either student or ourselves. Table 2 below outlines the role Concerned-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) can play in supporting our understanding of ourselves within the context of how good we are at using new methods and how or when they impact on our learners (Ó Murchú, 2014). This is an important point when we consider confidence levels and concepts associated with identity among mainstream teachers. Such teachers often require support in addressing the emotional as well as practical demands in seeking to be an inclusive teacher (TALIS, OECD, 2013; Griffin & Shevlin, 2011). In short, CBAM offers a level of comfort for teachers where they can map their progress in a more nuanced and practical way.

TABLE 2. CBAM LEVELS OF USE (THIS ALSO APPLIES TO STUDENTS)

Non-Use:	the teacher is not using the innovation
Orientation:	the teacher attends a workshop to understand, practice the innovation
Preparation:	the teacher is planning to transfer the innovation to their classroom
Mechanical:	the teacher starts using it, but the implementation is not effective
Routine:	the teacher is now a smooth user of the innovation
Refined:	the teacher is now a sophisticated user of the innovation
Integration:	the teacher is merging multiple innovations
Refocusing:	the teacher is searching for new ideas
(Note: little to no benefit on student learning until Routine and higher levels of use are achieved.)	

CBAM/Levels of use is presented and discussed with the participants on the programme and assists participants in positioning their efforts within the process of educational change and engage in wiser evaluation (both self and collective) along the continuum of improvement.

In the next section we will explore how the programme supports current actions associated with the promotion of inclusive learning in our schools and classrooms.

4.0 THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE.

In the past year a number of policy decisions have been undertaken which range from a tangential to central role for inclusive teaching. Of note is the new resource model which focuses much more on the school's enrolment profile (DES Circular 0014/2017, 2017) rather than on identified individuals. Weightings in determining such allocation see the movement towards inclusion as a broader term than special needs and where the focus is nuanced in attending to learning needs over singular interpretations (and funding) as based on disability. Such action brings us back to understandings around students at risk of not learning and schools now having greater autonomy in responding to such needs. But schools need pedagogy as well as autonomy.

Although policy is designed to inspire practice we should remember that policy in itself is often inspired by practice. The Instructional Leadership Programme offers a range of options for schools to consider and most importantly keeps the spotlight on pedagogy and how it might be implemented and assessed within classrooms and within/across schools. It gives practical choices and expression around actions that honour concepts such as inclusion and social justice. This complementarity aligns with DES Inclusion Guidelines from 2007 and most recently *Guidelines for Post-Primary Schools: Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Mainstream Schools* (2017). With such input by the Instructional Leadership Programme teachers can make learning happen within frameworks, and associated concepts like those listed above, and as represented by Junior Cycle Reform including Key Skills across levels 3, 2 and hopefully soon to come level 1.

Another key development in Ireland recently has seen the renewed focus on *School Self Evaluation 2016-2020 and Looking at our Schools (LAOS) 2016*. These very useful policy publications chime with our understanding of the need for teachers to 'contribute to building whole-staff capacity by sharing their expertise' (LAOS, p. 17). Of note is that such commentary was observed by Chief Inspector Harold Hislop when he gave the keynote address at the first National Conference of the Instructional Leadership Programme in 2012. Even then the Instructional Leadership programme was seen to be significant in promoting collaborative practice among teachers and school leaders. In the more recent document attention is also given to efforts that 'empower staff to take on and carry out leadership roles (p. 17). That point is significant given the growing importance of leadership as required by many 'SEN coordinators' in our schools and the potential that lies in 'leading from the middle'². In this regard our programme offers space to consider not only pedagogy but how best to lead capacity building among staff in a manner that draws on change wisdom

² See Hargreaves, A. & Braun, H. (2012). *Leading for all: Final report of the review of the development of essential for some, good for all: Ontario's strategy for special education reform devised by the Council of Directors of Education*. Toronto, Ontario:

and allows for sustained development within schools. That said, we should not forget that inclusion-generated actions like team teaching offer a reciprocal or win-win opportunity for our programme to be rolled out within schools. To paraphrase Hegarty's (2007) wry observation, special education often comes to the rescue of other initiatives. In turn we can see how CBAM, as outlined previously, can add weight, validity and common sense to how best and when best to evaluate our actions.

That point is also not lost on another key emerging development in Ireland, *Cosán: Framework for Teachers' Learning* (Teaching Council, 2016).

The Teaching Council is clarifying that teachers' learning is an ongoing process. Teachers know that they need to continue to learn as professionals so that they can empower students to be the best learners they can be. (p. 3).

Our programme is designed to do likewise and is indebted to Teaching Council Director Tomás Ó Ruairc for his steadfast support. Joan is a past member of the Teaching Council and Barrie has presented at FÉILTE and Tomás has spoken at, and frequently about, our programme. We also note the collaborative dimension to *Cosán*, and in keeping with *Cosán's* stated goals, we see the need for teachers to have a sense of belonging not only to their school but also to their profession. Where such exists the promotion of belonging among students and especially those on the fringes has a better chance of being addressed and a better chance of succeeding.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Collectively we have worked hard to apply/enact key ideas related to promoting inclusive learning in our schools and classrooms. Our project continues to evolve and we are aware of the many challenges we face including for example the challenge of transfer from the workshops to the school so as to build capacity within schools, extending our understanding of how best to engage with primary colleagues and the ongoing efforts to adopt a more interconnected understanding of our work across the educational landscape. Teachers with Joan's support have established networks, both formal and informal, across the country and we continue to work with the DES inspectorate and support services most notably the NIPT, but also the JCT, PDST and SESS. Our programme is self-financing, has a waiting list for new schools to be involved and is recognised internationally as witnessed by our guests from Australia, Canada, England and Germany at our recent international conference.

