



# CHALLENGE TO CHANGE 2014-2015



**A Development Education Project in Presentation Schools**



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# CHALLENGE TO CHANGE

**A Development Education Project for young people attending Presentation Schools**



The Challenge to Change Project aims to:

- Raise awareness and bring about a greater understanding of global issues
- Create and foster a critical mindset in relation to inequality, social justice and human rights
- Experience at first hand in a real and concrete way how local action can impact positively on global inequality
- Forge closer links between the Irish students and those in developing countries
- Develop an open, sharing and collaborative dialogue between our school communities and those of our Presentation network abroad
- Disseminate information and good practice

The **VISION** of the project is driven by the **Presentation charism** and **ethos** which embraces the challenge of working with those who are marginalised and excluded, for whatever reason. Justice, human rights, sustainability and right relationships are central to the Presentation mission.

By informing the students and the wider community the project aims to bring about a heightened awareness, a social consciousness, a broader vision and an appreciation of developmental issues.



# CHALLENGE2AID

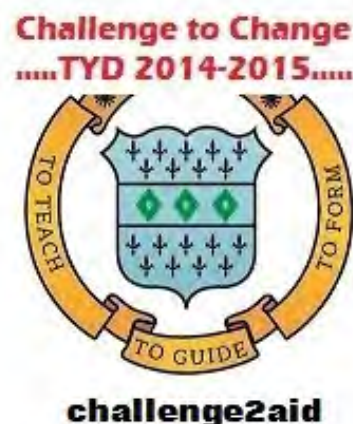
## Coláiste Bríde Clondalkin



Our Challenge to Change project this year focused on the Millennium Development Goals with a particular emphasis on the **sixth Millennium Development Goal**. We hoped to raise a greater awareness in our school community of the problem of **HIV/AIDS** and **Ebola** in African countries. We took part in various activities and actions to promote awareness in the wider school community and we included year groups from across the school community to ensure that our project was whole school and cross-curricular.

### AIMS

- To educate the wider community on the eight Millennium Development Goals with a special emphasis on the sixth Millennium Development Goal - to combat HIV/AIDS and other diseases such as Ebola
- To raise a greater awareness in our school community of the problem of HIV/AIDS and Ebola in African countries, with special emphasis on children affected by HIV/AIDS
- To encourage our school community to contribute to and to support agencies working to eradicate AIDS and Ebola (e.g. Keep a Child Alive and the ONE Campaign)
- To enable the whole community to realise that we, as individuals, can be instrumental in helping to achieve these goals today and into the future
- To encourage the students involved in and affected by the project to become activists for human rights and a voice for others



**TARGET GROUP** - Transition Years, First Years and the whole school community



AIM	ACTION	RESULT
To discuss the idea of the Challenge to Change project	Discussion as a class and in groups	Project discussed and ideas generated
To decide on Categories/Topic	Group work	Focus on <b>AIDS</b> among children in Africa and on the <b>Ebola</b> crisis
To decide on a way to communicate progress and ideas	Set up group e-mail with teachers involved and an edmodo account to track progress and for communication	Ms Wall set up the <b>edmodo account</b> . All TYD students joined. They have access to resources, information and a forum for communication.
To make Posters/Visuals – for Millennium Development Goals – eight goals for 2015	A group was set up, students designed their posters based on the icons on <a href="http://www.undp.org/mdg/">http://www.undp.org/mdg/</a>	If students had a <b>visual</b> of the <b>8 MDGs</b> they would understand our project in relation to goal number 6.
To decide on a project TITLE	Group work	<b>Challenge 2 Aid</b>
To divide up tasks and actions	Created a task sheet and shared it on edmodo	Students worked individually and in groups to progress each group's goal
To raise funds for charity	Record our own version of the song " <b>Do They Know It's Christmas</b> ", make a video of the song, perform our version of the song at the Christmas concert	We decided to raise funds for the <b>Keep a Child Alive</b> organisation and Ebola victims. We sold 300 CDs at €2 each of our own version of "Do They Know It's Christmas".
To display posters around the school and to set up a video link for MDG at reception	Decide where to display posters. Put the video on a loop <a href="http://www.undp.org/mdg/">http://www.undp.org/mdg/</a>	A <b>visual representation</b> for the whole school of MDGs as a springboard for discussion
To facilitate presentations by TYD students to other students	Create a <b>powerpoint</b> for a wide audience of teachers and students	Students and teachers became more aware and were motivated to become activists
To link with Keep a Child Alive and Action Aid websites	Manage fundraising	Stress the importance of being activists
To finalise details for guest speaker	Contact person identified	<b>Steve McDonald</b> spoke to all at Coláiste Bríde in March
To finalise music video of "Do They Know It's Christmas"	<b>AID ACTION WEEK</b> 20–24 April - Ice Cream Day, Red Velvet Cupcake Sale, Red Accessory Day	Focus on the need for action around children with AIDS and Ebola victims in Africa
To raise awareness through fundraiser		



## OUTCOME

Overall the students involved really engaged in this process and definitely gained a heightened awareness of and developed a social consciousness and broader vision on this development education issue.

### School Principal

*“By participating in Challenge to Change these students’ minds have been opened to issues relating to development education and they have actively engaged in raising awareness and social consciousness in school and society.” Marie-Thérèse Kilmartin*

### TYD - Students involved in the project

*“It was a great experience knowing that we helped those who are less fortunate...I would encourage other students to get involved in as much as possible to get the most out of it! It really is a great project to do.” Blessing Lawal*

*“I really enjoyed making the CD because a lot of people really liked it. It was unique and it was a great way for all the Transition Year students to get involved in something.” Charisse McMahon*



### Second Year Student

*“I was really impressed with the Transition Year students when they came in to give a presentation to our class. They were so confident. I was hoping I could be involved in something like this when I’m in Transition Year.” Chloe Murphy Massey*

### First Year Student

*“I loved the crochet heart that the students gave us. I love what it represents and I’m still wearing mine.” Chloe Hanna*

### Other Staff members

*“The students were very impressive as activists and really embraced the ideas around what the Challenge to Change programme means to the Presentation Ethos.” Michelle Dooley RE Teacher and Chaplain*

## WHAT WORKED WELL - ACCORDING TO THE STUDENTS

### Raising Awareness

- The speaker we had was perfect for our project and all students really enjoyed his presentation. Some students felt this was the best speaker they had in school this year.
- Good awareness was raised around our project (especially with First, Second, Third and Transition Year students) through announcements, notice boards, speaker, wearing something red in particular.



### Dividing our class into task groups

- We created different groups for individual tasks and everyone in the class had a job to do
- Some jobs required a lot of organisation, responsibility and courage:
  - the collection and organisation of money
  - taking photos and cataloguing activities
  - liaising with teachers and students from other years
  - presenting in front of peers
  - making announcements for the whole school on the intercom

### Fundraising

- Original Fundraising Idea - Ice-cream Van
- Bake sale

### Learning new skill (crochet)

Students in our class learned how to crochet and crocheted hearts and flowers to give people something back - students and teachers wore these accessories on **Red Accessories Day** and this created widespread awareness.

### Catchy title — Challenge2Aid



## LINKAGES

**Irish Forum For Global Health:** Spokesperson Steve McDonald, gave us a powerpoint based around our project. We have put this into our RE resources folder where all RE teachers can access in the future for use with all classes and age groups.



**Keep a Child Alive:** Their statistics shocked our students into action and as a result we decided to focus on children with HIV/AIDS in African countries. Proceeds from our fundraising efforts went to support this organisation which was founded in 2003 by AIDS activist Leigh Blake and 15-time Grammy Award-winner Alicia Keys, as an emergency push to get life-saving HIV medications to African children and families. Twelve years on, the organisation continues to fight HIV and AIDS on the frontline. Their work has grown to include the critical components necessary to support successful, life-long HIV treatment: comprehensive clinical care, nutritious food and psychosocial support, all delivered with compassion, dignity and respect.



**UNICEF:** Money was raised for this organisation in its efforts to treat Ebola victims and eradicate Ebola altogether. Students were taken with stories such as the one below where a connection with Nano Nagle resounded...

*"...Despite their brave efforts and unwavering commitment, these nurses are also subjected to the stigma and fear that have characterised the epidemic since it first arrived in the country. We are known as the 'Ebola nurses'. No one wants to come close to us. The nurses in the general ward won't talk to us.*

*Even our families are scared they will catch the virus from us."* (Sister Nancy)

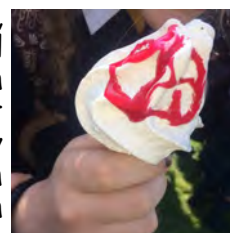
*Nonetheless, Sister Nancy continues to show up for work every day. "I don't feel afraid. I'm a nurse. I'm doing my job." she says. "We are trained to sacrifice."*

## POSITIVE IMPACT

**Something for Nothing:** Students and Teachers were all given a little red crocheted heart shape to wear on Red Accessories Day during Aid Action Week. The hearts were made by the Transition Year Students, teachers and parents. People loved that they were getting something, handmade, for nothing! Students are often asked for contributions towards charities in the form of bake sales, non-uniform days, but this time they loved the fact that they were given something for nothing. Some students continued to wear the crochet hearts on their uniform long after Aid Action Week. This highlighted that awareness had been raised and that we didn't require monetary fundraising to create this awareness.

**Team work and activism:** Students and teachers, and particularly Transition Year Co-ordinators were acutely aware of what these students achieved through this project. Working as a team was especially evident during Aid Action Week which was executed with admirable precision. Transition Year students were seen as activists by other students as they went around visiting classrooms presenting their project to all year groups, making whole-school announcements over the intercom and arranging fundraising events that were different and appropriate to their cause.

**Interesting and eventful fundraising:** Students own re-enactment, recording and performance of this song **Do this know it's Christmas?** parallel with what was happening in the pop world, created a strong connection with the global awareness around the Ebola crisis which was in the media daily at this time. The positive reaction by the school community to the icecream day was palpable. The sun was shining and people were delighted to part with their money showing that if you really put your mind to it and believe enough in your cause you can make people really sit up, listen and participate.



## INVOLVEMENT

**Parents:** The ice-cream van was provided by a parent of one of the students on this Challenge2Aid team. The students' aunts were past pupils of this school and he felt he really wanted to give something back and contribute to our project. A mother of one of the Challenge2Aid activists helped to provide assistance with and a pattern for the crochet hearts.

**Family and friends:** These were the focus group for the sale of CD's to bring awareness of the project to students' homes and their wider communities.

**Bank of Ireland:** Supported our CD sales effort when students were Carol Singing at the Bank before Christmas.

## CONCLUSION

We feel students really benefited from this programme and really embraced the philosophy around it. As Transition Year RE teachers, we loved that we had a focus for our RE class which ran through the academic year. It was so gratifying guiding the students in their choices and efforts along the way and encouraging them to be a voice for others and watching them grow as activists.

The lucky students who got to attend the showcase in Kilkenny really enjoyed it. They were very proud of their achievements - for some of them it was the highlight of their year in Transition Year.



A really worthwhile programme

*Co-ordinator: Jacqueline Wall*



# **YOU'VE GOT A FRIEND IN ME**

## **Presentation Primary School Castlecomer**



This year in conjunction with our new Anti-Bullying policy we decided on Friendship /Anti-Bullying as our Challenge to Change theme. We wanted to make pupils in all classes more aware of the qualities of a good friend, the skills needed in friendship and to encourage them to practise these skills on a daily basis. We also wanted to make pupils aware of what bullying is, what it looks like, how to report it and how to stop bullying from happening in our school.

### **AIMS**

- To make pupils aware of the qualities of a good friend and to help them practice these skills in their daily interactions
- To understand bullying, how to report it and how to stop it happening
- To further develop a positive school atmosphere in line with our Catholic school ethos
- To discover more about playground games pupils play in our school and those in developing countries around the world

### **TARGET GROUP**

Our theme involved all class levels from Junior Infants to Sixth Class. The target was to involve all class levels in age-appropriate learning. Infant classes focused on the theme of friendship whilst senior classes engaged in interactive anti-bullying lessons.

### **ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN**

- We elected our Challenge to Change Committee and held meetings.
- We surveyed senior classes about their awareness of what bullying is, the types, the people involved, the reasons why people bully others, how to stop bullying.
- All classes took part in lessons about Friendship at their own level.
- Every classroom created their own Friendship display outside their classroom so our school was awash with artwork and colour!



- Each pupil wrote a slogan about Friendship/Anti-Bullying for our **Slogan competition**. Winners from each class received a prize at Friday Assembly.
- A whole school art display was created with hand cut outs of every pupil used to create one huge 'Rainbow of Friends'.
- We held a whole school **Friendship Week** from 19<sup>th</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> January culminating in a special Friendship assembly full of songs and friendship good news stories. Students of the week that Friday were picked based on who had displayed excellent friendship skills.
- **Fun Friendship Friday** - we held an especially fun lunchtime where classes took part in organised playground games; athletics stations, soccer, catch games and circle games. All pupils took part with Fifth and Sixth Class girls helping to organise, supervise and encourage younger children to join in and play fairly. It was a great success!
- Second/Third Class pupils played games from around the world, made a powerpoint of information about these and rated each game using stars.
- 'Raising awareness' lessons about bullying were taught to pupils from Second to Sixth Class using powerpoints, worksheets, discussions and interactive videos.

Class	Activities
Junior Infants	Paper dolls, songs and rhymes, Polish playground games
Senior Infants	Poem, song, story, My Friend Profile, jigsaw portraits
Senior Infants/First	Friendship song, 5 rules of Good Friends, friends collage, story
Second/Third	Ingredients of Friendship collage, Cinquain poems, pictures, R.S.E friendship lessons, games from around the world
Fourth/Fifth	Acrostic poems, self-portraits, slogans, story, songs, surveys, R.S.E.
Sixth	Friend Wanted posters, slogans, surveys, songs, R.S.E, story

## OUTCOME

- We increased our knowledge and awareness of Friendship.
- We learned how to play playground games from around the world e.g. Poland, India, Brazil, Mexico, Africa.
- We promoted good Friendship skills on a daily basis, rewarding pupils with 'compliment stars' for their good behaviour in the playground.
- Senior pupils have a better understanding of bullying. They can now define bullying, describe the types, who is involved and importantly know the steps they need to take to stop bullying happening.

## COMMENT

*"I really enjoyed the Challenge to Change day, I got to see lots of different stands, meet lots of different people and tell others all about our project!"* Maeve, Fifth Class

*Co-ordinators: Michelle O' Sullivan, Marie Hughes, Claire Dunne*

# THE EARLY BIRD CATCHES THE WORM!

## Presentation Primary School Ballymakenny Drogheda



Fourth, Fifth and Sixth classes were involved in this project. We worked together to gather information that we already knew about our theme **Biodiversity**. We then decided that because this is such a vast subject we would concentrate on birds with biodiversity in mind. We named our project "The Early Bird catches the Worm". We felt this proverb was fitting as we need to help our birds and environment now rather than later.

