Andrew picks up top teacher award

Pupils have the world at their fingertips

See full story on page 6

See full story on page 7

GREAT SCOTT
Enjoy over 1,600 discounts of up to 50% with your Membership Plus Card

Membership Plus is the member benefit programme for members of UTU. From eating out, shopping, golf, hotels to big high street names, there is something for everyone with significant savings in a short space of time.

Over 300 offers have been added this year alone so ensure you have activated your card to view the full range of offers, be kept up to date with new offers throughout the year, enter fantastic competitions and much more.

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New offers now available with your Membership Plus Card...

The following offers are new to the Membership Plus website...

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Discount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acapulco</td>
<td>15% Discount</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adair Arms Hotel</td>
<td>10% Discount</td>
<td>Ballymena</td>
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<td>Aviva Stadium Tours</td>
<td>2 for 1</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS Clothing</td>
<td>20% Discount</td>
<td>Derry / Londonderry</td>
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<td>Harvards Coffee &amp; Deli Bar</td>
<td>20% Discount</td>
<td>Bangor</td>
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<td>Hush Boutique</td>
<td>20% Discount</td>
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<td>Relax Coffee Shop</td>
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<td>TGI Fridays</td>
<td>10% Discount</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Olive Tree Gift Boutique</td>
<td>15% Discount</td>
<td>Derry / Londonderry</td>
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<td>The Wellington Barber</td>
<td>20% Discount</td>
<td>Ballymena</td>
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<tr>
<td>Universal Sports Arena</td>
<td>Up to 25% Discount</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
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New offers are added each week so make sure you visit the Membership Plus website regulary! www.membershipplus.co.uk/teachers

Presidental Comment:

PUT THE GOOD WORK...

The more meetings I attend, the more I value the privilege of being a spokesperson to share the concerns, opinions and difficulties of UTU members.

In addition to attending conferences and negotiating meetings within my first few weeks as President, I also had the very pleasant job of organising our Annual Competition for Schools.

I primarily wanted to celebrate the wonderful schools we have here in Northern Ireland and, after one of our sub-committee meetings, we came up with the theme: “Schools are super places for Superheroes!”

We had a fantastic response to this competition and the entries we received reflected the joy that schools generate. As I visited schools to hand out prizes, I continued to be encouraged by the passion, determination and enthusiasm that teachers, Principals and classroom assistants demonstrate daily.

The efforts of all staff members to provide the best education system for the pupils in their care is so immediately obvious, despite the many and increasing pressures that schools are facing.

These are undoubtedly challenging times and, as we continue our industrial action on budget cuts, assessment, workload and the impact on teacher health and well-being, we know that there will be further difficulties ahead. I hope that within the organisation of the UTU, whether Principals, class teachers, student teachers or Union Officials, we will continue to focus on what is important and valuable in Education, standing united and purposely together to ensure that our concerns are effectively addressed.

One real privilege of being UTU President is the opportunity to have a closer insight into the excellent work that our UTU Officials, Field Officers and office staff carry out daily on our behalf. It has been very reassuring to know that the UTU continues to negotiate tirelessly on the issues that affect us most.

As we settle into a new Academic Year, I return then to the theme of our UTU Competition. I know that schools are indeed ‘Super Places for Superheroes’ and I hope that we as teachers continue to have the self-confidence to hold our heads up high and stick to our professional opinions and beliefs as we face whatever challenges may lie ahead - and don’t forget to give yourself a sticker or a slice of cake every once in a while to say, “Hey, you’re doing great! Keep up the good work!”

UTU President, JULIE ORR

“Membership Plus is fantastic. I’ve tried many new things and visited new places which wouldn’t have been possible without the suggestions and savings from Membership Plus!”

- Membership Plus Member

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Geoffrey Cherry, Principal of Pond Park Primary School and Laura Kerr, Choir conductor are both members of the UTU and last year their Junior Choir were awarded BBC Radio Ulster School Choir of the Year. The Junior Choir Awards were held in January at the White Hall where Pond Park were placed first. This saw them qualify for the Grand Final held in the prestigious Ulster Hall on Sunday, 19 April.

After all six choirs had performed their two contrasting pieces, the adjudicators chose two choirs to ‘sing off’ for the coveted title. Pond Park had prepared the song, ‘When I Grow Up From Matrix, This Musical’.