In the context of promoting learning for all we like to think that our work reminds and supports teachers and school leaders that all students have the ability to learn and the right to experience powerful learning experiences when in our class. Our shared value system in the promotion of learning for all is reinforced and reinvigorated by meeting with each other and by our shared focus and hope to become more instructionally intelligent. As stated at the beginning ‘it’s good to try to keep improving’ and honour Ken Robinson’s (2016) observation that ‘life is your talents realised’.

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Further details of the Instructional Leadership Programme are available at www.instructionalleadership.ie

EDUCATION MATTERS, 2014

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME

JOAN RUSSELL

Instructional Leadership are those actions that a Principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning (Flath, 1989)

The Instructional Leader makes instructional quality the top priority of the school and attempts to bring that vision to realisation. (John Arul Phillips)

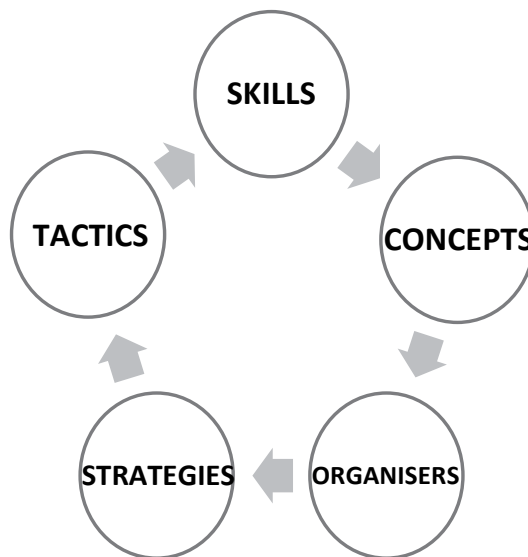
Looking back over the past two decades, one could conclude that as organisations, schools have become busier and more complex. The legislative framework and ever changing demands for procedures under which schools are operating, the changing opus of our society, as well as the changing economic climate, have all had their impact by intensifying the administrative burden on our school leaders. Has this resulted in a shift in focus from Instructional Leadership? I believe that we did displace this focus for a while, but thankfully, the focus is shifting back with increasing demand for accountability in terms of student performance; the demand for schools to engage in School Self-Evaluation, the mindfulness of teachers of the varying learning styles and needs of our learners, the multicultural school environments as well as the increasing professionalism of teachers has all contributed to the shift towards an emphasis on the quality of teaching and learning in our schools; a shift toward Instructional Leadership.

As well as informing you as to what the Instructional Leadership Programme is, this article aims to locate its' emergence and development in the context of Irish education policy and to highlight the developments of the programme in 2014 before informing you of the plans for 2015.

WHAT IS THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME?

The Instructional Leadership Programme is a programme for the professional development of schools leaders and teachers, developed in response to the need and demand for support to place teaching and learning higher on the school development agenda. The Programme itself aims to;

1. Acquaint participants with the general principles and ideas upon which the theory of Instructional Leadership is built and to develop the participant's notion of Instructional Leadership.
2. Provide participants with a vocabulary or language with which they can begin to articulate aspects of their practice as teachers, regardless of their subject discipline.
3. Introduce participants to the central pillars of the theory of pedagogy and of the teacher's instructional repertoire, such as *Skills*, *Tactics*, *Strategies* and *Power* and to begin to explore with participants how these terms and concepts interplay with each other in the teacher's classroom practice.



In essence it aims to facilitate moving from being **tacitly skilled** in a limited number of instructional methods to being **explicitly skilled** with a higher number of instructional methods.

"Consciously competent rather than accidentally adequate"

Dr. Barrie Bennett

THE ORIGINS OF THE PROGRAMME

The Instructional Leadership programme has emerged from the on-going Education & Training Board Ireland (ETBI) led engagement between schools, colleges and centres of learning with Dr. Barrie Bennett at post-primary and Further Education level.

It began within the VEC sector (now ETB) in 2008 in response to the demand for leadership and support in placing teaching and learning at the core of effective school development.

ETBI and its constituent ETBs, initiated engagement with Dr. Barrie Bennett, Professor Emeritus, University of Ontario, to develop a programme to support and develop Instructional Leadership. As it has been proved to be most successful, with schools and centres applying to be put on a waiting list to participate, ETBI partnered with the Joint Managerial Bodies (JMB) and the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (ACCS) to ensure that it is available to all sectors at Post-Primary and Further Education level.

Dr. Bennett has emerged as one of the world's leading proponents of Instructional Leadership. He has written and lectured extensively on the themes of teacher thinking, learning and action; how teachers acquire their instructional repertoire, how they extend it, how they integrate it in their classroom practice, how they share it and how this affects student learning. His work also focuses on systemic educational change and purports that such change must involve all partners in education.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME AS A PROGRAMME OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

One of the reasons cited for there being less emphasis being given to Instructional Leadership is the lack of in-depth training.