### AIMS

- To give the children a better understanding of the word biodiversity with special attention to birds
- To help the children identify birds and their habitats locally, nationally and globally
- To explore the challenges that birds face because of threats to biodiversity
- To enhance our local environment for birds
- To learn about the work that other organisations do to help birds nationally and globally
- To look at exotic birds, ecosystems and their habitats
- To work towards our next Green School Flag - Biodiversity

**TARGET GROUP** - Our teachers, staff and the girls from Third Class to Sixth Class.

## WORK UNDERTAKEN



We investigated what **different species** of birds we can see locally and nationally. We also examined some **endangered species** of birds from all over the world. We explored their **habits** and their **habitats** and also problems that birds face every day in their lives. We investigated different organisations that help birds throughout Ireland and made sure that our local environment was as "Bird Friendly" as possible.

As a group we decided that **Fourth Class** would investigate local birds in our area and our school environment. They studied a few different species and really enjoyed learning about the different local birds. **Our Fifth Class investigated our national birds and our Sixth Class investigated our global birds with particular attention to endangered birds from across the globe.** Each class examined what birds there are in the three areas locally, nationally and globally what troubles are facing birds in each area and also what can we do to help. We made bird feeders from recyclable materials and cleaned the bird bath at our school and made sure the feeders were full throughout the winter. We conducted an **audit** of the birds in our area. We planted an oak tree in our school garden.

We raised money for our chosen charity by holding a **Green Day**. On this day we all wore green, displayed our project and the combination of the classes held a small fashion show. This fashion was inspired by Junk Kouture and everything was made of recyclable materials. We had prizes for our best dressed and other fun activities.

We provided information to make our school community more aware of how we need to live sustainably taking care of our environment, especially our birds. We explored different ecosystems and some exotic birds in their natural habitats and the challenges they are facing due to global problems such as global warming, deforestation.

### Top Tips to get birds into your garden

- Don't give birds salted or dry roasted peanuts because salt can kill them.
- Build or install a bird house for birds to rest and refuel.
- Sunflower seeds are an excellent year-round food. The fat content is higher in black than striped ones.
- Always remove stale or mouldy food promptly.
- A ground feeding tray is better than putting food directly on the ground.
- Clean and wash your bird table and hanging feeders regularly (ideally using a 5% disinfectant solution) and move feeding stations to a new place every month.
- Avoid seed mixtures that have split peas, beans, dried rice or lentils as only the large species can eat them dry.
- Any mixtures containing green or pink lumps should also be avoided as these are dog biscuits, which can only be eaten when soaked.
- When lots of birds are attracted to a small area to feed, the danger of disease increases.



*Co-ordinator: Emma Malone*



# FABULOUS FAIRTRADE

## Scoil Mhuire Primary School Portlaoise



We have been working hard to become a **Fairtrade School**. We set up a **Fairtrade School Steering Group**. The Sixth Class girls spearheaded the project but they involved all classes in the latter stages of the project. A big emphasis was placed on using Fairtrade products as much as possible in our everyday lives. We learned about Fairtrade issues by watching documentaries, through our own research and by engaging with a guest speaker. We hosted a Fairtrade Coffee Morning in our school where we highlighted the issues surrounding Fairtrade to our staff and teachers. We made class presentations to other classes so that they too became aware of the importance of supporting Fairtrade.

### AIMS

- To raise awareness of Fairtrade
- To teach our school community about Fairtrade
- To take action to support Fairtrade issues

**TARGET GROUP** — Students of Scoil Mhuire, parents and teachers

### WORK UNDERTAKEN

We watched documentaries on the **Fairtrade website** detailing issues around chocolate, cotton, coffee and flower trade. We saw how the work of Fairtrade has improved lives for many people worldwide as they are provided with a fair wage. We set up a **Fairtrade Corner** in our classroom where we displayed our resources and information about the organisation.

We had lengthy discussions about **Fairtrade products** and we now can recognise these products in the local shops. We have passed on what we now know to our own families so that when we are shopping we can choose Fairtrade produce whenever possible.

We researched Fairtrade in our own project groups and we presented these completed projects to the younger children in our school to teach them about the important work the organisation does and how they can help in their own way. We organised a **Fairtrade Coffee Morning** to create awareness among the staff of the school. We investigated and saw that very little Fairtrade produce was being used by the staff. We replaced the coffee and tea with Fairtrade products. We hope that the teachers will continue to select these **Fairtrade options** in the future.

*Co-ordinator: Anne Marie O'Hara*

# TURN IT OFF!

## Presentation Primary School Warrenmount



For our Challenge to Change project this year our focus was on **Energy Awareness** in our school and in our homes. We linked the project with our target of achieving our second Green Flag.

### AIMS

- To become aware of the wonder of our natural environment and the need to look after it
- To discuss, agree and put into practice ways that we can reduce the amount of energy that we use
- To investigate methods of renewable energy
- To engage in activities that help children learn about energy saving
- To become more energy efficient in school and at home

**TARGET GROUP:** Fifth Class

### ACTIONS

As a school we

- Researched renewable and non-renewable energy
- Created posters to raise awareness in school about how to save energy
- Played a game of **Energy Bingo** to learn more about renewable energy methods
- Made draught excluders and chose the best locations in the school for these
- **Measured and recorded** the temperature in different parts of the school over two weeks
- Closed the doors along the corridors and external doors over the winter months
- Constructed **bar charts** to show the temperature in different parts of the school
- Conducted **draught surveys** at different doorways in school
- **Counted and recorded** the number of computers and interactive whiteboards that were left on stand-by and constructed bar charts to show this information
- Made models of **water-wheels, wind-mills and solar ovens**
- Investigated how to dissolve jelly using the least amount of energy

## OUTCOME

- The children discovered the importance of saving energy and the need to use more renewable energy.
- They enjoyed making the **draught excluders**, investigating how to dissolve the jelly, making the **water-wheels**, **wind-mills** and **solar ovens**.
- The whole school learned ways that we can save energy through the energy awareness posters that the Fifth Class girls made and posted around the school.
- The school obtained its second green flag for energy!

## WHAT WORKED WELL

- The closing of the doors around the school worked very well to conserve the heat during the winter months. All the children made a special effort to do this.
- The posters worked very well to raise awareness around the school. They also engaged the artistic talent of the class involved.
- The draught excluders were a big hit with the whole school.
- The children enjoyed making the models of different forms of renewable energy.
- It was difficult to reduce the amount of energy used in the school as it is an old building. The children however did a wonderful job in raising awareness of the ways in which we can save energy.



## LINKAGES

We invited **Christina**, from **Anyone for Science**, to facilitate experiments regarding energy. These included an investigation on how to dissolve jelly using the least amount of energy and making solar ovens to melt chocolate.

## POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE WHOLE COMMUNITY

The whole school community learned ways to save energy.

## INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Christina facilitated experiments on energy with the children in the school.
- The children continued the effort to save energy at home with their families as well as in school.

## CONCLUSION

- The internet was a great source of slideshows and images regarding energy.
- We found that it was helpful for our group to focus on one aspect of energy, in our case, that was different sources of energy.
- The children really enjoyed and learned from participating in the experiments and activities regarding different forms of renewable energy. These activities engaged children of all abilities regardless of whether they were strong readers or not.
- The girls also enjoyed the energy quizzes.
- We found that the children learned more about the concept of energy and the practical ways of saving it rather than a lot of facts around the topic.

*Co-ordinators: Anna Sweeney, Eimear Peacock, Linda Kennedy, Celine Foody*



# WE LOVE FOOD!

## Presentation Primary School Waterford



Our Challenge to Change project examined foods from diverse cultures around the world. We participated in some interesting cookery lessons and enjoyed the results.

### AIMS

- To look at foods from around the world and in doing so, to see our school as a multicultural environment
- To expand our tastes and our cultural understanding
- To learn about how much food is wasted in the world and in our own homes
- To learn about and become aware of many of the differences between developed and developing countries

**TARGET GROUP:** Fifth Class

### ACTIONS

- We researched the differences between developed countries like ours and developing countries. We read pieces online and looked at video clips of foods in other countries and the differences in amounts of food being bought by families in various countries.
- Ms Fetton invited **Toto's Mam (Fummi)** to cook typical Nigerian food with us and **Ciara's Mam (Nicole)** to prepare typical Japanese food with us.
- We did a lot of research on food waste around the world but in particular, in Ireland. As part of this research we attended a **Sustainability Workshop** in Waterford Institute of Technology.
- Three families took part in recording their food waste for five days.

## INVOLVEMENT OF OUTSIDE AGENCIES/GROUPS

- Students of W.I.T.
- Toto's Mam and Ciara's Mam for cookery workshops
- Families of the three children who recorded food waste in their homes

## STEPS OUR SCHOOL COULD TAKE AS A RESULT OF OUR PROJECT

- If there are pupils in classes whose parents are from countries other than Ireland, they could be invited in for a cookery demonstration/workshop.
- We will ask more families and teachers to record their food waste to make them more aware of and conscious of the food wasting problem in this country.

## OUTCOME

- We now see our school as a multicultural environment that we are lucky to be part of.
- We really enjoyed preparing and tasting food from other countries.
- We were shocked when we became aware of how much food we are wasting.

*Co-ordinator: Louise Morgan*

# THE WORLD OF LEARNING

## Presentation Senior Primary School Mullingar



We investigated the similarities and differences between the education systems in Ireland and those in a number of countries around the world. We explored the history of education in Ireland and identified key changes that have occurred in the system.

## AIMS

- To explore, identify and learn about different primary education systems in five different countries around the world
- To identify the similarities and changes that have occurred in education in Ireland today and in years gone by
- To enable the children develop independent learning skills
- To develop the ability to work as a historian
- To develop a basic understanding of a child's right to education
- To develop an appreciation of the privilege of receiving primary education in a local school
- To develop a basic understanding of the Presentation Sisters' contribution to education in Mullingar



**TARGET GROUP** - Fifth and Sixth Class pupils from the Enrichment Group

## WORK UNDERTAKEN

- We researched **online** and in the **library** to collect data in relation to the similarities and differences between education systems in five different countries around the world.
- We listened to a **guest speaker** talking about the history of education in Ireland and the contribution of the Presentation Sisters to education in Mullingar.
- We created a **survey** of questions based on information about education systems around the world.
- We got in contact with pupils from other countries including **Russia, Sudan** and **Australia** and asked them to take the survey - through a variety of means of communication - **face to face, Skype, e-mail** and **phone call**.
- We displayed our findings.
- We produced **visual timelines** to show a brief history of primary education in Ireland.
- The children did fantastic research both at home and in school.
- Communication was made with schools abroad. However, we had difficulties organising a video conference with an American school.

## LINKAGES

Contact was made with pupils, teachers and parents from various countries including Poland, France, Slovakia, Russia, Spain, Lithuania, Sudan, America and Australia.

We met pupils and teachers from primary and secondary schools around the country at the Challenge to Change Seminar in Tullamore Court Hotel to share our project with.

Sr. Annette O'Brien came in to our class to talk to the pupils about the history of Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters in Mullingar.

Parents, relatives and friends from places far and near contributed to our project about education around the world.

## CONCLUSION

The pupils and teachers thoroughly enjoyed participating in the Challenge to Change project this year. We particularly enjoyed our day out to Tullamore Court Hotel and all that was organised for us on the day.

We look forward to taking part in the next Challenge to Change project.

*Co-ordinator: Ciara Moore*



# RESPECT – MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE

## Presentation Primary School Clonmel



Our project this year examined the meaning of 'respect' and how we can live respectfully in school, at home and in the community.

### AIMS

- To examine the meaning of the word 'respect'
- To learn how to live respectfully in school, at home, in the community and in the world
- To celebrate our uniqueness and to explore our similarities and differences
- To foster an understanding of, and a concern for, the total interdependence of all humans, all living things and the earth on which we live



### TARGET GROUP

This was a whole-school project. We aimed to include all classes, all staff, all families and the wider Clonmel community.

### OUR ACTIONS

The theme 'Respect' was discussed, promoted and developed through discussion, story, powerpoint, drama and raps at Assembly and in class.

**Rang 1** learned the meaning and reasons for respect. Each child made her personal **Respect Pledge** and is working towards keeping her pledge.

**Rang 2** worked together to write a **rap**. They laminated the rap to create a **placemat** for each child. The girls bring the placemats with them when they move places to remind them to show respect wherever they are.

**Rang 3** decided on a **class target** to improve respect in their classroom. They decided to show respect to each other when the teacher was out of the room at lunchtime or at a meeting. They decided on clear actions to enable them to be more respectful to each other and displayed the agreed actions for reference.

**Rang 4** worked on the theme **We are all Unique** and created and displayed their **unique characters** and a **Celebrate Diversity** display. The pupils took part in a **Roots of Empathy** programme all year. Through the programme the pupils learned to respect the needs of a baby and to gain further understanding of the needs of all people of all ages all over the world.

**Rang 5 and Rang 6** learned about **inspirational people** and leaders who brought about social and environmental change because of their respect for others and their respect for our natural world. The whole school community took part in our wonderful **Multicultural Day**.



## OUTCOME

Pupils and staff enjoyed working on this project. The theme suited all age-groups and had a positive impact in classrooms and around the school. The Multicultural Day was a great success. Many parents and siblings visited the school to talk about their home countries, teach songs and share samples of food. The classrooms and playgrounds were a riot of colour as we all wore national costumes or the colours of an 'adopted' country. Many pupils and parents cooked and baked traditional dishes and treats which, needless to say, were very well received! Teachers taught lessons with a difference - food tasting, the Mexican Hat Dance, an Australian Bush dance, Frère Jacques, Chinese origami, Indian henna hand art and more! It truly was a showcasing of our respect for each other and a celebration of our magnificent traditions and cultures. Our local newspaper, 'The Nationalist', covered the story of our **Multicultural Day**, much to the delight of those photographed.

**Respect** is a theme that can be understood by even the youngest pupil in a primary school and yet is at the heart of Development Education. It was a positive topic that felt relevant at all times and that linked naturally with many curricular areas.



## WHAT OUR PUPILS THOUGHT



*"Some of the things I learned about respect are to show kindness, show love, be nice, be kind. When you show respect, you feel good."*

Róisín, Rang 4

*"One of the things I learned about respect is – we want it, so why should we treat others any differently to how we want to be treated? Treat everyone with respect!"*

Megan, Rang 4

*"Respect is important all over the world because if we had no respect, we would not be very nice."*

Abbie M-F, Rang 4

*"The Challenge to Change project about respect taught us to treat others better and to be kind to people no matter what."*

Sarah Jane, Rang 5



*"The Challenge to Change seminar really opened my mind to people who are in need."*

Cerys, Rang 5



*"We live now in a global village and we are in one single family. It's our responsibility to bring friendship and love from all different places around the world and to live together in peace."*

Jackie Chan (Chinese Actor, Philanthropist, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador)

Co-ordinator: Noëlle Lambert



# CHILD LABOUR / CHILD SOLDIER AWARENESS

## Presentation Secondary School Kilkenny



The aim of our project was to first raise awareness in our school by talking to First Years and putting up campaign banners around the school, with the view to then spreading this awareness further by going out to local primary schools to do activities with Sixth Class groups on our respective topics.

