



## EDITORIAL

This first issue of *REACH: Journal of Inclusive Education*, of 2026, brings together a diverse and timely collection of articles that deepen our understanding of inclusive and special education across varied contexts and has a mix of both empirical research and broader theoretical perspectives.

Keenan's article offers a critical and thought-provoking ideological lens on inclusive mathematics education for all students. By interrogating the assumptions underpinning current practices, Keenan challenges educators and researchers to reconsider what it means to be inclusive within subject-specific contexts. The paper raises important questions and key thinking points about knowledge, access, and participation, urging a shift away from deficit-oriented models towards more expansive and socially just approaches to mathematics education. This theoretical contribution provides a strong conceptual anchor for the issue.

In contrast, O'Connell's study brings us into the classroom, offering rich insights from children in a senior autism class. By foregrounding students' perspectives, this article exemplifies the principles of inclusive pedagogy in action. The findings demonstrate how listening to and learning from children can inform more responsive and meaningful teaching practices. This work reinforces the importance of student voice as a cornerstone of inclusive education and highlights the potential for participatory approaches to transform classroom experiences.

Dubey's exploration of teachers' perceptions in four major metro cities in India centres the voices of teachers working in inclusive classrooms, highlighting the gap between policy expectations and classroom realities. It outlines the challenges faced by teachers in addressing the diverse needs of learners, investigates their professional development needs in relation to inclusion and proposes the framework of a professional development programme. This reminds us that inclusion cannot be realised without investing in teacher capacity and wellbeing, particularly in contexts where structural constraints remain significant.

The study by Murray and Kazmierczak-Murray shifts the focus to the Republic of Ireland, examining the adoption and implementation of powered augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) in special schools and classes. Using a contextual framework for equitable AAC implementation, the authors illuminate the multifaceted factors that influence access to and use of communication technologies. Their findings underscore the importance of moving beyond provision alone, towards a more holistic understanding of equity that encompasses training, ongoing support, and the broader communicative environment. This article makes a valuable contribution to the growing discourse on assistive technology as a key enabler of inclusion.

Finally, Connolly's article on transitions from special schools addresses a critical yet often underexplored phase in the educational journey of students with special educational needs. Transitions represent moments of both opportunity and vulnerability, requiring careful planning, collaboration, and support. This paper sheds light on the experiences of students navigating these transitions, drawing attention to the systemic and relational factors that facilitate or hinder successful outcomes. It serves as a timely reminder of the need for continuity and coherence across educational settings as well as offering a set of practical work experience guidelines for schools.

Taken together, the articles in this issue offer a space for critical reflection on inclusion as an ongoing process and not a singular destination. We glean the importance of the interplay between policy and practice, the centrality of teacher and student voices, and the significance of context in shaping inclusive education. As the field continues to evolve, these contributions offer valuable insights and provoke important questions for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers alike.

Dr Miriam Colum,

Editor.