

# Clare Education Centre baking a RECIPE for success with European partners

CLARE Education Centre in Ennis recently hosted the RECIPE (Regional Educational Centres In Pedagogical Europe) meeting of partners in education from across the continent. The project, now in its third year, looks at how regional education centres (RECs) across Europe support schools and work to improve methodologies and standards. It places particular emphasis on those who are in danger of leaving school early.

Reducing early school leaving (ESL) to below 10% is a Europe 2020 headline target. This project addresses the problem of how RECs can best help schools to achieve this target. There are many types of REC and the RECIPE project represents all forms. Some were established as pedagogical centres to update practising teachers on continuing developments in educational theory and practice. Many are ministries or government departments with not just advisory but also managerial and regulatory responsibilities for regional networks of schools.

In general, RECs support the quality of their schools' provision and facilitate their implementation of educational policy and initiatives. Typically, they do this by disseminating information, organising conferences and training courses for continuing professional development (CPD), managing resource



■ Representatives from European schools who recently attended the RECIPE Project meeting in Ennis were Maria da Graça Carvalho (Portugal), Gert Larsen (Denmark), João Paulo Proença (Portugal), Britt-Mona Vang (Norway), Kostas Theodoridis (Greece), with Pat Hanrahan (Clare Education Centre).

centres beyond the capacity of individual schools and providing management, budgetary and other forms of generic training and support for school leaders.

The RECIPE Project, as a consortium of teachers, school leaders and REC directors, has shown that centres can play the key role of integrating schools more efficiently and effectively with EU and national ESL initiatives but that, to date, their

potential has been investigated and realised spasmodically and unevenly. In EU academic and professional literature, there is a dearth of projects and studies specifically addressed to this issue. All European countries must address the educational needs of disadvantaged children, particularly those from migrant and travelling communities.

On the visit to Clare, the school leaders and teachers looked at

the Accelerated Reader Project, Mata sa Rang and a LEGO/technology project in a variety of primary and post primary schools. The European teachers were impressed by the progress these projects had made and also in the way the Clare Education Centre worked with the schools. Some of these projects will feature in a future training course and conference to be organised by the RECIPE team.