

CONFERENCE ABSTRACTS

FRIDAY 12th JUNE 2015

10.45am -11.45am CONCURRENT SESSION 1

1. Enhancing Teacher Resilience

Professor Mark Morgan

Room 2

Teacher quality is continuously highlighted as the key factor in good schools where pupils are learning in an atmosphere of support and well – being and where teachers are working in conditions where they feel nurtured and encouraged in an atmosphere of collegiality and support from the school principal. However, many countries report a lowering of teacher morale, rises in stress and burnout resulting in high levels of teacher attrition in many jurisdictions. In this regard, it is important to examine the factors that help maintain teachers' "courage to teach" (Palmer, 1998) and to help ensure quality learning for all students and to contribute to overall improvement of standards (Gu & Li, 2013: 289).

ENhancing Teacher RESilience in Europe (ENTREE) is an international EU funded project to develop a teacher education programme in resilience. Resilience in this research project is understood as 'the capacity to maintain equilibrium and a sense of commitment and agency in the everyday worlds in which teachers teach' (Gu & Day, 2013: 26). It expresses teachers' capacity to draw on their individual, collective and institutional resources to cope with the demands and everyday challenges of their profession. The focus of the project is to examine how teachers learn to be resilient and what factors help or hinder teachers in becoming more resilient, to stay in teaching and most importantly to provide pupils with quality teaching and learning. A sample of 250 teachers in each of the 5 European jurisdictions will be surveyed with regard to their level of resilience. Following on the analysis, face to face training will be offered to a random selection of participants. In addition, all other teachers will freely access the online assessment and the training modules in 2016.

Professor Mark Morgan is Cregan Professor of Education and Psychology at St. Patrick's College, and has just completed three years as co-director of [Growing Up in Ireland](#) (the national longitudinal study) at Trinity College. He has been Head of Education and Dean of Education at St Patrick's College. His research has focused on the job satisfaction, motivation and interpersonal relations as well as resilience of people at work. He and Dr. Margaret O'Donnell are currently involved of a major EU project on resilience at work, involving Germany, Spain, Italy as well as Ireland. In 2010, Professor Morgan was awarded the President's prize for research by Dublin City University

CHAIR: Carol-Ann O' Síoráin

2. 'Lifting Spirits' - Building up the Resilience of Students and Staff within a Special School

Don Golden

Room 3

The presentation will deal with the theme of resilience and wellbeing especially within a special school community. It will particularly focus on the nurturing and development of students with SEN through school events, projects, certification and the provision of a scaffolded environment where it is safe to succeed and also safe to fail occasionally. Staff and parents go through the similar stages of disappointment and joy in the course of the educational process. The presentation will give an outline of the theory of resilience and wellbeing as it applies to students, staff and parents within the special school community. It will deal with the factors that promote resilience and wellbeing as well as those that challenge it. During the presentation examples of school-based projects and events that play a huge part

in the building of resilience amongst all the SEN community will be discussed. The presentation will show how talent shows, school assemblies, student councils, parent's councils, class dramas and other events and projects can hugely contribute to developing the self-worth of learners and advocates within the special school.

Don Golden is a secondary trained teacher with a Higher Diploma in SEN and a Master's in Education who has been working in special education for over sixteen years. He is currently working at Scoil Bernadette Special School (Cope Foundation), Montenotte, Cork with the Leaving Certificate Applied group of students in the school. He has previously presented at the conference in 2011 and 2014, and has spoken about experiences in designing and delivering a FETAC level 2 programme to senior cycle students with SEN. His Master's covered an analysis of how these FETAC programmes were running in a selection of special schools. Don has worked with the NCCA on and off since 2008 and most recently with the JCT team developing the new Level 2 Learning Programme and delivering CPD on it in various schools.

CHAIR: Mary Carrig

3. Supporting Teachers to Support Students with SEN to Achieve Agency Within their Daily Lives

Catherine Roberts and Camilla Marks

Room 4

The ability to self-manage one's own behaviour and daily activities, leads to an improvement in mental well-being and significant improvements in quality of life and access to the wider community. Having a sense of agency within our daily lives supports us to think positively and to become resilient and resourceful when things go wrong. This presentation will identify how to teach students with SEN the skills required to accomplish their daily activities with greatly reduced adult supervision, thereby enhancing a sense of agency within their daily lives.

Catherine Roberts is seconded from St. Clare's Special School in Ennis, Co. Clare where she taught the junior class for students with ASD. While studying and working in the States, she gained experience working in a variety of settings and currently specializes in the area of learning and behaviour with specific focus on autism, behaviour and verbal behaviour. Catherine joined the SESS as an advisor (C-ABA) in 2009. She is involved in the design and delivery of several SESS CPD courses for teachers including the Contemporary Applied Behaviour Analysis course. In addition, she provides on-going support for teachers in the application of applied behaviour analysis as appropriate to their students' learning and behavioural needs.

Camilla Marks is seconded from Scoil Eoin Baiste in Dundalk. She also joined the SESS as an advisor in 2009. She is involved in the design and delivery of several SESS CPD courses for teachers including the Contemporary Applied Behaviour Analysis course. In addition, she provides on-going support for teachers in the application of applied behaviour analysis as appropriate to their students' learning and behavioural needs.

CHAIR: Muriel Weekes

4. Optimism: The Key to Resilience

Moya O' Brien

Room 5

Among the attributes associated with resilience, optimism is identified as the 'key'. It involves the ability to see things as they are and to believe that individuals can still make the best of the situation. It is about the ability to work towards positive outcomes with the knowledge that the outcomes do not happen automatically, but are achieved through effort, problem solving and planning. Optimism opens individuals

to the world; it encourages an exploratory mindset and produces experiential learning. This paper examines the role of 'optimism' and its importance for all students including those with special and additional need. A number of learning theories that relate to optimism and its importance in the learning process are identified and briefly discussed. Positive psychology is one of the newest branches of psychology and it is thanks to work in this field that we now know that optimism is a set of skills that can be taught and learned. It is a way of thinking that individuals can choose and a capacity that can be modelled and taught to both students and teachers. The links between optimism and motivation to learn as they impact in the classroom are explored along with ways in which parents and teachers can help build hope and optimism in students. A number of ways in which teachers can promote optimism within the classroom are shared.

Dr Moya O'Brien, PhD, Clinical Psychologist is an experienced psychologist and co-founder of ICEP Europe. She trained in both Ireland and the USA. She regularly consults with a wide range of professional groups including teachers and presents at national and international conference. She has lectured on various masters level courses in Ireland and has supervised students both clinical practise and research. She is a Board Certified Behaviour Analyst. She completed her PhD in clinical Psychology in Alliant University Los Angeles. Her research interests include Applied Behaviour Analysis, inclusion, Autism Spectrum Disorders, on line training and the application of positive psychology to students with disabilities.

CHAIR: Dr Anita Prunty

5. Generating shared goals- 'Communities of Practice' in Health and Well being

Bernie Quigley

Room 31

School communities must look at their vision of the health and well being of their staff. The main reason why this is so important is because without this, staff members are not able to connect with each other and with the students in their care. Schools are interconnected communities and we do not exist in isolation we are interdependent on each other to do our jobs. One way to promote health and well being is the practice of kindness, patience and humour. As well as the connection we have to each other. These are important skills for the health and wellbeing of all staff, students and parents who are our community. These are skills that we can practice in order to improve the quality of our working day. These can help us to cope with stress and it can build resilience and creates happier people. The most important skill is to cultivate kindness to ourselves and others. We need to generate this kindness to ourselves first and look at our intentions in our working day. There are a number of resources that can be used to build-up these skills in all our staff members. However as this is a short submission I suggest the use of Mindfulness, Self compassion, mediation and an appreciation of our interconnection to each other. Finally I suggest our need to be kind to all, which creates happier and healthier schools communities.

Bernie Quigley is a qualified art teacher who has completed 26 years teaching, 20 of these years has being served teaching in a Deis Vocational school in Co Wexford where she is currently still resides. She is qualified art teacher who has a post grad in special education (Positive behaviour management). Bernie has also completed a mindfulness based stress reduction course and mindful self compassion workshop also. She mediates each and every day. She believes that skills of compassion and kindness are important in our schools. She also believes we must cultivate a greater interest in physical and mental health and well being in our school. Her aim is to complete and have a mindfulness teaching qualification in and by 2016.

