

accs NEWS

ISSUE 4 • 2021/2022

40th ANNUAL CONVENTION 2022



Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cúnamh na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha

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Welcome

“As educators and the leaders of schools today it is our turn to carry the torch and pass it on.”

Presidential Address, Convention 2022

It was wonderful to reconnect with colleagues and old friends and to welcome newly appointed colleagues and new friends in person to the ACCS 40th Convention at the Slieve Russell Hotel in Cavan in March this year. We were truly blessed that the sun appeared for the two days which helped add to the spirit and joy of the occasion. Our theme for convention, *Dhá Scor Bliain ag Fás, Education – The Soul of Society* was one of thanks and celebration, reflection, and resolve.

The occasion gave us a wonderful and fitting opportunity to celebrate forty years of the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools and we were privileged to have the company of some of those people who were instrumental in setting up ACCS and whose hard work laid the foundation for ACCS today. Prior to the Convention we had an informal gathering of former Presidents, Trustees and General Secretaries of the Association. A commemorative video created at this event was shown at Convention as part of the celebrations. In this newsletter, former Assistant General Secretary, Liam Ryder takes us through the history of ACCS on pages 10-11.

This was followed by a conversation with Marie Céline Clegg IBVM and Pat O'Connor, both of whom served on ACCS Executive and who represent the two great traditions, the religious and the VEC/ETB trustees still working jointly in the majority of our schools today. Pat served on Newpark Comprehensive Board of Management for many years while Marie Céline served on Boards in Gorey and in Portmarnock. Marie Céline also served as President of ACCS from 2004 until 2007. Following this discussion, messages from friends of ACCS were aired, including Emer Nowlan, CE of Educate Together, joint trustee in two of the most recently established community schools in the sector.

We are grateful to Minister Norma Foley who took the time to address Convention and to chat with delegates. We welcomed the Minister's recent announcement of additional DEIS funding. Seven Community and Comprehensive schools will receive additional resources, and ACCS strongly urges continued investment at all levels including in expanded senior leadership teams in all DEIS schools.

Since Convention, the Minister has issued her response to the NCCA Advisory Report on Senior Cycle Reform, and we look forward with great anticipation to working with the Department and our partners in education on its planned implementation. Full details of the Vision for Senior Cycle Reform can be viewed at <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/f53c6-senior-cycle-reform/> We acknowledge and thank Barry Slattery,

NCCA, Rachel O'Connor, NAPD and Emer Neville, ISSU for their contributions on the proposals for change and for their participation in the panel discussion on "Senior Cycle *Supporting Meaningful Education for All*" which took place on Thursday afternoon.

As ever, I wish to thank Debbie, Elaine, Eileen, Sarahlynn and Dave in ACCS Head Office for all their hard work and patience in the months leading up to and during the event itself. I wish to acknowledge the work of the Constitution & Convention Sub-Committee ably led by Paul Thornton and to thank you for your advice and planning of the event. I wish to thank Orlaith and the staff of the Slieve Russell Hotel for facilitating the Convention so smoothly and the exhibitors and sponsors for working so closely with us to ensure delegates got as professional an experience as possible.

Finally, I wish to thank all the delegates for taking time out of your busy calendars to join us at Convention in Cavan. There is no doubt that the event gave us ample opportunity to...

"rekindle the camaraderie that has existed for years in ACCS between those who have shared experiences, speak the same language, and know the mutual story. Together we purposely revived our good spirits and counted our blessings"

Presidential Address, Convention 2022

As we commence the new and final term, we look forward to the ACCS Annual Education Conference which will take place this year in Kinsale Community School on the 4th of May. The theme of this year's conference is *Managing a Sustainable Green and Digital Transition in Education in Ireland today*. Invitations have been issued to schools over the past few weeks and we are hoping that this will be an exciting and energising event with plenty of "take-aways" for delegates. Full details are available on our website accs.ie. Thank you to Kinsale Community School for agreeing to host this event and to Old Bawn Community School and Scoil Phobail Bhéara who will also share their experiences and learnings on the day.

The education sector, in reflection of modern-day society, is constantly faced with new challenges, some exciting and some of which

require us to deal with situations we thought we would never see. I would like to acknowledge the new challenges being faced by the schools, who have without question, welcomed Ukrainian students who have had to flee from their war-torn home country and to assure you of our guidance and support in facilitating these young people in their new lives.

Heading towards the end of another school year I think of the phrase "*We must be resilient*". It's a phrase which has been bandied about liberally over the last two years. Having resilience is only achievable if one has a solid support network and I hope that ACCS has proven and will continue to prove to be a solid support network to all of our members.

John Irwin
General Secretary ACCS



You are cordially invited to the



ACCS ANNUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Managing a Sustainable Green and Digital Transition in Irish Education

AT KINSALE COMMUNITY SCHOOL | MAY 4TH 2022

Registration to take place from 09.30 to 10.00

The Annual ACCS Education Conference is focusing on the twin transitions, green and digital, which represent the challenges and opportunities for school leadership at the moment and into the future. This conference is an opportunity for us to gather, learn, and share with one another while benefitting from the wisdom and expertise of highly regarded educationalists.

The ACCS Education Conference 2022 is a festival of learning and a great opportunity to share best practice in a school setting.

THE DIGITAL TRANSITION

The digital module will take the delegate through the digital journey which we have all travelled during the period of emergency remote teaching and learning. We will explore how we can build on the digital competence which was achieved by both students and teachers. Michael Hallissy from H2Learning will guide us through the opportunities that schools now face and how we can maintain the momentum.

Deirdre Hodson from the Education Department of the European Commission was centrally involved in the design of the Selfie for Teachers and Selfie for Schools tools. Deirdre will take the delegate through the benefits that accrue from the self evaluative functions which these tools provide to staff and schools. The Selfies provide feedback to direct the digital strategies for schools and this session will provide the delegate with guidance in respect of school improvement in respect of your digital strategy.

Both Kinsale Community School and Old Bawn Community School are Microsoft Showcase Schools and they will be showcasing their practices with their students.

THE GREEN TRANSITION

Students across our schools are looking for decision makers and policy makers to focus their attention on issues such as climate change, sustainability, bio diversity, and good global citizenship. Schools are grappling with where to start to deal with these complex issues which are giving rise to conditions such as eco-anxiety and eco-depression amongst our students.

The green module will be addressed by acclaimed film maker and educationalist, Lord David Puttnam and he will provide the delegates with his thoughts and guidance on these issues.

Valerie Lewis will illustrate her work on the Take One initiative which has been pioneered through the ETBI. This initiative traces the UN Sustainable Development Goals to the Junior Cycle Statements of Learning.

Klaus Harvey is the Sustainability Chaplain at Kinsale Community School and Klaus will address the delegates on his function within the school community and he will illustrate the transformative impact that his role has generated. Both Beara Community School and Kinsale Community School will be sharing their experiences and their 'green' initiatives with the delegates. Student voice will feature again in this module.

THE TWIN TRANSITIONS

The afternoon session will take the form of a panel discussion where the delegate will have the interactive opportunity to share with, and learn from the panellists how to take the next steps on our green and digital journeys. The discussion will also comprehend how schools can use the digital transition to support the green transition. This session will allow the delegates to crystallise the learning from the day and reflect on how these transitions can be managed in their own school settings.

Members of this panel discussion will include Lord David Puttnam, Deirdre Hodson, Assistant Secretary at the Dept of Education Tomás O'Rourke and Dr Kevin Marshall from Microsoft.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Principals, Deputy Principals, Members of Boards of Management and other members of the school community who are well placed and interested in supporting the sustainability and digitalisation in schools.

DELEGATE REGISTRATION

Schools are requested to register delegates on the ACCS Online School Portal. To access the school portal log on to <https://www.accscloud.net>. You will require your Username (last 4 digits of the main school Phone Number) and password and a maths captcha to login. If you require assistance with this process or your password please call ACCS Head Office staff on 01 460 1150.



Scoil Phobail Bheara
(BEARA COMMUNITY SCHOOL)



AGENDA

09.30 - 10.00	Registration
10.00 - 10.10	Welcome and introduction
10.10 - 11.20	Exploring the digital space in our schools
11.20 - 12.00	Tea/coffee
12.00 - 13.00	Embedding sustainability in school and beyond
13.00 - 14.00	Lunch
14.00 - 15.00	Leading and managing the twin transitions
15.00 - 15.10	Closing remarks



In celebrating forty years of the Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools, we salute and give thanks to the Trustees, Boards of Management, school leaders and staff, students and parents for their vision of beauty, love and truth. These pioneers in Kavanagh's words ploughed the often stony grey soil making it possible for us subsequent tillers to harrow the ground, to cultivate, sow seeds of learning and reap rewarding harvests.

James Duignan
President ACCS
Convention 2022

Celebrating 40 years of ACCS

40th
ANNUAL
CONVENTION
2022



Dhá Scor Bliain ag Fás, Education – The Soul of Society

Imagine the accumulative wisdom in this room, the experience, the tacit knowledge, the perspicacity, the skills and ingenuity, the common sense. Imagine what could be achieved with a spark of creative friction, what could be achieved if all this was harnessed, what challenges could be cracked, courses covered, obstacles overcome, innovation implemented.

It is said that the four prerequisites for creativity are time, space, focus and freedom from distraction. Let us continue in that spirit.

