

*An update on the Froebel Department of
Primary and Early Childhood Education*

Machnamh



10th Edition



**2022/23
Academic Year**

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Foreword

Le Niamh Fortune

A warm welcome to this edition of
Machnamh.

It is hard to believe that we have reached the end of this academic year. It has been a very productive one. We have lots to celebrate in 2023. On the 1st September 2023, we will mark ten years of the Froebel Department in Maynooth University and 80 years of Froebel in Ireland. Two important milestones!



Thank you to the students involved in this edition of Machnamh. To all our students graduating this year, I wish you well on the next stage of your journey. Remember your Froebelian values and principles as you embark on the next steps. To our returning students we look forward to a new and exciting year ahead. I hope all staff and students enjoy a restful summer.

Niamh

Preface and Acknowledgments

Fáilte romhaibh!

A warm welcome to our new BEd, PMEd, MEd, BA and PDIS students to this year's issue of Machnamh.

It has certainly been great to have a more normal year in the department this year for staff and students.

We hope you have had a joyful experience in the Froebel department this year.

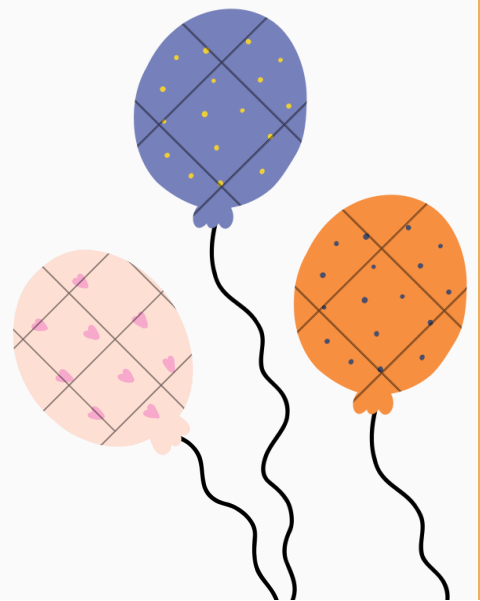
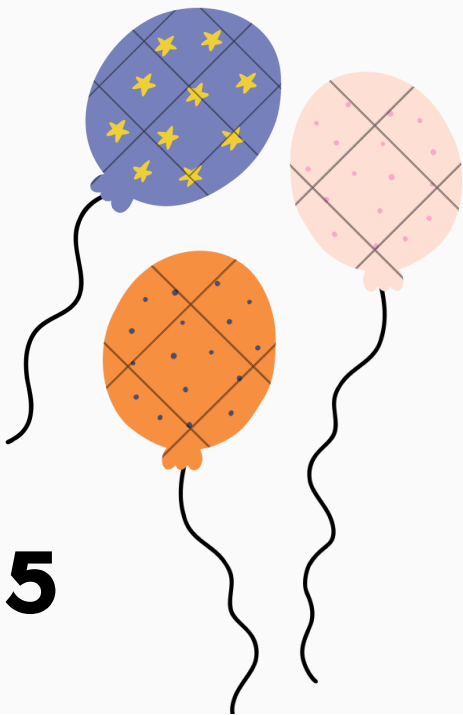
We would like to extend our thanks to Séamie Ó Néill who offered us advice and guidance throughout the creation of Machnamh.

We wish you all the best for the coming years and we hope you enjoy reading this issue!

*Amy Mc Donagh, Michelle Forkin,
Emma Walsh and Giedre Motiejunaite
(B.Ed. 3 22/23)*



Froebel turns 80!



The Story of Froebel in Maynooth.

9



Froebel College of Education was established. It was located in Blackrock, Co Dublin.



Staff from both colleges began assessing their libraries to identify what items would be moved to Maynooth. 3000 items were agreed for integration.

1

1782

2

1943

3

2010

4

2012

5

September 2013



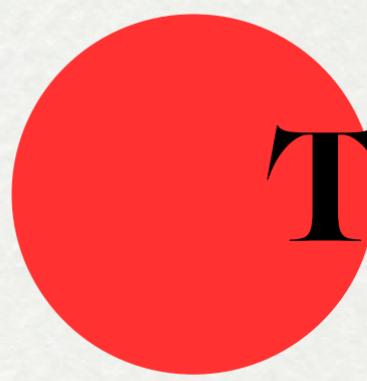
Friedrich Froebel was born. He was a German educator and became the founder of Kindergarten.



It was announced that Froebel College of Education would merge with Maynooth University.



Froebel College became the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education. It is the first teacher education college to be located on a university campus.



Staff
Teaching
&
Learning

International Froebel Conference

The Froebel Department hosted the 10th Biennial International Froebel Conference in June in Maynooth University, which was a great honour. It was a huge success with over 45 research sessions and over 100 delegates.

Professor Tina Bruce delivered a keynote on day three of the conference. 'Freedom with Guidance: a Froebelian approach to play' was the title of her keynote and it was delivered to a large crowd.

Professor Bruce spoke about the importance of the adult being a sensitive companion in the play scenario. She explained that play exerts no pressure on the young child and how important it is for the adult to tune into and observe the children. She reminded us how natural it is for children to seek difficulties and obstacles in their play, that play helps children to do things in advance of real life (Bruce, 2023).

I know many of our students have read Professor Bruce's work so it was wonderful to have her here in Maynooth.



