

COLAISTE MUIRE CROSSHAVEN NEWS WAVE

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Editorial Comment

Nelson Mandela once said "**Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world**" but getting that education in such challenging times with a global pandemic of Covid 19 is challenging to say the least. One thing is certain, we know that adjusting to change can be challenging. Whether it is planned or un-planned, gradual or sudden, change is inevitable and over the past few months, we all have experienced an unprecedented shift in our way of life due to Covid 19.

Our school day has changed dramatically. Our new normal sees gloves, masks and sanitizers as commonplace, the school bus has only half capacity, so we can no longer sit and laugh and chat with friends on our way to school. The atmosphere in school is totally different. Everything we need to stay safe has been done by the school, but there is still an underlying sense of unease and uncertainty. We are social creatures, people need people and it is difficult, but necessary to social distance now from our friends. We miss training and team sports and of course we miss a wide range of our extra curricular activities, such as our annual skiing trip, school tour and school play. But we recognize and have come to understand the saying "**Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine**" - we all live in one another's shadow and if there was ever a time to appreciate how closely we are connected, how much what we do matters to others, how much we rely on each other, then this is it.

Having endured lockdown where sitting in front of a screen became the norm, Covid 19 has given schools Zoom and Google classroom but neither of these are substitutes for being with your friends and classmates, and yes, even listening and seeing your teacher where they belong, front and centre of the classroom. Covid 19 and lockdown has definitely made me appreciate school more and now I do believe that there is a lot of truth in the old saying "**school days are the best days of your life**", and we all look forward to a time when we can begin to enjoy our school days again.

Amber Flag Initiative

This year we are delighted to announce that we have been awarded an Amber flag for promoting and demonstrating positive mental health in Coláiste Muire Réalt na Mara. The Pieta Amber Flag Initiative recognizes how our school has created a healthy, inclusive environment that supports the mental health of both staff and students.

Mental health education is extremely important for everyone in our school community. Exam stress and peer pressure can take its toll on a student's mental health. To combat this, our school offers Tai Chi and Yoga as well as Mindfulness sessions to all year groups. We are delighted to receive an Amber flag and hope that our school continues to be a safe and supportive place for all of us.



A little history of who we are



Coláiste Muire, Realt na Mara, (Our Lady Star of the Sea) was opened in 1947 and provided a second level education for girls in the area. They were taught by seven Presentation Sisters. The school adopted the Motto '**Respice Stellam, Voca Mariam**' which translates as '**Look to the star, call upon Mary**' reflecting the influence of the school's location in the small village of Crosshaven, Co. Cork, right at the mouth of Cork Harbour. In 1969 the school became co-educational and currently we have 500 pupils attending. Our school offers a wide range of subjects and extra-curricular activities, as well as having close links to the local community. As students, we regularly take part in community based activities ranging from Tidy Towns, Save our Steeple and Take 3 for the Sea campaigns to name but a few. Maintaining and developing these ties to the local community is essential for a small village. Our school continues to support and in turn be supported by the many organizations in the area and there is little doubt that this inter-dependence benefits both our school and the local community.

Coláiste Muire, Realt na Mara uncovers link to R.M.S. Titanic

The ill-fated R.M.S. Titanic made its final stop in Cork Harbour, just off of Roche's Point where the last passengers from Cobh (Queenstown) were boarded.



Last known picture of R.M.S. Titanic' as the tender pulls away having taken passengers out from Cobh. (Picture courtesy of Titanic Encyclopedia)

Our school, Colaiste Muire, Realt na Mara, has discovered that among the passengers was one of its past pupils. Miss Hannah Naughton from Donoughmore, Co. Cork was one of nine children. She was born on April 10th 1891. She was privately educated by the Presentation Sisters here in Crosshaven where she was certified to teach.



(Picture courtesy of Titanic Encyclopedia)

She boarded '**Titanic**' as a third class passenger on 11th April 1912, one day after her 21st birthday. She was to take up a position in New York as a schoolteacher.

Her ticket number was **365237** and her ticket cost seven pounds and fifteen shillings.

Hannah Naughton died when 'Titanic' sank, her body was never recovered.