Flath, 1989; Fullan, 1991

Empirical evidence suggests that successful teacher professional development programs are intensive, ongoing, and connected to practice; focused on specific subject content; and foster strong working relationships among teachers. They support teacher motivation so that the acquired skills continue to be practiced in class.

*Chong, Wan Har; Kong, Christine Anne
Journal of Experimental Education, v80 n3 p263-283 2012*

It is critical to provide leaders and teachers with the skills necessary to support excellent classroom practice. It is insufficient and irresponsible to consider that this type of support can be left to initial teacher education. It needs to be a sustained, intentional and focused

through the entire career of teachers. The Teaching Council has already identified that the rationale for effective Continuous Professional Development (CPD) stems from growing national and international awareness that teacher quality is inextricably linked, not only to the quality of initial teacher education, but also to the provision of high quality CPD.

CPD should empower change in both school and classroom culture; initiating conversations, encouraging the formation of networks and facilitating collaboration with peers. Instructional Leadership Programme participants are in an excellent position to achieve this. In the delivery of a keynote address at the Instructional Leadership Programme National Conference on 12th October 2012, Dr Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector with the DES, emphasised the importance of creating effective learning environments. *Learning has to be at the core of systemic change, for the student, for the professional and for the system. The establishment and delivery of CPD which focuses on pedagogical practice is key to achieving this.*

The Instructional Leadership Programme aims to enhance teachers' professional identity not only as pedagogical experts but also as teacher educators through the dissemination of their own instructional repertoires to fellow colleagues in their schools or neighbouring schools.

Arising from the Teaching Council EU Presidency Education Conference, hosted in Dublin Castle, 2012, entitled *Integration, Innovation and Improvement – the Professional Identity of Teacher Educators*, at which the Instructional Leadership Programme was presented, it was recommended that greater definition and recognition needs to be given to the role of teachers, as well as principals, as teacher educators across the continuum of teacher education. The Instructional Leadership Programme offers supports to this recommendation

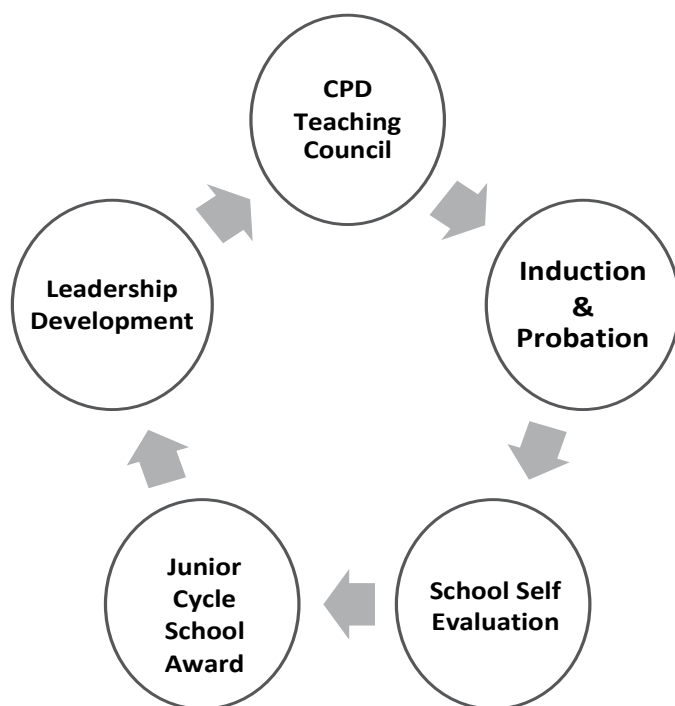
WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT AS A MODEL OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT? - IT PROVIDES AND FACILITATES:-

1. The Instructional Leadership Programme focuses on the development of a common language, to enable teachers to articulate their practice and converse with each other on pedagogy, irrespective of their subject discipline. The use of this shared language also assists in policy formation and implementation, fostering systemic change and the prevention of fragmentation of teacher professional identity.
2. Engagement & Submersion – It is a pre-requisite of the programme that the Principal or Deputy Principal and two teachers, from each participating school, are enrolled. The notion that the Principal or Deputy Principal must participate is based on the view that s/he cannot lead learning or support teachers if they do not know what is going on in the classrooms. Each participating school team are required to attend

the four sessions of the programme. The sessions are facilitated in residential format, over two and half days twice a year, spring and autumn.

3. **Modelling & Practice** – Throughout the programme the participants are required to practice what they have learned within their own classrooms, at the very least, some will share it with their colleagues at subject department or staff room level. They are also required to design and deliver lessons to their colleagues within the programme.
4. **The development of collegial networks as a means of supporting and encouraging teachers** - The intensity of the programme and the residential nature of it has resulted in the development of strong professional relationships between teachers around the country. A number of *IL Networks* have been established, where teachers meet to talk about teaching and learning.
5. **A ‘Cascading Model’ of Professional Development** – participants are required to share their learning within their own schools. There are examples of this practice around the country where graduates of the programme are teaming up with other schools, at primary, post-primary and adult education level, to share learning and pedagogical practice.

Instructional Leadership as a Driver and Support of Current Educational Policy



The emergence of the Instructional Leadership Programme has coincided with a significant educational reform agenda, evident in such policy areas as the development of the Junior Cycle Student Award, School Self Evaluation, Initial Teacher Education, teacher induction and probation and literacy and numeracy. In navigating the landscape it is necessary to identify the central tenets which underpin the successful implementation of such reform: **Preparation for teaching, teaching approaches, management of students and students' engagement with learning.** These four elements are central and crucial. These four elements form the main composition of the Instructional Leadership Programme.

