

SHARING EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE WORLDWIDE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2017

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OUR VISION

Education helps eradicate poverty, promote economic development and build sustainable communities.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

Global Schoolroom brings teachers from Ireland together with their global counterparts to build each partners capacity through the sharing of educational experience, expertise and good practice.

OUR FIVE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Education has the power to enlighten and expand each individual's scope for opportunity
- An education for every child is essential
- Sharing good educational practices enriches the collective educational experience and widens the cultural horizons of everyone involved
- Forging respectful links between educational partners works to their mutual benefit
- Working directly with teachers is the best way to build a strong framework for high standards of teacher education which, once in place, can be delivered by sustainable local networks

How WE WORK

Global Schoolroom is dedicated to sharing educational experience between communities worldwide to help eradicate poverty, promote economic development and build sustainable communities. Since 2006, Global Schoolroom has brought almost 150 teachers (serving and retired) from Ireland together with over 400 of their colleagues in India. Between 2008 and 2013, the Irish teachers have worked in India as volunteer tutors during their summer holidays and mid-term breaks on a University College Dublin (UCD) accredited programme for unqualified Indian teachers. In November 2013, this programme was officially recognised by Assam Don Bosco University (ADBU), Guwahati, India, as an established teacher education programme fulfilling the demands of teacher training under the Right to Education Act (RTE), India 2009. Throughout this time, the Irish teachers have contributed to their own personal and professional development through this engagement.

In practical terms this involves:

 The recruitment of experienced teachers each December to travel to India the following July to work with their colleagues as part of the four week faceto-face element of the programme

- This is typically a once off experience with preparatory training and preparation provided to them in Ireland over six weekends prior to July and an independent debriefing and evaluation session following their return
- These teachers are encouraged to maintain their links with Global Schoolroom thereafter through the alumni network and to involve their pupils in the experience through Development Education
- Some teachers volunteer to travel on the programme in subsequent years
- The teachers travelling from Ireland have the opportunity of using their Global Schooroom experience as part of accreditted Continuous Professional (CPD) once back in Ireland
- For the Indian teachers involved, the sessions each July form part of a 3 year Diploma in Teacher Education accredited by UCD. Those who graduate may be offered the possibility to participate as tutors on future Global Schoolroom programmes
- The sessions each July include 2 weeks of intensive seminars and workshops during which the teachers share their educational experiences with another
- The visiting teachers then join the local teachers in their schools working with them to apply in situ the techniques and methodologies developed together during the previous two weeks
- Further application and implementation is required throughout the year to help complete assignments for formal assessment in Global Schoolroom workbooks. A local tutor/mentor system and 'critical friend' groups have been set up locally to facilitate this process
- Mid year reviews and visits are undertaken in country by Global Schoolroom in March and October
- Assessment of written work is done each July by UCD accreditted assessors

IMPACT

What Indian teachers say:

"I have attended some seminars in the past, but these days have been the best ever" Stephen, Mizoram

"I got many ideas about teaching and learned different teaching methods. I also got tips about how to motivate students. This course has given me great confidence." Bijou John, Mizoram

"It gave me a chance to think about my school and my role there as a teacher" Jinsu Abraham, Mizoram

"During these days we have also learned not only about the importance of the teacher – student relationship but also about the relationships with parents and colleagues"

Victorius Lyngkhoi, Shillong

"After this course I feel more confident in tackling problems with children who find learning difficult"

Prettyman Marboh, Shillong

"Co-operation and understanding will be my first priority to help progress in my school"

Nilia Marboh, Shillong

"Before coming to this seminar I thought that all students learnt in the same way but I have now come to realise that all students are individual and learn in their own way"

Khamla Thapa, Shillong

A Perspective from an Indian Principal:

In 2010 Fr. Francis Sebastian reported at a meeting facilitated by Global Schoolroom and attended by local School Principals involved in Global Schoolroom programmes. He made a presentation in which he described the steps he had taken to address the many difficulties he faced in the area of staff, student and parental motivation when he first took up his post as Principal of Holy Cross School, Umkiang. This co-incided with an invitation from him for a Global Schoolroom programme to begin in his parish in 2007.

