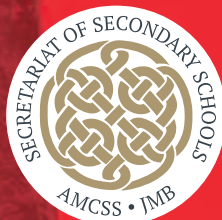


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Welcome from Region 5

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39TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

2026

A dhaoine uaisle,

Is mór an onóir dom, mar Chathaoirleach Réigiún 5, fáilte chroíúil a chur romhaibh chuig Comhdháil Bhliantúil AMCSS na bliana seo I gCill Áirne.

It is my great pleasure, as Chairperson of Region 5 of JMB/AMCSS, to welcome you to the 39th Annual Conference of the Association of Management of Catholic Secondary Schools (AMCSS). Our coming together is both timely and important as we navigate a particularly challenging landscape for education in Ireland.

Across our school communities, we are keenly aware of the pressures that continue to shape our work - evolving expectations and change within education policy, increasing administrative demands, ongoing questions around resources and staffing, and the growing pastoral needs of our students. At times, the terrain can feel uncertain and demanding. Yet within this landscape, the commitment, professionalism and generosity of spirit shown by school leaders, teachers, boards of management, support staff, parents and students remain a profound source of hope.

This year's theme, "Flourishing Schools: Education for Purpose and Meaning," invites us to reflect deeply on the true work of education. In many ways, a flourishing school is like a living tree, a metaphor that will permeate our liturgies over the coming days.

A flourishing tree is never the work of a single element. Its deep roots draw nourishment from the soil—much like the values, congregational traditions and shared mission that ground our schools. Ultimately, much of the strength of our schools comes from the people in this room—the leaders who nurture the roots, support the growth, and believe in the potential of every young person entrusted to our care. The trunk represents the strength and leadership that holds the community steady through changing seasons. Branches reach outward in many directions, symbolising the diverse gifts, talents and perspectives within our school communities. Leaves capture light and energy, much as our students bring vitality, curiosity and possibility to the life of the school. And the fruit of the tree reflects the ultimate purpose of our work: the growth, development and personal, spiritual and moral flourishing of every young person entrusted to our care in the arts, humanities, sciences, technology and sports.

For a tree to flourish, every part matters. It requires good soil, careful tending, resilience through storms and patience through slower seasons of growth. In the same way, flourishing in our schools is a shared endeavour. It calls us to support one another, to nurture the conditions where people can thrive, and to remain attentive to the care of every member of our community. Gathering in the beautiful surroundings of Killarney gives us the space, for a short few days at least, to draw breath together and to nurture the principals and chairpersons of our wonderful schools – a rare opportunity for the carers to care for themselves in the company of good friends and safe ears.

I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the management and staff of the Hotel Europe for their warm hospitality, their professionalism, and for providing such a wonderful setting for our conference. The beauty of this place—between mountains and lake—offers a perfect backdrop for reflection, conversation and renewal.

I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous work of Deirdre Matthews and the staff of JMB/AMCSS whose dedication ensures that this conference, and the many supports provided throughout the year, continue to strengthen our schools.

Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to the committee and all members of Region 5 for the tremendous work and commitment you have shown in preparing for the Annual Conference. Your dedication, collaboration and attention to detail are much appreciated. We are especially proud that Ann Marie Brosnan, a valued member of our own region, is serving as Deputy President of JMB/AMCSS. We are equally proud of Donal Cronin who is a Director of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools, and of Pat Hurley who serves with Ann Marie on Council. It is a great honour for Region 5 to have such strong representation at national level, and we greatly appreciate their continued support and work. A special word of thanks too to Patricia Higgins, Assistant General Secretary, for guiding and supporting us on our journey. At least it was an easy year for a Tipperary-based lady to make many journeys to Cork!

Bail ó Dhia oraibh agus ar an obair a dhéanann sibh! Bainigí taitneamh as an gcomhdáil, is go dté sibh slán ar ais chuig bhur scoileanna nuair a bheidh deireadh ráite anseo.

**Le gach dea-ghuí,
Marie Ring**



Welcome from General Secretary

**Flourishing
Schools:**
Education for Purpose
and Meaning

Welcome to the 39th Annual AMCSS/JMB Conference

This year's conference, *Flourishing Schools: Education for Purpose and Meaning*, invites us to reflect deeply on the nature of leadership in a time of sustained and often demanding change. Across our schools, leaders are navigating increasing complexity, educational, societal and personal, while remaining steadfast in their commitment to students, communities and the enduring vision and mission of Catholic education. In this context, the question of how we sustain both the work and the people who lead it has never been more important.

Our keynote speakers bring complementary and deeply relevant perspectives to this challenge. Dr Melodie Wyttenbach will explore the relationship between leadership, purpose and wellbeing, drawing on her research into the lived experience of school leaders in contemporary contexts. Her work highlights the impact of leader wellbeing on school culture and effectiveness, and points to the risks associated with a loss of meaning, connection and vocational identity in leadership. At the same time, it offers a hopeful and practical perspective on sustaining leaders through a renewed focus on purpose and professional support.

Grainne McLaughlin will share her experience of leading sustained cultural transformation in a highly challenging school context. Her work demonstrates how clarity of purpose, consistently high expectations, and a strong commitment to coaching and professional growth can combine to reshape school culture over time. Central to this approach is a deep belief in collective responsibility and in the capacity of all members of the school community to contribute to improved outcomes. Her leadership offers a compelling example of how excellence and equity can be realised together through intentional and values-driven practice.

A further highlight of the conference will be a presentation from the research team who studied the impact of Balint group participation on the professional and personal development of voluntary secondary school principals. Jointly led by Maynooth University and the JMB, the study uncovers the often hidden psycho-social demands placed on principals and reveals how membership of a JMB Balint group can provide deep levels of insight and support not found in any other professional setting.

We are delighted to welcome Hildegard Naughton to the conference. Her engagement with school leadership at this time of significant reform is both timely and important. It provides a valuable opportunity for constructive dialogue between the Department and school leaders on the implementation of Senior Cycle Redevelopment and the progressive realisation of an inclusive school system. In particular, it allows for engagement on the leadership capacity, structures and system supports required to ensure that these reforms are embedded in a meaningful, coherent and sustainable way across schools.

Together, these perspectives reflect the central challenge facing school leaders today, how to lead change in a way that is both deeply human and firmly anchored in professional purpose. Senior Cycle Redevelopment, alongside wider system reforms, calls for leadership that is not only organisational but transformational, leadership that builds capacity, fosters collaboration and sustains a shared sense of meaning across the school community.

Over the course of the conference, we will explore these themes through dialogue, reflection and shared experience. We will consider how leadership structures, professional learning and school culture can align to support meaningful and lasting improvement, and how we, as leaders, can continue to grow in our capacity to lead with integrity, courage and hope.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to our keynote speakers and workshop presenters for their generosity in sharing their expertise and experience. I also wish to thank the Region 5 conference organising committee and the staff of JMB for their commitment and dedication in delivering this important event. Finally, I extend my sincere thanks to all delegates for their participation and engagement.

As we gather in Killarney, I hope that this conference provides not only professional insight, but also renewal, an opportunity to reconnect with the purpose that underpins our work and the values that sustain our school communities.

**Deirdre Matthews,
General Secretary**



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P1



Plenary Session 1: Leading with Soul: Reclaiming Meaning, Purpose, and Wellbeing in the Poly-Crisis

In the face of a global "poly-crisis"—where the shock of sudden events meets the grinding stress of systemic change—the role of a Catholic school leader has never been more demanding. Yet, at the heart of this challenge lies a fundamental truth: leadership is not just a job; it is a vocation. To sustain the mission of Catholic education, we must look beyond mere "productivity" and prioritize the emotional health and spiritual formation of those at the helm. When leaders lose their connection to meaning and purpose, the result is more than just fatigue, it is a crisis of identity. This keynote addresses how the erosion of one's vocational sense leads to burnout and isolation and why reclaiming that sacred purpose is the ultimate antidote to cynicism. Drawing on a comprehensive, year-long study conducted by the Roche Centre for Catholic Education, we will explore the current state of leader wellbeing and its direct impact on school culture. To lead others toward the Light, we must ensure our own lanterns are fuelled. Join us for a data-informed exploration of how we can better support the men and women leading our schools, ensuring their vocation remains a source of life rather than a path to depletion.

Dr Melodie Wytenbach, Ph.D., is the Executive Director of the Roche Centre for Catholic Education and a faculty member for the Lynch School of Education and Human Development at Boston College. Before joining Boston College, Melodie served as an assistant professor and academic director of the Mary Ann Remick Leadership Program at the Alliance for Catholic Education, University of Notre Dame. She has served as president of Nativity Jesuit Academy in Milwaukee, WI, and director of mission effectiveness for the Nativity Miguel Network of Schools in Washington, DC. Melodie's current research and scholarship focus on urban Catholic education, system-level leadership, effective governance practices, character formation across networks of schools, and the intersection of immigration and education. Her published work includes *Cultivating Talent: Examining Pathways to Increase the Presence of Hispanic Teachers and Leaders in Catholic Schools* (2022), *Seven Steps to Strategic Planning for Catholic School Leaders* (2020), and *Responding to the Call for Educational Justice: Transformative Catholic-Led Initiatives in Urban Education* (2018). Melodie holds a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, as well as master's degrees in Educational Administration from Marquette University and Education from Mount Mary College. She resides in Boston with her husband, Chris, and three children, Ethan (12), Claire (11), and Liam (9).



