

machnamh

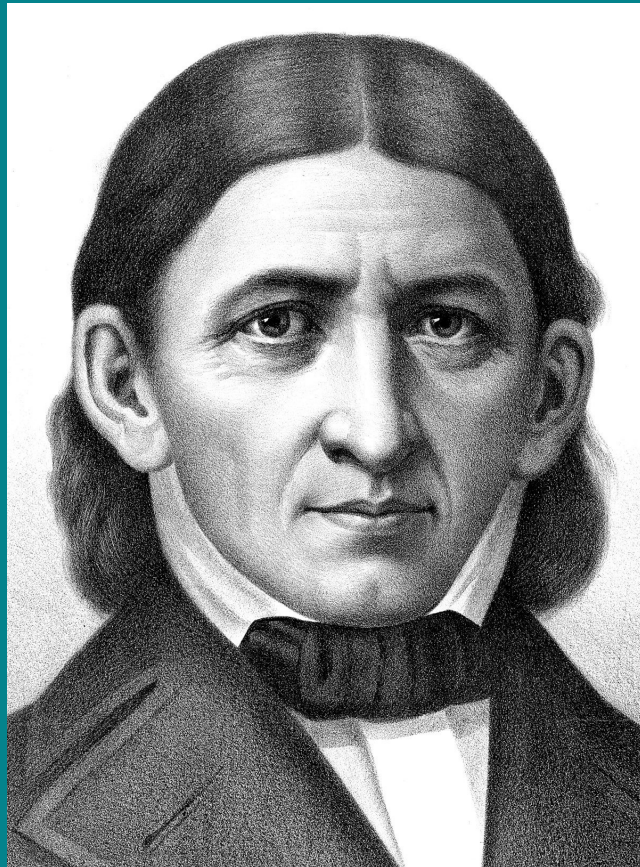
May 2019



Issue 5

Froebel Department of Primary
and Early Childhood Education

Mission Statement of the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education



Guided by the philosophy of Friedrich Froebel and the principles and values of Maynooth University, our mission is to prepare and inspire caring educators in their pursuit of excellence in teaching, learning and research towards the holistic education of every child in a changing Ireland.

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machnamh

Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education
Maynooth University
Maynooth
Co. Kildare

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Foreword

Fáilte romhaibh chuig an cúigiú heagrán den nuachtlitir Machnamh! Táimid tar éis deireadh a chur le bliain thar a bheith gnóthach anseo i Roinn Froebel, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad!

It is with great privilege that I welcome readers to the fifth edition of Froebel's newsletter Machnamh. In essence, Machnamh seeks to showcase and highlight the ongoing achievements and activities of staff and students alike. In documenting the internal and external developments of our thriving community, we strive to give readers a taste of the wealth of talents, discoveries and leadership to be found in the Froebel Department.

In this semester's issue, the broad range of contributions demonstrate the Department's aim of enhancing the sphere of education through various avenues. Particular highlights include: the opening of the School of Education, the ever-successful Froebel Week, new developments in policy and research, and a number of highlights regarding technology, inclusive education and sustainability .

This edition of Machnamh is the second student-led publication of its nature. In developing student leadership, the editorial team has compiled an array of contributions which vary from the Cuckoo Sticks, to Drama Workshops, to Instagram trí Ghaeilge!

I would like to extend my gratitude to each and every one of you who have contributed to this issue of Machnamh. The collaborative efforts allow for Machnamh's continued success - Ní neart go cur le chéile. Finally, I wish all of our staff and students a restful break over the summer months and we hope to see those returning invigorated and refreshed for another academic year. For those who are leaving us, we wish you all the very best as you embark on the initial stages of your careers.

Marie McLoughlin

Head of Department

Preface & Acknowledgments

Colm Keane & Adam Carroll

Welcome one and all to the fifth issue of Machnamh! Since its conception, Machnamh has sought to become a focal point for celebrating the achievement of staff and students, as well as to act as a historical document recording the hectic daily life led by all in the Froebel Department.

It is with great pride that the editorial team present to you the second student-led publication of Machnamh.

In prefacing this publication, we would like to acknowledge and thank Séamie O'Neill for presenting the editorial team with this new venture into Dissolving Boundaries in Educational Leadership. It has proven to be an interesting journey of continual drafting, collaboration and overcoming various challenges.

Furthermore, we would like to thank each and every one of you that have contributed to our most comprehensive and diverse issue of Machnamh to date. This publication could not have been achieved without the diligence and professionalism conveyed by all involved.

Go raibh maith agaibh.

Colm Keane *Adam Carroll*

B. Ed. Year 4

B. Ed. Year 3

Opening of the School of Education

On the 21 February 2019, the Minister for Education and Skills, Joe Mc Hugh (TD) and the Minister for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell O'Connor (TD), officially opened the School of Education in Maynooth University. This occasion marked another significant milestone in the transition from Froebel College for staff and students within the Froebel Department. The Dominican Sisters, Trustees of the College and past staff were represented in great numbers on the day. They were given tours of the premises and regaled us of the "old" days back in the Blackrock campus. They were most impressed by the building and were particularly pleased to see the Froebel ethos imbedded into the structural features of the building.



Left-Right: Anna Ní Ghallachóir (Head of School of Celtic Studies and Director of the Centre for Irish Language Research) Mary B Ryan (Head of Adult and Community Education), Marie McLoughlin (Head of the Froebel Department), Philip Nolan (President of Maynooth University), Joe Mc Hugh (Minister for Education and Skills), Mary Mitchell O Connor (Minister of State with responsibility for Higher Education), Sharon Todd, Sr Elizabeth Healy (Congregation Prioress) Lisa O' Regan (Head of the Centre for Teaching and Learning) Aidan Mulkeen, Vice President for Academic Affairs

Both Ministers, alumni of the University, spoke fondly of their time as Maynooth University students. Tributes were paid to the Dominicans for the service they had given to the Education system over the years and were praised for the legacy that remains within the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education. There was also a strong presence of stakeholders from within the broader Education system to include the Department of Education and Skills, the Teaching Council, School Management bodies, Officials from Teacher Trade Unions and Professional Networks. The Ministers met staff and students from across all the Departments during the visit. It was a very special event and marked a very momentous occasion for the Froebel Department.



Left-Right: Mary Mitchell O Connor, Aoife Ní Mhurchú (PMEd Year 2) and Philip Nolan (President of Maynooth University)

NCCA's Newest Recruit!

The Minister for Education and Skills Joe McHugh T.D. recently announced the appointment of the new National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) to include Brian Tubbert of the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education.

The NCCA advises the Minister for Education and Skills on curriculum and assessment from early childhood to the end of second level. It engages with learners, teachers, practitioners, parents and others to support innovation in schools and other educational settings. It undertakes, uses and shares research as a basis for advice and debate on education.



At the announcement, Minister McHugh said: "I am delighted to announce the appointment of the new National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). The work of the NCCA is pivotal in the development, planning and reviewing of curriculum and assessment provision in schools."

The Froebel Department warmly congratulates Brian on this appointment which is testament to his wealth of experience at various levels of the education sector.

Alumni Catch Up - Seán Hehir

Seán Hehir is an Irish long distance runner and primary school teacher from Kilkishen, Co. Clare. He studied for his Bachelor of Education (MH001) in Froebel College of Education, Blackrock, Co. Dublin from 2002 to 2005. In 2013 he won the Dublin City Marathon and has represented Ireland over the marathon distance at the European (2014, 2018) and World (2017) Track and Field Championships

Recently, we caught up with Seán, a Froebel graduate of 14 years now, and we asked him a few questions about how a Froebelian philosophy of education has influenced his life in recent years.

