

ACCS NEWS

ISSUE 3 • 2022/2023

41st ACCS Annual Convention



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Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Cúnam na Scoileanna Pobail agus Cúimsitheacha

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Meet the newly elected members of the ACCS Executive 2023/24



Ingrid Fallon Edwina Gottstein Eoin Norton Rachel O'Connor Margaret O'Connor

I would like to extend a warm welcome to the newly elected members of the ACCS Executive 2023/2024, Ingrid Fallon – Holy Family Community School, Edwina Gottstein – Bishopstown Community School, Eoin Norton – Newpark Comprehensive School, Rachel O’Connor – Ramsgrange Community School and Margaret O’Connor – Loreto Community School Milford.

Ingrid Fallon is Principal of Holy Family Community School and was elected as a representative of the Dublin Region.

Edwina Gottstein is Principal of Bishopstown Community School and was elected as a representative of the Munster Region.

Eoin Norton is Principal of Newpark Comprehensive School and was elected as a representative of the Comprehensive Schools’ sector.

Rachel O’Connor is Principal of Ramsgrange Community School and was elected as a representative of the Leinster Region.

Margaret O’Connor is Principal of Loreto Community School Milford and was elected as a representative of the Ulster Region.

The ACCS team and I are looking forward to working with them and the present Executive members over the next year as we continue to deliver the ACCS Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025 and to strive towards promoting our core values.

John Irwin,
General Secretary

ACCS Executive 2023/2024

President	James Duignan
City and Co. of Dublin	Pat McKenna Antoinette Nic Gearailt Ingrid Fallon
Leinster	Paul Thornton Denis Magner Rachel O’Connor
Munster	Fergal McCarthy Noel O’Sullivan Edwina Gottstein
Connacht	Tom Costello William Culkeen
Ulster	Patsy McVicar Margaret O’Connor
Comprehensives	Richard Prendiville Eoin Norton
Co-opted	David Leahy Dr. Eilis Humphreys

ACCS Annual Convention

“Education for All” 2023

The ACCS Annual Convention took place this year on 22nd, 23rd and 24th March at the Great Southern Hotel, Killarney. This year’s theme “Education for All” captured our schools’ core values of care and respect, inclusion and equality, equity and justice. These enable our students to reach his, her, their full potential and become open-minded and responsible citizens contributing to a just and fair society. We were delighted to welcome all the educational partners, Minister for Education Norma Foley, officials from the Department of Education, our Trustees, members of Boards of Management, managerial and representative bodies, teachers, parents and students to this year’s event.

We were honoured to welcome activist and sports journalist, Joanne O’Riordan as our keynote speaker. Joanne, a former pupil of Millstreet Community School, spoke about her life and how she has managed to overcome the many challenges she faces on a daily basis. It was truly humbling to listen to Joanne’s story as she enlightened a full audience of educators on how we all play a part in helping students along their path in life to reach their potential. Her story is one of resilience and good humour.

The two workshops, “Inclusion – Opening Special Classes” facilitated by the NCSE and DE and “Managing Risk in Schools” led by the State Claims Team were relevant and interesting and were received very positively by all who attended. The two workshops included Q&A sessions where delegates got opportunities to chat about processes and issues of concern in relation to both areas.

On Friday morning, current issues were raised with the Minister by ACCS President, James Duignan in his address including teacher supply, DEIS funding, curriculum reform and patronage/trusteeship of schools.

Teacher Supply

James thanked the Minister for the alleviating measures she has taken to date and committed to continue working with the Minister and the relevant bodies in bettering the issue.



Áine O’Sullivan, James Duignan and John Irwin with Joanne O’Riordan

Delivering Equality of Opportunity

James welcomed additional funding for Delivering Equality of Opportunity (DEIS) in our schools and acknowledged that the Minister is committed to ensuring that all students have access to equality and equity in our schools.

While he acknowledged this, James highlighted that there remain many schools with legitimate claims to be included in the DEIS programme given the challenges they and their communities face. ACCS, in conjunction with our

fellow managerial bodies, JMB and ETBI, continue to seek the widening of the DEIS programme and the allocation of a second Deputy Principal in all DEIS schools irrespective of size.

Curriculum Reform

“If education is to be relevant, then change must be a feature of it. Schools reflect society, which is constantly changing, therefore change is a constant in education, we cannot remain static, nor do we want to”.

James urged the Minister to continue to lead curriculum reform, continue to

innovate and continue to consult with the partners in education. We all want the best possible and most relevant educational experience for our young people.