In 2002, Umkiang had 162 pupils and 10 teachers in it's school. All nine class 10 students failed their State exams. The next year one passed out of seven. In 2007, the first year of a Global Schoolroom programme, 35% passed. In subsequent years 100% passed. In 2009, 91% of the twenty-two students sitting the class 10 exams passed with three students getting a first division score. In 2010 two students got a distinction. Parents tended to send their children to school very late (e.g. at age 8). This contributed to a high drop out rate on entry to high school. In 2005 it was about 50%, by 2010 it had fallen to 30%, i.e. 70% went through to high school.

All these steps stemmed from Fr. Francis's conviction that student and teacher discipline go hand in hand. He believed that the involvement of Irish teachers through the Global Schoolroom programme and the dedication shown by them has impacted on the way in which the Indian teachers now take their profession seriously. This is over and above the new skills the local teachers have acquired through their training. The results speak for themselves:

- A dramatic improvement in the success rate in State exams
- A huge fall-off in the student drop out rate
- Significant improvements in punctuality and reduction in absenteeism
- 100% co-operation from a now fully professional teaching staff including major reduction in teacher absenteeism and improvements in teacher punctuality

- The teachers' English language skills have improved significantly helped in part by the presence of the Global Schoolroom team each year. The social interaction between students and teachers from Ireland has also helped improve the students English as it is a matter of prestige for the students in the village to be seen to speak English with teachers from Ireland
- The school will now offer class 11 and 12 tuition
- The teaching staff has grown from 10 to 26
- The student population has grown from 162 to 1080 an increase of almost 700% in only 8 years
- Now in 2014, the school has more than 2000 pupils with the majority progressing to class 12, giving them career opportunities they never had before. This story is replicated in many other Global Schoolroom hubs where a whole school improvement policy is engaged in with all stakeholders.

A summary of progress in just one of the Indian schools involved (Namdong) is as follows:



What Irish teachers say:

"People who have travelled and worked in remote and challenging communities will often tell you that 'you get so much more back than you give.' Soon after beginning work in Umkiang, a small jungle village in remote North East India I came to know and understand this deeply. The dedication and interest shown by the Indian teachers was inspiring. The insights and experiences within this intimate community were as special and unique as one could ever hope for. It was an incredible opportunity for me professionally and personally. So now I am one of those people who say, 'you get so much more back than you give', and it's true."

Joni Clarke, PDST Dublin

"For many of us this would be the highlight of our careers in education. Our task was to work with teachers and technical trainees in developing skills best suited to their working environment. Their tremendous dedication and belief in the value of education inspired us and reconfirmed our commitment to the education of young people, both Indian and Irish"

Clare McCarthy, Secondary School Teacher, Dunboyne

"This is the most important thing I have done in my 25 year teaching career." Maurice O'Mahony, Primary School Principal, Youghal

"The assignment I undertook with Global Schoolroom has been a truly positive, memorable and valuable experience for me both professionally and personally." Cathy Geraghty, TEFL Teacher, Dublin

"From the moment I found out I had been accepted to take part in the Global Schoolroom programme I was excited. The organisation was very professional and the fact that they have backing from UCD and Cornmarket was a huge bonus. As Nelson Mandela said 'Education is the most powerful weapon with which we can change the world'. With Global Schoolroom you really feel that is true." Emma White, Secondary School Teacher, Galway

"When I was chosen to go to India as part of Global Schoolroom in December last year, I wrongly though that I was going to be teaching the Indian teachers. When I got there, I realised that the programme was so much deeper than this and we were actually able to share ideas, strategies and concepts with the teachers there. Yes they may have learned from me but I also learned a lot from them. Global Schoolroom made me more appreciative as a teacher and also humbled me. It was a brilliant experience. I will never forget my time in India and both my teaching and my life have been enriched by this experience."

Helena McSorley, Primary School Teacher, Omagh

"The Global schoolroom initiative is making a real difference. It is impacting on how school communities work and how pupils learn in North East India. It is an enabling and empowering tool for participants, a tool by which Indian teachers can evaluate and improve teaching and learning. This has been and continues to be a life changing process for participating teachers from the East and the West. It respects the power of education to break cycles of injustice and inequalities, thus providing opportunities for all. I feel extremely privileged to have participated in Global Schoolroom. The preparation was thorough, the support was unfaltering, the commitment was inspiring, the learning is long-lasting and the memories are unforgettable."

