

# Machnamh 2023/2024

An update from

The Froebel Department

**11th Edition**

**Froebel Department of Primary and  
Early Childhood Education**

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# FOREWORD

LE NIAMH FORTUNE



**Congratulations to all involved in the latest edition of Machnamh. I always enjoy reflecting on the last twelve months, as I put pen to paper for this foreward. It has been another exciting and productive year in Froebel.**

**Séamie O’Neill and Tony Sweeney retired over the last few months and we wish them all the best. Both have left a lasting legacy on education and in particular, initial teacher**

**education. Séamie and Tony were true Froebelian educators and placed the students at the heart of their teaching. Both dedicated their lives to shaping the future of education. They brought passion, creativity, and a deep understanding of teaching and learning to the classroom. It’s not just the number of years that mark an impressive career, but the countless lives touched, minds inspired, and hearts warmed. They will both be missed!**

**A special welcome this to all our new BA, BEd, PMEd and MEd students, we hope you will be very happy in Maynooth University.**

**We are also delighted to welcome a number of new staff members to the department. Megan Walsh, our new administrator, Dr Grace Cardiff, Elva Casey, June Pisaneschi, Jamie Murray, and Tracy Mc Elheron.**

**Enjoy reading!**

**Niamh**

# A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Fáilte romhaibh!

A warm welcome to the 11th edition of Machnamh. Machnamh is a yearly publication that showcases the hard work of the students and staff in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education.

The term ‘Machnamh’ encompasses ideas of reflection,

Machnamh is an ancient Irish concept encompassing reflection, contemplation, meditation and thought (taken from President’s website). We hope that you can take the time to reflect on all of the hard work, creativity, experiences and opportunities that took place this year in the Froebel Department.

We would like to thank all of those who have contributed to this year’s edition. We would especially like to thank all those who provided the opportunities for exciting workshops, training and many other wonderful experiences throughout the year. If working on the Machnamh publication has taught us anything, it is the importance of community and coming together in order to achieve our goals.

We are very grateful to have been a part of this project and we hope you enjoy reading this year’s edition.



**CE’NEDRA  
CULLEN-O’BRIEN**  
PMED YEAR 1



**LAURA  
DOLAN**  
PMED YEAR 1



## Student Voice in Primary Physical Education

LE TONY SWEENEY

In 2023, Irish Research Council awarded funding to a project called PE-Voice. This involved a group of primary teachers, supported by PE lecturers in Mary I, DCU and Froebel MU, trying out some strategies to enable their pupils have a greater voice in their physical education lessons. This project resulted in the production of a booklet of strategies which is available on Moodle and published on the IPPEA website [www.irishprimarype.com](http://www.irishprimarype.com). You can read more about this in an open access article <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1356336X241257455> published by European Physical Education Review in May 2024.

This year we are working with a wider group of primary teachers as part of a project to road test the teacher resource booklet, but at the same time I am also working with an international group of teacher educators to explore how we can introduce this approach with student teachers. Our excellent BEd3 students have been trialling some of



these strategies in PE this semester, and discussing the approaches in light of their prior school placement experience.

Having already read an article and discussed their responses on Moodle discussion forum, we invited the author Grace Cardiff (who is completing her PhD studies on student voice) to do a workshop with both BED3 groups to look at some of these strategies and gain insights into her experiences using student voice with her fifth class pupils. (see workshop photo attached).

Thanks to BED3 for engaging in this project – I hope it might help them consider similar Froebelian interventions for their own final year action research projects!



## An Update from Dr. Patricia Kennon and Dr. Suzanne O’Keeffe

Since 2023, Dr Patricia Kennon has been a member of the Advisory Group for the Children’s Research Network (CRN) of Ireland and Northern Ireland, an-island network for research with children and young people. The network supports researchers, practitioners, and service-providers including NGO’s, government and statutory bodies, and community, voluntary and social-enterprise entities.



Dr Kennon and Dr Suzanne O’Keeffe were awarded a Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute Small Grant for their project, ‘Crucial Conversations: Exploring Parental Voice and Parental Rights regarding the Provision of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Irish Primary Schools.’ This project takes place during the 2023/24 academic year and explores the role and impact of parental voice and parental rights in the complex arena of the provision of RSE in Irish primary schools.



## **DICE Updates: An overview of GCE work in the Froebel Department during the academic year 2023-2024**

**By Aoife Titley**

This has been another busy and successful year for embedding Global Citizenship Education in the Froebel Department and creating spaces for scaffolding 'worldmindedness' with student teachers at the beginning of their career. Many thanks to all my Froebel colleagues who continue to support DICE events and initiatives, and thanks so much to all the students who have engaged so professionally and creatively with the various GCE opportunities within Froebel.



# DICE 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT IVEAGH HOUSE

This year was particularly special for GCE within initial teacher education as it marked the 20th anniversary of the DICE Project. The DICE project is a national education initiative, which promotes the integration of development education and intercultural education in Initial Teacher Education at primary level in Ireland. The DICE Project aims to develop and extend staff capacity and expertise in the four partner institutions of Mary Immaculate College, Marino Institute of Education, Dublin City University, and the Froebel Department in Maynooth University. DICE also works to support student teachers in these institutions to integrate global and intercultural perspectives and themes into their teaching practice. By targeting the skills, knowledge and values of people involved in education, DICE seeks to promote global solidarity, human rights and sustainable development, and support people to recognise and challenge discrimination, racism, inequality, locally and globally.

In April 2024, we had a big anniversary celebration event in Iveagh House, hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs. There were several speeches on the evening which charted the history of the project and marked some of our significant achievements over the years. Aoife Titley was chosen on behalf of the DICE Network of lecturers to deliver a reflection on the work of DICE within teacher education. She spoke about how GCE is at its heart, a values-based education and our belief in the power of education to achieve



ITE INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED AT THE DICE 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

positive and meaningful change in the world. 'As members of the DICE Network, we are inspired and motivated by our commitment to the values of global justice, social justice, equity, human rights, anti-racism, climate justice, and global solidarity.'

She also spoke about how continuing to embed GCE within ITE remains of the utmost importance, particularly at the moment during such a time of global turbulence, growing inequality and political instability. She used the ongoing war in

Gaza to highlight how GCE helps learners make sense of what is happening in the world, to bring the world into our classrooms and to support our learners in navigating a new global reality rife with crises and complexities.



THE DICE NETWORK OF LECTURERS: DR AOIFE TITLEY (MU), DR BRIGHID GOLDEN (MIC), DR ROWAN OBERMAN (DCU) AND DR BARBARA O'TOOLE AND RICHEAL NI THIARNAIGH (MIE).



