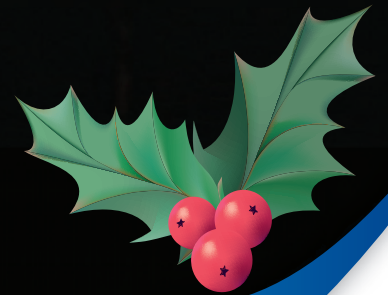


ACCS NEWS

ISSUE 3 • 2021/2022



IN THIS ISSUE • Is Your Zoom Updated? • ACCS Convention 2022
• ACCS DEIS Sub-Committee - An Overview • Further Education
• College Awareness Week (CAW)



Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cinnam na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cumistheacha

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Cover photo by Elise Casey,
St Patrick's Comprehensive School,
Shannon



All paper used in the production of this newsletter is certified by the FSC to come from managed sustainable forests.

Layout & Print: Print Bureau

ACCS Convention 2022

The Slieve Russell Hotel Golf & Country Club

The 40th Annual Convention is proposed to take place on **Wednesday, Thursday and Friday the 23rd, 24th and 25th March 2022** in **The Slieve Russell Hotel Golf & Country Club, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan**.

(While it is the preference to have an in-person Convention this is clearly subject to change during these pandemic times. At all times ACCS will operate within Government Guidelines and Restrictions).

Member Boards are asked to take particular note of the following important dates to remember:



23rd December 2021

Resolutions/motions and/or nominations for the Presidency must be submitted.



23rd January 2022

Draft agenda of business and nominations for Presidency - including resolutions/motions - to be issued to Member Boards and Executive members. Member Boards will be invited to submit amendments to the motions.



23rd February 2022

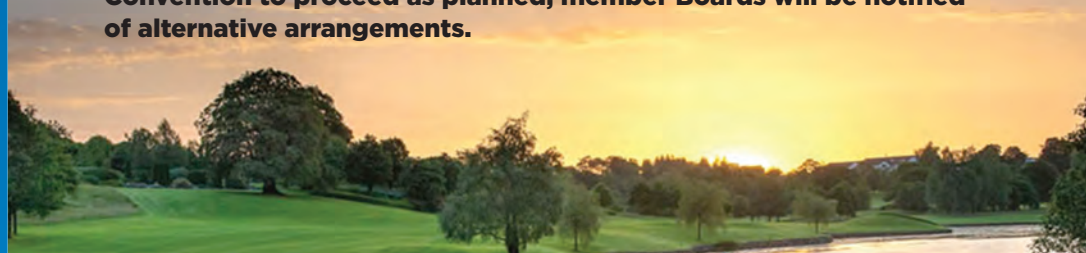
Deadline for submission of amendments to resolutions/motions.



9th March 2022

A final agenda will be issued to delegates and to the Secretary, Board of Management.

In the event that Government Covid restrictions do not allow Convention to proceed as planned, member Boards will be notified of alternative arrangements.



Glenamaddy Community School

Rebecca, Belle & their Lollypop Christmas Tree

Rebecca is a student in Glenamaddy Community School and comes to school each day with her assistive dog Belle. Rebecca was the first to do so in Ireland some years back and Belle is truly transformative.



Welcome

Full of Care

It is said that time is what prevents everything from happening at once. Paraphrasing Dickens, this past year *'was the best of times, it was the worst of times; it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness;... it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair; we had everything before us...'*

Stopping there on an optimistic line of his, one can look back with relief and satisfaction while looking forward with hope and faith. It is only when we take the time to reflect, that we fully appreciate what we have experienced and achieved.

At year's end it is good to take stock, give thanks, recognise what has been endured and sustained, draw breath and restore for the new year. We'll recall this couplet by William Henry Davis we learned in school:

*"What is this life if, full of care,
We have no time to stand and stare".*

Aristotle called the whole point of life, eudaimonia, as the state of being healthy and happy. It involves doing the best you can with what you have and where you are.

Most people I meet involved with managing schools love what they do and by their nature get on with the job and meet the challenge. It is fair to say though that just because someone carries the load it doesn't mean it is not heavy.

Nil desperandum.

Ring the Bell that Still can Ring

We often turn to stories, pictures or poetry to express ourselves. Sometimes it is hard to find the words to best describe how we feel

or what we see. Recently a friend of mine captured our mood in the right light with these uplifting lines by Leonard Cohen.

*Ring the bells that still can ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
That's how the light gets in*

Taken from the aptly titled song *Anthem*, Cohen reminds us to ring our bell, to do our best, not everything is perfect, love the things that are real. Our imperfections make us unique and that's where the beauty lies. Weakness can be a strength and fault a virtue betimes. The light already shines through from good people. There is always a chink of hope.

On behalf of the extended family of ACCS, I would like to acknowledge and thank all in our schools who serve their community. Thank you for ensuring our school communities remain safe, and that learning, and teaching continue to bud and blossom.

I wish you all the best of care, health, and happiness.

James Duignan
President ACCS



Beannachtaí na Nollag

This year instead of sending Christmas cards ACCS will make a donation to the President's nominated charity Autism Assistance Dogs Ireland.
www.autismassistancedogsireland.ie



Shared Island Dialogue Series

Learning from each other: The future of education on a shared island

This online event, held in October was one in a series of civic dialogue events organised as part of the Shared Dialogue Events launched by An Taoiseach in October 2020 and part of the Governments Shared Dialogue Initiative.

The shared island initiative is focused on harnessing the full potential of the Good Friday Agreement to deliver progress and foster trust and understanding between all communities and political traditions on the island.

The education dialogue was the seventh in the series. Previous topics included *new generations and new voices, environment and climate, equality on a shared island, health co-operation, economic recovery and civil society engagement.*

north and south as follows:

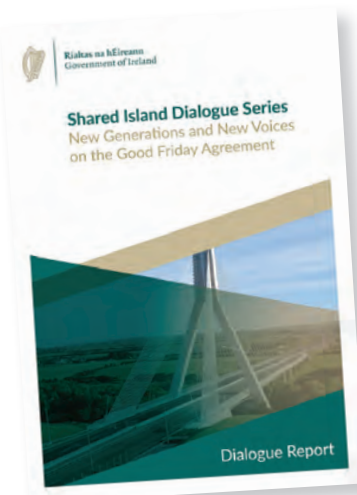
- Enhancing education accessibility on a shared island with a focus on further and higher education.
- Matching skills needs with opportunities across the island.
- Innovative connections on a shared island.
- Addressing educational underachievement on the island.

Joe McBride, a teacher in Loreto Community School Milford was one of the contributors on the innovative connections panel. He discussed his school's involvement in the Department of Foreign Affairs funded North-South Schools Civic Action Programme. He described the benefits and the value of the learning gained from the schools' participation in that project.

Mary Jackson, Principal of Ardee Community School contributed to the panel which addressed issues around educational underachievement. Her fellow panelist, Dr Noel Purdy in his role as Director of the Centre for Research in Educational Underachievement described how he and his colleagues had used the government's DEIS model to develop an action plan proposal to address education underachievement in Northern Ireland.

Minister for Education Norma Foley T.D., and Minister of State with Responsibility for Skills and Further Education Niall Collins T.D., addressed the forum.

Dr Aoibheann Ní Shúilleabháin, Assistant Professor in the School of Mathematics & Statistics in UCD, broadcaster and former teacher in St. Marks Community School was the moderator for the event.



The particular focus of this dialogue on education was on the benefits that have been delivered for people through existing North / South co-operation across all levels of education, training and research and new areas of co-operation in line with policy objectives of both jurisdictions.

The session was divided into several key areas with the panelists for each drawn from relevant areas of expertise both

A Christmas Message

As we prepare for Christmas and all that the most wonderful time of the year entails, we may be wondering where the last year has gone. We may also be looking back on a year that holds difficult memories. We continue to persevere at a time when case numbers, restrictions etc have become the norm in conversation and indeed everyday life. However, it is important to remember that Christmas is the time that holds all time together. The present moment is the most precious gift we can give this Christmas, to each other and to ourselves. The magic of the present moment and the magic of Christmas go hand in hand. As we consider our blessings that have come sharply into focus in the face of Covid 19, I am sure we would consider family as the greatest blessing of all. We look to the Holy Family this Christmas for inspiration and blessing. We ask blessings on all those whom we love and care for this Christmas through the intercession of Jesus, Mary & Joseph. Let us also remember it's not what is under the Christmas tree but those who are around it that is important. We pray and ask blessing on all those in our school communities. We pray that this Christmas your presents be many, your worries few, and your joy endless.

God Bless and Love you all this Christmas Season,

Tony Nolan

Chairperson School Chaplains' Association

ACCS DEIS Sub-Committee

An overview by Mary Jackson, Chairperson

Why the ACCS DEIS Sub-Committee was formed

The ACCS DEIS sub-committee was formed to support the work of the 29 ACCS DEIS schools and to enable these schools to understand and plan in line with the provisions of the Department of Education's *DEIS Plan for Improvement 2017*.