Jenny Dooley Ryan, Primary School Teacher, Limerick

"Global Schoolroom has been the single most rewarding project I have undertaken in my teaching career. The most rewarding aspect of the programme is that it is a reciprocal learning process for both Irish and Indian teachers. Working with such an inspirational group of Irish teachers forged a deeper respect for my chosen profession and strengthened my love of teaching. I have returned to my job in

September feeling energised, full of new ideas and with a greater understand of the gift of education. The programme itself is hugely worthwhile to the Indian teachers. I have had the privilege of witnessing Indian teachers grow in confidence and up-skill their teaching methods. It never ceases to amaze me how much the Global Schoolroom students respect and value our contribution to their development."

Patrick Sullivan, Primary School Principal, Louth

"In July 2010 I had the privilege to work with Global Schoolroom in the most beautiful, exotic jungle of Umswai in North East India. To say that it was the experience of a lifetime and one of the finest of my teaching career to date is indeed an understatement. As a teacher I gained far more than I contributed both from my two colleagues with whom I delivered the programme and the teachers and staff of the Don Bosco School Umswai. The Global Schoolroom programme is bringing sustainable and positive change to the communities in North East India. I would highly recommend Irish teachers to participate in this worthwhile, progressive programme. It was a life changing, sometimes challenging yet highly fulfilling experience."

Sinead White, Primary School Teacher, Clare

"I feel I came back to Ireland enriched both professionally and personally." Siobhan Brennan, Primary School Teacher, Stillorgan

"Global Schoolroom has given this fifty-something-year-old new challenges, new energy, new ideas and a renewed love for my career."

Tony O'Rourke, Secondary School Teacher, Kildare and Director of Global Schoolroom

BEGINNINGS

The founders of Global Schoolroom, Gwen Brennan and Garret Campbell were invited by the Salesians of Don Bosco and Holy Cross Order of the Northeast of India to train a number of their teachers in 2006 and 2007. This initiative was supported by Robert Power, then Deputy Managing Director of Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd and his colleagues in that company. Gwen and Garret discovered a knowledge and skills deficit in teacher education and a lack of confidence in the teachers' own professionalism and skills. This was broadly in line with research carried out by the North Eastern Hills University of Shillong (NEHU) in 2004. Gwen, Garret and Robert believed that there was an appetite amongst Irish teachers to share their experience and expertise and so help build the necessary capacity amongst their Indian counterparts. Towards the end of 2007 they agreed a longer-term more focused response to teacher education needs with their Indian partners, and with the support of UCD and Cornmarket, they made a three year committment from 2008 to 2011 to five locations in the Northeast where they established their first five teacher training hubs. The three-year teacher education programme

targeted the knowledge and skills deficit as voiced by Indian teachers and identified by Global Schoolroom. The first 99 graduates received their parchments from Professor Bairbre Redmond, Deputy Registrar UCD, who travelled to India in July 2011. Global Schoolroom went on to establish an additional 9 hubs with a small number of Indian Global Schoolroom graduates volunteering as tutors alongside their Irish counterparts, thus contributing to the sustainability of the programme. The next graduation of close to 250 teachers will take place in 2014 and an additional 10 hubs will be established with a target to train a further 450 teachers.

STRATEGY

In India we have had numerous requests to expand our programme from both our educational partners and from teachers in regions adjoining those where we now operate. While we instinctively want to respond to these demands, we are determined nonetheless to retain our focus on our current programme and to ensure that we do not compromise our ability to deliver on our goals by spreading our resources too thinly – hence our strategy is one of step-by-step progression tempered by on-going consolidation.

Between 2014 and 2017, as part of the third phase of our work, we intend to do the following:

- Establish 10 Centres of Excellence in association with ADBU, Guwahati, India, across our existing 14 training hubs in Assam, Meghalaya and Tripura (beginning July 2014) and roll-out the accredited teacher education programme to an additional 450 unqualified Indian teachers this will be facilitated by both Irish and Indian teachers (Irish teachers and retired teachers and Indian graduates of the Global Schoolroom programme)
- Pilot an online monthly tutorial for a sample group of Indian teachers enrolled in the 2014-2017 programme (beginning in September 2014 hubs where internet access is reliable), utilising the expertise of Indian Global Schoolroom graduates with internet access and Irish teachers who are willing to volunteer their services but may not be in a position to travel to India
- Plan and facilitate Principal training in India and facilitate exchange visits between India and Ireland in association with the Joint Managerial Body (JMB), Ireland
- Establish communities of good educational practice between Indian and Irish teachers/Indian and Irish Principals, and work with the Teaching Council of Ireland towards Continuous Professional Development recognition of the Irish teachers' learning, thus completing the 'virtuous circle'
- Develop and facilitate a series of additional modules, in association with ADBU, for a minimum of 150 Global Schoolroom graduates, leading towards B.Ed and M.Ed. Qualifications, initially in the areas of Educational Leadership and Special Education Needs
- Add value to the professional role of Indian teachers through collaboration between Global Schoolroom, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation

(INTO), the Association of Secondary Teachers, Ireland (ASTI), the Teachers' Union of Ireland (TUI) and the Khasi Jaintia Deficit School Teachers' Association (KJDSTA)

Towards the end of 2017 we will begin investigating opportunities for extending the programme in other locations and with other prospective partners and local educational authorities in India. Any such steps will however only be taken if we are certain that we have all the resources to ensure that any such expansion will not be at the expense of our current programme.

EXPERTISE, QUALITY ASSURANCE AND OVERSIGHT

Global Schoolroom's specialist focus is teacher education. Since 2006, Global Schoolroom has harnessed the social conscience, critical mind-set, professional expertise and skills of Irish teachers. From its inception, the Global Schoolroom programmes have created a different paradigm in teacher education through its teacher-to-teacher sharing of educational experience, expertise and good practice. This real and meaningful sharing is key to any true engagement amongst colleagues. Its facilitation is non-threatening, collegial and respectful, leading to a new way of thinking about teacher education, and education and development more generally. The professional recognition and academic rigour associated with the involvement of UCD and ADBU, along with the appointment of the Advisory Panel in 2011, adds value and credibility to the programmes. Its methodologies are readily scalable, allowing them to be replicated amongst educational communities worldwide.

We believe that Global Schoolroom programmes add significant value to teacher education in Northeast India because it is a focused response to voiced needs, which harnesses the professionalism and goodwill of teachers from Ireland. These needs are being addressed, not from outside the profession but from within, in a spirit of peer sharing and equality. The focus applied, driven by the demands of academic and professional best practice ensures that energy is not dissipated or wasted on peripheral issues. The programme actively and consciously avoids a patronising, service-delivery approach as it creates and fosters a real and equal partnership between educators worldwide.

We also believe that participating as a tutor on Global Schoolroom programmes, adds significant value to teacher education in Ireland. To ensure that the hugely beneficial personal experience and skills gained by the Irish teacher volunteers (and the opportunity they had to be immersed in the culture of India) were transferred to their fellow teachers in their staff rooms and to their pupils in their classrooms and to ensure that the knowledge transfer from Ireland to the developing world was complete via the development education link, we collaborated with the Department of Education and Professional Studies in the University of Limerick in 2011. This took the form initially of a research programme (just completed), and will now inform the

direction and detail of future Irish teacher CPD strategies (including Development Education).

Technical Expertise at HQ

The appointment of Dr. Garret Campbell as Chief Executive Officer brings a wealth of experience and insight in teacher education. He has worked as a teacher, consultant and teacher educator at UCD and is on the Advisory Board of ADBU. A Board of Directors and Management Committee with strong educational and financial background support the CEO. A Board of Studies at UCD and ADBU oversee accreditation and awards and a 5 person Advisory Panel, appointed on a pro bono basis by Global Schoolroom, ensures independent regulation of academic standards.

The Advisory Panel is composed of the following members:

- Dr. Mary Bousted General Secretary Association of Teachers and Lecturers,
 UK
- Professor Stephen Mavely Vice Chancellor, Assam Don Bosco University, Guwahati, India
- Dr. Roland Tormey Pedagogical Advisor at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
- Professor Ciaran Sugrue Professor of Education and Head of School,
 University College Dublin, Ireland
- Professor Martha Stone Wiske Co-Founder WIDE WORLD, Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA

Technical Expertise in the field

This is achieved through

- The selection of experienced and suitably qualified Irish teachers as programme tutors.
- 30 mandatory hours of CPD for tutors is provided by Global Schoolroom and UCD.
- An independent debriefing and evaluation session following the tutors' return to Ireland.
- These tutors are encouraged to maintain their links with Global Schoolroom thereafter.
- Some tutors volunteer to travel on the programme in subsequent years and this is very important to maintain continuity and further develop the institutional knowledge of the organisation.