CHAIR: Isobel Ryan

6. Teacher Care Practice in the Classroom

Máire Ní Lámhín

Room 37

This research examines the theoretical and legislative position of 'care' and investigates the prevalence of caring relations in Irish mainstream primary classrooms through analysis of *Care Triggering Incidents*. Based on qualitative data analysis of reflective diaries from teachers, the paper outlines the practice of care by teachers in the classroom. A *Care Triggering Incident* is an incident when a teacher believes that a pupil is showing a sign/(s) of needing to be cared for. The main areas developed through this research were: (1) the prevalence of care practice in the classroom, (2) teacher awareness of care practice, (3) types of care practice in the classroom, and (4) the impact of care practice on the child and on whole class teaching. The research finds that those within the school community are in a position of care. It finds that a culture of care in a school provides a positive impact on pupils and on whole class teaching. It finds that the same frequency of care practice exists in mainstream classrooms with children with SEN and mainstream classrooms without children with SEN. The research closes with a set of implications that emphasise the need for care to be placed centre stage when considering policy formation and practice.

Máire Ní Lámhín has been a mainstream class teacher in Scoil Chaoimhín Naofa in Hollywood, Co. Wicklow since 2009. She graduated from a Master of Education degree programme in St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra in 2013. Máire completed a thesis as partial fulfilment of the programme entitled An Investigation of Teacher Care Practice in the Classroom under the supervision of Dr. Eileen Brennan and Dr. Regina Murphy and was awarded First Class Honours. She has attended and presented at a number of educational conferences including the IPDA Conference in December 2012, the ESAI Conference in April 2014 and FÉILTE hosted by the Teaching Council of Ireland in October 2013 and October 2014.

CHAIR: Rosemary Fahey

12.00am – 1.00pm CONCURRENT SESSION 2

7. The Imperative of Play in Promoting and Sustaining the Well-being of Young Children with Special Needs

Trevor O'Brien

Room 2

In this session, the importance of planning effectively for young children with SEN, in order to improve their Well-being (an Aistear theme), will be explored. Through supportive and well-organised play activities, children's dispositions such as confidence and resilience may be improved and the presenter will highlight effective, evidence-based strategies to this end. Though play in its different forms may present benefits for all children, it is not without its challenges. These challenges may be particularly acute for young children with special needs. Therefore, whole class, inclusive play pedagogies, with a specific focus on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), will be considered. Furthermore, the presentation will focus on errorless learning promoting success and well-being for all young children with SEN through play.

Trevor O'Brien is a faculty member of the Department of Special Education at Mary Immaculate College. Prior to joining the Special Education team, he spent many years working as a classroom teacher and as a resource teacher and has also lectured in the Department of Adult Education, University College, Cork. He has a Master's degree in Education, with a focus on inclusion and is currently studying for a Doctorate in Special Education at The University of Sheffield. Trevor's areas of expertise include high incidence learning disabilities, differentiation, learning styles and e-learning.

CHAIR: Aidín Ní Mhaonaigh

8. Mindfulness: A Well Being Intervention for Pupils with Complex Needs in an Urban Special School Context

Kay Murphy and Michael Quinn

Room 3

Mindfulness is paying attention, in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally. It has been widely documented that mindfulness is an effective intervention in the promotion of well-being and can impact positively on the behaviour of children in a learning context. The authors examined the efficacy of a six-week mindfulness pilot intervention programme. The mixed gender sample class chosen for the study were pupils ranging in age from 14 to 15 years. All pupils presented with a Mild General Learning Disability (MGLD) and a variety of additional including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). This collaborative presentation will describe the implementation phase of the mindfulness programme, the measures used to evaluate its impact and a discussion around its findings.

Kay Murphy has a strong background in education having worked abroad and within the Irish Education system for over 25 years. Kay's main area of expertise is designing and delivering aspects of the curriculum to make it accessible to all students and in particular to students with learning needs. Kay currently works in a special school in Dublin which caters for boys and girls.

Michael Quinn is a special education teacher in the same school. He is conducting doctoral research at the School of Education in University College Dublin in the area of ADHD, with specific focus on the effects of physical activity on behaviour and executive functioning in children who present with ADHD symptoms.

CHAIR: Colin McElroy

9. Meaningful Learning and Confidence in Reading –Teachers' Self-reported Differentiated Reading Implementation in Primary/Elementary Schools

Helen Heneghan

Room 4

Reading is an important component of learning and reading instruction influences students' future learning potential. Optimal reading instruction restructures teaching and learning activities to meet children's needs towards provision of achievable goals and meaningful learning. Recent literacy policy initiatives have renewed focus on literacy approaches that promote the development of self-confidence and self-reliance in students in primary/elementary schools. Differentiated reading is one instructional model that is compatible with these literacy strategies and responds to learner variance.

This research investigated teachers' understanding of differentiated reading in relation to Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and examined teachers' implementation through content, process and product. It explored the transitions made by learners in the social-interactions of learner-responsive, teacher-facilitated activities.

Two case studies in one Irish and one Texan city provided questionnaires data, from 645 teachers located in 62 schools. Important themes were further explored through lesson-plan evaluations and interviews. Findings identify factors that shape teachers' understanding and implementation of differentiated reading and indicate a positive response to differentiated reading from teachers whilst also indicating the desire for further guidelines.

Recommendations are offered on school and policy level to overcome perceived obstacles. These findings can help shape future policies and guidelines for teachers, schools, pre-service teacher education and professional development.

Helen Heneghan, a PhD student in Trinity College Dublin, has broad experience in education as a teacher and lecturer in Ireland, Scotland and the US during which time she completed a B Ed and Higher Dip in Ed Administration (hons) in University College Dublin, a Master in Education (hons) in Trinity College Dublin and a Teaching Qualification in Further Education (hons) in Aberdeen University, Scotland. Delivery of M.Ed., B.Ed. and TQFE programmes and school placement supervision helped develop her interest in application of theory into practice in the classroom. Her main research interests are differentiated instruction, literacy and numeracy, teaching methodologies, curriculum development and professional development of teachers.

CHAIR: Dr Arthur Smith

10. The Impact of IEP Training on Teachers' Knowledge and Practice and on Learning Outcomes for Students with Special Educational Needs

Dr Anita Prunty, Dr Órla Ní Bhroin and Dr Fiona King

Room 5

Within our school communities, the well-being and resilience of adults is connected to that of learners. Research by Day (2007) found that commitment and resilience are fundamental to teachers' effectiveness and that variations in their continuing professional development (CPD) will affect these. The importance of CPD for teachers is recognised and promoted by bodies such as the OECD (2005), the Teaching Council and indeed by the teachers themselves. Significantly though, in terms of well-being and resilience, it is critical that teachers can evaluate if the opportunities that are provided for professional development will make a difference to their own learning and that of their students. Evaluation of CPD has been shown to improve the outcomes achieved (Earley and Porritt, 2010). This paper focuses on a study which aims to investigate the impact of CPD on the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process on teachers' practice and on learning outcomes for pupils with special educational needs. The study has two phases. In phase one, a postal questionnaire was administered to 165 teachers who have completed the Graduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs in St Patrick's College. Phase two involves case studies in six mainstream schools. Preliminary results from phase one of the study will be presented and their implications for the continuing professional development of teachers in relation to the IEP process will be discussed.

Dr. Anita Prunty has been a teacher and educational psychologist for many years both in Ireland and Australia. She is currently working in the Special Education Department in St. Patrick's College. Her current research interests include inclusive practices, educational provision for students on the autism spectrum, the IEP process, and children's rights. She may be contacted at anita.prunty@spd.dcu.ie

Dr. Fiona King has been a teacher for 25 years and is currently working in the Special Education Department in St. Patrick's College. Her current research interests include collaboration and inclusive pedagogies, CPD, and social justice leadership. She may be contacted at fiona.king@spd.dcu.ie

Dr Órla Ní Bhroin is a lecturer in the Special Education Department in St Patrick's College. Her current research interests include inclusive pedagogy and policy, the IEP process, student teacher experiences and learning over time, and the pedagogy of teacher education. She may be contacted at orla.nibhroin@spd.dcu.ie

CHAIR: Lisa White

11. Blending interventions to support the learning and development of a student with autism in Ireland

Suzanne McCanney

Room 31

Compared to typically developing peers, individuals with autism are more likely to experience exclusion from school (Green et al., 2005), isolation from peers (Kasari et al., 2012), lower rates of paid employment and independent living ((Taylor & Seltzer, 2011; Farley et al., 2009). Thus suggestive that in general, adolescents with autism are unprepared and poorly equipped for the transition to adulthood. This presentation will describe and evaluate a transdisciplinary approach blending key psychosocial interventions with a student with autism in Ireland who was experiencing difficulties related to their educational placement and inclusion.