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

The sub-committee aims to create an awareness among Boards of Management and school communities about the specific supports provided for DEIS schools, the governance requirements for the use of these supports and the action planning required to target the students who require the supports to progress educationally.

Is there support available for schools?

The sub-committee supports schools with the specific planning required in the seven areas indicated in the DEIS Action Plan (Literacy, Numeracy, Attendance, Attainment, Transitions, Retention and links with Community and others). In DEIS schools, the DEIS plan is the School Plan, it meets the schools' requirement for School Self Evaluation (SSE) and the School Improvement Planning (SIP).

The planning required is very specific, involving the gathering of data, the use of this data to create SMART targets and the evaluation of outcomes.

Each DEIS school has its own unique context determined by its community. COVID exposed the huge challenges faced by students and their families in our DEIS schools. It also highlighted the invaluable ongoing work in our schools in supporting students who need it most.

The DEIS sub-committee supported wellbeing, support for online learning and engagement during the two lockdowns. The sub-committee promoted the extension of the School Meals Programme for students while schools were in lockdown. Online webinars and information meetings were arranged where our schools were able to share best practice, support each other and plan the best use of the resources of those who most needed it.

During this academic year the sub-committee has arranged a series of webinars as follows:

- *The context of DEIS for Boards of Management.*
- *Planning for embedding DEIS in the classroom.*

These webinars were facilitated by Maria Lorigan from the Department of Education Inspectorate.

A *DEIS action planning workshop* was facilitated by Lorraine Counihan, PDST at the end of November and a further action planning workshop is scheduled for the end of January.

The DEIS sub-committee welcomed the invaluable contribution of both Maria Lorigan and Lorraine Counihan in sharing their expertise on DEIS.

Who are the members of the DEIS Sub-Committee?

The members of the DEIS sub-committee include James Duignan (President ACCS), John Irwin (General Secretary ACCS), Áine O'Sullivan (Assistant General Secretary ACCS), members of the ACCS Executive and co-opted Principals and Board members from our DEIS schools.

DEIS is about delivering equality of opportunity for the students in our schools and the ACCS sub-committee is committed to the ongoing support of our DEIS schools.

Mary Jackson,
Chairperson,
ACCS DEIS Sub-Committee



The Board is looking for guidance on the development of a school policy on Career Breaks, Job-Sharing and Secondments for teachers.

1. Go to the Human Resources section.
2. In the drop down menu, you will see the category called 'Leave'.
3. You will find a guidance document there with key points for consideration in the formulation of a policy on these leave arrangements for teachers.



The formation of the School's Policy on Career Breaks, Job-Sharing and Secondments for teachers

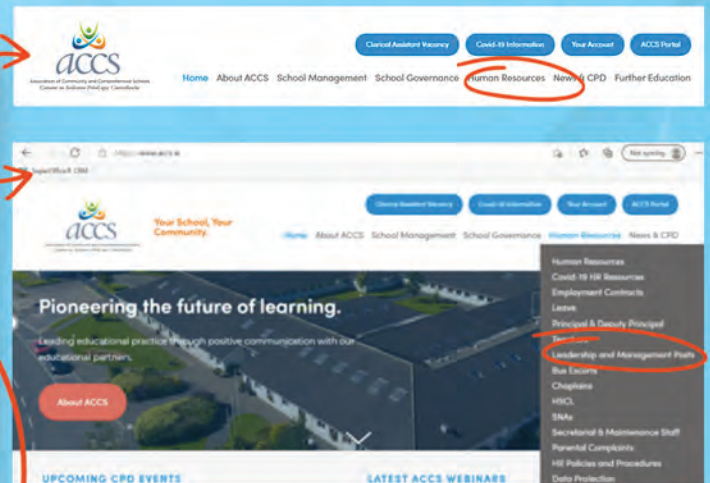
We are frequently asked for templates, guidance, documents, or contracts in relation to HR. These can be found in the Human Resources section of our website, and to further assist you we have shown some examples above.



I have a vacancy for a Programme Coordinator, where can I find the guidelines on the appointment process?

1. Go to the Human Resources section.
2. In the drop down menu you will see Leadership and Management Posts.
3. Click on Appointment Guide 2021.
4. Scroll down. Here you will find the document to download.

*Remember you will need to have your school username and password to access this section.



Leadership & Management Posts

[Revised Allocation of Assistant Principal Posts 2021/22](#)
[Appointment Guide 2021](#)
[Appendices to Appointment Guide](#)
[Appeal Documentation](#)
[Advice to appellants for completion of the appeal form](#)
[Covid19 & Leadership and Management Posts](#)
[ACCS Leadership & Management Post of Responsibility Webinar, 31st August 2021](#)
[Leadership and Management in Post-Primary Schools - CL 0003/2018](#)

Downloads:

[Revised Leadership and Management Appointment Guide 2021 \(MS Word document\)](#)
[Revised Leadership and Management Appointment Guide 2021 \(PDF File\)](#)





Is Your Zoom Updated for future ACCS Webinars?

As it looks like we will have to wait a little longer to hold face to face events, we will continue to hold events online through Zoom. To ensure you don't encounter any problems when registering for events or joining online it is important to make sure you are using the latest version of Zoom.

Last August Zoom announced that they updated their access policy, and the new policy came into force in November. Zoom clients more than 9 months behind the current client version will no longer be allowed access to their network. This is to ensure that users don't miss out on important security and feature updates. If you haven't already done so, you should have received a prompt from Zoom to update your client. The latest versions of Zoom have some great new features including the ability to share files in the chat window.

For more information on upgrading your Zoom, scan the QR code to be taken to the Zoom support site.



ACCS Guidelines and Tips

1. Breakout Rooms

In ACCS we often use breakout rooms to create small group discussions within larger meetings. Usually we create these breakout rooms before the meeting to make sure that we get the right mix in each room (not too many from a single School or Board for example). They are created using the email address you registered for the Zoom meeting with. So, if you come into a meeting using a different address on your Zoom account or a different Zoom account entirely, you will not be filtered into the correct breakout room automatically. We would ask, and we understand that its not always possible, that when you register for one of our Zoom events, you do so using the email address of the Zoom account you intend on joining the event with.

2. Always use the same email address you used to register for the Zoom meeting
3. Always use the same Zoom account
4. We respectfully request that you do not share your Zoom link with anyone outside of ACCS member schools

Data Protection – Responding to a request for Access to CCTV Footage

Several schools have reported an increase in requests from parents for access to CCTV footage.

The GDPR states that when dealing with any requests for data you need to consider if your response could “adversely affect the rights and freedoms of others”. This is largely assumed to mean that all data relating to third parties must be redacted, however this may not be the case.

If the footage clearly shows others (not the child of the parents who made the request), and those others are identifiable from the footage, then their image may have to be redacted. This can be costly if you must go down a technical solution route.

However, if the images are not clear enough to identify the others, then you may not need to redact them. Remember, the sharing of data would have to “adversely affect” those others captured in the footage. Perhaps the image is blurry; perhaps you can’t see their face; or people are not recognisable due to mask-wearing?

Consider whether parents have already received an account of the incident shown in the footage and so already know who the other individuals are who were involved. Would showing them the footage have any adverse effect on those others?

People requesting access to their (or their child’s) data have a right to receive a copy of it should they wish. You could however, invite them into the school to view the footage onsite instead, and this may be sufficient. This will save you time and effort, and also reduce your data protection risks of allowing the footage leave the school and you no longer have control over where it ends up.


As ever, if you have any queries in relation to this or any data protection matter, please contact Hilary on htreacy@accs.ie.


Hilary Treacy,
Data Protection Advisor.


Board of Management Access to ACCS Website


ACCS receives a number of phone calls from School Board of Management Members daily requesting access to the ACCS website. Following a suggestion from Ashbourne Community School which has worked well, ACCS recommends the following guidelines:

1 Each school sets up a unique school email address for BOM members e.g. BOM@anywherecs.ie. 

3 An email will issue from accsmemberadmin@screenzest.com with the description “Invite to join ACCS member space” to the unique BOM email address. It will contain a link to set up log-in credentials (password) to access the ACCS website. 

2 Forward the unique BOM email address to Dave Cahill, ACCS Web & IT Support Officer dcahill@accs.ie requesting access to the ACCS website for BOM members. 

4 Share the unique BOM email address and password with Board of Management Members only. 

5 It is advised to change the password when the Board of Management’s term of office expires. 



Microsoft Showcase School Program

The Microsoft Showcase School Program is a global professional learning community of like-minded schools looking to engage in whole school transformation. Using the Microsoft Education Transformation Framework, the schools are able to create student-centred immersive and inclusive learning experiences that will help prepare students to become lifelong learners and empower them to achieve their potential.

