

NEWSLETTER EDITION 12 - DECEMBER 2023



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- Dream Space On The Road
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- Aleen Cust - Wonder-Vet!
- AND MUCH MORE!



# A Message From Our CE

**I am delighted to introduce this edition of the DDLETB newsletter.**

As we near the Christmas break and look forward to time with family and friends, it gives us a chance to reflect on the wonderful transformative work happening across the DDLETB schools, centres and colleges. It is an honour to be the Chief Executive of this organisation and I extend my sincere thanks to all staff for the incredible work that you do and the important role that you play in the heart of our communities.

As you may know, there have been a few changes to the Senior Leadership Team and the Development Team in DDLETB over the last few months. Adrian Flynn took up the role as Principal of Adamstown Community College in November, we congratulate Adrian and wish him all the very best. We thank him sincerely for his leadership, expertise and dedication as Director of Schools over the last 5 years.

I wish to thank the members of the Development Team for their unwavering dedication to the development of DDLETB in 2023 and for highlighting all of the the great work. As you know, Frances Gibson took up the role of Deputy Principal in St. Mac Dara's Community College in September and Frances Shannon has taken the role as SEN Coordinator. Marise Carr has also joined the team as Ethos Coordinator while Caroline is on maternity leave after welcoming beautiful baby Oscar into the world. We extend our congratulations to Frances and Caroline and a warm welcome to Frances and Marise

In January, Mark McDonald will take up the post of Director of Schools in DDLETB, we welcome Mark to our team and wish him the very best in his new role. We also acknowledge Paul Turner who joined DDLETB as the Director of Organisation, Support and Development (OSD) during the summer.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you and your families a safe and peaceful Christmas and the very best wishes for the year ahead.

I look forward to 2024 as we continue to work together to support our students to learn, achieve and succeed.

**Caitríona Murphy CE**





# HEAD OFFICE CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

A great day was had by all at DDLETB Head Office on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. The team showed their support for the Alzheimer Society of Ireland by sporting their best Christmas Jumpers and all things shiny!

The event, which is organised every year by our colleague Jackie Tunstead (HR Department), is one of our favourites in head office and this year the event raised over €1300 for the charity. A huge well done and THANK YOU to Jackie and all those who supported the event and donated to the raffle.



DDLETB, our schools and centres have a long tradition of supporting various charities and community development and especially at this time of the year. Well done to all of our learners and staff who took part in and organised various events to support these worthy causes. It is amazing to see the level of commitment and enthusiasm from all involved.

*DDLETB Senior Leadership Team would like to take this opportunity to thank our support and administrative staff, in both our head office and in our schools, centres and colleges. These colleagues are a valuable and important part of Team DDLETB and their work and support are vital to our school and centre communities and the success of our organisation.*





# Wellbeing in Lucan CNS

Lucan Community National School is proud to promote positive mental health and wellbeing among our entire school community. We want to ensure it underpins our daily life and activities. We aim to achieve this through implementation of a number of exciting initiatives which are inclusive of staff, pupils, parents and the wider school community!

## Pupil Wellbeing

We are passionate about Restorative Practice in Lucan CNS. From Junior Infants to 2nd class, we learn all about our 'RP Buddies'. These Buddies help us out and remind us to make kind choices, use kind words, and to show kindness, love and respect to others. 3rd – 6th Class implement the 'Friendship Keeper' Programme which further develops their commitment to showing love and respect to each other, to staff and to themselves.

The implementation of Restorative Practice in our school, particularly through Morning Meetings and Check-

In Circles, is a fantastic contribution to the overall health and wellbeing of both our pupils and our staff!

Restorative Practice enables us to show kindness and respect to all members of our school community. We are an Anti-Bullying School and use our relationships and conversations to combat incidents of bullying.

We are delighted that we have been awarded a Cineáltas Flag in November 2023 from the Department of Education, in line with the government's new Action Plan on Bullying.

[Link to RTE News2Day Report on Mental Health in Lucan CNS](#)

# Pieta's Amber Flag Initiative

Our Amber Flag Committee is made up of both staff and students. They work together over the course of the year to monitor the general mental health and wellbeing of our school community. They also work hard at outlining goals to achieve and putting plans into action in order to achieve these goals! They are passionate about maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing in Lucan CNS.

We were awarded the Amber Flag Award in June 2023. Our goals for our Amber Flag application were to learn about all our emotions and how they can present in our bodies. We also wanted to learn about positive ways to manage our emotions. As a school, every class had a Pyjama Movie Day where we watched 'Inside Out' and raised money for Pieta House. We raised over €700 and celebrated our dedication to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in our school!

We will continue to work on our goals and initiatives for this school year. Keep an eye on our Twitter account (@LucanCNS) for snapshots of our goals in action!

## Staff Wellbeing

In Lucan CNS, we are firm believers in the saying 'you can't pour from an empty cup'! Staff wellbeing is of the utmost importance to us, and it is important that we model the promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing to our pupils. Staff wellbeing initiatives take many forms, from Staff Breakfasts, coffee mornings, Secret Santa, Random Acts of Kindness, mentorship meetings for new staff and much more. We also model checking in with each other in busy times and ensure that we are all happy in school so that we can pass on our happiness to our pupils.



# Science Week Superstars!

Scoil Choilm CNS celebrated Science Week.