Our theme for convention, Dhá Scor Bliain ag Fás. Education – The Soul of Society is one of thanks and celebration, reflection, and resolve. As educators and the leaders of schools today it is our turn to carry the torch and pass it on. Service is the duty of the soul.

James Duignan
President ACCS



Minister Norma Foley addressing Convention delegates.



L-R: James Duignan, Paul Fiorentini and Paul Thornton.

40th ANNUAL CONVENTION 2022

Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cuimsitheacha



L-R: Áine O'Sullivan, Pat O'Connor, Marie Céline Clegg and John Irwin.



accs

Association of Community
and Comprehensive Schools

*Cumann na Scoileanna Pobail
agus Cuimsitheacha*



L-R: Áine O'Sullivan, Assistant General Secretary ACCS, James Duignan President ACCS, Minister Norma Foley and John Irwin, General Secretary ACCS.

ACCS Executive 2022/2023

ACCS OFFICERS:

President:

James Duignan

Vice President:

Paul Thornton

Hon. Secretary:

Mary Jackson

Hon. Treasurer:

Pat McKenna

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Brenda Kelly

Antoinette Nic Gearailt

Leinster

Paul Thornton

Mary Jackson

Denis Magner

Munster

Denis Ring

Fergal McCarthy

Noel O'Sullivan

Connacht

William Culkeen

Tom Costello

Ulster

Maeve Sweeney

Patsy McVicar

Comprehensives

Craig Petrie

Richard Prendiville

Co-opted:

David Leahy

Dr. Ellis Humphreys



Convention Sponsors VSware.
L-R: Emmanuel McCormack, Lucy Clarke
and Philip Rodgers.



Convention Sponsors PCI Group.
L-R: David Quinn and Brendan Carroll.



Fintan Costello and
Maureen Casey of Microsoft.



Senior Cycle panel members. L-R: John Irwin, Barry Slattery - NCCA, Emer Neville - President, ISSU, Rachel O'Connor - President NAPD, Áine O'Sullivan and James Duignan - ACCS President.



Róisín Buckley of ViriiQuip presents Gerard O'Leary of Celbridge Community School with a prize of a HEPA Filter.



Michael Finn of Gorey Community School and Liam Ryder.

40th ANNUAL CONVENTION 2022

Congratulations to five of our member Schools celebrating their 50th anniversaries this year

- Coolmine Community School**
- Tallaght Community School**
- Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara, Carna**
- Mount Temple Comprehensive School**
- Newpark Comprehensive School**

Often when we celebrate, we look back, and so we return in our thoughts to those who started these schools, to their courage and their values of service to the community, to those determined in their quest to offer a meaningful education in a community where all stakeholders are valued equally. These schools were remarkable for their attention to developing distributed leadership models, and nurturing creative, innovative and problem-solving attitudes.

Capturing the history of ACCS at a recent gathering



Liam Ryder takes us through the history of ACCS

Background

Prior to the introduction of Free Post-Primary Education, statistics show that at 15 years of age fewer than 50% of young people were still in full-time education. At age 16 this number was reduced to 36%. The Free Post-Primary Education Act was introduced by the Education Minister, Donogh O'Malley in 1967 and became law. The establishment of Comprehensive and Community Schools was one of the many initiatives introduced to meet the needs of the substantial increase in student population. Comprehensive Schools were established in the late 1960's as an immediate response. Four "Protestant" Comprehensives were immediately established to meet the needs of Non-Catholic students and a further number of "Catholic" Comprehensives were established in rapidly growing areas throughout the country. Today about 90% of secondary school students complete second level education and Ireland has one of the highest levels of third level participation in the world.

First Community Schools Opened in Tallaght and Blanchardstown in 1972

The involvement of Catholic Religious Orders in the running of secondary schools for boys and for girls was particularly dominant in Catholic communities. At that time local VEC schools provided two or three years of basic training for boys and girls entering a variety of trade positions. Following a lengthy negotiation it was agreed to form Community Schools in the joint Trusteeship of a Male and a Female Religious Order together with the local VEC (now the ETB). The first such schools were opened in

Tallaght and Blanchardstown in 1972 both on the premises of the original VEC schools in those areas. In other towns throughout Ireland an amalgamation of local boys' school, girls' school and the local VEC school became the local Community school. Other arrangements have led to the present 96 Community and Comprehensive Schools.

Establishment of ACCS in 1982

The structure, funding and staffing of these schools were the direct responsibility of the Department of Education. This, together with the responsibilities of the Boards of Management and the Principal, required substantial negotiation and agreement with the Department, Teacher Unions, and representative bodies of Religious Orders involved in the schools. In 1975 the Principals and Vice Principals formed a body known as the APVC which represented the interests of the Principals and Vice Principals and also advised on the management of the schools. In the year 1980 it was acknowledged, and supported by the DES, that these responsibilities should rest with the Boards of Management and that, consequently, an organisation representative of the Boards should be formed. This was discussed by the APVC and by representatives of Religious Orders and led to the establishment of ACCS in 1982. During the first year a formal Deed of Trust and Constitution were developed under the chairmanship of Fr. John Hughes SJ and formally adopted at a Convention in Athlone in 1983. Tomás Mac Eoin, Principal of Tarbert Community School was appointed President and I was appointed Honorary Secretary of the Association.

L-R: Susan Cunniffe, Mary Mullarkey, John Irwin, Eileen Salmon, Antoinette Nic Gearailt, Tommy Flynn, Áine O'Sullivan, Ciarán Flynn and James Duignan





Back row L-R: Ciarán Flynn, Tommy Flynn, John Irwin, Seán McCann
Front row L-R: Áine O'Sullivan, Liam Ryder and Eileen Salmon

Between then and 1988 we worked to establish appropriate procedures for the management of Staff, Students, school finances and structures. With no proper office facilities the work of the Association was carried out in my own school office in Cabinteely CS and those of my successors as Honorary Secretaries Seán Ó Béacháin (Coolmine CS) and Kevin Meehan (St. Kilian's CS). Probably the most useful outcome of those years was the publication of an initial "Handbook for School Principals". This was later updated to a publication known as Tagairt and its subsequent insertion into the present day ACCS website.

First Fulltime General Secretary Appointed in 1988

1988 saw the first appointment of a fulltime General Secretary, Seán Moriarty, and the movement to official office accommodation. Subsequent General Secretary appointments of Frank Murray, Seán McCann, Ciarán Flynn, Eileen Salmon and John Irwin have led to the full acknowledgement of ACCS as a representative body for the Community and Comprehensive Schools and as a key stakeholder contributor to the continued development of Education policy in Ireland.

Liam Ryder

Former Assistant General Secretary ACCS

"The opening of principalship and vice-principalship to real competition in Community and Comprehensive Schools had an immediate impact on the quality of appointees providing a diverse group of individuals leading this new sector. They were pioneers, leading the way in a major modernisation of Irish second level schooling. In every aspect of schooling, they were in the vanguard: curriculum development, pastoral care, special educational needs, efficient timetabling, personnel management, option systems, pupil councils, parental involvement, adult education, community involvement, financial planning, and teacher career development. While initially the reform was taking place in the C&C schools, much of what was happening was to infiltrate the whole second-level system and give major impetus to the reform in secondary and vocational schools. The camaraderie which existed between principals and vice principals was unique: anyone who had a problem could contact others, share the problem, and get suggestions for a solution. The meetings held were generally very lively affairs, often with heated discussions, between people who passionately cared about what they were doing."

Extract from: *A Quiet Reformation, The History of APVC*
by Kenneth D. Brennan.



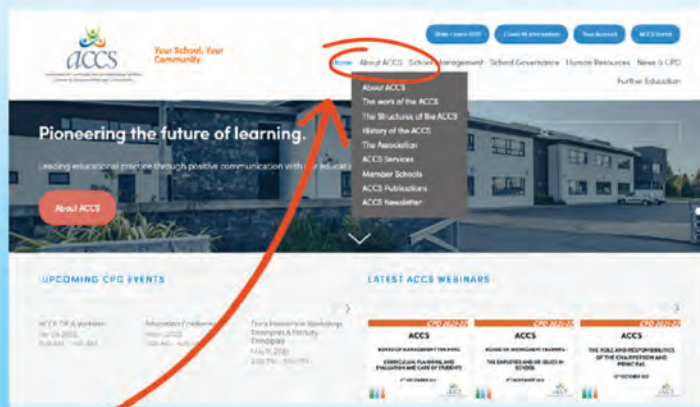
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www.accs.ie

Reminder – ACCS has produced a **Teaching and Learning Online Version 2** publication which can be accessed on our website accs.ie

1. Click on **About ACCS**
2. Click on **ACCS Publications**

Here you will find the **Teaching and Learning Online 2021 V2.0**



ACCS ICT Sub-Committee

An overview by Paul Thornton, Chairperson

Why the ACCS ICT Sub-Committee was formed.

On its foundation several years ago, the intention for the ICT Sub-Committee was to promote the regular use of ICT in the classroom. It was felt at the time that technology was becoming an integral part of school life and that schools and teachers would require some support in both the selection of devices and software and training around the most efficient way to use technology moving into the future.

This obviously has evolved over the years, as technology has become an integral part of everybody's life both at home and in school. At first a lot of the work of the committee was taken up with dealing with infrastructure concerns and establishing the proper supports and resources. For many years technology in schools was viewed as an optional extra with only a few schools becoming fully immersed with a full transition to devices in the classroom. The pandemic has changed this, as now technology is being viewed as an integral part of the day-to-day life of a school and the capacity to provide online forms of teaching has become essential. The committee currently provides guidance and initiatives to schools around the area of how best to use technology moving into the future world of education.