The first step is to enter the incubator pathway in which schools will assess where they are in terms of culture of learning, personalised learning and digital skills etc. Schools are also required to have a long-term commitment for digital transformation. Incubator status is the initial stage of this exciting and rewarding multi-year transformation journey, which culminates with becoming a globally recognised Showcase School. Entry to the incubator pathway is open all year round and schools must self-nominate to apply, the Microsoft Ireland Education team will support you all the way.

Showcase Schools benefit from Microsoft's commitment to holistic, sustainable transformation, guiding school leaders along an established framework that helps them navigate complex challenges, envision what's possible, and develop a strategy to achieve it.

In Ireland, we are fortunate to have over twenty schools involved in the program with nine schools having achieved showcase

school standard. Old Bawn Community School joined Kinsale Community School as the schools within ACCS that are recognised as a Showcase School 2021-2022. You can also learn more about the journey these schools have been on at www.aka.ms/OldBawnEduSpotlight and www.aka.ms/SpotlightKinsaleCS.

Innovation is a key part of schools especially as they have navigated the disruption of the last eighteen months and reforms at Junior and Senior Cycle. Showcase Schools have a commitment to innovation keeping student success and student-centred learning at its core. This is recognised in the approach that Old Bawn Community School took for their transformation with the "why" and the support of the students being the central point to build from.

Teachers' professional development and engagement with programs such as the Microsoft Innovative Educator Expert has enabled teachers within these schools to both learn and share strategies. This in turn ensures that the role of technology within the classroom has enabled inclusion, deeper learning and future skilling of their students. The additional benefit of taking this transformative approach was that teachers and students were able to adapt within this period of disruption as they had built teacher capacity within a culture of digital innovation.

To learn more about the program please visit www.aka.ms/SCSProgram or contact our Showcase Schools specialists at mseduirl@microsoft.com.

Old Bawn Community School announced as a Microsoft Showcase School 2021-2022

Microsoft recently recognised Old Bawn Community School as a Showcase School 2021-2022. Microsoft describe Showcase Schools as pioneers in education and schools are recognised and celebrated for educational transformation that includes vision and innovation in teaching, learning, and preparing students for the future.

The staff in Old Bawn, along with educators within the ACCS community and indeed the entire education sector in Ireland, have completely transformed their way of teaching over the past number of years. The introduction of digital technologies to enhance learning, improve accessibility and to have more enjoyment has been a great success for the school and to be recognised for our work was the icing on the cake after a year on the Incubator Programme.

Using the Microsoft Education Framework as a guide, we embarked on our journey of reimagining education for our own context. We focused massively on our 'Why' on this journey and asked teachers to think about why they would like to get fully on board. Teachers and schools will always benefit from time saving tips and we emphasised the benefits of OneNote for teachers. We gave teachers ample time to learn how to use OneNote learning from each other and then in no time they began to soar. From there our students very quickly began to reap the benefits of enhanced teacher confidence and their willingness to give anything a go.

We jumped at all opportunities to learn from others and in turn always accepted invitations to speak at different events. A highlight for us was speaking at a Microsoft Education Spotlight event. It served as a massive learning opportunity for us as we reflected on where we had come from, where we are and realised we needed



to avoid remaining static on our journey. As teenagers and society continue to evolve so do we and in order to prepare our students as best as we can for life after Old Bawn we needed to find the confidence to delve further into more meaningful content creation in our digital planning.

We are now beginning to push the boundaries even more. No longer is the device seen as this extra piece of equipment, it is now part and parcel of the landscape in every class. It's as essential as a calculator in a Maths class. It is not used when it is not necessary but exceptionally effective as a tool to support learning in the right context. As a Showcase School we really hope to help other school communities to reach their potential. We have teachers who have worked with subject departments in other schools, have had schools in to visit us and we are working on ways to continue to share and collaborate in a meaningful way so that others can get to enjoy technology in their classrooms in the same way as we do.

Growing Up in Ireland Study

The Growing Up in Ireland (GUI) is the national longitudinal study of children and young people in Ireland. It is designed to inform policy development and has already provided new insights into the transition from primary to second-level education, school factors and student wellbeing, and the experiences of students with special educational needs.

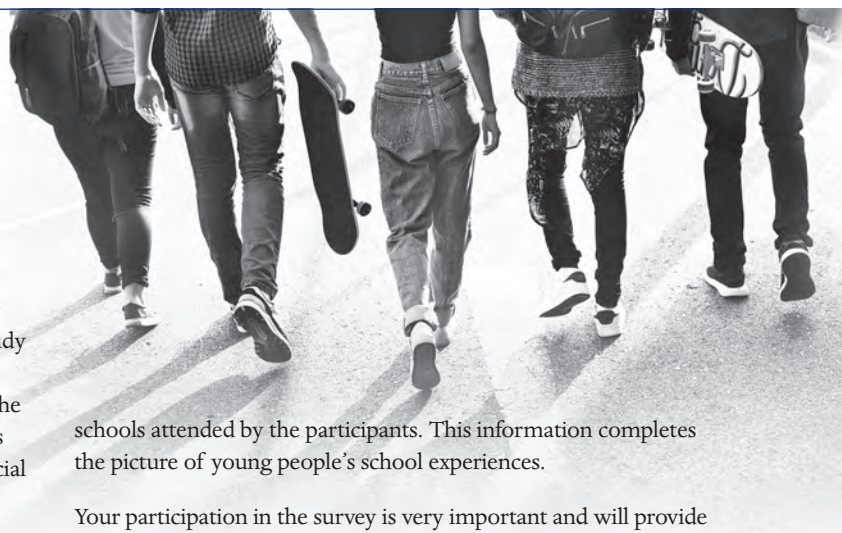
The study is currently conducting fieldwork with 13-year-olds and their parents from the youngest cohort, those born around 2008. This survey collects information on key aspects of young people's lives, including their attitudes to school and their experiences of the pandemic as well as information on their physical and mental health. At every wave of the study, the study team has surveyed school Principals to obtain important contextual information on the

schools attended by the participants. This information completes the picture of young people's school experiences.

Your participation in the survey is very important and will provide crucial information to inform policy development. You can find out more about GUI at www.growingup.ie

Dr Emer Smyth,

Research Professor, Social Research Division and Growing Up in Ireland, Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Dublin; Adjunct Professor, Trinity College Dublin





FUSE Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme



FUSE is the first research-based Anti-Bullying and Online Safety Programme designed to comply with UNESCO's Whole Education Approach to tackle bullying and online safety in schools. It is based on 25 years of research on bullying prevention and intervention and is designed to support the wider SPHE/RSE/Wellbeing curricula in schools. FUSE consists of a suite of student-led workshops and resources which FUSE teachers can deliver in the classroom.

At the heart of FUSE is the aim of building capacity in schools themselves to tackle bullying and online safety issues and to empower children and adolescents to understand their own behaviour, be able to recognise bullying and online safety risks and be confident in how to report and seek support when they need it.

The FUSE Programme is supported by Meta, Rethink Ireland and the Department of Education and as such is currently offered free of charge to all schools nationwide. It is the first research based Anti-Bullying and Online Safety programme in Ireland and is founded on over 25 years of research and is proving highly successful in improving the self-efficacy of children and adolescents in relation to tackling bullying and online safety issues. It is designed to support the wider SPHE/RSE/Wellbeing curricula in schools and involves teacher training, parental support, and student agency.

The FUSE Programme is recommended for 2nd year students and consists of four mandatory workshops of approximately 40 minutes in duration namely:

1. Bullying and the Importance of Noticing
2. Cyberbullying and the Importance of Noticing
3. Online Safety – Privacy and Sharing Online
4. Online Safety – Cyber Security Awareness

There are further optional & recommended workshops offered within the programme on key hot topics such as 'Image Sharing', 'Social Media', 'Bystanders & Responsibility' and 'Student Voice in the School Anti-Bullying Policy' amongst others.

Further details on the programme can be found on the FUSE website: <https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/>

It's time to register for FUSE

Registration for the FUSE Post-Primary Programme is now open for the forthcoming school term, please kindly register your participation at your earliest convenience at: <https://antibullyingcentre.ie/fuse/register/>.

Click on the Post Primary icon. Upon Registration, you will be sent a Zoom Link to register for a 30-40 minutes "Introduction to FUSE" session which provides a helicopter overview of the programme. The sessions run each Monday for the foreseeable future and as many teachers as you wish may join the session – it is not mandatory to attend the session to commence delivering the programme as the teaching resources are excellent & self-explanatory.