**'AS MEMBERS OF THE DICE NETWORK, WE ARE INSPIRED AND MOTIVATED BY OUR COMMITMENT TO THE VALUES OF GLOBAL JUSTICE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, EQUITY, HUMAN RIGHTS, ANTI-RACISM, CLIMATE JUSTICE, AND GLOBAL SOLIDARITY.'**

DR. AOIFE TITLEY

Given that our own institution has been noticeably silent on the war in Gaza for example, it makes the DICE work even more significant in terms of protecting space to meaningfully exploring relevant GCE themes, such as interdependence, critical reflection and informed action.

We also had some amazing inputs from student teachers and NQT's on the night which affirmed the importance of having access to GCE modules during teacher education. We were privileged that recent Froebel NQT Sophie Lopushynska gave a brilliant speech as well, sharing how DICE modules during her time in Froebel have shaped her worldview and affirmed her commitment to centring local and global justice issues in the classroom.

The DICE Project has been in receipt of funding from Irish Aid for the last twenty years and is extremely grateful for the longevity and sustainability of their funding and support, which has enabled the project to embed GCE in such a meaningful way across teacher education programmes in Ireland.



THE CHOICE GROUP: TERESA O'DOHERTY (MIE), ANNE LOONEY (DCU), EUGENE WALL (MIC), NIAMH FORTUNE (MU)



Sophie Lopushynska, representing Froebel NQT's



Aoife Titley delivering her speech on behalf of the DICE Network



# New DICE publication: GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

## EDUCATION: CURIOUS TEACHERS, CRITICAL CLASSROOMS



Curious Teachers, Critical Classrooms is a textbook for everything you need to know to teach global citizenship education (GCE) in primary schools. It has been edited by Dr Brigid Golden who is the lecturer in GCE in Mary Immaculate College and there are also many chapters in the book that have been written by the Froebel GCE Lecturer Aoife Titley.

The publication was launched by Prof. Doug Bourn at the DICE 20th anniversary event and is free to download from the DICE website. See the below link for further information, it comes highly recommended for use in the classroom!

<https://thediceproject.ie/resources/>



# EVENTS

This year was also characterised by numerous events, initiatives and guest lecturers, all of which enhanced our GCE teaching and learning experience within the Froebel Department.

## GUEST LECTURERS:

Many thanks to all the speakers who took time out of their busy schedules to speak to our students this year. Pictured below are Kinda Nassli, who generously shared her narratives of being an asylum seeker from Syria, and Briana Fitzsimons who facilitated energetic and inspiring workshops with students on anti-racism and anti-bias education. We also hosted international teachers and students from the PEPY Project in Cambodia for a visit to the university in May 2024. We hope to link more with them next year!



**KINDA NASSLI WITH B.EDY3 STUDENTS**



**KINDA NASSLI WITH PMED2 STUDENTS**



**BRIANA FITZSIMONS WITH PMED1 STUDENTS**



**AOIFE WITH VISITING TEACHERS AND STUDENTS FROM PEPY CAMBODIA**



# STUDY VISIT TO CLOUGHJORDAN ECO-VILLAGE



In March, Aoife and the Teach for Tomorrow elective group undertook a two day study visit to Ireland's only Eco-Village in Cloughjordan, Co. Tipperary. We were treated to a tour of the village and some of its local enterprises and students participated in workshops on food waste, fast fashion and zero waste.



## EDUCATION EVENTS:

Aoife was invited to speak at and moderate panels at a few different education symposiums this year. In October, IDEA held their very first GCE research symposium with a mix of speakers undertaking different types of research in GCE, both in Ireland and internationally. Visiting PhD scholar in Froebel Giulia Filippi shared some of her preliminary findings about GCE in ITE at this event as well.



AOIFE AND GIULIA AT THE IDEA RESEARCH SEMINAR.



PANEL MODERATOR

### Dr. Aoife Titley

Dr. Aoife Titley is the lecturer in Global Citizenship Education (GCE) in the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education in Maynooth University. Before becoming a teacher educator, she worked as an education researcher and a post-primary teacher. Her research interests include GCE policy and practice, international service learning, anti-racism education and diversity in the primary teaching profession.

PANEL SPEAKER

IDEA RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM BROCHURE.



Aoife also spoke at the second international Diversity in Teaching Research Symposium in Galway in October 2023, sharing some of her research about the barriers to initial teacher education for young people from minoritized ethnic backgrounds. It was great to have past and current students represented at this event as well!



**AOIFE WITH NIDAH AND LEESA**

Aoife was also invited to take part in a panel on GCE in the primary school as part of the Global Village Symposium with the IPNN, INTO, NCCA and Trócaire.



## **STUDENT WORKSHOPS:**

In May we organised a day-long certificate for students in 'Climate Justice and Design Thinking' in conjunction with Green Schools Ireland. We also had Irish Aid in to deliver workshops with B.EdY2 and PMEdY2 groups on ideas about how to approach the SDG's in the primary classroom.



**NIAMH AND ALEJANDRO FROM IRISH AID AND IRISH AID RESOURCES**





## ANTI-RACISM FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS:



PROF. KHADIJA MOHAMMED

In April 2024 we organised two big CPD events for teacher educators on the topic of anti-racism in initial teacher education.

We were privileged that Prof. Khadija Mohammed from the University of the West of Scotland was the keynote and she shared very interesting insights from the Scottish context.

Aoife Titley from Froebel and Niamh McGuirk from DCU also provided inputs related to the Irish education system. We were joined then on the panel by Briana Fitzsimons and Livingstone Thompson, both experienced EDI facilitators.





# OTHER RESOURCES



PHOTO FROM THE BOOK LAUNCH IN SLIGO

- Aoife Titley was on the advisory committee for an innovative new anti-racism picture book aimed at 4-7 year olds. She also contributed to the accompanying teacher materials. This book, entitled 'Talking about Race' was written by Susan McDonnell from ATU Sligo and the book was launched in Sligo in October 2023.

this year, one with IDEA on Critical Race Theory which can be found on the IDEA website, and one for the upcoming DICE Podcast series about GCE hosted by Brigid Golden. This will be launched on the DICE website in the new semester. Keep an eye out on the DICE social media channels for further information about this podcast series which will undoubtedly be a great resource for student teachers!