**Our task this year was to ‘consider what it means to be human in today’s world, and how the decisions we make today, will impact humans of the future’.**

The children faced this task with excitement and enthusiasm. We explored lots of areas that we felt were relevant to today’s world and discussed how the future might look.

We began the week by considering the impact we are having on the environment and raised environmental awareness and care through a whole school planting initiative. Each child planted a daffodil bulb with the help of our caretaker.

We look forward to seeing the daffodils bloom in Spring.

Everybody worked with a ‘buddy’ class to carry out and demonstrate experiments. There was floating and sinking, static electricity, slime and more.

Children discussed space travel and created rockets to demonstrate the different means of exploring space. There were lots of very creative and inventive designs.

Finally, the children encouraged their families to get involved in Science Week through our parachute competition. Children designed and produced parachutes at home to investigate the impact energy and forces can have on falling objects.

Scoil Choilm CNS has come to the conclusion that a plastic bag with a LEGO figure creates the most successful parachute.

Scoil Choilm CNS really enjoyed Science week. We felt it allowed lots of opportunities to identify the role we play in our future world!



# EAL and ESOL in DDLETB

## 1. Tracking and monitoring Effort and Achievement in language learning (EAL and ESOL) across DDLETB

Students' language learning has been tracked across DDLETB post primary schools this term. 867 students have been tested across 28 schools using the online adaptive Cambridge English Placement test.

Students have all been given 1:1 feedback on their skills and told how they can improve, subject teachers are aware of who is in their classes and parents have a copy of the computer-generated report - if required in their first language. Student voice and wellbeing have been documented to ensure all are managing and reaching their potential.

### Student voice:

It is important to have high expectations for all students to succeed and to acknowledge that EAL students are well able and have no deficit where learning and achieving is concerned. They have a **temporary** difficulty accessing the curriculum as the following 2 students from St Finian's CC prove:

The following is an extract from Julia from St Finian's writing. She explains how her language skills went from A2 (entitled to and in need of language support) to C1 level (accessing the curriculum very comfortably) in one year! She arrived in Sept 2022. Here is her incredible, inspiring journey in her own words:



*When I arrived in Ireland my English was very basic. I had basic vocabulary and knew some verbs. As the school year went on, I signed up for almost all the events and activities that the school offered, which helped me a lot to immerse myself in the language and really have contact with native people.*

*It also helped me a lot with my socialization and making friends. I joined the debate club, which helped a lot with my pronunciation and vocabulary and during classes I wasn't ashamed to ask if I had any questions.*

*After school I also did research on terms that I didn't know and studied all the topics that the teacher taught, which helped me a lot in understanding the content. All of this together helped me go from level A2 to C1 in one year.*

“Julia is part of our exceptionally able group of students. Any activity going, she signed up for it. Her positivity has helped her language skills” Aileen Cotter, one of a team of teachers in St Finian’s CC who pointed Julia in the right direction and encouraged her to put in the effort.

B. Roman from St Finian’s also describes his learning journey from when he arrived in March 2022:

### *How I achieved level B2*

*At the start when I came here, I almost couldn’t speak English, I knew only the basics. But as I attended classes, listened to every speech and talk, I got a little bit better, and started to watch movies in English with English subtitles, it was an important step for me and also a little stressful because I thought I might not fully understand the plot of those movies, but I did, and if I couldn’t understand something I just translated it. So my writing, listening and grammar skills grew, but I still had to get my speaking better, because I didn’t really talk much with my classmates and I was shy last year. Although I was kind of afraid to talk to my classmates and friends, I overcame this fear and got much closer with my friends. If you think I learned every word and rule of grammar in English language - I didn’t, so I still learn new words and work on my pronunciation, but I am on much greater level than I was A year and a half ago.*

“it’s Roman’s studying and diligence that has gotten him to where he is” says Aileen Cotter

## **2. Certification in language skills**

TY and senior cycle students from across DDLETB post primary schools sat Cambridge English exams in May 2023. They sat their written exams in Head Office and attended their speaking exams in St Kevin’s CC.



*Team Balbriggan CC. Principal Emmet Sheridan with some of the students who sat Cambridge English exams in May 2023.*



## Student voice in relation to sitting a Cambridge English exam, Balbriggan CC

### Patricia:

#### **Why did you choose to do a B1 Preliminary English Cambridge exam?**

I chose to do the Cambridge exam because I wanted to improve my English and know if my level of English went up

#### **What did you think the exam was going to be like?**

I thought the exam was going to be difficult but it was easy

#### **What were some of the challenges you faced studying for the exam?**

Some of the challenges I faced was lack of concentration. I couldn't concentrate at all especially at home

#### **Why did you NOT give up?**

I did not give up because it was for my own benefit

#### **How do you feel now that you have finished?**

I 'm glad that everything was okay and I saw that my level of English went up

#### **How will passing the exam help you in the future?**

Passing the exam would help me by open new opportunities like jobs or higher education

### Tatiana:

#### **Why did you choose to do a B1 Preliminary English Cambridge course?**

I felt more or less confident at this level.

#### **What did you think the exam was going to be like?**

I knew about different sections (listening, reading, writing) , however I was expecting it to be harder

#### **What were some of the challenges you faced studying for the exam?**

Lack of practise. I didn't know where to get more exam papers.