What are the aims and goals of the ICT Sub-Committee?

The aims of the ICT Sub-Committee include but are not limited to providing information around online teaching and learning; the identification of resources that assist with online learning and the provision of guidelines in this area and to assist in the continuous development of the ACCS website accs.ie. Other aims of the Sub-Committee include developing links with different ICT groups such as PDST and other essential educational providers involved in the development of technology in the classroom and schools. A goal of the ICT Sub-Committee is to work towards creating the optimal educational experience for our students and schools as they embrace the evolving world of technology. The Sub-Committee also represents ACCS schools on different DE committees and forums around issues of technology and the resourcing of ICT in our schools. The Sub-Committee's core goal is to provide up-to-date information and support for our schools in ICT through continuing professional development (CPD) and webinars.

Is there support available for schools?

There is support available for schools and their ICT staff through CPD, webinars and forums. The Sub-Committee assists in developing information and guidelines around issues related to technology (such as a digital learning plan and blended learning). Finally, the Sub-Committee identifies new initiatives and software with a view to increasing the use of technology in education.

Who are the members of the ICT Sub-Committee?

James Duignan (President ACCS), Paul Thornton (Chairperson), John Irwin (General Secretary), Áine O'Sullivan (Assistant General Secretary), Paul Fiorentini, Ciarán Stewart, Anne Smyth, Dermot Healy, Tom Lonergan (PDST), Deirdre Redmond (PDST), Sharon Connolly, Noel O'Sullivan, Cleona McCann, Rachel Hayes, Fidelma Foy, Catherine O'Sullivan, Ingrid Fallon, Hilary Treacy, Brendan O'Sullivan, Sarah Gibbons, Áine McKenna, Gemma Cooper, Aoife Phelan, Aideen Brennan and Irene Stone.

Paul Thornton,
Chairperson



CSL Coaching for Principals: Harnessing and Sustaining Leadership Capacity

CSL Coaching for Principals is a DE (Department of Education) funded initiative for school Principals to further support them in their role as school leader. This coaching programme has run very successfully over the past 5 years, offering the support of executive coaches to hundreds of school Principals and school leadership teams. In December 2020, the programme was expanded to include 58 coaches in six regions around the country as well as the option of being coached trí mhean na Gaeilge. All the coaches have extensive experience in leadership coaching in the private sector and are now bringing that experience to bear in their interactions with school leaders.

The key themes that have emerged to date from the coaching service are:

- Developing self-awareness
- Building productive professional relationships
- Gaining a greater sense of life work balance
- Time and space to hear your own voice and gain perspective.

Feedback from those who have engaged in one-to-one and team coaching has been overwhelmingly positive with in some instances, schools continuing to engage with coaches after they had completed the CSL Coaching for Principals programme. Since the inception of the Centre for School Leadership, interpersonal leadership supports have continued to increase and strengthen as we see a culture of professional development emerge in school leadership teams.

In tandem with the CSL mentoring for newly appointed principals programme, CSL coaching has opened the door of leadership

enhancement and cultivated healthy leadership dialogue in schools. The work of CSL mentors contributes to this significantly. For the first time, over 85% of aspiring mentors have experience of the mentoring programme from a mentee perspective and have indicated a wish to engage in CSL Coaching as they begin to support less experienced colleagues. This is a very welcome outcome, the embedding of a collegiality culture and professional development in the Irish Education System.

In the aftermath of COVID-19, it is time to credit school leaders with the incredible resilience, flexibility and versatility that have been at the core of their work. The CSL Team has continued to support school leaders through these difficult days and now encourages all school leaders to invest in the future of their leadership and their leadership team. CSL Coaching will both support and reinvigorate leaders, build on their existing strengths and find ways to overcome challenges faced going forward. For further information on CSL Coaching please see www.cslireland.ie or contact any member of the CSL Team.



NACED – National Association of Adult and Community Education Directors

The future is bright for Adult Education in Ireland. This is partially owing to the hard work of Directors and other colleagues, the backing of management, the support of ACCS and SOLAS and the loyalty of our students that we could continue to offer Adult Education for the past two years. As an organisation we proved that we had the ability to adapt and evolve to the changing environment. We have weathered the storm and are looking towards increasing the number of schools offering Adult Education courses. To this end we are actively seeking teachers in schools who would like to rise to this challenge. As many Directors will testify it is very rewarding and satisfying when one sees the benefits of Adult Education at first hand whether to facilitate a formal qualification or provide a social outlet to someone who may otherwise be isolated. Our aim for 2022/23 is that as many Community and Comprehensive Schools are part of the 'Future FET Transforming Learning' strategy

to build skills, foster inclusion and facilitate pathways to learning.



Only a year ago we set about the roll out of the QQI Learning Hub. In this short timeframe it is on the way to becoming a Centre of Excellence for QQI. It is an ongoing process and great care has been taken to ensure the integrity of QQI certification. Looking forward to working with you in the coming months.

Michelle O'Brien
NACED Chairperson.

Garda Vetting

New On-line Vetting Solution for ACCS Schools

Reminder to sign up

“Using the ACCS-VET portal is user friendly, accessible and efficient. Completing the process takes no time, highly recommended”.

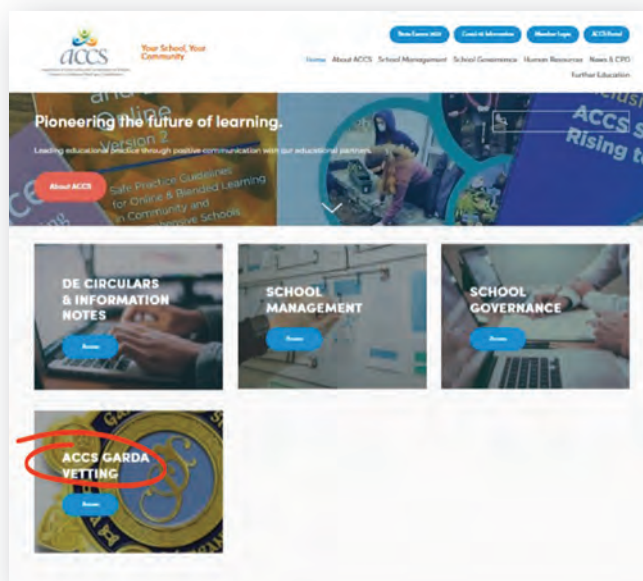
Martin Cunnane, Deputy Principal, Ballinamore Community School.

Following the success of the pilot project introduced by ACCS in February 2020, this facility was subsequently rolled out to all of our schools. Garda Vetting Training Webinars were provided in the first school term of the 2021/2022 academic year. These webinars were facilitated by Tricia Nolan, Manager South Dublin Volunteer Group and moderated by John Irwin, General Secretary. To date sixty-six schools have nominated Vetting Officers (Principal, Deputy Principal, Clerical Officer, TY/LCA/LCVP Co-ordinator/AE Director) to process garda vetting applications on behalf of vetting subjects. Garda Vetting training for the remainder of our schools took place on the 8th April 2022.

ACCS Template Garda Vetting Policy

In collaboration with Anne Marie Dillon, Director of Human Resources a Garda vetting policy template for schools has been developed and approved for circulation by the ACCS Executive.

Overall responsibility for this policy rests with the Board of Management of the school. The day-to-day administration of this policy is the responsibility of the Principal. This policy will be effective from the date of adoption by the Board of Management and will be reviewed as necessary to comply with any relevant legislative changes. You will find the [Garda Vetting Policy on the home page of the accs.ie website](#).



Garda Vetting Resources

A video link and training materials are available on request from the Garda Vetting Administrator. The Garda Vetting Administrator provides ongoing support and training to designated Vetting Officers on using the online system ACCS-VET. The ACCS-VET procedure is available from Susan Cunniffe, scunniffe@accs.ie.

Non-teaching staff

Schools must ensure that a vetting disclosure is on file for all non-teaching staff who are engaged in relevant work with young people or vulnerable adults. The school Vetting Officer can check the status of the application at any time using the individual application ID No and Date of Birth.

WWGS Grant Call 2022/2023

Apply online by May 13th 2022 – all info at <https://www.worldwiseschools.ie/grants/>

The WWGS Grant Call will open on April 7th. We have school grants of €500 (starter schools) and up to €900 (established schools) for activities related to Global Citizenship Education/ESD. Grants are also available for eligible school clusters, NGO/School Networks.

- **Application Deadline:** Apply online by May 13th for funding for 2022/2023.
- **Available support:** WWGS are here to support schools over the phone/email to discuss the application with them, please contact our Education Officers Laura, Aoife, Sinéad or Lizzy. You will find all of their contact details and the counties that they support in the Grant Guidelines (page 16 for counties and assigned Education Officer).
- **Where do I get an application from?** Please register online and we will set up an online account for you that will have a 2022/2023 application.
- **Find out more:** Please see our website <https://www.worldwiseschools.ie/grants/>

Further Education at The Donahies Community School



Liberal Arts

I had no long-term plan when I decided to do a PLC course in The Donahies, so I chose the course simply because it contained such a broad range of subjects. Having been out of the education system for so long I was terrified at the thought of doing exams and essays; however, a great group of fellow students and very dedicated, supportive, teachers led to my time there being one of the best decisions I have ever made. It changed how I felt about myself and my abilities. I went on to do a degree in Education and Training in DCU, something I had never imagined myself doing. I now work as an Education Support Worker, providing academic support for adult students with special needs as they complete their own PLC courses. I loved my time at The Donahies. I can honestly say, doing the PLC course was life changing for me.