TikTok working with the Anti-Bullying Centre

The Anti-Bullying Centre is aware of the issues with TikTok in recent times and is available to help tackle these issues. The Centre has been given a direct contact link with TikTok in which content which can be considered hate speech/bullying can be passed directly onto TikTok's Safety Team. If your school needs to report something very serious, the centre can aid in getting the process speeded up and get content and profiles removed faster. Contact Colm Canning at colm.canning@dcu.ie.

Rachel O'Connor named President of NAPD



“We are living in chaotic conditions. Thus, leaders must be able to operate under complex, uncertain circumstances”,

Michael Fullan

I am very excited about being the President of such an important Association as NAPD. As a Community School principal, a mother, and a leader I see my role as ensuring that the collective voice of our members, across all sectors, is heard and represented at national level. Paul Crone, NAPD Director, has written in NAPD Leader that his focus will be on the ‘4 Ps’ – People, Profile, Processes and Pedagogy. I look forward to being part of the new 5-year strategic plan that I’m sure will encompass the vision and core values of our members.

NAPD is a major partner in Irish education, enjoying a collaborative and constructive relationship with the Department of Education, consultative status with the NCCA, representation on a wide range of educational, social and cultural organisations and contacts with educationalists across the globe.

To have a ‘seat at the table’ as a recognised education partner is worth its weight in gold. NAPD is the association that represents the voice of school leaders only, not the Board of Management, not teachers, you, the principal and deputy principal on the frontline.

NAPD will continue to advocate for meaningful Senior Cycle Reform, against the increasing burden of administrative workload pressures on school leaders and for technical IT support for schools to name but a few. I urge you to get involved and to share your views.

I thank ACCS for its encouragement and will continue to advocate for Community Schools, and in particular, DEIS schools, at every opportunity that I can.

Wishing you all a safe and rewarding school year.

Ar aghaidh le chéile.

Rachel O’ Connor,
President, NAPD.

“As a Community School principal, a mother, and a leader I see my role as ensuring that the collective voice of our members, across all sectors, is heard and represented at national level.”

On behalf of the ACCS Executive members and staff I would like to congratulate Rachel on her appointment as President of NAPD and we look forward to developing our working relationship throughout her term in this important role.

John Irwin, General Secretary, ACCS





Trinity College Dublin lit up in the CAW colours.

College Awareness Week (CAW)

College Awareness Week was held this year from 22nd to 28th November. College Awareness Week is a national campaign that aims to celebrate the benefits of going to college, showcasing local role models, and helping students to become ‘college ready’.

Each year, events take place across educational institutions and places of learning, including schools, colleges, libraries, youth clubs, and organisations in the community education sector. The campaign now involves 50% of DEIS schools and 30% of all schools nationally.

This year, to mark the launch of the national campaign, four native Irish trees are being planted in schools across the four provinces of Ireland. In the words of CAW founder, Kathleen O’Toole-Brennan, “it is hoped that the trees will symbolise the seeds planted by the campaign, the growth of learners, and the fact that we are all rooted in our communities.”

Both An Taoiseach Micheál Martin T.D., and Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Simon Harris T.D. attended tree planting ceremonies already this week.

At an event in Cork, An Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD, said: “if we are to thrive as a society, we must make sure that no student is left behind. Important initiatives such as College Awareness Week help students of all backgrounds to investigate and understand the post-leaving certificate opportunities available to them”.



Minister Simon Harris T.D. at a tree planting ceremony at Tallaght Community School.

During the week a tree planting ceremony also took place in Carndonagh Community School, Donegal.

The campaign so far has seen an inspiring and informative #CollegeConnections webinar delivered in conjunction with the Union of Students in Ireland and the Irish Second-Level Student Union. The webinar can be watched

back here - www.youtube.com/watch?v=giz0gcRSr1k.

CAW also produced a series of #CareerConnections videos to act as a guidance resource and offer students an insight into some of the careers available to them in the future. They are available here - www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuCNzRGCLo8&list=PL4rLmxxnAw_tXxC-V4zsfQo3fqo3908U

According to Minister Simon Harris; “College Awareness Week, now in its eighth year, has become a highlight of the academic calendar for many involved in teaching and learning. It has helped to inspire and inform students across the country, encouraging them to consider higher and further education as real opportunities.”

The campaign is supported by a number of organisations including SOLAS, the Institute of Guidance Counsellors, the Union of Students in Ireland (USI), the Higher Education Authority, the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD), and Trinity College Dublin which this year lit up in the CAW colours to show their support for the campaign.

If you are interested in learning more about the campaign and how to get involved, you can watch the Continuous Professional Development Training resource we created with the support of the Institute of Guidance Counsellors - www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9n5BOHinyw.

You can also get in touch with the CAW team at dahennes@tcd.ie or visit collegeaware.ie.

“...it is hoped that the trees will symbolise the seeds planted by the campaign, the growth of learners, and the fact that we are all rooted in our communities.”



L-R: Paul Crone – Director NAPD, Ian Boran – Deputy Principal Tallaght Community School, Catherine O’Sullivan – Director ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit, Aidan Lynch – Principal Tallaght Community School and Kathleen O’Toole-Brennan – Trinity College and Head of CAW.



L-R: Simon Harris T.D. Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science, Aidan Lynch – Principal Tallaght Community School, Councillor Mick Duff, Tessa Awe – Board of Management member Tallaght Community School, Colm Brophy T.D. Minister of State with responsibility for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora and David O’Connell – Board of Management member Tallaght Community School.

National College Awareness Week launched by Minister Simon Harris at Tallaght Community School

On Monday 22 November, College Awareness Week (CAW) was launched in style with the visit of Simon Harris TD, Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science. We were delighted to also welcome representatives from the College Awareness Week including founder Kathleen O’Toole-Brennan, Trinity College, Trinity Access 21, NAPD, colleagues from ACCS, Perrigo, local representatives and our own Board of Management.

The event started with Principal Aidan Lynch, who shared remarks about the importance of giving every student at Tallaght Community School the opportunity to progress to further education. Kathleen O’Toole-Brennan of CAW also spoke passionately about the CAW campaign and its roots in communities across Ireland. The audience heard from two past pupils, Jack Keating and Adam Mc Dowell, who shared their experience in school and their journey to college.

Minister Harris spoke about the importance of further education and the significance of planting a willow tree as part of the launch.

He shared that the tree would symbolise the seeds planted by the CAW campaign, the growth of the students and the fact we’re all rooted in our communities. The event then moved outdoors for the tree planting ceremony. The Minister took time and made sure to speak to the assembled Student Council and other gathered guests.

What a fantastic way to launch College Awareness Week in Tallaght!

During the week, lots of activities and events took place in the school with talks from past pupils, webinars, college visits and workshops from industry like Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Bayer and Amazon. The students were engaged with college and future education through fun activities like daily quizzes and scavenger hunts. The school also welcomed virtual and in-persons workshops from Junior Achievement Ireland, Business in the Community and South Dublin County Partnership’s ‘Inspiring the Future Project’.



Tallaght Community School

Gorey School of Art Further Education

Stephen Considine (BiPolar Bear Wear Owner and Graffiti Artist)

“I am the founder and owner of BiPolar Bear Wear clothes company and blessed with the superpowers of ADHD. At BPB W, we love to see people enjoying and taking pride in our clothes, whilst also eliminating some of the stigma that surrounds mental health.

I knew I wanted to do art but had no experience or entry point, luckily the Gorey School of Art tutors gave me an opportunity, instilled some belief, and gave me the guidance and tools to create what I had always yearned to make. Nearly ten years later, I still refer to what I learned in Gorey School of Art. I am forever grateful to the tutors and the creative campfire they have created and for sculpting mine and many others' lives.”

Stephen Considine

For further information contact:
 Catherine O’Sullivan
 Director, ACCS/JMB Further Education Support Unit
 Email: cosullivan@accs.ie
 Tel: 083 355 1034

Ciara Aherne outlines her route through Gorey School of Art to graduation from NCAD

Gorey School of Art provides courses that are academically challenging and rewarding. They are interdisciplinary in practice, offering fine art and design modules. This broad spectrum allowed me to discover my particular interest in Fine Art: painting. The small-class sizes allowed for guidance on an individual-level and facilitated independent research, paired-work and debates.