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P2



Plenary Session 2: **Leading Cultural Transformation: *High Expectations, Coaching, Wellbeing and Collective Responsibility in Action***

In this keynote address Grainne will outline the key changes that have driven a profound cultural transformation at The Gateway Academy. Once ranked in the bottom 10% of schools nationally, the Academy is now recognised by Ofsted for excellence in behaviour, with purposeful classrooms, high levels of pupil engagement, and a calm, respectful learning environment. Pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, thrive both academically and in their wellbeing, underpinned by an ethos of high expectations and deep-rooted care. Grainne attributes this transformation to the relentless ambition of her team, a deliberate shift from traditional lesson observations to a coaching-based model of professional development, and a shared belief across the school community that everyone can be exceptional.

Grainne McLaughlin is the Headteacher of The Gateway Academy in Thurrock, England, leading a school that serves a community facing significant social and economic challenge. Many pupils arrive with attainment below national averages, yet under Grainne's leadership, Gateway has consistently refused to allow circumstance to dictate outcome.

Originally from Dundalk, County Louth, Grainne was educated at St Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk, and is a graduate of Maynooth University. She began her teaching career as a teacher of Mathematics in Essex and joined The Gateway Academy in 2015, taking on the role of headteacher at the age of 33. Since then, she has been recognised as a powerful agent of change. Her leadership is rooted in a clear belief: every child can excel, and schools must be intentionally designed to make excellence possible for all.

Grainne is widely respected for her people-centred leadership. She prioritises staff wellbeing, the recruitment and development of high-quality teachers, and clarity around professional standards and collective responsibility. This balance of high expectations and strong support has created an ambitious, values-driven ethos, delivering strong academic outcomes and building deep trust with families. The school is now oversubscribed and increasingly sought after within the local area.

Her work has been recognised nationally in England. A Pearson National Teaching Awards Silver Winner in the Headteacher of the Year in a Secondary School category, Grainne was praised for her "outstanding commitment to changing the lives of children." At its core, her work is about more than examination results – it is about changing life chances. She leads a school where ambition is normalised, excellence is expected, and young people and their families come to believe that a different future is possible.

P3

Plenary Session 3: Report of an Impact Study on the JMB Balint Group Initiative for Principals

For the past decade, the JMB has been developing and implementing an internationally unique project in which 'Balint Groups' offer a peer-mediated model of supervision for principals across the organisation. At present, thirteen JMB Balint Groups are in place and a number of their members and co-leaders supported a research project designed to uncover the impact of their participation. This plenary session will reveal the extraordinary effects and influence of being a Balint Group member on a principal's personal sustainability and their professional leadership practice. Dr Majella Dempsey, Associate Professor and Head of Department at Maynooth University School of Education and Dr Belinda Moller, Supervisor and Group Analytical Psychotherapist will be introduced by JMB Research & Development Officer, Dr Michael Redmond, and the team of six researchers will be present to respond to delegates' questions and observations.



Dr Majella Dempsey is Head of the Department of Education in Maynooth University. She lectures and researches in curriculum studies, school leadership, research methods, and assessment literacy. Majella is a member of the Secretariat of the National Convention on Education and has published widely. She is Link Convenor for the Curriculum Network of the European Educational Research Association (EERA), leads the ESAI Curriculum Studies Special Interest Group in Ireland, and is a member of the International Network for Curriculum Studies at the University of Stirling. She has chaired national curriculum development groups and contributed to Erasmus+ and FP7 research projects.



Dr Belinda Moller has a PhD in Strategy from Trinity College Dublin (2008). She is also a Group Analyst and a member of The Irish Group Analytic Society (IGAS). She is an accredited leader with The Balint Society, UK, a member of The International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organisations (ISPSO), and The Organisation for Promoting Understanding of Society (OPUS). She is currently Chair of The Irish Council for Psychotherapy.

Belinda has been consulting, teaching and researching in the psychodynamic and socio-analytic fields since 2001. From 2006 she began to integrate her Group Analytic training into all her work, becoming involved with Balint Groups in 2015. Since then, she has been a member of the team that has been developing Balint groups for secondary school principals across Ireland. She has co-led a Principals' Balint Group since 2016.

In private practice in Dublin city, Belinda has a varied workload that includes a group psychotherapy practice and supervision for psychotherapists, medics, senior social workers and a range of professionals from the public sector.



Dr Michael Redmond, JMB Research and Development Officer, a former principal of two Dublin secondary schools, was appointed to his education, research, and development role with the JMB in September 2009. His responsibilities include supporting the effective leadership and management of key education, research, training, and professional development functions of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools and having shared responsibility for achieving the strategic goals and operational objectives of the organisation as set out in the current strategic development plan.

Michael also works on behalf of the Secretariat in a wide variety of educational areas including special educational needs, curriculum development, intercultural education, inclusion, disadvantage initiatives and ICT in schools.

Michael has been Deputy Chairperson of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and, in 2023, was appointed to the Council of NCSE. His doctoral work centred on the emotional dynamics of change-management as mediated by voluntary secondary school principals, and which subsequently led to the development of the JMB Balint Group initiative.



Dr Paul King is an Assistant Professor in the School of Human Development, Institute of Education, DCU. He is a former Chair of the Management of Guidance Committee, National Centre for Guidance in Education (NCGE) and also chaired the NCCA Development Group leading to the publication in 2025 of the TY Programme Statement for second level schools.

He teaches and is Director of Placement Practice on the MSc/Grad.Dip. in Guidance Counselling programme in DCU which he established in 2007 and on the Postgraduate Masters in Education (PME). He has a teaching and research interest in the areas of guidance counselling, contemplative practice in education and guidance, and Restorative Justice in Education. He co-leads a Balint Group for Principals in the JMB Region 10.

Paul is also an active member of CREATE, a dynamic centre located in DCU Institute of Education, for collaborative research in teacher education across the continuum - initial teacher education, induction, and continuing professional development and is co-researcher on a current project exploring Wellbeing and Burnout within Initial Teacher Education across the UK and Ireland.

Plenary Sessions 2026



Marie Therese O'Gorman is an Assistant Professor at Dublin City University's Institute of Education, where she contributes to the MSc and Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling. With over twenty-five years of experience across early childhood, further education and training her current work focuses on the efficacy of small process groups and reflective practice for educators. Marie Therese is a professional member of Balint UK, IGC, Teaching Council and IGAS, and is currently completing her final year as a Group Psychoanalyst at the UCD School of Medicine.



Joe Lynch: With over four decades of experience spanning education, leadership, and clinical psychotherapy, Joe brings a rare depth of insight to every role he undertakes. His career bridges the worlds of teaching, additional needs coordination, educational support, and therapeutic practice, making him a well-rounded professional in both learning and wellbeing. Joe's educational journey began as a music and maths teacher in Dublin, where he developed a deep commitment to student learning and wellbeing. His career evolved to encompass a broad range of roles across Ireland and the United Kingdom, both at second level and third level, each one deepening his understanding of how education systems serve the needs of learners and develops the skills of teachers. Joe's academic credentials reflect a lifelong commitment to professional development. His qualifications span education, school leadership, and clinical psychotherapy – a combination that uniquely equips him to understand the human dimensions of learning environments and organisations. For the past eight years, Joe has been a part of the JMB Balint Group support programme for school principals. Joe's dual expertise in education and psychotherapy makes him exceptionally suited to this work. He understands the pressures facing school leaders not only as a former educator himself, but as a clinically trained group psychotherapist, bringing both professional empathy and therapeutic understanding to the work that he participates in.



Dr Aideen Cassidy was principal of a DEIS school in Finglas before becoming an Assistant Professor of Education and Director of School Placement and lecturer on the Bachelor of Religious Education and English / History / Music (BREHM) programme at DCU before she retired in 2025.

She is a current member the Centre for Literacy Research Policy and practice and of the Centre for Evaluation, Quality & Inspection (EQI) research centre in DCU. She is a researcher involved in the evaluations of several educational programmes including the Community Outreach programme in TUD, The DCU Access Programme for DEIS schools, DCU Access to the Workplace programme along with the Department of Education and Youth's pilot of Administrative Executive Pilot Programme 2025–2028 to support principals with their workload.

Aideen has been involved in DEIS education since the early 1980s commencing teaching in Finglas and Jobstown, before being appointed as national coordinator of the Junior Certificate School Programme, a programme to support the curriculum delivery to students at risk of early school leaving and worked in the Curriculum Development Unit for fifteen years. There she lead national CPD initiatives to support marginalised learners. Over this period the team designed the JCSP Literacy and Numeracy strategy and put in place the JCSP Library project in 30 disadvantaged schools. Dr Cassidy's research centres on adolescent learning and improving life chances for students facing disadvantage.

Aideen is chair of the Irish Lasallian MEL committee and is on the district Mel Council for Ireland, Great Britain and Malta. She is also chair of the Irish Lasallian safeguarding committee. She was a member of the national PISA committee from 2005 to 2012 and chaired the Department of Education and Skills National DEIS Committee from 2000 to 2011. She is also currently serving on the National steering committee for Localise. Until recently she was also one of the directors of the patron body Le Cheile.

Before joining the academic staff of DCU in 2022 she was principal of an all boys second level school of 580 students in Finglas for twelve years during which time she was part of the JMB Balint Group.