Niamh Fortune and Professor Marie Mc Loughlin with Professor Tina Bruce



Professor Tina Bruce with students Hannah Delaney, Eimear Colreavy, Raina Byrne, Danella Curdoglo



International Froebel Society

CHILDHOOD **TODAY**

A Froebelian Perspective

10th Biennial Conference hosted by
Maynooth University
June 15th, 16th & 17th, 2023



An interview with Lorraine Crean

Meet the newest staff member in the Froebel Department

What made you choose Froebel?

Even though I didn't attend Froebel as an undergraduate student, I've always been attracted to the philosophy and principles of Froebel education. Many of my teaching colleagues over the past twenty years spoke in a very positive way of their experiences of teacher training education in Froebel College which was then located in Blackrock. Having hosted Froebel trained student teachers in my classroom on several occasions, I was always struck by their ability to facilitate child led play and learning. It has been a dream of mine for some time now to work as a teacher educator and the Froebel Department was the perfect fit for me!



What has been your favourite thing about teaching in the department?

I have loved every aspect of the job this year. I love planning lectures and seminars and engaging with student teachers. I have also enjoyed the opportunity to visit students on school placement and see the content from lectures 'come to life' in the classroom. I enjoy making links between theory and practice during lectures, whereby students can take research and theory and plan for effective learning experiences. I particularly love all things related to language and literacy teaching as I truly believe that every lesson is a language lesson! I see literacy as the means to develop all aspects of learning. I'm always happy when I see students engage in lectures and have fun in the process of that engagement.

Describe your pathway that led you to Froebel.

I completed a Master of Education in EAL and migrant children's home language maintenance. From that I became more involved in research and continued to meet other researchers. I then worked in PDST as a Language Advisor before moving to work with the NCCA on the development of the Primary Language Curriculum

I was asked to deliver some guest lectures in various teacher training colleges, and I absolutely loved that work. I decided to take on a PhD in 2015 and when I completed that I decided to return to teaching in the primary school. I enjoyed this for two years before deciding that the time was right to move into the area of lecturing and teacher education.

One word of advice for student teachers or older self, what would it be

I think it's so important to realise that as teachers, we are constantly learning and evolving with societal changes, new research and changing times. As a newly qualified teacher, I worried that I didn't have the same knowledge as more experienced teachers. I think it's important to have confidence and know that experience comes with time. I think the teacher/child relationship is the most important aspect of being a teacher. When the environment feels safe, learning happens for children. Finally, I think it's important to realise that all teachers have their own unique strengths, and we shouldn't compare ourselves to others!

Lines to Illuminate

VERA MCEVOY, ARTIST IN RESIDENCE



Photo Credit: Mark Flagler / Flagler Films

Lines to Illuminate was a collaborative temporary art exhibition, installed in the garden of School of Education House, outside Room SE007 which was unveiled on Thursday 9th March 2023. Vera McEvoy, the Artist in Residence, Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education collaborated with the B.Ed. Year 3 students to develop this artwork.

Lines to Illuminate consisted of 90 colourful textile lanterns displayed from the branches of the trees. Each lantern was made from a recycled plastic 2 litre bottle, loose weave linen fabric, wool, thread, buttons and contained an LED bulb and a coin battery. Each artwork varied slightly in dimensions, approximate height of 20cm and diameter of 12cm each.

These lanterns include concept lines 'drawn', developed and stitched in thread and wool, in response to specific ideas and environments, individually relevant to each student.

Laura Thornton opened the exhibition on the night. Vera discussed her residency work and how her practice has developed since the commencement of the residency in Froebel.

A big thank you to the students involved in Lines to Illuminate for their commitment, creative skills and fun during the project. A special thanks to Laura Thornton, Triona Stokes, and all staff in Froebel Department for their support throughout the residency.

Sincere thanks to all who attended opening night, on a very wet and windy Thursday. For more information on this artwork, or to chat to Vera on the residency, visit her in her Open Studio on Wednesdays between 10am and 2pm in Room SE007.

**SUPPORTED BY THE ARTS COUNCIL OF
IRELAND; YOUNG PEOPLE, CHILDREN
AND EDUCATION RESIDENCY.**



An update on the works of Dr. Patricia Kennon

MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY TEACHING AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)

Patricia is the project lead for a 2022/23 Maynooth University Teaching and Learning Fellowship project, 'Maynooth University Teaching and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)'. This is the first MU trans-disciplinary, trans-faculty research on MU teaching and learning's engagement with SDGs.

This Fellowship project will explore ways to increase visibility of MU teaching and learning relating to SDGs and to further support and embed SDGs in MU curricula and programmes at all levels to ensure learners acquire knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions to promote and advance sustainable development.

A key Fellowship output will involve the creation and dissemination of Guidelines for Supporting MU Teaching and the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals in May 2023 designed to support and empower MU Departments, Schools, and faculty in their current and future teaching with relevant SDGs.



THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF YOUNG ADULT LITERATURE

Dr. Patricia Kennon was recently appointed as the General Editor of The International Journal of Young Adult Literature: <https://www.ijyal.ac.uk/>.

This is the first-ever journal dedicated to scholarship on young-adult (YA) literature. The journal aims to support and enhance the international YA community and to promote rigorous engagement with YA that recognises the field's complexity, diversity, and expansiveness.

Dr Kennon has also become a member of Teaching Council Research Engagement Group 2022-2024. This national Group supports the Teaching Council's strategic planning and promotion of engagement by teachers in and with research as well as promoting research between teachers and HEI based researchers.



Bringing the inside out and encouraging the outside in : Mindful walks and S.P.H.E

WHAT IS MINDFUL WALKING?

