

# KCETB ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

# 2024



Photo left to right: Eileen Curtis, Chief Executive, Jim Phelan, Darragh Phelan, Conor Power, Principal Coláiste Cois Siúire, Pauline Egan, Director of Schools.

## Vicky Phelan honoured as KCETB Alumni Winner 2024

Kilkenny and Carlow ETB was delighted to honour Vicky Phelan past student of Coláiste Cois Siúire as our Alumni Award Winner at the ETBI Day in Thomond Park on Thursday, 14<sup>th</sup> March.

Vicky Phelan attended Coláiste Cois Siúire, for her post primary education before attending the University of Limerick where Vicky became a researcher in the Centre for Applied Language Studies. Vicky always placed immense value on education throughout her life. She referred to herself as a 'true life-long learner' and often referenced how education unlocked her passion for travel and paved the way for her career path in life.

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 **kcetb**  
Bord Oileachais agus Oiliúna  
Chill Chainnigh agus Cheatharlach  
Kilkenny and Carlow  
Education and Training Board

As a household name, Vicky's story is widely known: a false-negative cervical smear test result in 2011 which ultimately resulted in a diagnosis of cervical cancer in 2014. But rather than accepting her fate, Vicky, always inquisitive, wished to find out how this could have occurred. Vicky commenced a brave campaign which unearthed what became known nationally as the 'Cervical Check scandal'. Subsequent investigations revealed that approximately 221 women were similarly affected. In speaking out, Vicky gave a powerful voice to those women who had been suffering in silence, some of whom who had died.

In 2018, four years after her own cancer diagnosis, Vicky Phelan gave a now-infamous address on the steps of The High Court that would result in important changes as to how cervical checks are carried out in Ireland. Her positive impact on the future health of all Irish women is simply immeasurable.

Vicky battled her illness bravely but, sadly, in November 2022, Vicky Phelan passed away. A scholarship recognising her passion for education has been founded in her memory in Coláiste Cois Siúire with the support of her family who wish for Vicky's love of life-long learning to continue to inspire others.

Vicky's story is inspiring and tells of rare resilience and power born out of her formative years. It is an account of how one woman can move mountains - even when fighting for her own life.

Kilkenny and Carlow ETB was proud and honoured for Vicky's husband Jim and son Darragh to accept the Vicky Phelan Alumni Award at the National ETB Week event in Thomond Park. A sculpture designed and made by woodturner Kathleen Walsh specifically to commemorate this event was presented to Jim and Darragh.



## Regional Education And Language Team

The Regional Education and Language Teams (REALT) were established in each of the 16 ETBs with the primary role of building on existing regional education support structures, with an initial focus on assisting newly-arrived families from abroad in securing school places, at both primary and post-primary level. While each REALT Co-ordinator is a member of their local ETB, they work with all schools in their area, regardless of the school's management affiliation, to ensure that every child can attend school as soon as possible on their arrival to Ireland.

While the initial focus of REALT was to assist Beneficiaries of Temporary Protection (BOTBs) in the wake of the war in Ukraine, the role now includes families who are seeking International Protection (IP) in Ireland due to their home country no longer being safe for them. As such, REALT works with people from around the world, with varying cultures, religions and backgrounds, in helping them integrate into their new communities here in Kilkenny and Carlow.

In terms of the types of supports provided, REALT Co-ordinators assist families across all aspects of school life, from securing initial places in schools and organising school transport, to other aspects such as educational supports and guidance, as well as offering advice to parents and guardians on the Irish educational system.

Over the past year, KCETB has helped many Ukrainian and IP applicants settle into their new lives in Ireland, and this would not have been possible without the support of organisations both from within the KCETB network and external agencies within the Kilkenny and Carlow area. With Community Integration Forums in each local authority being formed from these key organisations and agencies, REALT will ensure that all future individuals who arrive in the Kilkenny and Carlow areas will continue to receive the same "céad míle fáilte" that has been offered to the thousands of Ukrainians and hundreds of International Protection applicants who have arrived here to date.



# Welcome

As the 2023/24 academic year draws to a close, we reflect on another busy year filled with rich learning experiences in all our schools and centres. Every year brings its own dynamic as students settle in, activities and competitions begin, and the rhythm of another school year unfolds. Every aspect of life is represented in the pages of our Newsletter giving a flavour of the learning and enjoyment that is manifest daily in all our learning communities.

These articles provide tangible evidence of the experiences of our students and the dedication of our staff team as they share not only their subject knowledge but also their interest in and enthusiasm for learning that extends way beyond the classroom, through trips, games, and fundraisers for an extensive array of good causes. A sincere thank you to everyone for their contribution and for bringing to life our values of excellence in education, care, respect, equality and community every day in our schools, centres and services.

This year as part of national ETB Week celebrations we were asked to nominate an alumnus of Kilkenny and Carlow ETB, someone whom we thought represented the best of who we are, for this national award. We were proud to nominate Vicky Phelan, a past student of Coláiste Cois Siúire, who went on to study at the University of Limerick, graduating with a BA in European Studies and later achieved a Master's in Management in Education at SETU.



We chose Vicky as our recipient of this award because she placed immense value on education in her own life and often referred to herself as a true lifelong learner. She believed that her education was what allowed her to stand up for what she believed in. She was strong, determined, courageous and fearless in her search for the truth about the cervical smear scandal. She gave a voice to so many and we are proud of her and her legacy to others. We believe that she exemplified in every way our belief that learning has the power to change lives and build communities. Vicky did this and so much more during her life and we are proud to have shared part of her journey.

This year the term of office of our KCETB board, committees and boards of management comes to an end. I would like to thank all the members for their guidance and support for our work over the past 5 years. We are indebted to all who served for their commitment to and interest in the educational work that we do in our schools and colleges, our further education and training centres, our youth and community services and our music education programmes. I also extend my sincerest gratitude to all our directors, management and administrative teams and our staff in our schools, centres and services. Your wonderful work is truly valued and appreciated. A special word of thanks to Pauline Egan, Director of Schools for acting as editor of our Newsletter.

As another June dawns, we wish all our students well in their examinations and extend our gratitude to our retiring staff for their service. Your contribution has left a lasting legacy as you have shaped the lives of so many students and learners. You have been part of their journey and indeed of ours and have assisted our ambition to ensure that all our students Flourish through Learning with KCETB.

Go raibh maith agaibh go léir.

*Eileen Curtis*

Chief Executive

# Abbey Community College



*Ms Michelle Jefford, Principal Abbey Community College congratulates Abbey Community College student Caoimhe Barry on receiving ten distinctions in her Junior Cycle examinations.*

## Excellence in Education

In August 2023, we welcomed back over 1000 students and staff to Abbey Community College. We celebrated the outstanding achievements of the Class of 2023 when they received their Leaving Certificate results. It was also with great pride that we celebrated our Student of the Year for 2023, at the KCETB Student of the Year Ceremony.

As a school community, we gathered for our annual opening celebration. The theme chosen was “Be Your Own Champion”. Through prayer and inter-faith reflections, Fr. Whearty, students and staff all celebrated who we are as individuals as well as a whole-school community.

In October, we congratulated our Junior Cycle class of 2023 on their exceptional Junior Cycle examination results. We congratulate our student Caoimhe Barry who excelled and received the ultimate accolade of achieving ten distinctions. Not only is this an achievement at a local level for Caoimhe and Abbey Community College, but also at a national level too.

Our new student Learning Leaders group have been working together this year to help and support their peers with their learning. Their insight has been an important resource for us and they have provided useful guides to all year groups on effective study and note-taking techniques such as mind-maps, flashcards and highlighting. We look forward to the development of this student-led group during the next academic year.

Our school community’s hard work, curiosity, and thirst for knowledge have set a high standard for academic excellence within our school, allowing our students to shine brightly in all areas of their education.

## School Self-Evaluation

As a school community, we actively participate in the School Self-Evaluation process, working collectively, gathering feedback and implementing new initiatives, thus improving the teaching and learning experiences for students and staff.

This year, we have engaged with all school stakeholders through focus groups, surveys and conversations to identify a new Learning and Teaching focus for our school. Members of our staff have formed a Learning and Teaching Team to conduct action research in this area.

For whole-school Wellbeing, we have continued to promote the theme of Respect. Members of our Learning and Teaching Team are undertaking action research in Restorative Practice and we have also begun the process of achieving AsIAm Autism Friendly School status.



## Abbey Voice and Participation

Our students are at the core of what we do each day in Abbey Community College. This was evident in the engagement and active participation by our school community in the many whole-school initiatives that took place.

Distributed leadership, for both staff and students, is encouraged and promoted in our school. Some whole-school initiatives including Anti-Bullying Week, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Sustainability Week, Literacy Week and Wellbeing Week are true examples of collaborative work between our students and staff, with students taking the lead on the organisation of these events.

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities continued to complement and enhance the learner experience in Abbey Community College. Student participation and student voice, which inform clubs and activities, have allowed our students to succeed inside and outside of



*Members of Abbey Community College's amazing staff who took part in our annual Halloween Dress Up Day.*

the classroom. This year has been filled with remarkable achievements from our talented students across various areas. Their dedication and teamwork have brought immense pride to our school and inspired us all to become champions of our own endeavours. None of these opportunities would be possible without our dedicated and enthusiastic staff.



*Members of Abbey Community College's school community promoting our rich school culture at the KCETB Ethos Showcase as part of ETB Week.*

## School Pride and Reflection

Reflecting on this year and acknowledging the efforts of our students, staff, management, parents and guardians, we are so very proud of our school community who continue to live and promote our school ethos with enthusiasm and commitment as we all work Together Towards Excellence.



*Ms Michelle Jefford, Principal Abbey Community College; Ms Grace Brosnan, Abbey Community College Student of the Year 2023; Cllr Fergal Browne, Chairperson KCETB; Ms Helen O'Connor, Deputy Principal Abbey Community College attending the 2023 KCETB Student of the Year Awards.*

## Our School Ethos

Our school ethos is evident in everyday school life. We are a centre for learning in the heart of the community who support and encourage a positive environment for students and staff, which in turn allows students' academic achievement to evolve.

This year, our Ethos project Mainistreacha an Choláiste involved facilitating a lesson for all students in our school. Students explored the rich history of Abbey Community College by researching their class names – all named after Irish Abbeys. This furthered their understanding of the important foundations of our school and the influences they have on our school's unique character.



# ETHOS IN ACTION IN SCHOOLS



Winning photo of the Ethos Photography competition (#Equality) taken by Sophie Jandl, student Scoil Aireagail

The Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board (KCETB) schools are state, co-educational, multi-denominational institutions, reinforced by the core values of excellence in education, care, equality, community, and respect. These principles permeate every aspect of school life, from policy implementation to practical application, and from our actions to our interactions. In the academic year 2023/24, the integration of our ethos into the 13 post-primary schools has seen significant deepening, supported by a diverse range of initiatives. As a result, our core values have become more manifest and operational within each school, enhancing the overall learning environment for students, staff and the wider community.

A number of schools have integrated ethos into their School Self Evaluation and DEIS Plans, utilising resources from Education and Training Boards Ireland (ETBI), such as step-by-step screencasts and ready-made questionnaires. This integration serves to cement ethos as a cornerstone of their school planning. Additionally, several schools within KCETB piloted the Identity, Multi-Belief and Values (IMBV) Education for first-year students, either as a short course or as a curricular expression, with this option being open to all schools from September 2024.