President's Address

Flourishing Schools:

Education for Purpose
and Meaning

John Barry

A graduate of the University of Galway, John was educated in St Joseph's Secondary School Tulla, Co. Clare. He became a member of staff in St Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School, Finglas, a DEIS school, in 1984. Appointed Principal in 2004, John served in this role until his retirement from the school in 2023.

He was elected President of the JMB/AMCSS in 2023 and is a director of Catholic Education Partnership (CEP) and the Association of Patrons and Trustees for Catholic Schools (APTCS). John is also Chairperson of the JMB's DEIS advisory group.

John serves as Chairperson of the Board of Managements of St. Seton's Secondary School in Ballyfermot and of St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School, Finglas. He has is currently a director of Le Chéile Schools Trust Síol Board and is chairperson of Síol's Finance Committee.



Minister's Address

AMCSS/JMB
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Minister Hildegarde Naughton

Minister for Education and Youth, Hildegarde Naughton was appointed to the role in November 2025. Prior to this, she served as Minister of State attending Cabinet at the Department of Children, Disability and Equality with special responsibility for Disability.

Minister Naughton previously served as Minister of State at the Department of the Taoiseach as Government Chief Whip; and the Department of Education with special responsibility for Special Education and Inclusion. She has also served as Minister of State in the Departments of Transport, Health and Justice.

Minister Naughton worked as a primary school teacher for almost a decade. She was elected to Galway City Council in 2009 and served as mayor of the city in 2011/2012. Having served in Seanad Éireann, the Minister was first elected to represent the constituency of Galway West in the 2020 general election.

She has also served on a number of Oireachtas committees including the Future of Healthcare, and Budgetary Scrutiny. She was appointed as the chair of the Communications, Climate Action and Environment committee in 2016.

P4



Plenary Session 4: Communication in the Modern Educational Landscape

In an era of social media and continuously evolving social dynamics, traditional communication within a school community is more complex and challenging than ever before. This session explores strategic communication frameworks designed for school leaders to bridge the gap between home and classroom, manage crises with clarity, and maintain a unified school community in an ever-changing, digital world.

Eoghan Tomás McDermott is a founder and the Managing Director of The Communications Clinic. He serves as a personal coach and advisor to several Chief Executives of major indigenous and multi-national corporations and advises clients ranging from Cabinet Ministers to many of Ireland's leading sportspeople.

Over the last two decades, Eoghan has advised schools and educational institutions on media crises, internal issues, and communications strategies. Since June 2020, he has been an Adjunct Teaching Fellow at Trinity College Dublin's Business School, where he develops communication programmes for senior executives and lectures on Trinity's MBA and MSc programmes.

He published his first book, *The Career Doctor*, in 2009 and is a regular contributor to Irish media, including Today FM's *The Last Word*, Virgin Media's *Ireland AM*, *Newstalk*, and *RTÉ*.



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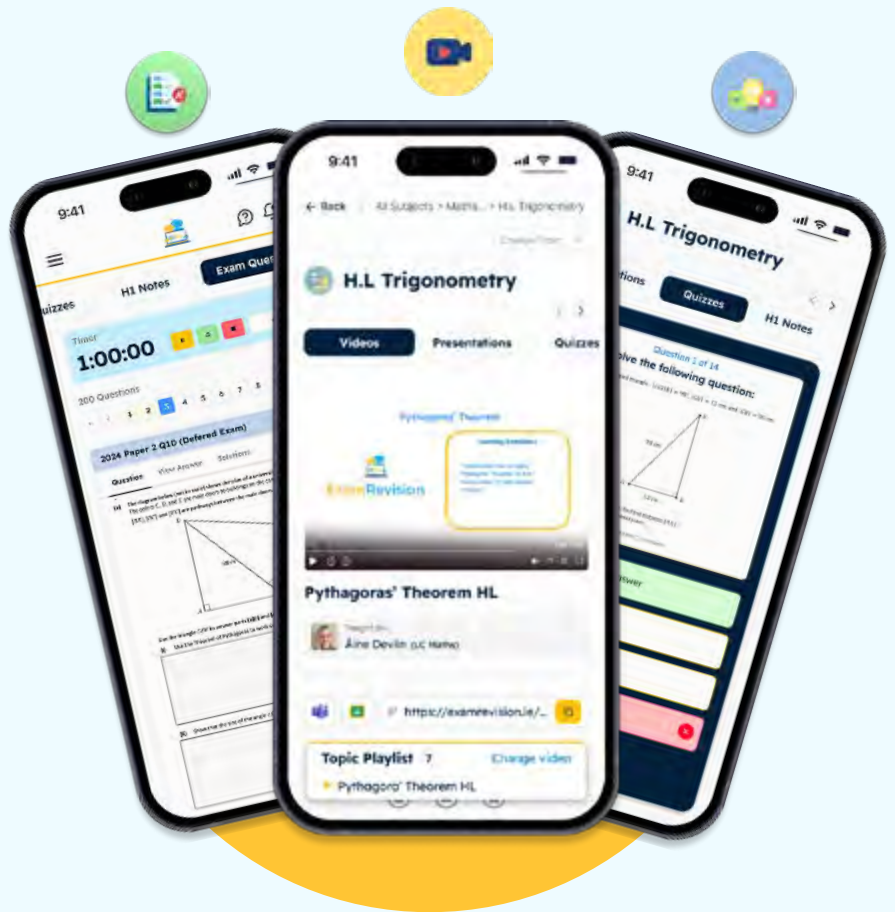
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W1



Workshop 1: Managing Parental Complaints

This workshop will explore practical strategies for responding to parental complaints in second level schools, with a strong focus on deescalation, calm and constructive communication, and the use of mediation informed approaches to resolve issues early. Participants will learn how early engagement can prevent conflicts from escalating and strengthen positive school–parent relationships.

The session will also provide a clear overview of each stage of the Complaints Procedure for Voluntary Secondary Schools, ensuring participants will feel confident and well equipped to navigate the process effectively.

Siobhán Corry is a dedicated and highly respected school leader with a longstanding commitment to supporting principals and boards of management in their vital work. She served as Principal of St Joseph’s College, Lucan from 1990 to 2012, leading the school community with care, integrity and a strong belief in collaborative leadership.

Following her principalship, Siobhán joined the JMB School Management Advisory Team, where for eleven years she worked closely with principals and chairpersons, offering practical guidance, reassurance and thoughtful advice across the full spectrum of school management challenges. She is particularly valued for her calm presence, balanced judgement and ability to support school leaders through complex and sensitive situations.

Siobhán has also contributed to educational governance at national level through her membership of the Governing Authority of NUI Maynooth and the NUI Senate. Now working as an independent education consultant, she continues to support boards of management by conducting investigations in areas such as Dignity in the Workplace and parental and staff complaints. She remains committed to strengthening school leadership and governance through her ongoing training of new boards on behalf of JMB.

A former director of the Spiritan Education Trust, she currently serves as Chair of the Board of Management of St Louis High School, Rathmines.



W2



Workshop 2: Middle Leadership in Schools: Culture, Challenges and Conversations

The workshop will focus on building senior leadership capacity to lead and develop middle leadership teams. Attention will be given to middle leadership and the benefits and challenges that have emerged since Circular 0003/2018, including exploration of recruitment and review practices associated with middle leadership while also attending to aspects of school culture and the promotion of leadership skills among post- and non-postholders. The workshop will be facilitated by Dr Finn Ó Murchú, former Head of School, Post-Primary, MIC Thurles and Frances Moss, Director of Drumcondra Education Centre.

Frances Moss holds a B.A., a Higher Diploma in Education, and an M.Ed., and is currently in the final year of a PhD by research with DCU. She is on secondment from her role as a senior inspector with the Department of Education and Youth as Director of the Drumcondra Education Support Centre. In this role she oversees the delivery of training, professional development, and support for school leaders, teachers, and the wider school community, guided by locally researched and identified needs. Frances previously worked as a post-primary History teacher before serving as an advisor with the Professional Development Service for Teachers. She then spent ten years as an inspector with the Department of Education and Youth, gaining extensive experience in both evaluation and advisory work across schools and diverse educational settings, while also supporting and advising other divisions within the Department. In addition, Frances has represented the Department of Education on several national and international committees focused on education.

Dr Finn Ó Murchú, B.A., H. Dip in Education, M.Ed. and PhD, retired as Head of School Post-Primary at Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Thurles, Ireland (2016-2024). Finn continues to work with schools and organisations at national and international level, including the DEY, NCSE, NCCA, Teaching Council, with the EU and with the Ministry of Education in Malawi. He has a particular interest in teacher professional learning, school leadership, inclusive and collaborative practices. Finn previously worked as a post-primary teacher of Gaelge, History and Special Needs Education (1987-2004). He also worked as a Senior Inspector with the Department of Education and Skills in the area of inclusion (2004-2016). Finn continues to work and learn with schools on an individual and collective basis. He is currently working with the NAPD on researching Middle Leadership in Post-Primary Schools.