What were some of the highlights of education in Froebel?

I am incredibly grateful to have had the privilege of attending Froebel College of Education. The Froebelian ethos of seeing every student as a valuable member of the community permeated my everyday experiences in the college. Lecturers and staff went above and beyond to support all student endeavours and we in turn were encouraged to develop and share our own personal interests and talents, feeling very much a valued part of the collective college community. I am thankful that this support and care has continued long into my teaching career and in turn do my best to live out the core tenets of the Froebelian ethos in my teaching career and in the community I work in.

In my final year in Froebel College I was fortunate to have been elected President of the Students' Union. In collaboration with the Students' Unions of CICE, Marino, St. Patrick's College (DCU) and Trinity College, the USI and the INTO we led a yearlong campaign to encourage consideration of subsidisation of teaching practice for student teachers, redressing the aggressive erosion of pension entitlements for newly qualified teachers and the outsourcing of educating future teachers to private, for-profit colleges. This campaign culminated in a well-attended march on Leinster House. However these issues still remain pressing concerns for student teachers to this day. My experiences on the Students' Union were challenging but incredibly rewarding, and I was very fortunate to have worked alongside a fantastic team of students and staff.



Froebel Department Hosts Transition Year Students on Work Placement

Laura Thornton

The second semester was a very busy period as Froebel Department hosted three Transition Year (TY) students on work experience. We were delighted to work in partnership with students from Confey Community College, Leixlip; St Joseph's Mercy Convent, Navan and Dominican College, Griffith Avenue. During their time in Froebel, they were offered some opportunities to experience life as a student in the department through their involvement in a range of activities. These included participation in B. Ed. Year 1, 2 and 3 lectures, while also assisting Lecturers in preparation and organisation of materials for methodology sessions.

This varied experience would not have been possible without the support of Froebel students who acted as mentors throughout the 3-week placement. Jenny Egan, Jennifer Brady (Year 3), Jessica Doyle, Ciara Erke (Year 2), Karen Roche and Erin Browne (Year 1) formed the team who ably coordinated the students to and from lectures, answered queries and communicated with Laura Thornton, Student Liaison Officer in a highly professional manner at all times. A huge thank you to them and the staff in Froebel who made these weeks so memorable for all involved.

We wish the TY students continued success with their studies and look forward to welcoming them back to Froebel as student teachers in the future.



Jennifer Brady, Ciara Erke, Erin Brown and Karen Roche

Staff Publications, Presentations and Awards

It has been another busy few months here in the Froebel Department with a number of staff members producing publications and leading presentations. The following is but a few examples of the exceptional, ongoing work undertaken by the staff:

Dr Patricia Kennon has won a 2018 Maynooth University Teaching Award. The awards have been introduced to foster, recognise and reward excellence in teaching activity which has led to particularly enriching and worthwhile learning for students. These new awards aim to acknowledge the efforts of outstanding Maynooth University individuals or teams that contribute to excellence and innovation in teaching and learning across the University and enhance student learning

Dr Patricia Kennon has won a Research Fellowship at the Arne Nixon Center for the Study of Children's Literature for her project on the representation of sexualities in contemporary young-adult fiction. As part of this project, she will conduct archival research at the Center at the California State University, Fresno, USA. With an emphasis on diversity, the Centre's holdings include the largest LGBTQ collection of books for young people in the US



Arne Nixon Center
for the Study of
Children's Literature

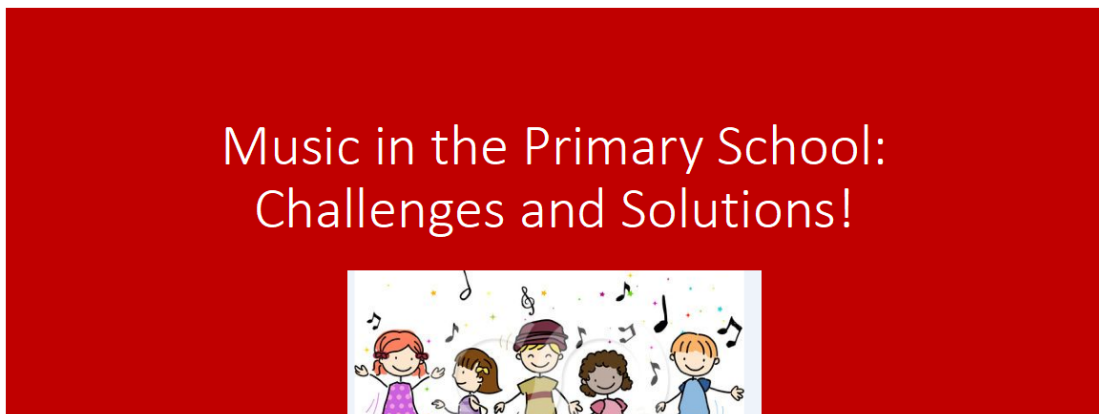


Dr Patricia Kennon has won a 2018 Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE) Network Funding Award for her work on inclusive children's and young-adult literature. As part of this research, she will be presenting a paper at the Researchers Exploring Inclusive Youth Literature conference in Glasgow in August 2019.

Lecturer, **Gráinne Deery**, has proven to be very busy over the past few months in leading a number of CPD workshops and presentations.

***Music in the Primary School: Challenges & Solutions*, CPD presentation.
Maynooth University, October 2018.**

***Composing in the Classroom*, CPD workshop.
Scoil an Linbh Íosa, Prosperous, Co. Kildare, January 2019.**



© 2018 MaynoothUniversity_Gráinne Deery



Gráinne has also been collaborating closely with **Dr. Máire Nic An Bhaird** recently through the recording of *An Damhán Alla agus an Mhíoltóg* (Douglas Hyde). Performed by Gráinne Deery (piano) & Sarah Keating (voice), presented by Máire Nic an Bhaird as part of an oral paper at the ACIS - American Conference for Irish Studies, Boston, March 2019.

Finally, Gráinne has been exploring Music Education in Action. B. Ed. Year 3 and PMEd Year 2 students explored the nine musical concepts in the curriculum.





Teach me AsIAM Evaluation Report Launch

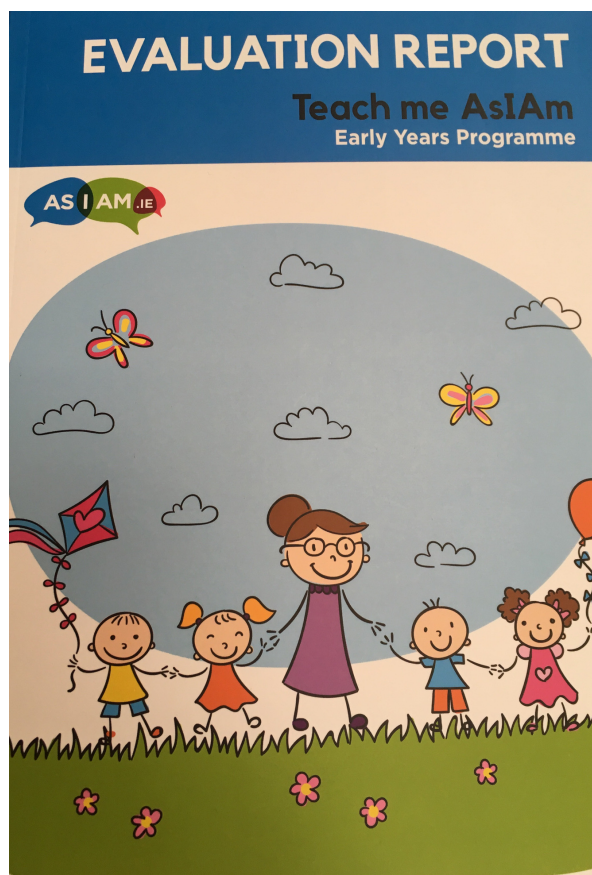
‘Language shapes attitudes and attitudes shape the world’