Guidance on our ethos originates from the Patrons Framework on Ethos, a nationally utilised document across all ETB schools. Each school has appointed an Ethos Lead,

who collaborates with the Ethos Coordinator and spearheads all ethos-related initiatives within their own school. This pivotal role is essential for the successful incorporation of our ethos, and we are fortunate in Kilkenny and Carlow to have such proactive and committed Ethos Leads in each of our 13 schools. Substantial progress has been made in maintaining each school's unique culture and context while embedding the ETB ethos effectively.

A significant Ethos Showcase Event took place on the 12th of March 2024 at Grennan College, celebrating the ongoing positive initiatives in each school. This event highlighted the use of our ethos as a guiding principle within each school community.



Photo taken by Eden Gillespie student of Abbey Community College, Winner in the Theme of Respect category

For example, Tyndall College demonstrated their commitment to 'Excellence in Education' through their successful project at the BT Young Scientist Competition in the Junior Group for Mental Health and Wellbeing, entitled "Is TikTok the Next Pandemic?". Duiske College exemplified the core value of 'Community' through a research project that explored vital community spaces in Graigueenamanagh, culminating in the creation of stop-motion animations displayed at the event. Coláiste Eoin focused on the core value of 'Care,' detailing their successful Grandparents/Special Persons Day, which celebrated multi-generational relationships. The day also featured awards to the winners of the Ethos Photography Competition, school participation awards and fantastic musical performances by



Kilkenny Vocational School Display





*KCETB Ethos showcase hosted in Grennan College*

students from Grennan College. As the Ethos Showcase also overlapped with Seachtain na Gaeilge, there was also an amazing array of traditional Irish music and dancing from Coláiste Pobail Osraí and Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach. The showcase was a resounding success, with considerable acclaim due to each Ethos Lead for their exemplary organisation of their schools display.

Kilkenny and Carlow were also well-represented at the National Ethos Leads Symposium held in Athlone on the 22nd of April. The symposium featured expert keynote speakers, panel discussions, and a series of interactive workshops dedicated to various aspects of ethos within our schools, attracting over 160 ethos leads nationwide.

Throughout this academic year, KCETB has reaffirmed itself as a leader in advancing our core values and the integration of ethos within our school communities. The Ethos Coordinator for KCETB, Conor Walsh, extends his gratitude to all Ethos Leads and their teams for their exceptional dedication and efforts concerning this theme.



*Grennan College display*



*Scoil Aireagail's display*



# Grennan College

Amongst all the different activities, studies and engagement of our teachers and students, Grennan College was successful in being selected as one of only 25 secondary schools in Ireland to participate in the Creative Schools Project, which is run over two years in collaboration with the Irish Arts Council and a creative associate linked artist. Funding is provided to support projects, speakers and activities that lend themselves to the goals of the project.



*Talented Musicians and Singers from Grennan College.*

Lead by Ms. Sarah Fitzpatrick (Music teacher) and Ms. Laura Gladney (Art teacher), a Creative School's team was put together, comprising of students from 1st to 6th Year and teachers. Through the collective collaboration and the input of our collaborating artist, Tunde Tothe, the project was officially launched in the school on Tuesday 20th February 2024 with music, recitations, displays and speeches from students, teachers, and invited guests. We look forward to the various projects coming to life over the span of the programme.

This year, Grennan College hosted the 13 Kilkenny and Carlow ETB secondary schools in order to showcase our ETB community, as well as to mark the annual ETBI Ethos celebrations. All 13 schools created and displayed elements of their own school ethos at their respective stands and were entertained by music and dance from



*Sean Óg O'Sullivan, Principal Grennan College, welcoming all to the Ethos Showcase 2024.*



*Students Alex Caffery and Ruby Ridout, Ethos Ambassadors Grennan College.*

some of the schools and from Grennan College. It was a wonderful spectacle of community, interaction and academic excellence from all of the schools, and we were proud to have been able to invite and host all of our visitors. Well done to all of our students who helped out in all aspects, with special thanks to Ms. Kinsella (Grennan College Ethos Lead), Ms. Fitzpatrick (Music) and Ms. Gladney (Art work and displays).

2023 / 2024 saw the eagerly anticipated opening of the first Autism class in Grennan College, with 4 students enrolling. This has been a very successful and a positive step for the school and the community. Grennan College is looking forward to opening the second of its sanctioned Autism classes in the 2024 / 2025 academic year. The Department of Education has approved the building project for the conversion of existing rooms/spaces to a fully equipped Autism unit as well as a building to replace these spaces/rooms to expand current capacity. The future is very bright for our school.

This year saw the retirement of our long serving teachers, Ms. Eleanor Reddy and Ms. Angela Downey Browne (44 years each) and also of Ms. Miriam O' Donnell our Deputy Principal (28 years). We wish them good health and a long and happy retirement.



*Miriam O' Donnell, Deputy Principal, Cllr Fergal Brown, Chairperson, KCETB Board, Eleanor Reddy, Teacher, and Sean Óg O'Sullivan, Principal Grennan College at the KCETB retirement function*

On behalf of the whole school and community Sean Óg O'Sullivan, would like to thank all parents, students and contributors to the ongoing development and growth of Grennan College.



# Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) Kilkenny



**Learners attending the level 4 Healthcare programme.**

*Back: Barry Traynor, the BTEI, Maria Silva, Mosharaf Hosen, Dovile Kilmasevkiene, Monica Babiracka, Veronica Hernandez Mora, Frances Codd, Thomas O'Brien  
Front: Karen McKernan (Teacher), Mohamed Ibrahim, John Bowles, Carmel-Anne White, Sukhvir Singh Chatial*

At the start of term, BTEI Kilkenny welcomed a new Co-ordinator, Jennifer Ryan. Inclusivity, pathways, and learner supports were the three keys areas which Jennifer focused on expanding in BTEI Kilkenny over the year.

It was a year of firsts for BTEI Kilkenny. We hosted our very first open day in November 2023, welcoming new applicants and current students alike to come and meet our lovely teaching staff to find out what courses we are on offer. The morning was a great success which saw both the January intake and the biscuit order increase! We also held our first class in Thomastown Community Centre offering courses to those not only in the Thomastown area but also the surrounding townlands. September 2024 will see an even bigger expansion in course offerings in this area and we look forward to welcoming the community and helping them on their learning journey!

Engaging with support services throughout Kilkenny such as Amárach Nua and K-CAT have helped us provide an all-inclusive, practical, and alternative pathway to achieving educational goals to those who are most vulnerable in our community. Amárach Nua is a CE scheme working with those who are in rehabilitation and, in conjunction with BTEI, participants were able to complete QQI certification at level 4 in modules on our Horticulture programme. We are excited to see this continuing next term with BTEI being able to offer more modules in different subject areas. K-Cat is a centre in Callan offering art and design modules with the goal of integrating those with additional needs with the wider community and, in conjunction with BTEI, were able to offer Digital Photography to participants for the first time. We look forward to seeing all the magnificent photographs when the programme concludes.

Closer to home, we saw our Danville campus reintroduce Special Needs Assisting and Horticulture programmes which have only served to boost the sense of community and laughter throughout the halls of BTEI Kilkenny. The

Sports Recreation programme has seen our learners travel across the South East developing their skills in the most picturesque locations and learners are now heading into their instructor examinations which will indeed continue to promote the programme to upcoming participants. We increased supports for all learners, which included extra English language support sessions, computer support and spaces for students to study outside of class time. We have upgraded our skills room adding new equipment and moved it to a bigger location to facilitate both Healthcare and Early Learning care skills demonstrations. As well as catering to the students in our centres, we have opened our doors to learners from Ormonde College, Training Services and Music Generation which has helped to promote a sense of community amongst the centres in KCETB. Collaborations with the Kilkenny Young Film Makers and the local Defence Forces continue to grow and expand and we are looking forward to seeing some more exciting projects for 2024 / 2025 with these groups.

All of the great work in BTEI Kilkenny could not happen without the support of the teaching staff and administrative staff. The dedication to facilitating and supporting our learners on their journey is unparalleled. Jennifer Ryan wishes to take this opportunity to thank all and looks forward to seeing what great things can be achieved in BTEI in the coming 2024 / 2025 year.



*Lowland Leader learners conquering the hills!*

# Borris Vocational School

## An Accolade of Scholarships

Borris Vocational School is very proud of all its students' achievements. Over the past three consecutive years, a cohort of students have achieved the maximum 625 points in their Leaving Certificate. Other students have achieved over 600 and 500 points. The school community is very proud of the strong academic tradition of the school.

This year, two past-students won All-Ireland Scholarship Awards sponsored by JP McManus for their outstanding Leaving Certificate Results.

One of our students featured in the Irish Times after taking home the coveted Naughton Scholarship for outstanding Leaving Certificate results, receiving €20,000 for his third-level studies in the area of engineering, science and technology at university level.

Two students won University College Dublin entrance scholarships and another won a National University of Ireland, Maynooth entrance scholarship. There have been notable achievements for individual subject areas too, with one of our students receiving an award from The Engineering and Technology Teachers' Association of Ireland for achieving 100 per cent in his Higher Level Engineering exam. Another student achieved 100 per cent in her Home Economics Higher Level Leaving Certificate exam. The school is extremely proud of all our students' achievements at the school, both academically and in all other aspects of life.



*David Doyle recipient of the coveted Naughton Scholarship award*

*L-R Martin and Carmel Naughton, Principal Pat Coffey, Co. Carlow winning Scholar, David Doyle and Former Taoiseach Enda Kenny at the Naughton Foundation Scholarship Awards held at Trinity Business School, Trinity College Dublin on 14th October 2023.*

## A link to our past and bridge to our future



*Borris Vocational School students under Borris Viaduct with their own viaduct project.*

The school took pride in attending the KCETB Ethos showcase in Grennan College on the 12th March. This showcase came at a pivotal time for the school community. This year, the school has updated its school uniform and crest as preparations are ongoing for the change of name to Borris College in the next academic year. During a time of transition, a cohort of students and teachers worked on developing a display that was a link to our past as Borris Vocational School and a bridge to our future as Borris College.

Students and staff collaborated as the Borris Viaduct became the focal point of the school's display. A viaduct is a type of bridge that consists of a series of arches or columns supporting a long-elevated railway or road. Typically, a viaduct connects two points, allowing direct overpass across a valley, road, river or other obstacles.

Similarly, Borris Vocational School is a series of connected parts comprising of students, staff, parents, guardians and the wider school community. These partners collaborate to enable and encourage each student to reach their full potential.

As the school community prepares for its new school name, Borris College, we reflect on our past with pride. The school community looks forward with anticipation to this exciting new phase of its development.



## Leading Learning and Teaching

Borris Vocational School hosted its inaugural Teach Meet on the 23rd of August. In a supportive environment, teachers collaborated to develop and share different pedagogical practices and the effect these practices have on the learning environment.


The school's Magenta Principles team focused on sharing the Assemble and Challenge Grid Methodologies with colleagues, while the restorative practice team shared techniques to manage various situations. The school's additional learning needs department shared some very insightful tips on differentiation and the digital learning team upskilled staff with Teach Nimble techniques and the use of MS OneNote.

The school self-evaluation team gave an overview of targets set and they also explored the school's agreed teaching and learning strategies with staff. Senior management also gave an overview of the Employee Assistance Scheme and the importance of teacher wellbeing.