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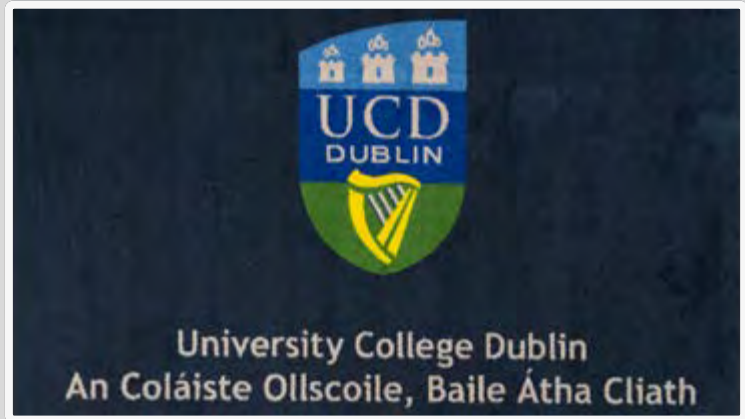
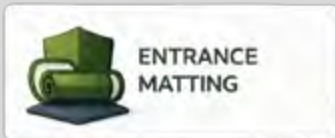
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W3



Workshop 3: Assessment in Senior Cycle

This workshop will focus on the Additional Assessment Components (AAC's) that are part of the assessment arrangements for all new and redeveloped senior cycle subjects, as was announced in September 2023. Specifically, each subject will now have an assessment component in addition to the final examination, with this being worth at least 40% of the total available marks. This AAC will be in a format that is not a traditional written examination, and will be set and assessed by the SEC.

The presenters will explore the principles that govern and guide the development of the new assessment arrangements that include considerations of the nature, weighting, timing, design, guidance, relevance and manageability of the AAC's. It will also explore how the development of student key competencies is central to the assessment approaches undertaken.



Barry Slattery began his career as a post-primary science teacher before joining NCCA as an Education Officer in 2013. He now serves as Deputy Chief Executive Officer, overseeing the review and redevelopment of the post-primary curriculum. In this capacity, he has led evaluations of the Framework for Junior Cycle, reviewed the senior cycle, and coordinated collaboration with the OECD to provide analysis supporting the review process. In recent years, he participated in peer-counselling teams organized by both the European Commission (EC) and the Ministries of Education in Lithuania and Poland, focusing on improving student assessment quality in Lithuania and modernizing Poland's curriculum to strengthen key competencies.

Ben Murray has twenty-five years teaching experience in both the primary and the post-primary sectors in Ireland; as a Music, a Classical Studies and an ICT teacher. Over the course of those twenty-five years, Ben has coordinated a thriving music department, enjoyed a few years as a Deputy Principal, acted as mentor and adviser for ITE students and has been involved in the design and deployment of teacher professional learning.

Ben joined the NCCA as an Education Officer in 2014 and is currently the Senior Cycle Programme Director, with responsibility and oversight for senior cycle redevelopment. Through his roles as Education Officer, Director and Programme Director, since joining the NCCA, Ben has led work on curriculum review and design, assessment, reporting and supporting the development of current and emerging student key competencies.

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W4



Workshop 4:

Chairing the Board of Management: balancing effective oversight with practical support to strengthen governance and improve educational outcomes

This workshop examines the statutory responsibilities and practical challenges facing chairpersons of boards of management in the voluntary secondary sector. This session is designed to equip chairpersons with practical insights and actionable strategies to promote effective governance and enhance educational outcomes for students in their schools. Participants will engage with a range of issues, from striking the right balance between oversight and support to effective leadership and management of the school. Key topics include the leadership role of the board, chairing meetings with confidence, identifying good practices, identifying pitfalls to avoid, and leveraging leadership opportunities for both the Board and the school. The workshop will explore strategies to support high quality learning and teaching, taking into account ongoing developments in curriculum and assessment. Additional areas of focus include recruitment processes for middle leaders (assistant principals) and senior leaders (principals/deputy principals). Participants will also consider agreed procedures, interactions with Department inspections, and the importance of self-reflection by the board.

Michael Denny is an experienced educational leader with extensive service in Irish post-primary education. He served as Principal of Loreto Secondary School, Bray from 1992 to 2004. Following this, he was appointed Education Officer with the Loreto Trust, a role he held for seven years from 2004.

He subsequently worked with the Le Chéile Schools Trust, where he also served as Manager of one of the Trust's schools for three years. He has been Chairperson of Le Chéile Secondary School for over a decade and currently serves as Chairperson of Loreto Secondary School, Bray. Michael served three separate terms on the Council of the Joint Managerial Body (JMB) and was an active member of its standing committee for six years.

Since 2012, he has been closely involved in the delivery of initial in-service training for boards of management. In that same year, he was a member of the core team that developed resources on behalf of the JMB for the appointment of principals and deputy principals. He continues to contribute as part of the team responsible for preparing and delivering annual Interview Competency Training for the appointment of principals, deputy principals, and assistant principals.



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W5



Workshop 5: Anchored in Hope: A New Vision for Catholic Schools in Ireland

This workshop provides an essential overview of the *New Vision for Catholic Schools in Ireland* which is approved by the Irish Bishops' Conference and published by the Catholic Education Partnership. The framework isn't just a document; it is a roadmap for identity and mission in an ever-changing educational landscape. While exploring the full "constellation" of this new vision, this workshop focuses on two core pillars that define the student experience: *Nurturing a Love of Learning and Building a Culture of Collaboration*. The workshop will explore what this means for how leaders lead and support others and will provide practical skills, strategies and tools that support the school leader in developing a shared vision with the whole school community.

Angela Mitchell joined the Roche Center for Catholic Education, Boston College in June 2025. Since then, she has led the design and facilitation of three formation programmes for leaders across Ireland - The School Leaders Fellowship, The School Culture Collaborative and The Executive Leaders Circle. Angela previously held the role of Director of ACE Ireland at The University of Notre Dame, successfully running a number of leadership programmes across the system. Angela is currently a member of the board of directors for the Catholic Education Partnership in Ireland and has recently co-authored the *New Vision for Catholic Schools in Ireland*. Angela holds a Bachelor of Education degree from Trinity College Dublin and a Master's in Educational Leadership from the University of Notre Dame. She has also studied Christian Leadership and Spirituality at postgraduate level in Ireland at the Milltown Institute and the Marino Institute of Education. She is a qualified coach, an experienced teacher and a school leader with over twenty-five years' experience working in Irish education. Her areas of expertise include instructional leadership, school culture and adult leadership formation.

W6



Workshop 6:

Boundary Management for Work Life Balance

In this workshop, Sheila recognises the realities of today's demanding work environment for school leaders. Competing demands can seem relentless and the boundaries between work and home are increasingly blurred. In this context, building resilience, managing stress and prioritising mental health are essential in sustaining performance and wellbeing.

Effective boundary setting is crucial to thriving rather than simply surviving. It builds capacity to deal with pressure and to manage the work environment. Sheila will share straightforward, practical tools and tips to help participants move from surviving to thriving, encouraging them to take responsibility and regain a sense of control. The workshop will focus on managing stress, avoiding overwhelm and challenging self-imposed pressure. Participants will be invited to make new choices and to take positive actions. Sheila's key message is 'You can do anything, just not everything'.

Sheila O'Malley is one of Ireland's leading public speakers on wellbeing whether personal, workplace or family. Sheila has worked for many years with Ireland's top companies delivering talks and workshops. Her clients include Apple, Google, Microsoft, PWC, Unilever, Coca Cola and Pfizer where she speaks on Boundary Management for Work Life Balance, Resilience and Mental Fitness to name a few of her topics.

Sheila combines a professional approach with a facilitative style that is warm and engaging. She presents in a clear, accessible manner, creating a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment that is consistently well received by participants. Sheila is a regular contributor to national press and media.



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C1



School Buildings Advisory Service

Noel Merrick, Michael Cregan, Tom Shannon, Michael O'Hara and Rory Hoban

The Building Advisory Team will be available to meet delegates on a one-to-one basis.

C2



Medmark (Friday only)

Dr Robert Ryan

Dr Robert Ryan will be available to meet delegates on Friday 1st May on a one-to-one basis.

C3



Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU)

Louise McNamara and the FSSU team

The FSSU team will be available to meet delegates on a one-to-one basis.



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Programme Timetable

Wednesday, 29th April 2026

4:30pm - 5.15pm	Pre-Conference Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cruinniú do cheannairí Gaelcholáistí – Jacqueline Ní Fhearghasa • TYRO – From Absences to Awareness: Transforming Attendance Through Better Parent Engagement • Compass – What's New In Compass? - Better tools better outcomes • Perduko – The Purposeful Principal: 5 Practical Ways to Reclaim Your Time Today <i>Low-effort, high-impact strategies for school leaders</i> • Exam Revision – Education for Purpose & Meaning with ExamRevision: The 21st Century Textbook • Simple Study – Stop Grading - More Teaching: The Mock Revolution Workshop
5:00pm - 6:30pm	Registration Tea/Coffee on arrival <i>sponsored by Compass</i>
6:30pm	Opening Prayer
6:45pm	Leading with Soul: Reclaiming Meaning, Purpose and Wellbeing in the Poly-Crisis <i>Dr Melodie Wyttenbach</i>
7:45pm	Buffet Dinner <i>sponsored by Allianz</i>