Suzanne McCanney is the Learning Support Manager in Middletown Centre for Autism; prior to this, she was Assistant Advisory Officer for Special Educational Needs in the Western Education and Library Board (WELB). Suzanne also worked as a Project Manager for the Cross-Border Parent Community and School Partnership Programme. Suzanne is a qualified teacher and has a Master's Degree in Special Educational Needs Teaching.

CHAIR: Paul O'Mahony

2.00pm – 3.00pm CONCURRENT SESSION 3

12. Movement Matters: A Purposeful Movement Programme to Teach and Support Positive Behaviours for Learning

Joan Henefer, Valerie Maher, Carolyn Lanigan-O'Keeffe

Room 2

Research indicates that building short activity breaks into the school day can help students to stay on task with their mainstream classrooms. Movement Matters is a short, intensive behavioural intervention that sets out to improve the behaviour for learning skills of students typically characterised as inattentive, hyperactive and/or restless in class. Activities are designed to be readily achievable in order that student can experience and build upon their success. Developed by Educationalists and Occupational Therapists from the National Behaviour Support Service, Movement Matters supports young people who find staying on task challenging and who have exhibited symptoms of, or who have been diagnosed with hyperactive disorders such as ADHD. A NBSS feasibility study (NBSS, in press) set out to determine whether it was possible for the programme to be delivered by teachers (with appropriate training and on-going specialist support) within the confines of the typical post primary timetable and classroom. Additionally, through the collection of teacher scaling and student self-evaluations, the study aimed to measure whether participation in the programme had a calming effect on the students. This paper will discuss the programme, the findings of the feasibility study as well as current Movement Matters research which explores further the possible impact of the programme on students' engagement and enjoyment of their learning in school.

Valerie Maher is a Regional Development Officer with the National Behaviour Support Service and works with and in schools promoting and supporting behaviour for learning. Previous to this she worked in post primary schools in Ireland and overseas as a PE and Biology teacher. She is trained as an SEN teacher and worked in a Behaviour Support classroom teaching students with behaviours that challenge in a DEIS post primary school.

Carolyn Lanigan-O'Keeffe is a NBSS Senior Occupational Therapist; Trinity College Dublin. She has attained advanced practitioner status in Sensory Integration. Carolyn works collaboratively with teachers and has piloted an adapted ALERT programme in NBSS partner schools.

Jean Henefer (PGCE, MLIS, PhD) is the Research Development Officer for the National Behaviour Support Service. Her areas of research interest include services and supports for children and young people with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties as well as the Information Behaviour of adolescents. Additionally, Dr Henefer is an occasional lecturer in the School of Information and Library Studies, University College Dublin.

CHAIR: Muriel Weekes

13. Provision for Pupils with Dyslexia: How Provision can Impact on Pupils' Wellbeing

Dr. Ann Marie Casserly, Dr. Bairbre Tiernan, Dr. Therese McPhillips

Room 3

Children with dyslexia experience particular difficulty engaging with printed text. As 'so much depends on being able to read to learn, the overall educational progress of such children is often seriously hampered with worrying consequences for gaining qualifications and for their life chances' (Rose, 2009, p. 10). In addition, many children with dyslexia experience secondary consequences such as difficulties with emotional well-being and anxiety. The renewed focus on efforts to improve literacy attainment as evidenced by the national literacy strategy (DES, 2011) brings a greater urgency to address the needs of pupils who continue to struggle with literacy as a result of dyslexia. This presentation will outline the findings of a SCoTENS (Standing Conference on Teacher Education, North and South) funded research project which considered the views held by key stake holders regarding the current provision of support for pupils with dyslexia. The implications of this provision on children's wellbeing will be considered.

Dr. Bairbre Tiernan is a lecturer in SEN at the Centre for Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity in St. Angela's College, Sligo. She is the course director of the blended-online learning of the MA in Professional Studies in SEN in St. Angela's College. Research interests included literary, assessment and inclusion with specific reference to multiclass settings.

Dr. Ann Marie Casserly is a lecturer in SEN at the Centre for Special Educational Needs, Inclusion and Diversity in St. Angela's College, Sligo. Her lecturing and research interests are diverse in the area of SEN but have focused extensively in the area of dyslexia and the socio-emotional aspects of dyslexia, particularly in her doctoral work. She is currently course director of the blended-online learning of the MA in Specific Learning Difficulties in St. Angela's College.

Dr Thérèse McPhillips is a lecturer in the Education Department in St Patrick's College, Dublin City University where her area of specialism is literacy education with particular emphasis on inclusion. She has extensive teaching experience in both special and mainstream classes and was principal of a special school for children with dyslexia before joining St Patrick's College. She has pursued postgraduate research in the areas of literacy and inclusion to doctoral level and has lectured in literacy, dyslexia and inclusive practice over several years.

CHAIR: Carol-Ann O' Síoráin

14. When Happiness and Sociability Mask High Anxiety: The Case of Williams Syndrome

Fionnuala Tynan (Ed.D)

Room 4

Learners with Williams syndrome (WS) in Irish mainstream and special schools are described by their teachers and parents as happy, sociable and friendly. Teachers also describe the very positive impact these learners have, both at classroom and school level: they present as pupils who model well-being and positivity. Yet, this masks high anxiety, which appears to be an attempt by the learner to maintain the teacher's well-being! Evidence suggests that maladaptive behaviours associated with WS are

caused in part by high anxiety and poor expression of emotion. So, pleasing their teacher comes at a high cost: emotional outbursts, challenging behaviours, and increasing levels of anxiety and depression into adulthood. It could be acceptable for teachers to assume that these learners do not need lessons on well-being or positivity. However, when the learner is listened to, there are clear indicators of the need for resilience and well-being to be seen as priority learning needs for learners with WS. Experience of teaching in a special placement (special school or special class) is correlated to targeted strategies to support the emotional/behavioural needs of the learner with WS. These findings arose from doctoral research which triangulated the educational experiences of children with WS of primary-school age, their parents and teachers.

Fionnuala Tynan completed a doctoral thesis on the education of children with Williams syndrome (WS), leading to the first set of educational guidelines on learners with WS in Ireland. She has been on the national committee of the Williams Syndrome Association of Ireland (WSAI) for over sixteen years and taught at the WSAI annual summer camp for over ten years to individuals with WS aged 10 to 45. Her current research includes the use of IEPs for learners with WS of post-primary age, and parental strategies for dealing with anxiety in WS. She works as an inspector with the Department of Education and Skills.

CHAIR: Aidín Ní Mhaonaigh

15. Promoting Resilience and Wellbeing in all Learners

Finola O'Neill

Room 5

The world in which we live is ever changing and frequently challenging and there are numerous negative consequences for children who have difficulty responding creatively and flexibly to these. Anxiety and negative emotions can inhibit learning and impact on physical and mental health. While the roles of parents, health professionals and educators overlap, teachers are uniquely placed to create a context in which children can learn to be resilient in the face of adversity and challenge. This presentation includes aspects of original research undertaken as part of a Masters Degree in Special Educational Needs; *Developing Resilience in Vulnerable Children; A Framework for Intervention*, and its subsequent influence on the author's work as a Learning Support/Resource Teacher. The study examined resilience research and was informed by the opinions of children and teachers in relation to stressors in the school setting. The resulting framework has since been modified and extended. The view of resilience presented is evidence based and positive and seeks to empower educators to promote wellbeing and improve outcomes for children. This presentation aims to provide an insight into children's relationship with challenge and offers practical strategies to integrate capacity building into teaching and learning.

Finola O'Neill has been a teacher at Scoil Mhuire, Leixlip for most of her career, working initially as a Class Teacher before taking up a Resource Teaching post in 2002. She has always been concerned for children whose anxiety prevented them from engaging with confidence in school. A Post Graduate Diploma in Special Education and a Masters Degree in Special Educational Needs at St. Patrick's College, Dublin provided Finola with the opportunity to consider the resilience research in relation to her own practice. She is hopeful that the current interest in resilience, and the research that underpins it, will result in cohesive policies for promoting wellbeing in our school communities.

CHAIR: Trevor O'Brien

16. Promoting Resilience and Wellbeing in Exceptionally Able and Twice Exceptional Children in the Classroom and Beyond

Leslie S. Graves

Room 31

For learners with special educational needs, the skills to think positively and to become resilient and

resourceful when things go wrong, don't fit or they find themselves up against a wall of misunderstandings, can enable them to progress in both learning and socialization. For the Exceptionally Able and 2E learners this can become an important issue. How to keep these students engaged, not bitter and not lose them in our overcrowded classrooms? How can we develop trust, self regulation, and empathy in our students that can breed acceptance of all learners in our charge? For the Exceptionally Able Student, in the Irish Educational System, it might mean taking the road less travelled by and going down a number of unusual paths. However, the wellbeing of teachers, special needs assistants and other adults involved in the school community, coupled with the degree of an understanding, positive, flexible, and open attitude towards these students is also connected to the wellbeing of Exceptionally Able learners, and may also affect the level of comfort, confidence and socialization which these students may experience.