Margaret Lawlor

I left school having failed the Leaving Cert. I cheerfully put formal education behind me for many years. I found the advertisement for The Donahies PLC Liberal Arts in a local newspaper. With my kids in school, I thought it would keep me busy for a year and never imagined anything more was possible for me. The course was interesting, the teachers were amazing, and the group was supportive. By the time Christmas came around and the CAO opened, many of us found ourselves applying for college, now believing we could do it. The following year I started my Degree, and qualified as a Secondary School Teacher four years later. When that was done I did a Masters in Poetry Studies, just because I could. Without the foundation and preparation of Liberal Arts, none of this would have happened.



Sharon Allen

Computing

The Donahies PLC award in Computing opened many doors for me - socially, academically, and professionally. I thoroughly enjoyed the course content and engaging lecturers, learning skills that have served me throughout my career. Academically, I continued on to study in Griffith College (1st class honours degree Comp Sci). Professionally, I worked my way up through the ranks in various technology companies - from a junior software developer to a senior architect. Eventually, I started my own business. The skills I learned from my time in the Donahies are still serving me well; and are as relevant now as they were back in the day.



Jason O'Connell, Co-Founder & CTO VisibleThread

Studying for my leaving cert back in 1995, I knew a career within IT was for me, I was fascinated by computers and loved any opportunity to use one. After narrowly missing a place in DCU, I remember approaching Tony Mullins, Course Director of the Donahies School of Computing. He explained the details of the 2-year PLC program and I signed up there and then. It didn't take long for me to realise that Computer Programming, a key component of the syllabus was something I thoroughly enjoyed and loved doing. After the course was complete and through the relationships the Donahies had with industry partners, all our class gained employment straight away and I began my career as a Software Engineer. The Donahies PLC course gave me the opportunity to get an exemption from the first year of a Computer Science degree program in Griffith College Dublin. I successfully completed the degree part time, graduating with honours, while gaining invaluable industry experience during the day. After holding multiple roles over the years, software engineer, team lead, independent consultant, IT Senior manager and now an architect for large scale software platforms, I continue to leverage those foundational skills I learnt in the Donahies PLC programme. A credit to the staff, facilities, and friends I met during my time there. Here's to the next 25 years...



Michael Coughlan

For information on Further Education contact:

Catherine O'Sullivan, Director,
ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit
Email: cosullivan@accs.ie
Mobile: 083-3551034



Cashel Community School

By Royal Appointment!

Prince Charles hopes to visit every county in Ireland and two weeks ago Tipperary was 'ticked off the list'. He and Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall arrived at the historic Rock of Cashel on Friday 28th March to a rapturous welcome from those invited to attend the event. Ten years ago, his mother, Queen Elizabeth and the late Duke of Edinburgh had fulfilled a long-held ambition to view Cormac's chapel. Cashel Community school's choir performed on that occasion and once again they were honoured and delighted when invited to perform for such honoured guests. In a nod to the Queen's visit the choir reprised 'May the Road Rise to Meet You' and their second song 'Down by the Sally Gardens' reflected the Prince's appreciation of WB Yates.

The Royal couple (in a departure) from their itinerary came to meet the choir and having expressed their admiration and appreciation they chatted with the students. Musical Director John

Murray and Conductor Helen Colbert were warmly thanked by the couple who were delighted to learn that John and Helen had been at the helm when the Queen had visited. Prince Charles was eager to chat with the students; enquiring if any of the singers played musical instruments. As he was told about the extent of the musical talent he was visibly impressed and he encouraged them to maintain their interest in music.

Prince Charles then did a brief walkabout and he was greeted by members of the School's Student Councils. He expressed his admiration for the depth of the School's curriculum as he chatted affably with the students.

As the Royal couple left Cashel those who had met them were in no doubt about how successful the entire occasion had been. We are very proud to have played such a significant role in conveying just how special Cashel is.

Cashel Community School Opens New School Development Project

The Board of Management of Cashel Community School recently officially opened a significant new school development project on its campus. The project consists of eight state of the art general classrooms fully fitted with the latest ICT technology. The project was a response to alleviate the learning conditions experienced in the previous academic year whereupon students were taught in temporary classrooms erected in the school gym and general purpose area in order to comply with Department of Education Covid-19 risk assessment guidelines and to ensure social distancing was adhered to.

Principal John Gallagher said that it was good news for the whole school community, especially all the students and teachers

who will benefit from the use of the new state of art facilities. This investment signals the commitment by the Department of Education to the future progression of Cashel Community School. He also commended the work of the school Board of Management and the Buildings Department under the guidance of Emmet Mordant for their support with this project. He said that the substantial value of the building project reflected the commitment of the Minister for Education to enhance the social and economic infrastructure of Cashel and the surrounding area.

The modular accommodation is the first step forward towards the expected extension which was sanctioned by the Minister and is currently at stage 2 of the Design Stage.



L-R: Martin Browne T.D., Councillor Roger Kennedy, Jackie Cahill T.D., Margaret Skehan, Chairperson BOM, John Gallagher Principal CCS, Cora O'Shea Student Council, Michael Lowry T.D., Senator Garret Ahearn and Mattie McGrath T.D.

Trinity Comprehensive

Students make the RTÉ News highlighting their part in the Better Ballymun project



Better Ballymun is a project about education, creativity sustainable living, active citizenship, experiential learning and most importantly making a difference.

On March 4th over 3,500 community members took part in a day of action to make their community a better place to live in. Dublin Council, Tidy Towns, BRYR and many more clubs and organisations came together to make a difference. Better Ballymun is about giving our young people a voice and empowering leaders of change. Giving them opportunities and ways to act. It's true what they say, 'Actions speak louder than words'. Our young people and community members sent out a strong message by their actions, taking ownership of their environment by planting, cleaning, potting, painting, building ponds, hanging bird boxes, planting wild flower gardens, creating a rooftop garden, placing little libraries around the community, painting murals, creating a Gaeltacht area, stencilling street games, creating a poetry trail and history trail, putting bug hotels in different locations and the list goes on. This added to and created a bright and beautiful place to

live in, showing true leadership by getting out into the community and making a difference.

Our students have already decided that it is not just about one day of action, it is about thinking long term, learning new skills and knowledge that they can use to shape their future. They are growing their own shrubs and plants so that they can give them to our community to plant and make their areas beautiful. They are promoting fair trade in their community and working with the rediscovery centre to think and create in a sustainable way. They are bee keeping and looking after the hens so that they can provide produce from source and understand the process. They are growing their own vegetables and learning how to cook it to create delicious meals. They are learning about sustainable living in a hands-on deep and meaningful way.

<https://www.rte.ie/news/dublin/2022/0304/1284496-better-ballymun/>

*Frances Neary,
Principal, Trinity Comprehensive*

Applied Maths Success in Ramsgrange Community School

It was a very successful week for Applied Maths students in Ramsgrange Community School where three teams, at both senior and junior level, competed in the Irish Applied Maths Teachers' Association Quiz in March. The senior team consisted of 5th year students Adam Noel and Tommy O'Grady as well as 6th Year student Adrian Pollard. The South East regional qualification round was held in St. Leo's College, Carlow and the group had to work together as a team of three to solve applied maths problems in six rounds.

After the eight rounds, the team from Ramsgrange Community School finished in a very strong 4th position out of 22 teams and RCS were the only DEIS team represented in this regional competition. The team just narrowly missed out on qualification for the next round with the top three teams now moving on to the National Competition.

Although they did not qualify, it is a fantastic result and very promising for the growth and development of applied maths as a subject here in RCS. This year was the first year that applied maths has been offered to senior cycle students as an exam subject and already, there are 15 students opting to take it for their Leaving Cert as an extra subject. The future is looking very bright as the junior competition had two teams from RCS competing consisting

of students from 3rd year and transition year, all with a keen interest and passion for problem solving and applied maths.

A big well done to all our competitors as well as to Ms. Sally McGuire who has been working very hard promoting applied maths here in the school and coaching the students during competition time!



BTYSE Winners

SCHOOL	PROJECT TITLE	WINNERS	CATEGORY
Pobalscoil Inbhear Scéine	Will planting mini seaweed farms reduce the pollution levels and acidification levels in polluted areas of the ocean in South Kerry?	Clodagh Rochford, Grace O'Brien and Ayla O'Neill	Chemical, Physical and Mathematical Intermediate Group 2nd Place Award.
Malahide Community School	UV or not UV, that is the question? Can UV light disinfection reduce the likelihood of contracting infections in a school environment?	Lara Scanlan, Ava Dolan	Biological and Ecological Senior Group 3rd place Award.
St Peter's Community School	Our Environment, Your Litter: A Mixed Methods Approach for Understanding Commuter Littering Behaviour	Éadaoin Farrell, Ethel D'Alton Bateman	Social and Behavioural Junior Group 2nd place.
Cashel Community School	Investigating the links between prenatal trauma, traumatic childbirth and adolescent mental health.	Ava Abbott, Megan Kirby	Social and Behavioural Senior Group 2nd place.
Carrick-On-Shannon Community School	Unearthing the hidden potential of Irish dung beetles; Aphodius Fimetarius, Aphodius Prodromus and Aphodius Fossor.	Hannah Stenson	Biological and Ecological Senior Individual 1st place.