“HIGH ON A HILL WERE SOME LONELY GOATS”

On top of the hill overlooking Crosshaven village is the old ruined church of St. Matthew at Templebreedy. This old landmark has a history all of its own. Building began in 1759 and was completed in 1868. The site has a special place in the heart of the community and many of our students are currently helping out with the ‘Save our Steeple’ project and the restoration of the graveyard as part of their community work.



As the church and graveyard were abandoned, centuries of weeds, thorns and thistles had taken over – the solution? **GOATSCAPING**. Yes, **GOATSCAPING**. Local Councillor Audrey Buckley first saw the potential for ‘goatscaping’ when she was on a trip to Wales. Goatscaping is a far more environmentally efficient way of clearing a site than by using strimmers and tools which have the potential to damage old and historically significant headstones.

Initially, two goats were rented from Norah De Barra of Hungry Hill in West Cork. And so, ‘Oscar’ and ‘Harris’ arrived to Templebreedy and started to munch their way through the graveyard. Locals turned up each day to see the goats ‘at work’. Soon, two more goats joined them because of the size of the site. ‘Breedy’ and ‘Keane’ joined the team. ‘Keane’ was named after Billy Keane who did a feature on the goats on the RTE show ‘Today with Maire and Daithi’.



The goats work has unearthed many lost graves, which have now been recorded. For example, the grave of Jonathan Magrath was found. He was one of 564 casualties when the RMS ‘Leinster’ was sunk by a German submarine in 1918.

The goats also uncovered a memorial to five men from 33rd Company Royal Engineers who died while on duty in Fort Camden. They were responsible for laying mines at the mouth of Cork Harbour and was a difficult and dangerous job. All were killed on active duty.

Here in school, there has been a lot of interest in both the project and the information that the goats have unearthed by clearing the headstones. This information not only adds to our local history archive but is also extremely useful for our L.C.V.P. Programme.

Locally, many descendants of those buried in Templebreedy are delighted that the lost graves of their grand parents and great grand-parents have been located. We all look forward to the return of the goats next summer, as they continue the work they started, who knows what they may uncover.

Student Enterprise Programme

Enterprise Ireland paid our school a visit to launch this year’s student Enterprise Programme’s ‘**Young Entrepreneur Competition**’. The competitions Ambassador Derval O Rourke spoke to all three of our teams. Our First Year company is called ‘**Sanitize Guys**’, our Second Year Team is ‘**Covid Kickers**’ and our Transition Year Team is called ‘**Electra Phone Cases**’.



CROSSHAVEN LOCAL NEWS ROUND UP

80 NEW WIND FARM JOBS ANNOUNCED FOR CROSSHAVEN BOATYARD

Green Rebel Marine, a business established by Mr. Pearse Flynn, is a business that will service the future needs of offshore wind farms and has announced the creation of 80 new jobs on the site of Crosshaven's historic boatyard. The jobs will be created over the next eighteen months and the news has been met with delight by local residents, especially as they learned that the Boatyard will continue to function.

Crosshaven Boatyard holds a special place in the hearts of local residents, many of whom worked there and learned their trade there, when such famous yachts as '*Gypsy Moth IV*' built for Sir Francis Chichester, helping him set a record time for sailing between West Africa and South America. Here too '*Moonduster*', Ireland's flagship yacht was built. '*Golden Apple*' carried our current Minister for Foreign Affairs Simon Coveney T.D. and his family on their circumnavigation of the globe in aid of the Chernobyl Children's Trust was built there as was the replica '*St. Brendan*' boat which was commissioned by the late Tim Severin for his successful bid to prove that Saint Brendan the Navigator could have crossed the Atlantic and reached America, long before Columbus did.

Ireland's Climate Action Plan commits to having at least 3.5 GW of offshore wind in Ireland in the next ten years which will help renewables account for 70% of electricity generation by 2030. With a view to meeting these targets plans for offshore wind farms are at an advanced stage. We contacted Mr. O Flynn for a comment and he told us that "Green Rebel Marine has plans to develop a centre of excellence in Crosshaven to train and develop the staff required to meet the needs of the floating wind farm industry".