Leslie S. Graves is an occasional lecturer at UCD - Exceptionally Able Input, School of Lifelong Learning and Education. Leslie is President of the World Council for Gifted and Talented Children.

CHAIR: Michael Travers

17. Teacher Wellbeing and the Implementation of Mindfulness as a Support to Combat Stress and Elevate Resilience

Kay Murphy

Room 37

Teachers are required to have energy and stamina as they tend to individuals, the class as a whole and to their added responsibilities both inside and outside of school. The Irish Congress of Trade Unions report high levels of stress amongst teachers (88 %). With this in mind the researcher conducted a small pilot study to test the impact of an eight-week mindfulness course adapted specifically for teachers. The teachers who participated in the programme reported a decrease in stress and anxiety in their personal and professional lives. Elevated levels of awareness and self compassion were also reported. It was discovered that the practice of mindfulness made teachers more aware of what was happening in their immediate environment and instead of reacting to situations; kinder, more compassionate options became available. This small scale study suggests that mindfulness can provide a route to a healthier, more resilient way of being, even in challenging times. Mindfulness is not about trying to improve or change things rather the “challenge of mindfulness is to be present for your experience as it is” (Kabat-Zinn, 2012, P. 26).

Kay Murphy has a strong background in education having worked abroad and within the Irish Education system for over 25 years. Kay currently works in a special school in Dublin which caters for boys and girls. Kay's first class honours MA in Leadership and Pastoral Care research was a pilot study of “Mindfulness in the Special School”. The implications of the study on all the partners in education prompted Kay to train as a Mindfulness teacher. She uses mindfulness programme with students and teachers. Kay believes mindfulness as a self-care technique can transform our personal and professional lives as teachers and principals.

CHAIR: Bernie Smyth

3.15pm – 4.15pm CONCURRENT SESSION 4

18. Developing the Critical Literacy of Young EAL Learners Using Active Learning and Visuals

This research focused on the empowerment of learners using active learning methods and visuals. The study trailed a multimodal, project based learning approach to literacy pedagogy within a DEIS post-primary school in Dublin. It attempts to add the knowledge base in the area of situated, contextualised literacies within an Irish context. Four participants' spoken language was analysed during and eight week timeframe, using a multimodal analytical framework in the attempt to answer the research question; "are there benefits to using a multimodal project-based learning approach to develop the critical literacy of EAL learners?" Findings suggest an increased motivational possibility in utilising locally produced resources in the language learning context. The approach may offer an increased possibility for paths to student empowerment within the post-primary context by offering a means of tapping in to learners' capabilities. Themes emerging from the study are 'community of learners,' 'informality' and 'support'. Presentation will include the visuals produced by the four participants and outline how they were used to elicit spoken language. The findings presented may be of value to the special education community as learners with language processing difficulties may also benefit from the use of visuals in the learning context.

Gina Potts is a resource teacher in a co-educational Dublin community school with a specialisation in art and literacy education. She holds a degree and Masters in Fine Art, HDip in Education, Post Grad Dip in SEN and a Masters in Education (SEN). She is interested in active learning methodologies, object agency and semiotics. Publications include 'The Nature of Print Processes' in Thoughtlines 4 and 'Shredders', a collage correspondence art project in CIRCA magazine. More recently her work explores New Literacy Studies in the attempt to improve the quality of the literacy learning experience in her own school.

CHAIR: Isobel Ryan

19. A Whole School Approach to Improving Learning, Social and Life Skills for Students with Autism

Tracey McGovern

Room 3

Students with autism experience a spectrum of challenges with social interaction, communication and restricted or repetitive interests and behaviours (DSM – 5, APA, 2013). These difficulties can restrict a student's academic potential. This pilot study investigated the current level of educational provision for students with autism in 1 school in Northern Ireland and measured the effectiveness of a 'Whole School Intervention Programme' devised to educate staff and parents of students attending the school about autism and best practice interventions. This presentation will:

- Discuss the current level of education provision for students with autism attending this school
- Discuss the design, introduction and delivery of the 'Whole School Intervention Programme'
- Explore results regarding the effectiveness of a 'Whole School Intervention Programme' on AET competency scores and teacher, parent and student satisfaction level

Tracey McGovern is a Specialist Speech and Language Therapist at Middletown Centre for Autism and has a particular interest in multi-agency working from the diagnostic process through to intervention in school and home settings.

CHAIR: Jerry Pierce

20. Online Professional Development in Support of Teacher Resilience

Dr Geraldine Hayes and Dr Deirdre MacIntyre

Room 4

The rapidly changing legislative context in Ireland which guarantees the right of all pupils, regardless of their difficulties or differences to attend their local school, has resulted in teachers facing a wide range of challenges. The importance of teacher resilience, with respect to the challenges experienced as a result of inclusive educational policy change, is of paramount importance. Kyriacou, (2010) defines resilience as the extent to which a teacher is able to maintain a set of positive attributes regarding their work as a teacher in the face of dealing with a range of challenges, pressures and demands inherent in the everyday work as a teacher. In accepting Kyriacou's (2010) definition of resilience we recognise that teachers' need continuous professional development in order to acquire the additional knowledge, skills and competencies required to effectively meet the learning needs of a diverse pupil population. In recent times, while many teacher professional development programmes are offered online, to date, there remains a dearth of research examining the effectiveness of such programmes. This research explores the extent to which engaging in online learning modules impacts on teachers' knowledge, attitude, skills and competencies with respect to supporting inclusive policy and practice in Irish primary and post-primary schools. The outcomes of this research study will serve to inform policy and practice in relation to how and in what manner online learning can support teachers' continuous professional development.

Dr Deirdre MacIntyre, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and co-founder of ICEP Europe. She has over 25 years experience working with parents and children and consulting with a wide range of professional groups including teachers. Prior to joining ICEP Europe Deirdre was Principal Psychologist for Child and Adolescent Psychology Services and lectured part-time at UCD and Trinity. Among Deirdre's special interests are inclusion, resilience and wellbeing. Deirdre is also the co-author of the Stay Safe Programme, a nationally implemented child protection programme. Deirdre has been designing teacher education programmes and tutoring on special needs and psychology for ICEP since 2001. She is involved in research on resilience and wellbeing, teacher training and inclusion.

CHAIR: Bernie Smyth

21. Promoting Wellbeing by Reducing Anxiety in Primary School Children Using the Friends for Life Programme

Ann-Marie Kealy and Shane Flynn

Room 5

A sizable amount of pupils experience anxiety issues as a result of their learning difficulties. Anxiety is among the most common health concerns in children by the age of 18 and approximately 1 in 10 children will have suffered from an anxiety disorder (Costello et al 2003).

Feelings of anxiety can adversely affect academic performance and social interactions. The Friends for Life programme is a cognitive behavioural approach designed to teach children the skills to manage their thoughts, emotions and body responses. It has been acknowledged by the World Health Organisation (2004) for its comprehensively evaluated practice and has been adapted and used in schools internationally.

The programme is promoted by NEPS countrywide. The presentation will provide an overview of the programme and rationale behind it, share the reflections of two teachers on implementing the programme in a special needs school and provide feedback from pupils and parents about participating in the sessions.

Anne Marie Kealy and Shane Flynn are teachers in St Rose's School for children with reading difficulties. Both have been trained in the "Friends for Life" programme by NEPS.