We wanted to learn more about our chosen topics so that we would be able to educate, inform and raise awareness about the worldwide issues of child labour and child soldiers.

When presented with the sheet of possible topics, it was a unanimous decision to choose **Rights and Responsibilities**. We narrowed down our choices to focus on the problems of children, as this would be most relevant to our target group. The most popular appeared to be **child labour** and also **child soldiers**.

We separated into two main groups, each of which took a topic. In our respective groups, we divided into smaller groups of three or four. We created an informative **powerpoint presentation** suitable to be shown to students between the ages of 11-13.

Within each First Year class, competitions were held to encourage pupils to engage in class, but also to do further research to learn more about the topic. Students were asked to incorporate the slogans used by each campaign group, which were 'All day, no pay, no say' and 'Given a gun instead of fun'. Examples of such competitions were: **Art** competitions, **poster** competitions and **essay** competitions. The First Year pupils were very interested and enthusiastic so the competitions were very successful.

*Co-ordinator: Zoë O'Dea*

# ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL!

## St. Brigid's Primary School Kildare



Our project focused on the theme of **Cultural Diversity** and on the celebration of the cultures within our school. We explored and experienced the different foods, music, education, fashions, dance, language and traditions of some of the different cultures. We aimed to increase the children's awareness of other cultures and nationalities. The project culminated with an **International Food Tasting Day** during which we launched our **International Food Cookbook**.

### AIMS

- To raise awareness of the diversity and similarities of the cultures in our school
- To promote tolerance and respect for all cultures in our school
- To celebrate cultural diversity in our school
- To gather and reinforce our learning by holding an International Food Tasting Day

**TARGET GROUP** - Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

The project began with the distribution of a **Cultural Diversity Survey** that established the representation of the different nationalities and cultures within our school. This survey was distributed to Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes (over 300 pupils). The class also gathered information in relation to the children's prior knowledge of their connections to other cultures by determining the foods/drinks they eat from different countries each week.







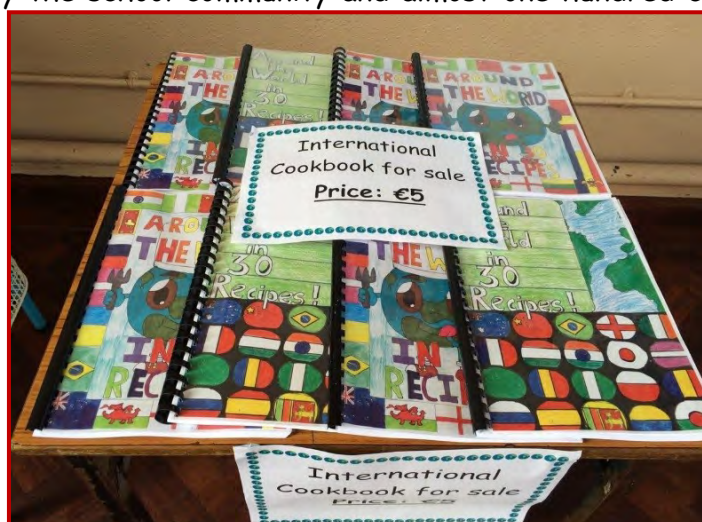
We began our study with an examination of the different cultures and customs in Ireland. We examined what makes us 'Irish'. We looked at the customs associated with St. Brigid's Day. We made St. Brigid's crosses as a class and brought them to St. Brigid's well to be blessed. We established a link with **St. Brigid's Catholic school in Evanston in South Australia**. We shared pictures of our St. Brigid's Day celebrations. We paid a visit to **Solas Bhríde**, a new centre in Kildare Town focusing on St. Brigid and Celtic spirituality.

We made **masks** to celebrate cultural diversity. We used as much colour as possible. The masks were displayed on a poster board outside the classroom with our slogan **All for One and One for All**.

We decided to focus our study on four countries: **Nigeria, China, Poland and Australia**. We spent a week studying each country in depth and were very lucky to have enthusiastic children and parents available to share wonderful stories and teach us about life in each of these countries. We visited the local **Nigerian community centre** where we learned some of the traditional dances and songs. Next, we created powerpoint presentations in groups for each of these countries. Sub-themes included were music, **food, geography, religion, history, traditions** and **customs**.

We decided to focus more closely on **Poverty, Employment** and the **Role of Women** in these countries. We examined graphs and tables exploring the **changing income** of people in these countries and we contrasted it with that of Ireland through the years.

We made an **International Cookbook** entitled **Around the World in 30 Recipes** which celebrated all of the different cultures in our school. We included a piece on **Phrases** and **Food** from each of the countries represented. Children brought in over 50 recipes which were collated to make the cookbook. The children were very involved in the process and they designed the covers. The book was very well received by the school community and almost one hundred copies have been sold to date.







On April 30<sup>th</sup>, we held an **International Day** in the school. Parents cooked and brought in dishes from around the world which the children got to sample. Some of the dishes on the day were **Nigerian Chin Chin, Chinese Fried Rice, Brazilian Passion Fruit Mousse, Welsh Gacen Gri, Polish Fruit Dumplings, Indian Saag Paneer, Australian Lamingtons, Tortilla Espanola, English Toad in a Hole and French Tarte Tatin**. We launched our International Cookbook which added to the excitement. The day added to the global awareness of interconnections and interdependence between different cultures.

## OUTCOME

- A heightened awareness of different cultures within the school
- A greater feeling of welcome and a greater sense of belonging in the school
- Overcoming racism, prejudice and stereotyping
- A sense of pride and self-confidence in sharing stories about where we come from



## PUPILS' COMMENTS

- *"I was very proud to represent my class and school in Tullamore. We put a lot of work into the project and it paid off!" Sam, Fifth Class*
- *"I was very happy to hear that the dish I brought in for International Day was all gone - it means everyone enjoyed my cooking!" Karolina, Fifth Class*
- *"Our project showed that everyone is different in what they do, what they like and what they eat." Arteom, Fifth Class*
- *"It made the children from other countries feel important which was good." Leah, Fourth Class*
- *"All of us are made different, that's what makes us unique." Morgan, Fifth Class*
- *"We learned to understand and respect other children by learning about their traditions, language, and religion." Jessica, Sixth Class*
- *"It was wonderful to see the whole school embracing International Day. The children learned a lot from each other and were very proud to share their knowledge and stories with others. It is definitely something we would like to see developed further next year as it was a huge success." Sixth Class Teacher*

## LINKAGES

Through our project we made links with children and schools in Evanston in South Australia. We developed a greater link with parents by inviting them to share parts of their culture by bringing in recipes, teaching us songs and dances and showing us their national dress.

## POSITIVE IMPACT

The project gave the children the opportunity to do something meaningful in trying to create awareness of and appreciation for the different cultures and nationalities within our school. The children enjoyed being involved in a project that related to their own lives as students in a school with such diversity. Parents and the wider school community really came on board with the project and were very enthusiastic towards the project and were only delighted to share recipes and dishes for our International Day. The International Day and our cookbook were successful in bringing together all that the whole school had learned and showing how we should all be proud of our uniqueness.

## CONCLUSION

The participating children really enjoyed the experience of being involved in the Challenge to Change project. They received lots of positive feedback from the International Day and people were very enthusiastic about it becoming an annual day that could incorporate more elements of diversity and more involvement from all the classes. As our school has close to a thousand pupils, it was difficult include everybody but an International Day next year organised by senior classes would result in greater benefits for all. The International Cookbook was a huge success and could be published on a wider scale next year to include more information (stories, pictures) from different cultures.



*Co-ordinator: Eimear Coffey*



# THE STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

## Presentation Secondary School Thurles



During the year we were horrified and saddened when we heard on the news about the girls who had been kidnapped in Nigeria. We were also inspired by the bravery of **Malala Yousafzai**. It got us thinking about the many areas of women's rights denied in the world today such as education and healthcare. We decided we wanted to find out more about how women's rights are denied in many parts of the world. We wanted to find out more about what is being done to remedy this unjust situation.

### AIMS

- To explore the struggle for women's rights in Ireland and around the world
- To investigate those areas where women's rights are commonly denied, such as education, health, voting, prostitution, human trafficking, female genital mutilation and domestic violence
- To gain an insight into the lives of inspirational women who have campaigned to better the lives of women, such as Malala Yousafzai
- To mark International Women's Day by designating a week in March to celebrate "Women's Week" to inform all students about the struggle for women's rights

**TARGET GROUP** - Transition Year Group and the wider school community



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

To spark our interest in the topic we began by reading articles about the **suffragette movement** in Ireland and the struggle for women's rights in the 1870-1920 period in Ireland. We then identified areas where women's rights are commonly denied.

We conducted initial **research** on specific areas where women's rights are denied, such as education and healthcare. We made a collage of **newspaper cuttings** highlighting the struggle for women's rights.

Next we read articles about the girls who were kidnapped in **Nigeria** and articles about Malala Yousafzai. We watched clips on **YouTube** about the struggle for women's rights.

We examined the role of Presentation Sisters in providing education for girls in Ireland and around the world. We invited a Presentation Sister to speak to our year group. We also invited a speaker from **Aid Action Ireland** to speak to all Transition Year students about women's rights. We used the information we gathered to compile a written project and to illustrate wall **posters**. We researched facts regarding the denial of women's rights and made posters to display during Women's Week. We displayed our project work and posters in our school hall so that our whole school community would be aware of the issues involved in the struggle for women's rights.

**Women's Week** took place in our school in March to mark International Women's Day and to educate all the girls in our school about the ongoing struggle for women's rights. We displayed our project work in the hall, put up fact posters around the school and made daily intercom notices with facts about the denial of women's rights. We also decided to hold an event for First Years to mark **International Women's Day**.



## CONCLUSION

We thoroughly enjoyed working together on our Challenge to Change Project. **We found the whole experience to be both challenging and rewarding.** We learned how to research a topic and how to work as a team. We also learned that it is important to use good communication skills and to be organised.

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***"Women constitute a majority of the poor and often the poorest of the poor. The societal disadvantage and inequality they face because they are women shapes their experience of poverty differently from that of men, increases their vulnerability, and makes it more challenging for them to climb out of poverty."***

***(Women in the World Today, Fourth Conference on Women)***

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***

*Co-ordinators: Valerie McCarthy, Eimear Harold, Edel Harding, Susan Max*

# WAR IN THE WORLD

## Sacred Heart Primary School Portlaoise



The focus of our Challenge to Change project this year was on **war** in the world. **We compared past conflicts in Ireland and in Europe with those happening today.**

### AIMS

- To create an awareness of war globally and at a present day level
- To study war in Ireland in a historical context linking it with the present day
- To identify areas in the world afflicted by war and to examine the causes and effects of such wars
- To raise awareness of the effect of war and how we can help fight against it
- To research the efforts made to combat war in the world today
- To enable the children to become aware of such political issues and realise their effect in the world today
- To highlight the injustice and futility of war

**TARGET GROUP** - Whole school community

### ACTIVITIES

- We invited a speaker to address the class on the **humanitarian work** done by volunteers
- We undertook a comparative study
- Posters / art work were displayed around the school
- A cake sale was organised
- We used creative writing / poetry
- We availed of newspaper studies

*Co-ordinator: Deirdre Coleman*

# CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## Scoil Áine Clondalkin



Our project this year focused on the diversity of nationalities and cultures in our school. We wanted to celebrate these cultures and enable the children to take pride in their history and heritage and share it with the school community.

### AIM

To celebrate the diversity of nationalities and cultures in our school

**TARGET GROUP:** All class groups and their parents and families

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

To achieve our aims we decided to:

- Celebrate **European Languages Day** by learning simple phrases from different languages
- Interview **parents/grandparents** from different cultures
- Hold a **multicultural fair** with lots of family involvement
- Incorporate a **multicultural element to lessons** whenever possible
- Experience **playground games** from around the world
- Celebrate **International Dress Up Day** and **International Food Tasting Day**
- Participate in **African Dance** workshops
- Devise a whole school **mural**



During **European Languages Day**, senior classes learned about **tongue twisters** and **phrases** in different European languages and pupils from different countries taught a phrase to the class. **Student teachers from France** shared French culture and traditions.

Parents when asked how they could volunteer to promote their culture, responded with many offers ranging from teaching a class a traditional dance or bringing in traditional dress to visiting classes to talk about daily life in their culture.

Our main activity was the **Intercultural Fair** in April with food fair, guest speakers, games, art and crafts, dancing and displays around the school.

## OUTCOMES

We are really pleased with our Intercultural project. The children were excited to share information about their language, traditions and culture with their classmates during many different lessons. The effort that parents and children went to to bring in foods from their country, dress up in traditional clothes and share special items showed great school community spirit. One of the parents drew a beautiful mural in our school yard and the children have all painted it.



The **Intercultural Food Fair** was a great success. Pupils dressed up in traditional clothes or clothes in their country colours so that everyone had a chance to take part. Parents and pupils brought in a wonderful variety of food from all over the world. We tasted seaweed crisps and sushi from South Korea, puf-pufs and jollof rice from Nigeria, stew, soda bread and potato cakes from Ireland,

Senior Classes developed great confidence in **public speaking** by going to different classes and teaching them about their culture - showing off items and clothes, teaching phrases or songs or even games. The younger pupils were delighted to have an older child be the teacher for a change and listened and responded enthusiastically to them!



Co-ordinator: *Karen McKevitt*

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***Leave the world better than you found it, take no more than you need, try not to harm life of the environment, make amends if you do.***

***If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go further, go together.***

***(Old African Proverb)***

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***

# RIGHT TO EDUCATION

## Presentation Secondary School Clonmel



We looked at education around the world. We studied education in **Uganda** and in the **Philippines**. We looked at education in Ireland in the past and compared this to our education system today. We examined briefly the important part women play in education.

### AIMS

- To enable students to be aware of the differences in education around the world and education in the past
- To make students aware of the importance of education in their own lives
- To demonstrate how one small action can make a big difference in someone's life, i.e. the ripple effect

**TARGET GROUP** - Whole school community

### WORK DONE

- We invited a **guest speaker** into our classroom to speak to us about education in Uganda.
- We **interviewed** our parents and grandparents.
- We organised into groups to do projects on various women and their importance in education.

*Co-ordinator: Margaret O'Mahoney*

# IT IS NOT OUR PLACE

## Holy Trinity National School Fethard



It is not our place - we are just passing through. The earth was passed on to us by those who came before us and we will pass it on to those who come after us. We are stewards of the earth. It is not our place to:

Destroy  
Pollute  
Use everything up  
Neglect  
Waste.

During our research we paid particular attention to our use of energy and our use of water. We tried to improve on the current usage in school and at home.

### AIMS

- To educate ourselves about sustainability
- To learn about good practice and bad practice as it occurs in our daily lives and as it occurs on a more global level
- To help us understand the effects of our personal choices on the environment
- To educate ourselves about fossil fuels and renewable energy and its advantages
- To inform the school community and the wider community of our project through presentations and local media

### TARGET GROUP

Third Class supported by Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes. Classes from Junior Infants to Second Class were also involved.