- Aoife Titley and Brigid Golden also facilitated a webinar for teacher educators in GCE across Europe through the ANGEL network. Aoife's presentation was entitled 'The DICE Project: A Model for Integrating GCE into Primary Teacher Education in Ireland' and you can view the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DOqZYIACfXQ>



19 Susan McDonnell with Niamh McGuirk, Aoife Titley, Briana Fitzsimons, Pierre Yimbog, Ronke Oladele and Emer O'Neill

Teachers and families can help children to develop positive perspectives on diversity in their societies, linking this work to social

# POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT OUR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMME, A LEVEL 9 POSTGRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION WILL RUN AGAIN IN OCTOBER 2024. THIS PG CERT IS DESIGNED FOR EDUCATORS WORKING WITH LEARNERS AT ALL LEVELS - FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD TO YOUTH, IN ADULT AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND IN SCHOOLS. ADDRESSING THE MAJOR GLOBAL CHALLENGES FACING OUR WORLD, IT OFFERS PARTICIPANTS A UNIQUE LEARNING EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING IN GCE, SHAPED BY PEER REFLECTION AND APPLIED LEARNING.

FOR MORE SEE: [HTTPS://WWW.MAYNOOTHUNIVERSITY.IE/STUDY-MAYNOOTH/POSTGRADUATE-STUDIES/COURSES/CERTIFICATE-GLOBAL-CITIZENSHIP-EDUCATION](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/postgraduate-studies/courses/certificate-global-citizenship-education)

IF YOU KNOW ANY PRACTICING TEACHERS WHO MAY BE CONSIDERING FURTHER STUDY, PLEASE CONSIDER SPREADING THE WORD ABOUT THIS UNIQUE PROGRAMME, OR CONTACT [AOIFE.TITLEY@MU.IE](mailto:Aoife.Titley@mu.ie) FOR FURTHER DETAILS. THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS THE **31ST JULY 2024**.



STAFF AND STUDENTS FROM THE PG CERTIFICATE IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AT A RECENT GCE SEMINAR IN MU. 20



# MU Sanctuary Committee



RITA AND AOIFE AT A NATIONAL RALLY FOR PALESTINE

Aoife Titley, along with Rita Sakr in the Department of English, is the Co-Chair of the MU Sanctuary Committee. Universities of Sanctuary is an international initiative designed to make universities and places of learning more inclusive and welcoming places to students from asylum seeker, refugee and international protection backgrounds.

We had another successful year with our Sanctuary work in MU. Our applications were doubled and thanks to the support of the Office of the Vice President of Equality and Diversity we were also able to increase the number of scholarships we offered. In December we held a Welcome Event for all Sanctuary Scholars and their families.

We also supported a range of events for Palestinian Solidarity, given the ongoing genocide, epistemicide and scholasticide currently being endured by our colleagues in teaching and learning institutions in Gaza. Some of these events included a seminar in



GAZA EVENT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM



WELCOME EVENT FOR MU SANCTUARY SCHOLARS

conjunction with the Scholars at Risk project on 'Human Rights, Academic Freedom and Criticism of the Israeli State', the participation in the MU walkout on the National Day of

Action in April and the hosting of a local school for their awards ceremony when they were designated as a school of Sanctuary.



SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY AWARDS CEREMONY FOR CBS NAAS



# Student Mobility Programme Maynooth University and Palacky University (Czech)



Student Mobility Programme Maynooth University and Palacky University  
On 16-20 October 2023, the Froebel Department of Primary and Early Childhood Education was visited by a group of six students from the Institute of Foreign Languages, Faculty of Education, Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, accompanied by their instructor, Dr. Petr Anténe. Their stay was a follow-up to a group of Maynooth University students' visit at Palacky University in March 2023. The programme of the Czech students' stay was arranged by Lorraine Crean, and Séamie Ó Néill, who had visited Palacky University earlier and developed the cooperation with the Institute of Foreign Languages, as well as the BED 4 students who had gone to Olomouc in March. As all the Czech students are trained to be teachers of English besides other subjects, they appreciated the opportunity to attend lectures by Niamh Fortune and Lorraine Crean herself. However, all the students also enjoyed

participating in Laoise Ní Chléirigh's Science Education lecture, which enabled them to take a walk across the university campus while discovering trees and plants native to Ireland. Besides going to regular lectures, the Czech students were introduced to Irish dancing and Irish sports (hurling and Gaelic football) by BEd 4 and PMed 2 students respectively. They also visited the South Campus, including Russell Library, and were given a tour of Maynooth College Chapel by Rev John Paul Sheridan. Outside campus, the students observed classes at St Mary's Boys National School in Maynooth as well as St Audoen's Primary School in Cook Street, Dublin 8, to get a sense of the Irish system of education on primary school level. In both Maynooth and Dublin, the students also attended traditional Irish music sessions. The Czech students and their instructor are very grateful to the members and students of the Froebel Department for preparing a programme that made their visit so memorable.



As the Czech students' stay is part of a one-month blended mobility programme, it will be followed by online lectures given by Lorraine Crean. Moreover, the cooperation between Froebel Department and Institute of Foreign Languages at Palacky University will continue in the future, as another group of B Ed students are coming to Olomouc in Spring 2024.



# An Environmentally Sustainable STEM Challenge



After returning from School Placement, it was time for a fun challenge - a STEM challenge based on the theme of Winter Wonderland. STEM offers creative opportunities to teachers and children alike, often helping to navigate the world in which we live. By engaging in a STEM challenge, students actively learn by doing, and have the chance to view what a STEM challenge is like for the children they are working with now and in the future.

With uncertain times in our current planetary crisis, STEM challenges - using only donated reusable, recyclable and/or biodegradable materials are wonderful teaching and learning experiences, nurturing creativity for all participants.

STEM education ensures children have the time and space to create, but through their own lens. The more they have these opportunities, and when we create a culture of STEM in classrooms, the more creative and adept children become at any STEM challenge they face!



Bhí an-spraoi againn leis an 'STEM challenge' and there were some highly-motivated competitors (you know who you are) and the photos tell their own story. The sleigh mid-air and the robin in the tree deserve particular praise! Mo cheol sibh! When you engage in STEM challenges, remember the 5Rs - refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, recycle! If at all possible, use household items, and become regulars at your local charity shops. STEM does not need to cost money. Be a 'changemaker' teacher! We have enough 'stuff' around us waiting to be used.