Patronage/Trusteeship of Schools

We look forward to the opening of Ennistymon Community School, Co Clare this September under the Joint Patronage of CEIST, Sisters of Mercy, ERST, and Limerick Clare ETB. James Duignan reiterated that the joint patronage model continues to be extremely successful, and is a preferred option by those seeking an inclusive community based, multi-denominational education. The joint patronage model provides for unity, diversity and democracy and reflects the community it serves.

ACCS enjoys working with all its patronage partners, the Minister, the Religious Congregations, the Educational Training Boards and Educate Together in providing an education for all in a truly pluralist Irish society.

Delegates were treated to two wonderful performances by the students and staff of Bishopstown Community School and Tarbert Comprehensive School. The Bishopstown Community School Students' Irish Sign Language (ISL Song Club) gave an awe-inspiring performance at the end of the General Secretary's report on Wednesday afternoon. The students from Tarbert Comprehensive School received a number of standing ovations for their performance on the evening of the Banquet Dinner. It is safe to say that the audience were visibly moved by both performances.

Throughout the various breaks delegates had the opportunity to visit the exhibitor area. ACCS wishes to acknowledge main sponsor, "VSware" and banquet reception sponsor, "PCI" for their continued support.

The convention concluded on Friday morning with Minister Norma Foley's speech and ACCS would like to thank her most sincerely for taking the time to chat with delegates before she proceeded to her next engagement.

Overall, feedback from the convention has been overwhelmingly positive. As well as getting the business of the day done, it was wonderful to see friends and colleagues enjoy heart-warming moments in such an uplifting atmosphere.



ACCS President James Duignan addressing delegates



Minister for Education, Ms. Norma Foley



Tarbert Comprehensive School students perform at convention



Nuala Bosonnét - A Parent's Perspective



Denis Ring, Blackwater Community School, James Duignan, Pat Pigott, former Principal Millstreet Community School, Joanne O'Riordan, John Irwin and Pól Ó Siodhcháin, Principal Millstreet Community School



ACCS President James Duignan, Minister Norma Foley and John Irwin



Tomás O'Ruairc, Assistant Secretary General, Department of Education, Deirdre Shanley, Assistant Secretary General, Department of Education and John Irwin



Craig Petrie, East Glendalough Comprehensive School, Antoinette Nic Gearailt and Fr. Paul Connell



Jarlath McDonagh and Declan Quinn, Dunmore Community School and Noel O'Sullivan, Beara Community School

Sponsors & Exhibitors



Main Sponsors VSware. L-R: Sinead Keogh, Lucy Clarke, Philip Rodgers, John Irwin and Emmanuel McCormack



Banquet Sponsors PCI. L-R: Brendan Carroll, PCI, John Irwin, David Quinn, PCI and Maurice O'Reilly, HP



L-R: Brian Crossan, Gort Community School, Michelle O'Brien, NACED, Eithne Coyne, St. Mark's Community School, Máire Ní Scanail, NACED and James Duignan



L-R: Eoin O'Doherty, O'Doherty.Biz, Regina Anderson, St. Louis Community School and James Duignan



John Irwin and Eileen O'Rourke, General Secretary, NABMSE



L-R: David Dalton and Eugene McDonough, IT Systems, Sr. Ena Quinlan, St. Caimin's Community School, Grace Gleeson, IT Systems and James Duignan



L-R: Alan McCormack, PPLI, Peter Keohane, Donahies Community School, James Duignan and Kirsi Hanifin, PPLI



L-R: Gerry Ryan, PhoneAwayBox, John McKennedy, St. Colmcille's Community School, James Duignan and Karl Hegarty, PhoneAwayBox



L-R: Chris Redmond, The ExamCraft Group, Dr. Eilis Humphreys and James Duignan

On behalf of ACCS I wish to thank our main sponsor VSware, sponsors of the banquet reception PCI and all of our exhibitors for their support.

John Irwin, General Secretary



Due to time constraints at the sponsor prize-giving draw, the prize donated by Skilly was generated online post-convention. Thank you to Shane Maguire, CEO of Skilly, for providing a prize of 'A free Anti-Bullying or Soft Skill Learning Module for a class group, delivered on Skilly' and the winning school is 'Dunmore Community School'.