## FETHARD NEWS



Pupils from Holy Trinity National School Fethard photographed on their visit to the Ecovillage, Cloughjordan, as part of their 'Challenge to Change' project.

## Fethard students challenge us to change

On March 5, 2015, twenty third class pupils from Holy Trinity National School, Fethard, travelled with their principal, Ms Morrison and their teachers Ms Kenny and Ms Hogan, to visit The Ecovillage, Cloughjordan, as part of the group's research for their project entered in this year's 'Challenge to Change'. This annual event, run by the Presentation Sisters Education Office, encourages and supports its schools nationwide in researching and presenting projects on various subjects such as, injustice, poverty, racism, inequality and Third World and environmental issues.

The Fethard school is taking part for the 8th consecutive year and their project focuses on sustainability and is entitled, 'It Is Not Our Place!'. The central idea of the project is that we are stewards of the earth – our ancestors have passed it on to us – we must pass it on to our descendants. It is not our place to destroy, pollute or waste.

"Leave the world better than you found it, take no more than you need, try not to harm life of the environment, make amends if you do." (Taken from Paul Hawken's definition of sustainability from the 'Ecology of Commerce')

The trip to Cloughjordan was very insightful and interesting. The community live on a 67 acre site where they grow their own food, plants and trees to promote biodiversity. The founder members of the eco-village first came together in 1999 and the construction of the first homes began in March 2009. The first residents moved into their new homes in December 2011. Today there are over 100 residents living in 50 high-performance 'green' homes. Construction is on-going to complete the planned total of 130 homes.

We learned about the various materials used to build the village from passive houses, cob houses, hemp-crete and all cedar houses to recycled glass and lime-plaster houses. We saw the solar

and wood-powered heating system and heard about various insulation systems such as recycled newspaper, sheep's wool and loose hemp.

The group encourages biodiversity and 17,000 native trees have been planted. The policy in the eco-village is to buy food produced in Ireland and to support local shops and businesses. It also has an on-site 34-bed hostel where visitors can stay and Ireland's only wood fuelled bakery.

The Ecovillage received the gold award for best 'Socio-Economic Project' at the UN International Awards for Liveable Communities (The Green Oscars) held in China in November 2013.

The students and teachers had a very educational and enjoyable visit to Cloughjordan and are very grateful to the residents who gave an audio-visual presentation, followed by a guided-tour of the eco-village. We look forward to presenting our findings at the 'Challenge to Change' in Kilkenny at the end of April.

## WORK UNDERTAKEN

- Talk and discussion around the **current bad practice** in our school, homes, community and wider world
- Dictionary work re the topic - words such as sustain, neglect, toxic, fossil fuels, steward
- We studied **carbon footprints** ranging from the use of plastics, tinfoil, cling-film, transport to fossil fuels, destroying rainforests and over-fishing
- We addressed litter and waste, water and energy usage in our school in conjunction with our Green Flag endeavours
- We visited **Cloughjordan ecovillage** where we had a powerpoint presentation followed by a guided tour
- Assisted by **local artist, Ms Pat Looby**, we made **model houses** based on those seen in Cloughjordan eco-village
- We presented our work to the **parents** of Third Class and also to First to Sixth Classes
- Articles about our project were published in the **local newspaper** and on **Fethard website**

## WHAT WE LEARNED

- The use of fossil fuels is dangerous
- Global warming and climate change are things we need to know about
- Renewable energy is the way forward
- We must not waste
- We must conserve resources such as forests, rainforests, rivers, lakes, seas
- We must rethink, reuse, reduce, recycle



# CommunityNews

SCAN &amp; ENJOY



TALK TO US

FACEBOOK.COM/THE NATIONALIST  
@THE NATIONALIST

## DUNDRUM

### Kickhams Camogie

U14s: Our U14s are through to a County Semi Final on Friday, May 8, in the County Camogie grounds The Ragg. The girls won through after they defeated Cahir in Cahir on Friday night last in a hard fought game.

Caman To Thurlies: Our full U12 Squad comprising of our A & B team participated in the Caman to Thurlies on Saturday morning last where they played against St. Joseph's Doora Barefield (Clare), Douglas (Cork) and Ballybrown (Limerick). All our girls played very well in what was fantastic, well organised and very enjoyable occasion in Semple Stadium. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the organisers for what was a memorable occasion for the Club.

Cake Sale: We are holding a Cake Sale after all masses in both Donaskeigh and Knock-



## Fethard's 'Challenge to Change Project'

Working on the Fethard Holy Trinity National School's Challenge to Change Project are from left: David O'Donnell, Haydyn Fleming, Jack Quinlan, Adam Tynan and Mark Neville. The project 'It is not our place', will go on display in Kilkenny on this Thursday, April 30.

## Ballyneale Field Day

45th Annual Ballyneale Field Day takes place on June 14, so time to start collecting all the usual items: CDs, DVDs, toys, books (no mags) also offers of vouchers or prizes for raffle would be much appreciated. Any of the items can be dropped to Vera Power at any time.

## HOLLYFORD

### Sean Treacys G.A.A.

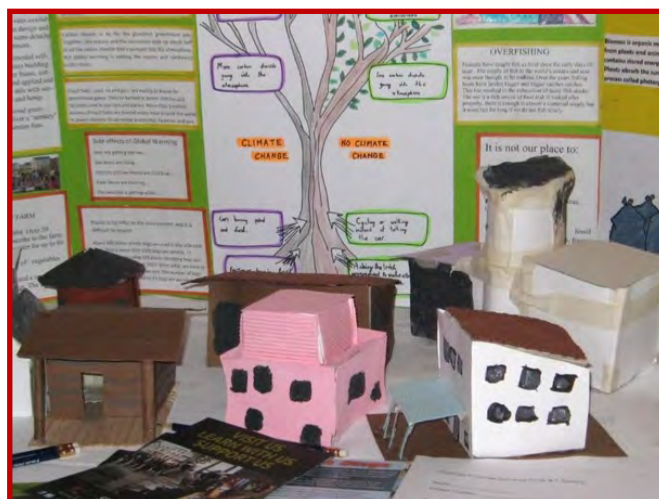
Intermediate Championship: We played Ballinahinch in the 2nd round game of Group 4 of the intermediate county championship on Saturday 25th in Dolla. Short a number of regulars we were slow to settle and Ballinahinch took the initiative with a point from Shane McGrath. A long delivery from John Foley to the edge of the square was fielded and finished to the net by David Gleeson. We quickly settled however and were winning possession in mid-field.



Aine Connolly and Holly Hayes working on their 'Challenge to Change' project under the artistic direction of Ms Pat Looby



Kacycie Aherne working on her model house for the Holy Trinity National School 'Challenge to Change' project



## POSITIVE IMPACT

This project/topic seemed to grip the imaginations of the pupils in the school. We think this is because it is in our power to do something about it - to change.

Challenge to Change is such a good support and guidance for young people and all those who have taken part over the years acknowledge its value.

Co-ordinator: Rita Kenny

# GENDER EQUALITY

## Presentation De La Salle College Bagenalstown



At the beginning of our project, we researched gender inequality around the world and we discovered where the countries stand on this issue. The topics we focused on were access to education, employment, maternal mortality in childbirth, human trafficking and child marriage. We examined the Millennium Development Goals with a view to ascertaining the world's commitment to gender equality.

**TARGET GROUP:** Third Year and Fourth Year students

### WORK UNDERTAKEN

In our project, we spread knowledge about **White Ribbon Day** - a campaign to encourage boys and men to break the silence and make an effort to achieve gender equality and end injustice against women. We wrote a brief description of White Ribbon Day and gave it to all of the Fourth Year students.



We prepared a presentation with a Third Year Class on **The HeForShe Commitment** - a solidarity movement for gender equality that brings together one half of humanity in support of the other half of humanity, for the benefit of all. We got the boys in the class to take the pledge and we took a photo of them holding the #HeForShe sign.

Our aim was to highlight the meaning of gender equality and to make people aware of the effects it has on our world today.

*Co-ordinator: Jenny Maher*



# CHOOSING INCLUSION

## Scoil Bhríde Shantalla



At Scoil Bhríde we undertook this project with a view to reminding ourselves and everybody involved in the school that we have a very special mix of people making up our school community. This is something to be celebrated and what better way than with those staples of celebration - food, music, dance, art and story.

### AIMS

- To learn about, celebrate and appreciate the wealth of cultures in our school focusing on food, art, music, dance and story
- To raise awareness of the broad range of nationalities represented in our school
- To allow children, parents and staff to learn about other cultures, seeing what we have in common and what makes us different
- To learn from each other in a fun way
- To work together as a whole school involving every pupil but also bringing in our families and friends

### TARGET GROUP

This project is being led by the two Fifth classes in our school but children from every class are involved at varying levels. Each and every nationality and ethnic group within the school community has been celebrated in some way.



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

We **explored cultures** in many aspects of classwork especially in Geography, Art, history, cooking, religion and language.

Each class learned about the countries we studied. Fifth class pupils learned about and did projects on each country represented in our school.

Classes from Third to Sixth engaged with a group of visiting Spanish students learning about their country, dance, music, food and language.

Flags from each country represented in

our school were made and displayed on our project display wall.

We arranged for guest speakers/parents from several countries to come in, talk about their country and culture, dress in traditional dress and show artefacts from their cultures.

Finally, the school hosted an **International Day** which was the culmination of all our work bringing all the strands of our project together. It was a momentous day and has inspired us to make it an annual event.



## WHAT WORKED WELL

- Individual project work - pupils did great work and learned something new
- Inviting participation by anyone in the school community who wanted to get involved
- Incorporating more fun elements - music, dress. Food, dance were the best received aspects of our work.
- Communication with parents - by text/word of mouth
- Parental involvement to an extent - we would like to get even more next time round
- Minimising structure of International Day, keeping it relaxed - allowed more/less time to be given to individual items and put no pressure on people (teachers, pupils, parents)
- Having a huge number of physical artefacts/items on display - it kept the audience engaged far better with our project

## LINKAGES

- Those schools in Spain whose students came to work with us this year
- A school in Portugal of past pupils
- Visiting teachers/speakers/musicians/artists from other countries



## PROJECT LEGACY

We have decided to celebrate International Day in our school on an annual basis and will make it a bigger event, run over a full day, possibly two, with greater participation by all parties and at a time of year that allows more time to be put into it by all classes.

## FURTHER STEPS

Our school intends to embark on an e-twinning programme with other European schools as a pre-cursor to joining the Comenius project to further our relationships with other countries and cultures.

We intend to engage more with parents and families from other cultures, backgrounds, ethnic minorities and to afford them greater opportunities to celebrate and show pride in their identities.



*Co-ordinators: Collette Furey, Brian Ferguson, Frank Keane*

## ***Challenging Thoughts ...***

*"We may have different religions, different languages, different coloured skin, but we all belong to one human race."*

*(Kofi Annan, Nobel Peace Prize Winner)*

*"No culture can live if it attempts to be exclusive."*

*(Mahatma Gandhi)*

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***



# THREATS TO OUR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

## St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick



We, the Fifth Class pupils in St. Joseph's G.N.S., Mountmellick, Co. Laois, were thrilled to be taking part in the Challenge to Change Project 2014-2015. We worked as a class throughout the project, discovering and learning within our class and passing on our information to the rest of the school. We investigated and learned about bees, their physical make up, and the essential role they play in our environment.

### AIMS

- To discover and learn about the bee - the lifecycle, habitat, and honey production
- To highlight the positive effects of the bee on our environment
- To identify threats to the bee
- To discover how we might protect the bee
- To highlight the effects of possible bee extinction
- To ask what can we do?

We studied the biology of the bee and honey production in class. We were very fortunate to have wonderful speakers visit our school. The first was **an amazing display** and talk about the **Secret Life of Bees** where we listened to fantastic information and were left speechless by the fabulous 3D Bee display and glass case display. Our second **guest speaker** was from **Trócaire**. It was fantastic to learn about the positive effects honey production has for people in other parts of the world. It can be a great source of income to farmers and will also aid pollination of the plants. Armed with our knowledge, we developed our own understanding of the topic through posters, story, display, poetry and passed on our knowledge to the rest of our school community.

*Co-ordinator: Sarah Robinson*



# PLANET EARTH'S FUTURE

## Scoil Mhuire Oranmore



Our project focused on sustainability and looking after planet Earth.

### GOALS

- That students would have a heightened awareness and greater understanding of global issues facing our planet earth
- That students would understand how their actions have a knock-on impact on the future of planet earth
- That students would understand the impact of collective action and how it can influence the future of the world
- That students would be motivated and enthusiastic about their own individual carbon footprint
- That students would impart their new knowledge about the world and its endangered resources to the wider community, starting within their own school and homes

### TARGET GROUP

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth classes (100 students approximately)



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN



A lot of resources and time were spent on setting up a system in our school to cater for the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' of our waste. Children in all classes were involved and this linked in with our Green Schools committee and our school garden. Every class in the school is now responsible for their own waste, and each class is working with three different waste bins (general waste, compost and recycling). Central to this was creating our own compost for use in the school garden. Children in Fifth Class picked stones from the garden and decorated these stones with garden animals, flowers, vegetables or fruit. These stones now line the path to the school garden.

Fourth and Fifth class had a visit from an **engineer** who spoke to the children at length about the use of renewable and non-renewable energies and the drive for global sustainability.

All classes researched their chosen area in detail, provided feedback and created and presented projects on their particular area of research.

### Children

- read articles based around the area of renewable energies and sustainability
- wrote **poems** about global sustainability and poems to encourage conservation of rainforests
- constructed **art work** showing the 'before and after' impacts of deforestation of rainforests
- debated '**The resources of the Rainforests should be exhausted for the benefit of mankind**'
- researched the introduction of **GM** crops and their development over time
- discussed the **merits** and **ethics** of **GM crops**
- researched the **lifecycle** of various crops and the impact this has had on native farming

We have been in contact with St. Brigit's Garden in Moycullen, Galway, about the possibility of a workshop on renewable energies with the SEAI.



Sixth Class watched a **documentary** produced by the Seeds of Freedom called '**Seeds of Sovereignty**' on seed saving in Africa. The other Sixth class wrote to the **Rainforest Alliance** detailing their project work and asked for information and advice on further actions that could be undertaken to conserve rainforests. They discovered that **two thirds of the world's plant and animal species are found in rainforests and that most of them are endangered**. Tropical rainforests took between 60 and 100 million years to evolve and are believed to be the oldest and most complex land-based eco-system on earth containing over 30 million species of plants and animals, i.e. half of the world's wildlife and at least two-thirds of its plant species. Over a quarter of the medicine we use today have their origins in the

rainforest. That's amazing when you consider that only 1% of the rainforest's plants have been examined for their medical properties. **Today rainforests are being destroyed at a rate of 15 acres every second. If deforestation continues unchecked we will completely lose our rainforests in the next 40 years.**



The girls undertook a case study focusing on **canola seed**. They discovered that it was genetically modified from rape seed. They researched the South-American 'Chia Seed', studied the genetic modification of them and looked into the effects genetic modification has on organic Chia farmers.