After tense deliberation it was announced that they were the overall winners. Since that the 60 strong choir have performed at Radio Ulster’s 50 Year Celebration at the Ulster Hall and the Business Awards Dinner at the Waterfront Hall. The choir were also asked to return to the Waterfront Hall to sing at Peter Corry’s Musicals concert.

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UTU NEWS

AUTUMN 2015

2

AUTUMN 2015

3
The UTU was recently forced to issue the following statement on ‘Shared Education’:

**Teachers, SAVE over £200 on car & home insurance**

We’ve joined forces with **Aviva** to offer UTU members a better deal. Retired teachers and partners also welcome.

**Register for a quote & WIN an Apple iPad Air or Apple Watch Sport 38mm**

Online: www.aviva.co.uk/utu

Or phone: 0800 9044 2200

To write only one report to parents per term. (This does not apply in schools that are currently on formal intervention).

We were hoping to receive £25,000 to implement the Shared Education Policy with St Patrick’s in the town – between the schools almost 900 pupils would have benefited,” said principal David Thompson, a member of the Ulster Teachers’ Union.

“We were hoping to use the funding to provide the pupils of St Patrick’s and Dungannon Primary with opportunities to develop life-long friendships, learning together within a shared environment, giving them the opportunity to explore their similarities and celebrate their differences. “Our teachers were also hoping to use the funding towards professional development in leadership roles. “However, under the terms of the policy one of the monitoring elements would require us to submit the results of the key stage assessments which we are not doing under the terms of our industrial action.

“How can the Minister judge the outcomes of literacy and numeracy assessments? It just doesn’t make sense.

“We want the success of shared education to be measured on qualitative outcomes – for instance, a child’s understanding of what happened in the past – rather than the quantitative outcomes of literacy and numeracy assessment.”

**The UTU immediately sought a meeting with the Education Minister, Mr John O’Dowd.**

And hopefully by the time you are reading this ACCOMMODATION WILL HAVE BEEN REACHED REGARDING THE REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE LEVELS OF ATTAINMENT: THE UTU REGETS THAT A PROGRAMME WHICH THE UNIONS’ WHOLE-HEARTEDLY SUPPORTED WAS ALLOWED TO BE ENDOGARED IN THIS WAY!!

IVDUSTRIAL ACTION. WHAT TO DO

**At its September meeting the Central Executive Committee of the Ulster Teachers’ Union agreed not to escalate its industrial action, but to maintain it at the current level until it is considered again at the October CEC meeting. The current action is as follows:**

**As FROM 30TH MARCH 2015 UTU MEMBERS HAVE BEEN ADVISED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FOLLOWING INDUSTRIAL ACTION:**

The current scheme has not been improved in many years and is now the poorest of all the public sector schemes.

Avril added: “If we can get a decent rise – and one that is certainly more than the recent limit of 1% – then teachers will consider whether or not it is in their interests to sign away their right to automatic incremental progression.”

**To refuse to participate in any school inspection process, including visits from the District Inspector, ETI scheduled inspections, any ETI survey or other process. (This does not apply in schools that are currently on formal intervention).**

**To make no returns of monitoring information to the Department of Education. Please note that much of this data-gathering is done via C2X returns.**

To submit only 6-weekly or termly planners, not daily or weekly lesson notes.

**To participate in only one staff meeting per week (including teacher briefings).**

To make no reports to parents or parents per academic year.

The UTU will continue to update you monthly by email on any changes to this industrial action. With a very handy calender showing you upcoming UTU events. If you are a Branch Secretary, please keep our office informed of your upcoming meetings and we will add them to this calendar. Check our new website out for yourselves and let us know what you think. We’re delighted with it! Thanks again, School WebDesign.

**To refuse to participate in the CCEA defined Assessment requirements – see the information sheet that was issued earlier in the roll.”**

“Manage -ment Side would certainly need to make an attractive offer if they want to persuade them to accept contractual changes of this magnitude.”

The Salaries negotiation team, which is made up of all 5 recognised unions, is scheduled to meet with Management Side again in mid-Octo- ber. The UTU General Secretary was recently elected as Salaries Spokesperson for the Teachers’ Side of the Negotiating Machinery.