#### **Why did you NOT give up?**

I'm interested in constant progress.

#### **How much study did you do outside of the classroom?**

I spent a few hours a week expanding my vocabulary and watching specialised Youtube channels for the Cambridge exam.



Team Grange CC: Students with principal, Seán Smyth and Deputy Principal Georgina Downes as well as EAL teachers Ms Matthews and Ms Byrne who prepared these TY students and seniors to sit Cambridge English exams.

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### Preliminary English Test

**Statement of Results**

Candidate name: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of entry: **TALLAGHT**

Result	Overall Score	CEFR Level
Pass at Grade C	140	B1

CEFR Level	Cambridge English Scale	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking
B2	170	Grade A			
B1	150	Grade B		108	102
A2	130	Grade C	114		
	110	Level A2			114

**Results**

Results	Score
Pass at Grade A	160 — 170
Pass at Grade B	150 — 159
Pass at Grade C	140 — 149
Level A2	120 — 139

Candidates who take Preliminary and score between 102 and 119 on the Cambridge English Scale do not receive a result. CEFR level is optional.

Cambridge English Scale scores below 102 are not reported for this examination.

**Other**

X - the candidate was absent from part of the examination  
 Z - the candidate was absent from all parts of the examination  
 Pending - a result cannot be issued at present, but will follow in due course  
 Withdrawn - the candidate should contact their centre for information  
 Exempt - the candidate was not required to sit this part of the examination

**THIS IS NOT A CERTIFICATE**

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Cambridge Councils (Press & Assessment) reserves the right to amend the information given below without notice to its certificate holders.

This is the Statement of Results which accompanies Cambridge English certs. The SoR shows it is possible to compensate across skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) in Cambridge English exams giving students the possibility to do their very best and focus on their strengths. This is called extended certification.



Team Rath Dara with Emily Boyle, Principal and Deputy Principal Cathal McDaniel celebrating the achievement of those who sat A2 KEY.



Team Castleknock CC Principal John Cronin, Seán Fay and EAL students with their Cambridge English certs.



Rath Dara CC. Celebrating B1 preliminary.

### 3. Excellence in Education – FET adult learners



*Students from Blanchardstown AES with Susan Clancy waiting for the bus to go to Tallaght Training Centre to sit B2 First. They don't look nervous at all for their day out!*



*Certification changing lives  
Some of the doctors (with their teacher, Ed McMenamain) who sat B1 Preliminary in July.*

**Congrats to all for your immense effort bringing you a step closer to your goals. We are proud of you – as are your families**

### 4. Teacher training for post primary teachers across DDLETB and beyond. The class of Summer 2023

The following teachers are some of those who were trained to teach EAL in June 2023. They attended 32 ½ hours of face-to-face training in Head Office. The course lead to certification from Cambridge English.



*Oana Andra Ene   Eimear Denning   Jeanne Bombon   Maeve Kavanagh   James Kirwan*

# CELEBRATE OUR ETHOS



Our ETB Ethos and Core Values are the foundation of our schools and centres. As DDLETB Ethos Coordinator I am delighted to work alongside our Ethos leads and support them in their role.

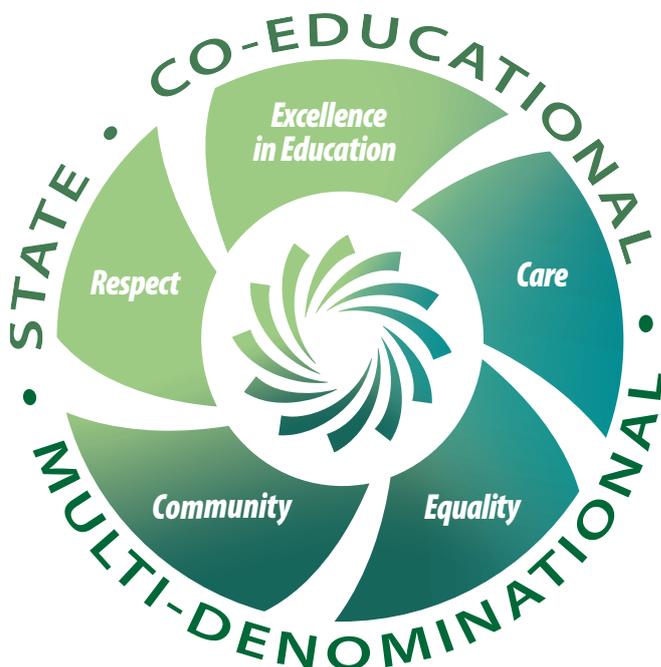
Our Ethos Lead Network Meeting on November 7<sup>th</sup> was a great opportunity for engagement and collaboration on ethos. Our Ethos Leads attended a very informative and insightful session on embedding ethos in our schools. They shared how they are identifying, creating awareness and bringing the ETB ethos to life. It was a great opportunity to learn from each other and share best practice.

We are holding the '*Celebrate our Ethos*' student competition again this year. Students are encouraged to express what it's like to be a student in a DDLETB in a creative form. Submissions can be through art, drawing/painting, film, music, photography, sculpture, digital media, performance, mixed media or written word. Ethos leads in each DDLETB school must submit entries by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April. We are excited to see what our talented students will submit this year.