Thursday, 30th April 2026

9:00am	Opening Prayer
9:15am	Leading Cultural Transformation: High Expectations, Coaching, Wellbeing and Collective Responsibility in Action <i>Grainne McLaughlin</i>
10:15am	Workshop 1
11:15am	Tea/Coffee <i>sponsored by Perduko</i>
12 noon	Mass
1:00pm	Lunch <i>supported by Rinan Food Village</i>
2:15pm	Motions
2:45pm	Report of an Impact Study on the JMB Balint Group Initiative for Principals <i>Dr Majella Dempsey, Dr Belinda Moller, Dr. Michael Redmond, Dr Paul King, Marie Therese O'Gorman, Dr Aideen Cassidy & Joe Lynch</i>
3:30pm	President's Address Minister's Address
5:00pm	Council Reception in Hans Liebherr Suite
7:30pm	Reception <i>supported by ExamRevision</i> Wine at Gala Dinner <i>supported by Simple Study</i>
8:00pm	Gala Dinner

Friday, 1st May 2026

9:15am	Opening Prayer
9:30am	Executive Report <i>Deirdre Matthews</i> Launch of Statement of Strategy 2026 – 2030 <i>Colm Keher</i>
10:30am	Workshop 2
11:30am	Tea/Coffee <i>sponsored by Tyro</i>
11:45am	Communication in the Modern Educational Landscape <i>Eoghan Tomás McDermott</i>
12:30pm	Closing Prayer
12:45pm	Lunch

AMCSS/JMB 39th Annual Conference List of Workshops, Clinics & Plenary Sessions

29 April – 01 May, 2026 • The Europe Hotel & Resort, Killarney

W1	Managing Parental Complaints Siobhán Corry
W2	Middle Leadership in Schools: Culture, Challenges and Conversations Dr Finn Ó Murchú & Frances Moss
W3	Assessment in Senior Cycle Barry Slattery & Ben Murray
W4	Chairing the Board of Management: balancing effective oversight with practical support to strengthen governance and improve educational outcomes Michael Denny
W5	Anchored in Hope: A New Vision for Catholic Schools in Ireland Angela Mitchell
W6	Boundary Management for Work Life Balance Sheila O'Malley

Clinics

C1	School Buildings Advisory Service Noel Merrick, Michael Cregan, Tom Shannon, Michael O'Hara and Rory Hoban
C2 (Friday only)	Medmark Dr Robert Ryan
C3	Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU) Louise McNamara and the FSSU team

Plenary Sessions

P1	Leading with Soul: Reclaiming Meaning, Purpose and Well-being in the Poly-Crisis Dr Melodie Wytenbach
P2	Leading Cultural Transformation: <i>High Expectations, Coaching, Wellbeing and Collective Responsibility in Action</i> Grainne McLaughlin
P3	Report of an Impact Study on the JMB Balint Group Initiative for Principals Dr Majella Dempsey, Dr Belinda Moller, Dr. Michael Redmond, Dr Paul King, Marie Therese O'Gorman, Dr Aideen Cassidy & Joe Lynch
P4	Communication in the Modern Educational Landscape Eoghan Tomás McDermott



Thursday & Friday Workshops

W1	Managing Parental Complaints	Mangerton 1
W2	Middle Leadership in Schools: Culture, Challenges and Conversations	Mangerton 2
W3	Assessment in Senior Cycle	Mangerton 3
W4	Chairing the Board of Management: balancing effective oversight with practical support to strengthen governance and improve educational outcomes	Mangerton 4
W5	Anchored in Hope: A New Vision for Catholic Schools in Ireland	Innisfallen 1 & 2
W6	Boundary Management for Work Life Balance	Innisfallen 3
C1	School Buildings Advisory Service	Main Lounge
C2 (Friday only)	Medmark	Conference Board Room
C3	Financial Support Services Unit (FSSU)	Main Lounge
P1	Leading with Soul: Reclaiming Meaning, Purpose and Well-being in the Poly-Crisis	Ballroom
P2	Leading Cultural Transformation: <i>High Expectations, Coaching, Wellbeing and Collective Responsibility in Action</i>	Ballroom
P3	Report of an Impact Study on the JMB Balint Group Initiative for Principals	Ballroom
P4	Communication in the Modern Educational Landscape	Ballroom

Motion 1

Region 2

That this Conference calls upon the Department of Education and Youth to acknowledge the increased number of SNAs in our schools, and the consequent intensification of the workload of school principals and deputy principals arising from the administrative, supervisory and human-resources responsibilities associated with the management of SNAs.

Proposer: Simon Carey, St. David's Holy Faith Secondary School, Greystones, Co. Wicklow

Secunder: Mary Gallagher, Rockford Manor Secondary School, Blackrock, Co. Dublin

Motion 2

Region 2

That this Conference calls on the Department of Education and Youth to work in partnership with the JMB and other management bodies to assess, and where necessary mitigate, the cumulative impact of Departmental, cross-Government and agency-led initiatives on school leaders, in the interests of sustainable workload and effective school leadership.

Proposer: Marie-Thérèse Kilmartin, Coláiste Bríde Secondary School, Clondalkin, Dublin 22

Secunder: Mary White, Dominican College, Muckcross Park, Donnybrook, Dublin 4

Motion 3

Region 2

That the JMB demands that the Department of Education and Youth clearly justify the basis and purpose of the requirement for Voluntary Secondary Schools to provide a detailed breakdown of voluntary contributions received and to specify how the data will be used.

Proposer: Mary Brohan, St Benildus College, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin

Secunder: Colm Dooley, Our Lady's Grove, Goatstown Road, Dublin 14



Motion 4

Region 7

That this Conference calls upon the Joint Managerial Body (JMB) to negotiate with the Department of Education and Youth to secure a sustainable, ring-fenced allocation of additional hours, calculated on the basis of the school's Special Education Teacher (SET) allocation, to provide dedicated time for SEN leadership and coordination and to ensure the consistent and equitable provision of supports for students with special educational needs.

Proposer: Juliet Coman, St. Joseph's Secondary School, Tulla, Co. Clare

Secunder: Mona Hynes, Mary Immaculate Secondary School, Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare

Motion 5

Region 7

That this Conference calls upon the Department of Education and Youth (DEY), through the Joint Managerial Body (JMB), to increase the allocation of Deputy Principal posts, to eliminate fractional Deputy Principal posts, and to ensure fair, transparent and equitable access to senior leadership across the voluntary secondary sector. Conference further calls for the immediate implementation of a minimum ratio of one Deputy Principal per three hundred pupils, with enhanced provision for schools within the DEIS scheme.

Proposer: Paul Reidy, St Joseph's Secondary School, Spanish Point, Co. Clare

Secunder: Louis Mulqueen, Rice College, Ennis, Co. Clare

1. Adoption of Standing Orders and the appointment of tellers.

2. Proposing a Motion

- (a) The proposer of a motion shall be allowed not more than four minutes to speak to a motion and any other speakers shall be allowed three minutes.
- (b) After a motion has been proposed and seconded the Chairperson shall, as far as possible, call alternately for speakers against and for the motion or amendment. Three minutes per speaker will be allowed.
- (c) No member shall be allowed to speak more than once on the same proposition except for the proposer of the motion, who shall have the right to reply for not more than two minutes to the matters raised in the debate.
- (d) At any time during the discussion of a motion, after opportunity has been given for the expression of a pro and contra view, it shall be open to any member to propose from the floor any of the procedural motions:-
 - i) "that the motion be put"
 - ii) "that the question be referred to"

The acceptance of such a motion shall be at the discretion of the Chairperson. If accepted, the mover thereof only shall be entitled to speak thereon for not more than two minutes, after which the procedural motion shall be put to Conference.

3. Timekeeping

The Conference shall appoint a timekeeper whose duty shall be to indicate when each speaker has exhausted the time allotted by Standing Order No. 2 at which time the speaker must stop.

4. Emergency Motions

The Council/Standing Committee may bring emergency motions directly to the Conference prior to the Business Session in which the Motions will be taken.



5. Voting

Voting shall be by show of hands, the majority being determined by the Chairperson (with the assistance of tellers if deemed necessary)

6. Suspension of Standing Orders

A motion to suspend Standing Orders must be submitted in writing to the Chairperson by a Proposer and Seconder who are members of AMCSS and registered for the Annual Conference. It must specify the Standing Order (s) to be suspended, the period of suspension and the reasons for justifying such suspension.

A motion to suspend Standing Orders shall not be adopted save with:

- a) permission of the Chairperson, and
- b) the consent of not less than two-thirds of the delegates present and voting on the motion.

7. Decision of Chairperson

Subject to these Standing Orders, the decision of the Chairperson on questions of procedure shall be final.