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Erasmus+ - a World of Opportunity

Schools across Northern Ireland could go global thanks to a new European funding programme. Erasmus+, which is managed in the UK by the British Council and ECVUK, offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils and teachers to participate and exchange activities across Europe.

The programme takes over from Comenius, which previously provided funding for schools, with funding split into two areas: – Key Action 1 mobility projects for teaching or training staff abroad; and Key Action 2 Strategic Partnerships, to develop innovation and exchange of good practices across schools, local and regional authorities and other sectors.

2014 was the first year of Erasmus+, with Northern Ireland receiving €6.5m in funding and 50 organisations receiving funding — including 15 schools.

St Mary’s Primary in Mullaghbawn was one of these successes stories, receiving £79,725 through the programme.

Working with five countries across Europe, St Mary’s aimed to promote IT skills, environmental awareness, a second language and even a happier work environment.

In addition to this, the school also received mobility funding to allow teachers to visit other educational settings across Europe and attend international training courses.

According to Ciara Crawley, the Erasmus+ Coordinator at the school, this funding will help the pupils and teachers in insurmountable ways. She said: “Through the project we hope to open up our pupils minds so that they are not afraid to travel in later life, while also helping them acquire a second language. Even the younger pupils know what Erasmus+ is, and we can see that they’re already making new friends and connections.”

“Hopefully Erasmus+ will make part of the European community, while also enhancing their career paths and broadening their outlook on the world.”

For Ciara, the benefits of the programme are far reaching. She said: “We firmly believe that a good project impacts on not only the school involved, but also the wider community, to which each school belongs. Here at St Mary’s we’ve developed a real community spirit — working with parents and grandparents and others within the local area. It’s really important for us to have their support.”

Also speaking about the programme was Jonathan Stewart, Deputy Director, British Council Northern Ireland, he said: “It is encouraging to see primary and post-primary schools from across Northern Ireland benefiting from Erasmus+ funding and we are hopeful when the new funding calls are opened in the autumn that even more schools will be able to participate and develop new partnerships and opportunities across Europe.

“Erasmus+ provides many opportunities for Northern Ireland schools to work internationally, which can enhance professional development of staff as well as broaden horizons of pupils.”

This international outlook can only add value to those directly involved in the school but also the wider community.”

Schools looking to apply to Erasmus+ will find a range of online tools to support them through the process such as the School Education Gateway portal (http://wss. school. education. gateway. eu/), which is a partner and opportunities finding tool, and eXchange (http://britishcouncil. org/exchanging), where you can start, grow or extend your partnership or Erasmus+ project.

There’s a whole world of opportunities for schools within Erasmus+.

Funding for Erasmus+ funding should open in November 2015.

Keep up to date on www.erasmusplus. ni. local. britishcoun- cil. org, on Twitter and Facebook.

TOP MARKS The pupils at St Mary’s are very much behind the international programme at the school – with even the youngest knowing about Erasmus+, which is jointly managed by the British Council and ECVUK.

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Past President attends International Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress

Diane Nugent, Past-President of the UTU and the National Association of Special Education Needs (NASEN), attended the International Inclusive and Supportive Education Congress (iSeC) in Lisbon from 26-29 July as NI Ambassador.

She stated that it was a real honour to represent Northern Ireland within this global arena of education.

The conference focused on developing international policies and practices which challenge educators who seek to overcome barriers, which often leaves many children marginalised. Diane met and had educational exchanges with many prolific educationalists such as Prof. David Rodrigues (Portugal) and Prof. Mel Anscow (U.K.).

During the congress it was very clear that schools across the globe who embrace an inclusive agenda are those who provide the best chances for our children in terms of abolishing prejudices and attitudes and build a society which embraces inclusion.

It was also very clear that teachers have a vital role in promoting an inclusive agenda to achieve a system of shared beliefs, passion and commitment to enable our pupils to succeed in life. Clearly, the process of inclusion is not an easy battle, and efforts to eliminate barriers across the globe have been fraught with difficulties, both financial and political. Therefore, it is imperative that educational leaders need to step above the parapet to place inclusive and supportive education at the top of their agendas.

UNESCO’s ‘Education for All’ Declaration, Education 2030: ‘Towards inclusive and equitable quality lifelong learning for all’ is a vital step in focusing the basic human right for all children to have access to education. The declaration’s vision proposes that inclusive and supportive education seeks to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all children, ‘leaving no child behind’.