Teachers benefitted hugely from this sharing of expertise within the school's staff. This Teach Meet also launched the school's first ever teaching and learning newsletter 'Spark'. This is a monthly newsletter issued by our teaching and learning committee with insights and practices from different departments throughout the academic year.



L to R: Acting Deputy Principal, Sarah Doyle, KCETB Chief Executive, Eileen Curtis, Principal, Pat Coffey; Ethos Lead Teacher, Nathan Kelly with students from Borris Vocational School



# TEACH MEET 2023

## SUPPORTING EACH OTHER


Sharing Good Practice


Five short bursts of helpful resources, tips and information to use in your classroom.

**August 23rd 2023**  
11.30am - 1pm


*Curated by us, for us.*

**#BVSTeachMeet23**




**Room 22 Magenta Principles**  
Presenters: Mr O Donnchu and Ms Hennessy  
Magenta Methods Showcase  
*Assemble* and *Challenge Grid* methodologies



**Room 23 Restorative Practice**  
Presenters: Ms Bambury and Mr Healy  
Overview and introduction to Restorative Practice and how it can help manage various situations both in and out of the classroom.


**Room 24 SSE**  
Presenters: Ms Doran and Ms Doyle  

Understanding School Self Evaluation in our school  
*\*SSE Teacher Support Packs*

**Room 25 Additional Educational Needs**  
Presenters: Ms Kavanagh, Ms J Duggan and Ms C Duggan  
Additional Educational Needs Stations.  
A focus on understanding student AEN with some amazing tips on differentiation.

**Room 26 Digital Literacy / Teach Nimble**  
Presenters: Ms Airoldi, Mr Gallagher and Mr Delahunty  
Using MSOneNote to aid teaching and resources.  
Tips and tricks when using Office 365 and helpful hints with Ms Excel

**Room 27 Assistance Scheme**  
Facilitator: Mr Coffey  
Employee Assistance Scheme Information  
*\*Teacher Treat*


**12.55pm** Complete Staff Survey using your preferred method on your phone, tablet, laptop or paper.  
Launch of Teaching and Learning Newsletter 'Spark'


**1.00 pm** Lunch and Prize Draw


# VTOS Kilkenny



*Photography and Woodwork items on display at the Christmas Fair 2023*

VTOS Kilkenny operates under the Aegis of Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board, and is located at Bishop Birch Training Institute, Waterford Road, Kilkenny R95 D8HT. It's unique selling point can be attributed to its holistic curriculum that has focused on a broad sphere of learning, thus VTOS seeks to be education led, vocationally oriented and progression focused. VTOS is embedded at the heart of adult learning within the expanding FET (Further Education and Training) provision.

VTOS Kilkenny welcomed 6 different groups into the centre in September 2023 and the centre has been a hive of activity since then. With the help of our dedicated staff and an outward approach to education, VTOS encourages all participants to strive to reach their full potential.

## FIT Support

FIT is an industry led initiative that works in collaboration with Solas, ETB's and Third Level institutions. FIT delivers workshops in VTOS that complement our existing guidance service. Anne Cooper (Training and Employment Officer) with FIT delivered the following:

### CV Workshops:

28th November 2023  
29th November 2023

### Interview Preparation Workshops:

1st February 2024

Mock interviews took place on the 6th and on the 7th March 2024 and on the 12th and 14th March 2024. All participants found them extremely beneficial.

## QQI Authentication

This took place at VTOS Kilkenny in both May and November 2023. QQI modules were authenticated at QQI Levels, 3, 4, 5 and 6 in a wide range of subject areas. There was positive feedback from all examiners, noting that there was good integration of work between the modules and work presented by learners. All examiners recommended the centre to keep up the excellent standard of work.

## VTOS Craft Fair – A phenomenal success

There was a mix of new and returning exhibitors at the Annual Christmas Craft Fair, which took place on the 13th December at the VTOS centre. It was home to over 20 exhibitors who displayed a wide range of products, including woodcarving pieces, ceramics, art pieces and Christmas cards. Tea, coffee and mince pies added to the festive atmosphere. It was a showcase of magnificent talent, skill and artistry and allowed visitors to purchase a wide range of unique gifts.

## Awards night

The Ormonde Hotel was a fitting venue for the VTOS graduates of 2022 / 2023 to celebrate their awards. Over 50 participants received awards in a wide range of disciplines including Art, Craft and Design, Furniture and Design, Information Processing, eBusiness and City and Guilds. The night was a resounding success and one to treasure for family and friends.

## Fire Safety Awareness Training

This took place in the VTOS centre in November 2023. Training was provided by AQUA Fire Prevention and all staff found it to be most beneficial.

## First Aid Training

This took place in the VTOS centre on 21st December 2023 by Medcore Medical Services and it was an excellent course.



## French at VTOS Kilkenny

French is a rich language embraced by students worldwide and, here at VTOS Kilkenny, a diverse range of participants study French at both levels 3 and 5. They find the classes enjoyable and worthwhile, learning about French Culture and Traditions.

## Career Guidance

Career Guidance is provided by the Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service and it allows individuals and groups the opportunity to identify, explore and review educational career options.

## Quality Assurance

The QA support took place on the 19th of January 2024. This was a very beneficial experience as there was much discussion around Academic Integrity and Artificial Intelligence, as well as reviews of last year's external authenticator's reports.

## City & Guilds Report/Audit

A City & Guilds Audit was conducted remotely in October 2023 and the outcome was most successful. The centre was commended for its high quality of teaching and learning, and was recommended to continue delivering the same high standard of excellence into the future.



Frances Doyle eBusiness Teacher at VTOS Kilkenny, Martha Bolger Director of FET KCETB  
Geraldine Moran VTOS Kilkenny Co-ordinator

## Flourishing through Learning with KCETB

KCETBs FET Service held their Learner Voice Forum in the Springhill Court Hotel on 13th March 2024. It was a resounding success, with six participants from VTOS Kilkenny attending the event, as well as a past participant who was also on the discussion panel. It was a most exciting and worthwhile morning for the VTOS participants as it enabled them to network with other organisations across KCETB.

## Careers Fair 2024

Geraldine Moran (VTOS Co-Ordinator) attended the Careers Fair held in the Ormonde Hotel on the 24th April 2024. It was a very successful morning, where participants engaged with the wide range of courses offered by KCETB.

## Other Events

VTOS Kilkenny hosted their Annual Woodcarving Exhibition "Take Me Home" on 17th May at MacDonagh Junction Kilkenny. Participants from the QQI Level 5 VTOS class showcased their enigmatic pieces. It was a culmination of a year of hard work, passion and dedication.

## A note of thanks

I would like to thank our dedicated and enthusiastic teachers who provide top quality teaching and learning.

"Ar scáth a chéile a mhaireann na daoine"

Geraldine Moran  
VTOS Co-Ordinator



Woodwork and Ceramic items on display at the Christmas Fair 2023

# Kilkenny City Vocational School goes from strength to strength



Senior Girls Volley All Ireland Champions 2023 / 2024

It was a great start to the academic year 2023/24 as we welcomed our new Deputy Principal Mr. Michael Hickey to Kilkenny City Vocational School. Michael has hit the ground running and we wish him continued success in his new role.

In his own words:

*"I was delighted to join the Kilkenny City Vocational School community and the Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board. My role as Deputy Principal has been a very rewarding experience to date. Working with the students and parents of our school community has been immensely fulfilling. It has also been a pleasure to meet and work with such a dedicated and innovative group of new colleagues within KCVS and KCETB."*

We also welcomed Ms. Maura Cottrell, our new HSCL in August 2023. Maura is joining us from Grennan College and is our liaison person both with parents and the wider community.

The launch of our School Newsletter in September was a highlight for the whole KCVS Community. It is a visual and vibrant representation of all that

our students and teachers continue to achieve in our school. It is obvious from the input from all our students and staff that high-quality learning and teaching continues as a priority in KCVS and our culture of learning and improvement permeates all aspects of our lives.

Maths Week and Science Week this year were particularly special as the focus was on Maths and Science beyond the curriculum. This in turn has resulted in a significant increase in the numbers of students studying both Chemistry and Biology at Senior Cycle Level.



KCVS Students at Work





*Maths week Quiz*

Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities continue to enhance the student experience in KCVS. Our students were involved in many different national competitions this year, including the F1 in Schools Engineering Competition, Sci-Fest and the Student Enterprise Programme. This year we had six entries to Junk Kouture, the Youth Sustainable Fashion Competition, two of which have been selected for the Finals in Dublin. Sports continues to thrive in KCVS and we won the Senior All-Ireland Volleyball Championship for the second year in a row. Our U19 boys basketball team were also victorious in the South East Shield final as were our Senior boys soccer team in the KCETB final.

Our Green Schools initiative is continuing to go from strength to strength as our school has just been awarded our 7th Green Schools Flag, Global Citizenship Energy. Our success in Green Schools has inspired us to extend our work in the area of sustainability and we were recently lauded by the Department of Education Inspectorate on our

SEF – DEIS School of Excellence Initiative which explores the theme of “Sustainable Tourism, Rural and Urban”, a theme that is both current and certainly relevant with regard to progression routes for our students to Third Level and the world of work.

Our partnership with Business in the Community and Bank of Ireland continues to thrive. Our students have really benefitted from working with their Bank of Ireland mentors.

This year saw the launch of KCVS Buddy Pods: a group mentoring and peer learning initiative of which all our teachers are members. Lunch and Learn, a lunchtime learning initiative led by teachers, for teachers is also an exciting new initiative on our journey towards Excellence in Education.

Another highlight was celebrating ETB Day with our Ethos Showcase which was entitled “KCVS Connects”. Our showcase highlighted how we connect within our school and in the wider community.

We have worked on consolidating and promoting Restorative Practice this year. To date, thirteen of our teachers and eight of our SNA team have taken part in formal Restorative Practice training. We have established a new restorative practice working group which is made up of sixteen members of our staff from a variety of subject departments. We continue to live out the values of restorative practice and we look forward to embedding this practice as a whole school community.

# Youthreach Kilkenny

## Creative Schools Day

We were lucky enough to be successful in our application to the Creative Schools programme this year. Since September, our learners have engaged in a series of creative workshops, fostering an environment of innovation and collaboration.

On 29th February, Kilkenny Youthreach Centre transformed into a vibrant hub of creativity. Workshops ran throughout the day, offering students various avenues to explore their artistic talents. In our 5th year room, learners had the opportunity to compose their own poems in a poetry workshop led by Clifton Redmond. Meanwhile, our art room, always brimming with creativity, hosted a beginner's crochet session with Steffi Gulde. The workshop proved to be immensely popular, especially among our 6th year students who reported back to us that they not only learned the craft of crochet but also found it to be a therapeutic and calming experience. As a result, Steffi's crochet box now sits proudly on a shelf in the art room, inviting students to continue



*Drumming workshop facilitated by Music Generation*

their crochet journey at their own pace. One of the highlights was the stone carving workshop with James Horan, held in our construction room. Students immersed themselves in the art of stone carving, acquiring new skills and unleashing their creativity.

In the afternoon, Tunde led an engaging print workshop that captivated participants. Learners were delighted to explore their artistic abilities in the world of print. Tunde's expertise and guidance created an engaging and inspiring atmosphere, allowing our students to unleash their creativity and produce remarkable prints. Additionally, a drum music workshop provided a rhythmic and energetic outlet for our students. In our Animation workshop, learners created their own animations and had the chance to explore different animation principles such as timing, spacing and anticipation.