Skilly (www.skilly.ie) is an innovative learning platform supporting students in developing soft skills through self-reflective practices that can be tracked and measured in SPHE/Well-being. As student well-being development becomes a more significant focus in schools, Skilly helps you to capture evidence of student engagement in an area that has been difficult to track and measure. Content is included and aligned with the curriculum giving teachers a practical resource to support the delivery of these programmes. Students enjoy it as the content is delivered digitally versus traditional SPHE textbooks, which engages them more.

Shane can be contacted at 087 418 8829 and by email: sales@skillysolutions.com
<https://www.instagram.com/skilly.ie/>
<https://twitter.com/ShaneMa11188424>



L-R: Patricia McPhillips and Anita Meehan, Coolmine Community School



L-R: Carmel Curran and Maeve Sweeney, Pobalscoil Chloich Cheannfhaola and John McGuinness, Carndonagh Community School



L-R: Catherine Moynihán and Fiona Behan, Kildare Town Community School with Anthony Leavy, Athboy Community School



L-R: Catherine Kelly, Mason, Hayes & Curran, John Curtis, JMB and Marie Thérèse Kilmartin, Le Chéile



Tarbert Comprehensive School students

Hiring Retired Teachers as Substitutes

Given the ongoing pressure on schools to source substitute teachers, the Department has recently updated its website to include some important information for retired teachers who are considering returning to work as a substitute teacher, in particular in regard to abatement.

Under the current rules in 2023, all retired teachers can work as a teacher for up to 50 days in any calendar year, with pension 'abatement' rules applying. Full details can be accessed on gov.ie/retiredteachers.

Substitute posts are advertised on subseeker.ie - retired teachers can register to substitute here.

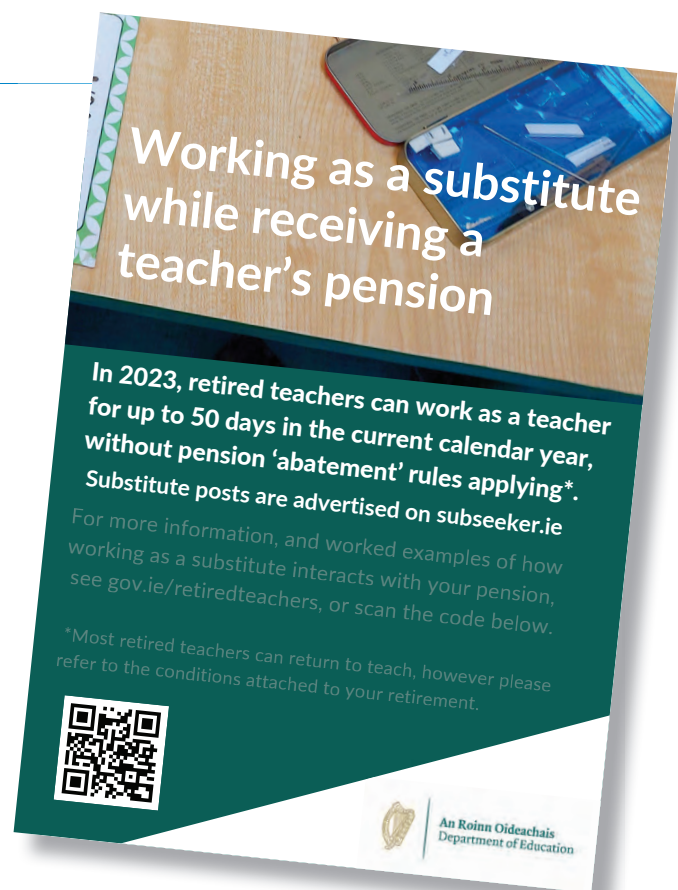
In order to remain eligible for employment in a state funded teaching post or in order to supervise the State Examinations, a teacher must maintain his or her registration with the Teaching Council. (If a teacher has not maintained their registration, they can work only a limited number of days). A person can maintain their registration using the online portal on www.teachingcouncil.ie.

Note: Most retired teachers can return to teach, however please refer to the conditions attached to your retirement.

The Department has informed ACCS that other issues are underway to increase the availability of teachers and will keep us posted on this matter.

Anne Marie Dillon,

Director of Human Resources, ACCS, email: amdillon@accs.ie



A note of thanks from Áine O'Sullivan

A sincere thank you to my friends and colleagues for your support and kindness on the death of my dear dad, Paddy Mc Mahon (RIP). Thank you for your messages of sympathy, mass cards, text messages and phone calls. A special word of thanks to all who travelled to Co Clare for the removal and funeral arrangements at Clooney Church. As it is impossible to thank everyone individually, please accept this acknowledgement as a token of my appreciation, your kindness and sympathy will always be remembered. The Holy Sacrifice of Mass will be offered for your intentions.