I am convinced that the parallel development of the Instructional Leadership Programme along with this agenda is timely, as the programme is the ideal vehicle to drive successful reform. It is notable, for instance, that core emphases in junior cycle reform, such as the promotion of key skills, the increased focus on student meta-cognition or awareness of learning styles, the fostering of critical thinking and the encouragement of self-directed learning, dovetail very neatly with the central tenets underpinning the Instructional Leadership Programme: promoting teachers' professional identity, extending teachers' instructional repertoires, enabling teachers to manage students effectively and to lead students' engagement with learning. It is to be hoped that the programme will continue to evolve as a significant driver for change in the future.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME ACTIVITY TO DATE:

Since its inception in 2008, over 600 teachers have engaged with the Programme.

Cohort 1	132
Cohort 2	159
Cohort 3	96
Cohort 4	129
Cohort 5	116
Total:	632
Cohort 6 enrolling for Spring 2015	
Notification will issue in October 2014	

The above figures represent 185 Post-Primary Schools and 29 Youthreach and Further Education Centres

Find out more about the Instructional Leadership Programme at www.instructionalleadership.ie

An additional 129 Principals and Teachers will graduate from the Programme in Autumn 2014.

Instructional Leadership partnered with NUI, Galway to develop a programme at Post Graduate Diploma level and 11 Instructional Leadership Graduates have completed it, *Post Graduate Diploma in Leading Learning*.

The National Conference entitled *Instructional Leadership: Building Professional Learning Communities* is scheduled for September 26th & 27th in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

Ms. Joan Russell was seconded to ETBI to further develop the Programme.

Graduates of the Instructional Leadership Programme will present at the Teaching Council's Féilte on Oct 4th. Dr. Barrie Bennett is a keynote speaker at the event.

Instructional Leadership has joined Twitter!!!

Schools were invited to apply for the use of the IL Logo, to assist in identifying their school as a participant in the Instructional Leadership Programme.

A new Website and Blog 'will go' live in early in 2015.

A new Cohort of Principals and Teachers will be enrolled to commence the Programme, at National Level with Dr. Barrie Bennett, in March 2015.

New IL Networks will be established around the country.

The Programme will be delivered at regional level by graduates of the Programme.

Work will commence on the editing and publishing of some of Dr Barrie Bennett's books for the Irish context.

An International Conference will be planned for 2016.

A National Conference will focus on the impact of the Instructional Leadership Programme on student outcomes.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME: THE CAPACITY TO SUPPORT SYSTEMIC EDUCATIONAL REFORM - IVEA NEWSLETTER 2013

BY TADHG LONG, CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
CO-ORDINATOR, COUNTY CORK VEC

A presentation locating the emergence and development of the Instructional Leadership Programme (ILP) in the context of Irish education policy and legislative framework was delivered by members of the National Steering Committee at the recent Teaching Council EU Presidency Conference in Dublin Castle.

Entitled *Integration, Innovation and Improvement – the Professional Identity of Teacher Educators*, the conference aimed to provide a forum to stimulate ideas from a range of perspectives and establish collaborations that will build on the work initiated by the European Commission. So how does The Instructional Leadership Programme dovetail with the concept of ‘teachers as teacher educators’? In attempting to answer this question, it is pivotal that we understand the core principles and key aims of the programme and that we explore how the participants themselves are cascading the content within their own school settings.

Since its inception in 2008, over 400 teachers have engaged with the IVEA-led series of seminars facilitated by Professor Barrie Bennett of the University of Ontario. Each of the fourteen modules contained within the programme identify key aspects of instructional leadership with the aim of exploring how teachers can generate more powerful learning

experiences. Through engagement with the programme teachers extend and deepen their instructional repertoire of skills, tactics and strategies whilst acquiring a common language through which they can articulate and deconstruct their practice in the classroom.

By focusing on the pedagogical development of teachers, and not on subject specific content, this unique form of continuous professional development (CPD) facilitates the cascading of material at a regional and local level. In essence, the ILP aims to enhance teachers' professional identity not only as pedagogical experts but also as teacher educators through the dissemination of their own instructional repertoires to fellow colleagues in their schools.

In embracing this conceptual shift of continuous professional development, where collegial supports and networks form the basis for peer-led education, we provide an opportunity to further develop teaching and learning in our schools. The Teaching Council has already identified that the rationale for effective CPD stems from growing national and international awareness that teacher quality is inextricably linked, not only to the quality of initial teacher education, but also to the provision of high quality CPD. Such CPD should empower change in both school and classroom culture; inciting conversations, encouraging the formation of networks and facilitating collaboration with peers. ILP participants are in an excellent position to achieve this.

In examining the effectiveness of teachers as teacher educators from the perspective of the ILP we must examine its application in a school setting. Breda Sutherland, Deputy Principal of Athy College, is a Steering Committee member and graduate from Cohort One of the ILP. Athy College is an admirable example of how applicable and beneficial the ILP can be to peer-led CPD. In December 2012, Athy College invited the entire staff of three adjacent primary schools to their college with an aim of building collegial relationships with fellow professionals. Through the application of a 'deVries Teams Games Tournament', an instructional strategy, the college fulfilled this aim in a fun way, whilst also creating a platform from which to cascade IL between the sectors.