### POSITIVE IMPACT

Green flag blowing outside the school due to the co-ordinated efforts of teachers and pupils and the whole school community. Parental involvement in the school garden. Children brought home some fruit and vegetables grown in school garden.

Children are more aware of their actions and how they have an effect on the global environment. They are aware of the importance of growing trees to keep our air quality clean and pure. The class decided that for national tree week in the next school year the school should plant a new tree to symbolise our commitment to the environment.



Children are more aware of the impact and power of large global organisations and the consequences this can have for lesser developed countries and for individuals themselves.

### SAVE THE RAINFORESTS

*Rainforests are important,  
Animals live in the trees,  
So every time you chop one down,  
An animal has to leave.*

*Toucans, ocelots, monkeys,  
They'll all depart their homes,  
All out in the wild,  
Afraid and alone.*

*That's not the only reason,  
You shouldn't chop down trees,  
For all of us as humans,  
Need the trees to breath.*

*So now let's stand together,  
As a community,  
Stamp out deforestation,  
And live in harmony.*

(By Caitlin Greaney)



### WHAT WORKED WELL

The children enjoyed working in groups and researching topics that interested them. Children were delighted to receive the Green Flag for their efforts in promoting a healthy attitude to recycling in the school.

Children contacted agencies outside of the school to gain further information on their studies. This provided them with opportunities to develop their social and communication skills. The students will carry out further research into the school community in order to acquire in-depth knowledge of the global issues affecting the local community.



### DO YOU KNOW THAT

- The Amazon contains 1 in 10 of the known species on earth
- Half of the planet's remaining tropical rainforests are in the Amazon
- The Amazon has 4,100 miles of winding rivers
- Rainforests contain millions of species, most of which are still undescribed
- There are around 3,000 different fruits found in the rainforests and we make use of about 200, whereas tribes in the east would use up to 2,000 of them
- Today rainforests are being destroyed at the rate of 1.5 acres every second.
- With deforestation continuing at such a fast rate it is estimated that 137 species are exterminated every day.
- If deforestation continues unchecked we will completely lose our rainforests in the next 40 years.

### Ireland's energy targets for 2020:

- Increase renewables by 20%
- Reduce energy consumption by 20%
- Reduce greenhouse gas levels by 20%

### OUTCOME

Children are encouraging their family and friends to be more aware of their impact on the environment at a local level. They are committed to buying recycled materials (e.g. copy books), using reusable bags and buying fruit from sustainable suppliers who treat the rainforest with care and who treat their workers fairly. They are conscious of the conservation of the earth's other resources such as non-renewable energies and are switching off lights, electrical items and heating when not in use or required.

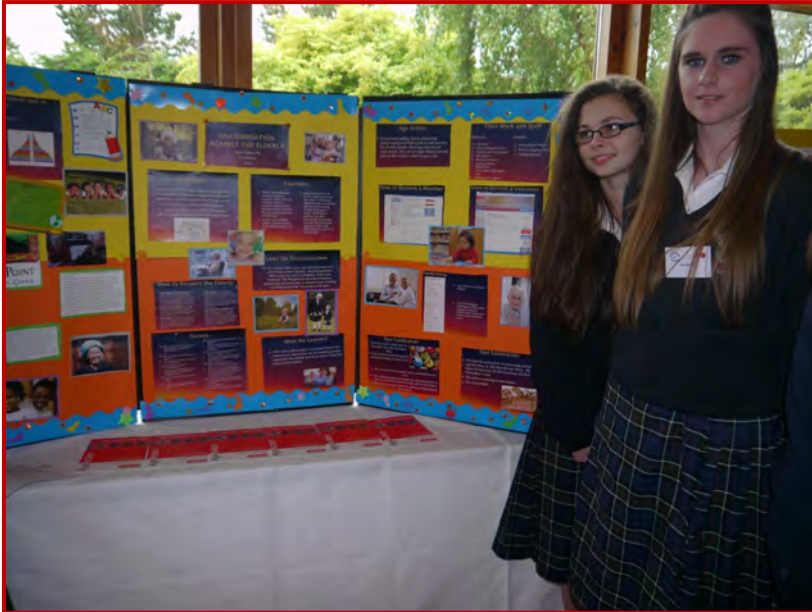
*Co-ordinator: Nóirín Fitzpatrick*



# DISCRIMINATION

## A DAILY PROBLEM FOR THE ELDERLY

### Scoil Chríost Rí Portlaoise



Transition Year students decided to research the **different types of discrimination** that exist in Ireland today. When this was done, the girls decided to focus their attention on discrimination of the elderly. Age Action is an organisation that helps elderly people and so they decided to get involved and to raise money for this very worthwhile organisation.

#### TARGET GROUP

All members of our school community

#### AIMS

- To have a greater understanding of the difficulties elderly people face on a daily basis
- To investigate if the elderly are discriminated against on a daily basis
- To understand how and why organisations like Age Action are needed today
- To be more aware of the needs of elderly people

#### OUTLINE OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

Students researched discrimination of the elderly and they created **powerpoint presentations**. The class decided to hold a **bake sale** in our school on 11<sup>th</sup> December to raise some much needed funds for Age Action. €348 was raised on the day. In March a speaker visited our school to talk to the class about the work the organisation does and to collect the cheque. Some of the girls devised **questionnaires** and distributed them to both patients and carers in local nursing homes. It is hoped to achieve a greater awareness of the difficulties faced by the elderly today.

#### OUTCOME

Students are now more aware of the needs of the elderly. They realise the importance of Age Action and the fantastic work they do. Students noted the differences between the treatment of the elderly in Ireland and in India.

There were lots of helpful websites to assist our research. The guest speaker answered lots of valuable questions. We worked closely with Age Action and Pavée Point.

Overall, the project was very successful as the students learned a lot and got very involved. It was fantastic to see how passionate they were because they all thought about their grandparents and how they were treated. They enjoyed learning new information and actively raising awareness and funds for a worthy cause.

*Co-ordinator: Jenna McGee*



# BEAT BOSNIA'S BLUES

## Presentation Secondary School Listowel



We were eager to do our project on poverty as it was an issue we all felt passionate about. We did not want our project to be solely highlighting the negative so we explored the human response to poverty. In doing so we came across a wonderful organisation called Mary's Meals which shines a light of hope on our project and the issue of poverty. We felt it would be a great idea to raise awareness of the work of Mary's Meals while also highlighting the devastating effects of poverty in Bosnia.

### AIMS

- To raise awareness in our school about poverty in Bosnia
- To create awareness of the effects of poverty, in our school community and also in the wider community
- To explore a response to this poverty - Mary's Meals
- To make a change in the way people in our community view poverty
- To contribute to breaking the cycle of poverty

### TARGET GROUP

The Transition Years co-ordinated the project. Our target group was our school community and our county.

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

We researched the project and what we wanted to do. Once we decided that we wanted to raise awareness and funds for the charity organisation Mary's Meals we had to pick a country to focus on. After much research we decided that Bosnia would be the best country to raise awareness of as the poverty in this country is not spoken about often and the reason Mary's Meals was created was because of Bosnia. Mary's Meals provides daily meals to hungry children in a place of learning. In this way the child is attracted to the classroom where they can gain a better future for themselves and their community.

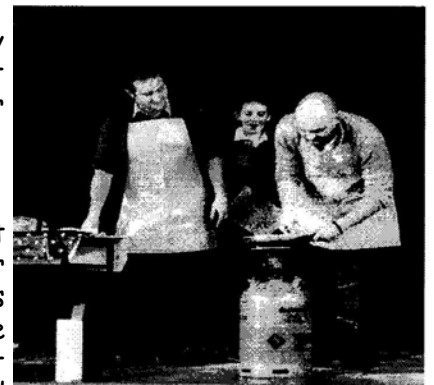
We created posters promoting Mary's Meals and hung them around the school. We designed a notice board to raise awareness of Bosnia and Mary's Meals. We designed the notice board so that it looked like the Bosnian flag. We displayed facts about Bosnia and its people. We didn't want to show just the negative view so we also displayed the hope that is provided by Mary's Meals. We included what we can do to help.



Once we had raised awareness in our local school we decided to explore different ways to raise awareness in our wider community and also we hoped to raise funds for Mary's Meals. To raise more awareness in our school we organised a screening of *Child 31*, a documentary about Mary's Meals and its aim to break the cycle of poverty. We designed posters with the date, time and information on Mary's Meals and displayed them around the school. We showed the film and made sure the First Years were aware of the donation box in the room. As the screening played through we heard and saw the reactions of the students. We heard the gasps of some when the numbers appeared on the screen of how many children had died from starvation.

As a class we came up with the idea for the **Mary Berry Bake-Off**. We made posters and we asked teachers to take part. Mr. Coffey and Mr. Hilliard agreed to be the two contestants. We also got three teachers to judge the event. When the two events were over we had raised €220 for Mary's Meals.

Our teacher arranged for us to go on **Radio Kerry** to speak about all we were doing. Mary Fagan interviewed us thoroughly about our project on Bosnia and Mary's Meals. She asked us why we chose this issue. It was a brilliant opportunity to raise awareness about the poverty in Bosnia on a county wide level. It was also a great opportunity to promote Mary's Meals and its simple solution to world hunger.



## LINKAGES

- First Year students
- Mary Fagan, Kerry Radio
- Mary's Meals

## OUTCOME

We raised awareness in our school about poverty in Bosnia. We created awareness about the effects of poverty in our school community and in the wider community. We explored a response to this poverty - Mary's Meals. We raised awareness and €220 for Mary's Meals.

## WHAT WORKED WELL

The project went well and we enjoyed all the events we arranged. The two highlights of the project were the chance to be on Kerry Radio and the Bake-Off. Radio Kerry is very popular and it helped us raise awareness about our project. Mary Berry Bake-Off enabled us to raise awareness, funds and it created a positive atmosphere in the school.



## CONCLUSION

**Our class was deeply affected whilst doing this project as we were shocked at how poverty stricken Bosnia is and how this effects children's education. Many children do not attend school as they have to provide for their family. Mary's Meals provides children with one daily meal in a place of learning which encourages children in poverty stricken areas to attend school and get an education. This gives children in Bosnia hope. We were touched at the impact Mary's Meals has on the lives of children in Bosnia and how it provides them with a better way of living.**

We would definitely do this project again as it was not only very educational but deeply effective and opened our eyes to the struggles that children in Bosnia go through on a daily basis. We were honoured to spread the good news of this hopeful organisation.

Mary's Meals feeds over 989,791 of the world's poorest children every day they attend school.

*Co-ordinator: Jacinta Feeney*

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

*"Saving our planet, lifting people out of poverty, advancing economic growth ... these are one and the same fight. We must connect the dots between climate change, water scarcity, energy shortages, global health, food security and women's empowerment. Solutions to one problem must be solutions for all."*

*(Ban Ki-moon)*

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***



# OUR CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGE

## Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin



This year we started to work towards our **seventh** green flag: **Global Citizenship - Energy**. As part of our work on this flag we found out all about climate change. We found out the causes and effects of climate change and hopefully have started to reduce Scoil Mhuire's contribution to global warming and climate change. We also wanted to raise awareness in our school, at home and in the wider community.

### AIMS

- To begin working towards our seventh green flag: Global Citizenship - Energy
- To find out about climate change and global warming
- To find out about carbon and the greenhouse effect
- To explore the effects of climate change on the weather, air, oceans, plants and animals
- To find out about the effect of climate change on people around the world
- To create a shoe garden

### TARGET GROUP

The whole school community played a part in this project.

## ACTIONS

We set up the Green Schools Committee (GSC) made up of 14 children from Second - Sixth Class. They applied for the position and were chosen by their classmates. The committee meets once or twice every month.

**Global Awareness Survey** - the GSC carried out an initial global awareness survey. The survey was repeated at the end of our project to see how far we had come.

We continue to reduce our electricity and heating bills. Our Green School Energy Monitors make sure we do everything we can to save energy around the school. So far this year our **ESB bill has been reduced by €500** and we have also significantly reduced our heating bill.

We have taken the **WEEE pledge** and are collecting batteries for recycling.

**The Big Travel Challenge** - we are hoping to reduce our carbon footprint by walking to and from school. We are making a big effort to increase the number of children who walk to school.

We are continuing our **golden boot** and **silver wellie** awards for the classes with the most walkers and we introduced a new award, the **bronze flip flop**.

We have joined RECREATE. RECREATE supplies recyclable materials for use in art projects.

**Senior Infants** planted beans in the school garden.

**Junior infants** planted herbs and garlic.

**Shoe garden** - as the weather improved the junior classes (Junior Infants - Second Class) started work on their shoe garden - planting flowers, fruits and vegetables in old shoes to make a beautiful garden.

**Third Class** found out about climate change and global warming. They completed projects on the different effects of climate change. They found out how climate change is affecting the weather.

**Fourth Class** created a climate change rap.

**Fifth Class** found out all about **deforestation** and its effects. They visited our local arboretum and made their own climate change song.

**Sixth Class** devised a powerpoint all about climate change. They did **case studies** on Ethiopia, Ireland, Philippines and the Arctic.





In December we held a ceremony to launch our **Sixth Green Flag**. For the ceremony our Green Schools Committee told the story of the spoon. We were delighted to be asked to share the story with everyone at the Challenge to Change Conference in Kilkenny in April.



We also had the opportunity to share the story with some teachers and students from **Delhi, India** when they visited our school in May.

*"Before you finish eating your breakfast in the morning you have depended on half the world." (Martin Luther King)*



## Go Green!

A rap about global warming composed by pupils at Scoil Mhuire



### Chorus

*It's time to make a change,  
To stand up and fight,  
Against global warming,  
So shout with all your might,  
'It's time to go green, to keep our planet clean!'  
'It's time to go green, GO GREEN, GO GREEN!'*

### Verse 1

Hey listen up people,  
We're here to tell you how,  
Our world is in danger, and we need to act now.  
This is our planet, so let's keep it clean, like we  
said before it's time to go green!  
There's this thing called global warming, and its  
isn't very cool,  
Lots of greenhouse gases, that are trapping too  
much heat,  
If it keeps getting hotter maybe the world will fry  
-----like a piece of meat!  
We may sound dramatic but there really are  
some problems,  
If we all work together in no time we can solve  
'em!  
Cause Climate change is bad,  
It's changing the seas,  
The water is rising, and the animals are not  
pleased.  
The ice is melting, as its getting warmer every  
year,  
Without the Arctic ice, polar bears will fear.  
As the water rises, it will take over the land,  
And then the sea turtles can't lay their eggs on  
sand.