Áine

Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Irish Education

On 28th February ACCS General Secretary John Irwin attended a Joint Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science on the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in Irish Education.



Tue, 28 Feb 2023

Committee on Education, Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science

Topic: Roundtable Discussion on the Future of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) in Irish Education

< Share

Other attendees at the roundtable discussion included representatives from The Joint Managerial Body (JMB) and Representatives from Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI).

Extract from Opening Statement by John Irwin

ACCS welcomed that the STEM Education Implementation Plan, with its aim at making Ireland a leader in STEM education by 2026, has been developed and provides a focus and plan with stated goals and actions for all involved in education.

It is also welcome that while there are many strengths in STEM education in Ireland, a number of challenges still exist and these have been identified as areas to be addressed over the life of the Plan. These include the need to:

- Ensure that Irish students' learning in STEM disciplines significantly improves including development of skills such as problem-solving, inquiry-based learning and team working to address demands from the world of work
- Increase the number of students choosing STEM subjects in post-primary schools, those progressing to STEM pathways in Further or Higher Education and those who take up careers in STEM

- Increase participation of females in STEM education and careers
- Raise interest in and awareness of the range of exciting careers in STEM
- Ensure young people sustain their involvement in STEM education

Investment in education will remain a key priority. From initial teacher education to opportunities to engage in continuous professional development, this investment must continue. The targeted Digital Strategy for Schools is helpful and welcome but in an Irish context schools have started from a very low base. It is essential over the coming years that we continue to invest significantly in future digital strategies. While during the pandemic we saw significant advances in the use of technology in education we need to ensure these advances are fully embedded for the benefit of current students who lost so many opportunities in education over the last three years and future generations.

You can request a full copy of the statement from office@accs.ie and you can access the full discussion at: <https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/oireachtas-tv/video-archive/committees/>

The ACCS Middle Leadership Programme

ACCS introduced the Middle Leadership Programme in 2019 following requests from its member Boards for specific in-service aimed at embedding a distributed leadership culture in Community and Comprehensive schools.

The programme is offered to school teams consisting of one member of the SLT, one API post holder and one APII post holder. It provides for established leaders rather than for those teachers aspiring to leadership posts. Post holders at different levels within the current structure grow in their collective self-efficacy and understanding of leadership at all levels.

The content and materials of the programme are based on three pillars; the tenets of leadership as set out in CL003/18, the LAOS 2022 framework and the six step SSE process. The focus on distributed leadership is set in international and national policy and in local practices and drivers established at international and national level are considered and explored during the programme. However, the school's context, the specific factors which influence its culture and understanding how context impacts on those who lead learning within the school community is a crucial aspect to the work completed by the school team.

One of the key learning outcomes of the programme is to promote a deeper understanding that all posts of responsibility are aimed at improving learning and teaching practices in schools. Colleagues in leadership positions in schools are challenged to support their own colleagues in the classroom and do so, building on current best practice in their school.

Since 2019, fifty nine schools have participated in the programme. ACCS is planning for Cohort Four which is scheduled for 2023/24 and will be open to all schools including those who

have participated previously. We can facilitate a maximum of 27 schools – places will be awarded on a first come first served basis.

An invitation email to all Boards of Management will issue in early May 2023. Any Boards interested in availing of this training, please contact Áine at aosullivan@accs.ie for further details.

Participants Feedback - ACCS Middle Leadership Programme

This was the best CPD/Conference I have ever attended in terms of the content I will actually use. I would love for there to be webinars throughout the year.

The Team overall was informative and hugely knowledgeable and there was a great balance within the Team disseminating their knowledge.

This has been one of the best learning experiences I have had in a very long time. It was great to have the time and space to explore ideas with other professionals from other schools but more importantly being able to explore these ideas with colleagues from my own school.

ACCS welcomes two new staff members

WELCOME

to the **TEAM!**



Meet Kim Harrison,
Clerical Officer
email: kharrison@accs.ie



Meet Jasmin Aminger,
Clerical Officer
email: jaminger@accs.ie



Student Voice Forum

Why do young people think it is important for them to have a voice in school?