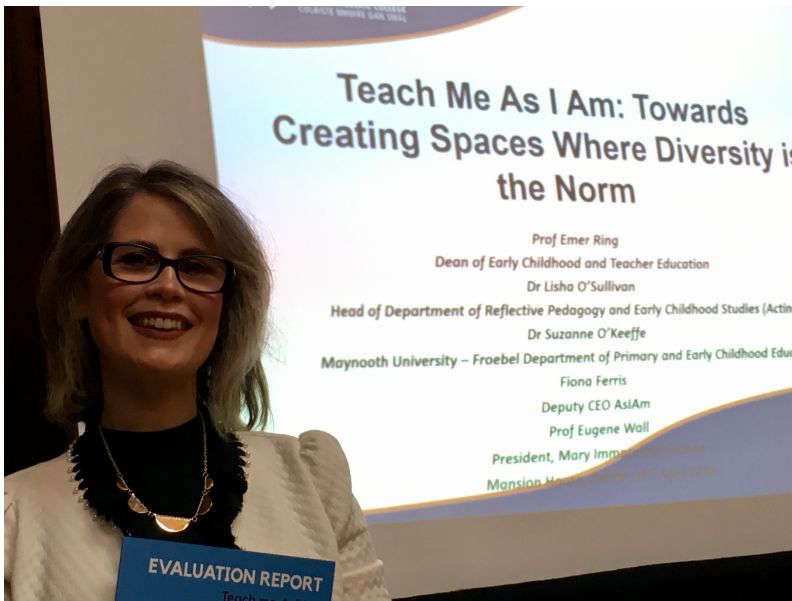
~ Prof. Emer Rind, MIC

Authors: Prof. Emer Ring, Dr. Lisha O’ Sullivan, Dr. Suzanne O’Keeffe, Fiona Ferris and Prof. Eugene Wall.

On Tuesday, 23rd April 2019, Dr Niall Muldoon, Ombudsman for Children, officially launched the Evaluation Report for the Teach me AsIAM Early Years Programme at the Mansion House, Dublin. The primary aim of this programme was to develop knowledge(s), practices and values to support early childhood teachers in cultivating inclusive environments for autistic children.

In January 2017, the number of children accessing the ECCE scheme surpassed the 100,000 mark for the first time, with 95% of eligible children attending a service under the ECCE scheme (Zappone 2017). This has led to an increase in the number of children with autism attending mainstream primary and secondary schools (Ring et al., 2018).





AsIAM, a not-for-profit charitable organisation, was concerned that early childhood teachers may not have accessed modules related to providing high-quality learning and care for autistic children during initial professional education or continuing professional development programmes. AsIAM responded to this need by developing the programme: Teach Me AsIAM

The researchers evaluated the programme’s effectiveness through the following methods:

- A pre-programme scoping exercise was carried out with 103 parents;
- 540 questionnaires from early childhood teachers were analysed;
- 583 early childhood teachers’ concepts of autism were analysed;
- Interviewed 6 early childhood teachers; and
- Visited 2 early learning and care services.

This report established that (1) the Teach Me AsIAM programme works, (2) not all early childhood teachers have the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to support autistic children, and (3) the Professional Education Continuum for early childhood teachers needs attention.

An examination of prospective primary school teachers' knowledge of fractions



Eddie Costello and Patsy Stafford presented a paper at the Association for Teacher Education in Europe Winter Conference in Braga, Portugal. The paper was entitled “An examination of prospective primary school teachers’ knowledge of fractions”. The research sought to answer the question ‘What knowledge of operations of fractions do prospective primary teachers bring to Teacher Education courses?’ Results showed that PPST’s were heavily reliant on rote memory skills and routinised procedures and showed little understanding of how and why these procedures work. The findings suggest that mathematics modules that PPST’s take during the education degree programme need to focus on the development of deep conceptual understanding of fractions as well as the ability to explain how and why procedures work.

Parental Involvement in Children's Primary Education

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and the National Parents Council (NPC) have jointly published Dr Leah O'Toole's literature review Parental involvement, engagement and partnership in their children's education in the primary years, written in conjunction with Dr Joan Kiely, Dr Deirdre McGillicuddy, Emma Zara O'Brien and Cliona O'Keeffe. The publication explores the many factors impacting on parents' capacity to engage with their children's education at primary level, and highlights the crucial role of relationship building, the importance of proactivity on behalf of schools and teachers, and the importance of understanding diversity when making policies to support family involvement. It also deconstructs the role of homework, finding no consistent evidence either for or against its use with primary age children, but suggesting that individualised homework that allows children the opportunity for independent learning may be most useful.

The literature review is the first part of a national project on parental involvement in children's primary education, funded by NCCA and NPC. Dr O'Toole presented its findings at this year's Education Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) conference in Sligo in April. Part 2 involves case studies of parental involvement in 5 primary schools in Ireland from the perspectives of parents, teachers, children and the Inspectorate. Part 3 incorporates the development of seminars for teachers and parents, to develop innovative approaches to homework that support oral language / teanga ó bhéal and the learning outcomes of the Primary Language Curriculum. Parts 2 and 3 will be presented to NCCA council and the NPC National Conference in June 2019.

The literature review is accessible at:
<http://www.npc.ie/publications/books>



Parental Involvement,
 Engagement and Partnership
 in their Children's Education
 during the Primary School Years

Leah O'Toole, Joan Kiely, Deirdre McGillicuddy,
 Emma Zara O'Brien and Cliona O'Keeffe

Student Publications, Presentations and Awards

On behalf of all the students and staff of the Froebel Department of Primary And Early Childhood Education, we would like to extend our congratulations to the following students for their fantastic achievements in being awarded their respective awards. Comhghairdeachas libh!



Winner of the Carlisle and Blake Award: **Sean Stafford**, pictured with Prof Aidan Mulkeen and Prof Marie McLoughlin. This prestigious award is awarded to the student achieving the highest marks in Education.



Winner of the Early Childhood Award: **Philip Cullen**, pictured with Prof Marie McLoughlin, Prof Aidan Mulkeen and Annette Kearns



Winner of the Vere Foster Award: **Holly Beggan**, pictured with Prof Marie McLoughlin, Prof Aidan Mulkeen and Fergal Brougham Vice President INTO. This prestigious award is awarded to the student achieving the highest mark on school placement.



Winners of the Froebel Gift Award: **Ali Egan** and **Sean Stafford**. Pictured with Prof Marie McLoughlin, Prof Aidan Mulkeen and Katherine Lally

Amhráin bheaga do na naíonáin

Léirigh na scoláirí sa tríú bliain go raibh spéis acu in amhráin bheaga i nGaeilge. D'éagraigh Gráinne agus Fiona go mbeadh aoichainteoir i láthair le saineolas ar na hamhráin seo.

I mí Aibreáin rinne Treasa Ní Ailpín seisiún dírithe ar amhráin bheaga do na naíonáin. Chuir sí béim ar an tábhacht a bhaineann le riachtanais teanga na bpáistí. Mhol sí do na scoláirí deiseanna don fhorbairt teanga a ghlacadh i rith an lae chomh maith. Chuige sin, bhí samplaí aici a bheadh oiriúnach agus na páistí ag súgradh sna hionaid spraoi nó amuigh faoin aer. Bhí deis ag gach duine páirt a ghlacadh i gcluichí fáinneacha agus muid ag canadh "Roille, roille, ráinne". Bhí an seisiún bunaithe ar na leabhair Bróga Nua agus Bróga Nua 2 atá foilsithe ag Áine Ní Shúilleabháin.



