

## Press Release: Froebel College, Dublin moving to NUI Maynooth

### NUI Maynooth first University to offer full range of Teacher Education



Prof. Tom Collins, Education Dept, NUIM, Ms. Marie McLoughlin, President , Froebel College, Dublin, & Prof. John Hughes, President, NUI Maynooth

NUI Maynooth and Froebel College of Education have announced plans to establish a “Froebel Department of Primary Early Childhood Education” at the University, with the teacher education college transferring to NUI Maynooth from September 2013. All of the student teachers from Froebel College will move to the University campus in 2013. NUI Maynooth will be the only Irish university offering the full spectrum of teacher education on campus – from primary and secondary, through to adult and community.

Froebel College of Education was established by the Dominican Sisters in 1943 and is currently based at Sion Hill, Blackrock. It is one of the five primary teacher education colleges in the State and is named after Friedrich Froebel, founder of the kindergarten movement who emphasised that children learn by play and activity. The College assigns an important role to creative arts activities in the education of primary school children. Since its establishment it has garnered a reputation for educating primary school teachers of the highest calibre.

From September 2013 NUI Maynooth will award Froebel College’s four-year Bachelor of Education degrees, Higher Diploma in Primary Education, Masters Degree in Special and Inclusive Education and Postgraduate Diploma in Arts in Special Education, as well as working to develop new courses.

Announcing the partnership, President of NUI Maynooth, Professor John Hughes said he was delighted that Froebel College of Education would be joining the University. “It is an ideal match. Froebel has developed an outstanding reputation for its unique, high quality approach to teacher education over the last 67 years. NUI Maynooth is also renowned for excellence in this area and Froebel will complement and enhance the full teacher education facility we offer”, he said.

President of Froebel College of Education, Marie McLoughlin said the move represented an exciting new departure for the college. “This will be the first occasion in Ireland in which Primary Teacher Education will be entirely carried out on a university campus. This initiative establishes a new model of primary teacher education, which combines the rich tradition of Froebel with the multi-disciplinary opportunities which can only be obtained on a university campus. Furthermore, students will gain a greatly enriched academic and social experience on a campus of 8,000 students, whilst still retaining their identity within a newly designated Froebel Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education”, she said.

The Dominican Sisters, Trustees of Froebel College of Education, have actively supported this initiative given the exceptional track record that NUI Maynooth has in the area of education. Furthermore they stated that they are particularly pleased that the Froebel name and ethos will continue to thrive and influence primary teaching, while still preserving its rich, unique heritage.

NUI Maynooth Vice President for External Affairs, Prof Tom Collins said the mix of university campus life with primary teacher education would be a unique offering for students. "This places early childhood and primary teaching right at the heart of the university education agenda and is an extremely significant announcement for both institutions, given our long, proud histories in the provision of teacher education", he said. NUI Maynooth will build a dedicated Froebel Centre at the University and it is envisaged that students will share many modules with other education and arts students. All Froebel College employees will have the opportunity to transfer to NUI Maynooth.