For further evidence of this, have a look at 'The Story of Stuff' here: <https://www.storyofstuff.org> and watch this video for more information: <https://youtu.be/9GorqroigqM?si=OVPOeI4a6OYArebK>

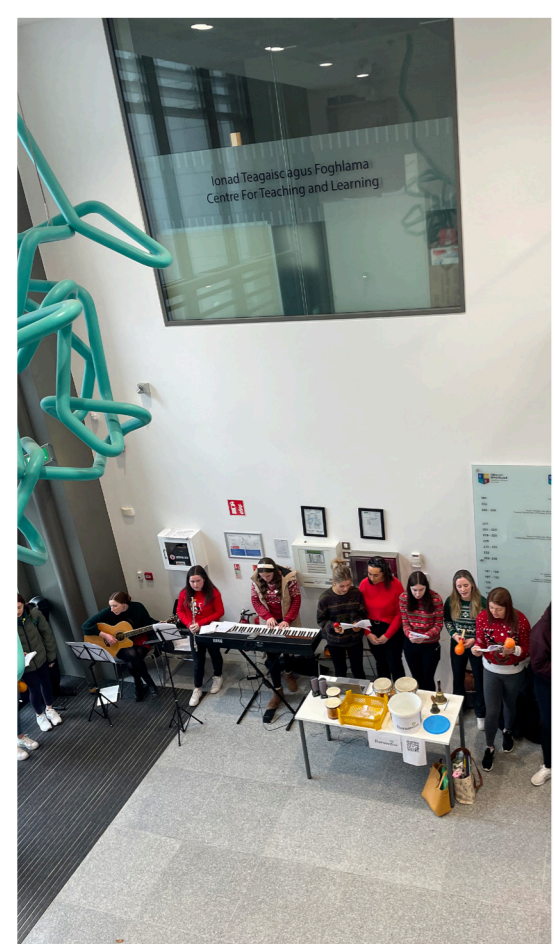
Until the next environmentally sustainable STEM session... keep creating and stay sustainable! Slán go fóillín... #SDGs #STEM

Dr. Laoise Ní Chléirigh





# Christmas Musical Gathering



In December another wonderful group of BEd year three students gathered together to lead what has been a long standing Froebelian tradition in the Department, a Christmas Gathering to mark the end of the calendar year. The event is student-led and provides year three students with an opportunity to organise the musical event on all levels, an important skill set for all primary school teachers. Following the Froebelian principle of Unity and Connectivity song-singing provides an important opportunity for people to gather together, to create one unified voice and celebrate the power of the collective.



Students have an opportunity to bring their own particular interests, skills and expertise to the event, which was evident in abundance. There was a great turnout, collective spirit, and the singing and instrumental contributions from all involved were outstanding. A fundraising aspect also forms part of the yearly gathering and this year proceeds were donated to Barnardos Ireland.

LE GRÁINNE DEERY



# CORE II: Shadow Theatre

By Froebel Students

IN COLLABORATION WITH  
VERA McEVOY

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW



## CORE II: SHADOW THEATRE, INTEGRATED ARTS PROJECT

In February of this year a very special collaboration took place between BEd year 3 students and YPCE Artist in Residence Vera McAvoy. Across three weeks students engaged in a Shadow Theatre project with Vera (as part of the CORE project ) exploring the themes of Curiosity, Openness, Reflection and Empathy. Facilitated by Laura Thornton, Triona Stokes and Grainne Deery students explored the themes with Vera through creative, playful and imaginative improvisations, reflecting on Vera's residency and Froebelian principles. This process-based exploration provided students with a space to explore Art, Drama and Music in an authentic integrated environment. As part of the process the eight groups performed their work, and with the assistance of John Meehan a record of the work was captured. A short video was produced

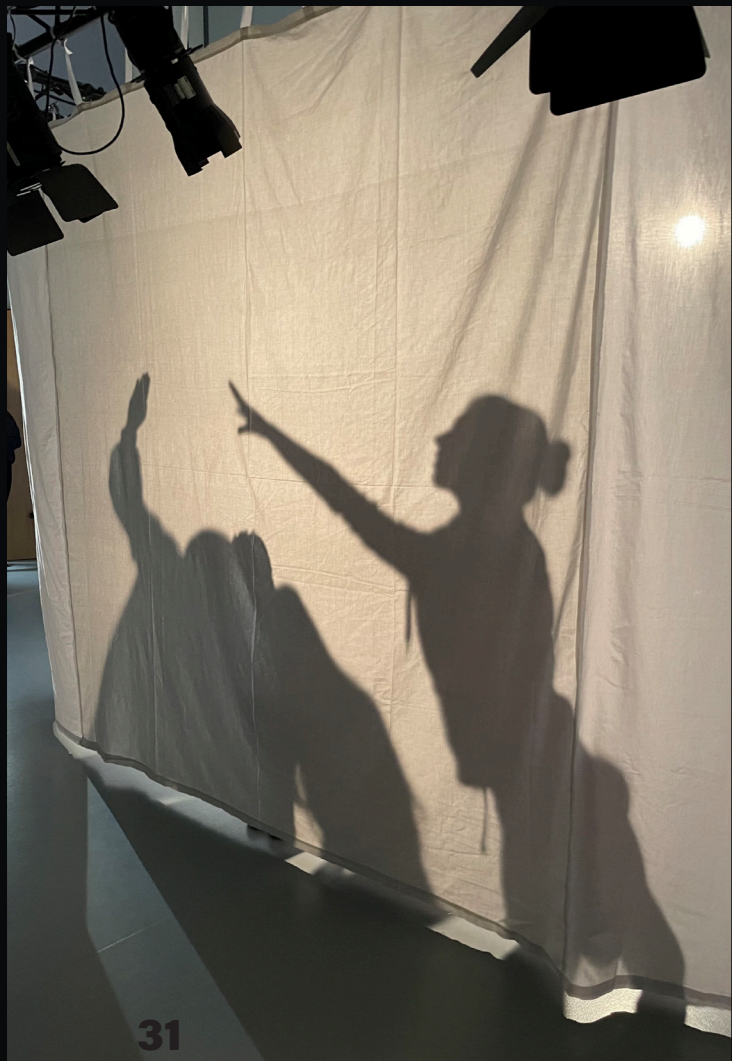
and presented by Vera as part of her residency showcase in May and can be viewed on Vimeo\*. Well done to year three students, the work was powerful, embodied Froebelian thinking and showed depth and beauty in the realisation of the themes.

\* <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/939598761>

LE GRÁINNE DEERY









# AN INTERVIEW WITH **VERA MCEVOY**

## Artist in Residence with the Froebel Department

### Can you describe your experience as an artist in residence in the Froebel department this year?

The YPCE Residency 2023 - 24 in Froebel Department was a brilliant and exciting year for me, busy and creatively very varied. There was a great curiosity and openness from staff and students about my residency role. Relationships that had commenced in 2022 - 2023 (Year 1 of the residency) continued to develop further and led to an exciting collaborative arts project.

