



A New Chapter Begins...

Let's be honest – the moment I got the chance to interview the principal of PDLs, I didn't hesitate for a second. The opportunity was right there, and I grabbed it with both hands. I think it's fair to say the entire student body has been buzzing with curiosity. I still remember sitting on my couch one evening, wondering what questions I could ask when I sit down with

Mr Hickey. Creating questions for the podcast definitely helped. I had to get the balance just right; between where he wants to steer Presentation De La Salle and connecting with him on a more everyday, human level.

Just before the Halloween mid-term break, we sat down together and I came away with a simple, but powerful realisation;

behind every teacher, staff member, and principal is a completely normal person. We often only see their professional side, not the everyday human behind the role.

You asked. I delivered. Want to know about Mr Hickey? Have a read on the next few pages.

Interview by Jenny Doyle

Check this out!!!!

Pg 2-5 Mr. Hickey's Interview

Pg 10 & 11 Erasmus+

Pg 14 Macbeth in Nike??

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Give something different this Christmas...

♥
**GIVE
 BLOOD
 AND
 SAVE
 A LIFE**





Mr. M.
Hickey

Q1. How does it feel to start in a new school fresh? Has the community been warm and open?

It feels great, I was delighted to be appointed as principal of Presentation De La Salle College. I had a fantastic experience in the previous school that I worked in as a deputy Principal. I worked as a teacher for many years also and I loved that role. However, when opportunity came up to join the Presentation De La Salle College community it was too good an opportunity to let go. PDLS is an excellent school, the people of the PDLS school community are fantastic, especially the students. The school culture that has developed here over a number of years is excellent. I spoke to some people living in the community and a number of people working in education before applying for the principals position in PDLS College and all were extremely complimentary about the school and their interactions with the students, parents and staff. Every person

that I spoke to expressed similar views about PDLS, they all mentioned the warmth and professionalism of the teachers and staff, the positive community culture and the quality of the students who attend the school. I have experienced all these things myself since my appointment in June. Every person that I have met has been so warm, welcoming and open. The students here are so genuine and hardworking, and all are striving to reach their potential with the help of their teachers and the support of their parents. Our two deputy principals; Ms. Burke and Ms. Murphy, our office and maintenance staff and our teachers and SNAs have been a great support and help to me while settling into my new role. It has been a really positive start, long may it last.

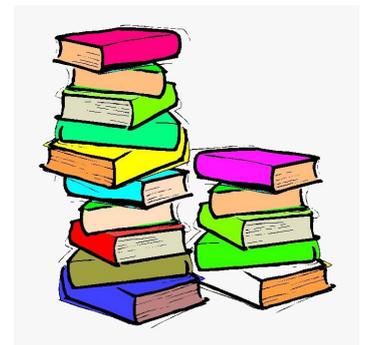


Q2.

Before becoming a principal, what subjects did you teach? Why were you so drawn to them?

Before becoming a principal I taught English and Geography. My primary subject was English.

I taught English at all levels up to to higher level Leaving Certificate. I taught less Geography over the years, but I would have taken some Junior Cycle Geography classes almost every year throughout my teaching career. I was drawn to English as reading was always encouraged at home and I would have seen my parents and sisters reading throughout my life, so I followed suit.



As a result, I achieved good results in English and this encouraged me to pursue it as a subject at third level. I also really enjoyed Geography at school; I was always interested in the workings of the world around me and I had some excellent Geography and English teachers.

I really love to read in my free time, and I also love to travel to new places in Ireland and abroad so both subjects suited me and played to my strengths. I have a passion for language as it is a powerful tool. The language that we use is so important. How we speak to people and express ourselves, how we write and the message that we deliver is important and I feel that by harnessing and using

language appropriately, it helps us to make connections and engage with each other, it also creates opportunities for us in life. In the world around us we see how leaders express themselves in positive and in negative ways and the impact that this has. I was drawn to both subjects because I found them interesting, especially because elements of both subjects are used each day and affect our day to day lives in different ways.

Q3. Do you ever miss being back in a classroom?

Absolutely, I do miss being in the classroom. Naturally, you get to know your students a little better when you are working with the same group each day over a number of years and they get to know and understand you a little better also, that is something that I really miss. Helping students to develop and to improve in the classroom is something that I am passionate about. As a teacher you have a unique opportunity to help and encourage your students every day. Teaching my subjects is something that I really do miss. I will hopefully get the chance to dip back into the classroom every now and again throughout my time as principal. I also use the skills that I developed as a teacher in my new role which allows me to stay in touch with elements of my subject areas.