Students were invited to a Student Voice Forum which took place in the Midlands Park Hotel in late February. They were asked to reflect on why it is important for young people to have a voice about matters that affect them in school. They offered their feedback having heard about Article 12 and their right to have their voices heard in schools and about their education.

Recurring themes: Student Voice is important because it:

- Ensures a **safe, respectful and inclusive environment** for students no matter who they are.
- Enables young people to have **a say in policies and decisions** that affect them.
- Provides opportunities for young people to develop **leadership and advocacy skills**.
- Ensures that students **get the most out of their education**.
- Promotes student **motivation**.
- Develops students' **confidence to express themselves**.
- Provides a **student perspective** about matters that affect them in school.
- Enables students to have their voices heard about **their learning in the classroom**.
- Ensures a better education in the future.



STUDENT FEEDBACK

The school is about the students, the students need to feel listened to and respected and safe in their school.

Student Voice makes school more enjoyable.

Improves the lives of those whose voices are not usually heard.

Gives unique and crucial perspectives.

Everyone learns in different ways... voice in the classroom matters.

Students are included in what happens to their school community and for them to feel comfortable around their surroundings.

It's an important skill to have. If you learn from a young age you won't fail to speak up in situations as you are older.

Student Voice brings us into a role of leadership which is important in everyday life.

May Wellbeing Series

An engaging health and wellbeing studio experience delivered to a dedicated platform and app, available live and on demand. Tune in from Wednesday 3rd May at 1:15pm.



Our Hosts:



Keith Walsh
Radio DJ, Writer
& Presenter



Clare McKenna
Radio & TV
Presenter

What this series delivers:

- 4 live seminars with option to interact with the host and guest via polling and Q&A function.
- E-learning material on mastering a digital detox.
- Supportive tipsheets relating to the series topics for you to download, read and share with your colleagues.

Seminars:

Find a budget that works for you

When it comes to budgeting, there is no "one size fits all". On this episode, we will be explaining how to create a budget that works for you and discussing the different methods of budgeting, providing tips that will help you to save over the summer.



Paul Shorten,
Financial Planner UK

Mental Health Week

According to mind.org, 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in the UK. This week in the wellbeing studio we will be raising awareness around mental health and discuss the effects it can have on our lives and learn how we can try to manage this for ourselves or the people around us.



Fleur Michelle Coiffait,
Clinical Psychologist



Leisha McGrath,
Work and Organisational
Psychologist

Taking a Digital Detox

Do you check your phone as soon as you wake up in the morning? Are you hunched over your laptop after work? You may be in need of a digital detox. In this episode, we will discuss what technology looks like today, and how it can impact your wellbeing.



Iona Walker,
Consultant Clinical
Psychologist



Chris Flak,
UnPlug Co-Founder

Staying Sun Smart This Summer

As the summer sun returns it's important to remember to protect your skin from sun damage-whether the sun is shining or not. According to The Irish Cancer Society, each year over 10,000 people in Ireland are diagnosed with skin cancer caused by UV rays from the sun (ICS2023). Join us in the studio as we will be discussing ways we can protect our skin all year round, and the skin cancer signs and symptoms to watch out for.



Ciara Darcy,
Skin Coach



Kelly Taylor,
British Skin Foundation

May

Wednesday 3rd
@ 1.15pm

May

Wednesday 10th
@ 1.15pm

May

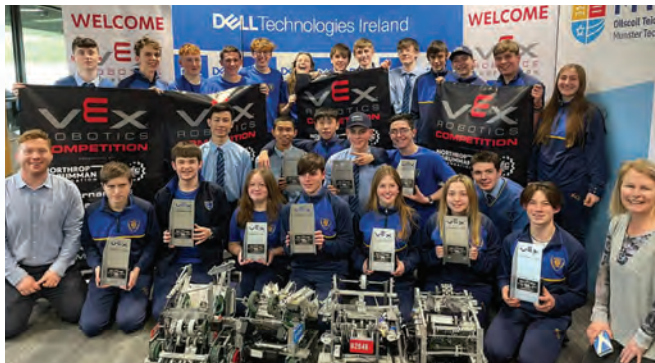
Wednesday 17th
@ 1.15pm

May

Thursday 24th
@ 1:15pm

Kinsale Community School

win National VEX Robotics Competition



Kinsale Community School has made history by winning the National VEX VRC competition for a 5th time, cementing its position as the top school in the country for robotics and securing its place in the World Championships in USA.

KCS's diligent and competitive students won 10 of the 13 awards including an Excellence Award and two Tournament Champion awards.