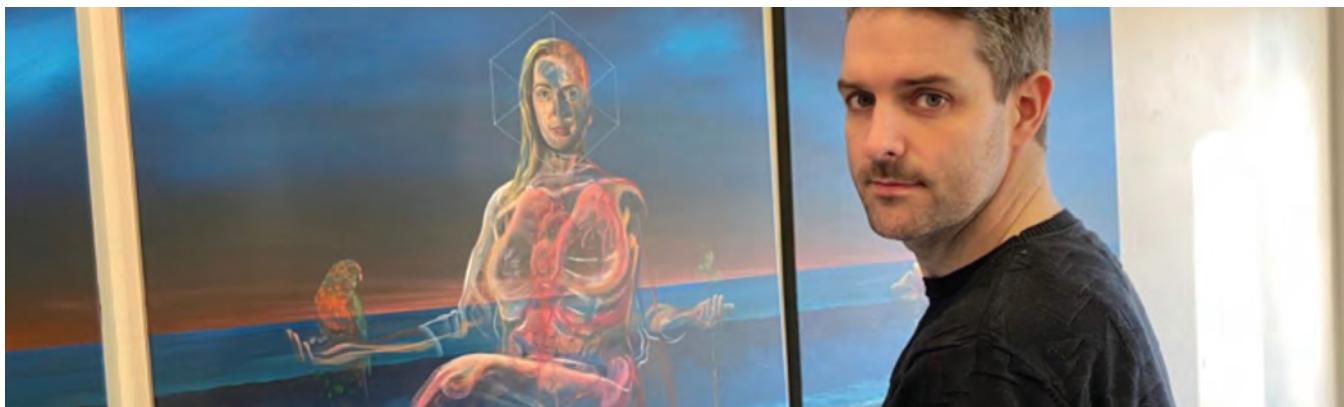
The staff at GSA were always approachable, helpful and thoroughly dedicated to their distinct art-fields. Having access to staff with diverse artistic research backgrounds helped to realise the wealth of career opportunities

available to me. I gained subject knowledge and relevant skills for employment in the different art sectors, including art curating and design.

The route I took in GSA granted me direct entry to second year of my undergraduate course in NCAD. I graduated from NCAD with a first-class honours degree in Fine Art (Painting) & Education, and I was awarded the NUI Art and Design Award 2021. Currently I work as a secondary school Art teacher.

Ciara Aherne,
 Level 6





Former Moate Business College student Vincent Devine commissioned to paint Vicky Phelan Portrait

After graduating from Moate Business College Level 5 in Art and Design course where Vincent completed his portfolio he continued on to complete an Honours Degree in Graphic Design. It was actually while studying graphic design he began to paint independently. Subsequently when he completed his degree at third level, painting was the art path he decided to pursue. In 2018 Vincent had a sell-out show of the Irish debut of his new Manifesto work to one of Ireland's most prominent collectors. His work has been lauded by huge stars such as Shakira, Will-i-am, Alanis Morissette and J.K Rowling to name a few and he has had work commissioned by Tyra Banks, Roisin Murphy, Iggy Azalea and has had his work feature on Madonna's "Rebel Heart Tour".

This past year became an incredibly poignant and proud year for Vincent when he was commissioned to paint a portrait of cervical cancer fighter Vicky Phelan. The painting took Vincent months

to complete and involved bringing Ms Phelan to the beach in Doonbeg in Co Clare to compose the image. The portrait was auctioned for the Heroes Aid charity, which was set up last year in response to the global pandemic and sources and funds personal protective equipment, equipment, educational and psychological supports for healthcare workers and raised just over an incredible €58,000.

Vicky said of her collaboration with Vincent, "I could see how invested he was in his work. He's very strong into women's rights and advocating for women and what I really loved was the anatomical way he painted me. I really like this idea of showing my scars. We all live with scars that nobody sees and I thought it was a really clever way of making the invisible visible."

"He just got me and understood what was important to me and why".

"Straddling the boundaries of Realism, Surrealism and Expressionism, Devine has infused the portrait with a mysterious pulse that resonates beyond the canvas. Reading from left to right, Vicky Phelan's narrative is conveyed as past, present and future acted out on Doonbeg beach in the west of Ireland. The left-hand panel is dominated by a powerful assemblage of flesh and bone whose forward motion is suddenly halted. The centre panel dominates. Here the sitter engages directly with the viewer. Events, both joyful and traumatic are rendered symbolically. Her outstretched right hand supports a bird, a young crimson rosella, representative of her daughter; on her left hand, her son as a sapling oak. Beneath her left foot, a colonnade represents a legal triumph while shamrocks close to her heart are emblematic of the continuous support she has received from the people of Ireland and beyond. Within her torso, invisible cancer is made visible. Her eyes are bright with strength and hope. In the right-hand panel a horse is looking backwards, a collage of powerfully charged symbols is placed between its hind legs and forelegs. A flickering candle reminds the viewer of the fragility of life itself. Indented into the sands beneath, Vicky Phelan's footsteps leave the canvas."



Events, both joyful and traumatic are rendered symbolically. Her outstretched right hand supports a bird, a young crimson rosella, representative of her daughter; on her left hand, her son as a sapling oak. Beneath her left foot, a colonnade represents a legal triumph while shamrocks close to her heart are emblematic of the continuous support she has received from the people of Ireland and beyond. Within her torso, invisible cancer is made visible. Her eyes are bright with strength and hope. In the right-hand panel a horse is looking backwards, a collage of powerfully charged symbols is placed between its hind legs and forelegs. A flickering candle reminds the viewer of the fragility of life itself. Indented into the sands beneath, Vicky Phelan's footsteps leave the canvas."

Description by Vincent Devine and Philip Sheppard

Employee Assistance Service

The Spectrum.Life Employee Assistance Service (EAS) is a free and confidential counselling service that provides wellbeing support to teachers, SNAs and all school staff.

Your EAS is available 24/7, 365 days a year providing:

- ✓ 'In The Moment' Support
- ✓ Referral to Counseling
- ✓ Online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy



On the initial contact, our case manager will complete a quick assessment and when appropriate, referral to short term counseling will be made.

Register for your wellbeing app:

<https://wellbeingtogether.spectrum.life/login> | Organisation code: yIVIU17



Stand Up Awareness Week 2021

St. Tiernan's Community School

St. Tiernan's Community School has been celebrating Stand Up Awareness week for the past four years and each year it gets better and better. Our students showed their support and signed the Ally pledge as part of our campaign to tackle homophobic, transphobic and biphobic bullying. This week created a lovely positive environment to allow for conversation and understanding to take place.

In SPHE and Religion classes, the students worked on educational resources from the organisation Belong To while other subjects supported the week by using inclusive language, themes and references to the LGBTI+ community. Well done to the Maths department on their creativity with this task!

Students showed great initiative, talent and forward thinking this year with our kindness wall. This wall was designed by a 3rd year student who then led a small group in the painting process. These students appreciate Stand Up week but felt there needed to be continued representation after the week ended. We are incredibly proud of these students and thrilled that this beautiful piece will remain a constant reminder that St. Tiernan's is a safe and inclusive space for everyone.



Bishopstown Community School

This November we celebrated Stand Up week. This is a week that focuses on raising awareness on homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and the affect it has on teenagers.

Students decorated the school, created anti-bullying lesson plans and donned badges in support of the LGBTI+ community. The week culminated in a human flag where each year group and the staff represented a colour of the pride flag. In addition we had a number of students who formed an artistic group to create our anti-bullying mural "Shantay You Stay" inspired by stonewall hero Marsha P. Johnson.



How to save your planet one object at a time

If you are looking for ideas on how your school and students can make small changes towards living more sustainably Dr. Tara Shine's book *How To Save Your Planet One Object At A Time* can help with numerous ideas and suggestions. We have selected articles on two topics from the book which we think might be of particular interest to schools and students, **Fast Fashion** and **Mobile Phones**.



About Dr. Tara Shine

Dr. Tara Shine is an expert in the field of climate change and climate justice with a passion for communicating her science and her positive vision for the future. She has advised world leaders, governments, multilateral agencies and civil society organisations on climate change, environmental policy and development assistance. Formerly Special Advisor to the Mary Robinson Foundation - Climate Justice and Adviser to The Elders, Tara has recently been announced as the incoming Chair of the International Institute of Environment and Development (IIED). She knows the inside world of the international climate change negotiations as well as the role that business plays in shaping and delivering sustainable development.

Tara is Co-Founder and Director of the award-winning social enterprise, Change by Degrees, which educates and inspires people at home, at work and in their community to live more sustainably.

Thank you to Dr. Tara Shine for her contribution to ACCS news. For more information and tips on sustainability go to www.changebydegrees.com.

Courtesy of publishers Simon & Schuster (UK) Ltd

**Change starts at home. In the office.
Change starts with you. Your family. Your friends.
Change starts with everyday things.
One object at a time.**

Fast Fashion

We consume 400% more items of clothing than we did 20 years ago and the predictions are that this will only continue to increase up to 2030.

Most clothes sold by high street retailers have a shelf life of 12 weeks maximum and then they are discounted for clearance.

Research suggests that 17% per cent of young people will not wear an outfit again if it has been snapped and seen on Instagram.