Just as mindfulness is the practice of bringing your attention to the present moment, mindful walking is the practice of becoming aware of your surroundings and how your body and mind feel while moving. When we teach mindfulness to children, we equip them with tools to build self-esteem, manage stress, and skilfully approach challenges they may encounter. Mindful walking is an active form of meditation so there is no sitting involved and is a great way to introduce children to meditation.

HOW DO MINDFUL WALKS CONNECT TO THE FORTHCOMING CURRICULUM (2025)?

Mindful walking sits comfortably among the seven key competencies of the forthcoming curriculum (2025), namely 'Being well', 'Being creative' and 'Being an active learner'. These key competencies are linked further to Aistear's (2009) four interconnected themes of Well-being, Identity and Belonging, Communicating, and Exploring and Thinking. Within the new curriculum, there are eight overarching principles of learning, teaching and assessment.



These principles convey what is valued in primary and special education and what lies at the heart of high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment in the primary curriculum. The outdoors is specifically referred to in one principle, under the title of 'Learning Environments'. This principle states that children's learning 'is shaped and nurtured by the physical environment, indoors and outdoors. These diverse environments encourage children's independence, and stimulate and support their learning across the curriculum.' (NCCA, 2018: 6).

Here are a number of ideas to try with your class :

1. Silly Walking: watch Monty Python "Ministry of Silly Walks". Encourage the class to walk like themselves, then turn up the silliness to level 1, 5, 10 and back down again. It encourages more self-awareness.

2. Walk As If: walk as if you've just won the lottery; walk as if you've had too much sugar; walk as if your team just lost; walk as if you're in a hurry; walk as if you're going through the dragon's lair (thank you for the suggestion year 2); walk as if you're going into an exam you have not studied for.

3. Balancing Acts: walk a tightrope; walk on thin ice; try to walk with something balanced on your head (e.g., pencil case, copybook); balance an egg (hardboiled!) and spoon (or something similar) and walk.

4. 5 Senses Walk: explain to the class that they are on a safari, looking for animals that crawl, fly or walk, listening for sounds, and feeling the weather. Explain to them that they have to be quiet and alert.

We want to gently guide each child to turn on their senses, they can engage their "super-senses" to make it fun.

a. Write down 5 things I can see, 4 things I can hear, 3 things I can touch, 2 thing I can smell and 1 thing I can taste.

5. Silent walking: listening for sounds.

6. Simple walking for the sake of walking.



Picture: walkway at the back of St. Patrick's Seminary,
South Campus, Maynooth University

“Wellbeing provides structured opportunities for children to be as physically and emotionally well and healthy as they can be. This happens by building their motivation and commitment to physical activity and to inform healthy lifestyle choices.” (NCCA, 2023: 18).

We caught up with a Froebel College alumnus, Ms. Aoife McWeeney.

*"It was such a wonderful experience to be part
of such a forward thinking College of
Education."*

I began my Bachelor in Education in Froebel College,
Blackrock in 2002.

Meeting new and now lifelong friends is the main
thing that I took from my time in Froebel. Although
the thoughts of moving to college were daunting to
begin with, I was put at ease very quickly with the
homely feeling.

The student body was small therefore friendships
were easily formed and everyone knew each other
by name. The staff were welcoming and supportive
and gave us the tools to help the children become
active in their own learning.

I have great memories of our methodologies lectures
where we were always active, exploring and playing.

Preperation for teaching practice is another
memory that comes to mind.

The rush to the library to get that book someone
spoke about, the reams of photocopying (often
never looked at again!), the sheer panic when the
floppy disc was misplaced, or worse, left in the IT
room and the preparation of posters with my
trusty velcro!

**Aoife McWeeney,
Acting Principal in Carn National
School
Gurteen, County Sligo.**



*"We would have great
fun putting ourselves
in the children's shoes
in order to fully
understand how
learning takes place."*

MU, Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education

Invites you to attend the launch of



‘CAPTURED MOMENTS’

by Vera McEvoy, Artist in Residence

When: Wednesday 3rd May

Where: SE 001

Time: Reception 5.15pm

Launch: 5.30pm

A conversation with Vera will close the evening



**Maynooth
University**
National University

the arts
council
chambers

funding

Social Justice and PE

Social Justice through TPSR (Teaching Personal & Social Responsibility) in PE.

TONY SWEENEY

Keen to look at improving my practice through action research, and following other recent self-study projects in Meaningful PE and Value Orientations in PE, I was honoured to be invited to work with an international team looking at how we can teach through, about and for Social Justice using the TPSR instructional model in PE.

Bed 3 Group C and I used our PE workshops in the 2nd semester to explore how this approach to teaching PE developed by Don Hellison since 1985 could be used to facilitate social justice learning in PE.

The model involves a five stage learning plan (Relational Time, Awareness Talk, Physical Activity, Group Meeting and Reflection) and we tried to consider the strands of oppression which would have already been familiar to the students through their DICE modules etc.

"Practical experiences including folk dance, gymnastics and cooperative challenges enabled us to consider matters such as gender, religion and socio-economic differences in the PE context."

We sought to look at how we moved towards gradual empowerment through different personal spaces of respect, cooperation, integration and helping others towards transfer of learning. The Froebel students remarked on the realisation that it was indeed possible to integrate social justice in physical education and will be more ready to embrace the integrated nature of the key competencies outlined in the Primary Curriculum Framework (NCCA, 2023).