The Kinsale teams have worked hard for months to perfect their design and programming skills. They have demonstrated high professionalism and dedication, spending countless hours perfecting their robot and practicing their strategies. They are now proud to represent Ireland in the upcoming World Championships in Dallas, USA, in April.

The team's victory is a testament to the school's dedication to STEM education (science, technology, engineering, and

mathematics), already with a great history in BT Young Scientist, and its commitment to inspiring young people to pursue careers in these fields. It also reflects the hard work and determination of the students and their mentors, Niamh Hay TY Coordinator and Eddie Farren, IT Coordinator who also each won Teacher of the Year awards. In addition to their victory in the VEX VRC competition, Kinsale Community School has also been actively mentoring local Primary schools in VEX IQ. This initiative, which began in 2018, is designed to introduce young children to the exciting world of robotics and programming and to foster their interest in STEM education. "This is what sets Kinsale's TY Robotics program apart. It creates student leaders, and the students become the experts creating a self-directed learning culture" says Eddie Farren, IT Coordinator and student mentor in the KCS robotics club.

Immensely proud of this phenomenal student achievement and beyond grateful to our staff for the guidance they provided to them. The skills learned in this competition will stand the students in great stead in their futures in terms of teamwork, critical thinking, and problem-solving.

Fergal McCarthy, Principal of Kinsale Community School

Coláiste Cholmcille

Triumph at the Secondary Schools North West VEX Robotics Champions 2023

Coláiste Cholmcille recently took part in the North West VEX Robotics competition and are delighted and very proud to announce that their Robotics team came out on top and were crowned the North West Regional Champions, having beaten off stiff opposition from 12 other teams throughout the day of competition. Schools pitted their Robot design and builds, programming and control skills, communication and teamwork in head to head robotic challenges through 8 qualifiers games, then a semi-final and final where winners progressed based on points scored throughout the timed challenges.

Coláiste Cholmcille's team of Cara Davitt, Fódhla Sheerin, Niamh Burke and Jamie McManus (seen here with their awards) have worked hard on their design, robot build and programming over the last four months. All their hard work and skill level paid dividends after performing to an exceptional level winning ten challenges from ten and being crowned the North West Champions.



The result is even more astounding considering this is the school's first year of entry and they competed against experienced schools.

Teacher and mentor John Kennedy

The competition fosters development of teamwork, critical thinking and project management and their alliance with Pobailscoil Ghaoth Dobhair in the semi and finals was a very good strategic move with both teams progressing to the All-Ireland finals in Cork.

Ramsgrange Community School

student Nathan Willers represents Ireland in European Research Project

Nathan Willers is a 5th year student in Ramsgrange Community School, who was selected as the Irish Student Representative for the BRIES - European Agency 'Learning Loss' project. This post-covid research is being led by the European Agency for Special Education and Inclusion and the Irish Inspectorate of the Department of Education. Nathan participated in focus group discussions with Bulgaria and Germany. This research was a very interesting and important topic and both his teacher, Ms. Miskella, and Nathan learned a lot about other European perspectives through their participation. Nathan was so impressive in his interactions on the European stage that the Department of Education has invited him to take part in another project called VIA (Voices into Action) in Belgrade, Serbia in May. This project will look at how European countries can promote the active participation of the voices of learners and families in educational decision-making. Congratulations to Nathan on this wonderful achievement.



L-R: Mayor Maura Bell, Nathan Willers 5th year student in Ramsgrange Community School and Principal Rachel O'Connor

Poetry in Motion at Glenamaddy Community School



Well done to Luke Dolan who recently won the Seamus Heaney Poetry Aloud Award with his recital of "Digging" by Seamus Heaney. Luke was named as the overall winner as well as winner of the senior category. Organised by the National Library of Ireland (NLI) and Poetry Ireland, in partnership with UCC, this year's competition drew 303 entries from schools across the island. There were 22 finalists in this year's competition from across 12 counties, from Armagh to Laois to Cork.

The competition has been putting poetry to the forefront of students' minds since 2007. The late Seamus Heaney was a significant supporter of the competition, citing the extraordinary way in which the competition seeks to celebrate the joy of speaking and listening to poetry, as well as the fact that there is a strong North-South dimension to the competition.