Q4. For this coming school year, what do you hope to achieve?

That is a really good question. My number one priority is to make sure that the wellbeing of all our students and staff is looked after. I want to ensure that PDLs students are happy and safe and that they are coming to school with a smile on their face. My second priority is to help all our students to achieve their full potential in all subject areas and to work to the best of their ability. I want to facilitate and promote an environment where students reach their potential in every subject and if a student is struggling, I want to offer support. My third priority for this year is to make sure that we continue to develop all of the really positive extra-curricular activities that make PDLs such a vibrant place to learn and to teach. We had our PDLs Open Night recently and we visited 5th and 6th class students in our catchment area primary schools. The response that we received was brilliant. The reputation of Presentation De La Salle College is excellent. The way

that people speak about our school and the experiences that people have in our school is so positive. I want to keep that culture and tradition going and continue to advance it as we move towards an exciting phase in the development of our school.



Q5. Just so the students get a feel for your personality, what hobbies do you engage in your spare time and what are your interests?

Some of my hobbies have been curtailed in recent years because I have two young children who keep me very busy. I have a huge interest in sport; I watch most sports on TV or live and enjoy them. I played hurling, football and soccer for many years and still support and follow each with interest. I'm from Tipperary so the recent All-Ireland Senior Hurling Championship win was fantastic, and I was lucky enough to attend the match. I play a bit of golf when I can, and I try to get to the gym and do a little bit of running every now and again.



. Since starting in my new role, I haven't done as much running as I would like, the hours are a little bit longer and it's a little bit harder to get out in the evenings but I'm trying to get my routine back on track now that I have settled into school life. Sport has been a big part of my life and has provided me with many opportunities, exercise and fitness is something that I really value, and I feel that it is as important for our mental health as it is our physical health.

I love going to concerts and sporting events. My friends and I try to attend at least one major sporting event each year. I spend most of my time with my family, I really enjoy getting out and about with my wife and children or just relaxing at home. I love socialising with family and friends also. Most of my close friends I have known since primary school and played sports with over the years. I also like to read when I get some spare time. I am currently reading Charlie Vs Garret by Eoin O'Malley.

Q6. What kind of student were you in school? Were you up to any mischief?

Another good question. I'll have to think about how I answer this one.

I was not the perfect student

but one thing that was instilled in me by my parents was to treat people with respect, and I have always tried to do that. I feel that this has stood to me over the years. I still have strong relationships with people from my childhood and people that I went to school with.

Mischief? Maybe coming back a little bit late to school from a match the odd time or not getting all my homework done on a busy evening. My parents and my sisters made sure that I didn't get into too much trouble, and I am really thankful for that.

Q7. What made you want to be a teacher?

I wanted to be a teacher for a number of reasons. My family played a central role in my choice to pursue teaching as a profession. My parents always valued education and encouraged me to do my best in school and to work towards moving on to third level. I have two older sisters who I looked up to growing up and they encouraged me to stay on track in school and in college. One of my sisters became a teacher also. Watching my siblings progress through school and through college and move into the working world inspired me. My parents also worked hard to provide for us, and I know that they were very

proud to see me go through third level education and become a teacher and now a school principal. Knowing that they were happy with what I was doing motivated me.

Many of the teachers I had in school also inspired me. My former Construction Studies teacher and my secondary school principal messaged me to congratulate me on my appointment at PDL College, I hadn't spoken to them in years. It was lovely to be contacted by two people who helped me throughout my time in secondary school.

Working with people is something that I have always been passionate about and interested in. Teaching is a profession where you can work with different groups of people every day and that is something that drew me towards the profession.

Q8. Do you like to travel a lot?

Absolutely, I have travelled all over Europe and I have spent summers in America and Asia. I have not travelled as much in recent years due to work and family commitments, but I really love to travel and would encourage anyone to travel as much as possible, especially when they are young. As my own children get a little older, I look forward to travelling with them and experiencing new things.

Q9. What type of music are you in to?

I love listening to music. I'd listen to anything really. I'm a big fan of Oasis. I've been to see Liam Gallagher a few times in concert. I would have loved to see Oasis in Croke Park this year, but tickets were hard to come by. I like Kasabian and I've seen them perform live also. I've recently started listening to Morgan Wallen and Luke Combs as they have become very popular. I also like Irish music and musicians; Christy Moore and The Saw Doctors would be regulars on my play list. An eclectic mix of music but as I said I would listen to most genres of music.



