



EDITORIAL

The publication of this special issue of *REACH: Journal of Inclusive Education in Ireland* is a reflection of the positive change toward greater inclusion of all students in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht education. This change has come about gradually, as research and experience have demonstrated that students with additional educational needs can thrive in bilingual environments.

Inclusion is not just about access to education; it is about belonging. Being able to attend the same school as family, friends, and the local community is essential to a child's identity and well-being. Every child should have the opportunity to attend their local school or receive their education in the language of their choice, with the right supports in place to help them succeed.

This special issue showcases important research on inclusive education in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht settings. Two articles explore the role of technology; Nic Aindriú's article examines teachers' current practices, while Cummins et al.'s article evaluates a communication system for children on the autism spectrum. Two further articles focus on dyslexia; Barnes reviews assessment and support in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht contexts, while Craven and Bourke investigate the experiences of students with dyslexia in Irish-medium education.

Pedagogical approaches to inclusion are also explored. Ní Aogáin and Dunne discuss the implementation of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, while Ahern examines the use of Task-Based Language Learning to promote UDL principles in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht schools. De Brún investigates inclusive literacy practices among teachers, and Ní Ghallchóir et al. provide a review of teacher professional learning to support inclusion in Gaeltacht schools. Collectively, these studies highlight the ongoing scholarly efforts across Irish universities to create more inclusive classrooms and identify areas for further development.

None of this progress would be possible without the dedication of teachers, principals, and school staff who foster inclusive learning environments every day. Your belief in students and commitment to equity make a true difference. We are also deeply grateful to the researchers who have contributed to this special issue and to the participants who generously shared their time and experiences.

A special word of thanks is due to Miriam Colum and the *REACH: Journal of Inclusive Education* editorial team for recognizing the importance of this topic and supporting us throughout the process. We also extend our gratitude to the LUMIERE research group at Trinity College Dublin for the funding they provided for this issue, reflecting their commitment to inclusion.

Finally, we would like to thank Jacqueline Ní Fhearghusa and An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) for funding the Irish version of this special issue. COGG have worked tirelessly to ensure that all students have access to Irish-medium and Gaeltacht education, without them the path towards inclusion would be very bumpy.

While significant strides have been made, continued policy support and investment are essential to furthering inclusion in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht education. We look forward to the next steps in this journey and to seeing further research, innovation, and collaboration in this critical area.

Ní neart go cur le chéile.

Dr Sinéad Nic Aindriú and Dr Emily Barnes

Guest editors