Coastal communities are changing. Crosshaven once sustained a relatively large fishing fleet, but the industry has been decimated over the years, so, little wonder that the local community welcomes these jobs which will also benefit other businesses in the village. But perhaps the last word should be left to Mr. O Flynn. "Ireland has the potential to become a net exporter of electricity within a decade, as opposed to relying on imported fossil fuels. Green Rebel Marine marries the best of the Blue and the Green Economies. We will create and sustain Irish jobs and become a global leader in this field".



Crosshaven Boatyard

Picture courtesy of Crosshavenboatyard.com



One of two survey boats which will survey and maintain the wind farms.

Picture courtesy of afloat.ie

CROSSHAVEN SET TO RECEIVE FANTASTIC PUBLIC BIKE REPAIR STATION

Our village is set to be one of the first places in Cork to trial a bike repair station, that will be free to use for members of the public.

It will be installed beside the outdoor gym near the RCYC which means that any cycling enthusiasts on their cycle along the greenway can have easy access to the facility.

But, the repair station not only caters for bicycles but can also be used to pump up tyres on prams or wheelchairs, which is again very useful as lots of families use the greenway facility.

Contents

Each bike repair station is equipped with 10 tools. These include

- Phillips screwdriver
- Flat screwdriver
- T25 Torx screwdriver
- Adjustable spanner.

Skateboard Tools

Flat wrench 8 x 10 mm

Flat wrench 13 x 15 mm

Hex key set and tyre levers.

The addition of this facility couldn't come at a better time for Crosshaven. With indoor gyms and indoor sporting opportunities currently not being available, more people are availing of outdoor facilities such as our green way, and many more, young people riding bicycles.

Local Councillor, Audrey Buckley says that "it's such a simple idea and so positive, I am really looking forward to seeing it being used".



The Bike Repair Station, located at the outdoor gym, adjacent to the Royal Cork Yacht Club and the Greenway walk.



COLAISTE MUIRE, ENVIRONMENT PROJECTS

Our school is very conscious of the environment and what we can do to raise awareness of the problems caused to the environment by human activity. This year, our annual Library Project, completed by Transition Year students focused on the problems plastics cause to the marine environment. Here is a small part of what they produced.

Jonah – The tale of a whale Library Project 2020

Centre stage of the project was Jonah the whale. Students constructed a wooden frame for him and then completely covered him in plastic bottles which had been collected all through the summer before. The result was startling and highlighted for all students the danger of plastic in the marine environment.

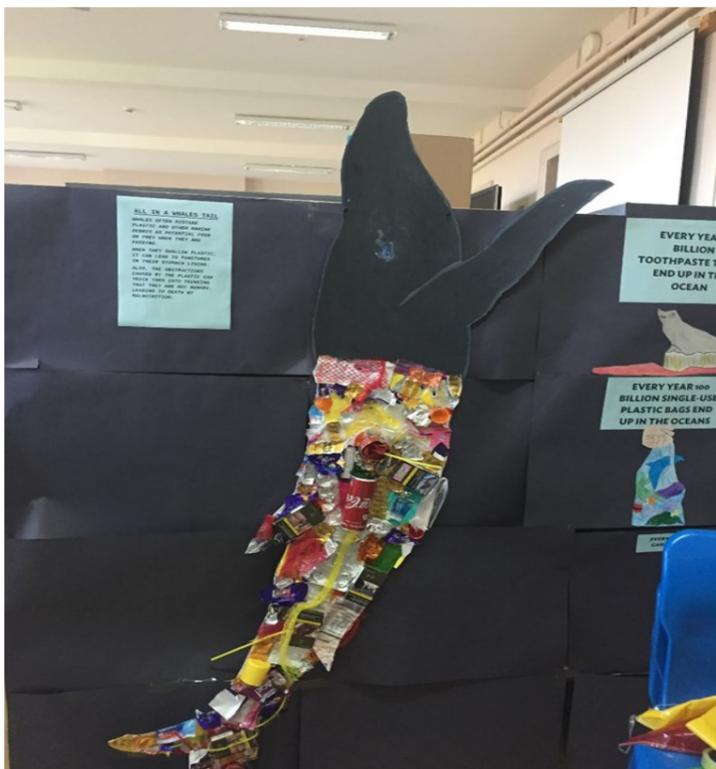


So, why is plastic a problem? Over 8.3 billion tonnes of plastic has been made since production began in the 1950's. Only 9% of this plastic has been recycled, the other 91% sits in landfill, floats in our oceans or has been burned. Plastic is almost indestructible. Instead they 'break up' into smaller and smaller pieces, creating microplastics and nanoplastics.