Quality Assurance and Oversight

We place the highest importance on ensuring that our programme is accredited both in Ireland and in India to reflect the professional qualification achieved by participants. With this in mind we have worked with ADBU over the last number of years and recently signed an MOU with them in order to secure recognition and accreditation in India.

Standards in the field are maintained as follows:

- Irish teachers (tutors) work with Indian teachers (students) on a part-time basis over three years.
- Formal contact with tutors include lectures, workshops, seminars and classroom observation.
- Students carry out self directed learning through assignments set by Global Schoolroom.
- Full attendance, participation and punctuality is expected from all students and all assignments must be submitted for assessment.
- A variety of academic, medical or personal circumstances may prevent students from completing the diploma for which they are registered within the prescribed time period. Leave of absence can be offerred in line with the University's Leave of Absence Policy.
- Assessment is made on a pass/fail basis by UCD accreditted assessors.
- Each module passed is awarded 5 credits towards a total award of 60 Credits.
- Those whose attendance or progress is judged to be unsatisfactory may, after warning, be asked to retire from the course.

To ensure that the quality of the education and training provided is second to none and embodies the very best practice worldwide, by February 2011, we had carried out a full in-house module review and put in place a module enhancement programme facilitated by the School of Education, UCD. We also had a Board of Studies appointed by UCD. Since 2011, modules are reviewed annually.

A full review of our tutor-training programme took place between 2011-12 along with a consultation with those we are working with on the ground and with the relevant bodies in India to ensure our programme is reviewed to reflect changing local requirements.

PARTNERSHIP

Global Schoolroom aims to ensure that its programmes are based on realistic goals and objectives with appropriate and useful volunteer roles, which fit with local needs. The organisation involves its local partners in all steps of programme design, planning and implementation. This takes place at least once a year at an annual meeting with all local partners but where possible contact is also maintained between meetings. Regular visits to host centres are also carried out on an annual basis and return visits to Ireland take place where possible. Designated local contacts respond to queries from volunteers. At the heart of this approach is a real and meaningful recognition of the equality and parity of esteem between colleagues – Indian and Irish – where learning, while it may be different in nature, takes place on both sides.

Accordingly, Global Schoolroom seeks active involvement with local partners in the following areas:

- Child and vulnerable adult protection issues to ensure common agreements, mutual learning and development of good practice
- Volunteer recruitment and selection
- Evaluation of volunteer programmes and process
- Annual project plans, which agree training supports required by local partners
- Allocation of human and financial resources
- Volunteer training and induction
- Consultation on promotional materials used by the organisation where local partners are given an opportunity to review and enhance this material
- Consultation on training content and materials
- Selection of local teachers for future training as tutors
- To agree any outstanding programme logistics and long-term strategic plans

In addition, leaders within the Indian teacher student group are identified throughout the programme and supported to take on mentoring and tutor roles, thus contributing more fully to capacity building and ultimate sustainability of the programme.

SUSTAINABILITY

The biggest step in ensuring sustainability of the programme and recognising it's contribution to systemic change in Indian teacher education came in November 2013, when an MOU was signed between Global Schoolroom and ADBU giving national recognition through ADBU to the Global Schoolroom UCD Diploma. This recognition ensures that

- Indian teachers with at least 50% marks at Higher Secondary and a Global Schoolroom Diploma will be awarded an equivalent of a 2 year Diploma in Elementary Education and will be qualified to teach classes 1 to 5
- Indian teachers with a Bachelor's Degree and a Global Schoolroom Diploma will be awarded an equivalent of a 2 year Post Graduate Diploma in Education and will be qualified to teach classes 6 to 10

The following was agreed:

"Global Schoolroom and Assam Don Bosco University agree to act in academic partnership to facilitate a teacher education programme throughout a series of hubs in Northeast India as mutually determined.