Drama Workshops!

Recently, B. Ed. Year 3 students were very fortunate to work in Drama workshops with leading experts in the field. The workshops, led by Aisling Byrne and Peter Hussey respectively, covered a broad range of topics with inclusive practice acting as the overall theme of the workshops. Here are some of the students in action during these fantastic workshops...



Pictured Left:
Aisling Byrne's
Drama Workshop



Pictured Right:
Peter Hussey's
Drama Workshop

Cloughjordan Ecovillage

DJ Hanley - B. Ed. Year 4

The B.Ed. Year 4 'Education for Sustainable Development' elective group travelled to Cloughjordan Ecovillage in Co. Tipperary this semester. The trip served as an opportunity for the students to engage in sustainable living and discuss the potential for this in their own lives. Through a broad range of workshops the group then discussed the implications of their learning in Cloughjordan Ecovillage on their classroom practices. Through these activities the group of students were able to approach the elective in an immersive way in a process-based learning suited for a subject such as Education for Sustainable Development.



Cloughjordan is an Ecovillage which aims to create a living example of a healthy and harmonious future while treading more lightly on Planet Earth. The Cloughjordan Ecovillage was set up in 1999 as a response to the limits to growth and the unsustainability of modern societies. In this ecovillage, the community is aiming to build a 'resilient, supportive community based on fairness and mutual respect'. The Ecovillage currently has over 100 residents living in high-performance green homes, over 20,000 newly planted trees and Ireland's largest renewable energy district heating system.

As part of this visit the group went on a tour of the Ecovillage and participated in a number of workshops over the course of the weekend. These workshops included a 'Food and fashion workshop' and a 'Zero waste workshop'.

This visit to Cloughjordan Ecovillage was a great opportunity to consolidate learning from lectures and gave the group of student ideas for the classroom as they begin their career as NQTs this September.

Academic Service Placement - A Shared Experience

Laura Thornton

Academic Service Placement (ASP) is an experiential learning pedagogy whereby students engage in contextualised learning experiences that are based on in the community. Using the community as a resource for learning allows the student teachers to widen their perspectives on education as well as developing the skills that enable them to work with other professionals and agencies in a collaborative, co-operative and collegiate manner. While on ASP students engage with a wide-range of societal issues such as multiculturalism, literacy, educational disadvantage, health and poverty. All B. Ed. Year 2 and PMEd Year 1 students have successfully completed ASP this year.

Reflection on ASP

A poem by B. Ed. Year 2 students:

*8 days looming ahead,
Filled us with dread.
7 days learning but unsure,
Amazed at what these people endure.
6 days as relationships grow,
There's still so much we don't yet know.
5 days I know my role,
Learning to love their heart and soul.
4 days half way there,
Guided by the respect and care.
3 days left, these children amaze me,
They're so much stronger than I will ever be.
2 days left, how time has flown,
My knowledge, perception and confidence has grown.
1 more day, I've come a mile,
I can't believe how much ASP made me smile.*

Ag Freastal ar Chúrsa Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht

Jack McCormack - B. Oid. B. 2

Dia daoibh, Is mise Jack! Táim sa dara bliain agus mar chuid den chúrsa d'fhreastail mé ar Choláiste Chú Chulainn i nGaoth Dobhair. Rinne mé cúrsa Gaeltachta agus thaitin an choicís go mór liom! Chuamar chuig an nGaeltacht ar an dara lá déag de mhí Aibreáin. Tugadh clár ama dúinn le linn an chúrsa ionduchtúcháin ar an gcéad lá. Bhí ranganna foirmeálta agam ó leathuair tar éis a naoi go leathuair tar éis a haon gach lá. Ansin, bhí rincí nó ceolchoirmeacha againn san iarnóin. Tráthnóna amháin, bhí an deis agam an t-amhrán "Tóg Mo Lámh" le Picture This a chanadh. Bhí imní an domhain orm, toisc gurb é mo chead uair ar an ardán! Ach, bhí an-chraic ann!

D'fhoghlaim mé go leor faoi cheantar Ghaoth Dobhair agus tá tuiscint níos fearr agam ar chanúint Uladh mar thoradh. Mar shampla, úsáideann muintir na háite "iontach" mar dhobhriathar i gcónaí agus iad ag caint, "bhí an fear sin iontach greannmhar!". Ina theannta sin, d'fhoghlaim mé go n-úsáidtear an focal "bomaite" in ionad "nóiméad" agus "barraíocht" in áit "a lán".

Bhí an seachtar againn (mise, Ciaran, Cillian, Colm, Eoghan, Paddy agus Tadgh) sna trithí oíche amháin nuair a d'fhoghlaimíomar míniú an fhocail "gasúir".



Bhí ár mbean an tí ag fuaimniú "gasúirí" an t-am ar fad ach ní raibh cliú dá laghad againn cad a bhí i gceist aici, toisc nach raibh an focal ar eolas againn. I ndáiríre, cheapamar go raibh sí ag úsáid an fhocail "glasraí" gach uair a rinne sí iarracht muidne a dhúiseacht.

Ar Dhomhnach Cásca, bhí lá saor againn. Bhí tuirse an domhain ar fhormhór na ndaoine agus mar thoradh, chodlaíomar go headra ar maidin. Is aoibhinn liom spórt faoin aer mar an ailleadóireacht. É sin ráite, níl a lán taithí agam.

The Diary of a NQT

Louise Brady - PMed Graduate 2018/2019

Your first year of teaching is a rollercoaster of a journey consisting of highs and lows. It is a year of new experiences, both expected and unexpected; a year of growth; and a year that you will always remember. The thoughts of standing in front of your very own class may seem both exciting and daunting right now, but here's a flavour of what to expect in your first year

Starting off:

You've gotten through your interview and have secured your very first job as a teacher. Congratulations, that's an unbelievable achievement! But what next? Should you gather resources, or start planning? Just relax. Enjoy your summer but begin to think of the kind of classroom you would like. What sort of environment do you want to create? How do you want the children to feel walking into their new classroom on their first day of school? That's what you should begin to think of. Everyone has an idea of what their dream classroom looks like.

Now it's time to begin thinking of what you need to create that classroom. I always imagined my classroom as a colourful, warm and welcoming environment, and that's what I tried to create. Organising noticeboards, an investigation table, and designing a cosy library and a Sacred Space, were all important elements to my dream classroom. Try to use as many resources from placement as possible! Don't start from scratch, you spent hours laminating, designing, cutting out signs, etc. Use them!

Two weeks before school starts, you will have an opportunity to move in and start to decorate. This is when you truly see what you do and do not need. Walking into a bare classroom can be daunting but take it in baby steps! Rome wasn't built in a day! Soon your classroom will slowly form, and the dream becomes a reality.

Meeting your class:

It is perfectly normal to feel nervous or that you're not ready. That's how I felt. My first day began with meeting my class and their parents in the school hall. I had been given third class, and the school I taught in is a senior school, so this was the first day in a brand-new



school, in a different class for the children and their parents. Needless to say, everyone was feeling a bit nervous. But that feeling of walking into YOUR classroom with YOUR class is unbelievable. When you get to that moment, just take it all in, be proud of yourself. I would recommend playing a few games, chatting with the children and getting to know them, talking them through the year, go through different important rules etc., but most importantly be yourself!