Within the 2012 – 2013 academic year, a series of CPD sessions for all teachers will take place in Athy College based on the Classroom Management Bumps Model as detailed in "Classroom Management: A thinking and Caring Approach" (Bennett and Smilanich). In addition to this, the Teaching and Learning Club (TLC), which was established in the college in 2010, meets for thirty minutes each Tuesday evening and although established and run on a voluntary basis, invariably over half of the staff are in attendance. Such success is attributable not only to the determination and hard work of the participants, but also to the applicability of the programme to enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in a school.

This entwines with recommendations, submitted from the conference to shape E.U Policy on Teacher Educators, that a reconceptualization of the notion of teacher educators is needed. Greater definition and recognition needs to be given to the role of teachers, as well as principals, as teacher educators across the continuum of teacher education. The ILP offers supports to further recommendations that teacher education should recognise the need to use a shared language that enables teachers to articulate their practice and converse with each other on pedagogy, irrespective of their subject discipline. The use of a shared language would also assist in policy formation and implementation, foster systemic change and prevent fragmentation of teacher professional identity.

The placement of the ILP in the context of current policy developments in Irish education has been relevant since the programmes establishment in 2008. Joan Russell, CEO of County Cork VEC and Chairperson of the National Steering Committee of the ILP, has repeatedly remarked on the capacity of the programme to dovetail neatly with the ambitious reforms in education, noting how the programme links neatly with such policy-driven themes as the reconceptualization of initial teacher education, the increased focus on literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, the emphasis on the critical thinking skills in junior cycle reform and the formalisation of models of school self-evaluation.

In the delivery of a keynote address at the ILP National Conference on 12th October, 2012, Dr Harold Hislop, Chief Inspector with the DES, emphasised the importance of creating effective learning environments. Learning has to be at the core of systemic change, for the student, for the professional and for the system. The establishment and delivery of CPD which focuses on pedagogical practice is key to achieving this.

The Irish educational landscape of 2013 may oftentimes appear as one fraught with evaluation and reform. The trepidation associated with Whole School Evaluations and Incidental Inspections, the apparent complexity of Junior Cycle Reform and School Self-Evaluation and the wide span implementation of Literacy and Numeracy Strategies all cohabiting on the same terrain has resulted in an appearance and feeling of crowdedness. In navigating the landscape it is necessary to identify the central tenets which underpin it: Preparation for teaching, teaching approaches, management of students and students' engagement with learning. These four elements are central and crucial. These four elements form the main composition of the Instructional Leadership Programme.

RECENT AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN ILP

A number of graduates from Cohort One have commenced further study with **NUI Galway's Post Graduate Diploma in Leading Learning** in partnership with the IVEA and developed in association with the ILP Steering Committee.

A one-day ***workshop for Cohort One*** is proposed for Monday 20th May 2013. The aim of the workshop is to support graduates, evaluate the impact of ILP in the classroom/school and consider future developments.

A ***new county-wide cluster of IL participants***, entitled ILN Cork (Instructional Leadership Network), was established for all current and past IL participants in the region of Co. Cork following similar developments elsewhere. The inaugural meeting took place on the evening of Thursday 21st February 2013 in Yeats House, Co Cork VEC HQ. The purpose of this IL Network is to provide a forum where current and past participants can continue to share ideas, experiences and resources, as well as endeavour to find avenues to overcome the challenges of maintaining motivation, direction and purpose. It is envisaged that this support will prove beneficial for both management and classroom teachers.

A ***fourth cohort of participants*** will begin the programme in the Mount Wolseley Hotel, Tullow on Wednesday 6th March. This follows the graduation of Cohort Three on Tuesday 5th March.

DEVELOPING INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP IN THE HISTORY CLASSROOM: THE SKILL OF FRAMING QUESTIONS - IVEA NEWSLETTER 2011

GERARD O'SULLIVAN

Between 2009 and 2011, some 150 teachers from schools across Ireland participated in a series of seminars held at the Mount Wolseley Hotel in Co. Carlow under the auspices of the Irish Vocational Education Association. The seminars related to the development of the concept of 'Instructional Leadership' in the second-level classroom in Ireland. This involves examining ways in which instructional intelligence (knowledge about instruction and how students learn) may be merged with real systemic change so as to impact positively on teaching and learning. The facilitator was Dr. Barrie Bennett of the University of Toronto, whose research interests relate to teacher thinking/learning/action focused on instructional practices - how teachers acquire an instructional *repertoire*, how they extend and integrate it, and what effect this practice has on student learning (kindergarten to adult). He is also interested in educational change and is the author of several books relating to instruction and the integration of instructional methodology in the classroom.

My participation as a teacher/ delegate in these seminars reminded me of my own experience in the provision of in-service. Between 2003 and 2008, I was privileged to work with the History In-Service Team in devising, facilitating and evaluating a programme of professional development related to the introduction of the revised Leaving Certificate

history syllabus. As well as informing teachers throughout the state about the syllabus, the team also consciously endeavoured to explore teaching strategies and methodologies that we believed were most consistent with the principles underpinning the syllabus. I was gratified to witness the positive and enthusiastic response to our ideas and to learn so much from interacting with fellow teachers and benefiting from their expertise. The experience convinced me of the quality and expertise of the history teaching community and of the real appetite among that community for professional development geared towards the advancement of teaching and learning in the history classroom.