Q10. Are there any traditions in PDLS that you haven't seen in your previous school that you think is fantastic? And are there any traditions of your own you would like to create here?

Yes, the traditions of PDLS are so important and unique. I look forward to experiencing them all this year.

Our tradition as a CEIST school is central to everything that we do, promoting spiritual and human development, achieving

quality teaching and learning, showing respect for every person, creating community and being just and responsible, these values are lived each day in our school.

Our First Years recently had their first school mass, and it gave them time to reflect on the values that we promote here in our school. We will also celebrate our whole school opening mass soon which will centre around the theme of Hope. It is important to remember and celebrate the traditions of our founders the Presentation Sisters and the De La Salle Brothers each year.

Our drama and music clubs organise school shows, and I look forward to supporting that tradition.

At PDLS there is also a great sporting tradition and traditional Irish music is also an important part of our school. We have a great variety of extra-curricular activity that is so important and helps to create such a vibrant school community.

The Pres Factor is another important tradition each year, this is a fun event that comes up just before Christmas, so I'm really looking forward to seeing that and getting to experience it for the first time.

Are there any traditions of my own that I would like to create?

I would like to provide opportunities for students to express their voice in different ways around our school. We have an active student council here in the school which is brilliant. I'd like to encourage our students to speak at school events and to showcase what they value and enjoy about PDLS. At our open night, we had several students speak, which was fantastic, and we had our trad band play which really added to the evening.



I would also like to encourage past pupils to come back to PDLS and to speak about their experiences of school, education and life. I want to create a tradition where people come back, speak to our students and encourage them to achieve in whatever field they are passionate about and interested in.

Thank you , Mr Hickey!

CEIST
Catholic Education
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Why We Must Keep Remembering...



Every Year on the 11th of November a hush falls over the din of the modern world, as society pauses to pay tribute to the fallen soldiers, whose lives were stolen by past conflicts. Remembrance Day was once a solemn commemoration to valiant war heroes, but as World War One becomes a thing of the distant past, it begs the question, should Remembrance Day evolve as generational distance grows and familial connections fade?

The two World Wars were pivotal events that shaped the 20th century, and few escaped the ruination caused by them. Back then, Remembrance Day was not a notional and impressionistic concept; it was personal, a memorial to the fallen. It was an event of solidarity, unity, and respect, when the world came together to mourn fathers, daughters, brothers, and friends. But now, it has been decades since the guns fell silent, and the battlefields stilled. The number of veterans alive to tell the story of our haunting past has all but evaporated, direct connections to wars are now vanishingly small, and the memory of war grows distant. To the modern generation, the world wars seem to be more of a foreign concept and

less of a lived memory. In our current world, we are faced with the problem of not just how we remember, but why we remember.

Remembrance is not individual, but unified. It links nations to each other, bypassing any differences between them and acknowledging the grief they share for the past. The world wars were global endeavors, with each country experiencing bloodshed that shaped their identity in the context of war and remembrance; Gallipoli for Australia and New Zealand, The Battle of Verdun for France, The Battle of the Somme for England, The Siege of Leningrad for Russia, and countless other unjust losses that molded national character. All of these momentous calamities are testaments to courage, perseverance, and valor. However, as our society diverges and the memory of war fades, the need for reinterpreting remembrance in progressive and inclusive methods arises. National identity is not fixed, and as society progresses through time, remembrance should move forward with it. Many current citizens don't have ties to the world wars but emerge from regions affected by current conflict. Is it possible to merge the struggles and hardship of the modern wars and the significance and history of WWI and WWII into a reformed remembrance that modern society can connect with?

The disconnect with our past runs the risk of turning remembrance into something performative; wear-

ing the poppy without registering its meaning, a minute of silence without reflection, attending ceremonies because of obligation instead of care and memory. Remembrance is at the peril of becoming stagnant in modern times, fortunately there are many ways to combat this, one of which is the evolution of education. Rather than teaching students exclusively about the battles of the great wars, illuminate the socio-political, economic, and human consequences of war. This fosters critical thinking, empathy and humanity, and bridges the disconnect between the current generations and the generations that lived through the wars. A developed Remembrance Day might also include a reflection space for all victims of warfare, not only fallen soldiers but also civilians, people displaced by conflict, and those involved in ongoing warfare. By making Remembrance Day less exclusive, we don't dilute its meaning; we strengthen it by extending its relevance into the modern timeline.