Problem of animal ingestion of plastic

A parent bird will eat what they see is bright and reflective. Plastic pieces look like fish or squid to the birds and, as a result over 40% of all seabirds have ingested some form of plastic.

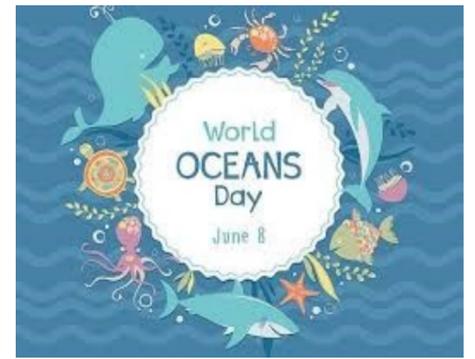
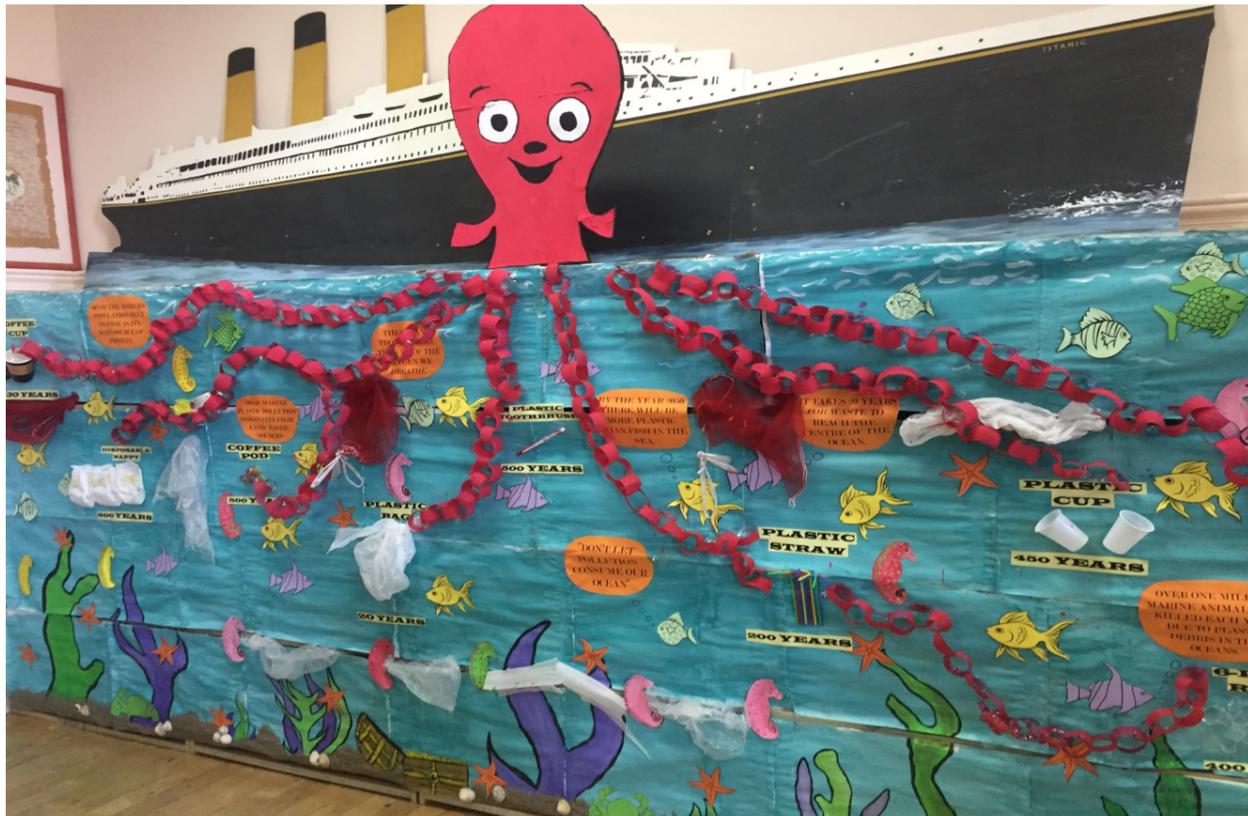
A blue whale ingests 75,000 litres of water every time it opens its mouth. Imagine how much plastic it must take in. We made a model showing this.