Chairpersons for Session on Motions

- **Noel Merrick,**
Region 4
- **Raymond McHugh,**
JMB School Management Advisor

Officers of the Regions 2024 – 2026

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Name	Title	School Name	School Region
Brenda Kearns	Secretary	Salesian College, Celbridge, Co Kildare	1
Mary O'Neill	Chairperson	Manor House School, Raheny, Dublin 5	1
Mary Gallagher	Secretary	Rockford Manor Secondary School, Blackrock, Co. Dublin	2
Caroline Garrett	Chairperson	Oatlands College, Mount Merrion, Co. Dublin	2
Pat McEvoy	Secretary	Mount Sion C.B.S., Co Waterford	3
Niamh Broderick	Chairperson	St. Leo's College, Carlow, Co. Carlow	3
John Cotter	Secretary	Killina Presentation Secondary School, Tullamore, Co Offaly	4
Justin Brown	Chairperson	Coláiste Iosagáin, Portarlinton, Co Laois	4
Nicola Barrett	Secretary	Le Cheile Secondary School, Ballincollig, Co Cork	5
Marie Ring	Chairperson	St. Francis Capuchin College, Co Cork	5
John Mulvihill	Secretary	St. Michael's College, Listowel, Co Kerry	6
John O'Donovan	Chairperson	St. Joseph's Secondary School, Ballybunion, Co Kerry	6
Juliet Coman	Secretary	Scoil Iosaif, An Tulach, Co. an Chláir	7
Karen O'Donnell	Chairperson	St. Joseph's CBS, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary	7
Emma O'Malley	Secretary	Coláiste Mhuire, Ballygar, Co. Galway	8
Orla Malone	Chairperson	Presentation College, Headford, Co. Galway	8
Peadar Ó Tuathail	Secretary	St. Joseph's Secondary School, Castlebar, Co. Mayo	9
Fionnghuala King	Chairperson	St. Mary's Secondary School, Ballina, Co. Mayo	9
Eddie Kelly	Secretary	Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, Co Monaghan	10
Mary Caffrey	Chairperson	St. Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk, Co Louth	10



Deirdre Matthews General Secretary

Appointed General Secretary in 2023, Deirdre Matthews brings extensive experience as Principal of St. Vincent's Secondary School, Dundalk (2011–2023). She previously served as an Education Officer at the NCCA, where she played a key role in curriculum development and policy, including chairing the LCA Development Group. Her combined experience in school leadership and curriculum development informs her advocacy for stronger supports for school leaders and effective leadership in curriculum change.

Deirdre was President of the Councils of AMCSS/JMB from 2018 to 2023, holding key leadership roles, including Chairperson of the Board of Directors and Director of both the Catholic Education Partnership and the Association of Patrons and Trustees of Catholic Schools.

As General Secretary, she continues to champion collaboration, transparency, and continuous improvement in an evolving educational landscape.



John Barry President

John dedicated decades of his life to St. Michael's Holy Faith Secondary School - a DEIS school where he worked from 1984 – 2023. He was appointed Principal of St. Michael's in 2004 and served in this role until his retirement in 2023. John is Chairperson of the Board of Management of St. Seton's Secondary School, which opened in September 2023, and he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Le Chéile (Síol) Trust where he also contributes his expertise to the finance committee. He has been an executive member of AMCSS/JMB Region 1 for a number of years and a regional representative on AMCSS/JMB Councils since 2018. John is chairperson of the JMB's DEIS Advisory Group. He was elected Deputy President of JMB/AMCSS in August 2022 and subsequently assumed the presidency in April 2023. John serves as a director of APTCS and CEP where he continues to make significant contributions to the educational landscape.



Ann Marie Brosnan Deputy President

Ann Marie is a graduate of St. Catherine's College of Education for Home Economics. She commenced her teaching career in Presentation Sexton Street Limerick before moving to Sacred Heart Secondary School Clonakilty in 1990. She was appointed deputy principal in Sacred Heart Secondary School in 2007 and became principal in 2009. Ann Marie is an active member of AMCSS Region 5 since 2011, serving as secretary, chairperson and regional representative on the FE and SEN Advisory Groups. She also serves as the JMB representative on the NCCA Junior Cycle Home Economics Committee. Ann Marie joined the Councils of AMCSS/JMB in 2020.



Christine West **Assistant General Secretary:** **School Management Advisory**

Christine took up the position of Assistant General Secretary, School Management Advisory, in January 2022 having worked previously as Human Resources/ Industrial Relations and Employment Law Advisor from January 2019. Prior to joining JMB, Christine worked in Mason Hayes & Curran Solicitors where she specialised in employment and education law. Christine supports and advises school management on day-to-day school matters, including employment issues, admissions, student conduct, parental complaints, child protection and grievance and disciplinary procedures for teachers, SNAs and ancillary staff. Christine also serves on a number of subcommittees of the Teachers' Conciliation Council and the SNA IR Forum.



Colm Keher **JMB Assistant General Secretary:** **Research, Development, and Training**

Having served as a secondary school principal for twenty years, Colm was appointed Assistant General Secretary in 2025. His key responsibilities include the efficient and effective leadership and management of key education, research, training, and professional development functions of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools and having shared responsibility for achieving the strategic goals and operational objectives of the organisation as set out in the current strategic development plan.

Colm also works on behalf of the Secretariat in a wide variety of educational areas including special educational needs, curriculum development, intercultural education, inclusion, disadvantage initiatives, and ICT in schools. Colm is a member of the Senior Cycle Board of the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and also the Catholic Education Partnership's Croi committee.



Patricia Higgins **Assistant General Secretary:** **Corporate Services**

Patricia is a past pupil of Scoil Bhríde, Mercy Secondary School, Tuam and a graduate of NUI Maynooth. She began her teaching career in Presentation Secondary School, Terenure and subsequently worked as deputy principal of St. Enda's Community School, Limerick. She completed a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership and Management and served as principal of Our Lady's Secondary School, Templemore from 2004 - 2022. She joined the Council of JMB/AMCSS representing Region 7 in 2018 and served as Deputy President/Company Secretary until August 2022 when she was appointed to the position of Assistant General Secretary (Corporate Services).



Louise McNamara **Director – FSSU**

Louise McNamara was appointed Director, FSSU in September 2013. Prior to this Louise worked in the FSSU as an accountant for over 6 years.

Following completion of the Bachelor of Commerce degree in University College, Galway, Louise trained as a Chartered Accountant and qualified in September 2000. She has worked in Irish and US multinationals both here and in France. In 2009 she completed the Diploma in Forensic Accounting and in 2015 the Professional Certificate in Corporate Governance.

The FSSU was set up and fully funded by the Department of Education and Skills in 2004 and is based in the JMB Secretariat. The FSSU is primarily a support mechanism for community and comprehensive, primary and voluntary secondary school sectors to assist them in meeting their obligations in terms of accountability and financial responsibility for State and other funding. The role of the FSSU is to provide financial advice and support to schools in all areas of financial management, to promote best practice in all areas of school finance and to provide support and training to principals, boards of management and school accounts personnel.

The FSSU Team comprises a team of accountants, accounting technicians and administration staff available to support school management and school accounts personnel on all aspects of financial governance and compliance.



Left to right:

Caroline O'Reilly, Raymond Mc Hugh, Christine West, Paul Cahill, Bríd de Brún



Dr Michael Redmond **Research & Development Officer**

Michael was appointed as Research and Development Officer in September 2009. His key responsibilities include supporting the R& D Team in the efficient and effective leadership and management of key education, research, training, and professional development functions of the Secretariat of Secondary Schools and having shared responsibility for achieving the strategic goals and operational objectives of the organisation as set out in the current strategic development plan. Michael also works on behalf of the Secretariat in a wide variety of educational areas including special educational needs, curriculum development, intercultural education, inclusion, disadvantage initiatives, and ICT in schools.



Catherine Moynihan **Research & Development Officer**

Catherine began her teaching career in a Special School in Dublin and moved to Co. Kildare in 1985. She was appointed Deputy Principal in 1994 and served as Principal in Mercy Secondary School, Kilbeggan from 1999. In 2007, she was seconded as Assistant National Coordinator to the Leadership Development for Schools (LDS). Catherine was appointed Principal of Cross and Passion College, Kilcullen in 2012 and retired from that position in September 2019. She has served on the Council of AMCSS/JMB from 2012 and as Vice-President of the Council from 2015-2017. Catherine joined the staff of JMB / SSS as Research and Development Officer in 2021.



Jack Cleary Child Protection and Vetting Advisor

Jack is a former principal of St Declan's College, Cabra, Dublin and his responsibilities include:

- Providing training in child protection/safeguarding to newly appointed principals and deputy principals
- Providing training in DES's Child Protection Procedures 2017 to school staffs and to boards of management, on request
- Advising principals/DLPs and chairpersons on child protection/safeguarding
- Also involved in teacher disciplinary appeals panels on behalf of JMB and in Complaints Procedures as board of management authorised representative



Cyril Drury Data Protection Advisor

Cyril Drury is the Data Protection Advisor with the JMB. Cyril was previously Headmaster of Dundalk Grammar School (2005-2016) and since his retirement from that position he has completed professional qualifications in data protection with both the Irish Computer Society and the Law Society of Ireland. Prior to his appointment with JMB (in November 2018), Cyril worked as an independent consultant with a particular focus on data protection governance and legislation within the education and training sector.