St. Kilian's Community School

welcomes Ukrainian students



Like most modern Irish schools, St. Kilian's CS, Ballywaltrim, is a vibrant, multi-ethnic, multi-cultural community, reflecting the great changes that have taken place in wider society in recent decades. This school has a particularly strong commitment to inclusion and, through its involvement with the International Protection Office, in recent years has enrolled many unaccompanied minors who have travelled unique and often treacherous journeys to Ireland and all of whom have humbling life stories to tell. Current students and recent graduates include wonderful such young people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Albania, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Côte d'Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They have all enriched the community of the school on so many levels, and we all learn from each other on a daily basis.

Where there is a will, the practicalities of enrolling large numbers of students with diverse backgrounds and needs, and at varying times across the school year, are easily overcome. Money can be found for uniforms and books and timetables can be organised; it may mean extra work, but this is important work that no school should be too busy for. Likewise, given that inclusion and a welcoming school environment are hallmarks of Community and Comprehensive schools everywhere, the integration of new students into our school communities happens organically

and more quickly than many might expect. While planning and preparedness are essential, the care, commitment and actions of staff and students are the essential ingredients for success.

Along with Community and Comprehensive schools across the country, St. Kilian's has been welcoming recently arrived Ukrainian students in recent weeks. We share the horror of right-minded people across the world at the humanitarian and ensuing refugee crises that have developed in Ukraine since late February. Many Ukrainian families have found living accommodation in Bray, and the school is working closely with Bray Partnership in enrolling as many students as possible. Eleven students have already taken up places, with further large numbers expected in the coming weeks. It has been a great privilege for St. Kilian's to have a role in providing some stability in the lives of these displaced young people, at such a traumatic time for them, their families, and their country. We hope and pray that peace and better times are not too far distant, and that they can soon return to rebuild their lives in Kyiv, Sumy, Koristin, Dnipro and Zhytomyr. Until then, and indeed into the future, they will remain important and valued members of the community of this school.

*John Murphy,
Principal, St. Kilian's Community School*

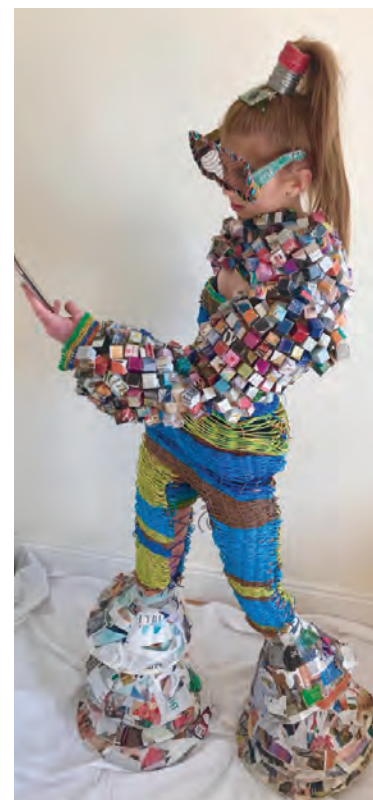
John the Baptist Community School

reach Grand Final of Junk Kouture with 'Print outside the Box'

Laura Boyle, Jean Donovan and Lauren Power (TY) with their design 'Print outside the box' have been selected for the Grand final of this year's Junk Kouture competition. The team and their mentor Ms. Ryan explain their innovative design:

Our design includes a flared jumpsuit, a short jacket and visor. How print media has evolved and moved online inspired the theme. The 1970's Abbaesque style, it's revival in the film Mamma Mia, and designers such as Viktor and Rolf were an inspiration. The jumpsuit, weaved from wires, that were stripped from old devices, represents how digital media has weaved its way into modern life. The jacket's intricate assembly of hundreds of paper cubes portrays how publishers had to "think outside the box" and devise innovative ways to communicate their content online. The visor represents online scrolling in today's modern world.

Stripped electrical cable from old devices were weaved to make our jumpsuit. The jacket was created from almost 1000 cubes, each crafted from recycled cardboard and magazines. The shirt sleeves were made with stripped wire, old pillow filling, secured with old tights. The cuffs were crocheted from wires. The flares were made from recycled plastic bottles, paper machéd with old newspaper and magazines. The visor was made from a phone cover, fruit netting and circuit boards.



World Down Syndrome Day

John the Baptist Community School marked World Down Syndrome Day 2022 in style, with staff donning odd socks to celebrate diversity in our school to remember that it is together we can empower people around the world to advocate for full inclusion in society for people with Down Syndrome and for everyone. Lots of staff members #rockedtheirssocks as well as sharing some lovely goodies for the special day!

Mountrath Community School

students make Student Enterprise Programme National Finals

Good luck to Mountrath Community School student's Raymond Goode and Caelum O'Brien who will represent not only the school, but County Laois, in the Student Enterprise Programme National Finals in May.

RC Woodcrafts secured 1st place in the Senior Category in Laois. Two other entries - Album Apparel & Sunrise Products also received awards.

Raymond and Caelum make handmade retro wooden signs (based on the design of vintage Irish road signs) as well as laser-cut medal holders, both of which can be personalised with placenames or people's names etc.



Ashbourne Community School

**Green-School's Committee -
championed by retiring Science teacher, Irene Hughes**



Green-Schools is Ireland's leading environmental management and education programme for schools.

Promoting long-term, whole-school action for the environment Green-Schools is a student-led programme with involvement from the wider community. The programme is operated and coordinated by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce (FEE member for Ireland).

In Ashbourne Community School, the work of the Green School's committee has been championed for many years by Science teacher, Irene Hughes. Hundreds of students have engaged with the programme on many different campaigns during this time. Currently Ashbourne CS is the proud recipient of its 8th Green Flag.

Traditionally the committee holds its meetings every Tuesday at lunchtime in the White Area science lab, home to Irene's

classes during the normal school day. The projects completed by the students in this programme are both creative and cross curricular by their nature meandering from the science lab to the engineering and wood rooms, across the hall to the Art rooms and back around the MFL, Geography, English and Maths classrooms. Students of all abilities and skill level can participate and students scaffolded carefully by Irene and her colleagues are empowered by the growth opportunities offered by the programme. The Green-School's committee is the most vibrant and active group in the school and currently has four staff members and around 20 students from all years.

Irene has also been to the forefront of our 'Ditch The Disposables' campaign to get rid of all plastic bottles from the school site and



Irene Hughes

has been instrumental in coordinating the installation of four water fountains around the school to allow students to fill their own bottles.

As a school, Ashbourne Community School is also one of the leading schools in the An Taisce Climate Ambassadors schools programme. Once again, Irene has driven this particular venture with three students acting as Climate Ambassadors, attending online events this year and promoting competitions and information around the area of global warming and the environmental impact of how we live our lives.

Finally, Irene has been instrumental in enrolling Ashbourne Community School in the Safe Routes to School Programme. This arose out of work undertaken by our Climate Ambassadors and the andshecycles group who took readings of CO₂ levels around the school and realised that they were far too high. In the first instance, we started a campaign to stop cars idling around the school and we put signs asking parents to switch off their engines. Through our PTA and other organisations, we asked parents to either stop driving their students to school or to drop the students off a distance from the school to eliminate some of the traffic. Meath County Council and the Safe Routes group have since become involved and there is currently an audit being carried out of the safety of our school site for the dropping-off of students. We are working with our neighbouring primary school and community centre to come up with a solution.

We wish Irene well on her retirement from Ashbourne Community School and are delighted that she is going to continue with the school in her work with the Green-School's committee on a part time basis.

Irene, sincere thanks from the staff, parents and students of Ashbourne Community School for the wonderful legacy which you have given to the community of Ashbourne and for the droves of students who have been impacted by your efforts to save our planet.

*Ciarán Stewart, School Principal,
on behalf of the Board of Management and school community.*

#andshecycles ambassador

Seven Transition Year girls in Ashbourne Community School are active ambassadors for An Taisce's #andshecycles. These girls have been working hard to promote cycling as a sustainable means of transport, with a particular focus on empowering teenage girls to reclaim their bikes. Most young girls embrace the freedom and joy that learning to cycle gives. However, as they approach their teenage years, girls feel less comfortable cycling, to the extent that nationally, only one out of every 250 teenage girls cycle to school. As part of their campaign, the team created this wonderful sculpture from old bicycle parts. The sculpture's role is to raise awareness around this gender inequality. As you can see, something beautiful has been created from scrap, illustrating the benefits of a circular economy. This sculpture will be on permanent display in Ashbourne



Community School and will inspire the generations to come to develop their own interpretation from the artwork. Well done, team!



Reflections from Coolmine Community School Principal, Patricia McPhillips

Two images have stayed with me recently. The first was the bombing of Ukraine and the destruction of schools that resulted from the war which started on February 24th 2022. The second was the distraught faces of all girls sent home from school and forbidden to return there, in Afghanistan on 23rd March 2022. These two images have been a stark reminder of how privileged we are to be able to access education and the responsibility we have to engage with it fully.

Education: The Soul of Society was the title of a convention that I attended in March. Given the two constant images above, you can see why the theme of the convention resonated with me. In both Ukraine and Afghanistan, we can see how education is a true reflection of what is happening in society. This is also true in Ireland where we are engaged in a lot of change. The changes introduced in Junior Cycle are being implemented, evaluated, and reflected upon. The advisory report on Senior Cycle has just been published.