This transformational view of education attends to and strengthens our children’s basic human rights to access quality education, irrespective of global and social barriers.

As schools continue to develop their educational climates, they must support the needs of children with a wide range of special needs. Pupil voice needs to play a larger part in shaping school curriculums, pathways and IEPs. Curriculum planning needs to address diversity and ensure that there is ‘one size that fits all’. Planning needs to be flexible and involve the input from pupils, families and local communities. So too, professional dialogue will go far to facilitating inclusive teaching and learning.

Teachers need to work together as a community to provide support for pupils and each other, as was identified at congress, are the ‘superheroes’ instrumental in changing the future of education.

Furthermore, congress claimed that teacher unions play an important role, providing a voice for the demand for informational change.

Cultural values, morals and principles form an important part of this change process which should reflect basic human rights, an inclusive agenda and the needs of pupils and facilitate parallel support among staff.

To conclude, iSeC 2015 raised the awareness of how inclusive and supportive education is being researched, developed and implemented in many countries across the globe.

A common definition must be developed to meet the demands of cultural contexts and stakeholders, enabling the 2030 vision for education to be achieved.

Diane stated that she wishes to use her recent experience at iSeC 2015 to advance the work of NASEN in Northern Ireland and in her role as Chairperson of the NASEN UK Special Provision Advisory Group.

Inclusive education requires the recognition of the needs of pupils and the facilitation of positive support. As a former teacher of Hilden Primary School, Mrs Ann Ferguson, is hoping to put together a book about this school which was identified at congress, are the ‘superheroes’ instrumental in changing the future of education.

A former teacher of Hilden Primary School, Miss Margaret Hawthorne, is looking for help in gathering information about this small school near Lisburn which sadly closed in 2008.

Mrs Ferguson, 7 East Downview, Low Road, Lisburn, BT27 4NW is inviting anyone who was a former pupil or staff member to provide their memories of their time at Hilden.

She will provide a reply advice slip so if your name has been lodged, you will receive a National Insurance Number which will be allocated unless you have been in previous employment when this number will remain the same. National Insurance will be deducted from your gross salary. As this is an interim one also will be allocated. Income Tax will be deducted from gross salary. Also deducted from salary will be contributions to Northern Ireland Teachers’ Pensions Scheme (superannuation). You may opt out of the scheme but you must provide for payments to be made to an alternative pension. Ulster Teachers’ Union does not recommend opting out. Retirement age may seem a long way ahead but, in the event of being unable to retire early through ill health, it is important that you are in a scheme which will provide a lump sum and regular income.

WHERE DO I FIT IN?

Whether you are in the school for one day, a term, a year or have been in it for a long time you have appointed permanently, the following will relate to your position in the scheme.

The Board of Governors is your employer. The Principal is responsible for day-to-day running of the school and should have ensured that appropriate policies and procedures are in place. For example, Heads of Department and Key Stage Leaders will assist the Principal and may be your first port of call if a problem occurs. You are responsible for the well-being of all pupils. Should any pupil have a problem, you should be aware of the procedures and policies which should usually be contained in the school’s current and updated Induction Programme.

TU would like to extend congratulations and a warm welcome to all NQTS embarking on their career at this time. We wish you all success in 2015/16 year and, indeed, a very rewarding and pleasant year ahead.

To help you get started we are including the answers to a few of the questions which were raised last year which may be helpful and should prove useful.

1. How can I claim back my income tax for your time at Hilden?

To claim back your income tax for your paid time you should apply to your employer.

2. How can I get evidence of my time at Hilden?

To help you get evidence of your time at Hilden you should apply to your employer.

3. How can I get a copy of my National Insurance Number?

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The Slieve Donard stands majestically by the Irish Sea at the foot of the Mourne Mountains. Enjoy a gentle ramble, a windswept seaside stroll, a round of golf or, just soak up serenity in our five star spa.