Front Row left to right:

Helen O'Donnell, Patricia Higgins (*recording secretary*), Deirdre Matthews (*General Secretary*), John Barry (*President*), Ann Marie Brosnan (*Deputy President*), Niamh Mc Shane

Middle Row left to right:

Marie O'Neill, Sheila McManamly

Back Row left to right:

Paul Meany, Derek Lynch (*Treasurer*), Dónal Cronin, Fr. Michael Troy

Absent from photo

Bishop Paul Connell, Jill Storey, Fr. Tomás Surlis, John Kelly

John Barry	President	St. Setons Secondary School, Ballyfermot, Dublin
Ann Marie Brosnan	Deputy President	Sacred Heart Secondary School, Clonakilty, Co Cork
Derek Lynch	01	New Cross College, Finglas, Dublin 11
Padraic Kavanagh	01	St. Declan C.B.S., Cabra, Dublin 7
Mary Gallagher	02	Rockford Manor Secondary School, Blackrock, Co. Dublin
Mary White	02	Dominican College Muckross Park, Donnybrook, Dublin 4
Pat McEvoy	03	Mount Sion C.B.S., Waterford. Co. Waterford
Thomas Bourke	03	De La Salle College, Newtown, Co. Waterford
John Paul Cotter	04	Killina Presentation Secondary School, Tullamore, Co. Offaly
Marie O'Neill	04	Cross & Passion College, Kilcullen, Co. Kildare
Pat Hurley	05	St. Aloysius' College, Carraigtwohill, Co. Cork
John Mulvihill	06	St. Michael's College, Listowel, Co. Kerry
Sheilagh O'Mahony Kennedy	06	C.B.S., Tralee, Co. Kerry
Audrey O'Byrne	07	Rockwell College, Cashel, Co. Tipperary
John Heffernan	07	St. Anne's Secondary School, Tipperary Town, Co. Tipperary
John Kelly	08	St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, Co. Galway
Siobhan Quinn	08	Colaiste Muire Mathair, Galway, Co. Galway
Anne Gorby	09	Mercy College, Co. Sligo
Fionnghuala King	09	St. Mary's Secondary School, Ballina, Co. Mayo
Eddie Kelly	10	Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
Mary Caffrey	10	Our Lady's Secondary School, Castleblayney, Co. Monaghan
Niamh McShane	Irish School Heads' Association	Bandon Grammar School, Bandon, Co. Cork
Jill Storey	Irish School Heads' Association	Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick, Co. Limerick
Hugh Baker	Irish School Heads' Association	Drogheda Grammar School, Drogheda, Co. Louth
Michael Troy	AMRI	
Bishop Paul Connell	Outgoing President	
Fr Tomás Surlis	Irish Episcopal Conference	



Front Row:

Mary Caffrey, Mary White, John Barry (*President*), Deirdre Matthews (*General Secretary*), Ann Marie Brosnan

2nd Row:

Sheila O'Mahony Kennedy, Marie O'Neill, Niamh McShane, Mary Gallagher

3rd Row :

John Heffernan, Anne Gorby, Jill Storey, Patricia Higgins (*Assistant General Secretary*), Louise McNamara,
Pat McEvoy, John Mulvihill

4th Row:

Eddie Kelly, Audrey O'Byrne, Pat Hurley, Fionnghuala King

5th Row

Derek Lynch, John Cotter, Noel Merrick, Colm Keher (*Assistant General Secretary*),
Padraic Kavanagh, Fr Michael Troy

Absent from photo

Thomas Bourke, John Kelly, Siobhán Quinn, Hugh Baker,
Christine West (*Assistant General Secretary*), Bishop Paul Connell and Fr.Tomás Surlis

Transforming School Lunches

Food Village: A Partnership for Health & Success

As educators, we understand the pivotal role that nutrition plays in the academic success and overall well-being of our students. That's why we are thrilled to introduce you to Food Village, a revolutionary culinary partner dedicated to transforming the school dining experience.

At Food Village, we believe that nutritious food is the cornerstone of a thriving learning environment. Our team of culinary experts and nutritionists work tirelessly to create menus that not only tantalise the taste buds but also provide the essential nutrients and tasty options that students need to excel in the classroom and beyond.

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- **No Utility Bills**
- **No Admin for the School**
- **No Contract**
- **No Fuss**
- **No Fees**
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- **Same Day Instant Purchase**
- **Over 200 Meals, Snacks & Drinks**
- **Quick, Tasty, Affordable Meals**
- **Dedicated on site operative**
- **Chef made Meals**
- **No kitchen space required**
- **No Mobile Phone in school**
- **Collection Key Tag**
- **Ready for Funding Roll out**
- **Trusted partner to over 100 Schools**
- **Dedicated delivery fleet**
- **State of the art Technology**
- **Integrated A.I Learning**
- **Stand alone ordering station**



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foodvillagemeals



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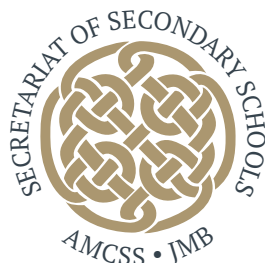
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teachers think 🗣️





JMB Website

- Member support services
- Members' area
- What's new
- Events
- Educational News and Current Issues
- Latest bulletins
- Financial guidelines
- Quick links, e.g. to DES circulars



JMB Training and Events

- Accounts personnel and secretaries training
- Allocations seminars
- Board of management training
- Budget workshops
- Child protection training
- Conferences: Annual Conference and Education
- Data Protection
- DEIS days
- Education Law Day
- Contracts of Employment Workshops
- Interview competencies training
- Newly appointed principals training – three phases
- Newly appointed deputy principals training – two phases
- Posts of Responsibility
- Vetting Seminars





School Procurement Unit (SPU)

Provide a central contact point for advice and guidance to all primary schools, voluntary secondary and community and comprehensive schools at second level on procurement related issues

Help schools to improve their procurement policies, practices and processes

Communicate clearly with school personnel to improve take-up of centrally negotiated frameworks and competitions for schools

Compliance checks on schools' procurement practices

Manage the collection of data required for certain competitions, e.g. electricity and gas

Attend meetings with the DEY and Office of Government Procurement (OGP) representatives to discuss school procurement requirements and agree approaches to various issues

Represent the schools sector on Category Councils and Category Sourcing Teams established by the OGP or established within the wider education and training sector

Trial and implement new purchasing methods to improve procurement practice across the schools sector

Monitor the use of contracts and vendor performance for the schools sector

Participate in specialised projects and assignments related to procurement, as required

Maintain an up-to-date contact list for all schools under the SPU remit

Deliver presentations to national and regional conferences for schools, training events, information days, etc. for school personnel

School Management Advisory Service

Supporting principals and boards of management

Responding to day-to-day school management queries

Providing advice and support to schools on matters relating to the management of the schools

Board of management support

Professional Development Seminars

Child Protection and Vetting

Responding on behalf of JMB at local level on matters relating to grievance and disciplinary procedures

Undertaking case work on behalf of JMB

Giving professional advice and support on policy and good practice

Attendance, where necessary, at grievance and disciplinary hearings

Advice on education legislation and national agreements

Liaise with teacher unions and representative organisations

Liaise with the Department of Education and Youth

Liaise with other relevant institutions/bodies

Professional Learning for newly appointed principals, deputy principals and boards of management

Professional Learning for national programmes, in co-operation with the DEY

Individual consultations

Human Resource Management/ Industrial Relations/Legal Services

Representation at Teachers Conciliation Council
Represent members at the Workplace Relations Commission
Represent members at the oral hearings of adjudications on CID appeals
Employment law updates
HR audits at individual school level
Advising on best practice with respect to negotiating changes in terms and conditions of employment, including supporting schools involved in transfers of undertakings
Assisting with development of policies at individual school level, e.g. Dignity in the Workplace/Social Media Policies
Social Media Policies/Whistleblowing Policy
Negotiating with Fórsa and SIPTU on a variety of HR issues
Provision of training to boards and newly appointed principals/deputy principals in the areas of employment law, best practices in human resource management and industrial relations procedures
Delivery of workshops on contracts of employment
Developing guidelines for school management in respect of best practice in relation to recruitment and selection
JMB Interview Competencies Model for Principalship/Deputy Principalship
Dignity at Work and the Role of the Contact Person
Individual consultations
Representational role
HR networking

Educational Development and Research

Conducting educational and management research
Presenting reports and position papers on key issues
Providing information and reports for Council and for the General Secretary
Representational role: e.g. Deputy Chairperson of NCCA Education Conference
Support for school management in a wide variety of educational areas, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior Cycle developments WSE-MLL School Self-Evaluation Numeracy and Literacy Special Education Needs Curriculum development ICT in schools Intercultural education Disadvantage/inclusion Education legislation Further, Second Chance and Lifelong Learning Career Guidance & Counselling Student Councils Emotional wellbeing

in consultation with:

Department of Education and Youth
 Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
 NCSE
 NEPS
 NCCA
 ACCS & ETBI
 ASTI & TUI
 IBEC
 JMB National Advisory Groups

Data Protection Advisory Service

The Role of the Data Protection Advisor (DPA)

The position is an advisory one supporting voluntary secondary schools with their data protection obligations. The Data Protection Advisor helps members to meet the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance standard and is available to:

- act as a point of contact on data protection related enquiries and issues for JMB schools.
- advise member schools on the appropriate handling of data access requests and personal data breaches
- assist with the development and ongoing review of privacy policies, procedures and processes.
- advise members on the technical and organisational measures needed to meet GDPR requirements.
- support the review of third party contractual and other relationships which relate to the processing of personal data on behalf of the school.
- help promote overall GDPR best practice and compliance (including advice on audits and reviews).

FSSU Financial Support Services Unit

The Financial Support Services Unit is responsible for supporting school management in good financial governance and compliance in the Primary, Community & Comprehensive and Voluntary Secondary Schools sections. This is carried out through the following:

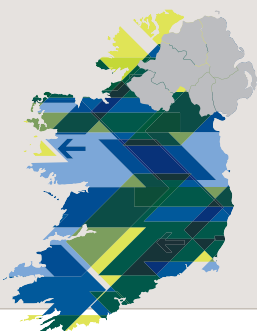
- Financial Management Advice
- Financial Internal Controls Reviews
- Financial Guidelines
- Statutory Compliance
- School Budgeting
- Sage 50 Support for VSS
- Training



Policy Setting/Implementation

Influencing policy at national/regional level in the areas of:

- Government policy
- Education policy at Ministerial level
- Education legislation
- Employment legislation
- Teaching Council
- Curriculum
- Assessment
- Catholic education
- Educational disadvantage
- Special Education Needs
- Intercultural education
- Social inclusion



JMB School Building Projects Unit

- Providing a support for principals and boards of management in meeting the *practical challenges* surrounding building projects.
- Advising schools on the possibilities for future development.
- Advising on the tendering for and the appointment of consultants once a DEY grant is approved.