### Chorus

### Verse 2

You see crea----tures under the sea need cold  
water just like you and me,  
Co---ral, krill, polar bears and seals,  
If only they could speak, they would tell us how  
they feel!  
They'd say they feel bad,  
That they have no homes,  
So it's time to help them now, they can't fight  
alone!  
So what can you do?  
Well let's start at home,  
Make sure you recycle,  
And dust off the bicycle!  
When not in use turn the power off.  
Hey you know, you'll also save on costs.  
Try to walk to school.  
The golden boot's cool.  
And leave that car at home,  
Hey there's no need to moan!  
Exer---cise it not just good for you,  
Wait and see It'll help the world too!  
So we hope you've been listening,  
To what we're tryna say,  
Without a bit of effort  
Climate change is here to stay!  
So if you are with us,  
Sing this nice and loud,  
Scoil Mhuire, lets sing it proud!  
'It's time to go green, to keep our planet clean,  
it's time to go green go green go green!'

### Chorus

*Co-ordinators: Naomi O'Dowd, Siobhán McKiernan*

# INSIDE INDIA – MANY REALITIES

## Presentation Secondary School Ballingarry

This year's project focused on **India** and its multiple realities. In particular, we studied the **caste system, homelessness, orphanages, dowry deaths, women in prison, violence against women, child trafficking, wealth and the wealthy.**

### AIMS

- To foster an awareness of the variety of problems in Indian society
- To complete a study on their preferred problem
- To write letters to students in St. Anthony's School in Chennai
- To complete a piece of art that we could send to St. Anthony's that represented Irish culture
- To receive from St. Anthony's a piece of art work representing their culture
- To be part of the school's decision to sponsor one child's education in St. Anthony's by having a no uniform day



**TARGET GROUP:** Transition Year students

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- All students researched their preferred social issue
- Each student was responsible for a part of the art work
- Students wrote to an individual student in Chennai
- Students presented their findings to other classes in the school
- They informed other students about our efforts to sponsor a student and they collected money on no uniform day

### OUTCOMES

Not only did students have individual work to complete but they learned how to work together as a class group while completing the art project. They became aware of the 'Multiple Realities' that is India

### LINKAGES

St. Anthony's Secondary School, Chennai

### WHAT WORKED WELL

Overall it was a great success. Time constraints were a big problem especially for the art work as it became bigger than we thought. We did not get to write back to students in Chennai but another teacher involved the First and Second Year students who took on this task. We have not yet received art work from Chennai but are assured that it will come.

### CONCLUSION

This project was one of our best yet. Our school remains committed to our links with Chennai and each year a new group of students get to experience this link for themselves. Their art work will hang in a prominent position in our school alongside photos of our sponsored student.

*Co-ordinator: Margaret Murphy*

# HOMELESSNESS

## Killina Presentation Secondary School Rahan



For our second Challenge to Change project, we chose to examine homelessness. We considered homelessness in Tullamore, Mullingar, Athlone, Birr, Dublin, Galway, Limerick and Cork. We extended our study to developing countries and cities, Kolkata, India and Rio de Janeiro. We also considered the "new homeless" in New York and Washington D.C.

### AIMS

- To research the extent of homelessness in our local community, Ireland, India, Brazil, New York
- To raise awareness about homelessness locally and in the wider community
- To investigate the degree to which the profile of those facing homelessness has changed
- To research facilities and services that are available for the homeless community
- To inspire others through our actions to make a positive impact for the homeless community
- To raise much needed funds for Focus Ireland, the Simon Community and St. Vincent de Paul

### TARGET GROUP

Our target group was students from First to Sixth Year. We also aimed our project at the staff of our school and at the local and wider community by using our **school blog** and our **newsletter**.



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

We undertook various actions to raise funds and also to raise awareness. We sold soup to raise funds and to simulate a **soup kitchen**. We sold tea and coffee at break time. We organised an **Easter egg hunt** for First Year students. We asked students in the school to donate **hygiene products** so that we could make hygiene packs.

We started a **letter writing campaign** in an attempt to get in guest speakers. Unfortunately Focus Ireland and Simon could not provide us with a guest speaker. However, St. Vincent de Paul was able to provide a guest speaker. Padraig Moran came to talk to us about the great work of St. Vincent de Paul. We presented him with the hygiene packs we made up.

We created a **wall of information** in our school concourse to inform the school community of our project. We informed people in our local area through bulletin notices. We **taught a module**, which was a class of 40 minutes, to classes from First Year to Sixth Year - this went very well. We devised a questionnaire for students, staff and other people in the local community. We used poetry to depict the life of a homeless person.

## OUTCOME

We raised great awareness about homelessness in our school, local and wider community through teaching, display boards, bulletins, newspaper and the school blog. We now feel that we all have a much greater knowledge and understanding of homelessness on a local, national and international level. We feel that we have made a difference and a positive impact on the issue which is homelessness through raising funds for local homeless charities, raising awareness about homelessness in our school and wider community and by deepening our understanding of this topic through various pieces of research.

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

*"I feel that Challenge to Change was a very worthwhile project. I have learned a lot over the course of the project and it's a great way to make a difference and positive impact on the lives of others while also having fun."*

*"I really enjoyed Challenge to Change and found it very informative and I developed a greater understanding of people who are homeless and the lives they live."*

## WHAT WORKED WELL

The fundraisers we held worked well. We held a

- Easter Egg hunt on 24 March which raised €80
- Soup kitchen on 1 May which raised €85
- Easter egg raffle which raised €65
- Non-uniform day on 16 March

Another thing that went well for us was teaching that five students in our class got involved in. We taught classes from First to Sixth Years.

## LINKAGES

We made links with **St. Vincent de Paul**, the **Simon Community**. **Focus Ireland** sent information about homelessness. We linked with our local community through information in bulletins, school blog and newspapers.

## POSITIVE IMPACT

Our project raised funds for local organisations such as SVP. We made hygiene packs which we donated to SVP. We raised awareness in our school and in our community. We hope that our efforts will impact in our community.

## WHAT WE LEARNED

A homeless person is a person who lacks permanent housing.

### Why do people become homeless?

- Housing and financial crisis
- Discharge from institutions
- Family breakdown including domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental health issues
- Transition from youth to adulthood for young people in care or who were homeless as young people

### Young persons are considered homeless if they are:

- Sleeping on the streets and other places not intended for night-time accommodation, e.g. bus shelters, park benches
- Living in accommodation intended for short period of time, e.g. hostels, shelters
- Living with friends/relatives short term

### Statistics

Location	Estimated number of homeless persons
Ireland	5,000
Australia	100,000
Europe	3 million
India	78 million
France	1 million
Canada	200,000
Brazil	20 million
World	100 million



### Who is a street child?

A street child in India is someone under the age of 18 for whom the street has become his/her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood, and who is inadequately protected, supervised or directed by supervised adults. **It is estimated that there are more than 400,000 street children in India. The majority of these are boys with little or no education.** Boys and girls as young as six years engage in rag-picking, sifting through garbage in order to collect recyclable material. Rag-pickers can be seen alongside pigs and dogs searching on their hands and knees through trash heaps.

## CONCLUSION

We feel that if we were doing this project again we would try to do the sleep out for Simon. However, we do feel that the teaching module went very well. We also feel that our various fundraisers like the soup kitchen, raffle and guess how many sweets in the jar competition worked well and that it raised awareness as well as funds.

*Co-ordinator: Edwina Hall*

# CHOOSE TO CHANGE

## PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY IN OUR SCHOOL

### Presentation College Currylea



Our project was about ensuring that our school is one that promotes tolerance and inclusivity, in line with the Christian ethos that is prevalent here. In keeping with this, we examined our anti-bullying policy and the D.E.S. recommendations on anti-bullying in school. We examined the types of bullying referred to in these policies, but focused primarily on gender identity bullying. We wished to show that our school is a tolerant, Christian school that is inclusive of all people, but with our project in mind, particularly people from the L.G.B.T. community.

#### AIMS

- To educate ourselves and others in our school about issues concerning the L.B.G.T community
- To show, in practical ways, that we are an inclusive school promoting positive awareness and being allies of the L.G.B.T. community

**TARGET GROUP** - Our whole school community

#### OUTLINE OF WORK

- We examined our own feelings and attitudes around L.G.B.T. issues. This increased our awareness of issues concerning the L.G.B.T. community.
- We researched and read D.E.S. anti-bullying guidelines.
- We researched and read our own school's anti-bullying policy.
- We examined our school building physically to see what information regarding bullying was on display and where it was on display and the different forms bullying can take e.g. emotional bullying, physical, gender identity.

We noted what helplines were on posters, what helplines were not found and the location of helplines and their accessibility. We discussed and recorded the observations made by all the groups who engaged in different tasks and we noted down our recommendations which will be compiled and discussed with school management and teachers at a later stage.

*Co-ordinator: Natalia Campbell*



# HARVEST HOPE FOR FAIRTRADE!

## Scoil Íde Clondalkin



We decided to do some research in the area of Fairtrade. We think that all people should be paid fairly for their goods and therefore we wanted to investigate the importance of Fairtrade worldwide. We wanted to raise awareness of Fairtrade in our community to help people make informed decisions when buying goods!

### AIMS

- To learn about Fairtrade and how it benefits the workers in developing countries who produce goods
- To raise awareness about Fairtrade products through making flyers, newsletters, projects and art
- To highlight why people should support Fairtrade
- To survey local supermarkets to see how many stock Fairtrade products
- To develop a whole school policy on Fairtrade
- To become a Fairtrade School
- To hold a Fairtrade Coffee Morning in our school



## ACTIONS

During the course of our project we:

- Completed lots of **reading** and **research** in the area of Fairtrade
- Watched **powerpoint presentations** and **video clips** about Fairtrade
- Explored how to become a **Fairtrade School** and are implementing the steps necessary
- Surveyed parents on Fairtrade
- Created a **timeline** of our **Fairtrade events** including designing **Fairtrade t-shirts**, hosting a **Fairtrade Coffee Morning** and designating a **Fairtrade information wall** in our school
- Interviewed the school Principal and requested that all tea and coffee in the staffroom will be Fairtrade in the future
- Undertook Fairtrade projects in our classes and presented them to one another
- Collected Fairtrade empty wrappers/containers and used them to create artwork
- Held a Fairtrade tea and coffee morning during **Fairtrade Week**
- Created a **Fairtrade space** in our school
- Organised a Fairtrade poster competition
- Organised a meeting with the **managers in our local supermarkets, Tesco and Aldi**, to discuss Fairtrade products and compiled a list of Fairtrade products that are available
- Made Fairtrade speeches in groups and read them aloud to the parents
- Developed a 'Fairtrade Friendly' school policy where we outlined how we will promote Fairtrade annually
- Designed **Fairtrade cotton socks** to raise awareness about Fairtrade cotton
- Designed **bookmarks** with Fairtrade facts and distributed them to our parents
- **Displayed Fairtrade products** in our school including various types of chocolate, sweets, jam, juices, tea, coffee, soaps, creams and many more.

We are really enjoyed learning about Fairtrade and hope we can encourage more people to support Fairtrade in the future!

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

*"I enjoyed taking part as I learned more about Fairtrade and it felt good to spread the awareness."* Esther

*"The Challenge to Change project opened up my eyes to what is happening in the world, not just in our lives. We thought about other people."* Codie

*"I found out what Fairtrade products were in my local shops and it was good to see the variety."* Molly

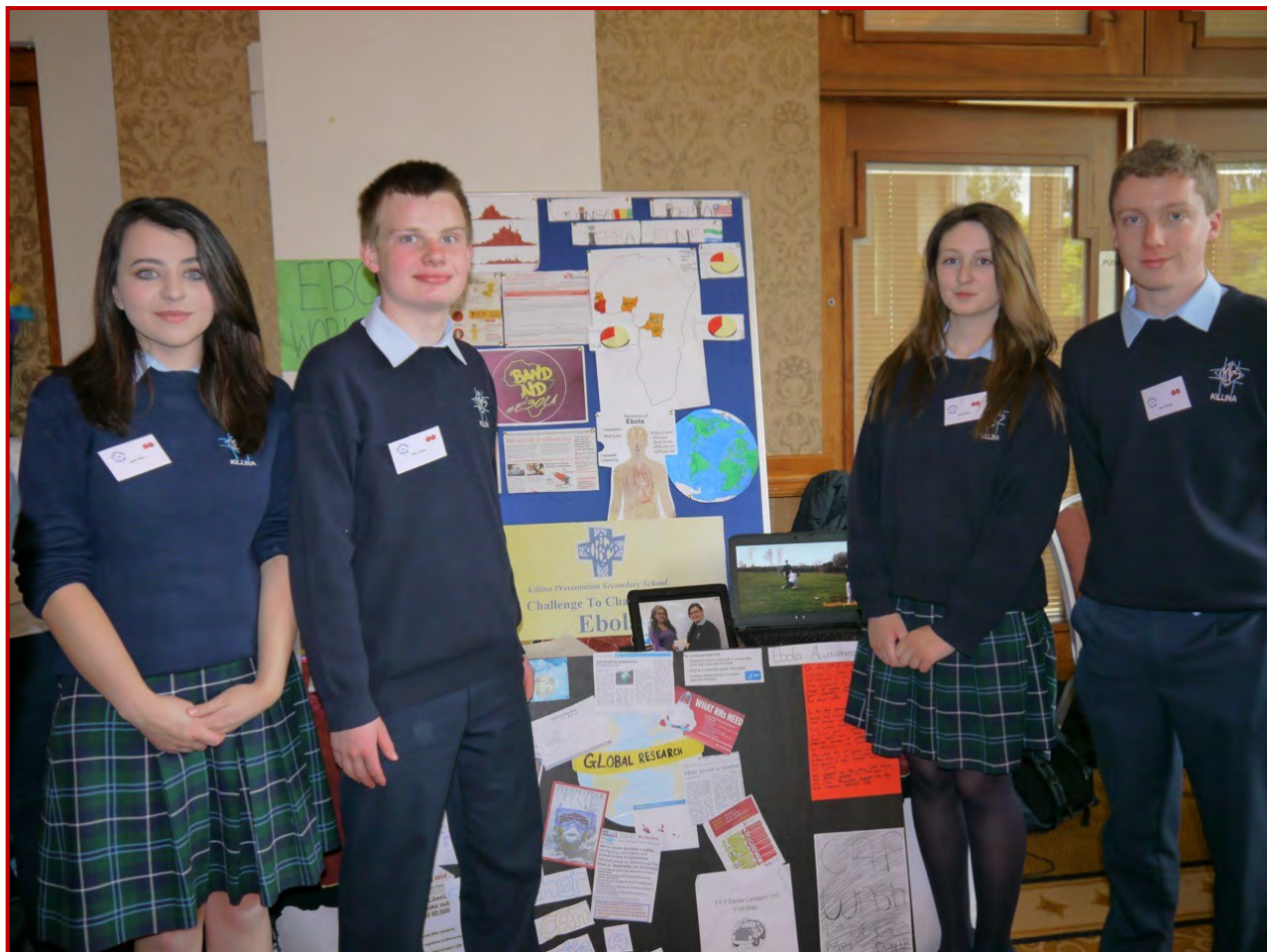


Co-ordinator: Audrey Dempsey



# MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS: EBOLA

## Killina Presentation Secondary School Rahan



For our Challenge to Change Project, we chose to examine the issue of Ebola. We investigated the possibility of Ebola entering our local area of Rahan and Tullamore. We then considered the possibility of cases arising in other areas across Ireland. We looked at the situation in **West Africa**, in countries such as **Guinea, Liberia** and **Sierra Leone** and asked what we can do to help the current crisis.

