



Masthead designed by Rachel Dowling

THANK GOD FOR SCHOOL!!!

By Dylan Hand

Throughout our lives we yearn for a sense of belonging; to connect to those with whom we share similar interests and who can challenge our views by stepping back and creating a new angle or viewpoint. We live for the moments of laughter until tears begin to well up behind our eyes or for the inside jokes we share with our friends - the ones others simply 'just wouldn't understand'. We crave connection, to be left without such is as detrimental as to be left without the primal necessity of food and water.

A world out of kilter.

In March of 2019 the solid ground on which we stood, fell from beneath us. The rise of the Corona virus led to the fall of life as we knew it. We lost the liberation of freewill and with it, our very sense of being. For many of us as students we initially saw a few weeks out of school as a God sent gift - but we soon realised it had a devilish twist. A few days became a few weeks and a few weeks quickly turned into a few months - months of little to no movement; no school, no days (or nights) out and most importantly for me - no sport. Tuning in to the news every evening we hoped for an announcement permitting an escape. Unfortunately as the nights went by, no such announcement came. We watched the world slowly crumble around us from the comfort of our own sitting rooms.

Newly found gratitude

As our world changed, we began to romanticise with the nostalgic memories of days gone by. Simple interactions such as a hug seemed so far out of reach. It was as if we had been transported to a dystopian future, like those within the books we study in school. We began to appreciate what we had once taken for granted; the classes in an actual room with actual tables, chairs, whiteboards, markers, pens and people, who were laughing, smiling, joking and even the few who were sleeping. After all, there's only so many zoom classes that can be done from your bed.

Personal contribution to a collective community.

Once we were freed from our shared feeling of loneliness, we returned to the cyclical routine parts of our lives. For many of us returning to school was an overwhelming feeling. After being in isolation for such a long time many may have feared their social skills had fled. Walking through the gates on the first day back felt bizarrely unique, it felt as though the last few months of our lives were a mere dream, like those dreamt the night prelude the reopening. As the day progressed however, it was as though we had never left. As the months went by, we began to realign ourselves with the various different school clubs, the intersection of our hobbies and academics. We began to once again invest in the community that had given us structure, the one that had given us - a purpose. Students took advantage of the opportunity to become a part of something bigger than themselves.

Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.

Our gratitude towards school is not always easily expressed. We tend to place dislike upon what is difficult. The truth is, we are among the very luckiest; we receive a free education - a luxury many around the world are not permitted to enjoy. We are given the opportunity to grow and develop and given the means and the strength to chase down our true potential. We are blessed to have hard-working, diligent and passionate teachers, who can guide and accommodate our journeys. No matter whether you wish to be an astronaut or an artist, a shopkeeper or a surgeon, our teachers help set us on the path and to take the all important first steps with us. After all, any journey of a thousand miles must start with a single step.

As I have previously stated: we all strive for a sense of belonging - a feeling of inclusion and importance. We long to achieve what we possibly can in the time we have available to us. Nothing is promised and permanent except for change - which is in fact guaranteed.

Be grateful for the days we get to spend together in our wonderful learning environment. And remember - every time you wish for less homework and plead for it to start softly snowing in the hope of a day off school... Recount the days spent staring at a blurry screen on zoom — void of hope and motivation.

Thank God for school....who would've thought?!!

Time to Reflect...

by Stephanie Doyle



Who were you, who are you, who do you want to become? Budding journalists, avid fans and intrigued readers of 'The Pres Release', my name is Stephanie Doyle and I recently received my Leaving Cert Results, leaving behind my secondary school days and starting a new chapter of my life-college. When I was first asked to write an article for the very first edition of the newspaper, to pass on some words of wisdom from my time in the school, I must admit I was a little bit hesitant. What could I have to offer to the next generation? It was then, I realised that it was not necessarily about what I had to offer but rather about the stories I can tell and the seemingly pointless lessons to be learned from them. Unfortunately for you, my words are not nearly as poetic as the great Seamus Heaney nor my jokes as funny as any comedian, but I'll do my best to keep you entertained. So, settle on in, grab a cuppa, Barry's or Lyon's (I don't discriminate) and enjoy the article.

One of my biggest achievements from my time in the De La Salle is my personal growth and development. A little bit cliché to say the least but an honest answer nonetheless! When I arrived through the doors of the school on my first day, I arrived in as a shy, quiet, nervous girl but when I left... well I don't think quiet would be the adjective any of the teachers would use to describe me! For most of my Junior Cycle, I spent most of time with my head in the book, studying non-stop until I had each chapter mastered and although that certainly had its benefits and I'm very proud of my achievements in that regard, it was only when I started T.Y. that I truly came into my own. Over that year, I participated in the John Paul II Award, creating the school yearbook and one of the most important activities I took part in, the Concern Debates. It was here that I really found my rhythm and began to look at school life slightly differently. The positive atmosphere during each debating meeting was something that allowed me to be myself without fear or judgement. With each activity in T.Y., I become more and more sure of who I was and who I wanted to be. After a week in the R.C.S.I. Mini-Medicine programme, I realised that maybe I wasn't as in-love with being a doctor as I thought I was! However, I found other things to be passionate about. Through debating I realised that I have a love for educating and public speaking. It gives me a real chance to express different viewpoints that allow me to make a difference but more on that later! By the end of T.Y. I had become not necessarily a different person but rather a truer form of myself. So I guess lesson number one from me is that you have to be willing to take things for all they have to offer. You have to be willing to put yourself into new, exciting and uncomfortable situations if you want to find what you are passionate about. You can't be afraid of failure or that will stop you from trying things. You've got to be willing to put yourself outside of your comfort zone if you truly want to understand what you want to do.

The thing about putting yourself outside of your own box is that it is actually harder to stop doing it when you start. In fifth year, I was elected onto the Student Council and in sixth year, I decided to return to debating one final time before leaving the school. Some of the greatest and hardest times of my secondary life occurred during my final two years there. When Covid-19 struck at the start of 2020, it would be an understatement to say that everyone's lives were turned upside down and I think we can all agree that it was particularly difficult for the school community. Adjusting to online classrooms, getting used to the new procedures in school and learning how to live alongside this virus is something that has tested us right down to our very core. I can still remember the stress of the uncertainty of what would happen to our Leaving Cert, what would happen if we didn't get back to school. So many unknowns in such a short space of time. However, we all got through that, we learned to look out for one another, help each other along the way. So get ready for lesson number two: there is nothing that you can't overcome. Yes, now we are getting to the 'cheesy part' but in reality, as cringy as it sounds, and I know it sounds bad...you really can get through anything. You have to be willing to adapt, to change even when it's uncomfortable and the path ahead is unclear. There really is nothing you can't do!