Changing our interpretation of remembrance is ironically the best way to preserve it. As the world wars fade into the distant past, our focus must shift from conserving memory to conserving meaning, whether that be by evolving education or reinterpreting connotation, we cannot remain stuck in the past and must progress so that remembrance reflects our modern identity.

by Sophie O'Reilly

THE BIG DIG!

BY TIM MEANEY

Our first- and second-year students recently took part in an exciting archaeology workshop held on the school grounds; **THE BIG DIG** - organised by the History Department. It aimed to help us students understand what archaeology is and what archaeologists actually do on a day-to-day basis.

During the first half of the workshop, we had the opportunity to speak with professional historians and archaeologists. Over the course of an hour and a half, they learned about

archaeology and its importance in uncovering the past. We discovered what fossils are, how they are formed, and what it means when a fossil is found—it often indicates that a civilization once existed in that area.

In the second half of the workshop, students took part in hands-on excavation activities. They dug into soil pits and unearthed fascinating artifacts such as bones, blacksmiths' tools, and hunting equipment like bows and arrows. This hands-on

experience brought history to life and gave students a deeper appreciation for how people lived and worked many years ago.

The workshop was a huge success, and all the students who participated said they would love to do something similar again. It was an excellent opportunity to learn about archaeology, understand the past, and appreciate the challenges faced by those who lived long ago.

Tús Maith

Ar ais arís i measc mo mhuintire.

Gealltanais le braith san aer
ag na geataí iarainne.

Leabhair agus siamsa ag fanacht orm.

Ar ais arís agus mé ar bís.

Brúigh isteach ar bhus na scoile
le málaí troma agus fuadar fúinne.

Cairde ag fanacht le cinnlínte an
tsamhraidh.

Ar ais arís ag deireadh mí Lúnasa

An chéad lá cruais agus tús luath.

Éadaí scoile nua ag an slua
agus foghlaim feasa gan é a lua.

Conor McDonald 3ú Bliain



Who are you fooling????????????

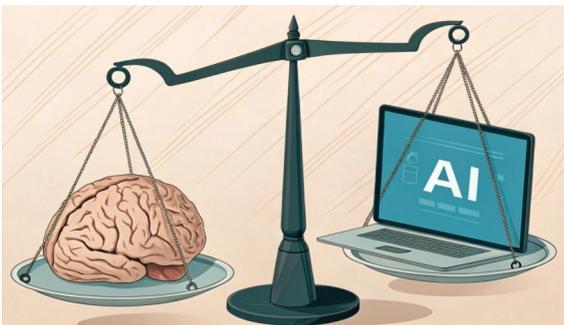
Everything cataclysmic was once craved. The death of the Celtic Tiger happened because our government abused the resources we had desperately needed, and on a much wider and devastating scale, WW2 and Naziism sprouted as a result of the dire conditions forced upon the German people. Therefore, I must urge you to reconsider what we are yearning for as a society at the moment. Will it advance us intellectually and emotionally, or will it cause us to eventually descend into chaos? This thought has been on my mind over the past year due to the rise in use of artificial intelligence. It has quickly become something to be feared among scientists and researchers, while it is revered by the general public. The so-called 'Godfather' of the system, Geoffrey Hinton, recently stated that he fears the technology he helped build could wipe out humanity. So, I must ask you, do you really have to turn to that app?

The issue I find most pressing and relative to us as young people, is the rise in teenage suicides that have been linked to AI chat bots. Just two months ago, the parents of a 16-year-old who took his own life filed a 'wrongful death' lawsuit against OpenAI - owner of ChatGPT. They revealed that after their

son expressed suicidal thoughts, ChatGPT started encouraging him and discussing ways in which he could end his life. The lawsuit is one of the first of its kinds, but just one of many reports that AI has been triggering harmful beliefs in young people. According to the lawsuit, Adam Raine, the young boy in question, began using the app as a resource for study and advice on future career paths. In just four months, the chat bot had become his closest confidant, and they began discussing methods of suicide. Accusations have since arisen of the system's ability 'to foster psychological dependency in users.' This is the unfortunate reality that many young people are now facing as they turn to AI. As it becomes more socially acceptable to develop a relationship with these chat bots, the masses are turning away from human connections and losing their lives to an unforgiving robot. Is this really where we want to end up?

