

## Happy Easter

Welcome to the first edition of the new ERST Síol E-Newsletter. It will go out every two months and will complement our existing Síol magazine. It's a way for us to highlight and share some of the amazing things happening in our schools on a more regular and timely basis. The newsletter will be sent to you by email and is really easy to share with your own school communities. We would really appreciate it if you could share it with your teachers and staff today before the Easter break. Send us your stories so that we can make sure that your news is shared with all of our 97 schools. And please continue to send us your information for the longer Síol magazine which will be published again in early Summer.



## President Higgins Greeted by High Fives and Smiles at “Franner”

President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina got a special year of celebrations underway when they visited St. Francis Primary CBS in Dublin's inner city to mark the historic school's 200th Anniversary. The pupils of the all-boys school welcomed the President with flags and high fives on January 26th when he performed the official opening of the school's new library, paying tribute to the work

of the Principal, teachers and parents particularly in the promotion of reading and literature. It was fitting, therefore, that award winning author Joseph O'Connor was also a special guest at the celebration. He presented a book written by his Dad Seán O'Connor to the library collection and read an extract from a chapter from the book that recalls his schools days at “Franner”.

The President also praised the school's special focus on social justice, inclusion and ecology. Referring to the influence of the wider ERST network, the innovative programme of co-operative learning that takes place between St. Francis Primary and CBC Monkstown was also highlighted as an initiative that is hugely beneficial for pupils in both schools.



*Photo: Sport Action Photography*

## Munster's Prestigious Harty Cup contested by two ERST Schools

ARDSCOIL Ris Limerick and St Kierans College Kilkenny renewed their hurling rivalries this Wednesday, March 21 when they lined out to battle the semi-final stage of the All Ireland Post Primary Schools Senior A Hurling Championship.

The semi-final game marked a remarkable fifth time that the Munster Champions Ardscoil Ris have met

with the indomitable Leinster stars St. Kierans. Unfortunately, this time out, Ardscoil Ris were defeated but not without putting in a valiant display against the Kilkenny roll of honour leaders. The semi-final challenge followed Ardscoil Ris' confident display against fellow, and on this particular occasion, rival ERST school Midleton CBS in this year's Harty Cup final, the prestigious Munster Colleges Senior Hurling Championship. ARDSKOIL Ris' score of 3-18 to Midleton CBS' 2-10 crowned them Harty Cup winners for the fifth time. For many of the talented players sporting the Limerick school's colours, it was their second winners medal in three years. The hotly contested match was watched by nearly 3,000 students, staff, parents and hurling fans in Mallow, all of whom were treated to what was described as a fluid and professional display of hurling at its best.



*On the catwalk: Jack Lawless, Ryan McAuley, Mark Dietz and Matthew Dunne looking dapper at the Coláiste Phádraig TY Fashion Show.*

## **Students' New Clothes Business Uncovered at Coláiste Phádraig Fashion Show**

It was all eyes on the catwalk at the annual Coláiste Phádraig Lucan TY Fashion Show where designs from SixSeven, a new clothing business set up by two of the school's sixth year students, Niall Moynihan and Dáire Newcombe, were given rave reviews.

The fashion event - which also had a serious fundraising side - was organised and operated fully by the Transition Year students, in keeping with the ERST focus on developing responsibility and leadership. Organising this event took much precision and coordination and required initiative, teamwork and planning skills from all involved. The students from Coláiste Phádraig were joined on the catwalk by a number of their teachers and also by students from St. Joseph's College Lucan. Interval entertainment was also provided by the talented students of the school. Brothers Josh and Luca Sullivan performed some upbeat tunes, including "Mr. Brightside" by The Killers. The crowd also got involved in a rousing rendition of "YMCA" led by teacher Mr. O' Donoghue. Teachers Mr. Todd and Mr. O' Neill were the entertaining co-hosts for the show with DJ Mono overseeing proceedings from the decks.



## **Sruth Lán Ghaeilge i mBunscoil Synge Street**

This September, Sruth Lán Ghaeilge i mBunscoil Synge Street will welcome its second influx of pupils, continuing on the strong and vibrant tradition that has made the school one of the best known in the country.

The Sruth Lán Ghaeilge was opened in September 2017 with fourteen boys and girls, in response to the demands of a large part of the changing community around the South inner-city Dublin school. Helen Diamond, the class teacher, is a musician and spends much of her time singing and playing the

fiddle with the children, helping them to learn and love the Irish language through song, interaction and games. In addition, the school provides support for parents with Irish language classes taking place every Monday and Thursday in the school. Osclaíodh ár Sruth Lán Ghaeilge i mí Mheán Fómhair 2017 le ceathair páistí déag. Tá na páistí á dtumadh go hiomlán sa Ghaeilge. Is deis mór agus rogha eile í seo do mhuintir na háite. Is í Helen Diamond an muinteoir sa rang, is ceoltóir í agus caitheann sí cuid mó ama ag canadh agus ag seinm ar an bhfidil lena bpáistí. Is léir go mbaineann siad an-sult as! Tugaimid a lán tacaíochta d'ár dtuismitheoirí le ranganna Gaeilge ar siúl gach Luan agus Deárdaoin. Táimid brodíuil uilig as an Sruth Lán Ghaeilge sa scoil!