Our Creative Workshops were a great success, leaving our learners feeling accomplished and eager to further

explore their artistic talents. We look forward to the rest of our Creative schools journey over 2024 - 2025.

## The BIG iDEA

We are thrilled to announce that this year, not one, but two of our teams have participated in The BIG iDEA challenge! Our learners showed immense passion and dedication, leading us to pursue two fantastic ideas.

Our first group are deeply interested in leveraging the power of AI to enhance their financial knowledge. They are eager to boost their confidence in managing money and take control of their financial future. To achieve this, they have devised an innovative app design that provides personalised investment recommendations based on individual circumstances, risk tolerance, and valuable investment tips. Additionally, the app features a component to guide users in setting up their first mortgage, comparing rates, and offering insightful advice





*Crocheting with Toya and Keira*

on planning for the future. It's an incredible endeavor that empowers our learners to make informed financial decisions!

Meanwhile, our second team are on the way to tackling the pressing issue of the cost-of-living crisis. Recognising the importance of utilising technology to address this challenge, their visionary solution is an app that harnesses the power of AI to help users find the best prices for groceries, all while assisting in budgeting effectively. Specifically tailored to their demographic, this app provides invaluable lessons on prioritising needs over wants and offers practical tips on saving for desired items. It's a remarkable achievement that equips our learners with essential life skills.

We couldn't be prouder of both teams for thinking outside the box. On the 10th of May, there will be a grand showcase in Dublin. This event presents an incredible opportunity for our teams to meet industry leaders and benefit from mentorship throughout the day. The future looks bright for our Youthreach learners as they continue to make a positive impact on their lives and beyond.



*The Big Idea PR team filming in Kilkenny Youthreach*





## Youthreach Carlow

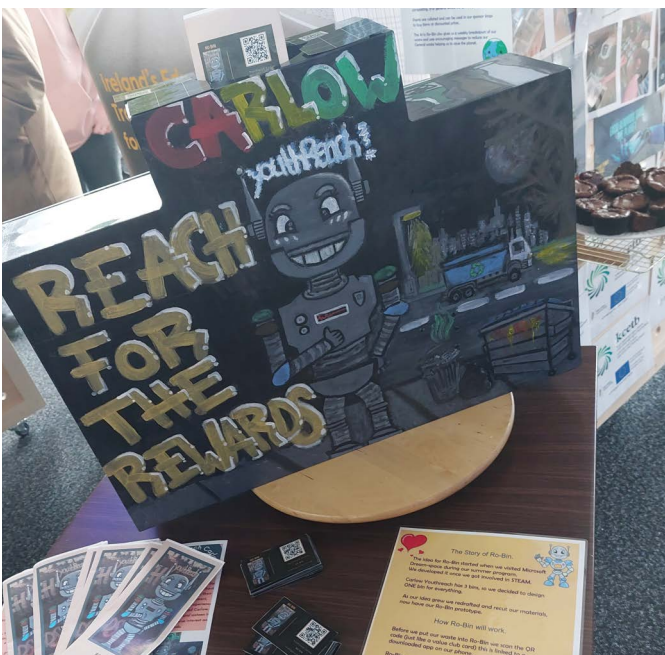
Over the past year, Youthreach Carlow has been a hub of activity, offering a wide range of alternative projects.

Under the guidance of the talented Clifton Redmond, our creative writing project flourished, culminating in Culture Night on the 22nd September. It was an evening of pride and excitement as all learners and staff came together to share their poems with a public audience. The result? A beautiful broadsheet of poetry that captured the essence of our community's creativity and spirit.

In November, our artistic endeavours continued with a printmaking workshop funded by Take Apart Carlow. Led by Kate O'Shea and Aoife Barrett, this project allowed us to explore new techniques and express ourselves through visual art. The finished project was proudly displayed at the Strategic Planning Meeting for Carlow County Council.

November also marked the launch of the BLAST programme, led by Rosín Murphy O'Sullivan. Through photography, Rosín empowered us to see our world through a new lens. Our work was later exhibited in December, showcasing our talent to all stakeholders.

As the new year rolled in, so too did exciting opportunities. We began VR workshops with Foróige in January, opening our minds to the possibilities of technology and creativity. In March, Young Social Innovators delivered a sustainable development programme, inspiring us to become agents of positive change in our community. Foróige continued to expand our horizons with a VR and animation workshop, sparking our curiosity and imagination.



But our journey didn't stop there. In April, Clifton secured Arts Council funding to develop a drama with Youthreach learners which will give us the opportunity to showcase our talents and creativity on stage. For the first time Youthreach Carlow held the state oral exams in centre, marking an important milestone in our academic journey. The Leaving Certificate Art practical also took place in centre.

As we look ahead to May and June, we are now focused on the completion of our academics, QQI and Leaving Certificate. Drama presentations, leadership programs, and exciting trips await us. We look forward in anticipation.



# Coláiste Aindriú



*Students of Coláiste Aindriú showcasing their Ethos work*

As we approach the end of another school year, it is timely to celebrate the many successes achieved by our staff and students in Coláiste Aindriú. In September, Coláiste Aindriú was conferred again with the School of Distinction Award from Trinity College Dublin for the second year in a row. We were delighted to be recognised for the inclusive practices we have in place to support both our students and our mentoring programmes.

## Introduction of LCA

The Leaving Certificate Applied Programme was introduced in September 2023 with sixteen students starting the programme. It has been a hugely successful and enjoyable experience for all the students.

## Staff Celebrations

In September we said farewell to five long serving members of staff. Michael

Quinn (Engineering & DCG), Miriam Hossey (Science & Biology), Sheila Dermody (PE & Geography), Betty Hughes (SNA) and Richard Mullaigh (Upholstery and Furniture Making). Between them they contributed 123 years to the school. We wish them all the best in their retirement.

Three of our teachers recently graduated from Cohort 15 of the Instructional Leadership Programme and a further two teachers graduated in April from Peer Coaching and Conferencing.

## Restorative Practice

The school is continuing to focus on developing a restorative culture. Our RP teachers found a new focus this year with the introduction of student RP Mentors. Ten students were selected and trained through Connect RP. They support 1st year students with their transition to Coláiste



*Second year students completing Art projects*

Aindriú. The mentors introduced an RP Hero weekly award, where 1st year students who demonstrate the RP values are sent a postcard home.

## Student Achievements

Our Student of the Month award continues to celebrate the many successes our students achieve. It is with immense pride that we see the huge number of students nominated by their teachers each month for their excellent attendance, hard work in class, demonstration of respect and their improvement over time.

All Transition Year and LCA students completed a Hospitality Skill Course and are now trained as Baristas.

Our Transition Year students produced videos to promote environmental awareness. They were entered into the Rubbish Film Festival and their video won second place in the Carlow region.

Our "Every Day Matters" Attendance Drive was launched this year and was very successful in promoting and celebrating student attendance.

The last four weeks of this academic year we celebrated our 6th Year Graduation, Transition Year Graduation, JCSP Graduation and our Ethos Awards.



*Student Council members attending training with KCETB*



*The Mad Hatter's tea party from Alice –  
Performing Arts students at GBS VISUAL –  
March 2024*

# Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training

## Year in Review

2023 / 2024 is proving to be a remarkable year for Carlow Institute of Further Education and Training, marked by significant achievements. With a bumper year for enrolments, busy teaching, learning and assessment, and wide-ranging educational trips, events, performances and initiatives, Carlow Institute continues to grow and thrive.

## Night School

In addition to our much-increased full-time enrolment, the Institute successfully relaunched its Night School programme, our first since moving to the new campus. The programme, which continued in the second semester, brought a new community of adult learners to the Institute for a range of programmes, from Art through to Irish Sign Language.

## Environmental Awareness Initiatives

Students and staff at Carlow Institute launched environmental awareness initiatives aimed at promoting sustainability and green practices. Activities included wild-flowers, herbs, and pollinator planting, as well as efforts to improve recycling awareness and the SEAI Energy Use and You certification. The Institute also welcomed Deirdre O'Carroll from an Taisce to support the work of the Green Committee's application for Green Flag accreditation.

## International Programmes

We continue our participation in Erasmus+ projects, which includes student mobilities to partner institutions in the Netherlands and Finland. Additionally, Carlow Institute has achieved accreditation status for Erasmus+, enhancing access to new projects and mobilities. An award from EPAL further recognised the Institute's efforts in promoting digital learning.

## Open Day and Recruitment

The Open Day held on February 29th attracted a record number of potential applicants, showcasing the Institute's programmes and facilities. Active engagement with schools contributed to the positive turnout of well over 1500 potential applicants for 2024 / 2025. The recruitment process shows a significant increase in applications, with interviews for new students already underway.

## Educational Trips

Many educational trips took place throughout the year, across all course groups. Highlights include Make-Up Artistry students participating in an Immersive Simulation Trauma Event with University of Limerick, where they provided special effects Make-up to simulate trauma injuries. Our Emergency Service course visits included



practical training at Graiguenamanagh Fire station, with hands-on experience of the work of the Fire Service. Animal Science students participated in extended Large Animal Husbandry training at Kildalton Agricultural College, while Science students visited NUIM Maynooth for a series of assessed workshops in advanced laboratory skills.



*Emergency Services – hands-on training with Kilkenny Fire Service*

## Music and Performing Arts

Music students show-cased numerous performances, including events in the Institute atrium, gigs at Tully's in Carlow, and a final performance project at Visual Carlow. Performing Arts students presented Alice, a full-scale adaption of Lewis Carroll's much-loved stories. A capacity audience attended Visual Carlow for an energetic production, with great characterisation, brilliant acting, movement and physical comedy.



*Echoes - Music Performance students at GBS VISUAL – April 2024  
photo by Ciara Buckley, HeyDay Studios*

## Community Engagement and Partnerships

Our sports department engaged with Carlow Sports Partnership and the Irish Wheelchair Association to develop an innovative programme of adapted physical activity. The team developed a six-week programme for members with our PE teaching students, working with IWA clients and Carlow Sports Partnership, to deliver adapted activity sessions, which supported their learning and our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility.

We developed an innovative Pathways to FET project for LCA pupils in Professional Cookery with Tyndall College, with LCA pupils completing a four-week Friday-morning experience programme. This provided an experience of cheffing in a professional kitchen, and some wider FET college-experiences to support this, including talks from our students.

## Competition success

Carlow Institute Make-up Artistry students and staff have had record success at the Professional Beauty National Makeup Competition. Two students took first prize with two runner-ups and three staff awards.



*Makeup Artistry student and staff award winners – Professional Beauty National Makeup Competition*

### **Students**

*1st Place Winners - Bianca Bidi - Catwalk Category, Lorraine*

*DeFaoite - Body Paint Category*

*2nd Place - Louise O'Brien - Character Category. Ciara McGrath - Body Paint Category Level 5 Makeup*

### **Staff**

*Danielle Fitzgerald - Body Painting Category 1st Place Winner, - Character 1st Place Winner*

*Sara Ashmore Kehoe - Creative Category 1st Place Winner*

## Publication

Congratulations to Robbie Kavanagh, from of our sports department teaching team, whose video case-study Including Students in Assessment which shares his innovative approach to assessment, especially in the context of AI, has been published by QQI. This is part a QQI project called Rethinking assessment: inclusive assessment and standards in a dynamic and changing world. The case study can be found on QQI's website or by [CLICKING HERE](#)



# A Year of Celebration at Tyndall College

## Oscar Winner James Martin Visits Tyndall

In September, we rolled out the red carpet for Oscar winning Irish actor James Martin. James delivered a truly inspirational talk to our students on breaking down barriers and never giving up on your dreams. He was so generous with his time and it was a very special occasion for the whole school community.