CHAIR: Aisling Hale

22. Learning to be a Man - Masculinity, Identity and Self esteem in the Digital Age - The Potential of Resilience Programmes

Dr. Michael Flanagan

Room 31

Masculinity Ideology is the internalization of cultural belief systems and attitudes toward masculinity and men's roles (operationally defined by gender role stereotypes and norms). Through social influence processes resulting in reinforcement, punishment, and observational learning, masculinity ideologies inform, encourage, and constrain boys (and men) to conform to the prevailing male role norms by adopting certain socially-sanctioned masculine behaviours and avoiding certain proscribed behaviours. Thus, boys who perceive themselves as not meeting these societally-imposed requirements of manhood experience what is referred to as Gender Role Strain, and they often become disenfranchised, unhappy, or worse. The perception that girls tend to be "getting ahead" in a number of traditional male categories can further serve to compound this problem. In the face of the many serious issues that confront vulnerable young people today - substance abuse, depression and all too frequently, suicide there is a clear need for a realistic and comprehensive response from both educators and parents. Effective resilience programmes may offer one potential example of such a response, not least with regard to those young men who, for one reason or another, may be considered to be in high risk categories - poor communication ability, special needs or low self esteem are some of the factors that may be included here. Serious negative impacts can result from a feeling of dislocation and marginalisation in the face of a digital world in which we are constantly exposed to the apparent popularity and social success of others, underlying yet again our responsibility to equip at risk youth and encourage them to identify and develop their own capacity for positive personal growth and emotional resilience This paper considers these issue and goes on to examine the manner in which resilience programmes may have the potential benefit to enhance the self esteem of young vulnerable males and support parents, teachers and others who work in the field to educate them to deal with the many complex challenges that they must face in learning to be a man in a post traditional society.

Dr. Michael Flanagan is Lead Tutor in the field of History of Education in Hibernia College. He also works in the area of Adult Education in Waterford Institute of Technology and is Module Leader, School Placement, Level 8 at St. Nicholas Montessori College, Dunlaoghaire. Dr. Flanagan has wide academic interests, having presented at many conferences both home and abroad - he is a regular contributor to the annual IATSE conference programme. He has an ongoing research profile, contributing to a range of publications across a broad field of educational and history/popular cultural issues.

CHAIR: Colin McElroy

SATURDAY 13th JUNE 2015

9.15am – 10.15am CONCURRENT SESSION 1

23. Resilience: Exploring 'Ordinary Magic'

Deirdre MacIntyre

Room 2

In recent years there has been a substantial body of research that explores the phenomenon of human resilience. There is increasing evidence that people with high resilience fare better in all areas of life than those with lower level of resilience. These individuals possess an amazing capacity to bounce back

from an event or series of events that have challenged their physical and emotional capacities along with their faith and beliefs. This paper explores the concept of resilience, how it manifests in everyday life and its relevance and implications for educators, learners and students with special educational needs in particular. It examines the key psychological ingredients of resilience and looks at how the factors that foster resilience and enhance wellbeing can be supported and cultivated in teachers and students alike. Evidence-based strategies and techniques for promoting resilience in the school and classroom are discussed with a particular focus on students with special and additional learning needs. The paper concludes with the welcome news that a substantial body of research finds that resilience can be taught and learned. Resilience interventions promote flexible thinking, emotional competence, teach coping skills and problem-solving and are underpinned by a strengths-focus with strong relationships and opportunities for participation.

Dr Deirdre MacIntyre, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and co-founder of ICEP Europe. She has over 25 years experience working with parents and children and consulting with a wide range of professional groups including teachers. Prior to joining ICEP Europe Deirdre was Principal Psychologist for Child and Adolescent Psychology Services and lectured part-time at UCD and Trinity. Among Deirdre's special interests are inclusion, resilience and wellbeing. Deirdre is also the co-author of the Stay Safe Programme, a nationally implemented child protection programme. Deirdre has been designing teacher education programmes, and tutoring on special needs and psychology for ICEP since 2001. She is involved in research on resilience and wellbeing, teacher training and inclusion.

CHAIR: Jerry Pierce

24. Social Skills for Young People with Visual Impairment

Jenny Flynn and Dr. Michael O'Keefe

Room 3

Engaging in social activity for a young person with visual impairment can be a difficult task. The learning of social cues and interactions does not always occur incidentally. Young people with visual impairment can at times feel marginalized and may not have the skills to interact appropriately with their peers and thus this can lead to isolation. The importance of the teaching of social skills is highlighted in several research articles and is stated by Thurston (2014) that curricular learning and social learning must go hand in hand for a young person with a visual impairment. Young people with visual impairment are also more at risk of developing learned helplessness due to the reliance on adult support from a young age (Sacks and Wolffe, 2006). This seminar aims to set out the needs of young people with visual impairment in relation to social interactions and ways to meet these needs.

Jennifer Flynn is a teacher in Saint Joseph's Primary School for Children with Visual Impairment. She is currently completing a masters degree in Special Education in Saint Patrick's College, Drumcondra. Her main area of research is the analysis and development of social interactions for young people with visual impairment.

Dr. Michael O'Keefe is a lecturer in the special education department of Saint Patrick's College Drumcondra. Dr. O'Keefe worked as a primary school teacher in both mainstream and special schools before working in Saint Patrick's College. Dr. O'Keefe's research interests include teaching approaches suitable for visually impaired students and teaching students with low incidence disabilities.

CHAIR: Isobel Ryan

25. Teaching and developing self-worth among learners with SEN through the Level 2 Learning Programmes

Judith Callan-Gough : Team Leader Level 2 Learning Programmes:JCT

This paper will examine the Level 2 Learning Programmes which target the learning and accreditation needs of students with general learning disabilities in the higher functioning moderate and low functioning mild categories whose needs are not met by existing subjects or short courses on offer at Level 3 and require focused priority learning outcomes. The L2LPs build upon prior knowledge and are designed around 5 Priority Learning Units (PLUs) that focus on the social, personal and pre-vocational skills that prepare students for further study, for work and life. Prior to the L2LPs, there was no structured framework as set by the Department of Education and Skills/ NCCA for students functioning in this category that allowed them to achieve a National Certification. As part of the new Junior Cycle, key skills are vital for our students allowing for the transfer of learning and skills into real-life situations but also as preparation for life. By teaching students the necessary skills to develop as individuals and gain a sense of their own self-worth, the aim is to prepare them for further opportunities, responsibilities and lifelong learning. This paper will also suggest practical classroom strategies to allow teachers to inspire confidence in their students.

Don Golden is a secondary trained teacher with a Higher Diploma in SEN and a Master's in Education who has been working in special education for over sixteen years. He is currently working at Scoil Bernadette Special School (Cope Foundation), Montenotte, Cork with the Leaving Certificate Applied group of students in the school. He has previously presented at the conference in 2011 and 2014, and has spoken about experiences in designing and delivering a FETAC level 2 programme to senior cycle students with SEN. His Master's covered an analysis of how these FETAC programmes were running in a selection of special schools. Don has worked with the NCCA on and off since 2008 and most recently with the JCT team developing the new Level 2 Learning Programme and delivering CPD on it in various schools.

Judith Callan-Gough is Team Leader of the Level 2 Learning Programmes within the Junior Cycle for Teachers Support Service, facilitating CPD activities to support their introduction. She is currently on secondment from Deerpark CBS in Cork, where she worked primarily with students with autism. She has a keen interest in special education within the Irish setting and has previously worked with the Special Education Support Service. She holds a BA(Hons) in French and German and a HDip in Education from University College Cork. She also has a Diploma in Education (SEN) from St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra and is a graduate of the Marketing Institute of Ireland.

CHAIR: Aidín Ní Mhaonaigh

26. Fostering independence through care? A critical reflection on the role of the Special Needs Assistant in inclusive education

Claire Griffin

Room 5

This presentation seeks to explore the role of the 'Special Needs Assistant' (SNA) in mainstream inclusive education in Ireland. In particular, the unique care role of the SNA, as prescribed within an Irish educational context, will be interrogated in terms of its potential to foster independence in the child with significant care needs. This matter will be explored in light of the most recent circular on the SNA Scheme, as published by the Department of Education & Skills (Circular 0030/2014), alongside a host of national and international research in the field. Based on a number of psychological theories and frameworks, the potential of scaffolding children's movement towards greater levels of independence will be examined, with particular regard for planning at the individual child and school level. This presentation seeks to acknowledge the complexities inherent within the SNA Scheme in Ireland, whereby audience participation will be central to critical reflection on this theme.

Claire Griffin is an Educational Psychologist and lecturer in Educational and Developmental Psychology at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She is also the placement co-ordinator and supervisor of trainee Educational Psychologists on the 'Master of Arts in Educational Psychology' programme. Claire is currently undertaking her PhD in Educational Psychology through the Institute of Education, University

College London. Claire's research interests include inclusive education, assessment in education, child-centred teaching/learning and the role of the paraprofessional within the larger school system.