9 GOOD REASONS TO REFUSE SINGLE USE PLASTICS

1. They are made from fossil fuels.
2. They have a huge carbon footprint.
3. They will still be here for hundreds of years.
4. Only a tiny percentage of them is recycled.
5. They leach toxins into our food and drink.
6. They can cause hormone disruptions and cancers.
7. They pollute our oceans.
8. They kill animals and birds.
9. They enter our food chain.

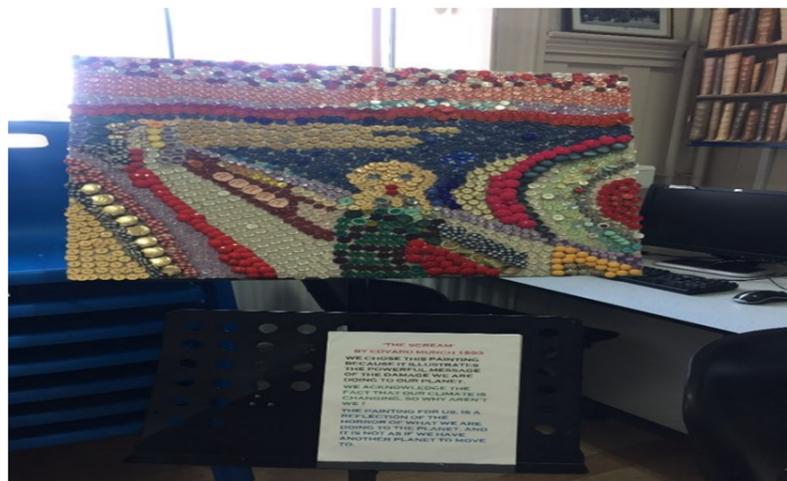




A sample of our work, showing the length of time each plastic item takes to disintegrate in our oceans.

The Scream' by Edvard Munch

This was a really interesting part of the project and the part that required the utmost patience. We re-created Munch's painting using recycled buttons. The reason 'The Scream' was chosen was because it best represented to us what we are currently doing to our environment .



Take 3 for the sea

Wherever we are, we are connected to the sea. The ocean provides us with the oxygen we breathe and the climate that sustains us. We need a healthy ocean for our own survival. Plastic pollution is devastating oceans and threatening the health of our planet. The 'Take 3 for the sea' initiative is a simple one, take 3 pieces of rubbish with you when you leave the beach and you have already made a difference. Our school is more than happy to be part of this initiative, given our location right in Cork Harbour. Some of our students have become ambassadors for the project, and as we like to not just talk the talk but walk the walk, we have undertaken several clean-ups of our local beaches.



This is one of the sponsored plaques placed at the entrance to all of our local beaches at Graball, Fountainstown, Church Bay and Myrtleville beaches.