## Snow Days Are Over

The Spring equinox might mark the first signs of Spring but who can forget the thick blanket of snow that covered much of the country in early March this year. Deerpark CBS in Cork City celebrated the snow days in style with a very special video. Check it out and let it give you a giggle the next time you want to build a snowman. It just goes to show that school can be fun, particularly when you have lively, enthusiastic and innovative Principals and Deputy Principals.



## The World as a Classroom – Focus on Sables Nua, Zambia.

Sables Nua, an ERST school that is part of our worldwide Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders network, is located in Kabwe, a town in the centre of

Zambia, two hours north of its capital city Lusaka. Under the guidance of Pat Fanning and his wife Eimear, the school looks after over 220 children. At school, they are educated and, vitally, get their meals, which is so important to allow them to learn and thrive.

The majority of the children who attend Sables Nua live in Makalulu, the second biggest slum in Africa, which is located just off the main street of Kabwe. In Makalulu, thousands of people live day to day at a subsistence level, doing what they can to support themselves and their families. Most live without any access to clean water and food. The journey for those lucky enough to attend Sables Nua takes up to an hour a day. Unfortunately, for those not attending school, the hours out of school are a lot longer and tougher, which is why the aim is to develop the school and project further in the years ahead so that it can welcome many more children to its nurturing environment.

Last June, 15 students from St. Fintan's High School, which is located in Sutton in Dublin, visited the school through the EREBB Immersion Programme to experience life in Kabwe and to get a sense of the vital importance of education to children's growth and development. The school will return to Kabwe in June 2019.



**North Monastery student Ahmed will speak at the upcoming Advocacy Conference. He is pictured here with Cormac McArt, Westcourt Centre, Belfast, Louise Callaghan, ERST, and Tom Murray, Edmund Rice UK.**



## Technology, Lego, Music and Debates - Sharing Ideas at Primary Principals Seminar

The Second Primary Principals' Seminar, held on March 15th just gone, was a day of lively discussion, ideas and co-operation where Principals representing our 32 Edmund Rice primary schools had a chance to learn about developments and initiatives taking place across the network. Kevin Gillen, Principal in St. Joseph's Primary School, Fairview and Sheila Brophy, Principal in Nenagh CBS Primary School both spoke about activities taking place in their quite different schools.

Kevin spoke about "Joeys" 2020 plan, outlining new initiatives to promote participation and leadership, including a novel approach to school self-evaluation. The plan will focus on teaching and learning, parents and community, the school environment and daily practice.

Sheila's presentation was on developing the whole person in the school environment and on what her school is doing to create an environment in which children can prosper. She spoke particularly about fostering a positive approach to behaviour, with an emphasis on technology, Lego projects, music and debating.

The morning began with an uplifting presentation on Wellbeing given by Sean Doran, a Guidance Counsellor in Patrician College, Newbridge, who emphasised the need for Principals to look after their own wellbeing so that they can care for the wellbeing of their young pupils and their teachers. There are 32 Primary schools in the Edmund Rice network stretching from Drogheda to Dingle, varying from single sex to co educational with many still operating the second to six class model. The Primary Principals set up a Whats App group last year and is a great way for principals to network and keep in touch on a regular basis.

## Save the Date - Mark your Diaries



Here are some of the upcoming ERST network activities

### **April 19th Student Council Conference, Croke Park**

### **April 25th Walk in my Shoes Advocacy Conference, Croke Park**

300 students are signed up for a day to explore some of the most topical issues of our time including the destruction of war, refugees and homelessness. Ahmed, a Syrian student at North

Monastery CBS will talk about his experiences of having his home bombed, being separated from his family, and spending 3 years in a refugee camp before arriving in Cork. The students will then work together on ways in which they can become active citizens to raise awareness about these issues and others.

### **May 1st Edmund Rice Feast Day - Note Change of Date**

Each year we ask schools to celebrate Edmund Rice Feast Day on May 5th. This year, as May

5th falls on a Saturday, we are asking you to hold celebrations on Tuesday, May 1st instead. We will forward a prayer service to be celebrated on the day. This year we want to celebrate well-being and so we are asking schools to organise sporting or other fun events within your own school or with neighbouring Edmund Rice school. We look forward to hearing your reports and receiving your photographs for our next newsletter.