I really enjoyed working with Rang a Sé, Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, Maynooth and Múinteoir Aoife, in the first semester. It was a great pleasure to introduce them to room SE 007. The room was darkened and all set up ready to explore and have fun with shadow puppetry. The class worked in small groups to develop their own character puppets and to create their own story. Their suggested themes were; moving to secondary school, bullying online and in person, overuse of mobile phones and the impact of Covid and lockdown on them.

The shadow work was further developed into a large scale shadow theatre performance with BEd Yr 3 students. These projects were called CORE I and CORE II respectively. CORE, is an acronym for Curiosity, Openness, Reflection and Empathy. The themes of CORE were values which were most pertinent during my residency in Froebel Department over the past year.

CORE II involved all of the BEd Yr 3 students, in a shadow theatre performance. The final work is a video recording of the performance with a duration 11mins 45sec. This work was developed in collaboration with Gráinne Deery, Dr Triona Stokes and Laura Thornton with technical assistance from Dr. John Meegan.



Image 1: Vera demonstrates shadow making on the overhead projector, with 6th Class pupils, Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, Maynooth. Photo credit: Laura Thornton, 2023

### What initially drew you to exploring themes through the use of shadows and light?

I have been interested in the art of storytelling through shadow puppetry since I was a child. At the end of year one of the YPCE Residency I was bringing the Captured Moments artworks to the picture framer when the bright sun entered the perforations in the artwork, projecting the dots/holes in a swift movement onto an external wall and path. They danced as I moved the artwork until the sun faded as quickly as it appeared. I knew then that exploring light and shadow was something I wanted to explore further.

### Can you reflect on a memorable moment or breakthrough during your residency?

As mentioned previously, although the moment of breakthrough which impacted this year was in May 2023.

### How do you think the collaboration between artists and student teachers benefits the broader educational community?

Collaboration between artists and student teachers is of great benefit to the broader educational community. Providing time and space for relationship building between artists and student teachers allows for both parties to be impacted and inspired creatively. It provides opportunity for both professions to gain a deeper understanding of different practices and approaches to achieve a similar outcome. This has the potential to build confidence in alternative ways of seeing and problem solving which, from my perspective, is one of the many benefits to the broader educational community. The collaboration for me, as an artist who works in arts-in-education, is very relevant and has a great impact on my professional development and practice in that area.

### What do you hope the student teachers take away from their experience working with you?

At the end of this residency I hope the student teachers take away;

- A deepened sense of creative fun and play within the arts.
- A deeper understanding of the value of a creative process over a finished product and to document and display those processes
- An enhanced creative confidence



Image 2: CORE I - Shadow Puppetry video still, 'Life during covid lockdown' by 6th Class pupils of Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, Maynooth.



Image 3: CORE II, Shadow Theatre video still. Developed in collaboration with Froebel Department Yr.3 B.Ed. students



Image 4: Serendipity 2024. Video still. Collaborative project with Vera McEvoy and Laura Thornton.

CORE I - Shadow Puppetry, 6th Class pupils of Gaelscoil Uí Fhiaich, Maynooth:  
[https://youtu.be/\\_VhwZwig92Q](https://youtu.be/_VhwZwig92Q)

CORE II, Shadow Theatre, Froebel Department Yr.3 B.Ed. students:  
<https://youtu.be/aeJxedBg30o>

Serendipity 2024, Collaborative project with Vera McEvoy and Laura Thornton:  
<https://youtu.be/OY8AgAU1MJE>

### Do you have any final thoughts or reflections on your year as an artist in residence that you'd like to share?

The images and projects shared in this article are all of special importance to me as part of the residency, each for a different reason. I enjoyed working with the 6th class pupils on CORE I project and in understanding what they are generally curious about. I was delighted with the openness, energy and enthusiasm with which BEd Yr3 students embraced the CORE II project. They combined many elements, for example; dance and movement, mime, music, drama, visual art, foley sound, storytelling, performance, set design and management, all in a way that seemed effortless. I really enjoyed collaborating and chatting about all things art with Laura Thornton as we worked with natural elements to develop Serendipity (video, duration 10mins 45 seconds). I also worked with Laura as she developed her installation artwork entitled Embodiment, dimensions 300 x100 x100cm.

### Looking back on the project, is there something you feel you have learned?

Looking back on the residency project I have learned so much from the students and staff that I have worked alongside and from conversations which took place. I have gained a greater knowledge and perspective on how I can be a more effective artist when working in the school environment with both teachers and students.



Image 5: Embodiment 2024. Installation by Laura Thornton in collaboration with Vera McEvoy. Dimensions: 300 x100 x100cm. Photo credit: Laura Thornton. Showcase exhibition 1st May 2024



# Froebel Ball 2024



We would like to thank the Maynooth University Froebel Society for organising this year's Froebel Ball. The Ball took place in the Glenroyal Hotel, Maynooth on the 29th of April.

This annual event is always popular with tickets in high demand. This year was no different, with Froebel staff and students alike attending on the night. A wonderful evening was had le go leor craic agus ceoil ar fáill!



POSTER FOR THE FROEBEL BALL 2024, ORGANISED BY THE FROEBEL SOCIETY, MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY.



# An Ghaeltacht '24

“Bhí go leor le déanamh againn ann, chuaigh cuid mhór dúinn suas ar Earagail ar Domhnach na Cásca, agus bhí tráth an gceist ar siúil lá eile. Bhí an-chraic againn ag na céilithe agus cadhaiceáil chomh maith!”

“Chuaigh muid ar chuart chuig an Ghaeltacht i rith na Cásca. Rinneamar Scóraíocht, ag déanamh plé ar drámaí is scannáin éagsuala, mar shampla ‘Sister Act’, ‘Annie’, agus ‘Barbie’. Le spraoi, spóirt, is craic den scoth, cinnte gur d’fhoghlaimid go leor.”

## BUATEOIRÍ ÓN TRÁTH NA GCEIST



## PÍOSA TUAIRIMÍOCHTA AR AN GHAELTACHT le Rory O'Connor (PMed 1)

I mo thuairimse, is é Gaoth Dobhair an áit is galánta i dtuaisceart na hÉirinn. Bhí mé ag teacht ar Tír Chonaill ar an 23ú lá de mhí Mhárta. Fuair mé an bus idir Baile Atha Cliath agus Dún na nGall. Ar dtús, bhí an bhóthar an-leadránach, ach athrú an rud sin nuair a shroich mé Dún na nGall. Lá an-fhliuch a bhí ann, ach bhí an radharc go hálainn fós. Sléibhte agus lochanna, trá agus farraige. Suas agus síos na cnoic, an bóthar chomh sleamhain le heascann. Bhí an Eargail le feiceáil i bhfad i gcéin, in ard sna scamail. Fuair mé mo chéad chiall de dhaonra Gaoth Dobhair tríd an tiománaí bus, mar thug sé síob dom idir stad an bhus agus mo theach lóistín, in ainneoin nár stop an tseirbhís ansin.