I want to leave you with the biggest lesson I've learned in secondary school - Life is a constant process of reflecting and re-evaluating. You have to be willing to look back at who you were, you might not like it, you might find it difficult but you have to. Then you have to assess where you are now, what are you about, what makes you, you and finally, you've got to decide who you want to be. What are your goals and aspiration? What is it that makes you passionate? What path are you on for the future? This process is something that I believe to be fundamental for success in life. You have to be willing to live by it every day, so you constantly work towards a better you. So as my final part word, I only have one simple question:

Who were you, who are you now, who do you want to become?



Hello everybody,

Well done to staff and students who have collaborated on the production of our new school newspaper 'The Pres Release'. It is brilliant to hear from our students - your voice is hugely valued in our school. We look forward to hearing your opinions and observations on life here in PDLs and beyond. I want to wish everyone involved the very best of luck with this and future editions.

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T.Y. News

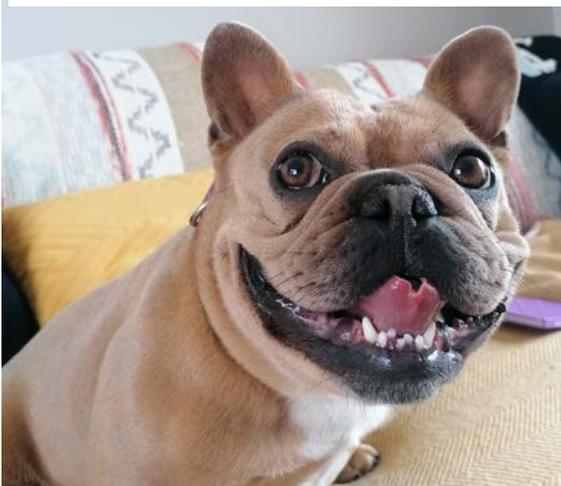
by Nicole Kirġ



Thosaigh mé san idirbhliain ag tús Mhí Mheán Fómhair agus b'é an chéad rang a bhí againn ná rang na Gaeilge. Thug an múinteoir amach féilire le hamchlár na bliana dúinn. Ní raibh gach ní scríofa isteach air ach fós féin bhíomar ar bís nuair a thugamar sracfhéachaint air. Bhí an plean don mhí sin air agus an chuma air go mbeadh an spraoi agus an spórt fite fuaite leis an léann. B'é an chéad imeacht a rinneamar ná cúrsa segway. Roinneadh é thar dhá lá agus chaith gach duine uair a' chloig ag tiomáint na segways ar chúrsa bacainní. Bhí sé iontach spráitlil agus réitigh gach duine go maith lena chéile. B'é an dara himeacht a rinneamar ná ceardlann drumadóireachta le Conor Moore ó "soundoutrhythm". Ag an tús sheinneamar an bodhrán leis agus ansin chuir sé muid i ngrúpaí agus sheinneamar an bodhrán inár ngrúpaí agus chumamar ár n-amhráin féin. Ag an deireadh d'úsáideamar go leor drumáí éagsúla. Bhí an-chraic againn le Conor. Is fear greannmhar agus an-deas é. Mholfainn 100% é d'aon scoil. Ansin chumar ar thuras go hIonad Eachtraíochta Dhún Mór Thoir. Ar dtús rinne mo ghrúpa na himeachtaí ar tír. B'iad siúd an boghdóireacht agus an dreapadóireacht. Ansin chuamar amach ag cadhcáil. Ansin ar aghaidh linn go dtí an "wibit". Is cúrsa mór bacainní uisce é sin. Bhaineamar go léir taitneamh as. Bhíomar an-sásta ach spionta ag teacht abhaile. Le déanaí thugamar cuairt ar "LeisureMax" I gCo. Loch Garman. Bhí cead againn ár rogha féin a dhéanamh ar an lá. Rinneamar an rud a theastaigh uainn nuair a theastaigh sé uainn. An chéad rud a rinne mé ná sacar bolgóideach le mo chairde. Ritheamar agus a phreabamar ar a chéile agus thit mé ar an talamh go fiormhinic. Ansin chuamar go tag léasair agus chaill mé gach babhta. Nuair a bhíomar críochnaithe d'itheamar ár lón agus bhíomar ag caint is ag comhrá. Ansin rinneamar iarracht éalú ón seomra éalaithe ach níor éirigh linn. D'éalraig cúpla grúpa ach d'éirigh le grúpa amháin buachaillí éalú in am iontach, timpeall cúig nóiméad is fiche. Chríochnaíomar an lá le dul ag babhláil.

Mar a deir an seanfhocal ' is aoibhinn beatha an scoláire '

Sin scéal na Ceathrú Bliana go dtí seo. Míle buíochas leis an Uasal Ó Céin, leis an Iníon de Búrca, le hIníon Uí Mhurchú agus leis na múinteoirí eile ar fad ach go háirithe le hIníon Uí Dhúdlá, an Ceann Bliana.



GUESS THE OWNER...

WHICH OF THE P.D.L.S. TEACHERS IS THE PROUD OWNER OF ROXY?

SUBMIT YOUR GUESS, WITH YOUR NAME AND CLASS INTO OUR POST BOX BY 20TH DEC.

Staying GREEN during a Pandemic...

by Chloe Fitzpatrick

The last two years have been a particularly difficult time for everyone, with many schools, jobs and businesses negatively affected by the pandemic. Despite the challenges of Covid-19, our excellent committee; full of hardworking and inventive individuals, made continuing our good work, possible. Regardless of the circumstances which have greatly hindered our level of work, we have still completed many projects for the school.

The Green schools committee is currently working on receiving the fifth Green Flag for biodiversity. We have already received the Green Flags for litter and waste, water, energy and travel. Biodiversity is all about the different forms of life on earth including plants, animals, fungi and microorganisms along with the communities they form and the habitats they live in. We contributed to biodiversity with the creation of several bug-hotels. These were made by Ms. Scanlon with some of her woodwork classes and can be seen around the school. These bug-hotels help to support the communities of insects and other small organisms. Some groups of students have also helped with tree planting in the McGrath Park.