Fashion by Numbers

- ⊕ The fashion industry is a **US\$3 trillion** global market.
- ⊕ This sector employs an estimated **60-75 million** people worldwide. **80%** of them are women between the ages of 18 and 35.
- ⊕ Garment workers earn only 1-3% of the price paid for an item of clothing.
- ⊕ The fashion industry produces **3.3 billion tonnes** of CO₂e per year – close to the carbon footprint of the entire European Union (**28 member states**).
- ⊕ It uses one-quarter of all the chemicals produced worldwide and is responsible for **20%** of industrial water pollution globally.
- ⊕ Producing textiles is second only to agriculture in the amount of water it consumes.
- ⊕ **One pair** of jeans and **one T-shirt** consumes **20,000 litres** of water (growing the cotton, manufacturing and consumer use).
- ⊕ **100 billion** items of clothing are produced worldwide each year, and **3 out of 5** are thrown away within a year.

What You Can Do...

We need a new approach to fashion where we share, repair, swap and rent clothes and shoes instead of buying more and more new stuff, for instance:

Rent or swap clothes for special occasions from job interviews to weddings from Depop, YCloset, Yeechoo, Rent the Runway and NuWardrobe.

Organise a clothes swap with friends. So much fun and everyone leaves smiling with something new to them to wear.

Learn how to repair and look after your clothes so that they last a lifetime.

Mobile Phones

There are 3.59 million smartphone users in Ireland and 48.42 million in the UK (2018).

There is no denying the effects any mobile phone has on the environment. From the extraction of the raw materials needed to make it to the energy involved in its production and use, plus the mountains of waste it generates as we upgrade to the latest model – a mobile phone’s impact is significant.

Approximately 7.1 billion smartphones were manufactured worldwide between 2007 and 2017. Between 2007 and 2017 the amount of energy used to manufacture just those smartphones is the same amount of energy required to power India for a whole year. Added to this is the energy required to charge a phone.

In 2020 smartphones will have surpassed laptops and PCs as the main users of energy in this sector. In fact, it is estimated that by 2040 the information and communications technology sector will be responsible for 14% of global emissions, equivalent to the current carbon footprint of the transport sector.

It may look like simply metal and glass on the outside, but inside your phone is packed with a vast array of precious metals. Mining those metals from the ground has a direct impact on the environment as well as the impact of the chemicals used to extract them and the wastewater they produce, called tailings. Over 40 tailings spills from metal mines occurred between 2007 and 2017 causing pollution and damaging the health of people living in the vicinity. The largest of these was in Brazil in 2015 when an iron ore mine collapsed and released 33 million cubic metres (equivalent to 13,000 Olympic-sized swimming pools) of wastewater into the River Doce, flooding local villages and killing 19 people.

Additional Facts

- **It has been estimated that if 10% of mobile phone users unplugged their phone chargers after use, the energy saved over the course of one year could power 60,000 European homes.**
- **By 2040 phone and data centres will have the biggest carbon footprint of the tech industry.**
- **The UN calculated that in 2014 alone the e-waste from small IT devices such as phones was 3 million metric tonnes and less than 16% of this was recycled.**

What You Can Do...

Unplug your phone charger when you are not using it – or switch off at the plug – and save money on your electricity bills.

Turn down the screen’s brightness and use the low-energy mode to prolong battery life.

Keep your current phone longer. The most sustainable phone is the one you already have. If it is getting slow, update the software, delete files and apps you don’t use to help it to perform better. A certified phone refurbisher may also be able to give it a new lease of life.

Sell or trade in your old phone. Many network providers and phone manufacturers offer incentives to offset the cost of a new one.

Donate old phones to charity where they are refurbished and sold to raise funds.



Killaun Bogland Reserve and book launch at St. Brendan's Community School, Birr



St. Brendan's Community School Birr relaunched the Killaun Bogland Reserve and the publication of the book, 'When the Nightjar Returns' by John Feehan on Thursday 18th of November. Former President Mary Robinson relaunched the Bogland Reserve via video link. When she was President, Mrs. Robinson launched the first boardwalk at Killaun Bogland Reserve in November 1991 in the infancy of her Presidency.

At the launch night Mrs Robinson told the gathering that she had "very fond memories" of the event thirty years ago. She went on to say that "the planet's biodiversity is reducing at an unparalleled rate. 'It is very frightening".

On the night, renowned naturalist, Dr. John Feehan gave an insightful speech on the significance of the Bogland Reserve and stated that "the great Killaun Project

is the ambition to see the bog as a whole conserved and managed in the long term as a place where people can go to experience an area of truly remarkable biodiversity."

St. Brendan's Community School recognised the importance of nature and sustainability all those years ago and continue to develop the project for students, the local community and the biodiversity that exists at Killaun. Students and staff at St. Brendan's will be trained by Dr. John Feehan so that they can learn about all aspects of life in Killaun.

The development of Killaun is spearheaded by John Kennedy (Principal), Ming Loughnane (former Principal), and Tommy Hannon (teacher). The newly developed boardwalk is available to the local community as a walking trail that will soon cover over 7.5kms with plans to expand to over 20kms. Throughout the night, guests were treated to some excellent musical entertainment, video footage and photographs of Killaun, and guest speakers.



Clockwise from top left:
 Master of ceremonies on the night John Kennedy (Principal).
 Left to Right. Attending the launch were the current Principal John Kennedy alongside the three former Principals of St. Brendan's Community School: Ming Loughnane, Tom Foley and Bro. Denis Minehane.
 Musicians providing excellent entertainment.
 Dr. John Feehan (Author), Alexandra Crowley (Green Schools Committee), and Tom Foley (former Principal) cutting the ribbon to launch the publication of the book 'When the Nightjar Returns'.

Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara Polathollán na hIdirbhliana

Seomra ranga amuigh faoin aer Le tacaíocht ón gClár *World Wise Global Schools* tá polathollán tógtha sa scoil. Is iad grúpa na hIdirbhliana a bhéas freagrach as an obair a bhaineann le roghnú, siolrú, plandáil agus cúram céard a bhéas curtha ann. Cheangal an tionscnamh seo freisin leis an gclár *Scoileanna Cruthaíocha* atá i bhfeidhm sa scoil, agus seomra ranga amuigh faoin aer cruthaithe ag grúpa na hIdirbhliana. Is fada linn go bhfeicfidh muid toradh na pleanála agus na hoibre ón Earrach ar aghaidh.



Goatscaping at Kinsale Community School

Kinsale Community School have recently added to their sustainability practices by bringing in a herd of goats to goatscape some of their steep embankments.

What exactly is goatscaping?

Goatscaping is a weed management practice that offers several additional benefits that traditional landscaping does not. Hiring a herd of goats could be a great strategy implemented on landowner's properties who want to mitigate weeds without pesticide use. Several businesses and landowners have called upon herds of goats to tame unruly weeds and tough areas to maintain. Goats will eat almost anything. They have no problem eating dangerous plants like burning nettle, poison ivy, and poison sumac. Steep and hard-to-mow areas are no match for the goat as they are agile and hard-working creatures that can get into rough and narrow spots.

Goatscaping is a good fit for landowners looking for a chemical-free and organic way to manage their weed populations. The use of grazing goats eliminates worrying about the risk of potentially harmful chemicals and negative environmental impacts. Goats eat almost anything and everything, provide fertilizer for the field, neutralize several varieties of weed seeds, and are a low maintenance method of land management.

"The embankment on which this photograph is taken is very steep and difficult to maintain during the wintertime. As part of our emphasis on practical sustainability we reached out to goatherd William Walsh. William engages with the students and staff of our school on the benefits that are derived from goats clearing the embankment.

It's a very valuable learning experience and it is a safe, sustainable and innovative way to maintain the hard to reach areas of the school site."

Fergal McCarthy, Principal, Kinsale Community School



Erasmus Plus Programme in Cashel Community School



Clodagh Kelly (Director of Schools, Tipperary ETB), Nicola Sheils (BOM, Cashel Community School), Margaret Skehan (Chairperson BOM, Cashel Community School), John Gallagher (Principal, Cashel Community School), John Irwin (General Secretary, ACCS).

Cashel Community School provides a high-quality education to all its students. This involves enhancing lifelong learning, improving efficiency in education, promoting equality, social cohesion, active citizenship, advancing creativity, entrepreneurship and innovation in our students in accordance with the EU Education and Training Programme 2020.

To do this we created a project called Growing Together. As life evolves and changes occur we must grow and develop to provide the best education possible for the holistic development of our students. Our project is driven by our desire to improve our ability to meet the needs of all our students in their growth. We strive to improve our teaching methods in order to support every student in their individual learning process.

The project identified three key areas for development- Health and wellbeing, ICT - new technologies and digital competencies and the key competencies of numeracy and literacy.

We applied for a grant from Erasmus Plus and have been awarded €76,630. The Erasmus+ KA101 programme is an excellent opportunity to develop collaborative practices within our school

community, local region and in Europe. Here we will gain invaluable knowledge as to best practice within Europe. We will send staff from a large range of subject areas to investigate new strategies, methodologies, and resources that will help the holistic growth of all our students.