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SCHOOL OUTING Teachers from Ballydown Primary School with Principal, Wilson McAlister and incoming President, Julie O’R

AT WORK UTU officials and guests at the top table at the 2015 Conference in the Slieve Donard Hotel

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS UTU members, Staff Shaw, Sarah Rea and Stephanie Alexander

SUITS YOU UTU members Steven Savage, Aaron Dunne, Ashton Shields and Greg Savage

A LADIES NIGHT Members of Foyle Branch – Ann Cartwright, Vi Whiteside, Lara Nutt, outgoing President Sandra Brown, Maureen Nutt and Valerie Hylands

FAMILY AFFAIR Incoming President, Julie O’R with her father Alistair, mother Ann and brother Richard

GOOD COMPANY UTU members from Dromara Primary School enjoying Conference
A TEAM EFFORT

A journey to Africa can start in many places but I did not expect it to start from the question, ‘What do you do with your old uniforms?’

This question was put to me some six years ago and of course we didn’t do anything with old uniforms. From that summer on we began to collect old uniforms which with the help of the Elim Church in Ballymena and a very charismatic couple from Ahoeghi, Bobbie and David Tinnon made their way to the Aberdare mountains in Kenya.

The Gracehill School Kenyan was born. Located in a very rural part of the country and comprising of some 60 pupils the school serves a very poor community.

What started as a very simple recycling idea has developed into an ongoing link which has seen Gracehill School Ballymena provide help to build new classrooms and the UTU to provide resources for desks and books.

Fast forwarding to 2014 I applied for a Connecting Classrooms grant to allow a teacher exchange between the two schools. This bid was successful and after some initial teething problems it was agreed that I would travel with the UTU to contact the Aberdare mountains in June. Jerioth, my African counterpart, was as amazed by her experiences here as I was in Kenya. She couldn’t believe how cold it was. She was sure my garden would provide enough grazing for at least two goats and wasn’t sure why people walked dogs.

We were met at Nairobi airport by Bobbie and David and the local chairman of the school, Pastor James, and these three provided invaluable advice and help during our time in Aberdare.

The school is a five-hour drive away from Nairobi and having left the road behind we completed our journey across a very rough country track. The countryside was beautiful and as we neared the school, a small cluster of tin sheds, we were astonished to hear these wonderful voices singing a song of welcome.

We were met at Nairobi airport by Bobbie and David and the local chairman of the school, Pastor James, and these three provided invaluable advice and help during our time in Aberdare.

The school is a five-hour drive away from Nairobi and having left the road behind we completed our journey across a very rough country track. The countryside was beautiful and as we neared the school, a small cluster of tin sheds, we were astonished to hear these wonderful voices singing a song of welcome.

We began to collect old uniforms. From that summer on some six years ago and of course ‘old uniforms’ led them to the Aberdare mountains in Kenya.

The school provided two hot meals each day – a bowl of porridge at the equivalent of our brekkie and a bowl of rice and beans at lunch time. There was no need to worry about healthy eating policies here.

The school is supported by the charitable collection which Bobbie and David arrange and we in Gracehill have recently held a sponsored walk – A Walk to School in a Dressie – to collect the money to connect the school to the electrical grid and we are hopeful that the lights will soon be switched on. Meanwhile, David and Bobbie have managed to collect enough money to pay for water to be piped into the school and this was switched on in early September.

Jerioth, my African counterpart, was as amazed by her experiences as I was in Kenya. She couldn’t believe how cold it was. She was sure my garden would provide enough grazing for at least two goats and wasn’t sure why people walked dogs.

This was the first day was really special and made a lasting impression on all present.

The children are well looked after with the school providing two hot meals each day – a bowl of porridge at the equivalent of our brekkie and a bowl of rice and beans at lunch time. There was no need to worry about healthy eating policies here.

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I would encourage other schools to contact the British Council to see which programmes might fit in with what you are doing in school. Our link with Aberdare grew from a very simple idea and I have no doubt that there are many schools in the developing world which would enjoy a link with schools in Northern Ireland.

I was asked to bring very special thanks to the Ulster Teachers Union for the generous sponsorship which the union has provided and I can certainly confirm that we are getting tremendous value for money from our donations.

What is the EI World Congress?

For the first four years, the EI World Congress is the supreme body of the Educational International. The World Congress determines the policies, principles of action and programmes of the organisation. It elects the Officers (President, Vice Presidents and General Secretary) and other members of the organisation.

It is an opportunity for delegates from Education Unions from across the world to come together, to reflect and recommit to the aims of Educational International, to develop policies and, above all, to celebrate the teaching professions and those who work in education, to provide quality education for all.