Jeanette O'Brien came into the school to educate us on Biodiversity. She talked about her job as the Environmental Affairs officer and enlightened us on biodiversity and ways we can support it to work towards the biodiversity flag. A habitat study was conducted on the school grounds with the help of Molly and Mies from the company 'Bare Necessities'. They talked to the committee about biodiversity. A group of students collected samples of different plants and they used books and pictures to identify them.

The upkeep of the flower tyres around the school is important to us and we recently organised a clean-up of the areas and with the help of Ms. Connors we removed unwanted weeds from the tyres to ensure the flowers had enough space to flourish.

We are also ecstatic about the completion of the bicycle shed at the front of the school. Hopefully this will encourage people to consider a more environmentally friendly way to travel to school.

We are very excited to start our future plans which will further improve the biodiversity of the school. We would like to thank the whole committee for their commendable work they have done over the past two years despite the unfortunate circumstances and a special thanks to Ms. Brennan, Ms. Connors, Ms. Scanlon, Mr. Brett, Ms. Egan and all the other teachers who have donated their time to help our committee.

Challenge: Tricky or Not...?



by Patricia Slawatecka

Challenge. When the word “challenge” is mentioned, what is the first thing that comes to mind? When adults are asked, they usually give answers such as “positive”, “rewarding”, “perseverance”, “achievements”, “true potential”. Students often view challenge as something bad, hard, intimidating, difficult etc. They view it negatively, yet it doesn’t have to be.

Why? Challenge by definition is “a task or situation that tests someone's abilities.” This means challenge is only a test to see what you are capable of. Challenge is found in all aspects of life and at all ages. It is found in sports, school, at home, at work, musically, financially, to name but a few. A lot of the time we don’t recognize challenge when faced with it. For example, learning a new trick in football, or learning a new language, or even knitting a jumper can be a challenge. Since we don’t recognise these small challenges, we usually associate challenge with the big problems in life, such as exams, losing a loved one, losing your job and/or life-changing injuries. These require much more perseverance than when learning tricks, yet the outcome of overcoming these challenges will leave you with greater rewards.

Edward Kopko, who is an American Businessman, publisher and author, once said “in order to achieve happiness and success, challenges must be dealt with.” Nicole Turner, an Irish Paralympic swimmer, said that a challenge for her was “prioritizing sport over education” as this “was a risky move that paid off.” Making such a big decision is a common challenge that people often face in sports of all kinds. Yet these people face their challenge and go on to do great things, such as winning a silver medal in the Paralympics like in Turner's case.

Avoiding challenge because you think it is too hard, does not make it go away. So attempt it, try facing your challenge head on. Remember you can share challenges with others. These challenges will over time become easier, and your developed mindset will allow you to face your challenges with a positive view. Being positive will create a happy and successful environment. “Take a limitation and turn it into an opportunity. Take an opportunity and turn it into an adventure by dreaming big” (Jo Franz). So next time you face a challenge, don't stress! Just keep going!



Student Council

The Student Council is democratically elected from within the school by the student body. The Student Council is primarily a voice for students and a forum for them to identify and articulate their views; it ensures that students have a say on matters that affect them in school. The Student Council comprises of representatives from each class. The members are Nicola Nolan (6E, Chairperson), Laura Cummins (6B, Secretary), David O’Dwyer (6E, Treasurer), Ella O’Hara (6E, PRO), Barry O’Brien(6E), Cormac Nolan(6E), Leanne Carroll(5A), Shane Fennelly(5B), James McDonald(5C), Orla Byrne(5C), Cormac Murphy(5D), Daire Whelan(4A), Crag Yeates(4B), Kelsey Cody(4C), Tristan Herlihy (4D), Conor Hennessy(4E), Noah Connolly(3A), Daire Dwyer (3B), Lydia Keating(3C), Mante Sladkeviciute(3D), Kacper Owieczka(3E), David Barron(2A), Dean O’Sullivan(2B), Kyle Clarke(2C), Sean Nolan(2D), Mikey Fenlon(2E), Luke McGrath (2F), Tony Nolan(1A), Martin Earl(1B), Daniel Brennan(1C), Niall Fitzpatrick(1D) and Oran McCullagh(1E). Students are welcome to approach their class representative or any member of the Student Council if they have any issues for discussions.

by James McDonald

Being Spanish in an Irish school...

Many students travel to different countries as exchange students and here in PDLs we have three 5th year students from Valencia in Spain; Olivia, Pablo and Eduardo. All three students openly shared, that they think the most amazing thing about Ireland is the Irish culture especially the mealtimes. In Spain, dinner is eaten at lunch time, and a second dinner when they go home in the evening at around 9 pm. Olivia told me Spanish omelette is her favourite dish!. All three told me they enjoy music and chemistry classes. They also expressed that the ability to move classes and meet different students remarkably interesting, at home they all shared that they remain in the one base class all day. Happily our Spanish guests agreed this has been an unforgettable experience, which opens a person’s eyes allowing them to see and experience a new culture.



by Ella O’Reilly

Dear Agony Aunt....HELP!!!!

Dear Agony Aunt,
I want to like school – I like learning and my teachers are great, but I find that the break times are really hard. I feel like there is no group of friends that I actually belong to. I walk around alone and I feel everyone is looking at me. It is easy to say try talking to others, but I am shy and not comfortable doing that – HELP!!!

Joining a group activity is always a good way to find groups of friends. I assure you groups of friends change—so don't feel you have to stay with one group. There are so many options in our school for group activities, such as, sports, wellbeing teams and our newspaper—just to name a few.

Dear Agony Aunt,
I have gotten myself into a bad habit – I don't come to school when I know we have tests or I go home early to avoid them. I tell my mam I am not feeling well. I am missing out on so much school time... It started last year and now I feel like I am almost afraid to sit a test... **HOW CAN I STOP THIS...?**

Tests create a sense of fear in EVERYONE!! So don't feel alone on this. Asking your teacher for a copy of your recent tests and trying to do them at home will allow you to see how you cope with doing a test. This will help to build your confidence and outline any weaknesses you have in that subject, which you can then work on.



GUESS WHO TOURNAMENT ...

On Monday 22nd November our T.Y. German students engaged in a Guess Who tournament with some of our first year German students.