### AIMS

- To gain information about Ebola - what caused it, how has it become widespread and how is it only being properly dealt with now
- To research the extent of Ebola in West Africa
- To find out different opinions and approaches to tackle this problem to arrive at a well-rounded opinion on what we can do to approach the situation efficiently and effectively
- To develop skills such as taking initiative and thinking practically
- To spread awareness about Ebola in the school community and in the local community

### TARGET GROUP

While hoping our work would reach all groups, we decided to focus on our students and other young people.



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

**Research:** Some students in the class were actually unaware of what Ebola is, where it was located and how it was really affecting people. We therefore had to get a basis of knowledge about the disease. We used different sources for research, such as internet, news bulletins to keep up-to-date with current events as well as books from the library. We visited Irish Aid Centre to get a real insight into what has been done to save the lives of people infected and to prevent further outbreaks. We found how aid was given in emergencies and to developing countries.

**Presentation day for First Years:** We held a presentation day for First Years in which we showcased our project and educated students about Ebola while keeping it interesting by including a wide range of activities. We produced a short play illustrating how Ebola was caused and how it is contagious. We directed the play ourselves and had an all-student cast. We used coloured flour and water to represent the Ebola disease spreading from person to person and in doing so, showed how it spread easily. This visual experience gave the students an easier way to understand how Ebola was caused and how people can easily catch it without noticing. We used powerpoint to explain Ebola in more detail, giving students a better perspective on the disease as well as relevant facts. We offered students a chance to take part in an African painting workshop run by very artistic Transition Year students who had researched different methods and traditional paintings mainly used in West Africa. This gave students an understanding of how important and beautiful the culture of the affected countries was before this atrocity happened. We held a soccer match at the end of the presentation day, with various mini-games. The day ended in great spirits. We collected donations of an optional €2 or more per First Year student - this was donated to Concern.

**Raffle:** We held an Easter raffle in aid of Ebola. We did this mainly for PR - to spread awareness. We donated the proceeds to Concern. We purchased Easter eggs and made three hampers. The raffle was advertised by posters and on our Facebook page. We set up a stand at every break time for about three weeks and displayed the hampers and sold tickets. We took turns on who had to man the stand each day. On the last Friday before Easter holidays we picked names from a hat and delivered the prizes.

**Cake Sale:** We organised a Cake Sale to spread awareness and advertised through posters and Facebook. Students baked the cakes. We sold out completely on the day which we thought was a great success.

**Class presentation:** Using the powerpoint we used for the First Year presentation day, we went to a number of classes from each year group to educate students about the Ebola epidemic, spread awareness about our project and gain useful insight they had to offer on how we could possibly improve our project or any information we didn't include that they thought would be relevant.

**Car wash:** We thought this would be a great way to spread PR outside the school, attracting not only parents and teachers but members of the public too. We advertised the date, price and location (after getting permission from relevant authorities) but mainly focused on advertising it on Facebook as then it would reach people outside the school. Luckily enough, a Transition Year student had a job washing cars, so we were properly geared up! On the day we were all designated different stations - washing, drying, interior clear, payment. We worked efficiently and raised money for Concern.

**Facebook:** We used our Facebook page to explain our aims and tasks. This was a great way to spread awareness about the topic and worked very much in our favour.

**Guest speaker from Concern:** A guest speaker from Concern visited and spoke about the work Concern has done for the Ebola crisis. We not only learned about their work, but we got a personal account of a person who travelled to Sierra Leone while Ebola was an extreme problem. This gave us another insight, giving us an even more rounded opinion. We presented the speaker, Clare, with a cheque for €415 towards hygiene packs and vaccinations.

**Video:** One of the Transition Year students recorded the entire experience of the project and displayed it on a finished and edited video which was then displayed on the presentation day.

**Stand for Seminar:** After completing all fundraisers, we focused on gathering up all our information, activities and things we had learned and displayed them on our stand for the seminar.

## OUTCOME

Reflecting on how our project went we believe that we achieved our goal of creating awareness within our school. We were surprised at how interested the First Year students were when we held our awareness afternoon. They asked numerous questions and were interested in learning more. We felt by the end of the day the First Years were better informed and conscious that even though a topic leaves the news after a few weeks it does not mean that the problem is solved.

We were delighted with how we created awareness around the school as a whole. Our Cake Sale at the beginning was a good way of letting the school know about our project as it grabbed their attention. This was followed by our classroom visits whereby we taught Second, Third and Fifth Year students about the Ebola crisis. Again, we were surprised at how interested students were and wanted to learn more. In fact, many students decided that they would go help and research even further themselves. This really showed us we were beginning to make a difference.

Individually, we believe we all developed as a class. We not only learned about the victims of Ebola but also the issues which are arising in many developing countries. Our trip to Irish Aid Centre helped us learn more about the difficulties in developing countries. It showed us that even though these people are struggling and find it difficult to receive a high standard of education, they are still as happy and as content as we are. We were surprised by this because the media tends to give an image of sad children and teenagers when in reality they are similar to us.

## LINKAGES

Irish Aid - Transition Years engaged in a workshop at Irish Aid Centre on 28 April

Concern - Two speakers visited our class to explain the work of Concern in Zambia, Vietnam, Sierra Leone. Students informed them of our upcoming trip to Zambia.



## POSITIVE IMPACT

Our Ebola awareness project had a positive impact on ourselves, our school and the community. Our class really came together and worked hard to raise fund for Ebola and showed a keen interest in every aspect of the project. It really helped and motivated all of us to work hard and we all bonded through working together. The project had a positive impact on the school as it made everyone aware that Ebola is still a problem. Everyone enjoyed our Cake Sale and it was a very positive day. First Years really enjoyed our project as our **Ebola Awareness Day** was solely to teach them about the disease and the damage it is doing.

The very nature of the Challenge to Change project is to raise awareness on a chosen topic. We chose Ebola because the areas affected by it do not have the money or resources to raise awareness by themselves. We involved people from outside the school community in a number of ways. Parents were involved mainly on the day of the car wash. Not only did we raise €150 but we raised awareness by talking to parents about the issue and answering any questions that they had and in the process, telling them a little bit about our project.

We involved other schools when we presented our project at the seminar in the Tullamore Court Hotel. Whenever a student or a teacher from another school came to our display stand we gave them a little presentation covering what we had done. We enjoyed seeing the projects from other schools.

We had two guest speakers from **Concern**. They came to our geography class. We got a chance to see the type of good work we were supporting and how we could get involved in the future.

We reached out to **Médecins sans Frontières** to see if they would be able to send a guest speaker to our school. Sadly neither of us could find a time and date that was compatible but we left communication open in case next year's group would like to contact them again. We also donated some of our money to **Oxfam Ireland** as we felt this was a worthwhile cause.

## CONCLUSION

Overall we are very pleased with our project. Our teacher complimented us on a number of occasions on our knowledge. Every single member of our class can easily discuss the issue of Ebola in developing countries.



*Co-ordinator: Michelle Guinan*



# CHILD LABOUR

## St. Colman's N.S Mucklagh



This was St. Coleman's second year being involved with the Challenge to Change project. The topic we explored this year was the global issue of child labour. At the start of the school year, one of the areas we covered in History was 'The Industrial Revolution'. It was through the study of this historical event that we were introduced to child labour. The children found this subject interesting and wanted to learn more about its prevalence in today's society. Together, we agreed that our Challenge to Change project would be on this issue.

### AIMS

- To learn what child labour means
- To learn where child labour happens
- To find out the causes of child labour
- To develop an appreciation of how lucky we are to be able to get an education
- To understand the long term effects associated with being a child labourer
- To research and learn about the ways of combating child labour

**TARGET GROUP** - Our target groups were Third to Sixth Classes with support from the whole school community.

### ACTIONS

- At Christmas time, we took part in the **Christmas shoebox appeal** where we filled individual shoeboxes with small presents and sent them to developing countries for the children.

- We watched a number of **informative and educational videos** about the child labour.
- We **investigated** and compiled a list of **brand/companies** that use child labourers in the manufacture of their products.
- We **wrote letters** to certain companies pleading with them to stop their use of child workers.
- We invited a lady from **Concern** who gave us an excellent presentation on child labour and how we can help.
- On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, **World Child Labour Day**, we provided the Senior Classes with short presentations on the topic in small groups.
- After individual research, we wrote **essays** on the topic and gave them to Sixth Class.
- We composed **diamante poems** using the two terms 'Child Labour'.
- We designed **awareness posters** and displayed them around the school.
- We created a **powerpoint slideshow**.
- We spent a full morning **making wristbands** to get a feel for what it is like to engage in tedious work for a long period of time.
- We worked in groups of four and researched different aspects of child labour and put together a large display in school



#### DIAMANTE POEM

Child  
Frail, innocent,  
Wondering, asking, learning  
Toiling, injuring, suffering  
Frightened, uneducated  
Labour

By Kevin Murphy, Fifth Class

#### OUTCOME

The children of St. Coleman's National School worked very hard learning and raising awareness about child labour. Everyone who took part in the Challenge to Change project developed a new appreciation of how lucky they are to live in a country where work doesn't replace education. The children showed a huge interest in educating themselves on the topic as well as how they can help. Some children have even said they are not going to buy certain products made by child labourers. The children undertook their group projects with great co-operation, team work and enthusiasm. We thoroughly enjoyed taking part in Challenge to Change again and look forward to the next year.

#### PUPILS' COMMENTS

*"We learned a lot about child labour and how it is still a big problem in developing countries. I enjoyed the talk given to us by the Concern speaker. All children have the right to an education and a childhood and I hope the problem is solved soon."* Dylan, Fifth Class

*"I liked watching all the videos about child labour, they gave us a small insight into the life of a child labourer. I enjoyed making awareness posters and displaying them around the school. The morning we spent making bracelets, I was tired after an hour! Some child labourers work up to 12 hours a day for less than 30 cents. It's not fair."* Emma, Fifth Class

*Co-ordinator: Claire Connors*

# SUSTAINABILITY – IT'S IN OUR HANDS

## Presentation Secondary School Mitchelstown



As a class group we decided to take on the Challenge to Change project as part of our Transition Year programme. Ms Grace, our Religion and Personal Development teacher, encouraged us to get involved and become a part of this project in order to feel a true sense of achievement and actually feel part of perhaps being "The Change" we want to see happen in our world today. We choose Sustainability as we felt it was the one area we could learn the most about and it would complement our Geography class.

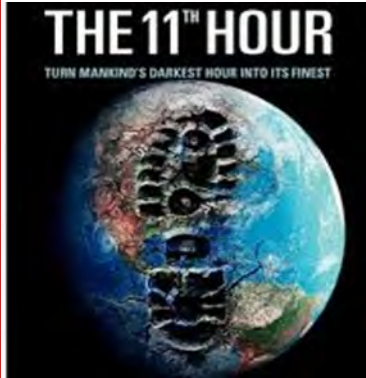
### AIMS

- To become informed, educated and knowledgeable on the topic of sustainability with a focus on **sustainable practices** of food production abroad and in Ireland
- To investigate the global realities of **unsustainable practices** and their implications for generations to come
- To review and become informed about the **unnecessary foods** imported to Ireland and learn of the importance of sourcing locally produced food
- To gather the results of an **attitudinal survey** to investigate the attitudes of students to food miles and general knowledge of the term sustainability
- To generate awareness of **food miles** throughout the school community
- To visit a **GYO** (Grow Your Own) **farm** that successfully grows, produces and utilises its product in the restaurant industry
- To hold an **awareness campaign** highlighting our research and findings
- To highlight the fundamental importance of sustainability to our peers, family and school community



## WORK UNDERTAKEN

During the month of **October** we completed a **brief study of sustainability** using coursework and worksheets based on the global realities of sustainability. We were shocked when we discovered the state of the earth from the lack of sustainable practices that are continuing to happen throughout the world today. We were unnerved about our future and really understood the term **Power of One**. We discussed droughts, melting ice caps, rising sea levels, unprecedented storms and erratic climates - all resulting from unsustainable practices.



In **November** we watched an eye opening **documentary** narrated by Leonardo Di Caprio entitled **The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour**. We became aware of our interconnectedness throughout the planet. Due to some scientific language this documentary was difficult to grasp at times but it still made an impact on us. We learned about reusing, reducing and recycling and attended a Green Schools meeting to help out where we could. We are now more aware of the need to be Green.

**Food miles and carbon footprints** were topics examined in **December**. We calculated food miles of random products found at home. The results were shocking. We placed **footprints** around the school with food miles and the items on them. This created a stir and discussions followed. We explained the purpose using our PA system.

In **January** we conducted an **attitudinal survey on food miles** and compiled and displayed the results. We created more general awareness about the importance of global sustainable development. We interviewed some local producers at our weekly market on Thursdays and got an understanding of the importance of buying local products that are in season. Our research continued and we brainstormed ways to generate awareness. Ideas put forward included: becoming a teacher for a day and going from class to class explaining our work, having a quiz for First Years, inviting a guest speaker, having a food fair using local food products and some imported ones to "taste" the difference.

In **February** we went on a **fieldtrip**. We continued work on our notice board. We examined the results of the engineer's report on **energy ratings** in our school with a view to bringing about change.



*Co-ordinator: Amanda Grace*

# A WORLD AT WAR

## Presentation Secondary School Waterford

Our Challenge to Change project set out to investigate war in different areas of our modern world and to examine how war impacts on human rights.

### AIMS

- To research war-torn countries in today's world
- To inform our peers of the human rights abuses in war
- To create empathy in our peers on the topic of war

### TARGET GROUP

Whole school community



### ACTIONS

- We **surveyed** the students from First Year to Sixth Year on their current knowledge of war.
- We **researched six regions** affected by war today.
- We organised a **guest speaker** from **Rwanda** to visit us on 18 March.
- We interviewed a **Presentation student** on the effects war and her experience of the Taliban had on her life and family.
- We produced three **powerpoint presentations** which were used by the team in a **peer workshop** given to junior students and R.E. teachers will also use this resource in their social justice classes.
- **Social Justice Week** took place from Monday, 23 March to Friday, 27 March.
- We had a **non-uniform day** to fundraise and sponsor victims of the Syrian war, the greatest humanitarian disaster since World War II.
- We held an art competition

### OUTCOME

#### POSITIVE IMPACT

Students were shocked at the cost of war versus the cost of worldwide humanitarian relief. The visuals we presented made real for students the destructive element of war on many levels. Teachers were impressed by the delivery and knowledge of the material by the social justice group.

Interviews of two primary sources were especially insightful.

Non uniform day was comprehensive in our effort to raise whole school awareness.

One World Centre recommended to us our guest speaker

We donated to NASC and Trócaire.