CHAIR: Aisling Hale

27. Lessons from Psychology: Promoting Positive Living & Well-Being in the Classroom and Beyond

Poster Symposium - Mary Immaculate College

Woodlock Hall

This poster symposium, hosted by Educational Psychologists and Mary Immaculate College lecturers Claire Griffin, Dr. Suzanne Parkinson and Marie Ryan, adopts a psychological lens in exploring a range of topical life issues which are found to impact upon positive living and well-being in the classroom and beyond. Psychology students of Mary Immaculate College will exhibit posters which attempt to translate psychological theory and research into classroom practice. Sample topics to be explored in these posters include mindfulness, stress management, motivation and social-media use. Conference attendees will be encouraged to explore the poster exhibition and to engage in discussion and debate with the authors and hosts. Each poster will address cutting-edge psychological theory and research in the field and will discuss the relevance of this theory in the Irish educational context. Each poster will identify key implications and lessons gleaned from theory and research for positive living and well-being in the classroom and beyond.

Claire Griffin (Educational Psychologist – MIC) See session 27 for biography

Dr. Suzanne Parkinson (Educational and Developmental Psychologist – MIC) completed her undergraduate in Education at Froebel College in association with Trinity College, Dublin. She completed her M.Sc. in Developmental and Educational Psychology in Queen's University, Belfast and her Ed.D. in Educational Psychology from Sheffield University. Suzanne worked as an educational psychologist in Northern Ireland and in the Republic. She initially worked in the Belfast Education and Library Board and in 2001 established the National Educational Psychological Service in County Clare. She is currently lecturing in psychology in Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. She has been central in the design of new programmes within the college and developed the M.A. professional post graduate training programme in educational psychology which was launched in 2011. She is a member of the Division of Educational Psychology, Psychological Society of Ireland and served on committees over the years. She was a member of a European CICE and co published with colleagues on a variety of topics. She has published in peer reviewed journals on topics such as 'Training and Practicing Standards for Educational Psychologists in the Republic of Ireland' and on the impact of Special Educational Policy on a Developing Educational Psychology Service. Suzanne has presented at numerous conferences on a wide variety of topics. She has a keen interest in educational psychology practice, special education policy, systemic school interventions, social emotional and behavioural difficulties and metacognition.

Marie Ryan (Educational Psychologist – MIC) See session 40 for biography

10.45am – 11.45am CONCURRENT SESSION 2

28. 'Giraffes Can't Dance, but Sometimes When You're Different You Just Need a Different Song' – Promoting Confidence, Resilience and Self-awareness in Children with SEBD

Tracey White (Casa Caterina Special School)

Room 2

The main aim of Casa Caterina Special School is to reintroduce students to mainstream schools or ASD units attached. For this to be successful pupils must develop the skill of resilience and be confident in their own abilities. To help the pupils achieve success, the school focuses on four areas of development:

- **Staff: Staff attitudes and the language used in relation to pupils. Training and development.**
- **Oral Language Development:** Many pupils with SEBD have been diagnosed with SLD. By developing oral language, children will be able to achieve academic success, leading to improved behaviour.
- **Learning to play and learning through play:** Through play pupils learn to develop empathy, resilience and awareness of 'ourselves as part of a school and wider community'.
- **Rewards and consequences:** Children should learn rewards are relative to the effort made and are earned with exceptional behaviour and achievement. Consequences for actions must be brief and relate directly to the concerning behaviour where possible.
- **Progress is monitored in by:**
 - Collating serious incidents of challenging behaviour
 - Assessing and recording progress in oral language
 - Annual record of students returning to mainstream settings

This is Tracey Whyte's 4th year teaching students with SEBD. She is currently setting up a Senior Autistic Unit. Tracey developed an interest in SEN after volunteering with Special Olympics Ireland. She pursued studies in Teaching and Special Education Needs in Liverpool Hope University, as the course was unavailable in Ireland at this time. Having trained in the U.K., Tracey worked for 2 years in a mainstream setting and 1 year as a nursery teacher to gain experience. On returning to Ireland, Tracey worked in a local school and Gaelscoil while attaining S.c.g.

CHAIR: Conor Mellon

29. How Collegiality Between College Faculty High School Teachers Affects Student Success

Dr Edward Pieper

Room 3

The presentation addresses establishing collegiality amongst professionals to enhance wellbeing and resilience throughout the school community as a result of partnerships among college faculty and public school teachers with the results showing students exhibiting a positive attitude toward school. The results from a 4 year US Office of Special Education grant will be presented to illustrate collegiality and partnerships supporting students with special needs. The goal of the grant was to develop a curriculum for college undergraduate/graduate candidates that connected their college learning of evidence based practices with what they saw in their public classroom practicums and observations. Throughout the duration of the grant teachers in 6 partner schools met with College of St. Rose faculty the learn the University of Kansas Content Enhancement Routines and Strategies. Throughout their collaboration a grade 7-12 college program to prepare teachers to work with special needs students was developed. Both partner public school teachers and college faculty were consistent in their knowledge of evidenced based practices. Students demonstrated both a positive attitude towards the use of the routines as well as improved scores, with the outcome of resilience and self advocacy amongst all learners to enhance the progress of those with special educational needs". The goal of the CRL in developing strategies and routines is to help adolescents with literacy needs achieve academic success and independence. Data will be shared showing the consistency as college students progress through their program they receive the same knowledge from their college professors as they experience in their field work with the partner public school teachers. Examples of the content routines developed and their impact on student learning will be shared. Examples that students found most helpful and were able to employ themselves will be shown, graphic organizers, memory routines, and writing routines.

Dr Edward Pieper is Associate Professor at the College of St. Rose Albany New York (Special Education Department 35 years). Currently Principal investigator, US Office of Education grant to create partnership in 7-12 special education programs between public school and the college faculty for the increase in special education students performance. Consultant and Professional Developer at

University of Kansas in Content Routines and Learning Strategies. Consultant on math strategies, memory routines, and teaching materials for special education students in mathematics grades 1-8. Special education classroom teacher for 7 years.

CHAIR: Michael Travers

30. Stakeholder Voices in the School Community

Colin McElroy

Room 4

The current national and international trend of inclusive schooling has resulted in the proliferation of pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) attending mainstream schools. In 2005, UNESCO defined inclusion as a process concerned with the identification and removal of barriers to education. Despite many publications and passed legislation on inclusive education, inclusive practices have failed to become firmly embedded in Irish schools. The varying outcomes of inclusion can have serious implications for the well-being of pupils with ASD. It is widely recognised that schools espousing the principles of consultation, collegiality and collaboration amongst all stakeholders, cultivate more positive relationships that benefit all in the school community. This research illustrates that the promotion of resilience and wellbeing is based upon giving all stakeholders a voice, within a process that respects and values their input in the shared educational enterprise of teaching and learning. In Ireland, there has been a dearth of empirical evidence that examines stakeholders' experiences of inclusion. This research examines stakeholder 'voices' on the process of inclusion for pupils with ASD. The triangulated stakeholder experiences will contribute to the debate on what constitutes best practice in education and identify how schools successfully promote the well-being of pupils with ASD.

Colin McElroy is a qualified primary and secondary school teacher, currently working as a primary school teacher in Dublin. Colin is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Education in Trinity College Dublin (TCD) under the supervision of Dr. Michael Shevlin. This research is providing an in-depth analysis of the experiences of inclusion for pupils with ASD attending Irish mainstream primary schools. Colin is a member of the Inclusion in Education and Society Research Group in the School of Education, TCD. He is also a serving committee member of the Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (IATSE)

CHAIR: Aoife Traynor

31. Strategies to Support, Maintain and Increase Resilience for Teachers

Bríd Kennedy

Room 5

This presentation/workshop is for teachers and other people in our school communities who work with students with special needs, difficulties or disabilities. It aims to provide participants with researched evidence-based findings and strategies to support, maintain and increase resilience for teachers, with a particular focus on teachers who work with students/pupils with Special Educational Needs. It will consider resilience in our teaching lives at individual, work-groups, and whole school levels. The session will include consideration of protective factors, school climate variables along with those unique features that proactively maintain our commitment to teaching pupils/students with SEN. The session will include practice of a number of easy and enjoyable, individual and group strategies that enhance resilience and wellbeing.

Bríd Kennedy is currently on secondment from St Flannan's College, Ennis, Co Clare to the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), where she is an Adviser on their Health and Wellbeing team. Bríd has worked for several years as resource/learning support teacher and as SEN coordinator in St Flannan's College. She is also an organisational psychologist, registered with the Ps.S.I. Her interests include teacher wellbeing and motivation, and the social construction of learning difficulties.