The research project continues currently with PE students in Deakin University in Melbourne and a Spanish co-researcher will be starting in the autumn semester in the University of Limerick before the next group follows their programme in Memorial University, Newfoundland, Canada. The work of the Froebel students is significant in the fact that their generalist primary studies give them a unique knowledge and insight into social justice matters in the primary classroom.

Míle buíochas libh go léir!

Global Citizenship Education in the Froebel Department

Introduction :

It was another eventful year for DICE/ Global Citizenship Education in the Froebel Department! Many thanks to all the Froebel staff and students who engaged with the various events and initiatives that we organised. And of course a massive thank you to Irish Aid for their continued funding of DICE/ GCE in our department. 2023 marks the 20 year anniversary of Froebel's involvement in DICE and we look forward to a celebration of this in the first semester of the new academic year. It has been heartening to see a return to so many face-to-face events and volunteering initiatives this year, please see below for a snapshot of our activities! And don't forget you can learn more about our work in this area by following us on Twitter - @MUFroebelDICE.

Aoife Titley

Lecturer in Global Citizenship Education



Professional Learning Opportunities

The following CPD sessions were organised for staff and students:

Introduction to Black Studies: In February, DICE funded an online webinar in conjunction with the Institute of Antiracism and Black Studies. The session was facilitated by Dr. Ebun Joseph and covered such content as Black intellectual thinkers and thought, Black Political Activism and movements, Black women in history, the languages of Africa and African business, trade and economics: power, inequality and dominance - challenging the 'aid' narrative. Feedback from students was very positive, they enjoyed learning about how to infuse multiple perspectives into their teaching and hearing from so many different speakers.

Teaching about Race Module: We were very grateful to DICE for funding further CPD sessions for students, this time a three part series looking at how to explore the complex issues of race and racism in the classroom. These workshops were well attended by Froebel final year students across the B.Ed and P.MEd and content focused on storytelling/ teaching tools and how to approach difference in the classroom. Thanks so much again to Dr. Ebun Joseph who has supported so much of our anti-racism work this year.

Irish Aid Workshop: Jennie from Irish Aid came in to B.Ed Y2 students in April to give an overview of the work of Irish Aid in partner countries in the Global South. She also gave us plenty of ideas of how to use the SDG's in our teaching and learning. Thanks Jennie for the input and resources!

GOAL Workshop: In April, GOAL Education Officer Darragh Wynne came in to talk to PMEd students about the SDG's and give some ideas of suitable resources for use in the classroom with 3rd- 6th class.

Black History Month: This year we celebrated Black History Month for the first time! Victoria Eniola, an Irish-Nigerian educator based in the UK, joined B.Ed3 students to give us some ideas for how to infuse Black History Month into senior classes on placement. Thanks so much Victoria for being so generous with your time and expertise! We also explored the educational resources from Black and Irish, and looked at how to celebrate the Black-Irish experience, rather than relying on examples from other countries.

Climate Classrooms: In February, we partnered with Green Schools Ireland to run a certificate workshop for final year students interested in using design thinking to explore complex global issues in teaching and learning. The Design Thinking methodology, used in a designathon workshop, offers education that develops children's curiosity, imagination, resilience, and self-regulation; teaches them to respect and appreciate the ideas and perspectives of others; and develops their ability to become changemakers to contribute to a better world.

Visiting Schools

We continued working with some partner schools during the year. Here is an overview of who visited us!

Clonburris NS: Paula Galvin, a long-time supporter of our DICE work in Froebel, and inspiring GCE teacher, brought 6th class from Clonburris National School in Clondalkin in to visit our B.Ed3 GCE module. The pupils shared poetry, presentations, and raps about taking action for climate justice and we had a great walk around campus for a photo task. Paula has been working in GCE for her whole career and we learnt so much from her talk about how to bring passion and activism into our teaching.

St. Oliver's Community College: For the second year in a row, first years from St. Oliver's Community College in Drogheda joined us on campus in May as part of their school tour!

Schools of Sanctuary: Aoife Titley, in her capacity of Co-Chair of the MU Sanctuary

DLETNS: In March, Ryma's 4th class from Dún Laoghaire Educate Together NS came in to undertake some GCE station teaching exercises with the PMEd2 students. Students organised really interesting activities around global refugee populations, direct provision, human rights, and the financial challenges associated with being an asylum seeker in Ireland. Ryma also shared some perspectives as a minoritized ethnic primary teacher and gave an inspirational overview of culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom!

Schools of Sanctuary: Aoife Titley, in her capacity of Co-Chair of the MU Sanctuary Committee was a member of the Schools of Sanctuary delegation team to CBS Naas School for their accreditation as a School of Sanctuary in May. She was joined by Kind Nassli, an MU student and Ambassador for the programme.

Publications and conferences

Aoife Titley has represented the Froebel Department at a number of conferences this year, including the Association of Teacher Education in Europe (ATEE), as well as the upcoming International Froebel Conference in Maynooth University and the European Educational Research Association (ECER) conference in Glasgow this summer. Aoife has also been an invited speaker to events organised by the INTO/ Turn to Teaching, IDEA – the Irish Development Education Association, the Institute of Anti-Racism and Black Studies (IABS), a DCU showcase about migrant and minority voices in teacher education, and an event about intercultural education, jointly organised by the Law Society and the Froebel Society in MU.

She also served on the advisory committee for a very important book 'Teaching about Race', by Dr. Susan McDonnell, which explores race and racism with young learners (age 4-7). There are multiple copies available now to borrow from the department, please email Aoife.titley@mu.ie if you are interested.