In a similar vein, these artificial intelligence programmes are directly impacting the population's ability to develop empathy and think critically. As I mentioned in a previous edition of this newspaper, 'critical thinking,' is the ability to analyse

and evaluate information to make reasoned decisions. To put it simply, critical thinking is what helps us to form an opinion and act on it. Something as simple as choosing your favourite colour based on your feelings about it, and buying something of that colour, is an example of using our critical thinking skills. This is what AI is stripping us of. The inability to make our own decisions also, inevitably, impacts our empathy - the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. While this is a skill that we humans have naturally, and can develop over time with experiences, it can never be truly reciprocated in AI systems. It lacks the experience, emotions, and concern for others' well-being that makes us inherently human. Because of this, many researchers and psychologists believe that attempting to confide in chat bots about one's mental health will undoubtedly lead to the population leaning more apathetic - showing or feeling no interest or concern in something/someone.



If our society continues to engage with these harmful systems, we will end up mimicking brain-washed zombies, subject to a cult of personality. This is something that has been attempted many times throughout history, so why should we allow it to take over now? Another factor to consider before stepping into the world of artificial intelligence, is the environmental impacts. This is an area that people seem to engage with the least - perhaps because they do not understand it, or simply because they do not care. However, I feel as though this issue will have the direst effect on humanity, and sooner than you might think. It is believed by many experts that if we do not drastically decrease our water usage, we could be left with no access to clean drinking

water by 2040. Sixth years, you will be 33 years of age, and first years just 28. It may seem old now but it is entirely too soon to have to think about an apocalyptic world in which we do not have access to something we take for granted in today's society. Clean water is a finite source that is being drastically overutilised by AI data base centres in an attempt to cool down their systems. It has been revealed that almost 150 million litres of water is used a day by ChatGPT alone - only 20% of which is being recycled. The water being used by these centres is not only impacting the human race, but the animals of our world, too, inevitably leading to a decline in agriculture. I'm sure I

don't have to tell you what would happen if the farming systems shut down. It would be the end of our livelihoods as we know it.

If you've read this far, I must assume that you share the same opinion as me in regards to the development of artificial intelligence. If not, I desperately urge you to reconsider. By engaging with these harmful networks, you are willingly subjecting yourself to the removal of our inherent humanity - our empathy, intelligence, practicality, and connection. Continue to refuse the rise of AI and encourage others to do so, too. So, I'll ask you again, do you really have to turn to that app?

by Ava Boyle Minchin

Dear 1st and 2nd Year Students...

Hi! My name is Elliot and I am in 3rd year! I know 1st and 2nd year can be a hard year for some students so here is some advise that helped me get through these years with ease...

- Getting homework done straight when you come home after school will help a lot with keeping track of after school activities.
- Studying for tests a little bit each day and not just the night before.
- Keeping your locker organised and easy to take and put your books in and out.
- Getting plastic folders to keep

one subject in, this means you only need to grab one thing for each subject, and it helps you to not forget books for a class.

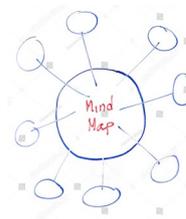
- Setting realistic goals for tests and study sessions.
- Putting your hand up if you need to ask a question instead of just keeping it to yourself.
- Getting your homework done the night you get it, instead of the night before.
- Making mind maps for each chapter you finish, as it can help break the chapter down to key information.

· If you have upcoming tests, ask your teachers if they have any notes or worksheets for a certain chapter.

· Using Studyclix for practising questions before a test can help you get familiar with what questions might be on the test.

· Using your whiteboard at the back of your homework journal to test yourself on vocab or definitions.

I hope this information helped you or will help you in the future!



by Elliot D'Arcy

Physics Discovery with Erasmus+

My name is Vilia, I'm in sixth year and I'd like to tell you about my most recent exciting school trip!

Together, my physics class and I journeyed to Geneva with Mr. Carbery and Donna Maher, funded by Erasmus+!

The advantage of having Erasmus+ in our school might surprise you – the opportunities it opens up are incredible. From foreign mobilities that let students experience life and learning abroad, to meaningful engagement with peers across the EU, and even hands-on projects that build real-world skills and cultural awareness,

Erasmus+ is transforming how we connect, learn, and grow.