*James Martin and students*



## Gaisce Trip to Lough Allen

In April, sixteen Tyndall students completing their Bronze and Silver Gaisce Awards were accompanied by three teachers as they participated in a two-day adventure journey in Lough Allen, Co. Leitrim. There was a busy schedule for the students, including canoeing and other water activities, bush-craft skills, campsite setup and wellness. Students completed their journey by participating in a reflective workshop in a yurt overlooking the lake. A truly memorable experience for all involved.



## School Musical "Defying Gravity" Leaves Audiences Spellbound!

This year's musical production of "Defying Gravity" took centre stage in February. Over seventy students were involved both backstage and onstage, as the school's GP area transformed into a realm of magic and music and drew in packed audiences for three nights. Students from 1st to 6th Year united to bring the fantastical world of "Defying Gravity" to life. This production was not just about showcasing talent but also fostering a sense of community and togetherness among the participants. As the cast and crew worked tirelessly from the beginning of rehearsals in October, they formed bonds that will last a lifetime and memories which will be cherished.





## Young Scientist Success

Tyndall College participated in the BT Young Scientist Competition for the very first time this year and we were incredibly proud when two of our 2nd Year students were awarded 2nd prize in the Junior Group for Mental Health and Wellbeing for their project "Is TikTok the Next Pandemic?". The aim of their project was to investigate the effect TikTok has on students' mental health and wellbeing and to study how the algorithm works in keeping you on the app longer. They also wanted to find out if students are addicted to the app and what features of TikTok encourage this behaviour. A phenomenal achievement, congratulations to the students and their teacher Ms Dowling.



## Belong To

This year, Tyndall College became the first Carlow school to receive the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark, reflecting our deep commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion, at a celebration awards event on 23rd February in Google Headquarters, Dublin. Over the past 18 months, our entire school community has worked tirelessly to embed LGBTQ+ inclusion across our policies, practices, and interactions. Guided by Belong To, we've implemented evidence-based actions to enhance the wellbeing and safety of LGBTQ+ students. In doing so, we've strived to create a safe and supportive environment for everyone. Minister of State, Jack Chambers, emphasised the importance of supportive school environments for LGBTQ+ students' wellbeing and success during the award ceremony. Our school witnessed firsthand how this initiative has enriched our school culture, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, feel valued and celebrated. Moninne Griffith, CEO of BelongTo, praised our leadership and unwavering commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion, recognising the positive impact of inclusive spaces on student wellbeing.



## International Trip - Barcelona 2024

In April, 68 students and 9 staff members enjoyed a memorable trip to Barcelona for our first international tour. The group had a packed schedule with trips to Parc Güell, La Sagrada Família, the beautiful Benedictine monk mountain retreat Montserrat, a thrilling day in Port Aventura, a cruise around Barcelona Port and a visit to CosmoCaixa Science Museum. This truly was an unforgettable tour and we are already looking forward to next year's adventure!



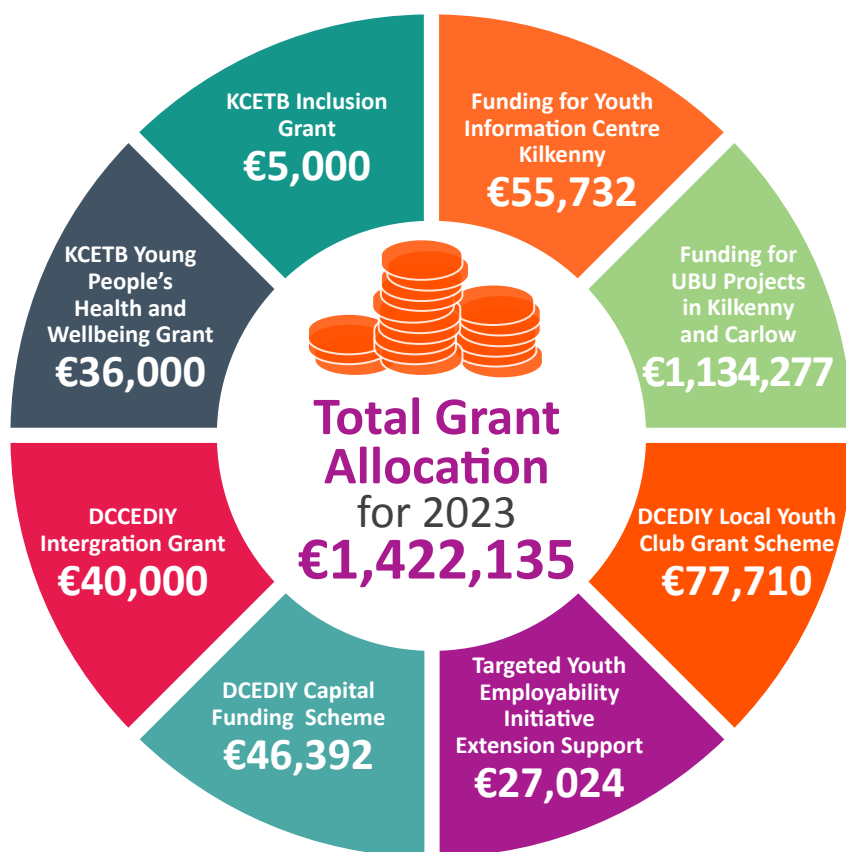
# KCETB Youth Office

During the year, KCETB Youth Office worked to support the provision, co-ordination, administration and assessment of Youth Work in Kilkenny and Carlow, in partnership with local youth work providers: Carlow Regional Youth Services, Ossory Youth Services and Foróige DRUM Youth Project.

KCETB has continued to promote Youth Work as a valuable, non-formal educational approach, as well as acknowledging the significant role and responsibility that the Youth Work Sector play in providing innovative, responsive and inclusive programmes, supports and services to young people.

## Funding to local Youth Service Providers:

In 2023, the Youth Office was responsible for the administration, governance and oversight of over €1.4 million in funding from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) to local youth services and local voluntary youth clubs through 8 different grant schemes.



Graph highlighting the range of grants and amounts allocated to youth service providers across Kilkenny and Carlow in 2023

This funding directly benefited young people in Kilkenny and Carlow through their participation and engagement in a variety of youth work supports, programmes and initiatives run by Carlow Regional Youth Service, Ossory Youth Services, Foróige DRUM Youth Project and local voluntary youth clubs.

## 'Have Your Say' Young People's Survey

The Youth Office developed a survey to capture the voice of young people in preparation for an area needs analysis and development of a Service Requirement for Cycle 2 (2024-2026) of the UBU Scheme. 276 responses were received from young people attending secondary schools, youth organisations and youth clubs throughout Kilkenny and Carlow. Young people's input to the survey was vital in helping KCETB to continue to support the services that provide young people with the programmes, supports and activities they need and want.



Cover of the 'Have Your Say' Survey





*Pictured at the launch of the 8 new UBU Projects in DCEDIY Headquarters*

## National Launch of the Bagenalstown Youth Project

Minister O’Gorman launched 8 new UBU Youth Services (established in 2022) across the country in 2023, inclusive of the Bagenalstown and South Carlow UBU Project run by Carlow Regional Youth Services and funded through the KCETB Youth Office. The Project currently has an annual allocation of €127,421 for a full time Youth Project located in Bagenalstown.

Young people and staff from the Project attended the launch in the DCEDIY headquarters in Dublin and got an opportunity to present their Project to the Minister. They also got the opportunity to have their say by engaging in a consultation session to help inform the next Youth Action Plan for Youth (2024-2028)

## ‘I Feel Like I am Heard’ Research and Toolkit



*Pictured at the launch of the ‘I Feel Like I am Heard’ Research and Toolkit*

KCETB partnered with South East Technological University (SETU) to launch an insightful and innovative research report entitled “I feel like I am heard” in SETU, Carlow in March 2024. The research was conducted between December 2021 and November 2023 and explored models of good youth work practice with young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who are not engaged in employment, education, or training. The Foróige Youth Skills Project shared crucial expertise and supported SETU in capturing young people’s experiences.

The research and supporting toolkit examined effective strategies for engaging and supporting young people who face barriers to education and training.

The research was initiated and commissioned by KCETB Youth Office and funded by KCETB in partnership with County Carlow Development Partnership (CCDP), Kilkenny Leader Partnership (KLP), and SETU.

# Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach



Pan Ceilteach

*Tá an bhiain scoile beagnach thart anois agus níl dabht ar bith faoi ach go raibh bliain an-ghnóthach againn arís i nGaelcholáiste Cheatharlach. Bhí bliain den scoth againn le ceol, drámaíocht, spórt agus ar ndóigh, barr feabhais san oideachas. Tá ríméad orainn blaiseadh de na himeachtaí a roinnt libh.*

## Féile scoildrámaíochta

Our school community came together to celebrate the arts through the Féile Scoildrámaíochta, showcasing the talent and passion of our students. Following a triumphant display in the county stage in the Visual theatre in Carlow, our brilliant actors progressed to the Craobh Laighin and from there to Craobh na hÉireann in Mullingar, going on win on the day with their drama 'Thuas Seal, Thíos Seal'. The screenplay and music for the drama were composed by Máistir Máirtín and Máistir Mac Cinnéide. Féile Scoildrámaíochta is a wonderful opportunity for students to develop their drama and musical skills while promoting the Irish language.

## Féile Pancheilteach

*Chum Máistir Mac Cinnéide amhrán álainn don chomórtas amhránaíochta Féile Pancheilteach Idirnáisiúnta i mblíana. Sheinn agus chan ceathrar daltaí an t-amhrán ar an oíche sa amharclann George Bernard Shaw.*

## Ard-Fheis na nÓg

*Fuair cúigear daltaí ón gCoiste Gaeilge deis freastal ar Ard-Fheis na nÓg i gCorca Dhuibhne i mblíana. Ba deis iontach í dár ndaltaí a bheith páirteach in ócáid náisiúnta chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn agus chun ardán poiblí a thabhairt do ghuth na ndaltaí. Bhain na daltaí agus Iníon Ní Inglís Ní Éideáin an-sult as an turas agus bhuail siad le déagóirí eile a bhfuil an dearcadh céanna acu ó thaobh na Gaeilge de.*

## Seachtain na hEolaíochta

During Science Week, our 6th year students delved into an online 'Careers in Science' event hosted by SETU. Additionally, 5th and 6th years enjoyed a trip to the cinema to see 'Oppenheimer'. We were delighted to welcome Rang 4 from Gaelscoil Eoghain Uí Thuairisc for a fun-filled session of science experiments in the lab. A special thanks to Múinteoir Conchubhair, who allowed Máistir Ó Cinnéide to set him on fire!

## Foghlaim taobh amuigh den seomra ranga

Our senior students had the opportunity to learn outside of the classroom and experience some of their Leaving Certificate subjects in a new way. Two educational international tours took place this year, an Turas Ealaíne go dtí an Róimh agus an Turas Staire go dtí an Pholainn. In Rome, our senior art students had the privilege of exploring the rich cultural heritage of Rome. From marvelling at iconic artworks to soaking in the city's atmosphere, it was an unforgettable journey. In Poland, our senior history students visited Krakow, delving into the poignant stories of Auschwitz and the intricate wonders of the Salt Mines.