Aoife also has a book chapter about GCE policy in a forthcoming book edited by Dr. Eilish Dillon which will be available next year, and a chapter about voluntourism in the upcoming Bloomsbury Encyclopaedia of Global Justice Education, edited by Douglas Bourn and Aamna Pasha

Partner Events

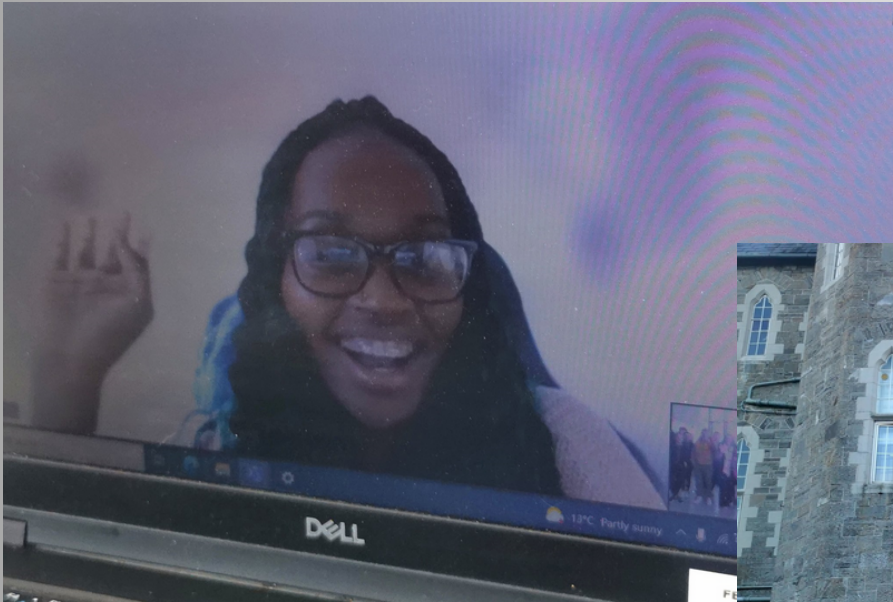
We are lucky to have such committed partners who support us to organise unique and important opportunities for intercultural exchange and learning.

Iolar Mid-Term Fun Day: Ann and Donna O'Donnell from the Kildare Traveller Action Project have been working with us for nearly 8 years on our educational partnership. This year, students from B.EdY₄ and P.MEd Y₂ volunteered during their Reading Week to run a fun day for children from the local site. We played cooperative games, toured the campus, and did much creative work in visual art and music as well!

Traveller Culture Day: Ann and Donna also helped us organise a celebration of Traveller Culture in May. Winnie Stokes gave us a brilliant talk about her experiences of exclusion as a pupil in school, Bridgie McDonagh shared her amazing poem about the power of education, and for the first time we were also joined by legendary Traveller storyteller and singer, Thomas McCarthy. Thomas has collected over 1200 traditional songs from his mother and he shared some of these with us in front of a captive audience of staff and students!

PEPY Cambodia Project: In May, we were privileged to host visiting teachers and students from the PEPY Education Project in Cambodia. We toured campus and we were delighted that they were able to join Aoife and Laura's final year elective to talk to the students who are travelling to teach in Kolkata this summer. We had a great discussion about the power of international educational partnerships, and the importance of intercultural exchange.

Dance and Drumming Workshop: For Social Justice Week in March, Catherine Young facilitated a dance workshop with B.EdY₃ students on the theme of welcome and belonging. Thanks so much to the Co-Chair of the MU Sanctuary Committee Dr. Rita Sakr for her support organising this great session.







The Learning Garden Podcast-Dr Laoise Ní Chléirigh & Erica Hynes

An opportunity and essentially a need, was identified to narrate the experiences of those involved in or interested in education. Dr Laoise Ní Chléirigh and student Erica Hynes engaged in a SPUR project to research and explore the possibility of providing an alternative platform for conversations and content regarding education and lifelong learning. To that end, 'The Learning Garden' podcast, supported by the Irish Froebel Network emerged, now providing a medium for guests who have similar interests in education and lifelong learning to have exciting and often very entertaining conversations! The podcast launched in February 2023 and there was no question that the guest for the inaugural episode would have to be the incomparable Niamh Bhreathnach. Niamh, one of the 'Cairde Froebel' of the Irish Froebel Network, shares her story from childhood through becoming a teacher and eventually Minister for Education (serving from 1993 to 1997). The first and second episodes give us an insight into the reforms which occurred under Niamh's guidance, including the move towards greater inclusion, the creation of the DEIS program, and abolition of third level fees to name but a few elements of her legacy.

**"Education is
about developing
your potential"**



**Niamh Bhreathnach, minister who abolished
college fees, has died – The Irish Times**

Niamh attended Froebel College in Sion Hill, Blackrock, as she was curious from a young age why other children in her class were 'left by the window' and essentially marginalised. These observations during her own childhood sparked curiosity in her which would lead her down the path of lifelong learning in the world of education and later politics. Niamh states that young people are inspirational and bring new perspectives on education. This is a motivational and inspiring podcast exploring our roles as educators and the potential influence we may exercise. The positive change we can make is highlighted in this heart-warming and often very funny podcast. The latest episode from the Learning Garden and the final part of Niamh's interview will be released at the end of June 2023. The Learning Garden Podcast can be found on Spotify and through all the usual podcast channels. Bainigí súp as!



Student Teaching & Learning

Drumming Workshop

Third year students were provided with the opportunity to engage with a drumming workshop which incorporated various traditional dances.