It can be daunting, heading to

a new place where everything is different, fears of language barriers and new cultural customs as you board the plane, but once you get there you can only be fascinated by the differences!

I stayed with a French exchange correspondent named Emma, living on the border of France and Switzerland where one of the world's most important and extraordinary science powerhouses lies on its doorstep.

Here I got to go experience life in a school in France, Jean D'Arc Lycée in Gex is significantly different to our Pres De La Salle.

There, they start school at 8:30

every morning; some days not finishing until 5:30! Such long days like these are the norm all across France.

They get very long and frequent breaks to compensate for these tough hours, typically two hours long each day. Their lunches are top notch - including a starter, main, and dessert! For the French lunch is the biggest meal of the day, much like our dinners in Ireland.

It's traditional there to eat your lunch early and dinner late in the evening, typically after 7.

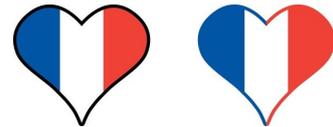
MERCI BEAUCOUP ERASMUS+!!!

by Vilia Johnston





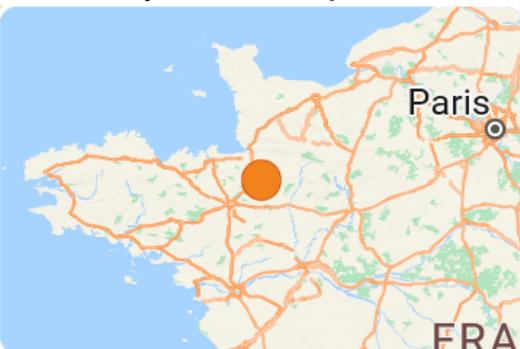
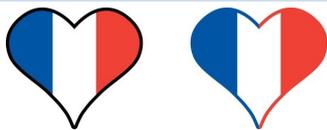
FRENCH EXCHANGE



Before my French student, Soren landed here I couldn't wait for him to arrive. I thought my partner would be shy considering he just arrived in some stranger's house, miles away from his home, but Soren was very chatty and kind. He also loved to play guitar.

We got on great together. Soren was only in school for one day where we taught him how to play G.A.A and did Irish dancing. Soren and I went to the cinema, lemon grass in Kilkenny and bowling together. I'm sure Soren had a great time and I can't wait to go to France and meet back up with him.

by Adam Dowling



On Wednesday, October 8th, 19 French exchange students, accompanied by two of their teachers from France arrived in Ireland after a very long ferry trip to Cork. They then travelled to Bagenalstown where they each met with their well-chosen partners. Each Irish student was paired with a very well-suited French student.

The next few days consisted of various activities; they were busy and full of fun. There was a lively night of song and dance in Doyle's along with a two-course meal. Here, the French experienced Irish pub grub and traditional Irish trad music.

In school, the Irish students

showed the French how to play Gaelic football and hurling. Afterwards, we attempted Irish dancing. On Sunday, everyone took part in a mountain walk at Glendalough. These activities encouraged us to bond with one another and see what we have in common.

Before this exchange I was looking forward to meeting my partner and showing them our culture. We got on very well together, it turns out we are not that different after all. I am looking forward to my own exchange to Fougères in March and am excited to experience a different way of life.

by Mai Cradock



Presenting Ms. Connors...

by Ava Boyle-Minchin

Anyone who knows you will be aware of your many hobbies. Can you talk a little bit about them?



I do have lots of hobbies! Anyone in school would know me as the head of green schools and because they may have seen me knit. I also do a good bit of cycling as well, and I do a lot of gardening. Knitting is definitely the main one though, I'm an addicted knitter. If I'm in the car on a long journey and I'm not driving, I'm knitting.

If I'm sitting in front of the television, I'm knitting. It's constant. I haven't learned how to crochet yet. I know Ms. Beck is organising teaching people how to crochet so I might have to start going to her classes. My knitting is probably the number one thing everyone would know me for, though.

Do you think your interest for the sciences link in with your hobbies? How so?

