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Editorial

It is with sadness that I write of the untimely passing of Seán Griffin in October 2012. Seán was the founding editor of REACH Journal in 1987 and remained as editor until 1997. He continued as a valuable member of the Editorial Board for a further ten years until June 2007. REACH Journal and its readers are indebted to Seán's vision in taking that first step to publish a journal with a focus on special education in the late 1980s. Twenty-six years later REACH Journal continues to publish articles of interest to teachers working with pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in primary, post-primary and special schools – a legacy of which Seán himself would be immensely proud.

Seán was innovative, creative and forward thinking in his thoughts and his approach to education. He spent many years as a teacher in Scoil Chiaráin before moving on to become principal in St. Paul's Special School in the '90s. Seán went on to become involved in teacher education and had links with Trinity College Dublin, Dublin City University, Froebel College and St. Nicholas Montessori College. One of Seán's strengths was his ability to encourage young student teachers to believe in themselves and he inspired them to engage their pupils in a meaningful and creative manner. Seán enjoyed dialogue and often asked 'probing questions' of his peers that led them to think deeper or take a step further to effect change.

Seán had many friends and colleagues in IATSE and in the area of special education who will miss him dearly. Those who knew Seán well have many memories of his enormous contribution to special education and to education generally. Some of Seán's personal writings are included in the tribute that follows (Ó Murchú and Shevlin).

Marron, Murphy and O'Keeffe discuss the views of preservice teachers as they attempt to enhance the physical education experience of pupils with SEN in primary schools. The importance of pupils having 'good' experiences during physical education classes is highlighted and preservice teachers require support to provide such experiences. Bergin and Logan note the need for teacher professional development to enable greater participation of pupils in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. They recommend programmes available to support teachers to include pupils in a more meaningful way in the IEP process. The concerns of parents in relation to transport and its impact on a child's day in school are issues addressed by Tiernan, Deacy and McDonagh. The provision of specialist transport supports parents in their efforts to enrol their child in a school of their choice. In these austere times it is hoped that access to appropriate school placement is not compromised by a reduction in school transport services to children with complex SENs.

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Editor



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