The facilitator, Catherine Young, founded the Company 'Catherine Young Dance' in 2014 after she returned to Ireland from New York and San Francisco. Catherine developed a deep sense of love and appreciation for African dance in particular, which stimulated the creation of the company.

Catherine then began a dance initiative in 2016 called the "Welcoming Project" which unites people from different backgrounds and cultures to enhance integration. As a result of the project, a dance family including migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and the local people of Ireland has been created to appreciate the different cultures through dance. As part of the third year workshop, students engaged and participated in this amalgamation of Irish and African dance.

Catherine and her team of musicians are devoted to integrating cultures, advocating for social justice and communicating important stories all through the medium of dance.

This programme known as 'Céilí Afro Dabke' is Ireland's first world music céilí. The experience was truly breath-taking as the students came together to perform the African dance which was supported by both African and Irish instruments. The students described the experience as "amazing", "eye-opening" and "fun" as they became immersed in the world of dance.

On behalf of all the third years, a special appreciation and word of thanks should be given to the MU Sanctuary Committee and to the Office of the Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for the funding of this workshop.

A special thanks also to the facilitator Catherine Young. Her website can be found at <http://www.catherineyoungdance.com>



COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

Giedre Motiejunaite

Københavns Professionshøjskole – University College Copenhagen



UNIVERSITY LIFE THERE:

I studied three modules whilst attending university in Copenhagen. My favourite one by far was a module called Practicum. This is a bit like Placement Learning here in Froebel. The module Practicum gave us Erasmus students the opportunity to undertake school placement in a Danish school.

I was placed in a music school where children had to audition to get in (something I was a little bit nervous about as I don't have a musical bone in my body). I taught two 8th grade (second year) English classes every Tuesday and Friday.

I saw a completely different side of secondary school education - where children have a positive attitude to school, are treated equally by their teachers, and are comfortable enough to talk about issues or topics that might be seen as too controversial in an Irish secondary school.

It was an amazing, eye-opening experience.

HOST COUNTRY

I fell in love with Copenhagen when I was there. It is a beautiful city with so much to do - from food places to try, castles to see, flea markets to find the most stylish clothes at, parks to hang out in, canals to swim or boat in (when it's sunny!!) and unique architecture to admire. One of my favourite things about Copenhagen was the Christmas markets as well as the theme park, Tivoli. Tivoli is one of the most magical places you can find yourself in around Christmas. It is definitely a must see!

TEACHING ON ERASMUS

During my time on Erasmus in Copenhagen I learned a lot about myself as a person and myself as a teacher. I gained more confidence teaching as going in to teach teenagers was very daunting at the start. I also was able to solidify my learning of starting with the child. Whilst on placement, there was no curriculum for me to follow and my class teacher allowed me to teach whatever I wished. So, naturally I decided to get to know the students and pick a topic that interested them - pop culture. It made class enjoyable for both the students and me.

A PHRASE LEARNT:

HYGGE

The word Hygge is a lovely word that the Danes use to describe a feeling of cosiness. For example, when you have hung out with your friends, went to a Christmas market or have sat by the fireplace and you have been left feeling like you are wrapped in a hug. That feeling, that is Hygge.

JOENSUU, FINLAND

Shannon Flynn

University of Eastern Finland (UEF), Joensuu.



UNIVERSITY LIFE THERE:

My favourite course in the University was the Introduction to Finnish music education. This module took place in an amazing music room with a variety of instruments and other resources for music. It was a very interactive class, with many very useful activities that could potentially be transferred to the primary classroom.

UEF has many different facilities. For example, I could borrow ice skates and go ice skating on an open rink with no additional cost. As a member of the students union, I was also automatically a member of any club or society in the university. The Erasmus student network (ESN) was the most relevant for me as an international student and I got to make many new friends through their events. They also organised trips, including Lapland and a pirate cruise to Stockholm from Helsinki. The events facilitated by the teaching society also welcomed us and it was great to make friends with local students. Student events included orienteering around the city, international dinners, nights out, sitsit (a Nordic traditional dinner party which is very different and great fun), various day trips, workshops, many sports and talent shows.

HOST COUNTRY

Joensuu during my free time was great as there was beautiful scenery all around. Two national parks were in driving distance from Joensuu, which we visited for a weekend trip: Koli and Patvinsuo. These national parks have great hiking trails and both were very different from each other. The university had multiple cafeterias to choose from each day, with extremely reasonable student prices and new options every day. Student culture is very strong in Finland. Every student has overalls which represent what you are studying (as an Erasmus student, my overalls were blue).

TEACHING ON ERASMUS

Schools in Finland were very welcoming and were thrilled to have us come in and observe lessons, often asking us to participate in activities for practice in English language classes- for many of the children, it was their first time speaking to an English native speaker. I also had the opportunity to take two different modules that explored the Finnish perspective of Special Education. The similarities and differences here with the Irish system were very interesting to explore.

A PHRASE LEARNT:

Kippis!

Cheers!

Minä olen kotoisin Irlannista.

I am from Ireland.

FREIBURG, GERMANY

Hannah O'Donohoe

Pädagogische Hochschule Freiburg (University of Education Freiburg)



UNIVERSITY LIFE THERE:

University life was very different to what I was used to in Froebel. We were able to choose any module we liked as long as we got enough credits. My favourite class was definitely my beginner German class. Our teacher was so friendly and was so invested in making sure our German improved.