Queries on and how to apply for:

- Emergency Works + Access for All
- Additional Accommodation
- Major Projects
- Summer Works

Collaboration with the Building Unit:

- Engaging with the Building Unit regarding the various schemes and individual schools
- Clarifying the respective role of trustees, boards of management and principals
- Regular updates to JMB on approvals under the various DEY schemes
- Survey of PE Halls
- Workshops at Annual Conference and to various other groups

Public Profile



Maintaining a profile in the media

Preparing pre-budget submissions

Issuing press statements

Raising profile in the Institute of Public Administration Yearbook

Engagement with Education Secretariats of Northern Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales

Involvement and representation at EU level through membership of the European Committee for Catholic Education (CEEC) and the Catholic International Education Office (OIEC)

Contacts with other agencies and institutes

ACCS	Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
AONTAS	National Adult Learning Organisation
AMRI	Association of Missionaries and Religious of Ireland
ASTI	Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland
ATCS	Association of Trusts of Catholic Schools
CEEC	European Committee for Catholic Education
CPSMA	Catholic Primary Schools Management Association
CSP	Catholic Schools Partnership
DEY	Department of Education and Youth
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland

IBEC	Irish Business and Employers Confederation
IEC	Irish Episcopal Conference
ISA	Irish School Heads' Association
ISSU	Irish Secondary Level Students Union
NAPD	The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum Assessment
NPCpp	National Parents Council post primary
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIEC	Catholic International Education Office

List of Exhibitors

STAND	COMPANY	
1	Unique Schools	Connect, Inspire, Grow : discover all the benefits of using Ireland's leading school app
2	Rinan Food Village	Offers staff and students over 160+ full meals at a very competitive price.
3	LANCOM Systems	Secure, fast, and GDPR-compliant Wi-Fi for the future-proof digital classroom.
4	Cubbie	Immersive multi-sensory space that reduces anxiety and encourages participation.
5	Computex	Educational IT experts, caters for both onsite and remote support for Primary and Post Primary schools
6	CourseCompass	AI-powered career guidance and CAO course matching for Irish secondary school students.
7	FASD Ireland	FASD Ireland exists to support children, young adults and families living with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and Foetal Alcohol Syndrome.
8	Wolf Academy	An educational programme designed to support student wellbeing, emotional intelligence, and personal development in schools.
9	VAUGHTEC	Dedicated to bringing technology to Irish classrooms. A focus on service and affordable solutions.
10	Advanced Medical Services	Leading supplier of sports and workplace healthcare services, cardiac and Concussion Management
11	Perduko Ltd	As a dedicated Google for Education Partner, Perduko empowers schools to fully realise their digital potential.
12	Compass Education	Can provide On-line and on-site support for those tasked with leading and implementing reform.
13	Ark	Policy development, Advice and Training for busy Schools
14	ILLE SERVICE IRL	Customized hygiene solutions
15	Purchase dot	Helping schools manage purchasing with clarity and control
16	Studyclix	Simplifies learning and assessment by topic and provides resources for each topic.
17	School Fitness Ireland	Is Ireland's NO 1 outsourced PE provider, trusted by over 300 principals nationwide.
18	Toomey AV	Supplying, Installing and maintaining Audio Visual equipment in Irish schools
19	Peak Learning / ExamCraft	Offers Exam papers, students journals, teacher diaries, study skills and leadership seminars.
20	Three	THREE MOBILE is making technology work for you and your teaching and learning needs.
21	Bytek managed print	Supplies Office Equipment for Managed Print Solutions using Print Technology and Remote Software.
22	Wriggle Learning	Provides 1:1 mobile learning for teaching and learning with engaging content for school students.
23	Footfall Ltd	Floor Design Specialists, supplying quality Modular Matting and Floor Tiles.

List of Exhibitors

STAND	COMPANY	
24	Prodigy Learning Ltd	Delivers IT Learning and Certification for Adobe, Autodesk, Hewlett Packard and Microsoft.
25	LockerFix	Has a unique and tailored secure locker storage system to suit all educational space needs
26	ExamRevision	Exam Revision helps students grasp difficult topics, crack exam techniques and improve grades.
27	MySolar	Install solar panels in Ireland with zero upfront cost.
28	SimpleStudy	Helping students learn smarter with revision notes, past papers, quizzes, and expert tools for major Irish academic exams.
29	Yondr	Yondr creates phone free space for educators in our hyperconnected world
30	PSRA	Retirement advice for the Educational Sector.
31	Athena Analytics	Using machine learning, we enable schools to understand the unique academic potential of every student
32	Select Tech Group	Select redefines Apple sales, service repairs and solutions for customers and educational institutions.
33	Phone Locker	Reduce Classroom Disruptions. Phone Locker Securely Stores Phones During School Hours.
33	Standard Utilities	We help schools stay connected and secure with reliable telecoms, fast broadband, and advanced CCTV systems .
34	Exam Craft 4 Schools	We design and create innovative and engaging resources that support students' learning and offer solutions to teachers' needs in the classroom.
35	Foundit	You simply scan the QR Code on the foundit label with the camera on your phone
36	VSware	Cloud based School Admin & Time Tabling platform with 450 Secondary Schools.
37	Phoneawaybox	A transparent box attached to the front of students' lockers to store students phones.
38	SKILLY	Our world class learning software is the ultimate platform for learning and developing soft skills.
39	Lettertec Irl	Provides Educational print solutions. Call to the stand to view and collect samples.
40	Saffron Travel	A Saffron school tour is a far more relaxing experience.
41	ICDL Ireland	ICDL covers all the skills needed to use technology and thrive in today's digital-first world.
42	Allianz	Allianz provides Insurance for schools
43	Tyro	Engage, excite, and connect your school with a student information system and timetabling platform.

Exhibitors Floor Plan





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Scalable to fit every school type, primary, post-primary, ETB, community/comprehensive or independent, without costly third-party add-ons.



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GDPR-compliant, 99.98% uptime, and secure cloud access for total peace of mind.



Seamless Integrations

Connect finance, HR, comms, and timetabling tools, everything works together, all in one place.



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Personalised migration plan, free training, and Ireland-based immediate support, so you're never left on your own.



Real-Time Dashboards

Instant analytics and custom reports for compliance, funding, and performance – no more spreadsheet chaos.



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Manage student records, attendance, and wellbeing information with ease. Cut errors and free your team from repetitive admin.



To learn how Compass can transform your school, scan the QR code.

Get your students set up on Studyclix

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Help every student reach their potential with a school licence for Ireland's most popular teaching and learning website.

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School Complete

Includes access to **mocks** for your teachers

Our best option

- everything in Plus
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Regular price > €300

€39.99 per student (multiple year groups only, e.g. 3rd, 5th and 6th)

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Full access to everything on Studyclix

- ✓ All past state and mock exam questions, by topic, for students and teachers
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- ✓ Boost tutorial videos across available subjects
- ✓ Student progress tracking and reporting
- ✓ Solution videos with multilingual subtitles
- ✓ Quizzes, flashcards and AI-powered Answer Guidance
- ✓ Staff and student training



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Studyclix is Ireland's **most popular** teaching and learning website. It now integrates with your school's MIS and LMS.

Contact the schools team



Luke Saunders



Anna O'Sullivan



Amanda McGeer



Jamie Bell



Ally Hegarty

schools@studyclix.ie
086 084 0283



Region 5 has nominated two remarkable charities. Down Syndrome Ireland provides all-through life supports for people with Down Syndrome and their families across Ireland. Their work enhances the lives of thousands of children and adults with Down Syndrome. Cork ARC Cancer Support House provides a place of comfort, care and understanding for those affected by cancer in the Munster region. Your contributions can help sustain and expand the invaluable work of these charities. Please consider donating to Down Syndrome Ireland and Cork ARC.

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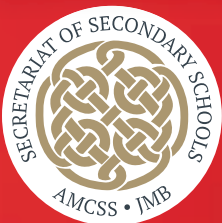
To avail of these offers come visit **our stand**
at the JMB conference or alternatively:
Freephone **1800 944038**, e-mail **schoolbusiness@three.ie**
or visit **[3.ie/offers](https://www.three.ie/offers)** to request a call back.

This offer is available to school business connections only subject to successful completion of the Three application process. A 24-month minimum term applies. All contracts must be on direct debit. **Unlimited calls and texts in the ROI & EU are subject to fair usage. Where your Price Plan has an unlimited element, it is subject to a fair usage allowance of 10,000 minutes and/or texts per month which can be used in the ROI and/or EU. Your inclusive allowance for voice minutes can be used for calls made in Ireland to Irish mobile or landline numbers and calls made in the EU to Irish or EU landline or mobile numbers. For fair usage policy see [three.ie/web/legal/business](https://www.three.ie/web/legal/business).

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“On the banks of my own lovely Lee”



JMB

JOINT MANAGERIAL BODY
For Voluntary Secondary Schools