Chuaigh muid go dtí an tAcadamh i lár Gaoth Dobhair gach lá chun ceacht agus cluichí a glacadh. Oibríonn daoine ó gach cearn d'Éirinn san Acadamh, an chuid is mó as Dún na nGall. Ag an tús, bhí mé ag streachailt leis an mblás Gaeilge sa tuaisceart. Is canúint anna difriúla é, mar shampla, úsáideann siad 'maddah' in ionad 'madra'. Ní creid mé go raibh aon seans agam leis an teanga ansin ag an am sin.

Ach, lá i ndiaidh lae, d'éirigh mé níos tuisceanaí agus níos eolaí ar an gcanúint, rud a bhí dochreidte cúpla mí ó shin. Chuaigh muid go dtí Gabhla, oileann beag in aice leis an



## Radhairc ó bharr an Earagail - Grianghraif le hEoin Moran (PMed 1)





# Turas go dtí an Rinn



**Thug 21 feitheoirí agus lucht riaracháin Froebel cuairt ar an Rinn i Mí Aibreáin chun a gcuid Gaeilge a chleachtadh. Seo tuairisc ó Sheán Ó Casaide:**

Ar dtús ba mhaith liom ard bhuíochas a ghabháil le Séamie Ó Neill as ucht an turas seo a eagrú. Fuaireamar fíor fáilte chuig an Rinn agus bhí ranganna agus gníomhaíochtaí suimiúla agus tairbheacha eagraithe dúinn. Déarfainn gur bhain gach éinne a bhí páirteach sa turas taitneamh as gach uile gné den chúrsa. Rinne an fhoireann go léir tréan iarracht gach duine a spreagadh chun a gcuid Gaeilge a úsáid agus d'éirigh leo an cuspóir sin a bhaint amach.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH SÉAMIE O'NEILL



learn about education systems worldwide. I was also fortunate to visit Kolkata with the Hope Foundation on more than one occasion. These were seminal experiences that shaped my educational philosophy. I was also lucky to work with wonderful students in Froebel, students who are bright, talented, engaged, and enthusiastic and very dedicated to teaching. That made my job very easy!

**WHAT DO YOU FEEL WAS YOUR BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE FROEBEL DEPARTMENT?**

I was lucky in Froebel to have a very strong School Placement Committee which worked with me over the years to develop our School Placement Model. From feedback received from schools and students, it appears to be very successful and provides students with a wide range of educational experiences, not just in mainstream but in a wide variety of settings which enrich the student experience.

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ALL THE STUDENTS IN THE DEPARTMENT?**

To be open to learning at all times in their future careers, to engage in continuous professional learning, both formal accredited courses such as the Master of Education (Research in Practice) and informal summer courses and CPD. We should always be open to new ideas and approaches in order to best provide for all children in our care.

**HOW WAS YOUR TIME IN THE FROEBEL DEPARTMENT?**

Over the last 44 years I have worked in four different educational settings and have been blessed to work with some incredible people in all four, people who were supremely dedicated to education and who know what good education is. I loved my time teaching in a primary school, Scoil Treasa Firhouse, where I started in 1980. I then spent 9 very fulfilling years as a primary school principal in a DEIS school in Sandycroft. I ended up in Froebel when Brian Tubbert invited me to do a once-off lecture on educational disadvantage in May 2001, and the following week was offered a full-time lecturing job. In all I have spent 23 years in Froebel, 12 years in Blackrock, followed by 11 years in Maynooth. I have really enjoyed my time in Froebel, working with colleagues, students, and schools to create an effective model of Initial Teacher Education.

**ARE THERE ANY MEMORIES DURING YOUR TIME IN THE DEPARTMENT THAT STAND OUT TO YOU?**

The main memories that I will take with me are the colleagues that I have worked with, people who are passionate about education and who strive to improve outcomes for the children in our primary school. The Froebel Department Mission Statement states that our goal 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. Apart from working with great colleagues, I also had a number of opportunities to travel to other jurisdictions such as Finland, Denmark, South Africa, Denmark, Czech Republic and the UK to

**WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?**

I hope to do some travel, starting with a cycling trip to France in September. I also hope to do some volunteering, and I have a number of educational projects that I will remain involved with. Most of all I am looking forward to avoiding the M50 in the middle of winter! Tá súil agam chomh maith níos mó ama a chaitheamh i nGaeltacht na nDéise.



# North South Student Exchange

Le Ella Reilly agus Laura Christie

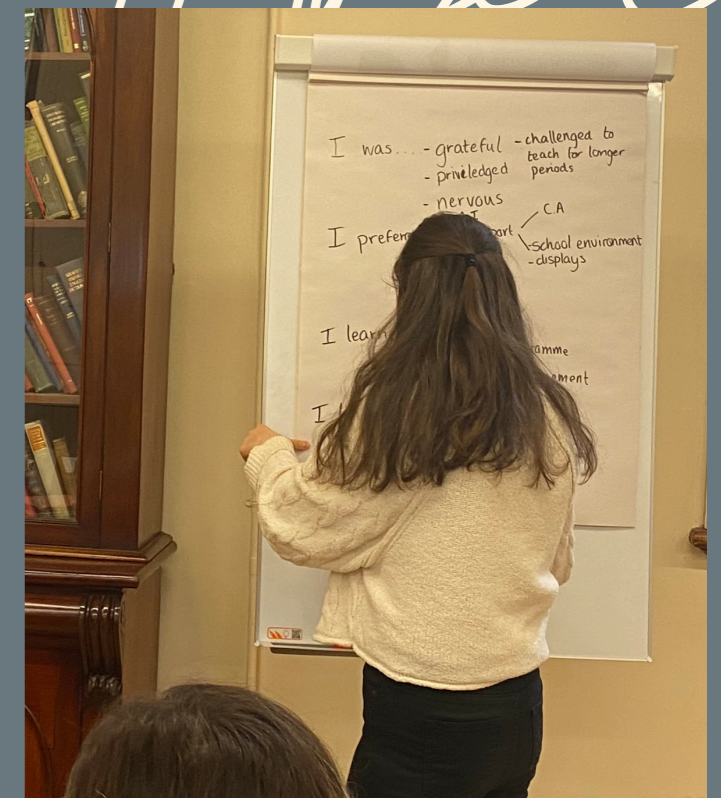


When beginning 3rd Year in Froebel, we could never have imagined that we would have the opportunity to engage in an incredible school placement experience in Belfast City. Thanks to SCoTENS, we got the opportunity to observe the different values and methods of teaching and learning within a different jurisdiction, while completing our senior school placement.