After some intense battling, A.J. Dooley and Hana McCabe were leading—with 6 games each in hand.

An impassioned final round saw **A.J. DOOLEY** taking 1st place.

SEHR GUT A.J.!!

Snowflake....REALLY?

Entitled, easily offended, can't take a joke, or deal with problems - a snowflake. Originally used to refer to millennials, today we as part of Gen Z tend to share this label, but why? Is it just a blanket term, a stereotype? Or is there any merit to it? To find out I decided to investigate what makes us, Gen Z, different.

What kind of time did we grow up in, what came before us and how has it affected us. As part of Gen Z (people born between 1997 and 2012) we live in world fresh of the heels of huge changes. Many of our grandparents who walked uphill, to and from school, would have lived during the black civil rights movements and the feminist movements of the 1960's. The internet didn't exist till the 80's, yet to one in three college survey participants it's as important as food and water (And to another half it's "pretty close" to that). Which is all to say that our experiences are all but the same as those of our parents or grandparents. Our generation is the first to grow up in a global society. As most of us were born just a bit before the first iPhone, messaging someone across the ocean was never a big deal. Our generation is aware of global issues at a much younger age than ever before. Be it climate change or Black lives Matter, our generation is one of the most likely to act and most likely to demand action - perhaps the reason we're so "entitled".

But, what about being easily offended? Well, as comedians such as Konstantin Kisin or Dave Chapelle are criticised for jokes left and right, I don't think there is any denying that our generation has an issue with controversial topics. In my opinion whether it's warranted, depends on the joke. Not everything is black and white after all. Why is it our generation seems to be so quick to jump on any social issue, with the heart of a lion and the grace of an overweight cat climbing a wall? I don't know. My best guess is that people want a cause to rally behind, a team to play a part on.

Despite Covid, I think it's hard to deny that we're living in a relatively amazing time. After all poverty is steadily reducing and World War 3 has not yet started. So, in the end, is Gen Z really full of snowflakes? Probably not. Just like with real snow, at least here in Ireland, we tend to make it out to be a bigger deal than it ever actually is.

While there's undeniably a frustratingly vocal bunch demanding everything to change right now, much like an entitled child, their hearts do seem to be in the right place.

by Adam Zielinski



So, in the end, is Gen Z full of snowflakes? Probably not. Just like with real snow, at least here in Ireland, we tend to make it a bigger deal than it ever actually is.

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INTERVIEW WITH SARAH BREEN by Edele Walsh

I was lucky enough to sit down and chat with Sarah Breen co- Author of the bestselling books, The Aisling series. Sarah Breen was raised just down the road from us in Borris and along with her co-writer Emer, she has just won the popular fiction book of the year for a remarkable third time in four years for *Aisling and the City*, the fourth book in the series and on track to be Ireland’s bestselling book of the year. They even have a series in the pipeline. With the fifth and final Aisling book coming next I was eager to have a chat with her.

Sarah told me reading was something she always loved that she used to read a lot of books when she younger, She loved English in school and enjoyed languages very much in secondary school and excelling in German. With the advice from her guidance counsellor, she was going to college for a language's degree. She did not believe that writing was an option yet. “I didn’t imagine it as a career,” To her writing was something that she was interested in but did not believe you could get a career out of that. It's seen as a “dream” job to be able to write for a living.

Sarah was really interested in magazines and keeping up with celebrities and so she did some research and a found a course in Ballyfermot College. It was a media diploma that involving journalism, radio broadcasting and TV. That is where she met her future co-writer Emer Mclysaght. Sarah went into magazine journalism and that was where she and Emer were offered a book deal. It's not like she always imagined having this job - “it just worked out that way.”

Since Aisling was a character that they were both familiar with and had known for years, it was easy for them to snap into Aisling’s character while writing. I applaud them, because I would not be able to co-write a book with someone so easily, writing with a best friend sounds difficult.

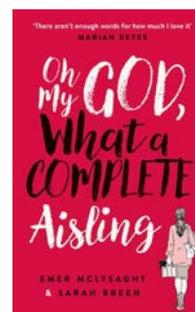
For those of you who do not know Aisling, she is a well developed character, who “plans everything to a T”. Sarah told me she relates more to Majella, Aisling’s friend, who is very laid back and mislays items a lot.

“Observing” she told me, “is an important skill for a journalist” because you must take in your surroundings and you create a picture in your head. Observing helps you create characters and an image in your head, quite like how they created Aisling. I was very interested in this response, because even getting motivation is something that everyone struggles with and it is hard to figure out what your motivation is. Once you get it, do not let it go. Sarah’s motivation springs from the thoughts and mind-set that ‘I need to get this done’. If you put your mind to it, you will find motivation in the satisfaction of completing a task. She is a stay at home mother and she told me it is difficult to find time, you get so exhausted. There is a stereotype that writers are constantly artsy people and you must always be creative, but that is not true.

Sarah honestly admitted that “nobody's going to like everything you do,” - accepting this is important because people spend most of their life caring what other people think. It is not something you can control, even the most popular books and authors receive criticism. You just have to take it in your stride because it happens regardless.

Throughout the interview, Sarah spoke very highly of Marian Keyes, whom she considers to be one of the first successful Irish authors, who does not water down the authenticity of Irish humor.

Let me leave you with this thought - *Life is all about taking risks! If you never take risks , then you’ll never know what you’re capable of...*



The Meitheal Programme

by Finnán Nolan

On Tuesday the 16th of November all of the first years went on a school outing to Leisure Max in Co. Wexford. It was organised by the Meitheal leaders and Ms. O’Neill. The Meitheal leaders are a group of 6th year students who take care of first years. If you have a problem you can tell a Meitheal leader. They have been a great help to all of us in making the transition from primary to secondary school.

Leisuremax has plenty of activities including bowling, laser tag, Sumo and escape rooms to mention a few. The bus ride took 70 minutes approximately and it was good fun on the journeys to and from Wexford. Personally, my favourite activity was laser tag. Leisure Max is actually the first place in Europe to have this new type of laser tag technology. I think everyone enjoyed the escape rooms also and as my team got out the quickest - we found it great fun. The escape room is a good test for any group as you need to combine different skills including teamwork, speed of thought, problem solving and concentration.

I would definitely recommend a visit to Leisure Max with friends!!



