

## County Meath VEC embraces Online Learning for Special Education Needs

As the country recovers from the shock of its toughest ever budget, the impact, across every level of Irish society, is being keenly felt. For one out of every 10 Irish students, however, the further cut-backs merely add to an already difficult challenge. This group is the 10% of students in the country with special educational needs.



*Group Discussion at ORSEN Partner Meeting,*

*Trim, January 2011*

### Partners discuss new and existing SEN curricula at Developmental Team Meeting

Delegates from each partner country attended the developmental team meeting which was kindly hosted by our Austrian Partner in Neusiedl am See, Austria on Friday 29th and Saturday 30th May 2011.

The objective of ORSEN is to develop the first open access SEN virtual classroom thus enabling any student with access to a computer to avail of personalised structured learning programmes that address their specific needs within a formal classroom setting. During the developmental meeting the partners discussed the most appropriate options for curricula development for the target group.

While no final decisions have been made regarding the adaption of two existing curricula, the team are working on two new, exciting options for future curricula development. These include the introduction of an “exercise builder” to target curricula development on the basis of six perception areas and “Online Learning” which offers barrier free options for learning and teaching mild SEN. Watch this space for updates...!!!!

Spearheaded by County Meath VEC, Online Resources for Special Education Needs or **ORSEN** is an exciting new project, funded under the European Lifelong Learning Programme which focusses on the provision of innovative learning practices for special needs students from rural areas. Over the next two years we will collaborate on designing and delivering online resources aimed at giving SEN students, their parents and their teachers a fighting chance in an increasingly challenging education system.

Delegates from Spain, Cyprus, Turkey and Austria met in Trim, Co. Meath for the kick off meeting in January 2011. “We’re very encouraged after this first meeting,” said Mr. Peter Kierans, CEO of Meath VEC. “We have a great level of expertise and diversity around the table and we have a common goal to focus on. The fact that County Meath VEC are leading out this project demonstrates our commitment to extending every opportunity to every member of our community in these challenging times.”