The vision for our young adults is that Senior Cycle education would cultivate learning and contribute to human flourishing. The three tenets for Senior Cycle reform expand further on the vision, the reform aims to:

- Empower students to meet the challenges of the 21st century
- Enrich the student experience and build on what's strong in our current system
- Embed wellbeing and reduce student stress levels.

This vision reflects the soul of our society – we want true learning for our young people and we want them to flourish. The vision alone captures how privileged we are to have access to education. Without education we could not have this aspiration for our children. As educators at home and in school it demonstrates our enormous responsibility to get it right for the next generation.

Ми щиро вітаємо всі наші сім'ї з України. Ми сподіваємося, що ви відчуєте підтримку та доброту, приєднавшись до нашої спільноти. Ми з нетерпінням чекаємо на співпрацю з вами.

We sincerely welcome all our families from Ukraine. We hope you find support and kindness by joining our community. We look forward to working with you.

Corey O'Reilly represents Ireland in the European Taekwondo Championship

Coolmine Community School are very proud of our 3rd year student, Corey O'Reilly, who was selected to represent Ireland in the European Taekwondo Championship in Croatia from the 26th of March to the 2nd of April 2022. Corey achieved a Bronze medal in sparring. He collected plenty of bruises during the competition but enjoyed the whole experience immensely and looks forward to the championships in Italy next year.

Congratulations from the whole school community Corey!



John the Baptist Community School

John the Baptist Community School was selected as the winner in the Munster Post-Primary School Category of the Jack B. Yeats: Painting and Memory Schools Competition / National Gallery of Ireland with their entry, 'Illuminated memory bubbles'.

The students had to respond and create a collaborative piece using any media in any form under the theme of 'Memory and my local area'.

Student Isabelle Croker Yrures explains the rationale surrounding their entry.

After researching memories and culture of our local areas, we decided to base our project around the myths and legends of our areas. In Jack B Yeats' paintings he represents magical elements through colour and light. We decided to capture the magical essence of the myths through stained glass pieces. When the light shines through the painted perspex memory bubbles, a mesmerising fantasy effect is created.

After considering the legends of areas such as Lough Gur, we picked out key symbols to display on the perspex. Stained glass pieces are suspended in groups to display the many colours and patterns we incorporated. This gives a sense of togetherness to our work, which is also found in many of our communities. We build memories from these communities,

which makes representing this an important aspect of the project. While the common size and shape of the pieces adds uniformity to the display, individuality is represented through our own works, showcasing variety. This variety is also an important part of our communities. This project has allowed us to reflect on the many memories associated with our local areas, it has given us a chance to contribute to a display that holds the very essence of these communities.

The student's artwork will also feature on the National Gallery of Ireland's website and social media channels.

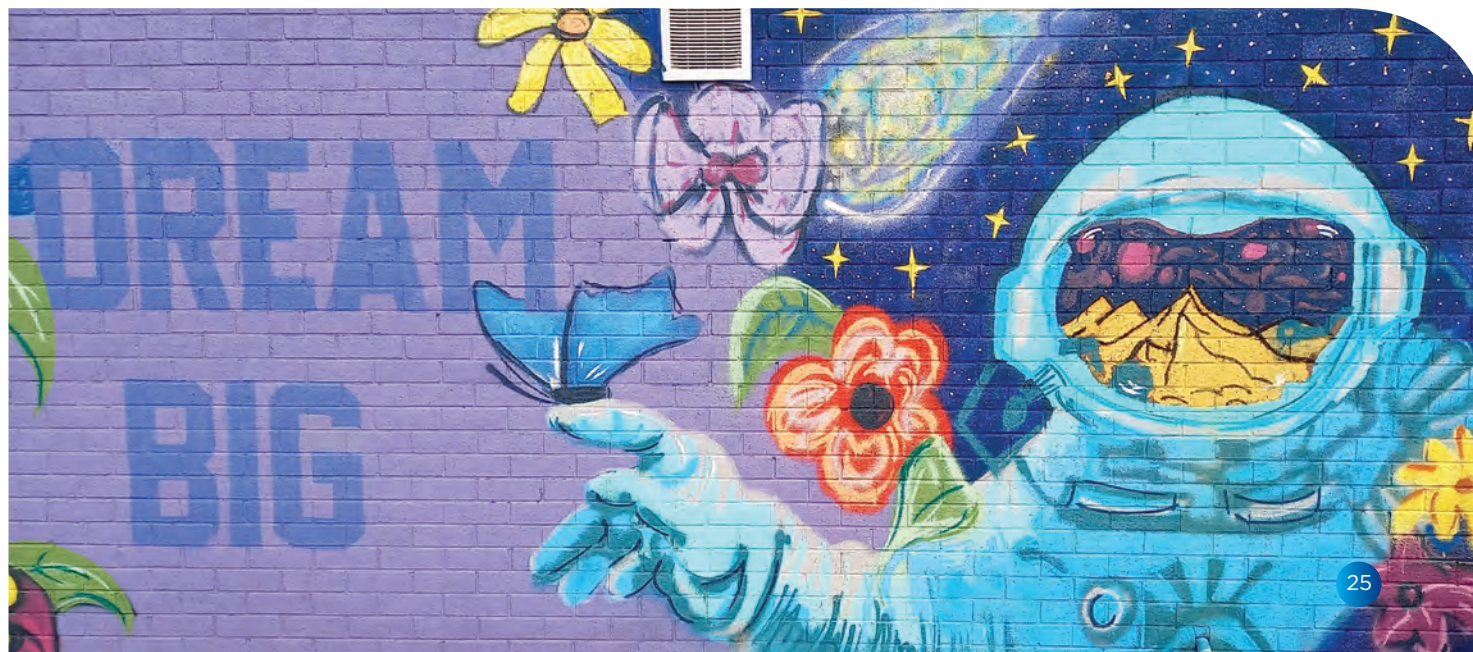
Congratulations to all the students involved: Ruby Byrne, Conor Clancy, Isabelle Croker Yrure, Aaron Hogan, Maeve Howard, Abi McLaughlin, Niamh Mc Nally, Aine Mitchell, Ava Morris, Maggie Murtagh, Ella O'Brien, Walter O'Driscoll and Mia Sadlier.



Moyne Community School

Senior Art Students Dream Big

The contemporary art mural was an idea from our Senior Art students who approached their Art teachers last year. They hoped to create a piece of outdoor art that would spread hope and positivity to the entire school community. These students designed and executed this wonderful Art piece with the help and guidance of Fiona and Aisling from "Bloom the Art Project". This contemporary spray painted mural was completed in two days by the Senior Art students. A special word of thanks to Creative Engagement NAPD (National Association of Principals and Deputies), who kindly funded the art project and who always encourage creativity in schools. We hope you love the final result.



Another great year for

Moate Community School

at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition 2022



BTYSE Awards Back Row: Katie Creggy, Hannah Higgins, Aoife Ross, Claire O'Donohoe, Eabha Greville, Grace O'Flaherty, Fionn Campbell, Emma Keane, Diya Govindaraju, Seán Farrelly. Front Row: Alex Roache & Eimear Kinahan. (Missing from photo Sive Brady).

Moate Community School students scooped a total of nine awards at this year's BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition. The students were awarded five major Category Awards, three Highly Commended Awards and a Display Award. Congratulations to all the students and their mentoring teachers Mairead Cusack, Irene O'Sullivan and Margaret Mandal.

JUNIORS

Second years Fionn Campbell and Emma Keane were awarded First Place in the Junior Technology Category for their project, **Coding the Solution to Ireland's Scam Call Issue**. The students designed an app which alerts the user when they receive a fraudulent call and advises them on how to respond.

Second years Diya Govindaraju & Seán Farrelly were awarded Second Place in the Junior Technology Category for their project, **Light-Belt: A Life Saving Belt**. Diya and Seán also received a Display Award. They created a prototype consisting of an LED light strip which turns on in low light conditions and a vibration buzzer activated by a sensor detecting approaching cars. Their prototype will enable students walk and cycle safely to and from school on Irish roads and is particularly helpful for individuals with a hearing impairment.

Katie Creggy, Aoife Ross & Hannah Higgins with their project **Eco-friendly alternative to Chemical Cleaners** were awarded Third Place in the Junior Biological and Ecological Category. The students created an eco-friendly cleaner using fermented fruit and vegetable peels.

Jack Nally, Leah Connell and Lucy Hamilton received a Highly Commended Award for their project **Nature's Solution to FootRot**. The students created a feeder that administers a foot soak comprised of native Irish plants to suppress the spread of foot rot.

TRANSITION YEARS

Eabha Greville, Grace O'Flaherty and Claire O'Donohoe were awarded First Place in the Social & Behavioural Category **A Statistical Analysis of the use of Americanisms by Local School Children and Parents**.

The students investigated if TV shows, books and social media consumed are having a significant impact on everyday language. From their surveys, they found that a significantly higher rate of children than adults use Americanisms.

Alex Roache and Eimear Keenahan in their **Firebreaks** investigated the potential of native Irish plant species for use as green firebreaks in preventing the spread of wildfires such as those occurred in Killarney National Park last year. They designed a prototype firebreak consisting of a fire-retardant ground cover such as Sedum, fire-retardant wind-break trees, and a protective barrier for existing foliage, along with a flame-resistant layer such as Ivy or Honeysuckle. The students received Third Place in the Intermediate Biological and Ecological Category.