The school’s yearly St. Vincent de Paul food collection encourages students to donate non-perishable food items to provide for others who have less. I urge you to donate to SVP in anyway you can this Christmas—thinking of others in need in a time of plenty. Colletion boxes in school foyer.

by Emma Condemmi.



Bagenalstown Bank circa 1865-1914; 2021



Let us take you on a tour of Bagenalstown from the year 1865 right up to the present day 2021 and explore the difference between our town then and now. The website we used to retrieve these photos was The National Library of Ireland Digital Photos—<https://www.nli.ie/digital-photographs.aspx>. We hoped to find out how much the town has changed since the time the photos were taken. There was a total of 48 photos of Bagenalstown. Here we share some of our favourites...



Main Street Bagenalstown circa 1880; 2021

**T.Y.
History
Class**



Royal Oak Road circa 1940-1960; 2021



Our aim was to see if Bagenalstown had changed a lot. We noticed an absence of car parking spaces in many of the photos which indicated that it was a time that horse drawn carriages were in use. More people were using bikes and were on foot in older photos. The cars were a lot smaller in photographs from the last century. We were surprised to learn that some places had been knocked down like the Old Convent Secondary School is now the Beam Centre. A small number of buildings in the town were in bad disrepair, for example - Bagenalstown House which judging from old photos seemed a very fine house indeed. What is most interesting to note is the change of use of buildings. The most notable change is the old post office is now the Bank of Ireland. This building dates back to the 19th century so it just goes to show that a sound structured building lasts the test of time.

Bagenalstown's History

Presentation Convent Beam circa 1940; 2021



Main Street circa 1841;1917



We encourage you to examine the website below to lead you on an adventure into the past...

<https://www.nli.ie/digital-photographs.aspx>.

The Ambush

by Evan Nolan

Musai focused the scope directly onto his target. The Black Hawk was oblivious. She proceeded to scale the silvery peaks bound for a safe return to camp. Musai curled his finger firmly around the trigger and inhaled. He drew the fatal lever - his eyes frozen and then released a confident breath. The bullet ripped through the dawn air and instantly shred a propeller upon impact. Metal shards scattered wildly across the landscape. In an instant Musai's firearm was reloaded and set carefully adjacent to him. He watched as the Black Hawk spun uncontrollably into the bleak valley, leaving behind a smoldering trail. Captain Collins tugged ferociously on the chaotic joystick. His efforts were futile - the Hawk struck the rigid terrain - they were grounded.

Collins pressed a bloodied palm against a wide gash on his left temple. Streams of heavy, dark blood flowed down his forearm. His shaking right hand struggled to release the buckles strapping him to his captain's seat. Eventually he freed himself. His second officer had remained motionless since the impact. Collins held two fingers against the young officer's neck - no pulse. Removing his tags, Collins carefully slipped them into his breast pocket, then hurtled through the cockpit door drawing in a hopeful breath.

On the other side, amidst the blackening smoke, Collins could identify two lifeless bodies - Officer Riggs and Officer McClain - both fatally injured in the impact, and yet the rest of the aircraft was deserted. Collins rushed eagerly to the rear of the plane and leapt onto the solid ground beneath. Cries of relief drifted through the foggy air, followed by unexpected gunfire from overhead. The sniper was still there.

"Requesting permission to retrieve our target Sergeant", claimed Musai.

"I want them alive - no fatalities" was the response.

Musai signaled to the driver and they began their descent into the rugged ravine. He fixed his gaze - intent on locating the target. The jeep hustled through rocks and bothersome trees and yet Musai's stare never faltered. The other vehicles advanced on the gorge after confronting the opposite cliff. They circled the fallen aircraft trapping Collins and his crew in a dust cloud.

Collins retreated gingerly - complying; he had no other choice. He watched as Musai dismounted the rear of the vehicle. Collins's breath quickened with every step Musai made in his direction. He thought of his family, he thought of his wife - and he thought of his fallen comrades - still strapped to the grounded Hawk. Masai signaled to his fellow officers to cuff the remaining men, whilst he aimed an impressive handgun intently at Collins's chest. Within moments the hostages were shackled and being driven to the enemy base.

"I don't understand Sir - why they taking us alive?"

"I'm not entirely sure Michaels - but it's gonna be O.K."

The men sat silently in the uneasy blackness and the van bludgeoned the rough terrain.

"Did they shoot us down Captain", asked Michaels skittishly.

"They did son".

Suddenly the van halted, and the men lunged forward. They had arrived. The rear doors were drawn open, daylight burst inside the van. The officers gestured to Collins and his men to step outside. They were to be led to a location inside the camp. Collins surveyed his surroundings - nothing looked familiar. On both sides of him he saw officers engaged in preparation; stacking ammunition, unloading weapons and tending to the injured who had returned. They were escorted to a large tent deep inside the camp. Musai halted before reaching the entrance. He indicated to the others not to follow and then disappeared inside. Within moments Masai returned, caught Collins by his right elbow and ushered him inside. Instantly he was met with a familiar face.

"It's been too long James".

(To be continued)



Winner of the

PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION...







Ciarán Murphy

2nd Year

Wellbeing...

by Kady Kehoe

Wellbeing is the state of being content with your life, physically and mentally. Your physical health is regarding the state your body is in. There are many things we can do to improve it such as eating healthier, getting more sleep and exercising regularly. However, our mental health is a more complex thing. Yes, sleeping more can help you feel better mentally so you won't be as tired and keeping up with your work can make you feel less stressed but it's not always that easy. We all feel stressed from time to time but when it's a reoccurring thing it may be a sign you need help from others. If you or someone you know may be struggling mentally, there are plenty of people who you can go to talk to about it, whether it be a trusted adult or a teacher in the school, there will always be someone out there to listen to your problems and help you. Feeling like this is completely normal so you're not alone if you feel this way.

So far this year the well-being committee has done a number of things to help out our peers. One of the biggest things we did was the 5k walk with all of the classes during their SPHE class. The students had to pay a 2-euro donation. All the money we earned was then donated to charities to help out with mental health. We also did numerous activities during kindness week for all the students such as treats to wish the 3rd and 6th years good luck on their exams and a Halloween sweet hunt for the first years.



Stand Up Awareness Week promotes inclusivity and a positive understanding of LGBTQI+ youth - showing that LBTQI+ students are not only accepted but supported and celebrated.



F1 in P.D.L.S.