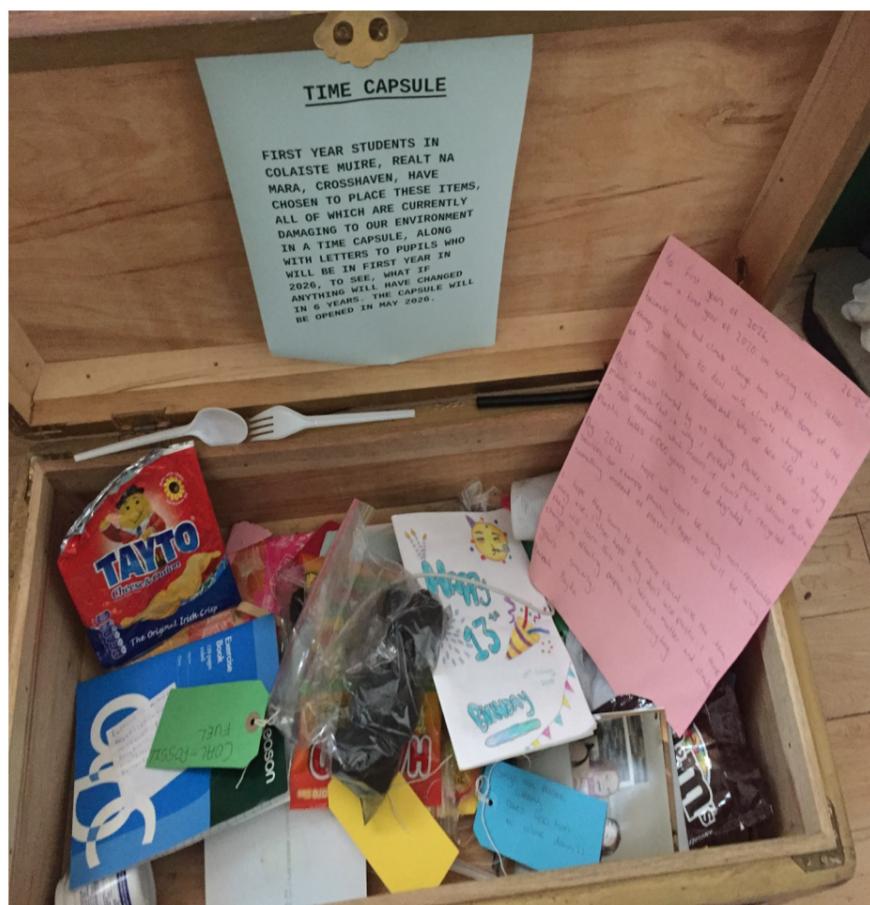
FIRST YEAR STUDENTS MAKE A TIME CAPSULE

“Sometimes you will never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory” – Dr. Seuss

2020 will be a year to forget for many reasons, raging wildfires, climate change and of course the devastating Covid 19 pandemic. But, 2020 also marks the first year in secondary school for our First Year cohort of students.

They have created a time capsule, full of everyday things that they think are damaging our environment. Included, are letters they have written to future First Year students in 2026 to see what, if anything has changed.

The capsule will be opened when these current students are in Leaving Cert in 2026.



The Time Capsule includes plastic cutlery, crisps and treats, copy books, pens and textbooks, it will be particularly interesting to see if we are still using these in six years time, or if education will have gone digital. Pieces of turf and coal, with the recent closure of Bord na Móna, it is doubtful that we will see turf in six years time. Photographs and birthday cards to remind students of their first term in secondary school, and of course leaflets relating to Covid 19. Who knows what the future holds, but what we do know is that these First Year students will be as excited to open it in 2026 as they were when they created it.

We would remind our First Years that

TIME IS FREE

But it's priceless

You can't own it

BUT YOU CAN USE IT

You can't keep it

BUT YOU CAN SPEND IT.

Irish / French Exchange



Our French Department like to offer us experiences outside the learning of the classroom. The study of French means learning about French life and culture, their customs and traditions. Crosshaven is twinned with the town of Guidel in Brittany and this year we engaged with a French pen-pal, exchanging e-mails letters and postcards, telling them all about our culture, hobbies and of course our school. Here are some of the Cartes de Noel we sent them at Christmas.



Great Success for Coláiste Muire, Realt na Mara, Crosshaven at B.T. Young Scientist Exhibition .

Once again our fellow students enjoyed great success at the B.T. Young Scientist Exhibition, which was held virtually this year.

Ava Long, was awarded 2nd place in her category, Biological and Ecological Sciences, Intermediate Level for her project “**Beach Closure Exposure**”, where she investigated the link between E-Coli levels at Cork beaches after high rainfall. She was also awarded the **Met Éireann Award**, for her project. Well done Ava !