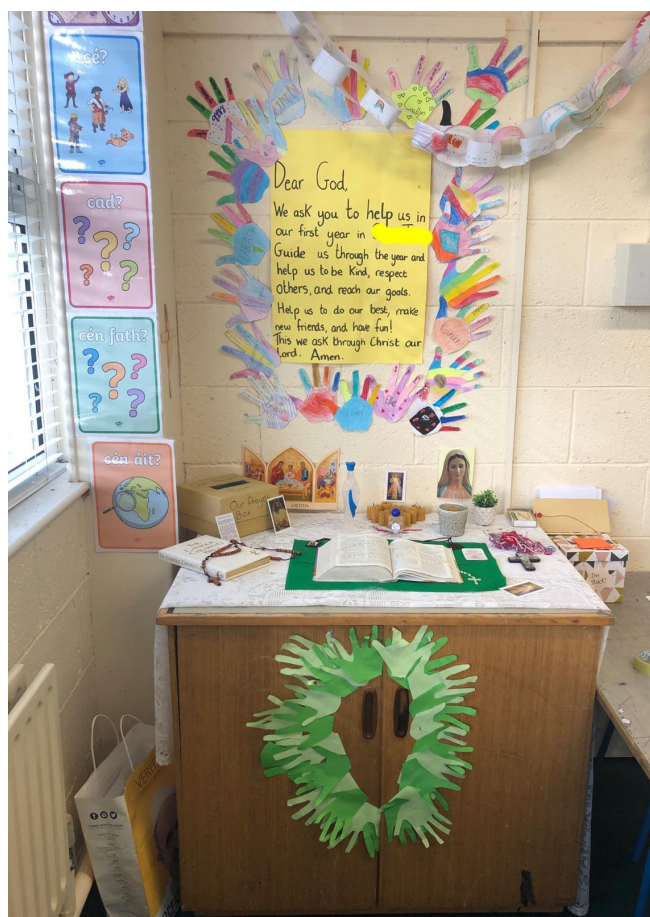
It's important to reflect on the type of teacher you want to be. What values are important to you? Do you have a behaviour or reward system that you want to use? Do you have a passion that you want to emphasise in your teaching? For me, I love Gaeilge and Music, so throughout the year, I tried to create a musical environment, learning through song, creating our own songs, and speaking as much Gaeilge throughout the day while also implementing CLIL into my lessons. This is your own class, teach them in a way that excites you and the children.

Get involved!

I would highly recommend getting involved in school activities and extra-curriculars. It's so important. If you play sport, sing, are interested in the environment or technology, then bring that to your school. Help out by training the children in your sport, help out with the choir, join the green school committee, join the ICT committee. That's exactly what I did, and it makes your job even more enjoyable. It also shows your commitment to the school. Don't be afraid to go that extra step

Droichead:

Droichead is fantastic. I loved every single minute of the process. The support, and advice given from the PST (which consists of three teachers from your school) was phenomenal. It was very enjoyable and allows for reflective approach to your teaching, and how you can improve and develop as a teacher. The whole process lasts roughly 6 months. This consists of monthly meetings with the PST, cluster meetings (max 3 of them, all two hours long) in your local education centre and going to a course that focuses on something you want to improve on in your teaching practice. Then you have observations, of you being observed and you observing other teachers in your school. You get to pick when you are observed, what lesson and what time, as well as what element you wish to focus on. After you're observed you discuss



how it went, if there is any way you can improve, or anything you would change; it's an enjoyable experience. Then when you observe other teachers, you can pick when and for what subject. So, you could go to 6th class to observe a Visual Arts lesson if you wanted to and felt like you would benefit from it.

The other aspect of Droichead is your Taisce folder. This is a folder that allows for further reflection, it can be a physical folder of ideas or worksheets or documents that you found helpful in your lessons. Alternatively, it can be online, a folder on your laptop, or like what I did, an Instagram (@muinteoir_lou) based on your journey and useful resources you came across. It's entirely up to you, document it whatever way or style you want.

Droichead is a fantastic support that takes away the stress and anxiety that is normally felt during teacher induction. It does not feel like you're going through placement again, it is really enjoyable. With most schools becoming Droichead schools next year, you should really look forward to the process.



*Pictured Left:
Our Mathematics and Literacy
Stations. The child really enjoy this
aspect to the classroom and it's super
easy to set up!*

Look after yourself!

Your first year will be tough at times but you really need to make sure that you look after yourself. In your first few weeks of teaching, I can guarantee that your voice will be sore or even almost gone at some stage. You NEED to drink plenty of water, stock up on your multivitamins (a berrocca a day keeps the colds away), get out and get some fresh air after work, meet up with friends... whatever you like to do, do it. It's all about balance. In your first year, you pick up EVERY bug, flu and cold imaginable. It's sad but ask any teacher and they will agree. It's perfectly normal to feel run down or tired sometimes, especially coming to the end of a term. So, treat yourself from time to time!

Parent Teacher Meetings:

By the time PT meetings come around, you will have well and truly settled into your routine of teaching. I would highly recommend using a template for the meetings, meaning that each child will have an A4 sheet with information you have gathered about their ability in Gaeilge, Maths, English, results from tests, any form of assessment you

have conducted but also, and quite importantly too, include their talents. They might be great at sports, or science or the Visual Arts, whatever it is, let their parents know! It's not all about the core subjects – Social skills and behaviour are important too. I would suggest that if problems arise, or you are concerned about a child in your classroom; don't leave it until the PT meetings to talk to the parents, invite them in for a chat straight away. Another element of the meetings that is important is time management! Keep your eye on the time, you don't want to delay other parents that are waiting to speak to you. Over those days, make sure you take some time for yourself... you'll need it after spending a few hours talking to parents!

Good luck!

Good luck on this exciting adventure and enjoy every moment. You've made it and you should be proud. Inspire, motivate, and bring excitement to your classroom. Be the teacher you want to be and don't be afraid to ask teachers for advice! You're a staff, a team, so work together, share resources and ideas, help one another! Have fun. Take each day one day at a time. You can have a very giddy class one day and a focused class another day. Nobody is perfect, it's all about learning from experience, mistakes. It's trial and error. Everyday you learn something new, and that's the way it should be. Laugh a little, not everything goes to plan and that's ok. Not every lesson is 'Instagrammable' and that's ok too. You will have good days and bad days, brilliant lessons and disastrous lessons, and that's teaching. So good luck as you start your journey and remember to have fun!

The Cuckoo Sticks

Alannagh Moylan & John Redmond

On the 28th March, we were treated to an evening of jazz from The Cuckoo Sticks, made up of our very own Laura Thornton singing, accompanied on bass by Dave.

Donations were made on the night in aid of The Froebel HOPE Partnership.

The night was a huge success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all those who attended, including parents of this year's volunteers, past students, Froebel staff and members of other faculties. The night kicked off with a drinks and food reception followed by the music session which consisted of songs from the four themes - Lust, Love, Loss and Life. The drama room was totally transformed into an unrecognisable music venue. The evening concluded with a special song in honour of the partnership along with a slideshow of pictures taken in Kolkata.

Thank you to Laura and Dave for the wonderful evening and a special thank you to all for their generous donations.



AsIAM: "Autism: Behaviour and Communication"

Annette J. Kearns

On April 4th, AsIAM, in association with the Froebel Department Early Years team, hosted Yvonne Newbold to speak on the topic 'Autism: Behaviour and Communication'. Yvonne Newbold, from the UK, is a writer, speaker, trainer and mother to a multiply disabled son who has profound learning disabilities. She has written *The Special Parent's Handbook*, covering every aspect of Special Needs Parenting and sharing all that she learnt about making life easier. Yvonne engages with healthcare professionals and others who work with families like her own, gently challenging them to think differently about their own work practices. The session was attended by approximately 240 people, including approx. 50 students from the BA in Early Childhood Teaching and Learning.