F1 in Schools is a STEM project (Science Technology Engineering and Maths). Ben Hogan, Ben Lord, Sean Hanlon, Gracjan Wojcik and I (Conor Hennessy) have formed a Formula 1 style team. We must create a model F1 car to race in a national competition and then hopefully internationally. We have already agreed a title sponsorship with PB Machine Tech. Further sponsorship has also been provided by Autolaunch, Jones Engineering, Doyles Railway House, Bagenalstown Country Store, AK Design, McGagh Tyres, Rea's Motorfactors, Hi-Spec, MCM, MB Graphics, ASF, Internorm and Worldwide Window Frames. We would like to thank our sponsors sincerely —we are extremely grateful for their support.

by **Conor Hennessy**

RECOMMENDED READ...

BY NADINE COOGAN

This book is about two teenagers in the 80's. Elenor is living with her highly dysfunctional family in a small, old house and is poor. While Park on the other hand, is a half -Korean boy and more well-off.

They first meet on a bus where Park offers Eleanor a seat. From there, they fall for each other and their love story begins.

"Eleanor was right. She never looked nice. She looks like art, and art wasn't supposed to look nice - it was supposed to make you feel something."

"What are the chances you'd ever meet someone like that? Someone you could love forever, someone who would Forever Love You Back."

THANKS TO MS. COBURN, WE ARE NOW ON OUR JOURNEY TO A WELLREAD NATIONAL AWARD...EXCITING TIMES AT P.D.L.S.



Mr. Bolger under the Microscope

by Adam Zieliski



Why Geography and PE?

I teach PE because sport is my voice, and I always have been quite competitive and quite decent at sports, and I get so much joy out of it, that I just want other people to get the same amount of satisfaction.

Why geography? Because I'm an outdoor person and I like the global aspect of things rather than just the local and national aspect. It's just so vast, geography is everywhere and it's something I'm passionate about as well.

Any other profession you would be interested in?

A professional golfer.

Do you think sport helped you develop as a person?

Yes, definitely, I suppose from a young age when you're playing sports, you learn how to interact with people because you're on a team. Even though you don't know at the time you're taking on feedback all the time, and someone's going to correct and help you, not discipline ya but put you back on the right track.

And you also get setbacks when you lose, and you have to cope with that. I feel it was very organic back then, if you won, you won, if you lost, you lost and you had to deal with it.

Whereas now days you see there are participation medals, but you see the only medal is for the winner. And sometimes you end up embarrassing the kids, they know they didn't do as well.

And that goes for school. If you're getting good results, you know you're getting good results. So when it comes to sport, I think they teach you so many skills and they help you build your character and you just learn so much, whether it's socially or dealing with your own emotions, losses and setbacks but also enjoying all the really good things that sports offers!

Would you say you're a more relaxed, easy-going teacher?

Yeah, I would be relaxed, I'm a relaxed person, there is not much that could go on here today that would get me riled up. I'm not trying to impress anyone and when I come into school, I have a job to do. But I also remember vividly, me in a classroom, being the student, I remember what I was thinking and what I was feeling.

When you come into the building this is a community.

This community isn't made for everyone, academia and education isn't made for everyone, not everyone has fun in school. Once it's a happy and safe place, that's great, but people don't like geography, English, math's, people like geography, English and math's. We all have our likes and dislikes, but all I want to do is make sure people are open to learning. Are there some classes where we really have to get on with work, yes, are there classes where we go off topic, also yes.

And that's brilliant we shouldn't just be reading and writing out of a textbook. If you go into a job in the real world no one's ever going to hand you a textbook and just say "off, there you go", you have to be flexible and you have to be able to deal with people in a positive and proactive way.

Have you ever travelled much?

Yes, I was in Canada, England, America, France, Spain, Greece, Sweden, Belgium, Dubai, Oman, Jordan, Sri Lanka, Seychelles, Vietnam, Qatar, Bahrain, and Tenerife.

Favourite destination and why:

Seychelles, just because it was a small island, easy to get around and it was so relaxing, it felt like a proper holiday, to relax, rest and get your energy back.

Favourite food:

Depends on the day. Right now—a nice curry.

Favourite food from a foreign country:

Shish Tawook from Abu Dhabi and a grilled Sharwma — also from Abu Dhabi. I ate with the locals on the desert BBQ and sometimes because you're new or the "guest of honor" it's customary to place the head of the animal on your plate.

Do you think Fitness is emphasised enough?

No. I think there should be way more emphasis on it. I think we live in a country that spends a billion every year on obesity related diseases and I don't think that's good enough. And I don't buy this thing that it costs a fortune to eat well or anything. I think if you're physically active and you're exercising it creates good discipline in yourself. Why am I after doing an hour of spinning if I'm going to go home and eat crap? I'll do an hour of spinning and go home and eat well because I'm enjoying how I'm feeling. I think the more you stay on top of food and exercise, the better you feel internally and the better you look externally. I think everybody is body conscious, I don't think anyone in the world isn't, men or women. And exercise doesn't have to be rigorous, it can be a walk, it can be a cycle or a jog, or bringing the dog out for a walk, there are so many ways to be physically active.

Ending note:

I think we're very lucky. I worked in a lot of schools. This is a good school with really good students and really good teachers, and it's not very often you get all them ingredients in one pot. This is a very good place to work, and I hope for students it's a nice school to come to, a good school to develop and grow in, and feel like a part of the community.



How LONG is TOO LONG???

From my experience of working in a nail bar you can tell a lot about a person just by what nails they ask to get done or if they ask you to pick. At the moment the most popular shape is the 'coffin'. Many are going for Christmas or winter/autumn colours right now and