Here is a snapshot of some of our schools and the work they are doing to embed ethos.



***Marise Carr, Acting DDLETB  
Ethos Coordinator.***





## Excellence in Education

- CAT4 Admissions Testing
- Attendance Monitoring
- Homework policy
- Subject Teams/ One Note
- Teaching and Learning Team
- Academic Tracking
- Mixed Ability Classes
- Subject Clubs
- Classrooms
- Curriculum Choices
- Library
- Accelerated Reader
- Coding
- Evening Study
- Study Skills
- High Expectations
- EWO
- College Visits
- LCVP



This term Lusk Community College were identifying the numerous ways they embed the core values in their school. Ethos Lead, Ciara Grant, mapped out how each of the core values are brought to life in their college.

The purpose of this is to create awareness of the many ways they embed ethos in their school. To promote Excellence in Education, the College identified almost twenty supportive activities they offer to help their students reach their full potential e.g. Attendance monitoring, LCVP, subject clubs, subject teams and use of OneNote.

“It was a very effective exercise as it highlighted all the wonderful ways, we are encouraging our students to reach their full potential on a daily basis, and to be respectful, responsible and kind, which in turn promotes a wonderful positive school ethos” Ciara Grant, Ethos Lead.

## Respect

- Code of positive Behavior
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Multi Cultural Events
- Mission Statement
- Core Values
- Inclusion Policy
- AEN Unit
- AUP
- Student Awards
- Support Team
- Critical Incident Team & Policy
- Wellbeing Team
- Welling Being Events
- Student Leadership
- Staff Mentoring
- Green Schools
- Community Cleanup
- Anti Graffiti
- Display of work
- Room Doors
- Vibrant Classrooms





## OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT ST. MAC DARA'S



In September of 2021 St. Mac Dara's was successful in an application to the arts council for the creative schools grant of 4000 euro. The purpose of the grant is to encourage engagement in creative learning in all areas of school life over a 2-year period and beyond.

We asked students if they would like to be part of a creative schools committee and planning began. Through student lead design and activity workshops that happened every Wednesday we decided to plan to build an outdoor classroom on the grounds of St. Mac Dara's.

Students were carefully guided, to facilitate them in seeing their visions come to life. Much of the work, such as site clearing, and pallet painting was done by the student committee.



The classroom is located at the front of our school, and it connects to our wonderful sensory garden and poly tunnel, forming an outdoor learning complex.

As ethos team lead in the school, it was my absolute pleasure to lead this school enhancing project. I saw the project as an opportunity to demonstrate how our school represents each of the core values on a day-to-day basis.



We were extremely lucky to make a strong community connection with our local men's shed, St. Jude's, who enthusiastically provided the physical power and skill to do some of the jobs we could not do ourselves. Together with the expert guidance of our caretaker Mr. Eddie Dalton ground works began.

We used our Arts Council funding to enlist the services of Graham Bradley, horticulturist and owner of Junior Gardeners. Graham was invaluable with advice and planting appropriate native plants that will grow and create a natural shield around our classroom area.



Site (before).



Finished outdoor classroom.

Much of the materials needed to execute our design were recycled and repurposed. Many old trees were felled around the school grounds and the resulting stumps and mulch were used in our project. Pallets were donated by a local business and all the paint we needed was donated by Stillorgan Décor.

Old drawing boards from our Art Department were cut to size and shape by our excellent woodwork teachers and repurposed into our learning signposts. The involvement with the men's shed really emphasised the importance of the core value of community for our school. Some of their children had been pupils in our school and reconnecting with the school meant a lot to many of them.

Through the activity we have made a strong connection with the Men's Shed and plan to continue to work with them. It also provided us an opportunity to create a student community within the school through our weekly meetings, students from across the years were given an opportunity to connect.

Looking to the future, we hope that the outdoor classroom will provide our learners an area where they can engage in all of the core values in our ethos. Work will continue by students, staff and the Men's Shed to continually maintain and improve this facility.

*By Rachel Cairns*





# Promoting and Supporting Parental Involvement



Numerous studies have shown that positive relationships between schools and families lead to increased attendance, participation and even improved academic outcomes for our students. I was recently asked to reflect on the benefits of developing parental engagement in our schools and what this looks like in practice;

A thriving Parents' Association is often a first indicator of parental involvement. Home visitation, a well-developed school journal, availability of a dedicated parent's space in school, provision of training seminars and inclusion of parents in whole school events are all opportunities to build trust and establish positive relationships. Social events that put families at the heart of an activity also provide opportunities for parents to network and their value cannot be understated.

In our school, an initiative as simple as a parents walking group provoked discussions, which in turn led to a third-level community visit to explore options available to mature students and their children alike.

In line with our community values and ethos, it is no surprise that ETB schools are increasing opportunities for parents to become involved in school life post-Covid. Instead of saying, 'parents need to be more involved', say 'settings need to build relationships that empower parents based on trust and respect'.

*-Matt Corbett is Home School Community Liaison Co-ordinator at Deansrath Community College.*



# TREE OF KINDNESS



❖ Embedding Community and Care in Ériu Community College

❖ Handwritten notes for both staff and students, written by both staff and students

❖ Celebrating the little things done for students and staff in our college

**Ériu Community College** developed a creative way to embed ethos in their college. The Tree of Kindness is a beautiful way to encourage and acknowledge acts of kindness within the school community. Staff and students write handwritten notes and put them on the tree celebrating kind deeds.