*Left-Right:
Annette J. Kearns, EY Team,
Froebel Dept.; Adam Harris,
Founder and Chief Executive
Officer, AsIAM; Patsy Stafford,
EY Team, Froebel Dept.;
Michael O'Flanigan,
Community Support Officer,
AsIAM; Deirdre Forde,
Froebel Dept.*

*Back Left-Right:
Deirdre Forde, Froebel
Dept.; Annette J. Kearns,
EY Team, Froebel Dept.;
Michael O'Flanigan,
Community Support
Officer, AsIAM;
Front:
Yvonne Newbold.*



Froebel Department, Maynooth University comes first in Europe! AgroCycle Kids wins 'Think Biobased Challenge'

Dr. Máire Nic An Bhaird & Laoise Ní Chléirigh

The Froebel Department, Maynooth University is a partner in the *AgroCycle Project*. The project takes a holistic approach to understanding and addressing how to make best use of the full range of waste streams associated with the agri-food industry. It is delivering the AgroCycle Protocol, a blueprint for achieving sustainable agri-food waste valorisation. The resultant AgroCycle Protocol will deliver sustainable waste valorisation pathways addressing the European policy target of reducing food waste by 50% by 2030, as well contributing to the wave of change that is occurring in China in relation to sustainability. This corresponds with the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

The Froebel Department, Maynooth University led by Dr Máire Nic an Bhaird have worked with the AgroCycle scientists and have produced AgroCycle Kids. AgroCycle Kids is delivering the message to the children of Ireland, Europe and China about Sustainable development education, the circular economy, 'agri-food waste' and 'waste valorisation'. The AgroCycle Kids Anna, Liam and Kate are seen in the photo with the edible straws that AgroCycle



made from rice bran. 'No more plastic' is their motto! The free online resources available to educators, children and the wider community came first in the European 'Think Biobased Challenge' competition for their innovative, modern, fresh resources.

<http://kids.agrocycle-platform.com/>

Maynooth University PhD student Laoise Ní Chléirigh has been disseminating the message of AgroCycle Kids to children in Ireland, Europe and China. 'What is important about this project is that the children, the future generation, are being consulted and given a voice. Scientists and children are working together for the greater good. Children are empowered and have started sharing and discussing the AgroCycle Kids message, thus working for societal change and for a better future for them and their families. They are driving home the concept that 'there is no away'' Laoise Ní Chléirigh 29th March 2019. Phil Hogan, European Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, praised Maynooth University's foresight into including the children in this important conversation. Please listen to Phil Hogan's video from Brussels delivered at the AgroCycle closing meeting in the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Backweston, Celbridge, Co. Kildare on Friday 29th March 2019.

<https://youtu.be/OgaAFleud8E>

Froebel Collaboration with the Computer Science Department

Tony Sweeney

As the Department of Education and PDST are currently exploring ways to introduce computer coding in primary schools, we were delighted to have the opportunity to work with Emlyn Hegarty-Kelly and students and colleagues from the Department of Computer Science as part of our B. Ed. Year 4 Digital Learning workshops in April.

This joint project was proposed by Emlyn who is responsible for the ongoing review of materials being used by their Coder Dojo club, which is a voluntary initiative to introduce children to coding. He recognised that our experienced fourth year students would be able to give feedback on the suitability and value of primary level materials, so during the first session, the students engaged in evaluating three different Scratch-based activities, supported by two visiting CS students.



Our second week's activity looked at the use of the popular and affordable Micro Bit technology and Emlyn was able to bring CS equipment into our classroom so every student had hands on programming experience. They then worked in pairs to programme Finch robots which was another new opportunity for the Froebel students. Following the session, Tony borrowed the Micro Bits for PMEd2 and then visited the Eolas building where he had the chance to introduce Marty the Robot and Bee Bot to the Research students there, not realising that a Chinese student would use this experience to face time her son in China for a live bedtime lesson with us!

We were delighted with this initiative and look forward to working with Emlyn and his CS colleagues again in the future.

Strathclyde-Maynooth Universities' Academic Exchange

Áine Moore - B. Ed. Year 4

This year as part of the Dissolving Boundaries Leadership Development Programme, an Academic exchange was organised between the Froebel Department, Maynooth University and University of Strathclyde, Glasgow. As part of this programme three trainee teachers from Strathclyde visited Maynooth University and in turn nine trainee teachers visited Strathclyde. As part of their visit to Ireland the Strathclyde students took part in a tour of the University, visited local school Scoil San Carlo Senior School, Leixlip where Seachtain na Gaeilge was in full swing. and also participated in a maths trail in Castletown House.

When visiting Strathclyde we toured the campus of the University and visited the resource room where teachers in training gather to plan and prepare lessons for placement. We also visited a South Park National School, a local national school. Here we observed a nursery classroom where a self-directed learning approach was being piloted, we also experienced the children's outdoor free-play lesson and spoke to the Nurture teacher in the school. She talked us through her role in assisting children in regulating their emotions.

Overall, it was a very enjoyable exchange and it was interesting to compare and contrast the Scottish and the Irish Education systems. We thank our generous hosts - Lucy, Jennifer and Jack - in Strathclyde for helping to co-ordinate the exchange and also thanks to Castletown House and all the staff in Scoil San Carlo Senior National School for facilitating the visit at such short notice.



Making a Difference in Our Local Community

Bláthnaid Glennon - B. Ed. Year 4

Earlier this year, myself and a group of Third and Fourth Year students from the B.Ed course were offered the chance to host a homework club for a group of children from the Traveller Community in the local boys' school. This was part of the Dissolving Boundaries initiative. We as a group thought that this was a wonderful opportunity and one which could not be missed. We could not wait to begin working on the project.

With guidance from Séamie O'Neill and Aoife Titley, we planned our approach and met with Donna, one of the children's sister. Donna was extremely helpful in highlighting the childrens' interests and learning needs. She was very supportive of the process and made some very insightful statements during our meeting.



Left-Right: Niamh McHugh, Rachel Scanlon and Bláthnaid Glennon (missing from picture are Seoighe Deniffe, Aoife Hayes, Rachel Tyrell and Emma Byrne)

The homework club ran for six weeks throughout March and April. The girls and I had a wonderful experience working with the four boys, and they benefitted from small group and individual support with homework. We as a team made use of active learning methodologies and also hosted games and sports when possible. We are very grateful for the support of class teacher and former Froebel student, Laura Kelly, who enabled this project to go ahead and was very supportive in hosting it. We gained so much from the experience and we are sure that the children did too.

It has been a pleasure to lead this project this academic year, and I have every hope that the links between the Froebel Department and the Kildare Traveller Action project will continue to flourish and grow in the coming years.

Purcell Champions 2018/2019 The Balance of Camogie and College!

Lea Sutton - B. Ed. Year 1

Our Maynooth University camogie team deserved and won the title of Purcell Cup champions for 2019. It is the first time that the college has won this title and it was a very special occasion for all involved. Four of our team are Froebel students: Second years Anna Breen from Carlow and Ellen Bolger from Dublin were joined this year by Clodagh Jackman from Wexford and Lea Sutton from Kildare.