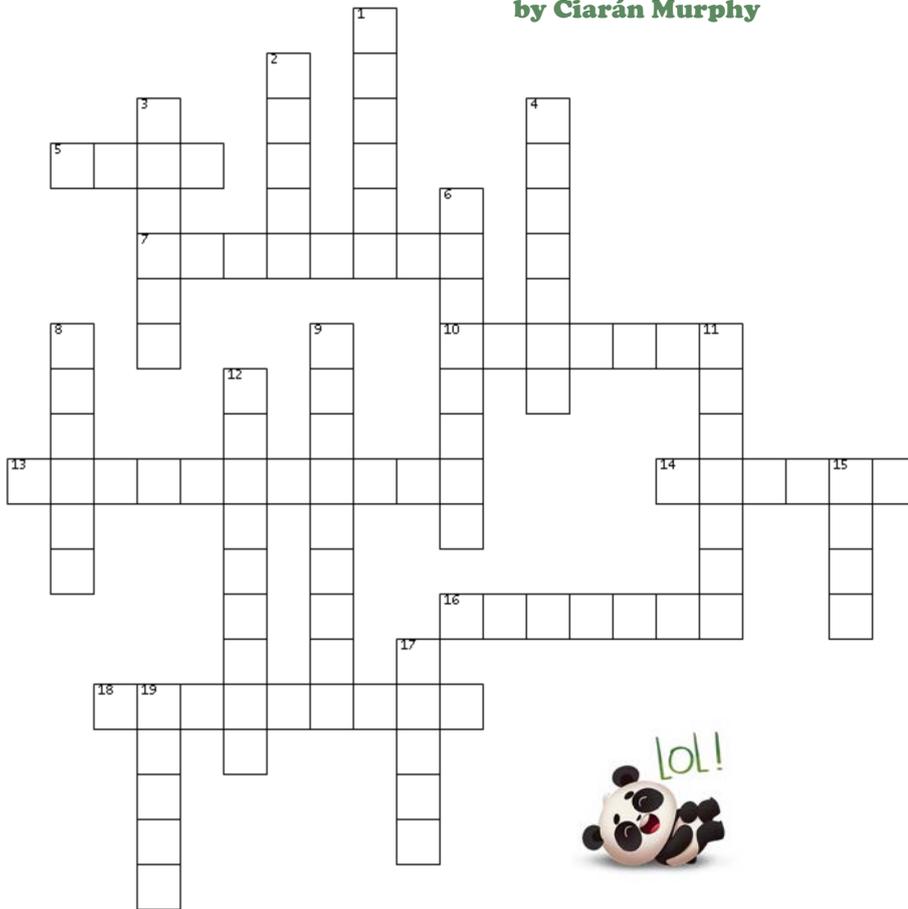
the designs, colours and styles people come in with are amazing. Most people go for medium-long nails, but we have often had people come in to the salon who want very long nails and honestly, I cannot imagine how they can do anything with nails that long, but....the client gets what the client wants.

by Aoife O'Neill



CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD

by Ciarán Murphy



CLUES...

ACROSS

- 5. A shorter name for Christmas.
- 7. Santa has nine of these, including Rudolph and excluding spares.
- 10. The day after Christmas Day, St. _____'s Day.
- 13. The famous man who was born on Christmas Day.
- 14. Santa uses this to fly around the world.
- 16. It's figgy and it's brilliant.
- 18. Turkey is very nice with this, _____ sauce.

DOWN

- 1. A spherical object that hangs on a Christmas tree.
- 2. The name of the main character of Home Alone.
- 3. He appears in Aldi ads every Christmas, Kevin the _____.
- 4. Santa can always fit down these somehow.
- 6. Santa has a sack full of these.
- 8. Another name for the countdown to Christmas.
- 9. How many days there are in December.
- 11. The Irish name for Christmas.
- 12. Christmas is a time of giving and _____.
- 15. One of the gifts from the Three Wise Men.
- 17. This happened on Christmas Day 1914, during World War I.
- 19. This bird usually visits around Christmas time.

MATHS QUIZ...

What is the value of an apple, an orange and a lemon?

Apple =

Orange =

Lemon =

 x
  x
  = 27

 x
  x
  x
  = 24

 x
  x
  x
  = 96

 +
  x
  = ?

Write your answers on a piece of paper, along with your name and class and pop it in the blue post box in the foyer by 20th Dec. to be in with a chance to win a prize...

AUTOGRASS by Courtney Kelly



To say the least Autograss is a pretty unusual and unheard-of sport. Autograss is a form of motorsport that takes place on oval dirt tracks and is considered to be one of the cheaper ways of getting into racing.

I first came across the sport when I just so happened to watch a few races at a track and decided to watch it on YouTube some more. I begged and pleaded then to my mam to let me race, after many promises and compromises I won the debate and was allowed to start racing.

Firstly, I had to find a car to convert, we found a blue little Nissan Micra for sale and bought that for €200. The next step was to gut the car from head to toe, pulling out the seats, dashboard, added bits and bobs etc. When it was practically empty, it was fitted with a roll cage, which cost about €500, I think. The roll cage had to fit exacting measurements and then be 'tagged' by officials. When that was complete the battery was moved into the 'passenger seat area' and excess wires for indicators or front lights were taken out of the car. A bucket seat and a 5-point harness were bought, which both cost €150 each. Also, the ignition was placed beside my seat and a 'kill' switch was added on the outside of the car, which basically cuts all power immediately in an emergency situation. Metal mesh was put on instead of the front window of the car and all the other windows were

also taken out too, the driver's window also has a fabric mesh on it. To build the whole car it cost about €1300 but pre-built cars can be bought for about €1000.

In Autograss there are about 10 different classifications of race cars, I race in class 1 which has the most basic car but I usually the most popular class. From ages 12-16 I raced in the junior saloon races and now race in women's class 1. There are two junior classes, saloon and specials. Specials are called buggies and are completely built from the ground up by someone, you cannot just buy a chassis for those. When racers reach 16, they move into the adults' classes, either men's or women's, and into



classes 1-10 depending on the engine size, speed etc. Some people choose to get new cars, to race in higher classes but I choose to stick with my old car. Class 1,2,3,4,5,6, are saloon cars then class 7,8,9,10, are buggies. Naturally, these cars cost a lot more to buy.

I renew my race license with my club yearly - then I am good to go racing in any of the Irish or British clubs. I usually go to about 5 race days a year because my club is relatively small, and the race season is quite short. On a race day I usually race three, 5-lap races and if I've done well maybe even the final race too. Racing goes on pretty much all day, because there are so many types of cars to be raced. I'm usually there from 9 am to about 6 pm. About 8 cars race at one time on the track and allegedly the sport in 'non-contact' but I have firsthand witnessed it is far from that. Usually, the only contact is little tips or maybe spinning around, but sometimes there are big crashes and collisions that require the race to stop and the ambulance that's on standby there to go out on track. Quite a few times I have been in big collisions and had to be checked over by the paramedics, luckily enough I've managed to avoid big injuries. Despite crashes Autograss is a lot of fun to do and even watch and I'm really glad to show off my unusual sport.