Where was the EI World Congress held this year?

Every four years the EI World Congress is held in a different continent across the globe. This year the EI World Congress was held in the Shaw Conference Centre in the beautiful Canadian capital city of Ottawa.

Who can take part in the EI World Congress?

Participants are nominated by the EI’s member organisations. The number of delegates and votes are allocated on the basis dues paid (size of organisation). Delegates are the official representatives of member organisations. They are entitled to participate in the formal debates and to vote.

Who represented the UTU at this year’s EI World Congress?

Julie Orr, UTU President and Sandra Brown, ex-President attended the 7th World Congress on behalf of the UTU. In Ottawa they not only met with colleagues from within BIGTU (British and Irish Group of Teaching Unions) but with Union Officials from across the globe.

How can I find out more about the EI World Congress?

For more information on the work of EI, visit www.ei-ie.org or follow EI on Twitter @EIie4ed

Please visit our website to see how our Medical Research Programme has already supported groundbreaking projects and is committed to many more over the coming years.

www.nichs.org.uk

For a leaflet or further information on leaving a legacy to NICHS, please call us on: 028 9032 0184, or write to NICHS Gifts in Wills, 21 Dunbin Road, Belfast, BT7 1H8

A TEAM EFFORT

BRINGS REWARD

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Ballymena’s Gracehill Primary Principal, Lexie Scott explains how ‘old uniforms’ led them to the Aberdare mountains in Kenya.
How I got involved in TeachMeet

had heard of TeachMeet through colleagues on Facebook and I was lucky enough to spend a weekend at a conference in June with 2 of those who helped to organise it, Barry & Dathi. They convinced me to attend the next and advised me to follow #niedchat on Twitter and to join in weekly chats with other local educators using the hashtag #niedchat. Following these two on Twitter (@MrMalcontent & @Daithi) led me to connect with so many other teachers across Northern Ireland and beyond. I had heard another educator describe Twitter as “like the staff room but without the negativity” and this is a perfect way to put it. By using Twitter professionally, I have been able to connect with like-minded colleagues across the globe who are willing to share ideas and solve problems.

I decided to attend my first TeachMeet in October 2012 in Stranmillis. Since then I have attended six more & managed to present at four. It has been such a great way for me, as a nursery teacher, to share outdoor practice from my setting with a wider audience.

So what’s it all about?

The idea of a TeachMeet is that teachers put their names down to deliver either two or seven minute presentations on something innovative they are doing in their classroom or school. Names are picked out randomly by an app, so no one knows they are presenting in advance and you may never get picked if there are lots of presenters on the list. Everyone attending has to register for a ticket, but there is no entry fee and your ticket ensures your name goes into another random draw for prizes. Refreshments are also provided. The pace of the evening is very fast and fun, loads of laughter but most importantly lots and lots of enthusiasm and passion from all those involved, both presenters and organisers.

The last TeachMeet I attended in June was very different and yet must take a lot of organisation to sort out a wonderful line up of presenters and tickets, presenters and, most importantly, prizes.

They convine of the prizes runs from vouchers for shops or online sites to six months free trials of new educational apps and top of the range tablets.

Why do you recommend it?

From my first TeachMeet what struck me the most was that those present are still very much in love with what they do. They have been the teachers who care about each and every pupil and want them to be challenged and excited to learn. As a nursery teacher I am used to seeing that kind of passion in colleagues but it is so amazing to see it in primary and secondary colleagues too.

How can I get involved?

So my advice to any teacher is, get yourself a Twitter account, put up a profile picture and short biography to identify yourself to fellow teachers and start to follow a few key people to start building up your own PLN – Professional Learning Network.

Watch out for educational chats like #niedchat, #kinderchat, #sltchat. Find people to connect with so many who care about each and every pupil and who have mental health and other issues.

MACS (Supporting Children and Young People) is a charity established 25 years ago to help the needs of young people to support their transition from care to independent living. Whilst we still provide supported housing, our services have expanded to include young people who have left care, or who have mental health and other issues.

MACS aims to help young people aged 16-25 by providing them with a range of projects and initiatives.

The Resilient Teacher’s Survival Kit

At Carecall, we know that teaching is both a hugely rewarding and challenging profession, in the midst of the hectic school year it’s easy to forget about your emotional health and what tools you’ve got to stay positive in both your professional and personal life. We are here to keep you on the road to resilience...