Treasa Elliott, Ethos Lead, said *“it’s a heartwarming way to foster caring and supportive relationships amongst students and teachers as EVERYONE gets involved in this kindness activity”*. *“Positive feelings encourage everyone to think about their words and actions which helps to reinforce positive behaviour in our school”*.





## Awards evening at Castleknock Community College

Castleknock Community College celebrated students at our annual awards evening. The evening recognises students who have excelled in many areas, from academic achievement, sport, and music.

There were awards for Junior Cycle, Leaving Certificate, and Leaving Certificate Applied students. Our annual Spirit of the community award was presented to Oisin and James Tolan, who ran from Castleknock to Foxford, Mayo, to raise funds for Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association, in memory of their late mother, Elaine Tolan.

There was great excitement on the evening as Castleknock CC were awarded their One Good School award. The team, led by Ms. Carmel O'Neill and Ms. Claire Sayers, were delighted to be awarded the gold award. Congratulations to all the school community.



## Diversity and inclusion in our library

The library Committee of teachers and students have been working hard to make the library a place of sanctuary and inclusion for our school community.

We have worked at ensuring we have reading materials that celebrate all our students, including LGBTQ+, neurodiversity and the many cultures our college celebrates. All this hard work led to the College being awarded the Readers for life award with Wellread initiative in June.

**Pamela Dunne Ethos Lead**



## Ambassador Visits Coláiste Cois Life

Tháinig Ambasadóir agus Ársa Daon-Phoblacht Dhaonlathach na Cóiré a throid i gCogadh na Cóiré ar cuairt chuig Coláiste Cois Life an mhí seo. Rinneadar plé ar an gcogadh agus bhronn siad leabhar Cóiréise ar an scoil don mhodúl Cóiréise atá ar chlár na hidirbhliana.

Deis iontach a bhí ann do na scoláirí ceisteanna a chur orthu agus sonraí staire nua a fhoghlaim. Ba mhór an phribhléid é don scoil fáilte a chur rompu.

The Korean ambassador and a Korean War veteran visited Coláiste Cois Life this month. They discussed the war, and they presented the school with new Korean book for the Korean module in TY. It was a great opportunity for the students to ask them questions and learn new history facts.

Also, it was a privilege for the school to have the Korean ambassador and veteran as visitors in our school.



# National Apprenticeship Graduation

Dublin and Dún Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) recently celebrated the graduation of its apprentices from Baldoyle, Tallaght and Loughlinstown Training Centre at the National Apprenticeship Graduation ceremony.

The event served as a platform to recognize and applaud the hard work, commitment, and accomplishments of the graduates. The ceremony provided an opportunity for DDLETB to join hands with other Education and Training Boards in celebrating the success of apprentices from diverse fields. DDLETB extended heartfelt congratulations to all its apprentices who successfully completed their programmes and graduated at the National Ceremony.



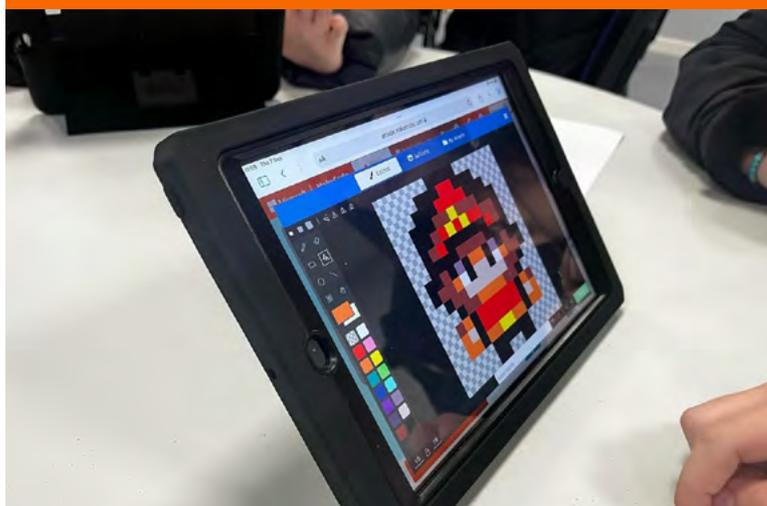
Some of the DDLETB Senior Leadership Team and Training Centre Managers at the National Apprenticeship Awards ceremony in Tallaght Basketball Arena on the 27th of November.

# MICROSOFT DREAM SPACE HITS THE ROAD

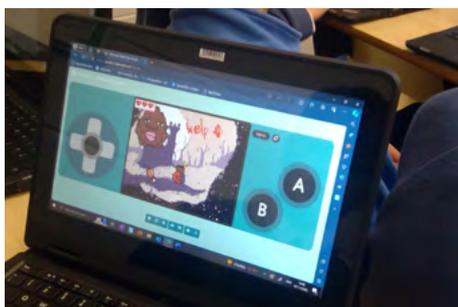
**During the week of November 6th -10th DDLETB Learners had the wonderful opportunity to take part in the Microsoft Dream Space Roadshow.**

The Roadshow team visited 9 of our schools during the week and facilitated over 350 learners.