## Seó Éiteas KCETB

We were delighted to participate in the KCETB Ethos day at Grennan College, where collaboration and shared values were celebrated, fostering a sense of unity and purpose among KCETB schools. Our students had the opportunity to collaborate with Coláiste Pobal Osraí on a musical display on the day. The students enjoyed working with other students from another Gaelcholáiste and we hope to continue this collaboration in the future.



## Lá Corcra do Temple Street

Our students helped to support some of our own students in fundraising for Temple Street Children's Hospital. Amber Ní Ruaire and Lauryn Webster wanted to thank the doctors and nurses of Temple Street and they organised a Lá Corcra sa scoil. Students and staff dressed in purple to show their support and money raised was given directly to the hospital.

## Seó na hIdirbhliana agus Turas na hIdirbhliana

Our transition year students wowed a packed audience with their rendition of High School Musical. The show was brought to life with singing and dancing and students, staff and parents thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Students from Gaelscoil Eoghan Uí Thuairisc also came to



cheer on the performers. There was no time to rest for the Transition year students however, as they jetted off to Lake Garda a few days after the big show to enjoy their international school trip.

*Agus muid ag druidim i dtreo deireadh bliain scoile eile, ba mhaith buíochas ó chroí a ghabháil leis na daltaí, múinteoirí agus tuismitheoirí as ucht bliain rathúil agus taitneamhach. Guímid gach rath ar na daltaí atá ag tabhairt faoi scrúduithe stáit agus tá súil againn go mbeidh samhradh suaimhneach agus taitneamhach ag gach duine de phobal na scoile.*



Lá Corcra



# Community Education Service Kilkenny

## A Year Of Special Events

### “The Butts “

The Community in St Canice’s Neighbourhood hall made a documentary over an eighteen-month period about their Community, ‘The Butts’, with the support of a Community Education funded tutor. The documentary covered areas such as history, sport, local celebrities and many stories were told of times gone by. This is an amazing collection of information for any community to have on record. The tutor Gillian Grattan worked with the group to teach interviewing skills, editing and how to piece the documentary together. The documentary was shown in the IMC Cinema in Kilkenny to a lucky 150 residents. A great evenings celebration was had by all.

The full documentary is available to view on YouTube and is well worth a watch. [click here](#)



John O'Neill KCETB, Jenny Cooke St Canice's Neighbourhood Hall, Siobhan O'Brien KCETB, Gillian Grattan Tutor KCETB, Stephen Murphy Fr McGrath Centre, Michael Kelly Chairperson Fr McGrath Centre Board



Participants in the Documentary

### Defibrillator Training

Over the past 12 – 15 months, the parish of Tullahought, near Windgap, with the support of Community Education have trained almost 100 people in the skills of using their local defibrillators. This is a massive achievement for any community and may very well save lives at some stage in the future.

### Plein Air

The Plein Air programme was extended in Summer 2023 to include venues in Carlow and Kilkenny. Over 150 learners benefited from these courses. Plein Air is the art of leaving the four walls of the art studio behind and experiencing painting and drawing out in the landscape itself. Learners immerse themselves in the outdoors while attending a guided painting class run by Community Education tutors.



Plein Air

This was a new initiative across Kilkenny and Carlow counties and ran in a diverse range of locations. Ten sessions in total were run in locations such as Butler House Kilkenny, St Mullins by the river, Medieval Mile Museum Kilkenny, Huntington Castle Clonagall, Thomastown Village, An Gairdín Beo and Borris. Each class was hosted by a local community group who work with Core Community Education, who welcomed and provided hospitality to the learners and the tutors.

### “Someone’s Gotta Go”

SOS in Kilkenny have a wonderful drama society and that has been supported through Community Education and the REACH grant to purchase cameras and recording equipment. They made a film and launched it in the Watergate Theatre before Christmas 2023. It was a very enjoyable movie and “watch this space” as they are entering competitions and may be on the red carpet yet.





# Coláiste Pobail Osraí

Rinne Coláiste Pobail Osraí ceiliúradh i mbliana ar éiteas scoile, ar an gcroílúach 'Pobal' de chuid an Bhord Oideachais agus Oiliúna, agus ar an bPobal Gaelach sainiúil a bhaineann leis an scoil mar Ghaelcholáiste ach go háirithe.

Coláiste Pobail Osraí celebrated our school ethos, the ETB core value of 'Community' and the distinguishing 'Irish Language Community' that is at the heart of our school as a Gaelcholáiste.

Mar chuid den cheiliúradh, bhí áthas ar dhaltai agus ar mhúinteoirí an Choláiste taispeántas a thabhairt uathu ag an lá ceiliúrtha KCETB ar an 5ú Márta. Bhí ionadaithe ó Dháil na Scoile i láthair chun labhairt faoin scoil, agus léiríodh buanna na ndaltai lena gcuid grianghrafanna, filíochta, agus ealaíne. Sheinn ceoltóirí na scoile ar an ardán in éineacht le Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach, agus rinne daltaí rince iontach chomh maith. Bhí an-lá ann!

As part of the celebration, students and staff from the Coláiste were delighted to showcase the variety of ways in which the Irish Language Community core-value is promoted in the school. At the KCETB celebration on March 12th, students displayed their photography, their poetry, and their art. Musicians from the school trad band played on stage with Gaelcholáiste Cheatharlach, and dancers gave a wonderful performance.

Ina theannta sin, cheiliúramar 'Seachtain na Gaeilge sa mhí chéanna, le clar ollmhór Imeachtaí, idir agallamh raidió ar KCLR, cuairteanna bunscoile, maidin chaife agus díolachán bácála, comórtas seaimpiní ranga, seisiún ceoil am lóin, iarnóin scannánaíochta, banna traidisiúnta ar an gclár teilifíse Ireland AM, Gaeilgeoirí na Míosa, is aille!

We also celebrated our Irish Language Community during 'Seachtain na Gaeilge' with a huge programme of events, which included a radio interview on KCLR for some of our students, visits to primary schools, a cake sale and coffee morning, class champions competition, live music session



*Daltaí Choláiste Pobail Osraí ag caint leis an bpobal ag Lá Éitis KCETB*



*Daltaí Choláiste Pobail Osraí ag Comhchoiste Gaeilge i nDáil Éireann*

at lunchtime, an afternoon film event, the trad band playing on live television on Ireland AM, monthly Irish speaker awards, and much more!

Bhí an t-ádh leis an scoil scéim mhalartaithe a chur ar bun le scoil Eorpach sa Bheilg i mbliana, agus daltaí ag taisteal ann roimh Nollaig chun a gcuid Fraincise a chleachtadh. Bhí deis acu chun fanacht le teaghlaigh ósta a labhair i nGaeilge leo. Thugadar cuairt ar Pharlaimint na hEorpa agus bhuail siad le hÉireannaigh a oibríonn le Gaeilge ann. I ndiaidh na Nollaig ansin, d'fháitigh an Choláiste roimh scoláirí ón mBeilg agus ag freastail ar ranganna agus ag tabhairt cuairte ar an gcathair.

Coláiste Pobail Osraí was fortunate to send students to Brussels before Christmas so that they could brush up on their French skills, and in return the school welcomed a group of students to Ireland in the new year so that they could experience life in a Gaelcholáiste and visit the city. As part of the trip to Belgium, students visited the European Parliament and met those working through and with the Irish language there.

Deis iontach eile a bhí ann chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ná nuair a fuair Uachtarán agus Leas-Uachtarán Dháil na Scoile, Róisín, Lily agus Rhys, cuireadh chun labhairt ag an gComhchoiste Gaeilge i dTeach Laighean. Thug siad óráidí uathu ar ábhair suntasacha na linne seo, agus d'fhreagair siad ceisteanna ó pholaiteoirí chomh maith.

Another opportunity to promote the Irish language arose when President and Vice-Presidents of the Student Council accepted an invitation to speak before the Irish Language Joint Committee in Leinster House, speaking on current events and answering questions from politicians.

Sa chaoi seo, agus ar go leor bealaí eile, d'éirigh leis an scoil Pobal Gaelach a spreagadh.

Bliain an-ghnóthach agus tairbheach a bhí inti do Choláiste Pobail Osraí!

# Music Generation Carlow



*Reelig, MGC's Senior Trad Ensemble performing at Music @ Mount Leinster 2024*

## Music Generation Carlow Ushers into the "We Are Music Generation" Year with Celebratory Events in 2023/2024

As we nearly draw the curtain on another academic year, Music Generation Carlow (MGC) is thrilled to recount a year of extraordinary milestones and continued dedication to spreading the joy of music across the Carlow region. Currently engaging with over 4,300 children and young people weekly, MGC's efforts have significantly strengthened the fabric of music education locally, which is being celebrated with events and workshops as part of the yearlong "We Are Music Generation Celebrations."

The celebrations commenced with the inaugural national Children and Young Persons Day, a day dedicated to the musicians of tomorrow, with Carlow represented by young musicians from our Traditional Irish music ensembles Reelig, Reel-Nua and ReelÓg.



*Reelig, Reel-Nua and Music Generation Waterford performing as part of the Pan Celtic Festival 2024*

MGC's annual Music @ Mount Leinster (M@ML) festival, which took place in February 2024, marked a record-setting event in 2024 with participation from 112 young musicians and 8 groups. This festival continues to be a programme cornerstone, celebrating the rich tapestry of traditional Irish music for young musicians, providing a nurturing ground for emerging talent nationally.

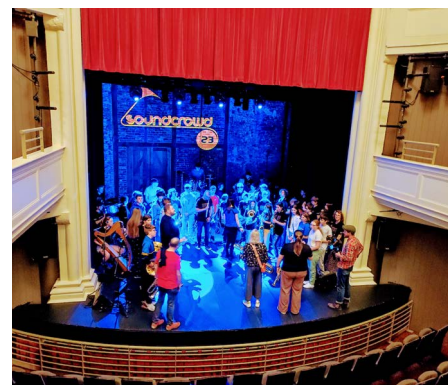
Our decade of musical development will be showcased at a 10-year open-air celebration concert held during the Carlow Arts Festival in June 2024. It will be a reflection of MGC's commitment to fostering a diverse and skilled generation of musicians, featuring musicians from our Encore primary school programme, Rock/Pop programme, Ensembles programme and will feature MGC alumni who have went on to have their own successful performance and educator careers.

The upcoming Sound Crowd '24 and the Bangers and Crash Project will further our mission, combining performance artistry with educational outreach. These events are a testament to our commitment to integrating professional and educational realms within performance music spaces.

This year is also marked by MGC's venture into producing its first professional ensemble concert, headlined by the renowned traditional Irish band, Goitse. This concert is not merely a performance, but a strategic endeavour to enrich the musical scene

in Carlow, and to cultivate a deep-seated appreciation for the arts among our young participants.

Exposure to professional ensembles like Goitse is crucial for young musicians—it opens their ears to the possibilities of their instruments, allows them to see where discipline and creativity can take them and fosters an appreciation for the dedication behind artistry. These experiences can be profoundly inspirational, often sparking a lifelong passion for the arts and helping to develop the audience and musicians of the future.



*Participants at Sound Crowd '23 getting ready to perform in The Theatre Royal, Waterford*

As part of our "We Are Music Generation" festivities, a series of workshops and events are being curated throughout the year, leading up to a celebration concert that marks 11 years of MGC's presence, coinciding with the Carlow Arts Festival and Cruinniú na nÓg, in June 2024.