Our Top Tips:

- Get the right work/life balance
- Strengthen your work relationships
- Check up on your emotional health
- Be realistic with expectations
- Make time for yourself outside of class

When you feel like things might be getting on top of you at work, or at home, call us free and in confidence on 0800 800 0002

Our lines are open 24/7, 365 days a year.

auto-news@macsni.org

We will be in contact with you regarding all matters relating to presentations for young people who have left care, or who have mental health and other issues.

The programme was delivered in three phases: the Belfast post-primary schools to 169 young people. The programme, which was designed in the partnership with schools, focused on general wellbeing, body image, coping with exam stress, self esteem and confidence.

We were also able to offer more specific one to one work for young people who were experiencing particular issues, specifically those around self harm. We work closely with the pastoral care teams and ensure any concerns we have are passed on line with teachers and the school’s Child Protection Officers, ensuring the safety of the young people we encounter.

Our goal for the next two years is to expand and develop this programme. We aim to deliver it in at least five post-primary schools per year in order to continue promoting and increasing awareness of mental health and wellbeing. We would also be keen to deliver the programme outside the Belfast area to offer particular support to those in more rural locations, with an additional focus on non Belfast areas.

Research and recent news reports show that more and more schools are struggling to deal with the rising numbers of young people self-harming. Representatives, from two major teaching unions, National Association of Head Teachers and Association of
UTU partnership in Tanzania is developing educational rights for disabled children

In recent years UTU has partnered with Disability Aid Abroad, a NI based disability charity, in developing and delivering a series of disability awareness and equality training to school teachers in Tanzania. The trainings were aimed at promoting the rights of disabled children in accessing education particularly at primary school level.

While the primary focus for the training was for school teachers, the training also included local government education officials and other educational decision makers. The statistics for the percentage of disabled children accessing education in developing countries is depressingly low – a UN report puts the numbers as low as eight %, and this figure would be reflected in our experience in Tanzania.

Although the Tanzanian government has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with a Disability which specifies special provisions including inclusive Education for disabled children, in practice the implementation of the UNCRPDs provisions on Inclusive Education has been difficult to achieve.

This can be easily understood when looking at the teacher/pupil ratios existing in many classrooms in Tanzania. Many of the training sessions some teachers reported that they had class sizes of 332 and 150 pupils! So there is little scope, at present, in the practical advancement of Inclusive Education for disabled children.

However, the Tanzanian Teachers Union (TTU) who has been the national partner in the training programmes has reported that the raising awareness of the educational rights of disabled children and the subsequent empowerment of national disability organisations has resulted in the Tanzanian Department of Education engaging with them in developing further disability programmes.

The latest training took place in June of this year when Carey Ann Clark, a Disability Equality Trainer from Disability Action and a volunteer with Disability Aid Abroad, travelled to Tanzania and delivered a one week training seminar with 29 primary school teachers from the Morogorro. The training took place in the Muhayo Centre for disabled children who have been abandoned at many of whom had been abandoned at the gates of the Centre.

An added feature of this training is that Carey Ann used the opportunity to train a local teacher Samuel Ngago to carry on the training in the future. Samuel is already planning a series of disability workshops for teachers in 2017.

Disability Aid Abroad is a completely volunteer charity and raising funds to run the training programmes is particularly difficult and they are looking for NI schools to co-operate with Tanzanian schools in promoting Inclusive Education.

For further information contact: John Coghlan - johncoghlan@disabilityaction.org

Once again, I am very thankful for the support of UTU for my work in CCAP Synod of Livingstonia in Mzuzu, Malawi! The past year has been challenging in many ways. Some of our volunteer trainers have left us for various reasons and so training our caregivers and committees has been difficult. Coupled with this, it is difficult to find financial support in Malawi, where many people are struggling just to survive.

The programme is still continuing however with volunteers and I am at present doing interviews to find new trainers. We are training Committees of our Early Childhood Centres to ensure that they work smoothly. We are also sensitizing local community and church leaders on the importance of ECD and sending children to ECD centres.

Right now, only 40% of our children have access to any form of ECD – this means that many will drop out of primary school as early as standard four, because they do not have the basic skills necessary for primary school.