Dream Space at Microsoft Ireland provides immersive, research-based STEM experiences for students, teachers and communities to enhance their STEM skills alongside crucial social-emotional skills such as empathy, creativity, ethical decision making and collaboration. It is a unique opportunity for learners to interact with a team working in a multi-national company and develop crucial IT skills and knowledge.



The Roadshow visited 2 schools per day during the week at both primary and post-primary level and feedback from learners and staff has been fantastic.



*“Our 2nd Year Digital Media Literacy classes and our Digital Leaders participated in a Microsoft Dream Space Coding Event today. Our students learned about coding in blocks, and they got to create a game using code. Afterwards, students swapped their devices and got to play each other’s games. This allowed our students to further develop their IT knowledge and skills and their teamwork skills in a fun creative environment. A huge thanks to Amanda Jolliffe from Microsoft for facilitating this for our students.”*

Bernie Kelly, ICT Coordinator at CP Setanta.



*"I really enjoyed the Dream Space coding activity. I learnt that I could have fun on a website that I can make a fun game when I code, I really enjoyed learning how to code and all about Dream Space and about the games they make and all about Microsoft, I really enjoyed coding because it was easy and very fun".*

**Learner at CP Setanta**



*"Our team from Youthreach also had the opportunity to experience the magic of Dream Space. On December 7th, 5 of our centres visited Baldoyle Training Centre to take part. It was a great day for all"*

*"I really enjoyed the MS Dream Space Coding event. It was very interesting. I learnt a few skills at the session. They were placing where to put the sprite/villain/food and where to place the blocks. I found the session to develop my IT/coding skills".*

**Learner, CP Setanta.**

*"I enjoyed the workshop. I thought I didn't like coding but now I do, It has convinced me to buy one of the microbits. I thought the workshop was very good and interesting"*

**Learner, Scoil Ghráinne CNS.**

A huge Thank You to Amanda, Corey and Michael at Microsoft and also to the School Leaders and ICT Coordinators at Scoil Choilm CNS, Lutrellstown CC, Coláiste na Tulchann, Scoil Ghráinne CNS, CP Setanta, Kishoge CC, Griffeen CC, Grange CC and Gaelcholáiste Reachrann, Youthreach Rush, Youthreach Swords, Youthreach Balbriggan and Youthreach Blanchardstown.

A special Thank you to the team at Baldoyle Training Centre who facilitated the event on behalf of Grange CC and Gaelcholáiste Reachrann and Youthreach.

# Introducing The O'Leary Library at Ardgillan Community College.

**Friday the 6th of October was a very special day in Ardgillan College as we celebrated the official opening of our new O'Leary Library. The O' Leary Library is dedicated to the founding Principal of the College, Mr. Michael O'Leary. We welcomed a wide range of guests; current staff, past staff, past students, parents/guardians, past parent/guardians and current students to attend. It was particularly heart-warming to welcome those involved in the early years of the College, as we reflected upon Mr O' Leary's tenure as Principal.**

The afternoon included speeches from our Principal, Nuala Ní Mhurchú, Library Development Group lead, Cillian Walsh, our Head boy and Deputy Head Girl and from Mr. Michael O'Leary. The speeches each reflected on the three pillars upon which Ardgillan was founded in 2009; Teamwork, Respect and Excellence. These pillars continue to form the cornerstone of the College ethos and were noted as having provided a strong foundation for the College to grow from 68 students to 1,100 at present. Our Music students also performed superbly on the day. The poignancy of the location of the O'Leary Library in our newly reopened Phase One building was noted, as this was the building where Ardgillan College opened under the principalship of Mr. O'Leary in 2009.

The Library Development Team worked with a schools' interior designer, Julie Potter, to design a bespoke space for our students. The ethos of the College was central to the design phase, with the colours coming from our crest and our pillars given prominence throughout. The official opening of the O'Leary Library in the newly redeveloped Phase One building marks the beginning of a new chapter in the College and serves as a permanent thank you to the leadership Mr O' Leary provided Ardgillan College for a decade. We hope that the O'Leary Library will inspire many generations of Ardgillan students to have a love of reading, and perhaps be the origin story of a writer or two!



# Kingswood CC's Extra-curricular Fair

The Senior Student Leadership team, which includes the head students and senior leaders in Kingswood Community College, organised an extra-curricular fair for Junior Cycle students.

With the help of student volunteers from each activity, the fair was a great opportunity to promote the wide range of clubs and sports found within the school. The fair was a huge success, with many students signing up to a variety of the clubs and sports on offer within the school.

This fair is very beneficial to Junior Cycle students and can be part of their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) which requires students to be involved in at least 2 extra-curricular activities. With a wide range of activities during lunch times and after school, students were bound to find clubs and sports that suited their interests!



# Swords CC

## An Apple Distinguished School

**This year Swords Community College became an Apple Distinguished school.**

We are very honoured and privileged to become part of this community, alongside our sister school, Kingswood Community College. This is a three-year distinction given to Swords CC following a lengthy in-depth process led by our digital coordinator, Lyndsey Balfe, digital team member, Sinead Brennan, the digital team and whole school community.



As a new school, our vision for teaching and learning was to seamlessly integrate digital learning via the iPad alongside traditional pedagogical methodologies, embedded within the school curriculum.