It is in that spirit that I would like to discuss in this article some aspects of Dr. Bennett's thinking that I consider immediately applicable to my own classroom practice as a history teacher. I hope that these ideas might resonate with other history teachers as well. The amount of material covered was quite extensive so it would be impossible to convey its full breadth and richness in a short article. Therefore I propose to discuss an instructional skill that is central to effective teaching but has a particularly crucial role to play in the teaching of history; namely, the skill of framing questions effectively. The article draws extensively on Dr. Bennett's comments at the conference and a publication entitled *Beyond Monet: The Artful Science of Instructional Integration* by Barrie Bennett and Carol Rolheiser, published in 2001.

FRAMING QUESTIONS

In articulating what is meant by the instructional concept of "active participation", Bennet and Rolheiser argue that it is incumbent on teachers to consider the variety of ways in which students can be encouraged to become involved and motivated in the learning environment. Recognising the practical realities of classroom life, the authors acknowledge that teachers can exercise little control over such factors as students' learning styles, intellectual abilities or home environments, not to mention the attendant pressures of covering courses and meeting assessment expectations. However, they do suggest some ways of invoking student participation; for instance, through the structuring of content and strategies such as role playing and co-operative learning. The method that is focused on here is that of framing questions.

Questioning is a methodology that most teachers employ in most lessons, often as a means of recapitulating on previous lessons or as a means of gauging student understanding. However, I wonder how many of us reflect on how well or effectively we frame the questions that we ask? Or, in other words, how useful are the questions that we put to our students as a means of enhancing the learning –and indeed, the teaching–that takes place in our classrooms?

History teachers who engaged with the HIST in-service programme will be familiar with the formation of enquiry-focused questions as a means of engaging students with syllabus

content. It will be recalled that the enquiry focused approach was advocated as a teaching methodology consistent with the aims and objectives of the syllabus. For instance, when engaging with the case study, “The Montgomery bus boycott, 1959” in the topic LME6, *The United States and the world, 1945-1989*, the HIST team offered a model of question that was considered appropriate in stimulating students’ curiosity while also offering a pathway through the events and issues relevant to the case study. The question was: “Why did Rosa Parks’ refusal to give up her seat on a bus trigger a national controversy?” The engagement with this and other examples of such questions at in-service sessions was often lively and stimulating. But my participation in Dr. Bennett’s conference led me to think about how I structure questions in my role as the leader of a class so as to engage my students fully in the learning process, as distinct from specifically addressing aspects of historical thinking in my students.

MODELLING QUESTIONS IN THE HISTORY CLASSROOM

The following page consists of a selection of questions that might commonly be asked in history classrooms. (This selection is a close adaptation of a series of model questions devised by Bennet and Rolheiser in *Beyond Monet*, Ch. 4, p. 58.) It is worth exploring the *structure* of these questions in terms of the effect each one might have on student participation in the lesson.

Compare the odd-numbered examples and contrast them with the even numbered. In each case, think about how the structure of each question might affect student participation in the lesson.

1. “Share with your partner please. Who were the Kulaks? What was the connection between the Kulaks and Stalin’s policy of collectivisation?”
2. “Who can tell me why Sinn Fein was so successful in the 1918 General Election?”
3. “No hands please, I’ll pick several of you to answer. What are two causes of the First World War?” (After waiting ten seconds, the teacher picks a student at random to respond).
4. “Who in this class can explain why de Valera and his followers opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty?”
5. “Thumbs up if you agree, and down if you disagree, and be prepared to defend your answer. The 1936 Eucharistic Congress played an important role in shaping the culture of the Irish state.”
6. “We talked yesterday in class about the importance of propaganda in the rise of Nazism in Germany. John, please tell the class about three examples of how propaganda was used and how these examples influenced public opinion.”

7. “Take five seconds to think of the difference between democracy and fascism. Be prepared to share your answer with the class.”

8. “Could someone please tell me what they predict will happen in Vietnam now that Richard Nixon has become President of the United States?”

9. “Think to yourself and I’ll ask you to share. What was the significance in terms of US-Soviet relations of the Moon landing, 1969?”

10. “What do you predict might now happen in Derry as a result of the Lockwood Committee’s recommendation that the second university in Northern Ireland be located in Coleraine?”

Perhaps you have identified a common characteristic in each of the odd-numbered questions? Bennet and Rolheiser argue that the critical feature of these questions is that they are framed in such a way that each student is held accountable to think. Furthermore, students are afforded the opportunity to rehearse an appropriate response within the safety of his or her own mind before sharing the answer publicly, before the whole class and teacher. Each of the questions also allows for the movement from *covert* (think to yourself) to *overt* (write it down or share it publicly) in terms of student responses, although this movement is not considered essential in terms of the effectiveness of the question.

Let us now look at the even-numbered questions. In each case, only one student is held accountable. In addition, Bennet and Rolheiser maintain that very often, the suddenness or abruptness of being selected can erase the information from the student’s head as a result of the increased level of concern due to no opportunity being provided by the teacher to practise or reflect prior to being asked to respond. It might be argued that regular exposure to such a model of questioning with the resultant potential for embarrassment or exposure could lead to the student becoming disillusioned with the subject as a whole.