Dara Shortall, Dean Burns & Eoin Murphy received a Highly Commended Award for their project, **Developing Modified Buffer Strips to Increase Biodiversity and Water Quality in Grassland**.

In their project **High frequency to save food**, Poppy Hennessy and Sive Brady developed a storage device that uses high frequency sounds and endothermic reactions to prevent the growth of bacteria and fungi and therefore preserve food. They also investigated the heat insulation of common recycled materials such as thick carpet, old jumper, cardboard and newspaper for insulation in their storage device. The girls received a Highly Commended Award.

Gráinne Kelly worked as individual in her project **Seeing Sweetness** and received a Highly Commended Award. Her project aimed to utilise the ways the brain uses various colours to perceive different levels of sugar and their sweetness in taste.

Kinsale Community School

holds tradition of achievement at the BT Young Scientist Exhibition

Kinsale Community School again maintained its excellent tradition of achievement at the recent BT Young Scientist Exhibition held virtually this year.

Conan O'Brien (1st Year) came 3rd in the Junior Individual Technology category for his project **'The science of bacteria and virus control using energy efficient and environmentally friendly UV LEDs'**.

Martha O'Sullivan and Aoibh Kirwan (1st Year) came 3rd in the Junior Group Social and Behavioural category for their project **'An Intergenerational study of diets and the awareness of the effects they have on health and the environment'**.

Jessica O'Keeffe (1st Year) came 2nd in the Junior Individual Social and Behavioural category for her project on **'An analysis of the awareness of the link between heading the ball and increased risk of dementia in later life'**.

Hannah Collins and Edel Ryle (1st Year) came 1st in the Junior Group Biological and Ecological category for their project **'An exploratory study of what the carbon footprint impact of driving on rough road surfaces v smooth surfaces'**.

Isabelle Lenihan, Lucy McCarthy and Momo Sheehy (TY) came 1st in the Intermediate group Biological and Ecological category for their project **'The evaluation of horse manure on a sustainable alternative to peat compost'**.

Lilian Gleave (TY) won the Special Award for Sustainable Development presented by Minister Norma Foley and a Highly Commended Award for her project **'To investigate the world of**



Lilian Gleave, winner of the Special Award for Sustainable Development pictured with Young Scientist Coordinator, Shaun Holly who won an 'Educator of Excellence' award.

fast-fashion and how to incentivise mending clothes instead of discarding them.'

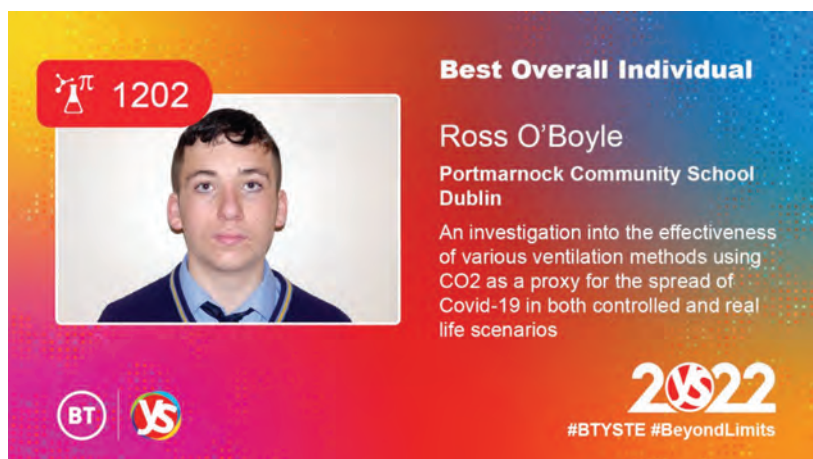
Rachel Bogue and Giulia Moretto (TY) received a Highly Commended Award for their project **'A Statistical Analysis of Gender Difference in ADHD Diagnosis.'**

Paidi O'Farrell (TY) received a Highly Commended Award for his project **'An investigation into the prospect of including boxing into the Paralympics and raising awareness of the sport within my own community.'**

Portmarnock Community School

Ross O'Boyle secures Best Overall Individual Winner of the 2022 BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition

Congratulations to Ross O'Boyle, Portmarnock Community School who was announced the Best Overall Individual Winner of the 2022 BT Young Scientist & Technology Exhibition for his project entitled **"An investigation into the effectiveness of various ventilation methods using CO₂ as a proxy for the spread of Covid-19 in both controlled and real-life scenarios"**. His entry was in the Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences Individual Category at Intermediate level. Speaking on the project, Professor Orla Feely, Vice-President for Research, Innovation and Impact, UCD & Chair of Individual Chemical, Physical & Mathematical Sciences said, "Ross used experiments and mathematical models to investigate the effectiveness of different ventilation methods at maintaining safe CO₂ levels, with a view to preventing the spread of Covid-19. The judges were very impressed by the breadth of the project, and also by the way in which the student applied scientific principles to a problem of great current interest."



‘Celebrate Us’ week at St. Caimin’s Community School

St. Caimin’s is a wide and diverse community where we should be proud to share our individuality with one another. The wellbeing team wanted to try foster an environment where both students and staff feel safe to do this. We have a responsibility to create a space where everyone feels safe to be themselves and so, through Celebrate Us week, we wanted to highlight and celebrate our individuality.

Student voice and school belonging is defined as “the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school social environment.”

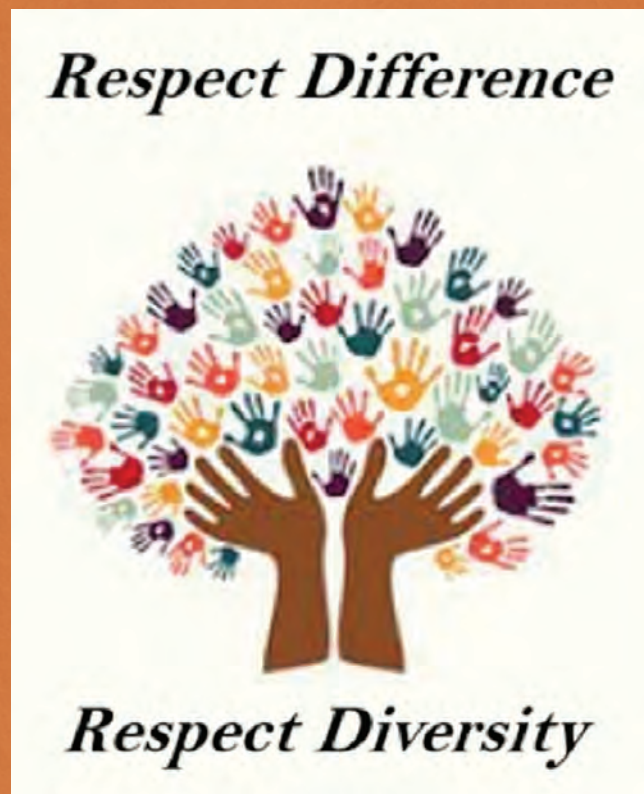
Goodenow and Grady, 1993.

If those teaching and those being taught don’t feel accepted in their school community, it can be difficult for them to immerse themselves fully in school, both from an academic and personal point of view.

The aim of this week was to educate the school community on issues of individualism and diversity, so that they can be understood and acted upon. Diverse perspectives on common themes gives us all a holistic and well-rounded view of the world and we should seek out such opportunities, not shy away from them. Students who attend schools with a diverse population can develop an understanding of the perspectives of children from different backgrounds and learn to function in a multicultural, multi-ethnic environment. Students may perceive that they do not “belong” in the classroom setting – a feeling that can lead to decreased participation, feelings of inadequacy, and other distractions. We felt the need to provide the space and support to allow such conversations to flourish.

In theory, this sounds wonderful, but like every teacher knows, how can we practically apply this idea; of sharing space with those who are different to us? Of guiding young adults in these difficult and at times, uncomfortable conversations?

At St. Caimin’s, we decided to find an accessible way that everybody could begin using immediately: our communication. You could go down a rabbit hole and spend weeks on end speaking about the issues of race, ethnicity, sexuality, thinking styles, different abilities etc and in essence, these are areas in which we are trying to incorporate into our everyday teaching. We started simply with a presentation delivered to every student in the school, which tried to facilitate learning from those who wanted to share experiences of their own individuality; the students and staff themselves. We felt if we could hone in on how we communicate with one another, with a



focus on the language we use, both verbal and non-verbal, it would be an accessible step for all our school community. Language is vital and we need to think about how we use it – what is a common, polite, inclusive language to make sure everyone feels comfortable?

Our tree of diversity is something else that takes up a prominent position in discussing diversity. It is printed on the sleeves of all school sports jerseys and at the entrance to all our classrooms. All presentations to staff and students have it as a focal point.

As children start to recognise human differences; teachers can help them to develop a foundation of respect and inclusion. We lead by example in how we broach topics of race, culture, sexuality, abilities, and backgrounds. We don’t have all the answers but showing empathy and interest in these topics creates inclusive spaces for more learning to take place. Open conversations may be challenging and uncomfortable, but they can also inspire and drive change. We are trying to get our community to see the importance of listening to understand rather than listening to reply.