It was of key importance that all students would have the ability to reach their full potential utilising the unique learning tools that the iPads afford, allowing students to learn in many different formats while learning new skills such as photography, film making, coding, animation and much more.

As a 1:1 iPad school, we wanted to give students the opportunity to be creative in their work while maintaining a safe, structured, monitored, and controlled environment in the classroom. The use of managed iPads, limited apps and Apple Classroom afforded this to us and gave teachers a unique oversight of their students iPads at all times.

In Swords CC, all staff including SNAs have iPads. Using apple classroom, SNA's can monitor multiple students' progress during class and will see when a student is struggling, allowing them to intervene at the right time and thus developing student resilience and independence in their own work.

An important part of our vision and review is communication with students, and in our school, we use 'Schoolwork' as our VLE as this is very accessible for all. Schoolwork allows teachers to become collaborators with students and when we share resources with students, teachers can review work at any time, leave comments and voice notes on student work.

One subject that this has had a massive impact on, is Math's. Our math teachers have made workbooks for students, and embedded within these workbooks are questions from the textbook and screen-recording examples of questions. Instead of writing the example on the board, the teacher would do the question on their iPad. This means students can go back at any time and watch as their teacher writes out the example and talks them through the example again. Students have found these videos to be of incredible benefit for completion of homework or for revision for exams.

Key to the successful integration of iPads into our curriculum and teaching and learning was to ensure our CPD was differentiated for all abilities, regularly assessed, reviewed, and evolved with the school's changing needs over the past six years. This has now included our CPD training extending to our whole school community including parents and guardians.

Our aspiration is to continue this journey with the whole school community, building on our CPD programme. We have a fundamental belief that we can all learn from each other through shared and collaborative practices, and that this will enable our vision to grow and develop year after year.

We have linked the videos used in our Apple Application below outlining our journey over the past six years.

### **Inspire**

<https://youtu.be/HVwEGUAGO6U?si=3XHiyY3bk6bSRuVN>

### **Impact**

[https://youtu.be/ZkjteH14Lcl?si=liaQEcfjt3xy\\_Zze](https://youtu.be/ZkjteH14Lcl?si=liaQEcfjt3xy_Zze)

### **Imagine**

<https://youtu.be/TEVSbvWkaXM>

# Swords CC 60 KM Challenge

Swords Community College teachers: Oide Joey, Oide Damien, Oide Mark and Oide Paddy are aiming to raise funding and awareness for the Movember organisation. On the 25th of November they took on the ambitious challenge of running 60 kilometres from Swords Community College to the 40-foot in Dun Laoghaire, and BACK AGAIN!

## What is Movember?

Movember is a global men's health charity that tackles suicide prevention, as well as prostate and testicular cancer. Since 2003 they have been involved in 1'250 men's health projects, uniting experts from around the world with the sole purpose of changing the way men in need are treated and supported. Annually they host 'Movember' where participants traditionally grow a moustache whilst gathering sponsorship. Alternatively, participants can 'Move for Mental Health' during the month to raise awareness and funding.

## Why 60km?

Globally, 60 men are lost to suicide every hour. Whilst everyone can experience struggles with their mental health, in Ireland approximately 3 out of every 4 suicide victims are male. Oide Paddy, Joey, Mark, and Damien are ran 60 km to support every grandfather, dad, brother, uncle and mate who may experience challenging times.

Huge well done to Paddy, Joey, Mark and Damien from everyone at Team DDLETB. We are so proud of your dedication and achievements and in awe of your determination.

[You can review their journey at scc 60km challenge on instagram, where you can still donate .](#)



You can also purchase the limited edition Swords CC Movember jersey. Please, show your support - a little can go a long way!



## DDLETB Special Educational and Additional Needs Coordinator

My name is Frances Shannon and I have recently been appointed as Development Officer for Special and Additional Educational Needs (SAEN) within DDLETB.

I look forward to working with our DDLETB Director of Schools and The Development Team in supporting our 31 community Colleges (Post-Primary schools).

Prior to this role I worked as a teacher in Colaiste Pobail Setanta (CPS) for 9 years. During my time at CP Setanta, I co-ordinated Special and Additional Education Needs and was a SET teacher in Mainstream.

I taught in, and co-ordinated our three ASD Classes and gained great experience working with children with sensory, social, communication, behavioural and medical needs. I also co-ordinated and delivered QQI Level 2, L2LP, L1LP modules in ASD special Class and mainstream classes.

On Thursday, November 16th, I was delighted to welcome our SEN Network to DDLETB Head Office for our first

meeting of this year. A huge thanks to all the Special Education Needs Co-Ordinators who attended. It was wonderful to meet you all.

The meeting a great success and we had rich conversations around co-ordinating special education needs in post-primary schools and the use of Assistive Technology to support students with special and additional education needs. It was also a vital opportunity to share and discuss SEN Resources (SENCO Tool kit).

We look forward to our next SEN Network meeting in February 2024.



## Swords Community College Visit:

I had the pleasure of visiting Swords Community College on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November. I got a tour from SENCO, April Corr of their three ASD classes in An Cosan where I received a very warm welcome from all students and staff.

Beautiful Artwork brightened their corridors created by students during science class. It was great to see such a fabulous facility in Swords CC.

Well done to all the students, their Teachers and SNA's.