So with your assistance, we have been able to train adults to try to help our young children with the skills they need before they begin formal schooling at the age of 6.

On a personal note, I am leaving Malawi after working here for 20 years. I am moving to Lusaka in Zambia where I will be setting up a teacher training programme for Early Childhood educators for one of the local churches there.

They have 30 community primary schools and are anxious to set up ECD centres as feeders for the primary school. I hope that UTU will continue to support my work in Zambia to empower our ECD educators to assist our young children in preparation for primary school.

Wishing you every blessing,

Diane Cusick
E X C E L L E N T R E S P O N S E T O U T U C O M P E T I T I O N

This year’s UTU Competition for schools was aimed at celebrating schools in Northern Ireland and all the hard-working superheroes within them.

The Global Solidarity and International Relations Sub-committee had a fantastic response to this competition from across the Key-Stage 1 and it was extremely difficult to choose just one or two winners within each category.

Prize-winners were announced through Facebook and Twitter in the Summer term and our President, Julie Orr, very much enjoyed visiting some of the winning schools to present the prizes in School Assemblies.

A big thank-you once again to all schools who took part! We look forward to organising our next UTU Competition which we will announce in the Spring Edition 2016 of the UTU News.

Overall winners
Nursery: Ann-Louise Kerr (Cooley Nursery Unit), Foundation/KS1: Izy McKinsty (Bush Primary), Grace McFarland (Cooley Primary School), KS2: Lucy Burns (Bush Primary School), KS3/4, Zara Davis (Ballyclare Secondary School, Special Schools), Lisanolly Special School – Classes 4 and 5
Runners-up:
Nursery: Charlie Kerr (Cooley Nursery Unit), Foundation/KS1: Adam (Rathenraw Integrated Primary), Hannah McBride (Longstone Primary), Ella McFarland (Cooley Primary School) KS2: Lucy-Rain Symington, (Rathenraw Integrated Primary), Sarah Thompson (Bush Primary), Cheryl Watson (Pennystraith Primary), Clare Dobson (Donaghmore Primary), Heilie Hughes (Ballydown Primary) KS3/4: Sarah Nolan (Victoria College).

UTU Crossword No.1

EXCELLENT RESPONSE TO UTU COMPETITION

UTU Crossword No.1

UTU Crossword No.1

UTU Crossword No.1

Who will be our lucky winner of a £25 voucher for Marks & Spencer?

DOWN
1. Nocturnal burrowing animal of the grasslands of Africa (6)
2. Fix or adjust the time, amount, degree or rate of (6)
3. Deadly (6)
4. Bitch dog as a fortification (4)
5. Medicine (4)
6. Diane Teacher trainer in Malawi and Zambia, Africa Online (6)
7. Lacking in intensity or brightness (4)
8. A mixture of gases required for breathing (3)
9. Give an education to (7)
10. Unlikely, open to suspicion (8)
11. Celestial, heavenly (6)
12. Innovator or colonist (7)
14. The 7th month of the Hindu calendar (4)
15. Lessons, messages in a story (6)
16. Objective form of ‘I’ (2)

Name: __________________________ Email: __________________________

WINNER – Lucy Burns, Bush PS

WINNER – Class 3, Lisanally Special School

WINNER – Class 5, Lisanally Special School

WINNER – Grace McFarland, Cooley PS

WINNER – Class 4, Lisanally Special School

WINNER – Grace McFarland, Cooley PS

WINNER – Ann-Louise Kerr, Cooley Nursery Unit

Who will be our lucky winner of a £25 voucher for Marks & Spencer?

All completed entries should be returned to ‘UTU Competition’, 94 Malone Road, Belfast, BT9 5HP by Friday 11th December, and should include a contact name and an email address.

Do not hallucinate.

THEME: WE ARE IN SCHOOL

The Belfast boys kicked off and looked the brighter in the opening spell. However, it was Arklow who scored first with a well-taken goal. Despite their domination and the efforts of every player, the ball would just not go into the net for the Belfast Primary Schools team. Arklow took their chances in the second half when they came along and went on to win comfortably by a 4-0 score line – a result that definitely didn’t reflect the performance from the local side. Arklow celebrated as they lifted the Bryson Cup for 2015. The Belfast squad will look forward to trying to regain the coveted trophy next year when they visit Arklow in 2016.
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