CHAIR: Julie Shields

32. Lessons from Psychology: Promoting Positive Living & Well-Being in the Classroom and Beyond

Poster Symposium - Mary Immaculate College

Woodlock Hall

This poster symposium, hosted by Educational Psychologists and Mary Immaculate College lecturers Claire Griffin, Dr. Suzanne Parkinson and Marie Ryan, adopts a psychological lens in exploring a range of topical life issues which are found to impact upon positive living and well-being in the classroom and beyond. Psychology students of Mary Immaculate College will exhibit posters which attempt to translate psychological theory and research into classroom practice. Sample topics to be explored in these posters include mindfulness, stress management, motivation and social-media use. Conference attendees will be encouraged to explore the poster exhibition and to engage in discussion and debate with the authors and hosts. Each poster will address cutting-edge psychological theory and research in the field and will discuss the relevance of this theory in the Irish educational context. Each poster will identify key implications and lessons gleaned from theory and research for positive living and well-being in the classroom and beyond.

Claire Griffin (Educational Psychologist – MIC) See session 27 for biography

Dr. Suzanne Parkinson (Educational and Developmental Psychologist–MIC) See session 26 for biography)

Marie Ryan (Educational Psychologist – MIC) See session 40 for biography

12.00am – 1.00pm

CONCURRENT SESSION 3

33. Does Resilience Matter?

Patricia McCarthy

Room 2

Increasingly policy initiatives and legislative provision place a strong emphasis on the importance of inclusive education. It is recognized that the challenge for the education system is to adapt to the needs of disabled children and young people and, to accept their differences, while enabling them to realise their potential. Successful inclusion and participation are often forged in spite of, rather than because of, the opportunities presented by public policies. This paper draws on findings from qualitative research conducted with blind/vision impaired people. It will consider how resilience and wellbeing can impact positively on the inclusion and participation opportunities of young disabled people, while psycho-emotional disability can have negative repercussions. A Life History approach was utilized for data collection purposes. This approach provides evidence regarding how resilience and agency can impact on experience. As humans, our differences are what we all have in common. It is recognised that people with disabilities are often perceived as being different in a negative way. Where one's ability to participate is determined by societal perceptions of disability, it is often necessary that people with disabilities challenge disabling environments and disabling attitudes to ensure participation and inclusion within all realms of society.

Patricia McCarthy is a postdoctoral researcher in the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. She is actively involved in the research community within the School of Education, Trinity College Dublin. Her

research focus is in the area of inclusion and her area of expertise is on the experiences of vision impaired young people in the education system. Her ontological position as a disabled researcher has been instrumental in the development of her research. Patricia also supervises M.Ed. dissertations and gives guest lectures.

CHAIR: Paul O'Mahony

34. Expanding the School Community: Breaking Down Communication Barriers

Katherine Salvador Cisneros

Room 3

Research in Special Education remarks the importance of high quality in teaching to enhance the potential of learners with special educational needs, but the challenges of teachers in mainstream schools are augmented when dealing with mixed-abilities classes. Despite counting with the help of assistants and resource teachers, time is a limitation to keep up the course of the school programme. Parents -or carers- are reckoned to be of paramount influence in the development of children with special learning needs when they are actively involved in their children's educational process, but how can they be involved if they sometimes do not feel qualified to help their children at home? This empirical study explores the case of a parent who received intervention in: a) ways to improve communication with her child's mainstream school and b) resources to continue the learning experience at home. A questionnaire with open-ended questions, interviews, reports, diaries, and field notes were used to inform a description of good practices that were perceived as factors to influence the child's performance. This paper/presentation describes practical ways to build bridges between the schools and the learners' homes and how they influenced positively the wellbeing of the child and the school community.

Katherine Salvador Cisneros is a scholar of the government of Ecuador who came to Ireland to do her doctoral study in Trinity College Dublin. She is a passionate educator, teachers' trainer and an active researcher. She has presented her work on philosophy of education, reflective teaching practice, success in higher education, and teaching strategies in local and international conferences. Katherine is a volunteer helper for the Riding for the Disabled Association-Ireland (RDA) with the Mullingar group where she is gladly engaged in horse riding classes and interacts with children and members of the group.

CHAIR: Jerry Pierce

35. The Convergence of Mental Health and SEN in the Irish Post-Primary Classroom

Pauline Connolly and Kathryn Fitzgerald

Room 4

The issue of well-being among students with SEN can be a complex one, given that many mental health issues are masked by disabilities. Many students at both primary and post primary level have vulnerabilities which put them at increased risk of developing mental health issues.

This presentation will aim to further an awareness of the risk and protective factors associated with student well-being and highlight the importance of one supportive adult in a student's life. The position of the teacher in supporting students with identified or emerging mental health issues will be examined in the context of the supportive role of the school.

The importance of a positive school climate in the promotion of well-being for all, with a particular emphasis on those with SEN will be a key element of this paper. Reference will be made to relevant, appropriate documents and recent publications in the area of mental health promotion and support in Irish schools.

Pauline Connolly, B.Sc, HDE, M.Ed and Kathryn Fitzgerald, BA, HDE, PGSEN, M.Ed, are both seconded from the post primary sector as Advisors with the SESS. Pauline has a Science and Maths background and worked as a resource teacher in Coolmine Community School. She contributes to the PGSEN course in Church of Ireland College of Education as a visiting lecturer. Pauline's M.Ed is in Educational Leadership and Management. Kathryn's background is in English and Literacy and she was SEN coordinator in St.Aloysius' College, Co. Cork. She also contributes to the PGSEN course in UCC as visiting lecturer. Her Master's thesis focussed on the self-esteem of students with SEN.

CHAIR: Rosemary Fahey

36. Promoting Resilience, Attainment and Wellbeing in the School Culture, Ethos and Environment

Aoife Prendergast

Room 5

School culture, ethos and the environment affects wellbeing and attainment for children with special educational needs. Children's wellbeing is influenced by a range of factors and includes their subjective feelings as well as social, physical and psychological aspects of their lives (Bowling, 2011) Consequently, schools are key locations for shaping and informing general wellbeing and resilience. The health and wellbeing of children and young people contributes to their ability to benefit from good quality teaching and to achieve their full potential. How do we as teachers, special needs assistants ensure that children with special educational needs are resourceful and resilient in the school environment? Children must face loss, disappointment and circumstances they cannot change. This presentation explores how the school culture, ethos and environment can cultivate resilience so that children with special educational needs can not only endure these experiences but also have the ability to gain strength and confidence in their ability to cope with these. Practical recommendations and guidance will be provided to develop and implement this process for the children.

Aoife Prendergast is a Lecturer in the Department of Humanities at the Institute of Technology, Blanchardstown. Having completed both her undergraduate (BSc, Diploma sa Gaeilge) and postgraduate studies (MA in Health Promotion) at NUI Galway, Aoife has undertaken a diverse breadth of work with a variety of client groups and settings. Aoife has substantial lecturing and training experience in both the UK and Ireland in a variety of roles including National Training Projects Co-ordinator, and Community Health Co-ordinator for NHS Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, UK. She has successfully created and managed numerous innovative training and development projects in public health within diverse communities in both the UK and Ireland. In addition, Aoife was selected as a Graduate Scholar for the International Aging and Society Community in November 2014 and a Community Empowerment Champion for her work in the East of England in 2010. A skilled and successful lecturer, her exposure to various cultures and widely divergent groups ensures her comfort level in working with a variety of clients. She has presented extensively internationally in Canada, Italy UK and Ireland. Her abiding belief is that education is a personal and communal process that is the path to the social change needed by communities.

Her research interests include participatory learning methodologies and assessment techniques, practice education and active citizenship. She is currently undertaking her PhD in Education exploring practice education and supervision.

CHAIR: Colin McElroy

37. The use of Attention Autism to Promote Social Skills for Students with Autism / Asperger's

Suzanne McCanney

Room 37

The social skills programme intends to help professionals provide young people with a forum for developing skills necessary for effective social interaction. It aims to help them have a great time whilst doing so. **How is it different to other kinds of group learning?** The group work starts at a level where young people cannot get it wrong. They learn as part of a group. It aims to build skills gradually over a number of weeks, beginning with a scenario where the young person only has to concentrate on one activity. Activities are structured to first capture attention, and then maintain attention, then move into turn-taking, sharing problem solving and interactive activities. The approach is used in small group settings to encourage social learning but can also be used in one to one settings. This approach to teaching social skills has been developed by Middletown Centre for Autism and Gina Davis founder of Attention Autism which is messy, colourful, exciting, interesting and innovative and offers **an irresistible invitation to learn.**

The presentation will:

- Outline the development of the programme
- Describe the social needs of students with autism/ Asperger's
- Describe the programme content
- Provide examples of content

Suzanne McCanney is the Learning Support Manager in Middletown Centre for Autism; prior to this, she was Assistant Advisory Officer for Special Educational Needs in the Western Education and Library Board (WELB). Suzanne also worked as a Project Manager for the Cross-Border Parent Community and School Partnership Programme, part of the focus for this programme was developing transition resources for children with autism. She has worked with children with autism in her capacity as a Resource Teacher for Special Educational Needs in the Republic of Ireland. Suzanne is a qualified teacher and has a Masters Degree in Special Educational Needs Teaching.