Over the coming months, I plan to support schools in the following areas:

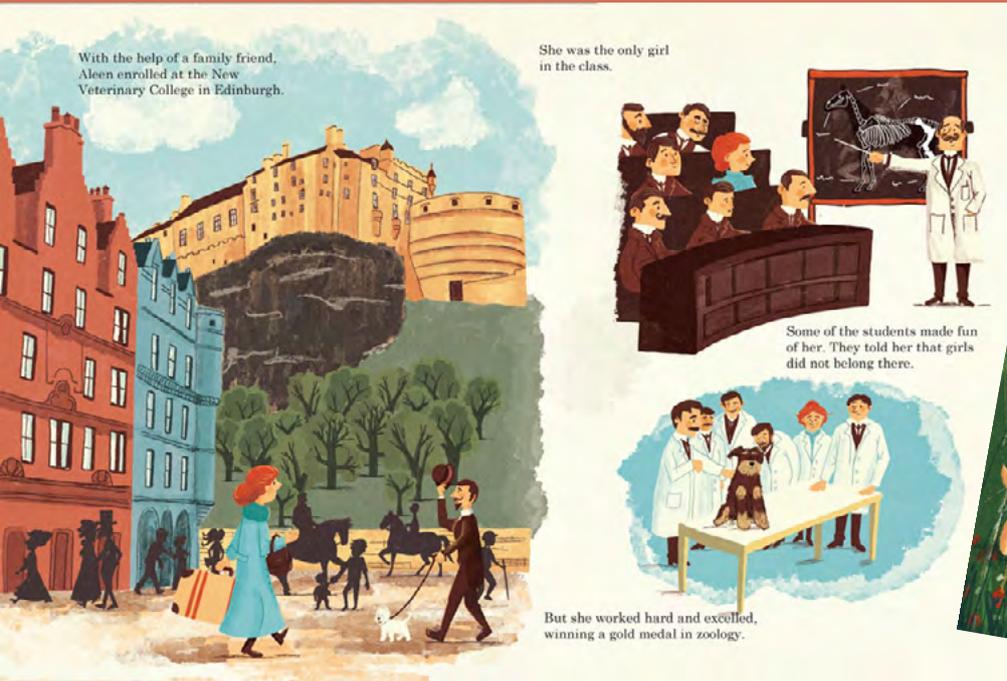
- Setting up and organising ASD Special classes for the first time or opening an additional Special class.
- Supporting Schools prepare for an Exceptional Review Process for SNA allocations in mainstream classes in Post Primary Schools.
- Supporting Schools deliver L1LP and L2LP for students unable to access the Junior Cycle Curriculum.
- Supporting Schools get Teachers trained to deliver Certified QQI Modular Programmes for students unable to access LCA and Leaving Cert at Senior Cycle.

I look forward to working with you all.

I would like to wish all staff across the DDLETB School Community a very happy Christmas and all the very best for the Academic Year 2024.

Frances Shannon  
[francesshannon@ddletb.ie](mailto:francesshannon@ddletb.ie)

# Aleen Cust - Wonder-Vet!



Our philosophy in DDLETB is to help all of our students and learners to **Learn, Achieve and Succeed**. I have a story for you, a **true story** about an Irish woman who exemplified this.

Aleen Cust was born in Tipperary in 1868. From a very young age, she loved animals, and expressed her unwavering desire to become a veterinarian.

In those days, it was “unbecoming” of a lady to want to be a vet. Despite facing an uphill battle including her own family’s disapproval, Aleen enrolled as a student at the Veterinary College in Edinburgh Scotland in 1894.



Although she was one of the best students in the class, Aleen was not allowed to sit her final exams. Why? Because she was female.

Returning to Ireland, she found work as an unqualified vet. In 1915, she drove by herself to France to volunteer to care for wounded war horses.

In 1922, the laws changed and Aleen finally received her diploma. Officially becoming the **first female vet in Britain and Ireland**.

Aleen Cust’s determination and groundbreaking achievements in a male-dominated field opened the doors for girls to follow their dreams.

**Wonder-Vet** is a picture book for kids who love animals and inspiring stories of people following their dreams.

Written and Illustrated by Jennifer Farley, who is part of the DDLETB FET team. Available from bookshops or online from [BeehiveBooks.ie](http://BeehiveBooks.ie).



# We Are DDLETB #Teamddletb

## Creative Events

A special commendation goes to the schools that organised learner competitions, staff coffee mornings, and wear green events—the latter being a great nod to our favourite colour. These initiatives not only added a fun and engaging element to the celebration but also highlighted the unique character of each school and centre within our organisation.

Our commitment to community engagement was evident as schools and centers shared valuable information about DDLETB, its mission, and the significance of being part of our community. This outreach to students, parents, and the wider community served to strengthen the bonds that unite us.

## Gratitude to our Team

A heartfelt thank you goes to our DDLETB Communications, Digital and Social Media Team for their creative efforts in organising this event. A very special appreciation the Digital and Social Media leads in our schools and centres. Your dedication and commitment were instrumental in bringing this event to life and your contributions are a testament to the collaborative spirit we value here at DDLETB.

Thank you all for making this event fun and successful.

We will continue to foster connections, celebrate achievements and build a community that thrives on collaboration, respect, equality, support, excellence and professionalism.

Check out our social media **@ddletb** for all the updates.





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