In summary, then, it is suggested that the odd-numbered questions in this discussion are framed so as to:

- Increase the accountability of all the students in the class;
- Involve all students in the class in the lesson;
- Maximise the learning that takes place in the classroom.

ACADEMIC ENGAGED TIME

Bennet and Rolheiser also point to the evidence from research that indicates the positive impact on student achievement of “academic-engaged time”. This concept relates to the extent to which students are engaged with the business of the lesson. In terms of framing questions with the objective of maximising student learning, it is important that teachers

reflect on whether they wish all students to be encouraged to be involved in thinking or instead require students to respond if or when they feel like it.

Let us consider the two examples that follow:

A: Does anyone in the class know why the Jarrow march took place in October, 1936?

B: In our last class, we discussed the Jarrow march of October 1936. Discuss the reasons why it took place with your partner for 30 seconds and then I will select several of you to respond.

It seems evident that example B above is likely to allow for more participation and less opportunity for misbehaviour than example A. Yet, research indicates that teachers commonly employ a model of framing questions in class similar to example A, not B. This is common in classrooms throughout the world. It is worth reflecting also on the fact that example A, above, tends to lead to the same three or four students most frequently responding to teacher questions. In fact, research suggests that when students are invited to respond in a way that encourages them to volunteer, three or four students in a class willingly answer 80% of the questions. Interestingly, this figure is replicated for adults: three or four adults in a group of twenty five will respond to 80% of the questions asked that seek voluntary participation. We need to ask ourselves if this is an acceptable level of student response in our classrooms.

WAIT TIME

If we accept the importance of maximising students' academic engaged time in our classrooms, it is important for us to be sensitive as to how we structure time. As teachers, we might not think too much about this issue, particularly when we are concerned with covering syllabus material in a 40 minute lesson. If we are not immediately presented with the response we expect from a student, we often move quickly to a different student or give the answer ourselves. Yet, one means of increasing our students' academic engaged time is through monitoring the time we give students to think during questioning. Literature in this area refers to this as "wait time".

Bennet and Rolheiser define wait time as "the time the student has to think after a question has been asked and the time to think after a student has been asked to respond." It might also be extended to include the time given to a student to reflect further upon or develop more fully a given response. Research in this area points to two specific effects of wait time as an instructional skill in the teacher's practice. Firstly, wait time increases the chances that the quality and length of a student's response will improve. Secondly, wait time enables the fostering of a safe learning environment. (Bennet and Rolheiser cite the work of Tobin, 1982 and Rowe, 1974 in this regard.) Research also suggests that when students have time to think and share with a partner before sharing publicly, they are more likely to feel secure

and experience success. Yet, Bennet and Rolheiser report that from their research, most teachers' wait time is measured in hundredths of seconds even though increasing thinking time to three or more seconds meaningfully improves student responses. Teachers need to exercise discretion in relation to the amount of wait time allocated. Such factors as the current performance level of the student, the complexity of the question asked and the student's past experience with the material being explored are all relevant here. Also, research indicates that wait time has little effect on questions that simply invite students to recall facts, yet such basic recall questions amount to approximately 60 to 70 per cent of questions asked in the classroom.

GROUP/ PAIR WORK

It is noted that the idea of assigning students to work in pairs or smaller groups is a valued one in the rationale for framing questions discussed here. The History In-Service Team consistently advocated such practice in the classroom in modelling methodologies for teaching the Leaving Certificate syllabus. The History inspectorate also lauded examples of such practice that they observed, as can be seen in the 2006 report *Looking at History* (see www.education.ie). Aside from any other arguments in favour of group/ pair work from a pedagogical viewpoint, it is important to mention here the ethical argument, in terms of framing questions, of engaging in such a strategy. As Bennet and Rolheiser caution, when we randomly select students to respond to questions, we are asking them to possibly fail in front of their peers. While we as teachers might not consider inability to respond to classroom questions to be "failure", the fact is that students usually do consider it so, unless a safe environment has been created for them to respond.

We are all aware of teachers who may be perfectly relaxed and competent within their own classrooms but may be extremely reluctant to talk in front of their peers at meetings or in-service sessions. That is why it is incumbent on us as educators to develop the skills to understand and respond to students' efforts. As has been suggested previously, affording students the opportunity to rehearse answers with a partner or within a small group will increase the chance that students will experience success. Structuring lessons in a small group format increases the chances that students afraid of failure will involve themselves more actively in the lesson.

Many teachers are reluctant to deviate from a whole class approach to other forms of class engagement, such as pair or group work, often citing the disruption caused or the impact on discipline as negative features of such practice. Yet, the evidence is that adapting such practice in our own lessons, even on a gradual level, does have a positive impact on student learning.

CONCLUSION

In the course of addressing teachers who participated in the seminars with Prof. Bennett, Ms. Joan Russell, Acting CEO of Co. Cork VEC and organiser of the programme, expressed her confident belief that the training undertaken by participating teachers would be the catalyst for profound change in the nature of instructional leadership in Irish classrooms, with positive attendant consequences for teaching and learning. Certainly, the feedback from those who attended was overwhelmingly positive. I think that we as professionals need to be aware of compelling educational research evidence that has implications for the manner in which we teach. I was struck by a comment by Dr. Bennett in which he described as a “tragic flaw” the notion that deep knowledge and passion for their subject area is all that teachers need to foster effective learning. He characterised such a view as naïve and urged teachers to rethink their instructional repertoire in terms of how they engage students, even arguing that there is an ethical imperative on teachers to do so. He added that he would prefer to see teachers “consciously competent rather than accidentally adequate”. This serves as a reminder to us as professionals of the need to examine our pedagogical practice so as to ensure that our students’ needs are met – a challenge to which history teachers have always responded positively in the past.