We were the first team back training in September and the last team to finish up in February. The tone was set from September when we hit the field hard as the league was coming up fast. In the league, we defeated Div. 1 Ashbourne teams such as UCD and DCU but lost in the semi final to WIT. This was a great achievement for us as we showed our competitiveness for the championship. Not a week went by without training except the two weeks for Christmas. Lesson planning, school placement and the distance didn't affect the Froebelian students as full attendance for lectures and training continued.

All our work paid off when all roads led to Mallow on the 9th of February for the Ashbourne Cup weekend. After the heavy conditions and our tough opposition in the semi final against DIT, the management pulled out all the stops ensuring we were ready for the final the next day. Between chiropractors, ice baths and steam rooms, we were well recovered for the final.

We took to the field for the final against NUIG. At the end of the sixty minutes, MU were victorious. As we celebrated with one another, our families and the management, we were ushered to the front steps to let our captain and man of the match, Linda Bolger, lift that cup with all her might. It is a memory that is cherished and history was made for Maynooth University. Captain Linda Bolger and Clodagh were both nominated as best athlete and best fresher athlete for the college in 2018/2019. Not only did the camogie team win the All Ireland, we also won best club in the college for 2018/19!

Gaeilge i ndiaidh na hOllscoile

Sinéad Ní Scollaigh - B. Oid. B. 4

Dia dhaoibh! Is mise Sinéad Ní Scollaigh agus is mac léinn na ceathrú bliana mé! Tá sé deacair le creidiúnt go bhfuil mé ag scríobh m'alt dheireanach le haghaidh Machnamh agus go mbeidh mé ag baint mo chéim amach i gceann cúpla mí! Ag an bpointe seo sa bhliain, is minic a dhéanaim machnamh ar na hathruithe móra atá ag tarlú i mo shaol le saol na hollscoile i mo dhiaidh agus an saol oibre os mo chomhair. Ceann dena ceisteanna is mó a bhí do mo chrá ná conas gur féidir liom mo chuid Gaeilge a úsáid agus a fhorbairt an bhliain seo chugainn nuair nach bhfuil mé mar mhac léinn nó páirteach leis an gCumann Gaelach ar champas, Cuallacht Cholmcille, a thuilleadh? Táim ag déanamh staidéir ar an nGaeilge le 17 bliain anuas agus tá grá ollmhór agam don teanga nach bhfuil mé ag iarraidh a chailliúint.

Labhair mé le cairde liom ó Chuallacht Cholmcille mar gheall ar an mbuairt seo agus nach mise a bhí curtha ar mo shuaimhneas nuair a dúirt siad liom go raibh an bhuairt díreach céanna acu! Rinneamar cinneadh díreach ansin dul i ngleic leis an bhfadhb seo a bhí ag cur imní orainn faoin todhchaí agus bheartaigh muid ar cuntas Instagram darb ainm Gaelgals a bhunú cár mbeidh muid ag plé réimse leathan d'ábhair trí mheán na Gaeilge.



Tá seachtar ban san iomlán mar chuid dena Ghaelgals; Rachel Nic An Rí (B. Oid. B.4), Aoife Ní Oisín (B. Oid. B.4), Clíódhna Ní Dhúfaigh, Alswyn Ní Aonghusa Ní Dhúill, Dúlra Ní Áinle, Róisín Ní Mhaoláin agus mé féin. Tá spéiseanna difriúla againn uilig idir ceol, polataíocht, spóirt, taisteal agus garraíodóireacht! Is

iontach an rud é seo! Ciallaíonn sé go mbeidh rud spéisiúil ann do gach duine faoin spéir. Tá níos mó ná 400 leantóirí againn anois agus táimid ar fad ar bis go bhfuil deis cruthaithe againn ár gcuid Gaeilge a choinneáil agus a fhorbairt i ndiaidh na hollscoile! Má tá an bhuairt céanna agaibh faoin nGaeilge nó ábhar ar bith i ndiaidh na hollscoile, mholfaínn daoibh dul i ngleic leis agus tús a chur le ardán cár féidir leat do chuid spéiseanna a phlé agus a léiriú! Níl ort slán a rá le do chuid spéiseanna agus tú ag dul amach chuig saol na hoibre in aon chor! Má aithníonn sibh an deis rud éigin nua agus taitneamhach a dhéanamh, tapaigh an deis agus déan é!

Intervarsities Basketball 2018/2019

Sarah Devine - B. Ed. Year 2



This year, the Maynooth Ladies' team won the Division 2 League Final, beating Waterford I.T. 69-52. The game was in Oblates Hall, Inchicore on the 12th March. To reach the final, the ladies beat Athlone I.T., Sligo I.T. and Tallaght I.T. both home and away. The ladies also attended the Varsities Competition held in the National Indoor Arena and I.T. Blanchardstown on the 5th, 6th and 7th of April. Rachel Hynes, Sarah Devine and Orla Keoghegan competed throughout the year!

Well done ladies, and best of luck next season!

Froebel Week 2019

The annual Froebel week proved to be a massive success again this year with high levels of learning and engagement across a range of well-organised workshops, day visits, class trips, talks and certificate days. Go raibh mile agaibh uilig a chabhraigh leis an eagraíocht - a stellar effort indeed! The following articles and pictures are but a flavour of the fantastic work carried out by all involved recently.



Pictured: B. Ed .Year 2 students and some of their selfies during the 'Selfie Outdoor Treasure Hunt'. Many thanks to Katherine Lally and Dr. Suzanne O'Keefe for organising the hunt!

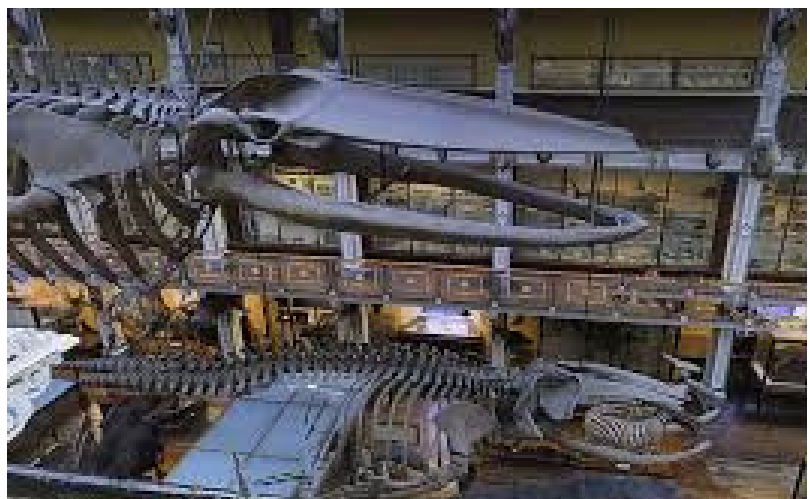
The Natural History Museum

Shauna McKinley - B.Ed. Year 3

As we entered the 162-year-old Natural History Museum and were greeted by the enormous skeletal structure of the great deer, we were all in awe of the sheer proportion and extent of the exhibits on show. In all, the museum hosts 10,000 animals from the various complexities of life on earth, which are on display in the Victorian cabinets or so called "cabinets of curiosity". The museum has 2 million animals in storage, 1 million of which are insects.

Our welcoming and informative guides enlightened us on how the dead zoo acquires its animals, through donations from other zoos, as well as the workshops and hands on activities that are run throughout the year for primary school classes, all which are free of charge.

There are exciting times ahead for the dead zoo, as the wonder cabinet is expected to be on display from June and the building is expected to receive millions of euro in funding in order to make it wheelchair accessible on all floors and re-open the second and third floor for public access.