HOST COUNTRY

Freiburg is located in the south of Germany and was built in the centre of the Black Forest. The views were beautiful and there were so many different hikes and walks you could do without travelling further than an hour away.

Freiburg is also known as one of the most sustainable cities in the world, so everything is very clean and the locals respect the city very much.

TEACHING ON ERASMUS

I definitely learned so much about myself in the short time that I was away. I learned how important it is to get out of my comfort zone, by meeting new people and travelling to lots of new places. I also found that my confidence grew while I was on Erasmus as I had to talk to new people in order to get to know everyone. I don't think that you can get that type of experience and growth in any other situation

A PHRASE LEARNT:

ENTSCHULDIGUNG

Excuse me (This is just fun to say)

GENAU

Exactly/ Yes (This is very very common for Germans to say)

"I would recommend going on Erasmus to everyone! It is one of the best decisions I made and I wish that I could do it over and over again. You will learn so much about yourself, get to travel to a new city every weekend and will meet so many amazing people. "

AN GHAELTACHT

Michelle Forkin

An Daingean, Ciarraí



D'fhreastail formhór na mac léinn ón tríú bliain agus máistir ó Roinn Froebel ar Ghaeltacht i nDaingin, Co. Chiarraí. D'fhreastal blianta eile ar an gCeathrú Rua i nGaillimh. D'fhreastail scoláirí ar an nGaeltacht ar feadh coicíse um Cháisc chun feabhas a chur ar ár nGaeilge mar is í ár dteanga dhúchais í.

D'fhreastail mé ar an Ghaeltacht i Colaiste Chorca Dhuibhne l gCiarraí agus beidh mé ag scríobh faoi mo thaithí agus mo thuras. Bhaineamar go léir taitneamh as ár gcuid ama sa Daingean. Bhí sceideal gnóthach laethúil againn ach gan dabht bhaineamar an leas is fearr as saol na hoíche chomh maith le hoícheanta amuigh sa Daingean agus Paidi o Sé! Bhí ranganna againn ó naoi go dtí 1 in aghaidh an lae nuair a d'fhoghlaimíomar gramadach agus chuireamar feabhas ar an nGaeilge labhartha. D'fhoghlaimíomar neart amhrán Gaeilge agus bhí "trasna na dtonnta" ar cheann de na hamhráin is fearr linn. Bhíomar tumtha go hiomlán sa teanga rud a bhí an-tairbheach.

Bhí gníomhaíochtaí againn gach lá óna dó go dtí a ceathair lena n-áirítear scéalaíocht, zumba, potaireacht, cluiche chlois, curas taistil agus caint ghliomach spéisiúil. Chuamar ar go leor turais lena n-áirítear tiomáint ceann sléibhe, mara beo agus taispeántas ealaíne. Bhí trath na gceist againn agus ar ndóigh an céilí a bhain gach éinne taitneamh as. Bhí bean an tis, muintir na háite agus an fhoireann an-fháilteach agus cairdiúil linn go léir.

Gan dabht ar bith go bhfuil an Ghaeltacht tairbheach agus taitneamhach agus muid ag feabhsú ár gcuid Gaeilge agus ag cur lenár ngrá dár dteanga dhúchais. Bhain mé an-taitneamh as mo chuid ama sa Ghaeltacht ach gan dabht chuir na bóithre cúnga agus lúbacha an-taitneamh orainn go léir ach rinne na tránna áille agus na radharcanna iontacha dúinn é.

***Tuairimí ó dhaltaí eile:
Spraoi Turais spraíúil
taitneamhach taithí
éagsúla
tumtha sa teanga***

CZECH REPUBLIC

Grainne O'Reilly & Jennifer Byrne

Palacký University Olomouc



UNIVERSITY LIFE THERE:

During our time in the Czech Republic, we attended two lectures. The first class we attended was an English Rhoticity class. English rhoticity refers to the pronunciation of the consonant 'r' in all 'r' position contexts. We looked at different examples of when the 'r' sound is added as an extra sound and when it is dropped. The second class we attended was about English-speaking countries. During this class, the lecturer and students asked us questions about Ireland.

HOST COUNTRY

There are many traditional dishes in the Czech Republic such as Goulash. Goulash is a rich, meat-based stew often served with dumplings. The architecture in the Czech Republic is amazing. The main style of architecture is a Romanesque. It first appeared in the country around the 9th century. This style of architecture consists of round arches, tall towers and symmetrical designs.

TEACHING ON ERASMUS

The principal of a school informed us that they follow the International Primary Curriculum (IPC). I was interested with this framework as I had never heard of it before. The IPC is focused solely on improving children's learning. The IPC includes a range of cross-curricular units based on globally relevant themes that engage children. When starting a new theme using the IPC, you must begin with an 'entry point' that engages the children's attention, for example, a hands-on activity that encourages the children to think about the topic. Next the teacher must create a 'knowledge harvest' that includes what the children know and what they would like to know on the topic, this will help the teacher plan a lesson on the children's own interests. Next, the children are invited to research and record investigations based on the topic. I think that this curriculum relates directly to Froebel's idea of a child-centred approach. In each of the schools we visited, I noticed that the teachers were teaching English explicitly through English. It was interesting to see how English was taught as a foreign language. We have been taught to teach Irish through Irish, so it was very interesting to observe how this was being done with English.

A PHRASE LEARNT:

Jak se máte?

How are you?

Děkuji

Thank You

Ahoj

Hello/Goodbye

In Czech Republic, the students are asked to remove their outdoor footwear before entering the school, and to change into their sliders or slippers, however, this is not a usual in Ireland.