The staff that go will improve their skills and knowledge and they will bring their new found skills back to the rest of the staff. This will help us grow and in turn enrich our students' learning experience; they will become active citizens and future leaders who are connected, respected and contribute to the world, enhancing employment skills, training, entrepreneurship and social inclusion.

Our staff wellbeing is a priority for us also. Staff will attend mindfulness, stress management and healthy eating courses, as happy teachers lead to happy classrooms. Their coping strategies will be improved and these methods can be passed on to our students.

By taking part in the Erasmus + project we in Cashel Community School will continue to grow together. Like a tree our branches will be strengthened and we will continue bloom.

'Decade of Centenaries' Irish History Competition 2021

Congratulations to the winners of the best video entry in the 'Decade of Centenaries' Irish History Competition 2021. The students chose to make a video about the specific theme within the War of Independence category – the Ambush of Soloheadbeg in 1919.



Pictured: Mr. Flynn (Multimedia Production Teacher), Ms. Neavyn (TY Co-Ordinator), Mr. Gallagher (Principal), Award Winners: Ellen Butler, Aurelia Piasecka, Gráinne O'Connor, Aoife White & Clarence Navarro.

Celebrating Language & Culture in Mountrath Community School

Language is a very important part of our school

We learn our own language, Irish, as well as other European languages such as French and German, but I feel one of the most interesting ways we learn language is through the culture and traditions that come into our school through the students that inhabit the school.

Knowing how the French prepare their meals or the history of their music and cities is just as important as knowing the difference between “un” and “une” (It’s the fact that one is masculine and the other is feminine if you were curious). A country’s language and culture are intertwined with one another and in Mountrath Community School we get to experience all of them. We have so many nationalities from across Europe and the rest of the world and as a result we learn so much about life outside of Ireland, helping us in getting to know each other better and come closer as students. When making the video for the EU National Language Day I was shocked by how many students I’d met who had such a strong connection to their language and its country, whether they’re as close as Poland or as far as Peru. I think schools across all of the EU should do more when it comes to celebrating the languages of their member states. The experience as a whole made me take a step back and realise that our school isn’t necessarily an Irish school nor is it even a European school, but simply put a school spanning all across the world that welcomes any and all nationalities into its arms. Quite a nice place to be in if I were to be candid about it. I look forward to more students from across the world coming into our school so that they can share the language and culture surrounding their nationality with us.

*George Donnery,
Transition Year Student*

Mountrath Community School recently celebrated European Day of Languages. Students participated in several online/in class quizzes, discussions, speed dating and a language treasure trail competition. Transition Year student George Donnery created and edited a superb video showcasing some of the languages within the school community. Check out the MCS European Day of Language content via Twitter and Instagram - @mountrathcs.





Academic Mentoring at **Ballinamore Community School**

There is overwhelming evidence that students learn more effectively when they are happy in their work, believe in themselves, and feel that their school is supporting them (Weare, K. 2000). As part of our commitment to student wellbeing and providing our students with the information, tools and supports necessary to realise their personal and academic goals, we consult with all stakeholders on a regular basis to ensure that we are adapting to meet the evolving needs of our students. Having worked for several years to embed formative instructional and assessment practices into the culture of our school, and committing to the provision of formative feedback, we have now developed an academic mentoring programme that will ensure that our 3rd and 6th year students have constant access to that feedback and receive ongoing support and guidance from all their teachers throughout the year.

The programme, developed by our Guidance Counsellor Ms Garvey, is facilitated through Wellbeing Classes at Junior

Cycle and through Career Guidance classes at Senior Cycle. It encourages students to examine their routine and to create realistic study timetables for themselves; to set SMART goals in each subject, using their recent test scores and teacher feedback as a reference tool; and to review and evaluate their progress each month. Subject teachers provide individually tailored formative feedback to meet the needs of each student at regular points throughout the year. All the data is stored in a specially designed handbook that acts as a personal learning diary. It contains all their targets, evidence of their progress, the advice provided by their teachers and tips on how to plan effective study routines.

Working together as a school community, our academic mentoring programme aims to ensure each student receives formative support and guidance from all their subject teachers, as well as the Guidance Counsellor, and that this in turn will assist them in making good decisions about their academic year and realising their true potential.



Carrigaline Community School

celebrate the tenth year of Health Week -
"Falling into Healthy Habits"



Health Week in Carrigaline Community School has always been a fun and exciting time within the school environment. This year in its tenth year, was no exception with countless activities and events taking place over the course of the week.

Students heard talks from Narcotics Anonymous, personal trainer Gavin Rowan, sex and relationship counsellor Grace Alice, Chef Darina Allen and Mark Kilgallon, the Munster Rugby Strength and Conditioning Coach. Having previously worked in Harvard and for the Sydney Swans, he has coached many athletes

including Mutaz Essa Barshim who won the gold medal in high jump in Tokyo Olympics 2021. He also introduced us to the importance and the benefits of exercise and sleep.

Master Chef CCS made a triumphant return after a year break due to the pandemic. The competition was opened by Neven Maguire via Zoom, and we were very privileged to have three professional judging chefs from MTU Culinary College.

5th years were visited by Father Philip Mulryne. Father Philip spoke to them about his previous career as a Manchester United soccer player and how he transitioned into the priesthood. Six months prior to becoming a priest, he had to close his bank accounts and give away all his belongings, including his Ferrari! He studied to become a priest in Dublin and Rome, is now a priest for three years and enjoys everyday life and spreading his spiritual experiences with others.

Also held throughout the week were BodyWhys webinars and internet safety workshops for Junior Cycle classes and Mindfulness workshops.

Students heard from Colette Wolfe whose daughter Leanne took her own life after years of bullying. Leanne left behind a diary that charted her descent into despair.

Perhaps most beneficial to hear from all the talks was that no matter what the situation, there is always someone to talk to and to reach out to. Hearing the stories helped highlight the importance of mental health and mental illness. This focus on mental health and reaching out is so important, especially given the past two years we've had to experience.

It certainly was a Health Week packed full of activities. A great success we believe and thoroughly enjoyed by students and staff alike. We're already looking forward to next year!!!

By Sarah Byrne, Arianna Fennessy, Grace Dooley and Alex Paul Wilson.

Portumna Community School

congratulate Ashlynn Fahy

Ashlynn Fahy receiving her Galway Gardaí Divisional Youth Award, for her short film on raising mental health awareness for young people during Covid 19 lockdown, from Brid Dunne. The film entitled "Unmasking" was an entry for the Walk in My Shoes campaign, by St Patricks Mental Health Services. Ashlynn was shortlisted to the top five in her category.



Cúrsa Seoltóireachta

Scoil Phobail Mhic Dara

A bhuíochas don aimsir fhábharach cuireadh cúrsa seachtaine seoltóireachta ar siúl do scoláirí na hIdirbhliana. Reachtáiltear an cúrsa seo le bunscoil seoltóireachta a theagasc agus chun suim sa spóirt thraidisiúnta seo a spreagadh i measc aos-óg an cheantair. Cabhraíonn teagascóir ó Cheapach na gCapall, An Fháirche linn an traenáil a chur ar fáil. Fuair an scoil deis roinnt báid seoil agus bád tionlacáin a cheannacht agus tá sé i gceist againn an traenáil seo a ofráil go rialta agus tuilleadh forbartha a dhéanamh ar an gclár amach anseo.





Ballincollig Community School

Student Council achieve success with Library Rejuvenation Project

The Library Rejuvenation Project began last year following a student council meeting where students reached a consensus that the school library was not student friendly, lacked resources and needed modernisation. Students agreed that they would adopt the task and embark on a journey to rejuvenate and modernise the library space.

“Important for us to take responsibility for our school and take an active role in making a positive change”

Third Year Student Council Member

Under the guidance of Student Voice Coordinator Ms. Healy, the students embarked on a journey which began with consulting with Construction Study students. Construction study students with the assistance of Mr. O’ Toole used concepts and ideas displayed in the mood board to draw up a design of the library on school software. They also researched and advised on materials to be utilised in the project, provided huge insight and guidance on budget and played a huge role in the assembly of chairs, desks, cubicles and furniture ensuring the design on paper became a reality.

“We always get the opportunity to apply our skills on projects in class, it was great to get the chance to apply them to building the furniture for the library because it gives you a sense of pride in your work knowing that it is being seen and used by everyone in school”

Construction Study student

Art students also played an integral role of design and decorating the space by integrating the 4th year group’s legacy project into the library space. The legacy project gives students the chance to use their voice by choosing a personality who has had a lasting impact on the world and create a portrait of this person. Portraits created thus far include Darwin, Malala Yousafzai, Padraig Pearse, Ruth

Bader Ginsburg and Nelson Mandela. The new library will now offer a space to showcase the students’ work and highlight these inspiring figures in the BCS community. This year, students have chosen to create a portrait of a woman called Sarah Gilbert, a vaccine developer. We can give you 19 guesses as to why she was chosen! Senior Cycle students with the assistance of Mr. Desmond have come up with a design plan, primed their boards and work on the 8ft x 20ft mural has finally begun. The mural which will occupy the main wall of the library, aims to represent all aspects of life in the school and serve as a visual story for staff and students.