CHAIR: Muriel Weekes

1.05pm – 2.05pm

CONCURRENT SESSION 4

38. Anxiety Management in Autism

Dr Fiona McCaffrey

Room 2

Students with autism are likely to experience high levels of anxiety at some stage during their school career with some researchers indicating that as many as 40% of adolescents with autism will present with clinically significant anxiety (van Steensel, F., Bogels, S., Perrinn, S. 2011). Personal accounts of people with autism demonstrate the negative impact that anxiety can have on their lives (Lawson, 2000). Anxiety can be a significant issue for children in the school and classroom environment and can impede their ability to engage with programmes of education and also with their social and emotional development with the school. This session will examine the efficacy of a range of interventions that promote positive coping and resilience for students with autism. Participants will be appraised of the most current approaches that promote positive mental health and coping.

Dr Fiona McCaffrey (CPsychol) is Head of Research and Development at Middletown Centre for Autism she is also a Chartered Psychologist with a MSc in Counselling and a Post Graduate Diploma in Autism. Fiona has worked on a group and individual level with young people with autism in order to understand their difficulties and help them develop positive coping strategies.

CHAIR: Bernie Smyth

39. 'Friends for Life': A School-based Positive Mental Health and Resilience Building Programme

Sharon Costello and Jean Henefer

Room 3

The 'FRIENDS for Life' programme (ages 8-18) is a school-based positive mental health and resilience building programme. The World Health Organisation cites 'FRIENDS for Life' as the only evidence-based programme effective at all levels of intervention for anxiety in children (WHO 2004). The programme, which can be run by teachers with individual students, small groups, class groups and as a whole school anxiety prevention programme, provides exercises and strategies to help children and young people cope with the stressors they encounter in their lives and build resilience. The National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS), in partnership with NEPS and the SPHE Support Service piloted FRIENDS in fourteen NBSS partner schools. The aims of the research pilot were twofold. Firstly, to determine whether the programme would be effective in reducing anxiety levels of a cohort of Irish post primary students. Additionally, the pilot explored whether FRIENDS could be implemented with fidelity within the Post-Primary educational context in Ireland. This paper will discuss the research (Henefer & Rodgers, 2013) that found that across the cohort, there were significant reductions in anxiety levels at the conclusion of the programme and that teachers who delivered the programme were able to do so within an Irish context, describing FRIENDS as an effective intervention for student well-being.

Sharon Costello (MSC in Educational Guidance and Counselling TCD , HDSGC Maynooth, BA., H.Dip.Ed., UCD) initially qualified as a secondary school teacher with a BA in Geography and Economics and taught for a number of years in Holy Faith Convent, Haddington Road, Dublin. In 1996 she qualified as a Guidance Counsellor and moved to Colaiste Choilm in Swords, Co. Dublin where she worked as Guidance Counsellor before being appointed to the post of Deputy Principal and then Acting Principal of the school. In 2006, Sharon was appointed to the role of Assistant National Coordinator (ANC) with the National Behaviour Support Service (NBSS). She retired from the position of ANC in 2014 but continues to work with the NBSS on interventions relating to NBSS Level 3 intensive, individualised support to students.

Jean Henefer (PGCE, MLIS, PhD) is the Research Development Officer for the National Behaviour Support Service. Her areas of research interest include services and supports for children and young people with Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties as well as the Information Behaviour of adolescents. Additionally, Dr Henefer is an occasional lecturer in the School of Information and Library Studies, University College Dublin.

CHAIR: Conor Mellon

40. Attitudes and Experiences of Students with Dyslexia Within a Small Private Third Level Institution

Saragh Ward

Room 4

This study will use a case study strategy involving mixed methods, consisting of a self-completion questionnaire followed by individual interviews. Dyslexia can be described as an umbrella syndrome and Wennas Brante (2013) proposes that each student must be tutored as an individual to cater for their individual strengths and weaknesses. The challenges facing students with dyslexia will be explored and the findings analysed to evaluate how this College helps to support the individual needs of learners with dyslexia formally and informally. The research occurs in a small third level College that educates Early Years educators. Riddick & English (2006) found that the majority of trainee teachers with dyslexia agreed that they had the empathy and understanding to find alternative ways of helping children who are struggling. Discussion will question if Student Early Years educators who themselves have dyslexia believe they also are better disposed to respond and motivate children with dyslexia more empathetically than their peers. Conversations will explore resilience and self-worth among third level learners with dyslexia.

Saragh Ward: RGN, RNID, BA: A professional in nursing and education, Saragh has worked for over 20 years in Educare in front line service delivery. She has fifteen years' experience managing teams in the provision of educational and health care interventions for children with Special Educational Needs from birth to six years. Primary research interests' focus on Down Syndrome and Dyslexia. An excellent communicator, Saragh is experienced in training practitioners to provide client focused, high quality, evidenced based services within the Educare field. She currently lectures on Montessori pedagogy and practice, Health, Safety and Nutrition, and Special Education at St. Nicholas Montessori College Ireland.

CHAIR: Julie Shields

41. The Social Psychology of Bullying: Lessons for Teachers in Terms of Prevention and Intervention

Marie Ryan

Room 5

Bullying is a social phenomenon. Eight-five percent of bullying takes places when there are peers present (Salmivalli, 2010). Bullying is never confined to the bully-victim relationship. Every person in the classroom environment plays a role in bullying. Children who are perceived to be different or of 'low-status' are most at-risk of victimisation. This presentation offers a comprehensive review and analysis of what is known about the social psychology of bullying. It will draw on insights from the social psychological theories of group conformity, norms, social hierarchies and pluralistic ignorance in order to advance our understanding of the theoretical and empirical foundations for understanding bullying and will review research-based prevention and intervention methods. The presentation will offer an alternative perspective on why bullying happens, how to prevent it and how to intervene. It will look at issues of pupil confidence and resilience among peer-groups. This presentation will seek to answer the following questions: *What does the bully want? Why don't peers intervene? What can teachers do?*

Marie Ryan is a lecturer in Educational Psychology and Developmental Psychology in Mary Immaculate College and is Course Director for the B.Ed in Education and Psychology Programme. Marie began her career in primary education before subsequently training to become a qualified Educational Psychologist. Marie is currently conducting her PhD in the University of Cambridge in the area of assessment. Marie lectures on behaviour, bullying, social psychology, motivation and assessment. Her current research interests include assessment, social psychology and inclusive education.

CHAIR: Aoife Traynor

42. Developing Self Worth among Learners with Special Educational Needs

Berna Daly

Room 37

Low self worth is not just an issue for pupils with special educational needs. However due to delay or lack of development in one or several developmental domains , children with additional needs are very susceptible to not feeling good about themselves .This presentation will focus first on the development of the participants' own understandings of their role in creating a sense of self worth in the child. We will then identify some key teacher behaviours that enhance the self worth of children. This will be followed by a video showing how Maria Aarts uses the Marte Meo Approach (www.martemeo.com) to build not just children's self esteem but also to stimulate their developmental processes. This is achieved through intensive interactivity between adult and child where the adult (a)LEADS through role modeling the naming ,sharing and containment of feelings, (b)FOLLOWS the verbal initiatives of the child. (c) ENGAGES fully in the child's world. Then we will look at how to develop a pupil friendly, holistic profile of the child through the identification and illustration of his/her strengths in pictures and photos. Using an example, we will then do a group exercise to create an IEP

and formulate focused targets that utilize these talents and come up with strategies that reflect the pupil's optimal learning styles. Home School Interactions will be examined in terms of how they contribute to supporting and developing the parent child relationship. Finally the presentation will present ideas on how to use collaborative and peer learning in the mainstream classroom to include the child with learning difficulties by giving him/her a clear role in the learning team.

Berna has over thirty years experience in early childhood, primary and special education. She spent nine years working in St Augustine's Special School in Blackrock where she completed an Action Research Project for her Masters on Multi-Disciplinary Collaboration in Special Education (DCU 2004). She is also a qualified Play Therapist and is currently training as a Marte MioTherapist . Using a broad spectrum of modalities such as NLP, Solution Focused Brief Therapy and Movement Work. Berna is now running a private practice in which she helps children and teenagers with additional needs find new pathways to learning.

CHAIR: Dr Arthur Smyth