We are only one year into running this project in St. Caimin’s and we are very aware that there is still more work to be done, there’s still uncomfortable conversations to be had, but we are taking baby steps, and baby steps still move you forward.

Chloe Morey, Teacher



Ashbourne Community School

Leaders of Learning

Ashbourne Community School invests a great deal of time encouraging student leadership in and out of the classroom. It is very much part of the culture of Ashbourne Community School. From senior student leaders to the numerous student lead committees convening throughout the year, student voice is clearly heard and acknowledged.

In the learning space of SPHE peer education plays a fundamental role. Students lead the learning throughout various awareness weeks; financial literacy, one kind word, LGBT+ to name a few. This approach enhances the delivery of key messages to the student body. Student leaders create impactful information videos highlighting the importance of road safety, physical wellness, healthy relationships etc. The senior student leadership team pay an annual visit to the local primary Gaelscoil and through the medium of Irish make presentations to 6th class students <https://www.ashcom.ie/student-voice>.

The content is then shared and used as a teaching tool. At all times students exhibit great initiative, insight and forward thinking with their efforts. The feedback from both students and teachers has been very positive. Well done to all!



A Focus on Student Voice in St. Aidan's Community School

In St. Aidan's Community School, we are always thinking of creative ways to have our student's voice heard and represented in our school in relation to teaching and learning but also in the representative space. A student voice focus group came together and worked on a student voice podcast. The students were from across different year groups and had conversations with one another about teaching, learning and assessment. They also spoke about what methodologies worked best for them and how teachers supported their learning. This was then given to all staff in St. Aidan's Community School and teachers loved the response. This is just the beginning of the podcast that the student's hope to grow even further over the next few months. You can listen to this episode of the podcast at this link <https://www.mixcloud.com/SACsradio/st-aidans-cs-sacs-fm/>

One of the goals of the student voice focus group this year was to produce an educational wellbeing space in the main entrance of the school. Student's collaborated with teacher Shane Casey, and also an artist Julie the Genie on this project. The student's presented their ideas for the wellbeing space and it was brought to life. The Wellbeing Wall was officially launched on Friday 4th of March with the Mayor of South Dublin officially launching the wall with students, staff and parents. Wellbeing has become a priority in St. Aidan's Community School, and as Principal Kevin Shortall said "If our students are well, they will excel".



OECD in Tallaght Community School

OECD Student Voice Project

Five students from Tallaght Community School – Christopher Higgins, Kelly Okeoguale, Marilia Netto, Qirui Zhang and Aayan Idle were asked to submit videos on the topic of curriculum flexibility and autonomy during the OECD Student Voices on Curriculum (Re)design campaign. TCS have recently received confirmation that the five videos will be showcased on the OECD SV website when it goes live.

OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 Project

In addition to the video contributions, well done and congratulations to Tallaght Community School 6th year student Kelly Okeoguale whose video was asked to feature in the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 project in their upcoming report on Curriculum Flexibility and Autonomy, which will be published in May 2022.

For further information visit www.oecd.org.



Mighty Mountrath Community School

Crowned All Ireland 2nd Year Volleyball Champions



Mountrath Community School are All Ireland 2nd Year Volleyball champions. The girls and their coach Katie Wallace won the All-Ireland B title in the UL Sports Arena, Limerick. The girls beat local rivals Portlaoise College in a thrilling encounter on 4th April. A huge Mountrath Community School crowd travelled with their teachers and principal Kathryn O'Brien to witness their classmates win the All-Ireland trophy. Caoimhe Dunne was awarded MVP for the game. The Sports Arena erupted as captains Fiona Haslam & Isabell Tyrrell lifted the trophy. Well done to Katie Wallace and all her girls on a super win.

Moate Community School

Well done to the Moate Community School Senior Ladies Gaelic team on reaching the All Ireland A Final played in Limerick on 2nd April.

"Despite being narrowly ahead at half time it wasn't to be on the day for our ladies. They have represented themselves and the school extremely well, not just today but throughout the whole year. We are tremendously proud of each and every one of them." – Tom Lowry, Principal.

Ashbourne Community School

Cillian Slattery takes on The Crean Challenge

Cillian Slattery, 3rd year student in Ashbourne Community School recently headed off to Iceland on The Crean Challenge with the Scouts on Saturday 19th February 2022. He was chosen along with 30 other scouts from around Ireland. They trained for 6 months, including climbing Carrauntoohil. They spent midterm in Iceland and took a 2 day hike up a glacier, staying in huts halfway up overnight. Well done to Cillian and his team.

<https://www.facebook.com/CreanChallengeExpedition/>





Student v staff basketball match teams during the Portumna Community School 'Community Active Week'.

Active School Week in Portumna Community School

Portumna Community School recently ran a very successful 'Active School' week in preparation for a future application for the Active School flag. Students were given the opportunity to participate in a range of activities and explore what's on offer in their local community.

PCS welcomed back several past students and local entrepreneurs involved in the exercise and wellness industry. The weeks activities included Climbing Wall experience, body conditioning workout, Zumba, meditation, Hip Hop, yoga, soccer and outdoor fitness classes.

The week also included several staff wellness initiatives incorporating a Forest Park run, Pilates classes, Kayaking and

a thrilling basketball match between staff and students which resulted in a hotly disputed win for teachers! Great credit to all the staff and students for participating in the match while also raising much needed funds donated to the Ukraine crisis.

The highlight of Portumna Community School 'Community Active Week' was a student v staff basketball match. Cheered on by those in attendance the staff fought back to claim a deserved win. Despite some dubious tactics (teachers) the game was played in a sporting & spirited manner with all proceeds raised going to the Irish Red Cross-Ukraine appeal. Both teams pictured above.

The week ended with a 'Walk and Talk Empathy Challenge' led by School Chaplain Ms Dunne.

First girls' basketball team to represent Portumna Community School in over 20 years

The first and second year girls' basketball teams recently made their debut as they faced St. Killian's College, New Inn. The students played with great heart and determination but unfortunately, they were narrowly defeated. Well done girls!



Portumna Community School - 1st Year Basketball Girls.



Portumna Community School - 2nd Year Basketball Girls.

Recent ACCS Info Bulletins

BULLETIN NO.	DATE	SUMMARY
ACCS/Info Bulletin 01/22	05/01/2022	Information Note SD 0002/2022, COVID-19: Updated Arrangements for all recognised Post Primary Schools – January 2022.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 02/22	10/01/2022	Leaving Certificate Coursework 2022.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 03/22	19/01/2022	FÓRSA Directive Re: Use of the SNA 72 Hours During the Pandemic.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 04/22	20/01/2022	HR Matters: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Information Note TC 0001/2022: Updated Working and Leave Arrangements from January 2022 for Teachers and Special Needs Assistants employed in recognised Primary and Post-Primary Schools. Job-Sharing, Career Breaks and Secondments.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 05/22	28/01/2022	ACCS Convention – 23rd & 24th March 2022.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 06/22	01/02/2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> State Examinations 2022 & ACCS Briefing on Friday 4th February at 11:30am. Covid Sick Leave.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 07/22	05/02/2022	ACCS CONVENTION 2022 – 23RD & 24TH MARCH 2022 The Slieve Russell Hotel Golf & Country Club, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 08/22	10/02/2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangements for State Examinations 2022. Candidate Self Service Portal Closes at 5pm Friday 11th February.
ACCS/info Bulletin 09/22	17/02/2022	ACCS Convention 23rd and 24th March 2022.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 10/22	25/02/2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Updated COVID-19 Guidance to Schools following mid-term. COVID-19 Parental Leave Scheme-Arrangements for remainder of 2021/22 year for Teachers & SNAs. Temporary amendment to the 5 Day Rule. Additional Bank Holiday from 2022.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 11/22	15/03/2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Garda Vetting Policy Template for Schools. Progress report on “ACCS-VET” On-Line Vetting Solution Project for Schools. Garda Vetting Resources.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 12/22	16/03/2022	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Department of Education Engagement regarding the Ukraine Crisis. The Inspectorate, Current and Planned Work. Department of Education School Governance Section Update. SEC Updates. Allocations. School Roll Out of NIMS Status Update. Procurement: High Spec PCs for use with Solidworks in Design Communication Graphics Senior Cycle Course.

Recent Relevant DE Circular Letters

CIRCULAR NO.	SUMMARY
CL 01/22	Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2021
CL 02/22	Graduate Certificate in the Education of Pupils on the Autism Spectrum (AS) for teachers working with Pupils on the AS in Special Schools, Special Classes or as Special Education Teachers in mainstream Primary and Post-Primary Schools, 2022/2023
CL 03/22	Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Special Education Teachers, 2022/2023
CL 04/22	Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs (Autism)
CL 06/22	Revision of salaries with effect from 1 February 2022 for Clerical Officers and Caretakers employed in National Schools under the 1978/79 Scheme and Clerical Officers employed in Post Primary Schools under the 1978 Scheme
CL 07/22	Revision of Salaries of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools with effect from 1 February 2022
CL 08/22	New Public Holiday from 2022
CL 09/22	Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) with effect from 1 February 2022
CL 13/22	Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2024
CL 14/22	Prescribed material for Junior Cycle English (For the student cohorts commencing Junior Cycle in 2021, 2022 and 2023 and presenting for examination in 2024, 2025 and 2026)
CL 16/22	Employment of 3rd and 4th Year Undergraduate Student Teachers and application of the “5 Day Rule”
CL 19/22	DEIS identification 2022: Appeals process for schools