I like answers to things. I like to know why things happen and I always need an explanation. My interest in the environment, for

example, there is science behind it. It's what I always say to the non-believers, the science doesn't lie. The idea of climate change was coming out in the '80s when I was in college and so many people were just ignoring it. It's only now that we see that global warming has become a serious issue, that we're seeing the extremes of weather and how the climate is changing in different areas in the world. I think it's very easy for American presidents to say all these doomsday disasters aren't happening - but they're just not in America. They've happened in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, so many third-world countries. They're affected



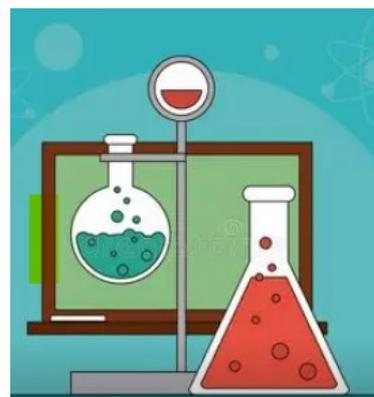
the most but even America had the wildfires in California and that's all linked. So yes, my interest has always been in the 'why.' I never take anything at face value or just believe it because someone says it, I need an explanation.

You teach 4 subjects in this school - JC Science, LC Chemistry and Biology, and Agriculture and Horticulture to LCAs. Do you

have a favourite?

I do love the Agriculture and Horticulture for the LCAs, there is an awful lot of work that goes into though, but I think I love Chemistry the most.

Again, it's linked to the logic of it. I like the experiments and how it's definite that they will work. Whereas in Biology there's always a bit of leeway because living things are not going to do exactly what you want them to do. So chemistry is definitely my favourite.



Science is a subject that is engaged with very little in primary school. What's it like to see 1st years explore the subject for the first time?

It's great! When we really notice it is during the Open Evening. We tend to have very simple experiments set up for them, like the pH test. I love the fact that they have never seen it before and they get really into it. I also love to see when I'm teaching Juniors, that

a lot of the time they know what's going on when they think they don't. I could be starting a new topic and ask them what they know, and while they might not have the scientific terms they know most of the information already. I do like seeing how they can come up with those answers themselves.

Where did your passion for sustainability come from?

I just absolutely hate waste. To give an example, the new school books here in the school. Because everything is free now, no one has any regard or care for them and there's so many books just thrown around the corridors. That's waste. I would say the same about the hot food in the primary schools. Not every child wants it and there's a huge

amount of packaging so it'll just go to waste. Whereas I'm more practical and I think every primary school should have a kitchen instead, where the food can be prepared there for the right amount of children and there's no more disposable containers and cutlery. I do, unfortunately, think that the modern way is it to have everything disposable, but I much prefer the old fashioned way of things being reusable.

There's also enough clothes on the planet to clothe the next seven generations and there's still people out there with no access to them - we're just wasting resources.

How can we, as the community, implement 'being green' into our everyday lives?

In school, there are lots of little things I'd love to see improve. I'd like people to take ownership of their own belongings and not have it end up going to waste, as well as people using the correct bins, using the bottle bins, and reducing food waste. That's also something to bring into your personal life. I'd really love people to become more aware of their food miles. There is no reason to be eating apples that came from New Zealand when we have perfectly good and in season food being produced over here. Just to be aware of waste as a whole would be an improvement, like fast fashion and energy waste. If you only want one cup of tea don't fill the kettle to the top, it works just as well with less water. Little things like that would make a huge difference.



In TY I took part in the Pope John Paul II award. I completed the gold award, this entailed volunteering 20 hours in aid of my community and 20 hours in aid of my parish, St. Andrew's.

In our school, Ms. Maher has given up her time to help us complete this award. She organises hours for us to help around the parish and community; this makes the students' task so much easier. She also allows us to take on leadership roles which can encourage us to be more independent and not shy away from taking charge.

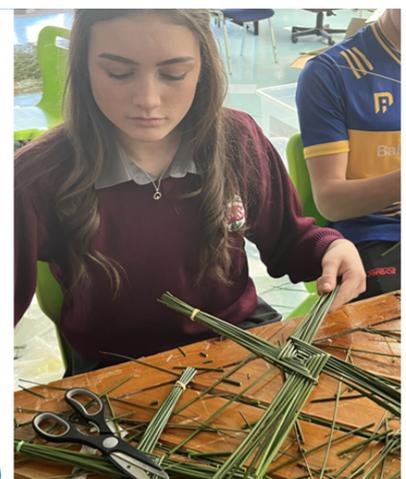
One of the main things we did for the John Paul award was cleaning St. Andrew's Church for two hours each Wednesday. This contributed hugely to our parish hours and benefited the church.

To volunteer in my community, I lent a helping hand around the school, in my GAA club and in my local community.