Luke chose "Digging" because it drew comparisons with his own rural Irish upbringing and said that finding his 'poetry voice' has been a wonderful experience which has been nurtured through his school. "It's a great poem because although he's a poet, Seamus Heaney appreciates where he came from and what the generations before him did." Luke believes a poem is experienced on a different level when it is read aloud. The late Seamus Heaney, a supporter of Poetry Aloud, said the award "brings poetry into the memory and affections of the young in a way that will make it a lifelong possession and value."

Extract from

Digging by Seamus Heaney

The coarse boot nestled on the lug, the shaft
Against the inside knee was levered firmly.
He rooted out tall tops, buried the bright edge deep
To scatter new potatoes that we picked,
Loving their cool hardness in our hands.

Green Travel Week in Crescent College Comprehensive S.J.

This year Crescent College Comprehensive S.J. came up with a novel idea of organising a Green Travel Week. The aim of this initiative was to encourage as many students as possible to take greener travel choices where possible and to highlight alternatives options.

Green Travel week was officially launched by The Lord Mayor at Shannon Rowing Club. The first student centred event happened immediately after with Transition Years partaking in urban orienteering around the city, while simultaneously a second group rented the city bikes and utilised some of the city's most scenic cycle lanes.

Proceeding this, the senior travel officer with the council Ellen O'Sullivan brought students on a walkability audit of Limerick City. The students walked different routes with the aim being to assess obstructions to walking as an alternative travel option. Similarly, a cycle ability audit also take place with a smaller group of fifth years from the committee to assess restrictions to cycling.

For Green Travel Week the Green School Committee created a full week of activities including;

Online Certified Cycling Safety Course

All first years and second year students did an online certified cycling safety course. The Cycle Right online course is designed to support the development of awareness, knowledge, values and skills to become safe cyclists on the road. This took approximately 1 to 2 hours.

Bicycle Maintenance Course

Evolution Cycles kindly volunteered to do a bicycle maintenance course in the school with two separate groups from Transition Year and Second Year. This involved students getting a hands-on experience showing them how to service and repair their bikes.

School Walk

On the Friday all First Years walked to school together. Students assembled at Summerville Rovers for 8.45am, where they then proceeded to walk the short distance to the school.

Recycling Bicycle Donation Centre

A recycling bicycle donation centre was in operation all day Friday. Students were asked to bring in bicycles they no longer used but are in good working order and suitable for teenagers. The aim is that these bikes will be repaired by the TYs and used for cycling lessons with classes in the future.

The Green Travel week was closed with prize giving on Friday, where prizes were awarded for the most steps walked in the week. A raffle for those who cycled and spot prizes for participation.



Bicycle Maintenance



First Year walk to school



Launch of Green Travel Week

Portumna Community School



L-R Aisling Madden, Sinead Donohue and Sinéad Power.

Spring is in the air! Students attending Gurteen Agricultural College Open Day, where all aspects of farm life were covered ranging from biodiversity and sustainability to farm safety awareness.

Kildare Town Community School



Kildare Town Community School students make the Today Show by creating the largest St. Brigid's Cross with over 1,500 students. The video of the St. Brigid's Cross was shown on RTÉ on the Today Show and viewed over 20,000 times and shared on many local and national media outlets.

Coolmine Community School Celebrates 50 years

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Coolmine Community School which opened its doors in 1972 for the first time. The school, which was originally located in the grounds of Coolmine House and moved in 1973 to new purpose-built premises, has served the Dublin 15 locality with pride and distinction, and is recognised as a local centre of excellence in the Community & Comprehensive sector.

On January 22nd last, as part of the 50th celebrations, the school community came together to remember deceased members of the Coolmine family. Staff and students (past and present), along with parents, members of the board of management, and the senior school management team were present. Current principal Patricia McPhillips, former principal Eileen Salmon, and founding principal Seán Ó Béacháin were all in attendance.



After a short service of readings and reflections held in the school library – the gathering proceeded to the school memorial garden for the laying of a wreath and memorial candles where a minute's silence was held in memory of deceased staff and students who had been part of the Coolmine story over the past 50 years.

Coláiste Cholmcille

student Lucy McGlynn recognized at Donegal Sports Awards

Congratulations to Lucy McGlynn, 6th Year student in Coláiste Cholmcille, whose fantastic year on the track and on the GAA field was recently recognised at the Donegal Sports Awards.

Lucy won the category for best Secondary School Girl. Her year included CCBS's first ever Ulster GAA All Star award, in itself a fantastic achievement.

However, it is her achievements on the athletics track that really puts her at an elite level. Lucy has represented CCBS, Ulster and Ireland over the last year winning gold medals in 100m, 300m and 400m hurdles.