### STUDENT COMMENT

*“Reading what people wrote on the doves for the victims of war was very inspiring.”*



## SOME FACTS OF WAR

War	When	Duration	Casualties/Impact
Afghanistan	7 October 2001 - 28 Dec. 2014	13 Years 2 Months 3 Weeks	Between 18,000 and 20,000 Afghan citizens killed
Pakistan	16 March 2004 - Present		20,076 civilians killed 35,600 - 52,000 killed overall as of 2010
Korean	24 January - 14 August 2013		Death toll unknown
Syrian	11 March 2011- Present	4 years	200,000 killed as of December 2014
Ukraine	26 February 2014 - Present		Over 5,400 people killed so far
Iraq	20 March 2003 - 30 Sept. 2011	8 years 6 months 10 days	114,000 civilian deaths

## COST OF WAR

In 2012 1,700 billion dollars was spent on military operations.

## THE COST OF WAR VERSUS THE COST OF WORLDWIDE HUMANITARIAN RELIEF:

ITEM:	COST
Basic health	15 billion
Shelter	21 billion
Literacy	5 billion
Eliminate starvation	19 billion
Prevent global warming	8 billion
Clean water	50 billion
<b>TOTAL COST</b>	<b>118 Billion Annually</b>

*The cost of One Trident submarine could provide schooling for 16 million in the developing world. 200 million trees could be planted for the cost of one missile.*

*The amount of money spent on war each year is enough to minimise to an extreme extent the poverty in the world.*

Marc, from Rwanda, came to speak to us about human rights and the rights taken away by war. He is a victim of the war in **Rwanda** in 1994 in which **1 million people were killed in just 100 days**. While he survived, his family were killed. He moved to Waterford to start a new life. Rights taken away in war include the right to education, shelter, safety, food and water, privacy.

*Co-ordinator: Liz Murphy*



# RETHINK YOUR DRINK

## IF YOU CARE, BE SUGAR AWARE

### Presentation Primary School Portarlington

This year our Challenge to Change project was entitled *Rethink Your Drink If You Care, Be Sugar Aware*. The Fifth Class girls steered this project.



Sugar is a veritable magic ingredient. It is tasty, cheap and adds great flavour to foods. However, as with many things in life, moderation is key. Even too much water is bad for you! If you have dental problems, are diabetic or want to generally stay healthy, you may wish to cut back on your use of sugar. It is not as simple as laying low and foregoing the chocolate. Sugar is hidden in places you wouldn't expect it to be. Tuck into that fancy ice-cream now and again but have some spuds too!

#### AIMS

- To make all the children more aware of the amount of added sugar in their drinks and food
- To encourage children to make wise choices when it comes to selecting what they consume
- To demonstrate how sugar is the main cause of obesity in children
- To develop healthy habits that will stay with the children as they grow older

#### ACTIONS

- We carried out **research** on the internet and project work in many classes. We **analysed** the sugar content of many foods popular among children. We examined wrappers, cartons, packets, ingredients, chemicals.
- Fifth Class girls carried out a **survey** to see how much junk food we are consuming in a week. We analysed the survey results and displayed them in **graph form** to increase sugar awareness throughout the school.
- Several classes carried out **artwork** and created **slogans** on the various topics.
- The girls in Fifth and Sixth Classes held a **Healthy Cooking Day** where we cooked/baked using no added sugar and had a tasting session for other classes and shared our recipes.
- Some girls designed **powerpoint presentations** on the dangers of too much sugar in our diets.
- We invited a **guest speaker** (Dietician/Life Coach) to speak on the topic.
- We studied ways to combat obesity and encourage health and fitness.



*Co-ordinators: Mairéad Terry, Mary Kjeran*

# POLIO AWARENESS

## Presentation Secondary School Wexford



Polio is an infectious disease caused by the poliovirus which may cause weakness of muscles, especially in the legs. The disease is preventable with the polio vaccine which has resulted in polio been eradicated worldwide except for primarily three countries — Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan. However, with opposition of the Taliban and Islamic militants to the immunisation programme and civil war in Syria it is proving difficult to eradicate polio completely.

### AIMS

- To raise awareness of polio
- To examine why it is proving difficult to eradicate this preventable disease

### TARGET GROUP

The primary target group of our project was the school community at Presentation Secondary School Wexford, especially our peers in Transition Year. Through fundraising we also aimed to introduce our project to Transition Year students in other local schools and to the general public in Wexford Town.

## ACTIVITIES

After the formation of the **Polio Awareness Team** among the Transition Year Class of 2015, we introduced the project to our classmates by organising a practise céilí (as preparation for our **Céilí Mór** during Seachtain na Gaeilge with local schools). From the funds raised a Bingo Machine was purchased and **Bingo/Karaoke** afternoon for all Transition Year Students was organised as a Christmas Activity. A **Polio Day** for the whole school was organised for March 20<sup>th</sup> to educate students from all year groups, with permission received for a bucket collection in Wexford Town. As a group we met with **Wexford Rotary Group** and Mr. Matt Porter of **Rotary International** to learn about polio. A speaker from the **Post-Polio Organisation Ireland** visited us.



*Co-ordinator: Mary Dooley*

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

*"If there is a climate change problem, it is in large part a justice problem."*

*(Mary Robinson)*

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***



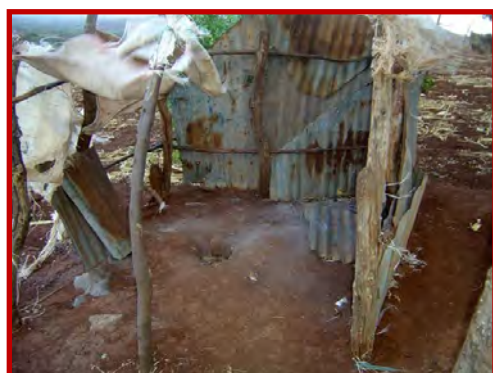
# IMPROVING HOUSING IN KWAKAKULU

## Kildare Town Community School



Students from Kildare Community School will undertake a trip to Kwakakulu, East Kenya, during the summer. The purpose of the visit is to fund and build a house for one of the poorest families in the village. Students from St. Joseph's Academy have already funded and helped build a school there in 2011. The connection came about through Fr. John Mahon from Kildare and Maria, P.E. teacher in the Academy, who is a past pupil of Presentation Secondary School Kildare.

The project involved researching the housing situation in this part of Africa where millions live in shanty towns and assessing what the challenges are to help change this situation. The proposed trip by the students and teachers from KTCS will be used as a case study to assess how the challenges posed by such poverty can be met, particularly in the area of housing.



Our project team members are very enthusiastic about this challenge.



*Co-ordinator: Herbie Wilkins*

# BIODIVERSITY

## Presentation Primary School Maynooth



Co-ordinators: *Tarah Mahon Fergus Fahey*

*"Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving to future generations, we look at things differently; we realise that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others ... Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us."*

*Pope Francis Laudato Si: On the Care of Our Common Home*



# Highlights of the Challenge to Change Project

(Sample of pupils' responses to Final Questionnaire)

Everything —  
I loved every  
bit of it.

Teaching various  
classes

Challenge to  
Change  
Seminar

Presenting  
our project

Learning lots  
of different  
things

Being able to have  
fun and work with  
my friends

Knowing we could  
make a difference

Our  
Awareness Day

Reading what people  
wrote on the doves  
for the victims of war  
was very inspiring.

I wrote a play about  
how Ebola spreads. It  
was performed for First  
Years.

Working as a  
group

We learned to understand and  
respect other children by  
learning about their traditions,  
language and religion.

It made a huge  
difference being  
aware.

The Seminar really  
opened my eyes to  
all the issues going  
on in the world.



## Analysis of Final Questionnaire

Question 1 - Percentage who ...	PRIMARY LEVEL	SECOND LEVEL
Learned that all people have rights	84.4%	91%
Learned that some people are denied their rights	78.1%	100%
Worked with people from other countries	66%	68.2%
Learned that we should respect people who have different cultures	81.2%	100%
Learned to respect the rights of other people	84.4%	100%

### WHAT NEW SKILLS DID YOU LEARN DURING THE PROJECT?

- Teaching others
- Communication
- Research
- Groupwork
- Teamwork
- Social skills
- Organisational
- Interviewing
- Public speaking
- Presentation

### WHAT DID YOU GAIN FROM PARTICIPATING IN THE CHALLENGE TO CHANGE PROJECT?

- Better understanding
- Confidence and knowledge
- Respect
- A deeper understanding of division between the developed and developing world
- Teamwork and listening skills
- Experience
- I learned a lot and got to do things I wouldn't normally do
- Social skills
- How to raise awareness
- Maturity
- Awareness of human rights issues
- A chance to make a difference in the world
- Respect for different cultures

## REFLECTIONS



*"The day itself in Kilkenny was a highlight of the project but also writing and reading what people wrote on the doves for the victims of war was also very inspiring."* Second Level Pupil

*"The morning we spent making bracelets, I was tired after an hour! Some child labourers work up to 12 hours a day for less than 30 cents. It's not fair."* Primary School Pupil

*"I tried to raise awareness for others in need and it kind of succeeded."* Second Level Pupil

*"I really enjoyed making the CD because a lot of people really liked it. It was unique and it was a great way for all Transition Year students to get involved in something."* Second Level Pupil

*"The Challenge to Change seminar really opened my mind to people who are in need."* Primary School Pupil

*"We learned to understand and respect other children by learning about their traditions, language, and religion."* Primary School Pupil

*"It was wonderful to see the whole school embracing International Day. The children learned a lot from each other and were very proud to share their knowledge and stories with others. It is definitely something we would like to see developed further next year as it was a huge success."* Sixth Class Teacher

*"By participating in Challenge to Change these students' minds have been opened to issues relating to development education and they have actively engaged in raising awareness and social consciousness in school and society."* Secondary School Principal

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

*"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."*

(Nelson Mandela)

***... Does this Change your Thinking ...?***





# Challenge to Change Seminar Kilkenny



Challenge to Change Seminar Tullamore





# GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND THE STORY OF THE SPOON

Opening Activity performed by pupils of Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin at the Challenge to Change Seminar in Kilkenny

Two years ago we started working on our **Green Flag for Global Citizenship**. In the beginning we weren't too sure what it meant exactly. After consulting with the dictionaries, asking our teachers and parents and consulting with Google we found out that a citizen is a person who belongs to a town, city or country and global means worldwide. **We then realised that we are all citizens and that we live in the world so therefore we are all Global Citizens.**

Throughout the two years we carried out many projects and the big fact we learned was we cannot survive on our own we need many, many people from all over the world to help us to live every day. We also learned that if we don't help people ourselves then the world may not continue to exist as we know it.

If you look at our motto for Global Citizenship, it says **"Before you have finished your breakfast in the morning you have depended on half the world"**. This was written by Martin Luther King Jr. who was a great campaigner for civil rights.

If you think for a minute of what you may eat for your breakfast. Many people have cereal, toast, tea or coffee. The list is endless but at some stage everybody uses a spoon to eat or stir their tea.



**How did that spoon get to your table?**

Most spoons are made of stainless steel and have to be manufactured. The steel has to be mined or produced. To do this the mine has to be excavated which involves many workers and lots of machinery which had to be produced from a factory perhaps in a different country. All the workers must travel to work on foot wearing comfortable shoes for walking which were made in a different factory possibly in another country. These workers may cycle their bikes wearing their helmets, rain jackets, hi-viz jackets and have lights - all of which were produced in another country. These workers may have driven cars, got on the bus or train. The fuel for all of these modes of transport again comes from another country.

**Getting back to the spoon.** Once the steel has been mined it has to be heated and treated. **How is it heated? Who does this? How many people does it take to do this? How is it treated? How is this done? Who does this? How many people does it take to do this?**

Once the steel is produced it is then poured and moulded into spoon shapes. Now ask yourself... **How is this done? Where is it done? How many people are needed to do this job? Where does the power for the factory come from?**

**Now the spoon is made.** They don't want to keep them in the factories so they are transported to warehouses all over the world, by truck, train, ship and plane. Same questions. **Who does this? How many people are involved? Where does the fuel for the transport come from? Who made the cars, trains, ships, planes, roads, airports, railway tracks?** The list goes on and on.

Finally, the spoon reaches its destination. It is stored for a while until it is sold.

Ask yourself where is it stored? How many people work at the storage unit? Do they need power to keep the spoon safe while it is being stored?

The spoon is then transferred to the shops where we buy them. How are they transported to the shops? Are they packaged? Who made the packages? How did they make the packages?

You go to the shop and you buy the spoon. How did you get to the shop? Where did you get the money to buy the spoon? Who made the money? Who made the purse you have the money in or the clothes you are wearing that has the money in its pocket?

You are finally home with your spoon. Time for a nice cup of tea and you can stir it with your new shiny spoon.

Wait now...

Who made the cup? How did they make it? Where did they make it? Who produced the tea? Who made the chair you are sitting on? Where did they get the wood from? Who built the house or apartment or hotel you are living in? How was the sugar made that you will put in your tea? Where did the milk come from? You can have your tea now and make sure you give it a big stir with your shiny spoon.

We are not too sure how many people were involved in the making of the little spoon. We had to give up counting.

This is an example of how we are **global citizens** and how we need the rest of the world to survive. Unfortunately we do not always treat the world with the respect that is due to it.

As global citizens we are trying to improve ourselves and help out in the world.



*Co-ordinators: Naomi O'Dowd, Siobhán McKiernan*



## Challenge to Change 2015-2016

In the 2015-2016 school year we embark on the thirteenth year of our Challenge to Change Project. An increasing number of primary and post-primary schools are taking part each year. We hope the project has made a difference in bringing issues of justice, human rights and sustainability into sharp focus within school communities.

### Key Dates

25 September 2015	Closing date for receipt of Outline Project Plan
Sept.—Oct. 2015	Project Steering Committee meets Project begins Support Materials arrive in schools Initial Questionnaire administered and returned to Presentation Education Office
Oct. 2015—Feb. 2016	Visits to project schools
March 2016	Planning by Presentation Education Office, in consultation with project co-ordinators, for end-of-project seminars
April 2016	End-of-Project Seminars Final Project Report due in to Presentation Education Office



Sr. Imelda Carew, R.I.P.

**"Be the change that you wish to see in the world."**

**Mahatma Ghandi**

In appreciation of your support of the Challenge  
to Change Project over the years



We congratulate and thank all our students, teachers, co-ordinators, parents, Principals, and all associated with this year's projects. We commend them for their active involvement and participation. The support offered to schools by the various NGOs and agencies is gratefully acknowledged.

A special word of thanks to the students from Scoil Mhuire, Clondalkin and from St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick who performed the opening activity at the Challenge to Change Seminars and to their teachers for their guidance and support.

The funding provided by Presentation Trustees is much appreciated by all involved in the project.

We look forward to making a difference for the thirteenth successive year with Challenge to Change 2015-2016. Details are now available.

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# CHALLENGE TO CHANGE 2014-2015



**A Development Education Project in Presentation Schools**





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