There are so many things to be done around the place that you would never notice unless you ask. People are constantly working silently to better our community and could always do with an extra pair of hands.

I, personally, really enjoyed using my free time to benefit others. I would strongly encourage everyone doing TY to take part in this programme as you are left with so much extra time on your hands, I believe you might as well use it for a good cause.

by Mai Cradock



To Be or Not to Be... in Nike Air Max?



We expected a Shakespeare tragedy, not a Premier League crossover. Our Leaving Cert English class took a trip to The Mill Theatre in Dundrum to see *Macbeth*, and it was a welcome break from all the books and study. Everyone was full of excitement. A day out before exam season felt like a reward in itself.

The performance started strong – the actors were full of energy, and the witches' scenes had great eerie lighting and atmosphere. But the real surprise came from the costumes. Lady Macbeth, in a full Juicy Couture tracksuit, turned heads, and spotting someone in a Liverpool tracksuit made it feel less like medieval Scotland and more like match day at Anfield. The Nike Air Max were the final touch – stylish, if slightly out of place next to the daggers and death. Still, the modern twist got us thinking about *Macbeth* in a new way. It wasn't the version we expected, but it made the story fresh and definitely memorable.

After the play, we explored Dundrum Shopping Centre, got food, and enjoyed the bus journey home. It was one of those days that remind us how quickly school is flying by – and how good it feels to enjoy the moment.

All in all, we learned a bit more about *Macbeth*. All's well that ends well – even if Macbeth was wearing Nike.

by Reuben Gadney

Murphy
Facility Solutions

Hallo Bagenalstown!



Here at the B[R]G Enns, we have about 650 students, about 65 teachers and general education. There is a big variety of languages that you can learn at our school, for example Spanish, Italian, Russian, Latin and French.

In our Erasmus+ team there are eight students, who are very excited about travelling and meeting new people and their cultures. Our Erasmus team consists of people from two classes the 6b and the 6a. They are specialised in natural sciences, such as chemistry, maths, physics and biology.

In the last years we had laboratory as extra subject where we tried different experiments. Sometimes we have

trips to museums or historic sites in Austria.

In Austria we of course speak German, but there are some differences between the German and the Austrian varieties. Among each other we don't speak high German, which is the written language, but our dialect. Another fact about our communication is, that every part of

Austria has its own dialect, that people from Germany usually can't understand and sometimes even we struggle with the different accents.

We think Ireland and Austria have a lot in common, like for example in Austria we also drink a lot of beer. Quite often, Austria gets compared to Germany, but we have our own culture, that we like to de-



pend.

We have traditional clothing, music and meals, that usually show up at certain events and in specific places, especially in the Alps.

To be honest, there are lots of stereotypes about Austria, the most widely-known one is that there are only mountains, which isn't exactly true, but there is beautiful landscape, that is full of tourists in the high season.

We are really looking forward to being at your school and getting to know you guys and your culture!

See you in Spring 2026!



1950 vs. 2025

Have you ever wondered what school life was like for students back in the day?

Many students, me included, feel that school life is very hard. We have homework and exams to keep on top of. This got me thinking, what was school and the lives of teenagers like back in our grandparents' days. I interviewed people and did research to find out what life was like in secondary school in the 1950s and if we have it easier or worse.

The rules at schools were much stricter and there was a close connection between the schools and the church; most teachers were either monks or nuns. There was a strong focus on religion as well as that teachers were much harsher with home-

work compared to now and tests were more difficult and marked very hard. It was much harder to do well in school and students weren't given validation or recognition for their skills outside of the curriculum.

The classes were very centred around the curriculum. There were no SPHE, CSPE or Learning-to-Learn lessons. These lessons, would have been out of the question in an average 1950s school in Ireland. There were less resources for mental health and finding help for students than there are now.

Corporal punishment wasn't banned until 1982 and was often used in some schools when students misbehaved. Imagine forgetting a copy or not doing your homework and instead of

minus five be given a slap on the wrist with a ruler or a hand! Which one would you rather?

Many more students than nowadays left school early to work on their farms or family businesses, like shops, they would sometimes have no choice in the matter especially due to economic hardships Ireland was facing at the time.

Overall, I think that I would much rather stay in 2025 with our current school system. While the work is very hard, it doesn't hold a candle to the struggles of our relatives who grew up back then. It's really fascinating to see just how much the system has evolved and grown since then.

by Íde Nolan