Global Schoolroom shall

 Provide all training, reviews and assessments as required under the programme guidelines

- Validate all prospective students and keep such records as are deemed necessary by the University
- Liaise with students to ensure, where possible, that they receive all necessary support to allow them to complete the programme
- Meet all academic requirements of Assam Don Bosco University to ensure the quality and recognition of the programme in India
- Meet with the Committee set up by Assam Don Bosco University to monitor the functioning of this MOU at least twice a year and to review the progress of the teacher education programme and other Global Schoolroom related matters

Assam Don Bosco University shall

- Set up a committee to monitor the conduct of the teacher education programme and to ensure that the quality of the programme content and conduct is maintained
- Lay down the regulations for the conduct of the teacher education programme and ensure that the conduct of the programme conforms to the regulations
- Recognise and certify the teacher education programme
- Award the Diploma and PG Diploma in Education to qualified candidates in accordance with regulations set down
- Liaise with Indian education authorities on behalf of Global Schoolroom if it is deemed necessary by both parties
- Meet with Global Schoolroom personnel at least twice a year, to provide all necessary support and guidance to Global Schoolroom on academic and related matters pertaining to the teacher education programme and related Education Faculty and University matters"

In addition, at a meeting in December the following was agreed:

"As of now ABDU do not have a B.Ed. degree programme in their schedule, hence they are awarding a diploma/post graduate diploma to those teachers who complete the three years Global Schoolroom programme. As and when ABDU commences their B.Ed. programme, they should award a B.Ed. degree to all the graduates who complete the three years Global Schoolroom programme. A B.Ed. degree is more beneficial to the teachers and acceptable to the Department of Education in India."

FUNDING

We are conscious of the need to ensure that we enjoy a secure pipeline of reliable funding in order to fund our programme as it currently stands, finance the building and on-going cost of a permanent management infrastructure and make possible the expansion of our programme in the future.

From 2006 to 2013 we expended resources equivalent to approximately €800,000, made up of direct funding from Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd. together

with management and other related assistance provided by Cornmarket, and from contributions made by those teachers who have travelled to India. This is not taking into account the educational expertise provided by these teachers on a pro bono basis.

Cornmarket delivered a further grant of €40,000 for 2014. This, along with presence of Michael O'Brien, Chairman of Cornmarket, on the board of Global Schoolroom, confirms Cornmarket's long-term commitment to the project. Irish Life plc., Cornmarket's parent company, selected Global Schoolroom as its international staff charity for 2010 and the resultant funds (€83,000) were available for 2011.

Teachers from Ireland who participate, raise €3,000 each as part of their contribution.

Looking forward, we are investigating other potential sources of funding from a variety of state bodies, corporate funds and international foundations as well as looking towards our alumni and the general public.

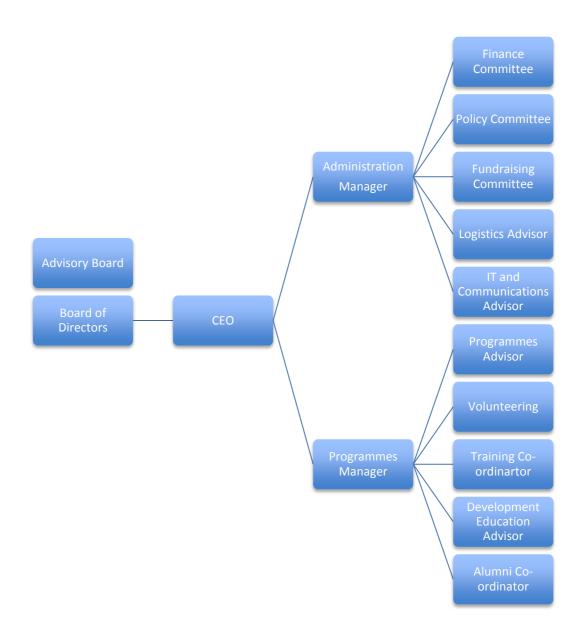


Figure 1. Global Schoolroom Strategic Advisors, Co-ordinators and Committees.

Table 1. Global Schoolroom Board of Directors

Robert Power (Chairman)

Director at KBC Bank plc., Chairman of IMAGE Publications, Managing Director at Emeritus Consulting Ltd.

Gwen Brennan

Co-founder of Global Schoolroom & Principal of Presentation Secondary School, Warrenmount.

Tony O'Rourke

Tony is currently working as a second level teacher of English and Geography. He holds a Higher Diploma in Education Management and a Masters in School Leadership. He served as Principal of Scoil Eoin CBS, Athy for eleven years prior to its amalgamation in 2007. Tony has been with Global Schoolroom since 2008, for three years as a tutor in India and last year as manager of the ten Global Schoolroom centres in India.

Michael O'Brien

Chairman, Cornmarket Group Financial Services Ltd.

Ivor O'Shea

Actuary and Head of Health Insurance, Irish Life.