If music speaks to you, or if you know a budding musician, we invite you to join our community. Reach out to us at [musicgenerationcarlow@kcetb.ie](mailto:musicgenerationcarlow@kcetb.ie) and explore the many ways in which you can be a part of our musical journey.

Looking ahead, MGC is fervently preparing to build upon the success of the past year, eager to uncover new opportunities and continue to provide our students with challenging, inspiring, and enjoyable musical experiences. Here's to another successful year of fostering talent and celebrating the spirit of "We Are Music Generation" in Carlow.



# A Busy Year For VTOS Carlow

2023/2024 has been another very busy year for VTOS Carlow.

The Level 3 Employability Skills group are ready for their portfolios to be submitted for evaluation and certification in Application of Numbers, Career Preparation, Communications, Digital Media, ESOL, Internet Skills, Office Procedures, Personal and Interpersonal Skills, and Word Processing. While the Level 4 Office Skills group completed Bookkeeping and Accounts, Business English, Communications, Customer Service, General Office Skills, Functional Maths, Spreadsheet Methods, Word Processing, and Work Experience.

The centre has been utilised efficiently by incorporating ESOL learner groups in the afternoons. These lessons have been very well attended and demonstrate the demand for this provision within the community. The groups will be pursuing certification at QQI level 3, and City and Guilds entry 1 and 2. We wish them well in their exams and their next steps.

With the addition of English as a Second Language (ESOL) to the programme, it has brought a new and welcome element of diversity to the learner body. We now have a very multicultural feel to the centre, with students from Ireland, Bangladesh, Ukraine, Poland, Sudan, Brazil, Somalia, Moldova, and many other countries from around the globe all integrating and learning together from each other.

## Highlights

We were delighted when a part-time level 3 group member won the Wolfwalkers quiz in December 2023, and the group were very happy to meet and get a photograph with Chief Executive, Eileen Curtis. One of the group is a huge fan of Wolfwalkers and a mastermind on the topic. A fantastic day was had by all.



*Wolfwalkers. From left to right: Gary Craig, Andrew Shanley, Annie Walshe, KCETB Chief Executive Eileen Curtis, Adam Williamson, and Adam Ralph*

## FET Learner Forum

A number of our learners from across the programme attended the FET Learner Forum in the Springhill Hotel in Kilkenny, in March 2024. It was a fantastic day of shared learner experiences from a wide range of FET programmes. Learner participation and evaluation of programmes is a vital source of feedback at both a local and national level. These Fora are very worthwhile.



## A Sad Farewell and New Beginnings

In March 2024 we welcomed our new VTOS Co-ordinator Joanne Griffin to our KCETB FET team. We are delighted to have Joanne on our team, and we look forward to working together with all our staff to ensure the continued provision of a high standard of education and care which seeks to place the learner at the centre of what we do.

It is now with a very heavy heart that we are leaving the premises on Granby Row after over 15 years. A fantastic team have worked with hundreds of learners and put through thousands of portfolios, achieving major awards, across level 3, 4, 5, and level 6. VTOS will continue to deliver programmes in Carlow for the coming academic year and we will be offering courses at level 3 and level 4.



*VTOS Carlow team from left to right: Joanne Griffin (Co-ordinator), Lorna Keohane, Mary Byrne, Caroline Coakley, Mary O'Donoghue, Keith Swan, and Terence Doughan*

# Coláiste Mhuire



TY Girls' final visit to Microsoft for the STEM Passport for Inclusion programme

In our bustling school life at Coláiste Mhuire, we live and breathe the values of the ETB every day: caring for one another, showing respect, promoting equality, building community, and striving for excellence in education. These principles guide us through our busy days, whether we're in class, on the field, or out in the community. We're all about looking out for each other, treating everyone with kindness, making sure everyone has a fair shot, and working together. With these values as our compass, our school is a place where everyone can shine and succeed.

## Trinity Access Programme

CMJ is proud to be in its second year of participation in the Trinity Access Programme. Our mathematics department has been accepted onto an Erasmus programme organised by Trinity, establishing a partnership with a school in the Czech Republic. As part of our involvement, we recently hosted teachers from the Czech Republic, Sweden and Denmark

facilitating knowledge exchange and collaboration. Mr. Dunne presented our teaching strategies at Trinity College Dublin, underscoring our commitment to sharing best practices and promoting numeracy education. Looking ahead, our Erasmus programme continues with upcoming Teacher Exchanges. Our teachers will travel to the Czech Republic for the return visit to further explore their educational practices, particularly focusing on their utilisation of Microsoft Education. These experiences deepen our partnerships and enrich maths and numeracy education at CMJ.

## Microsoft Dreamspace

This year also, Transition Year Girls concluded their participation in the STEM Passport for Inclusion programme with Microsoft and Maynooth University, marking an exciting milestone in their STEM education journey. This collaborative initiative, organised by Mr. Lacey, is designed to increase girls' engagement

in STEM courses, and our students have fully embraced the opportunities it offers. Throughout their visits to Microsoft, they immersed themselves in real-world challenges, exploring and designing solutions for UN sustainable goals. From tackling beach plastic pollution to crafting innovative robotics, our TY girls have demonstrated exceptional creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Their active involvement in such initiatives not only highlights their dedication to STEM education but also exemplifies our commitment to fostering excellence in education. We are incredibly proud of their achievements and look forward to witnessing their continued growth and impact in the STEM field.

## Transition Year Show

In preparation for "Around the World in 80(ish) Minutes," our Transition Year students, supported by teachers Ms. Martin, Ms. Manning, and Mr. Ferncombe, dedicated themselves to rehearsals. Each student contributed their unique talents, showcasing growth and development. The production offered valuable opportunities for personal growth, emphasizing skills like teamwork and self-expression. With every student involved, a sense of belonging and unity flourished. The Gortnahoe Community Hall, graciously provided by the community, symbolized collaboration and support, enhancing the show's success and strengthening school-community bonds. "Around the World in 80(ish) Minutes" truly



Mr. Dunne delivering a workshop on "Mastering Quadratics" in Trinity College as part of the Erasmus Programme.





*Leinster Senior Camogie Champions 2024*

reflected the talent and spirit of both our students and our supportive community.

## Sport

Coláiste Mhuire's senior camogie team secured the Leinster Colleges title this year, a testament to the hard work and dedication of both the students and their management team, led by Orla Walsh, Ciara Moloney, and Laura Murphy. Since the early stages of the school year, they've put in relentless effort. Through rigorous training and matches, they honed their skills and formed strong bonds. The guidance of their management team played a crucial role in their success. Congratulations to all the girls for their outstanding achievement!

## Spanish Exchange

We're thrilled to share the exciting experiences our students had during the recent Spanish exchange trip. Following our visit to Seville in November, the Spanish students arrived in Ireland for the return leg of the exchange. They immersed themselves in cultural activities, sampling our sensory room and participating in classroom quizzes using Kahoot. Exploring Kilkenny City provided them with a firsthand look at our local history and landmarks. Additionally, they joined in a lively céilí, experiencing traditional Irish

music and dance. There were of course day trips to the capital and more besides. These enriching experiences not only broadened their cultural horizons but also fostered meaningful connections with their Spanish counterparts. We're proud of our students for embracing these opportunities

We're excited to share the memorable experiences that our students had during this year's Spanish exchange trip. Following our school's visit to Seville in November, the Spanish students arrived in Ireland for the return leg of the exchange. They fully engaged in cultural activities, exploring subjects such as engineering,

woodwork, and home economics. Additionally, they participated in classroom quizzes, Gaelic games, and joined in a lively céilí, immersing themselves in traditional Irish music and dance.

Of course, they also enjoyed day trips to the capital and beyond. Exploring Kilkenny City gave them a firsthand look at our local history and landmarks. These enriching experiences not only expanded their cultural horizons but also forged meaningful connections with their Spanish counterparts. We're proud of our students for seizing these opportunities and representing our school with enthusiasm and respect.



*Spanish and Coláiste Mhuire Students together on the Spanish visit during the year.*

# KCETB Training Services



*Erasmus+ programme in Lyon, France*

On the 3rd of April 2024, seven students from the Commis Chef Apprenticeship Programme in KCETB took part in a two-week Erasmus+ programme, which is an EU-funded initiative that promotes international mobility and cooperation among students, educators, and professionals.

It aims to foster cultural exchange, skill development, and personal growth. In this case, our seven aspiring commis chefs embarked on a culinary adventure in the gastronomic heart of Lyon, France. Paul Bocuse was a legendary French chef based in Lyon. His restaurants were valued for their high quality and innovative approach. These students had the privilege of working in the kitchens of four of his award-winning establishments.

Under the guidance of experienced chefs, our students refined their culinary skills. They learned the art of precision, creativity, and presentation. From mastering classic French sauces to creating intricate desserts, their hands-on experience was invaluable. Working in such prestigious kitchens challenged our students. They learned to handle pressure, multitask, and maintain composure during busy service hours. Their confidence really increased as they successfully executed complex dishes. Our students became part of a tight-knit collaborative team. Immersed in the heart of Lyon, they supported each



*Daniel Byrne with the Head Chef Restaurant Marguerite Bocuse and Chris Owens*

other, embraced the French language, deciphered menu items and took part in full service which enriched their cultural understanding and chef skills.

Beyond the kitchen, Lyon offered a vibrant cultural opportunity for our students. They got to explore historic streets, visit Les Halles de Lyon (an indoor food market), and savour local delicacies. They witnessed the city's real passion for gastronomy and its role as a World-renowned culinary capital.

Sustainability is a core value at the Paul Bocuse restaurants, along with responsible sourcing, minimising food waste, and eco-friendly practices. Learners witnessed how a prominent establishment can lead by example in promoting a greener future.

Our students witnessed the dedication of their mentors and felt the pulse of Lyon's culinary scene. This experience fuelled their own culinary dreams. The Erasmus+ programme at the Paul Bocuse restaurants was a truly transformative experience, and one that really enhances the Commis Chef Apprenticeship programme offered by KCETB.

On returning to Ireland, our apprentices will continue their culinary training with newly-enriched skills, a taste of French culture, and a commitment to sustainable gastronomy.



*Evan Rafter with the Head Chef at Brasserie L'Ouest Bocuse and Kate O'Grady*



*James Cowan with the Head Chef at Brasserie Le Nord Bocuse and Clare O'Shea*



# Employer EXPO, a first for KCETB Training Services

**KCETB Training Services were thrilled to organise the first Employer Expo in January at Lyrath Convention centre Kilkenny.**

The focus of the event was to facilitate apprenticeship employers to recruit apprentices in 2024. Over 40 employers attended along with a number of the new Consortia providers and employers.

The event was deliberately targeted at school leavers (and their parents) and job changers.

Over 2000 people booked on Eventbrite and there was a palpable buzz around the venue.

Employers feedback after the event included -

*“Without a doubt the best event we have ever been invited to”*

*“Couldn’t fault this event and there should be more like it .... everything about the event was so well organised, KCETB staff were so welcoming and couldn’t do enough for us from the set-up to the finish and providing food for the exhibitors was really thoughtful”*

*“This was a fantastic opportunity for us as a company as we intend to have a major recruitment drive this year”*

Employers represented many of the craft apprenticeships and the consortia apprenticeships, and with so many employers from the KCETB region being well represented at the event, it was great to see so many regional and national employers supporting the event.

A panel discussion with parents and apprentices also proved to be popular and informative, with apprentices describing their route into an apprenticeship and parents outlining their belief in apprenticeship options for school leavers.