Along the way, we connected with fellow 3rd Year teaching students from the North and the South of Ireland, and we were able to openly discuss and experience first-hand, the differences in primary education both North and South. Furthermore, we enjoyed living in Queens University accommodation with our fellow SCoTENS participants.

As you can imagine teaching placements can, at times, be challenging. As a result, SCoTENS encouraged us to step out of our comfort zone, by navigating a new city, implementing a new

curriculum and adjusting to a new education system! Therefore, this was an invaluable opportunity which we feel has broadened our outlook on education. The ideas, skills and dispositions we have acquired along this journey, will undoubtedly shape the teachers we will become. We Are grateful to have been chosen for this programme, and if you have the opportunity to participate, we can assure you it will certainly be an enriching experience.





## AWARDS STUDENTS

### **EIMEAR COLREAVY**

CARLISLE AND BLAKE

2023

### **LAURA KERINS**

EARLY CHILDHOOD IRELAND TOP

STUDENT AWARD

2023

### **SIOBHAN CAREY**

KATHERINE LALLY FROEBEL GIFT BA

2023

### **RAINA BYRNE**

KATHERINE LALLY FROEBEL GIFT BED

2023

### **MELISSA NÍ SCOLAÍ**

KATHERINE LALLY FROEBEL GIFT BED

2023

### **HELEN HUGHES**

KATHERINE LALLY FROEBEL GIFT PMED

2023

### **CARA AIMEE ELLARD**

PDISE PRIMARY BURSARY

2023

### **CONOR JAMES DE FAOITE**

VERE FOSTER BED

2023

### **AIKLING LYONS**

VERE FOSTER PMED

2023

## INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS

### INTERVARSITY DANCE

SHAUNA JOHNSTON



### DRAMA SOCIETY

ARIANNA MCKIRDY



### MUSICAL SOCIETY

ENDA KEATING AND MOLLY WILSON



### MUSIC

ANGELA MORELEY





# INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS

## SHAUNA JOHNSTON



### How long have you been dancing for?

What drew you to Irish dancing?

I started Irish dancing lessons in my local community centre when I was 4 years old. My older sister had been to lessons before me so I had to try it out as we did everything together. I did not have much interest in it until I started to compete in feiseanna . From then on I have had a drive to do well and become better at the hobby.

### Can you tell me a bit about your dancing achievements and your experience this year in the society?

I am grateful to have had many successful experiences in Irish dancing since a young age. I have competed in many local and worldwide championships. In 2012, I competed at my first world championships in Belfast. I was 11 years old at the time and placed 11th in the world. Since then, I have competed in 5 more world championships placing 4th in London and 5th in Boston. I stopped dancing in

competitions during my leaving cert year as I could not commit to it as much as I used to, however I still attended dance classes until I began college in 2020. From there I joined Maynooth Universities dance society. I have since danced in 3 intervarsity competitions. This year the dance intervarsities was hosted by DCU in the Helix, Dublin. I was lucky enough to choreograph the Irish dance piece alongside 2 other girls on the team and I am looking forward to choreographing the team for next year's competition.

### What's your favourite part about dancing?

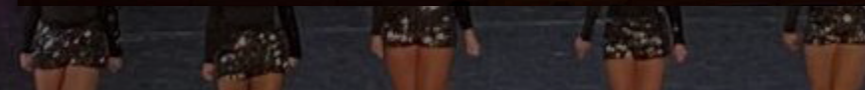
My favourite part about dancing is seeing people's positive reactions while doing someone that I love to do . I enjoy the feeling that comes with entertaining other people as well as enjoying myself. Alongside this , before dancing on stage for a lot of people, it can be nerve-wracking. However, this usually turns to adrenalin and I feel proud of myself afterwards helping to boost my confidence.

### How does your dance experience help you in the classroom?

During my previous placement, I taught many traditional Irish dances during PE lessons. Having the experience in this area allowed me to teach the children confidently in this area helping the lessons to run smoothly.



I have also found that dancing has helped me to teach music lessons as I have been able to develop rhythmic awareness from it. Dancing is great for overall health and well-being and one of the messages I aim to give to the children In school is that you can keep fit while enjoying yourself, it does not have to seem like intense exercise!





# INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS

## ARIANNA MCKIRDY



**Arianna wrote and directed two plays during this academic year. The first play, 'Solo' took place in Dublin during November. Her second play, 'Cliché' took place in the Aula Maxima on the 1st and 2nd of May.**

### How did you get into drama?

I started drama 3 years ago. It started off as acting, I actually kind of hated it but I choose to continue as it was the only thing on after Covid19 at the time. I noticed that people were writing and submitting plays to the festivals, so I decided to try it too. I enjoyed this and decided to do the master's in creative writing last year.

### Tell us a little bit about the play Solo...

The play Solo is based off of the idea that the waitlist for having a wedding in St. Patrick's Church on South Campus is 10 years. I was thinking about this, and I thought 'what if a girl was so insane that she put her name down and then when the time came around, she

realised she had to find someone to marry! So, I ran with this idea! It developed into the story about a girl and her best friend who put their names down together because she was in love with the idea of getting married there. Then, when the time comes, she persuades him to get married to her there! The wedding ends up being a celebration of her life as she was actually slowly dying. I was hoping that the audience would come away from the play feeling the importance of living their life to the fullest.

### What advice would you give to others who are thinking of writing a play?

I'm not sure why but creating can feel so stupid and embarrassing sometimes. It's not the same as saying 'I played a match' or that 'I'm on a team.' I'm putting something that is in my head out there. People can actually find that bad, people could think it was awful and you have to take that risk. Having all the talent in the world isn't what matters, you need to actually have the courage to put things out there and take the risk. Obviously, you need to practise your craft and it matters to do your best and aim to write something good but what matters the most is to get it out there. That's the advice that I would put out there.



### How does being a part of the drama society benefit you in the classroom?

Drama helps you push through and to get up there on the stage. It's a skill that you learn and develop. It helps kids with speaking in class and presenting. It's so important for them to learn to push through and learn how to get over the fear of being embarrassed and the idea of 'everyone laughing' at them. This is how drama is such a benefit to children, and I want to bring this into my classroom.





# INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS

## ENDA KEATING & MOLLY WILSON



**Enda Keating and Molly Wilson were a part of the Maynooth's Musical society's production of Cats.**

**Molly was one of the key acrobats and dancers in the show. Molly and another Maynooth student, Eimear Molloy won the AIMS award for the Best Ensemble for their performance of Mungojerries and Rumpleteazer which featured acrobatics in the choreography.**

**Tell us about the musical that you were a part of this year...**

This year we did a production of Cats. The story is based on an old collection of poems by T.S. Elliot. Rather than your conventional story that you would see in regular musicals – it's a bit different! Andrew Lloyd Webber composed music around these poems and then was able to put the story together. Rather than sticking to the general production of Cats, we went for a non-replica show – we went for more of a cabaret style. So, in the actual aula maxima, it would look like you were in a cabaret or a club. All the cats were dressed more as people rather than in leotards. It was a nice, different

approach and allowed us to feel a more personal side to the cats, which we were delighted to do.

**How does your experience in the musical society benefit you in the classroom?**

Enda: As a teacher, acting is a massive part of teaching because when you are in the classroom with children, you are playing the part the teacher. You are acting for 5 or 6 hours a day; you are presenting yourself as a character. So, we were just absolutely delighted to get that experience in the musical society with Cats. I got the opportunity to take my strengths on music with piano and join the orchestra. I was able to play the piano in character throughout the show. These are skills that can be clearly transferable to the classroom.

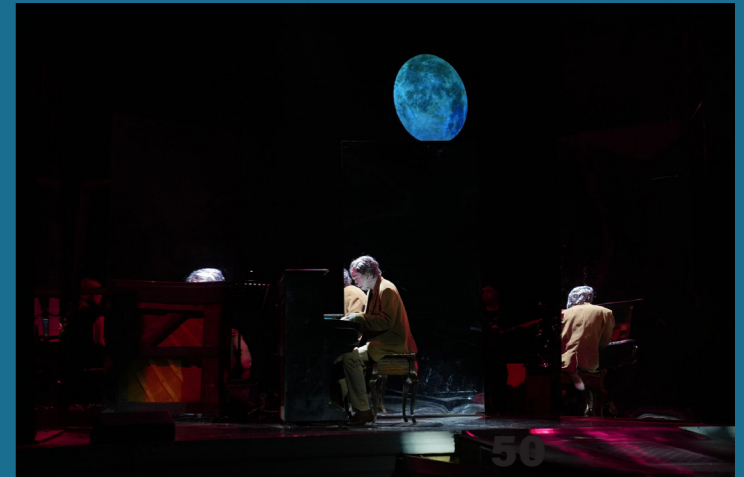
Molly: In the musical society you are talking with lots of different people, choreographers and directors, from this you really learn how to talk to people in a formal setting. Just like how you might talk to a teacher or principal on placement. When I was on placement, I felt like I was really able to talk to the teacher and express what I wanted to do because of my experience

during the production. I was really confident when asking for advice as I had to do the same in the musical society. So, in general, it has really improved my communication skills. As well as this, because I am acting a role and speaking up, I am well able to control a classroom. So my classroom management has really improved. Extracurriculars also help so much as they give you an escape from placement and from the classroom.

**What advice would you give to anyone thinking of taking part in a musical?**

Molly: Some people think you can't be a part of societies or take part in a musical production when you are doing teaching, but it is so possible. I did all three productions this year, it's busy but it teaches you time management. You literally have no time to spare so it means you just get your study and essays done. There's no time to overcomplicate it, it's really good practise for actually being a teacher because you won't have a lot of time. It also means that when you are a teacher you can have extracurricular activities after school as you will be so used to having a busy schedule.

Enda: Don't hold back. Doing a show gives you so many opportunities. So just be yourself and give it your all. It's also practise for the classroom. You could consider it practise for teaching in terms of voice projection and performance! We are so proud of ourselves for being able to balance everything this year.





# INSPIRATIONAL STUDENTS

## ANGELA MORELEY



### What Drew you to rap music?

I was always into music in general as a child from singing and playing piano from 7-17 years. But I got into rap when I was about 14, when I saw the cover of Hello by Adele, by Anth and Conor Maynard. I was able to memorize it quickly. And thought maybe I could do the same in terms of writing my own. At 14 I had a lot going on in my own head as most teenagers do. And I use rap as a therapeutic outlet and one I would be lost without, and I haven't looked back since.

### Can you tell me a little bit about your experience so far?

I started writing songs at 14 but of course when you start anything it's never very good!. I took a break from about 16 until the week before my 19th birthday. I took a break because I was afraid of what people would think of me or being made fun of. But all changed the

week before my 19th birthday when I lost a childhood friend of mine unexpectedly. From there I knew I wanted to do something to honor his memory. Over the that year I wrote potential parts for the song each day and it really became a coping mechanism for me. After I recorded it, it took me a few months to build up the courage to show his family. I'm so grateful I got their blessing to release. On the 22nd of September 2023 the song "Never Be Replaced" was released on Spotify and the reaction and support has been better than I ever thought it could be. And there is plenty more to come with my next single "Power House" releasing on the 24th of June.

Music is such a diverse hobby to have, I also participate in the battle rap scene in Dublin (think of 8 mile). I went to my first event in 2021 and I immediately loved it and thought I could do it or at least try it. I told myself I would come to the next few events to see if I liked it

A year or so later I decided to debut as a battler. It is nerve wrecking, and the preparation is long and repetitive. I would go as far as to say it's even more creative than songwriting as you have to write 3 rounds of material based on one person and put your own twist on it. However, there is no better feeling having the crowd behind you and enjoying your performance. I've battled 4 times now, however my first two opponents didn't show up but I still performed my material for the crowd. I had my first opponent February gone by which was a challenge for me but one I embraced. Only as of last Saturday the 8th of June I got my first win which I am over the moon with. And there is plenty more wins to come.



### What inspires you to write music?

My inspiration for music can come from anywhere or anyone. But it mainly tends to be from my personal life and things I've gone through or have happened to others around me. I tend to use the notes app in my phone as a journal to express myself and sometimes one attempt of me making sense of something can turn into a song. I find when I put pressure on myself to write nothing comes to me but if I listen to a beat on youtube 9 times out of ten something will spark in me.

### How can your experience with music help you in the classroom ?

When I think of music and teaching and how they can relate to each other, the first thing that comes into my head is performing. Performing in a sense where you have to be confident and create who you want to be as a teacher, the same way you would create who you want to be as an artist. The creative side definitely helped with lesson plans and coming up with an idea in my head and watching it come to life is the same concept when you start with a song idea and bring it all the way to release on different platforms.