The Student Council were extremely successful in the rejuvenation of the library space and in September their focus turned to updating the library book collection. Students now play a critical role in running the Library. While the Library acts as a space for students to utilise on a daily basis, the student council manage a book borrowing scheme on a Monday at Lunchtime, which allows students and teachers to avail of books in the school.

Student Voice was central in this project from start to finish.

What began as consultation with students resulted in a student led initiative which enabled students to become engaged, active and enthused in school development. Students were not only afforded the opportunity to get involved but they were given the opportunity to take ownership of the Library renovation project. The project provided students with an opportunity to apply their skills, interest’s and expertise to a project which they felt passionately about. Entrusting and empowering students with this project had been an enormous success as it has resulted in students making a huge contribution to school development, a development which will benefit future generations of students.

The school motto “Achieving Excellence Together” is exemplified in the proactive approach students have taken together with the library renovation project. A project, which was funded by Tomar Trust, a support which students and staff are extremely grateful, has resulted in the transformation of the existing library space into a vibrant, modern space which facilitates students to read, research, explore, create, collaborate and learn.

Enterprise in

Ramsgrange Community School

As Christmas approaches, Enterprise Season is in full swing for the students of Ramsgrange Community School who have been busy creating their own enterprises and selling their products.

With Covid and current restrictions, it was unfortunately not possible to hold the annual Christmas Market this year however, that did not hinder the budding entrepreneurs who have been travelling to a variety of Christmas Markets across the region as well as selling directly through their own social media pages.

A selection of the enterprise groups include; Sunset Jewellery, run by Maggie Byrne (1st Year) who makes handmaid jewellery to order, Glassea, established by Eanna Grennan (1st Year) who creates art made from sea glass, Erin McNamara and Ellen Chapman teamed up for their enterprise, Simply Recycled, to design and make handmaid cards using recycled tissue paper from the dispensers in the school.

Students recently travelled to the RDS Arena with Ms. Louise Walsh who spearheads Enterprise in RCS to attend the “The Contemporary Craft & Design Fair” which was run by Gifted. There they each had their own stand to display their products as well as being able to sell alongside well established professional craftspeople.

Other enterprise groups running include; a group formed by Anna Murphy and Emily McCabe (1st Year) who have made handmade and sustainably packaged bath bombs with their enterprise Bath Bliss, 2nd Year student, Evan Brennan, who creates Lego Mini Decals with his enterprise EB.Troops and also Kraveable Kookies, an enterprise run by Noah O'Connor (1st Year) who has combined his passion of baking with his desire to make a positive contribution to the environment by baking and selling homemade cookies. Noah has pledged to donate 25% of all profits to Oceana, a non-profit ocean conservation organisation.

All enterprise groups will be entering both the NFTE competition run by Foróige and the Student Enterprise competition (SEP) run by the Local Enterprise Office. Students of Ramsgrange Community School have been very successful in these competitions in previous years and this year's Enterprise Groups will be eager to emulate the success of groups in the past.



#My Hopes for the Future

Child Talks 2021

Now in its fourth year, the Ombudsman for Children’s Office recently held Child Talks 2021; an annual event where children and young people up to age 18 are given a platform to talk about the issues that matter most to them. This year’s theme was ‘My Hopes for the Future.’

Congratulations to Katherine Amusan, Chairperson of the Student Voice Council in St. Marks Community School who co-hosted the event. Katherine is a past speaker who took part in Child Talks 2020 and has participated in ACCS Student Voice for the last two years.

“My story last year was about my hair and coming to terms with my identity. My culture is something to be proud of and I spoke last year about how I don’t need to separate my African culture from being born and raised in Ireland. Participating in Child Talks and getting to tell my story was a very liberating experience and it really grew my confidence.”

“I would tell anyone thinking of applying to go for it. You don’t need to have a fully fleshed out story – it can just be a thought or a spark – anything you are passionate about. You get so much help along the way. It is an amazing opportunity to get a platform you would not normally get.”

The OCO invited children from all over Ireland to apply to take part in this year’s event. Child Talks is an opportunity for children to tell their own stories, to share their views and to have their say. Since Child Talks began in 2018 young people have talked about lots of different issues – school, disability, period poverty, culture,

sexuality, family, and lots more. It is completely up to the speakers.

Speaking on the importance of elevating children’s voices, Dr. Niall Muldoon said:

“The past 18 months has highlighted the importance of hearing children’s voices and their concerns. Child Talks gives us a real insight into the problems and issues children are facing and helps us to get a better understanding of their world. At a time where children’s voices have often been forgotten, Child Talks gives young people a unique platform to share their story, vision, and hopes for the future.”

“We want to hear from children from all over the country and from all backgrounds. We also want to hear from children with disabilities or those who may need additional supports. There is no need to worry if you have never spoken in public, we will help you and work with you.”

“Child Talks has changed over the past four years, largely due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but the message and value has remained the same. Child Talks gives our speakers the confidence and courage to speak up about the issues.”

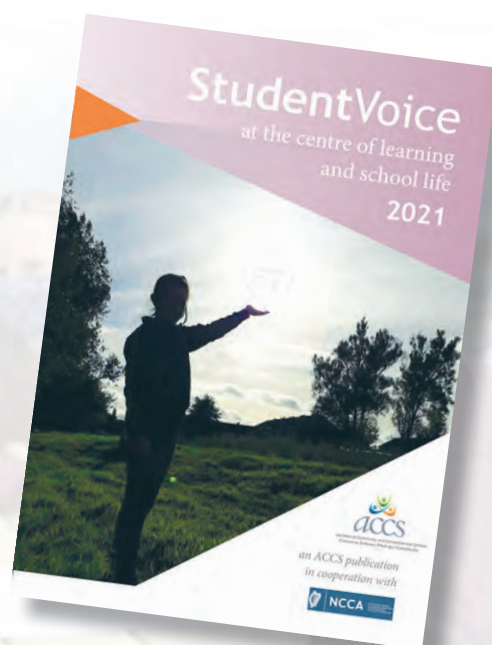
For further information go to <https://www.oco.ie/childrens-rights/child-talks>



ACCS represented at the Australian Association for Research in Education Children and Students’ Voice 2021 Online Symposium

ACCS was proud to be represented by Assistant General Secretary Áine O’Sullivan at the recent Australian Association for Research in Education Children and Students’ Voice 2021 Online Symposium.

John Irwin,
General Secretary, ACCS



Recent **ACCS Info Bulletins**

BULLETIN NO.	DATE	SUMMARY
ACCS/Info Bulletin 43/21	30/11/2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circular Letter 0045/2021 (CLASS Hours). 2. Substitution Note to Post Primary Schools and TC Information Note 0026/2021. 2. CL 0059/2021 - Arrangements for the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to the school year 2021/22 (supersedes CI 76/2020).
ACCS/Info Bulletin 42/21	25/11/2021	Re: 1. Inspections. 2. Child Protection. 3. Substitution. 4. MPLC License.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 41/21	24/11/2021	ACCS CONVENTION 2022, The Slieve Russell Hotel Golf & Country Club, Ballyconnell, Co. Cavan.
ACCS/Info Bulletin 40/21	17/11/2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update on Government Guidance 2. Cancellation of In-School Management Conference 2021 3. Unmet Demand Survey
ACCS/Info Bulletin 39/21	19/10/2021	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Circular Letter 0045/2021 (CLASS Hours). 2. Department Survey for Unmet demand for teachers in schools 2021/2022. 3. Draft Specifications for Leaving Certificate Irish L1 & L2. 4. PDST Online Courses. 5. Junior Cycle. 6. NCCA.

Recent Relevant **DE Circular Letters**

CIRCULAR NO.	SUMMARY
CL 62/21	Appeal System for Permanent Principal and Deputy Principal Appointments
CL 59/21	Arrangements for the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to the school year 2021/22

As the sun sets on 2021, we in ACCS reflect on the challenges you have faced entering into a new school year in September and indeed continue to deal with on a daily basis. We had hoped to meet with you in person at our In-School Management Conference in November but unfortunately it was not to be. As we look ahead to a new year be assured our goal is to continue to work for you and with you through any challenges we may face in 2022.



John, Áine, Anne Marie, Catherine, Debbie, Eileen, Susan, Hilary, Dave and Elaine wish all our ACCS members a very Happy Christmas and a healthy New Year.