STUDENT VOICE ABOUT IL

One thing that I love is having the learning objectives on the board, to know what the class is setting out to do, what you plan to do for the class, it just makes me happy to know what I am about to do.

On behalf of the students, it makes my heart light to see that all of the teachers and principals and management teams are working so hard to make our school life better.

When we think about all the different methods: the learning outcomes on the board, the mind maps, the room set-ups, it just makes us realise how much of a positive effect it had on our learning without us even noticing it. That's the great thing about it.

I can recall a day when we went into school and our tables were organised in a U-shape rather than the usual shape and that said to me that we were going to be having a conversational classroom, group work and it was a safe environment because all of us were sharing our opinions together and building on our opinions from each other.

The freedom to voice our opinions, group work and conversational classes were the foundation of our classes from the very beginning.

The U-shape in the classroom allowed us to be more confident to talk in front of the class.

STUDENT VOICE ABOUT IL

We were being taught in a new way that facilitated us to study better.

It's not the same students answering in the class, everybody gets involved. We learn from each other, we are not just learning from the teacher. We have to work because they might say, 'think, pair, share', give you a topic now and I want you to teach each other about it or learn from each other. You have to know so it involves all the students.

The teacher was merely a facilitator so the teacher would give us the knowledge, but it was what we were going to do with it that was important so we had tools such as mind maps and fishbone diagrams to do that.

You don't learn in the classroom unless you are comfortable and happy; you are too nervous, you don't want to put up your hand, but everyone is just so comfortable in our classrooms.

What is unique about this programme; it helps us to learn the way that we want to learn.

The freedom to voice our opinions, group work and conversational classes were the foundation of our classes from the very beginning.

It was a safer environment.

I feel the IL programme is the journey and it's creating more free thinkers and responsive learners in our classrooms.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY POSTER COMPETITION

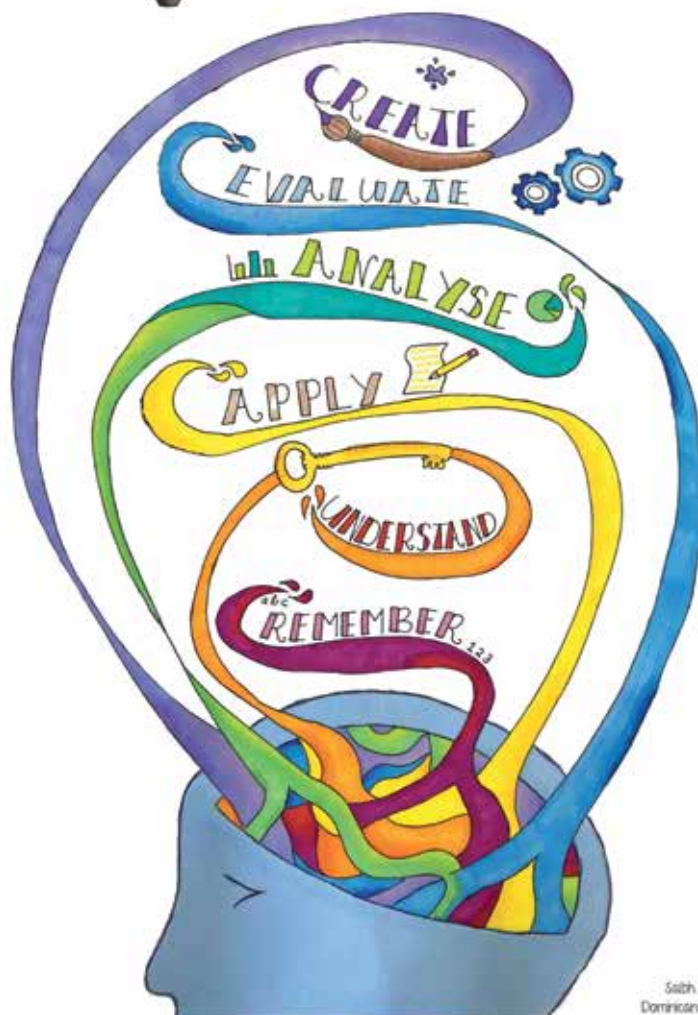
As part of the 10-year Anniversary Celebrations, the National Steering Committee invited schools to participate in a competition to design a poster illustrating "Bloom's Revised Taxonomy of Learning".

Having judged 142 entries, we were delighted to announce Saibh Managan, Dominican College, Griffith Avenue, Dublin as the winner with Ben Cantillon, Causeway Comprehensive School, Co. Kerry as the runner up.

Saibh's design has been printed and issued to all schools.



BLOM'S TAXONOMY



Designed by:
Sáibh Mangan, Student at
Dominican College, Dublin, 2018



Left to right: Dr Olive Laffoy, Principal Dominican College, Saibh Morgan, Student Dominican College and winner of the ILP Bloom's Taxonomy Competition and Joan Russell, Director of Schools, ETBI