Managing Challenging Behaviour Workshop

Kate Conniffe - PMEd. Year 2

On Tuesday the 8th of May PMEd Year 2 students were lucky to have Tomás Dúlaing in to speak to us about managing challenging children. We engaged in group discussion and worked together to problem solve some challenging behaviour situations. We learnt that it is important to have a relationship with challenging children as this helps us to better understand and help them.

Tomás told us about the best way to approach a challenging situation: be calm, think about the best thing to do and then decide- never lose it! It is the behaviour, not the child. A final important lesson we learnt is that "the power of consequence lies in its certainty". As teachers we must be absolutely consistent and give children responsibility over their behaviour.

Ciorcal Comhrá

Aoife Ní Oisín - B. Oid. B. 4

I rith Seachtain Froebel i mbliana, d'eagraigh mé féin agus Sinéad Ní Scollaigh ciorcal comhrá don cheathrú bliain chun ullmhú do na scrúdú cainte. Bhainamar an-sult as an taithí agus bhí maidin iontach, thaitneamhach ag cách. Bhí gach duine ag ithe brioscaí agus ag labhairt as Gaeilge. Rinneamar ár ndícheall ciorcal spraiúil a chruthú. D'imríomar cluichí eagsúla-líon na bearnaí, tomair an focal agus cluiche comhcheangal focal chun ár bhfoclóir a fhorbairt.

Bíonn gach duine faoi bhrú agus neibhíseach maidir leis na scrúduithe, go mór mór faoin mbéaltrialail. Thug an ciorcal comhrá seans dúinn ár nGaeilge a chleachtadh i mbealach suaimhneach, gan strus, lenár gcomhaoise, agus ár nGaeilge a chleachtadh le chéile i modh nádúrtha. Is deis iontach é Seachtain Froebel do Mhic Léinn chun rudaí a chruthú agus a eagrú iad féin. Mholfainn do gach bliain ciorcal comhrá a eagrú roimh na béaltrialacha as seo amach

GAA Foundation Level Course

Ciara Finn & Heather Hudson - PMEd. Year 2

On the 9th May 2019, PMEd. Year 2 and B. Ed. Year 4 undertook in the GAA Foundation Level GAA course and a child safeguarding course with Kildare GAA. In the morning we were welcomed by Declan O'Toole from Kildare GAA who introduced us to some very fun warm up games that we could use with children which included 'Foxes and Rabbits', 'Rats and Rabbits' and 'Musical Footballs'. These morning activities really woke us all up and the events got very competitive!



In the afternoon we worked on our GAA skills with David Murphy and Tadhg Fennin. We split into groups of four and each group was given a GAA skill to teach to the rest of the group.

Finally, after lunch, we finished up with a child safeguarding course which was facilitated by Dudley Farrell. We all really appreciated this, as it is vital if we ever want to train a team that we have this course done.

A big thank you to Kildare GAA and to Dudley Farrell for a very enjoyable day!



Outdoor Adventure Activities with PMEd. Year 1

Tony Sweeney

The 31 students arrived on the South Campus for an outdoor activities session on Tues 7th May during Froebel week, probably glad to be speaking in English again after their béaltrial that morning.

All the groups managed to locate at least one geocache during their campus exploration task, and following that they bravely engaged in a number of blindfold activities, including a short but scary rope trail in the woods. Their various senses were challenged in an unsighted tree identification activity before they finished with a cooperative sitting circle. They definitely needed to collaborate effectively here to sit down on the job. We were glad to have finished in good time before the rain forecast finally arrived, so we were perhaps luckier than the groups who ventured out on the Wednesday!



Kabaret for Kolkata 2019

Laura Thornton

This year, the now, annual Kabaret for Kolkata went to 'The Flicks', celebrating songs from a wide range of dearly loved films of the past and present. A wonderful showcase of Froebel talent, students and staff, brought the Roost, Maynooth to life on Wednesday 8th May with all funds raised going to support the Froebel HOPE Teacher Education Partnership. The night was filled with a mix of duo's and trio's, performing a tremendous mix of slow and fast numbers, all expertly introduced by Jack McCormack who hosted the evening with great professionalism.

The house band, Jamie Murray, Matthew Lowth, Rachel Walsh and Eoin Casey, were delighted to have Froebel Graduate Niall Mc Grath back on drums for the night, helping to keep everyone on and in time! All performers were especially grateful to have the fabulous support our amazing backing singers, Aoife Ní Mhurchú, Donna Reilly-Parrish and Eileen Dineen on board to help ease the nerves and seamlessly fill the gaps when needed. Congratulations to all involved and best of luck to the group travelling to Kolkata in June 2019.



Trad musicians (L-R):

Aela Mc Gowan, Aoife Hession, Áine Roche, Eva Cullen and Darragh Hammel.

GoQuest Class Trip

Edel Fahy

As part of Froebel Week 2019, Year 2 had the opportunity to participate in the GoQuest Indoor Challenge Zone. Located in Finglas Industrial Estate. GoQuest contains twenty-eight unique challenge rooms split over physical, skill and mental challenges. One student describes the experience in more detail explaining that they, “were split into five groups of four, shown a very informative video and then battled against each other over the course of ninety minutes to see which team could secure the most points”. Students really enjoyed participating in this exciting and adventurous activity as is evidenced by their very positive feedback:

“I really enjoyed GoQuest as it was a chance to unwind at the end of a long year, a chance to have a bit of fun and to get to know my classmates better. It was nice to be able to do some fun and sometimes difficult challenges and to improve our teamwork skills by doing them together, while also making sure no one was left out”.



“I really enjoyed the GoQuest activity - it really encouraged team work and helped develop our friendships further within the course. We were split into groups of five and we were put into challenge rooms and had to figure out how to solve a particular problem. One of the most enjoyable things we have done in the course yet!”.

St Audeon's Music Event



St Audeon's in Cook Street is one of Dublin's oldest schools with a long history. Indeed, Peadar Kearney, author and composer of *Amhrán na bhFiann* is a past pupil. As part of Froebel Week 2019, a group of Froebel students, led by Darragh Hammell, B Ed Year 3, visited the school to collaborate on a singing project based on Dublin songs from the locality with a musical score created by Gráinne Deery.

Also participating in the event was past pupil of the school, Des Geraghty, who has translated many famous Dublin songs into Irish, including the Auld Triangle and Raglan Road. One of the teachers in the school, Geoff Finan, acted as MC. Geoff also happens to be a spoken word artist and poet. Once the song-singing was over, the pupils of St Audeon's taught our students a few dance moves in their Music and Dance Zone in the playground. Our thanks to the Principal of the school, Froebel Graduate, Eilish Meagher and all her staff for a warm welcome.

Kildare Traveller Action Project

Mary-Louise Wallace - B.Ed Year 3

Our visit to Black Lion Halting Site was an insightful experience, that bridged the gap between Traveller children, and future teachers. Upon arrival at the halting site, we were given a very warm welcome by Ann and her daughters, and spent some time playing with and getting to know the children.

The atmosphere was one of mutual respect. Ann's daughter Donna showed us a quilt with a variety of symbols that represent different elements of the Traveller culture, such as music, the Holy Spirit and a beady pocket. Ann explained that beady pockets were a tradition from her mother's era. They are a type of apron on which buttons or other items are sewn. These items may be good luck charms or religious symbols, for example.

Both Ann and Donna emphasised how much the Traveller culture has changed from generation to generation. A quilt made by Traveller children would display very different symbols than the ones on the quilt we were shown. For example, in the past education was not valued at all. However, this attitude is beginning to change, she believes. I am very grateful to have had this opportunity to visit the halting site, and learned a lot from going there, in a meaningful manner.

