

# Tackling Commercialism in our Schools

A chara, We, the undersigned, wish to express our support for the strong motion adopted by members at Congress this Easter to tackle commercialism in our schools. While not attacking the goodwill of many local businesses in giving to local schools for purely philanthropic reasons, we take exception to the growing number of profit-driven schemes which exploit parents, pupils and schools.

This motion deplored the continued under-funding of education which has starved schools of resources and public funding. This shortfall, combined with cutbacks such as the suspension of the PE equipment grant in 2002, means that many schools lack

adequate resources in PE, IT and others vital areas, forcing schools into the clutches of companies such as Tesco, SuperValu and McDonalds.

The motion instructed “the CEC to immediately devise and circulate a policy on commercialism in schools that will support teachers promoting a commercial free education in primary school classrooms”. We trust that, in keeping with the spirit of the motion, the INTO will shortly issue a policy of its own that will ‘serve education’ and act to reduce, rather than consolidate, the number of commercial schemes operating in our schools. We urge that, in formulating this policy, the INTO should consult with teachers and school communi-

ties rather than with business interests. Guidelines should act to filter out commercial schemes which require proof of purchase, promote products or place brand logos before a captive audience of children.

Hopefully, the INTO will continue to listen to and reflect the views of primary school teachers. These teachers did not enter the profession in order to promote commercial messages and brands in their classrooms.

Is muidne le meas,  
Niall Smyth (Dublin City North Branch), Joseph Fogarty (Dublin City North Branch), Brendan Horan (Cahir Branch, District XI), Allan Carberry (Dublin North East Branch), Carl O’Brien (Cork City North Branch), Anna O’Loughlin,

(Dublin City North Branch), Tom Moriarty (Liffey West, District XIV), Gearoid Hayes, (Wexford Branch), Colm O’Riain (Dublin City South Branch), Donncha Mc Ginley, (Craobh Chualainn Branch), Rory McDaid (Dublin City North Branch), Kieran Griffin (Craobh, Chualann Branch), Colm Byrne (Dublin North East Branch), Emma Gormley (Dublin City South), Padraig Ó Fainín (Dublin City North Branch), Treasa Nic Dhiarmada (Clonmel Branch), Deirdre Cronin (Dublin City South), Sinead Fahy (Tallaght Branch), Gregor Kerr (Dublin City North Branch), Fionnuala Ward (Dublin City South), Joe Duffy (Dublin North West Branch), Pauline O’Hanlon (Tallaght Branch), Alison O’Meara (Dublin West Branch)

## Keep in Touch this Summer

Muinteoiri.com Email

**D**on’t forget – a free email service is available from [www.into.ie](http://www.into.ie). If you haven’t signed up already go to the Republic of Ireland home page and click on the top button on the right hand menu entitled ‘Check Muinteoiri.com email’. This brings you to a page which allows new users to register and existing users to access their mail.

Users can choose between free and charged accounts, with

different features available for each.

If you can’t see the email facility when opening the INTO homepage you may need to use the scroll bar at the bottom of the page to scroll to the right and view the right hand menu.

This email facility is also available to our Northern Members via the ROI home page.

*Please note that INTO is not responsible for the functioning of muinteoiri.com accounts.*

## Su Doku

Su Doku solution to quiz on page 17.

8	1	9	6	4	3	5	2	7
5	7	6	1	2	8	3	9	4
4	3	2	7	5	9	6	8	1
9	6	1	2	3	4	8	7	5
2	8	3	5	6	7	1	4	9
7	5	4	8	9	1	2	6	3
6	4	5	9	1	2	7	3	8
3	2	8	4	7	5	9	1	6
1	9	7	3	8	6	4	5	2

## Religion Ground Claims Disputed

Your Call/The Tribunal’s Decision

**W**ith regard to the claim of discrimination concerning leave issues, the Equality Officer was not satisfied that the claimant had discharged the initial burden of proof required.

The comments of colleagues were found to constitute harassment as defined in the Acts. However, the respondent employer’s actions in relation to the claimant’s complaint were such as to enable it to rely on the “reasonable steps” defence provided for in law; therefore, the employer did not harass the claimant on the religion ground.

A thorough, timely investigation, with a clear outcome

communicated to the claimant, was an important factor.

Finally, the Equality Officer found that there was a prima facie case of victimisation, and “on balance” favoured the respondent’s version of events surrounding contact with the claimant at the relevant time.

(Case summary – see Equality page 12.)

Employment Equality case reports may be found at [www.equalitytribunal.ie](http://www.equalitytribunal.ie) at “Database of Decisions”.

This case is **Thornton v Cheeverstown House**, Decision E2006-002.