She captained Ireland to silver medal at the Home Countries International multi events. She is also a gold medal winner in the Ulster and All Ireland schools competitions in the 100m and 400m hurdles.

She also represented Ireland at the World U20 competition in Columbia last summer. As recently as Sunday the 29th January, her Irish U20 relay team made qualifying standard for the Europeans in August with a new U20 record.

Personal bests and records have been tumbling all year including Ulster senior records for 60 metre hurdles.

All this while maintaining a high academic performance in school. Well done Lucy on an amazing year; we are extremely proud of you at CCBS!



Kildare Town Community School

win Triangle Cup Competition

Congratulations to the Kildare Town Community School boys Junior Rugby team who were outright winners of the very first Triangle Cup Competition.

The Triangle Cup was set up as another competition to promote rugby within schools who are developing the sport. It is hoped to develop this competition further next year by including other schools and eventually including a senior competition to go along with the junior competition.

Jack O'Donoghue was presented the Triangle cup by the President of Newbridge RFC Ollie Delaney to the delight of his team mates.





Portumna Community School

Portumna Community School 1st Year student Abbie Cox who has been selected for the Midlands Girls Soccer League 'Emerging Talent' panel, one of only two Galway girls chosen. Well done Abbie!



All Ireland Runner Up for

Tarbert Comprehensive School

Senior Boys Basketball Team

Well done to the Senior Boys Basketball Team who made it to the Schools League All Ireland Final against Davis College, Mallow.

A thrilling, tightly contested game needed extra time to decide a winner and Davis just got ahead to be crowned champions.

It was an honour and privilege to be given the chance to coach such a fantastic bunch of lads and eagerly look forward to seeing how the team progress after being promoted to the B league for next season. Well done again lads, GO TARBERT!

Mr Derek Horgan, Coach

Recent ACCS Info Bulletins

BULLETIN NO.	DATE	SUMMARY
ACCS Info Bulletin 08/23	31/03/23	Social Media Advice
ACCS Info Bulletin 07/23	14/03/23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DE CL 72/2022 2. School Transport Application Process 3. School Transport Application Process (As Gaeilge) 4. DE Circular Letter 0012/2023 5. DE Circular Letter 0013/2013 6. DE Circular Letter 0014/2023
ACCS Info Bulletin 05/23	31/01/23	ACCS CONVENTION 2023 - 22ND, 23RD & 24TH OF MARCH 2023
ACCS Info Bulletin 04/23	23/01/23	Job-Sharing, Career Break, Secondment & ACCS Teacher Allocations In-Service
ACCS Info Bulletin 03/23	09/01/23	Updates on the implementation of the Framework for Junior Cycle with particular reference to the school year 2022/23
ACCS Info Bulletin 02/23	09/01/23	State Examinations Updates
ACCS Info Bulletin 01/23	09/01/23	Requirement to Update your School's Admissions Policy

Recent Relevant DE Circular Letters

CIRCULAR NO.	SUMMARY
CL 20/23	Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate Examination in 2025
CL 19/23	Prescribed Material for the Leaving Certificate English Examination in 2025
CL 15/23	Amendments to Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2 specifications and assessment arrangements for Classroom-Based Assessments 1 and 2. (For student cohorts 2022/25 and 2023/26)
CL 14/23	Post-Graduate Certificate/Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development for Teachers working with Students with Special Educational Needs (Autism)
CL 13/23	Post-Graduate Diploma Programme of Continuing Professional Development For Special Education Teachers, 2023/2024
CL 12/23	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, 2023/2024
CL 11/23	Revision of salaries 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 under Building Momentum - A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2023 ("The Agreement")
CL 10/23	Revision of Salaries of School Secretaries and School Maintenance Staff in Community and Comprehensive Schools under Building Momentum - A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2023 ("The Agreement")
CL 08/23	Revision of Salaries for Special Needs Assistants (SNAs) under Building Momentum - A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2023
CL 07/23	Revision of Teacher Salaries under Building Momentum - A New Public Service Agreement 2021-2023 ("The Agreement")
CL 05/23	Teacher Fee Refund Scheme 2022
CL 03/23	Staffing arrangements in Community and Comprehensive Schools for the 2023/24 school year
CL 01/23	Advice on the use of assessment instruments/tests for Guidance or for additional and special educational needs (SEN) in post-primary schools. (Revising Circulars 0067/2020 and 0058/2019)