Final year Student Workshops

After a break for a few years, it was great to see some final year students signing up on their penultimate week and getting the opportunity to gain some certificates for their portfolios! Laoise arranged for STEMpathy to do an excellent practical workshop with the BED4 and PMED2 students who came in on Friday April 28th. After a morning working with problem solving using lego resources etc, they took advantage of the lunch provided before heading over to the PE Classroom for the Irish Primary PE Association (IPPEA) final year Froebel Maynooth student workshop.

Having been restricted to an online workshop in 2021, it was great to return to a practical experience this year. It was also appropriate that our last pre-pandemic presenter, Elaine Harris returned to Maynooth to deliver an excellent session: "An introduction to using yoga inspired movement, breath and relaxation tools in the primary school classroom" .

These students will start teaching full time in September with a student membership of IPPEA, super resources from STEMpathy and will be more skilled in key competencies of the Primary Curriculum Framework: Being Well, Being Creative and Being a Digital Learner. Maith sibh go léir!



Third year Mindfulness Elective

AMBER TRAVERS

The mindfulness elective was a lovely experience for all of us involved. It focused on tips and strategies that we could use for ourselves and that could be tweaked to suit the children in our classroom.

Each week was filled with new mindfulness practices such as meditation or mindful moving and we received access to plenty of resources that we could use in the classroom.

It was a really enjoyable eight weeks that has benefited our own wellbeing along with giving us some new strategies to use in schools with children who may need support with their mental well-being

One exercise we did was a partner guided meditation. We broke into pairs and guided our partners through a meditation and then gave each other advice on how we could improve for the classroom.

We also did a balloon exercise where we associated our worries with different balloons and as we blew the worry into the balloon, we were getting our worry out and as we let the balloon go, we were also letting the worry go.

A huge thank you to Ena Morley for facilitating this elective.

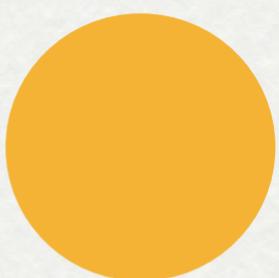
CALM YOURSELF WITH A

STAR BREATHING

BRAIN BREAK

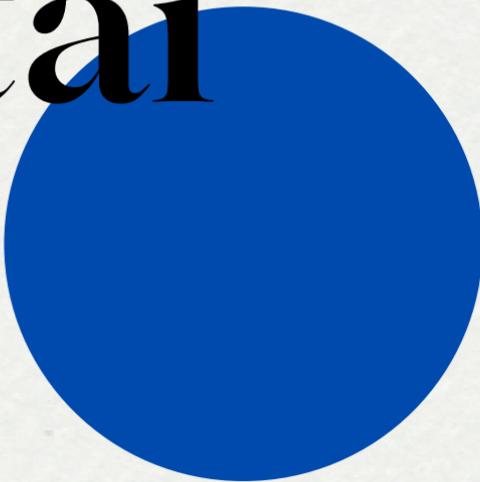


Trace your finger up one side of the star, while you take a deep breath in. Hold your breath at the point and breathe out as you slide down the other side. Keep going until you've gone around the whole star.



Halla na

Réaltaí



KORAN DUNNE

"In rugby and teaching you form special bonds with your teammates and the children you teach and that's what makes rugby and teaching so enjoyable."

Can you tell me some of your sporting achievements to date?

Some of my sporting achievements to date would be representing Ireland and Leinster at both u18 level and winning two interprovincial medals with Leinster.

I won the Division 1 and AIL Junior Cup with Barnhall RFC this year. Finally, I won the Kay Bowen sevens tournament with the university team.

Is there a coach or player that you look up to?

I look up to Siyamthanda Kolisi a lot and I love watching his clips on YouTube. I like him because he's dominant in attack and defence and he's always working hard on the pitch.

He is also a great leader that always puts his teammates ahead of himself.



Are there any similarities between teaching and rugby?

There are many similarities between teaching and rugby such as you must be respectful and responsible on the pitch and in the classroom.

Rugby is about seeing how the team can work together in order to win and teaching is the very same only the teacher is working with parents and students in order to get the best from their students.

Finally, in rugby and teaching you form special bonds with your teammates and the children you teach and that's what makes rugby and teaching so enjoyable.

ERIN MCLAUGHLIN

I believe I can be a role model to young girls and boys who wish to achieve their goals in sports and can share my experiences and interests with them.

Are there any similarities between teaching and rugby?

There are definitely loads of similarities between soccer and teaching, ones that has stood out for me the most while being on teaching practice would be teamwork. Having that idea of teamwork in your class and incorporating it into everything you do is huge.

Having that experience through soccer already and being able to bring that into the classroom works really well.

Is there a coach or player that you look up to?

My dad who sadly passed away 2 years ago, was definitely one of my biggest role models. He was my manager when I was younger, and he always believed in me. He would have done whatever it takes for me to succeed.

He had a great love and passion for the game this is something I have carried with me through my career.



Can you tell me some of your sporting achievements to date?

I am currently a member of the Peamount United Women's team who play in the Women's National League. This is my second year on this team. I previously played for Sion Swifts Ladies in the Northern Ireland Women's League. I am captain who of the Maynooth University soccer team. I have represented Ireland at u15, u16, u17& u19 level.

I received a call up to the Irish Women's National team in November. I have great ambitions to make the squad again. It would be a dream come true to make the World Cup squad this summer.