Niamh Nash took 1st place in her category, Social and Behavioural Sciences, Intermediate Level, for her project “**Giving Gender inequality the red card**”.

Rhea Itty and Ella McCarthy O Neill’s project “**Loberistic**” was highly commended in the Biological and Ecological Science Category.

Huge congratulations to you all !

FIRST YEAR ART

Christmas may have been a little different this year, but our First Year students made it feel that little bit more festive with these wonderful wreaths they created in Art Class.



Engineering and the Planet Quiz.

Huge Congratulations to Transition Year Student Praise Wenigieme, who took 1st place in an online quiz on Engineering and the Planet run by Foroige on YES ! - the



Transition Year Students help Crosshaven Tidy Towns Committee tackle the issue of dog fouling.

Having a dog is a wonderful thing and there is no doubting the benefits of exercising by taking your dog for a walk. However, even before the last round of lockdown measures, the problem of dog fouling was an issue in Crosshaven. To help the local Tidy Towns Committee, a group of our Transition Year students took up the challenge of this problem by lobbying our local County Council to provide more bins for the village and also the local bay areas. They also sprayed stencils onto footpaths and walkways, reminding owners to pick up after their pets.



Minding your mental health during lockdown.



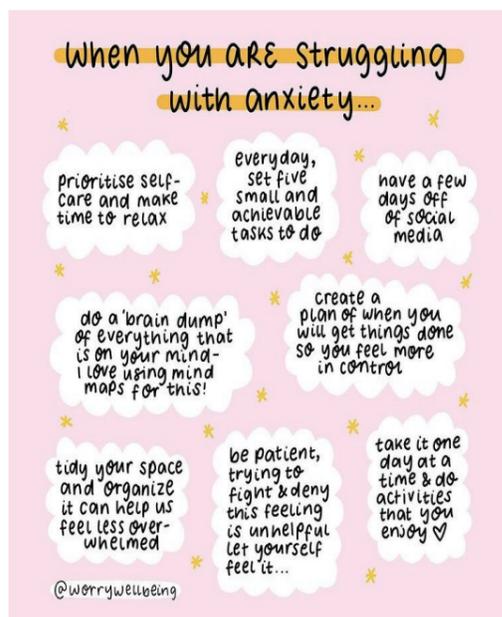
There is little doubt that the Covid 19 Pandemic has affected all of us and, as a result we have to deal with many new stresses and strains and feelings of isolation, insecurity and panic. Adapting to our 'new normal' can be hard, but we are very fortunate to have a wellbeing team in the school, who email us tips and hints about how to cope during lockdown.

They remind us that although it is important to keep up with schoolwork, it is equally important to take regular breaks and exercise not only our minds but our bodies.

Exercise releases endorphins or 'happy hormones', which are proven to benefit your mental health.

Exercise does not require running 5km every day or working out for two hours. Even going for a walk for twenty minutes will help to clear your head.

Below is a sample of what our Wellbeing group send us at the start of each week.



With the Covid 19 Pandemic dominating everything in our world today, from news media, to print media and all social media platforms, it is little wonder that the Pandemic has become the subject of a lot of poems and stories.

Just after we returned to school after the first lockdown, we read and discussed the viral poem by Kitty O'Meara entitled "And the people stayed home".

As we are completing this project during our third lockdown, we felt it was more than appropriate to include the poem here.

"And the people stayed home"

And the people stayed home.

And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still.

And listened more deeply.

Some meditated, some prayed, some danced.

Some met their shadows.

And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed.

And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.

Reflection

There were times that we felt we would never be able to complete this project, no sooner had we begun, when our school year was interrupted once again.

Despite this, we were determined to complete what we had started and despite all the setbacks and challenges, we have succeeded in completing our Newspaper.

Lockdown has taught us many things, never to take our schooling for granted, never to take family and friends for granted, how to adapt to our new normal, patience and discovering new ways to pass the time. Whatever lockdown has meant to you, we hope that you have remained safe and well and that you trust in the knowledge that we will get through this.

Our final thoughts, are best summed up by Tom Roberts :

***"And when the cure is found and we are all allowed to go outside,
We may prefer the world we find, to the one we left behind".***