Ireland
 Burnside Autocyl (Tullow) Ltd.
 Industrial Estate,
 Tullow, Co Carlow
 Email: sales@burnside.ie
 Phone: +353 59 9151200
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Continued Success to PDL S
 Bagenalstown School Newsletter!

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GAME ON!!!

Where do I start; the sweat, the tears, the nerves and most of all the joy. We finally got our chance after two whole, long years waiting for the day to set foot on the court again.

The adrenaline one feels being back where you most felt at home (some would say) and most of all where your mind is at ease. I often think of all the training sessions we took for granted, all the times we even complained about having to go to training. Who knew that one training session back in 2019 would be our last - for what felt like a life time of waiting. There was an unexplainable empty space in our lives for those months, It's only now you realise how much you really can't live without it. It's the motivation and confidence it gives a player. Sports keeps you sane. It really creates unexplainable energy and excitement. I know every player, of every sport is delighted to be back doing what they love; achieving and making memories that will last a lifetime.

by Sophie Dowling



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Compulsive Sketching...

by Vicu Cealic

I occasionally refer to myself as an addicted sketcher, but I wouldn't describe myself as a painter. I do paint, but I wouldn't describe myself as a painter. I'm a compulsive sketcher, and as far as I know, I've spent my whole life drawing forms, locations, and people. I feel my first artistic spark occurred approximately ten years ago, when I was initially exposed to art as a subject. It is, without a doubt, the same thing that drew me in from the beginning. My teachers' and peers' reactions to my artworks, I feel, had a significant influence on my style and early "carrier" as an artist. One of the best things that inspires my desire to create more is having someone there to see what you've done and how you do it, and to nurture and encourage you to keep going. I don't paint or draw from imagination very often; instead, I paint from reality or from photographs. I need to be able to perceive, analyse, and develop the subject to the best of my abilities, which only comes through practice. Many people have "raw" ability and can create genuinely wonderful works of art, but I need to draw continually in order to improve day by day since it is how I cope with my daily challenges. I want people to see people's faces through my eyes; everyone else can paint, but I want you to see what I see, how intricate and detailed a face can be, from my perspective. While I adore drawing from images or life, the realism approach has never appealed to me. Don't get me wrong, I like it, and I totally encourage anyone who wishes to focus their efforts on being great at realism. Personally, I prefer painting in the impressionist style because it allows me to be more creative with my brush strokes and how I present my work. To those who are unfamiliar with impressionism, it is a 19th-century art movement characterised by relatively small, thin, yet visible brush strokes, open composition, emphasis on accurate depiction of light in its changing qualities, often accentuating the effects of the passage of time, ordinary subject matter, unusual visual angles, and inclusion of movement as a crucial element of the composition. Being able to paint a subject's major characteristics and adding this "blur" effect to my work has helped me realise how much more enjoyable it is to paint, rather than staying for hours attempting to imitate what is directly in front of me. I find myself exhausted trying to get everything to absolute perfection. Don't get me wrong, it may be calming and a wonderful way to practice muscle memory, but often I find myself completely drained. I normally spend 6-8 hours drawing, and if there's one piece of advice, I could give to someone who wants to become a better artist, it's to simply draw, draw, and draw. I'm not suggesting that you abandon all other responsibilities in your everyday life in order to focus on art; rather, if you want to improve, you should just put yourself out there and spend whatever time you have creating, modifying, and sculpting your creativity. If you sketch, no matter how complex your art practice is or what shape your creativity takes, your work will improve. Everything revolves around drawing. Whether you're creating art in a sketchbook, painting, decorating cakes, or making jewellery, being able to draw improves your work.



Title: "Demon en insolement"

Barrow Rangers Win Minor C Title by Noah Connolly

On the 30th of October Barrow Rangers faced off against Graignamanagh for the Minor C title. The first score came after a Graighnamanagh free in the fourth minute which was then converted. After seven minutes Rangers registered their first point from play. Then a converted 65 by Joe Healy gave Barrow Ranger an early lead, however Graig would soon equalize with their only point from play. Then Niall Carpenter reinstated Rangers lead, before Sean Hamilton converted a 65 and a free to give Graig a lead of **Barrow Rangers 0-03 – 0-04 Graignamanagh** heading into the first water break. After the break Hamilton scored another 65 to give Rangers a 2-point deficit. This deficit would then be turned around with a point from captain Joe Healy and goal from Dylan Hunston. Hamilton scored yet another 2 frees - then in added time Joe Healy's free left the game at **Barrow Rangers 1-05 - 0-07 Graignamanagh** going into halftime. Within a minute Hamilton drew the sides level. However after that Graig went on a 16-minute score drought. By the 32nd minute Paddy Wade had Rangers back in front and then a minute later Niall Carpenter scored his second point of the match. Healy then pushed the lead to 4 with score a from play and a 65. Just before the water break Hamilton scored again making it **Barrow Rangers 1-09 – 0-09 Graighnamanagh**. With a tense fourth quarter looming both teams knew it was vital to start well with full forward Dylan Hunston scoring a brace within 5 minuets. Then Healy scored his seventh point of the match in the 56th minute. Barrow Rangers seemed in control of the game but then Dunne found the net leaving only four points in it. Hamilton converted yet another point separating the teams by a goal. Then Liam Healy would win a 65 to be converted by Joe. The final play saw a free converted by Hamilton leaving the game at **Barrow Rangers 2-11 – 1-11 Graighnamanagh**.



LIVING THE DREAM!!!

Since September arrived and we all returned to school, TY's have had a blast! In September everyone went on a trip to Dunmore East in Waterford. We did an obstacle course on water. "It was an amazing experience" one TY student claimed. We also went on paddle boats and did some kayaking. After all the water activities, we did some archery and rock climbing. In October, TY students went to Leisuremax in Wexford. Students played laser tag, google football, escape rooms and much more! "*I loved the variety of activities and had fun time with friends*" stated Ottilie Griffith. Student have also been enjoying fun things during PE lessons, for example: swimming, gym, pitch and putt and much more. It has truly been a fun time for TY students.

TY students have also engaged in various workshops. Some classes had first aid, where they learned how to do CPR, and how to bandage someone. They also learned what to do in different situations. I have found that workshop very helpful, and I have learned so much from it. Students have also enjoyed a personal safety workshop, where they learned how to be aware of situations and some self-defence. I find these workshops very fun and interesting but also educational.

by Nadine Coogan