KCETB were delighted to have our Chief Executive Eileen Curtis and Maryliz Trant, from the National Apprenticeship Office, address the audience.

In advance of the event, Training Services staff worked with local Guidance teachers and schools to promote the event and also social media and traditional media proved to be really helpful in garnering support and interest.

Feedback from school guidance teachers was also sought and some of the comments referred to the importance of holding the event outside of normal school hours a major contributory factor to the success of the event as people attending were intentionally focused on getting an apprenticeship.

We are delighted to plan for the next Apprenticeship Expo event early in 2025, and will extend an invite to all of our KCETB colleges and centres closer to the time.

Frankie and Bridget  
Keoghan Apprenticeship  
Expo Lyrath January 2024



# Local Training Initiatives

A Local Training Initiative (LTI) is a project-based education, training and work experience programme run by local community groups who have identified a specific education and training need within their area.

## Moving On LTI - St Catherine's Community Services Centre

The Moving On LTI, run through St. Catherine's Community Services Centre, is specifically designed for mothers aged 17 to 35 years who are at risk of, or are experiencing, isolation, early school leaving, poverty and difficulties in accessing mainstream education and/or employment opportunities. It offers participants the opportunity to achieve a QQI Level 4 Major Award in Employment Skills (4M0857) with a view to progressing onto further education and/or work. It comprises of nine QQI modules, the Parents Plus programme as well as non-QQI material, such as MABS, Manual Handling and Paediatric First Aid. A key feature of this LTI is the high degree of social and emotional support provided by the tutors to all learners. Learners can avail of free onsite childcare, which enables them to access education which would be otherwise impossible to pursue.

In November 2023, learners from the 2022-2023 cohort celebrated their achievements with a wonderful graduation evening. Of a group of 14 learners who joined the programme, seven learners achieved a Major Award and three learners left to pursue employment, representing a progression rate of 71%. Feedback from learners highlights the importance of the programme and how it has increased self-esteem, social skills, parenting skills and overall confidence in their ability to pursue further education or work. This is further demonstrated by a recently completed case study of the programmes offered through St. Catherine's Community Services Centre.

A research report funded by the Bechaire Fund and Community Foundation Ireland, carried out by the Centre of Effective Services entitled 'The Power of Community Education: Supporting lone parents to fulfil their potential in education, employment, and society' was launched by Norma Foley TD, Minister for Education, at an event



2023 Graduates – Moving On LTI



Moving On LTI learners in action

at the National Concert Hall in April 2024. St. Catherine's Community Services Centre was one of eight case study sites that contributed to this research report. The research at St Catherine's Community Services Centre focused on two programmes funded through KCETB; the Moving On Local Training Initiative and the Learning for Everyday Life programme.

The research found that lone parents engaging in community education programmes experienced a transformative impact on their lives.



Minister Norma Foley TD and Pamela O'Neill - Moving on LTI Assistant Co-ordinator, at the launch of the Bechaire Research Report



Niall Morris, Director of Services, St. Catherine's Community Services Centre, Pamela O'Neill, LTI Assistant Coordinator, Cllr Andrea Dalton, Tony Duffy, LTI Coordinator and Michelle Butler, KCETB at the launch of the Bechaire Research Report



## Visual Communications and Multimedia Production - Young Irish Filmmakers, Kilkenny

The Visual Communications and Multimedia Production LTI, run through Young Irish Filmmakers, is specifically designed for people who wish to gain knowledge, competence, and skills to gain a job at an entry level and/ or to progress to further education and training opportunities in creative digital media. It offers participants the opportunity to achieve a QQI Level 5 Major Award in Visual Communications and Multimedia Production (5M2146). The current group of learners have been attending this programme since October 2023 and are due to complete their award in August.

Over the last seven months, the LTI participants have been learning how to run a multi-camera set up for live podcasts. This has been integrated into the QQI Team Working module and all learners have been very engaged with this process. Learners have also had the opportunity to engage with the professional processes of studio photography and the resulting images have been integrated into the Image Processing and Design Skills modules of the LTI programme. Learners thrive when the creative control for their projects comes directly from their concepts, and we look forward to seeing the body of work created by all participants at the end of the programme.



*YIFM LTI learners; Andrii Humennyi, Margarida Mendes, Byron Teehan Dunne, Gareth Hanlon LTI Coordinator, Sviatoslav Harkavyi and Iryna Pankratova*



*YIFM LTI learners; Andrii Humennyi and Taliat Asanov*

## KCETB Training Services: Exceeding Targets and Transforming Lives

KCETB Training Services exceeded target expectations and drove meaningful change in the community in 2023. As we reflect on the achievements of 2023 and look ahead to the promising horizons of 2024, it becomes evident that the spirit of innovation and dedication permeates every aspect of the unit's operations.

### Consolidating Supports to Industry

KCETB Training Services, comprising of Apprenticeship Services, Community Training, and Contracted Training, has demonstrated remarkable growth throughout 2023 and into 2024. By aligning their efforts with the strategic objectives of KCETB and SOLAS, the unit has become a pivotal force in addressing the evolving needs of the region's workforce.

### Supporting Jobs, Creating Pathways, Building Partnerships



*Healthcare Students Ferrybank Evan Phelan and Gary Jacques*

At the heart of KCETB's mission lies a commitment to supporting employment opportunities and fostering career pathways for individuals from all walks of life. Through innovative programmes such as the Healthcare Support Traineeship in Ferrybank, in partnership with the Department of Social Protection and the Brothers of Charity, KCETB has provided a lifeline to learners seeking to retrain and gain valuable experience in a new field. The Work Placement Experience Programme (WPEP) has proven to be a resounding success, with nine learners completing the traineeship and achieving their QQI Level 5 Major Award in Healthcare Support. The impact of this initiative extends beyond mere certification, as all nine learners were subsequently offered contracts with the Brothers of Charity, ushering them into a new chapter of employment and professional fulfilment.

# Training Services Commits to Inclusion

## Fostering Inclusion, Upskilling Through Lifetime and Careers

Training Services' commitment to inclusivity and lifelong learning is palpable in its efforts to provide tailored training solutions that cater to the diverse needs and aspirations of its learners. By targeting specific skills gaps and leveraging partnerships with local stakeholders, Training Services has empowered individuals to upskill, reskill, and embark on transformative career journeys. Whether through apprenticeships, community training initiatives, or contracted programs, it remains steadfast in its mission to unlock the potential of every learner, regardless of background or circumstance.

KCETB Training Services is igniting sparks of opportunity at the KCETB Welding Academy, set in the well-known Thompsons of Carlow. Offering industry-certified welding training, the academy is a hub of skill development, catering to individuals at every stage of their welding journey.

From basic to intermediate levels, the academy covers all essential welding techniques, including MIG, TIG, and ARC. With courses running at full capacity, participants have the flexibility to choose between full-day sessions or part-time evening classes, ensuring accessibility for all.

The evening provision, funded under Skills to Advance, specifically targets individuals currently employed, providing them with the opportunity to enhance their skills after work hours. Meanwhile, daytime training caters to jobseekers and career changers, equipping them with the expertise needed to embark on a new path in the thriving field of welding.

At the KCETB Welding Academy, it is not just about mastering a craft; it's about unlocking doors. Through quality training, KCETB Training Services is paving the way for individuals to forge successful careers and contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

## Looking Ahead

Looking to the future, KCETB Training Services is poised to continue its trajectory of success. Building on the achievements of 2023, it's anticipating the rollout of a diverse range of upskills and training opportunities that will enrich and empower local business and individuals.

## Empowering Local Businesses: KCETB's FET Solutions for Business

KCETB FET Solutions for Business, based at the Danville Campus, is delivering on initiatives aimed at bolstering local businesses and enhancing the skills of their workforce. At the forefront of this endeavour is the Employer Engagement Team, a vital link between employers and the wealth of training and educational resources offered by KCETB.



*Mary Liam Pinto, Miriam Cuddihy, KCETB Tutor Mary Byrne and Hannah from Goatsbridge Trout Farm*

One shining example of this impactful collaboration is the partnership between KCETB FET Solutions for Business and a key player in the hospitality sector, the renowned Mount Juliet estate.

Mount Juliet recognises the critical importance that continuous learning plays in enabling their team to deliver their hallmark 5-star service to their guests. The management team at Mount Juliet has embraced the opportunity to work with KCETB's Employer Engagement Team to upskill its employees across various domains, including Supervisory Management, Excel proficiency, First Aid, and English for speakers of other languages.

These training programmes, facilitated through funds such as Skills to Advance and Skills to Work, are tailored to meet the specific needs of businesses seeking to enhance the capabilities of their workforce. Funded through the National Training Fund, these initiatives serve as invaluable resources for local enterprises striving to thrive in an ever-evolving economic landscape.

In 2023 alone, the impact of Skills to Advance was profound, with over 550 individuals in employment seizing accredited upskilling opportunities. Moreover, approx. 80 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) directly benefited from training support, underscoring the tangible benefits of investing in workforce development.

One of the cornerstones of the FET Solutions for Business offering to local business' is the Skills for Work initiative, a part-time education and training programme meticulously designed to cater to individuals whose skills may be outdated or in need of refinement. Targeting employed individuals with a need to upskill, the Skills for Work programmes aim to elevate skill sets, enhance career prospects, and foster educational advancement amongst employees.

Beyond the numbers lie stories of empowerment and growth. Employees at Mount Juliet, equipped with newfound expertise and confidence, are not only better positioned to excel in their roles but are also poised to contribute meaningfully to the success of their organisation.

The symbiotic relationship between KCETB and local businesses exemplifies the power of collaboration in fuelling economic development and nurturing a skilled workforce. All of this is contributing to the bottom line for local business.



# What is Adult Literacy for Life?

We believe everyone should have the literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to participate in society and succeed in life.

## Why literacy?

Literacy touches every aspect of our lives and has a great influence on our well-being. It is more than reading and writing. It's being able to understand, use and act on information. It involves listening, speaking and using everyday technology and the internet to communicate and handle information.

Literacy allows us to fully engage in society and be active citizens. It provides us with opportunities and is essential to developing an equal society. Literacy is a human right. Literacy affects everyone.

In Ireland, more than 500,000 people have unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs. This means they may be unable to fill in a form, vote, read instructions on medicines, add up a bill, help kids with homework or search the web for information. This can negatively impact their confidence and prevent them from participating fully in society.

Most people with unmet literacy needs can read a little but may find it hard to understand certain types of information or deal with modern technology. Every day we are faced with increasingly complex literacy tasks to participate in daily life. Many of us will struggle with literacy-related issues at different times in our lives.

Helen Walsh is the Regional Literacy Coordinator for Kilkenny and Carlow ETB. Helen works closely with the Adult Literacy Management Team and together they worked on a very successful Intergenerational Family Learning Project – One Book One Film for All, based on the graphic novel by Cartoon Saloon, WolfWalkers®.

Family Learning and intergenerational learning has been at the heart of Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's literacy provision for many years, working

closely with local principals and Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) co-ordinators. This work is underpinned by national and international research and good practice guidelines, where active inclusion, collaboration, learner-centred and adult learning approaches are central and impactful.

The book and related work was adapted to suit the vulnerable cohorts of adults who may have unmet literacy, numeracy, or digital needs, identified by HSCLs and other service providers.

The numbers speak for themselves: 1500 WolfWalkers® packs were circulated to families across both counties, with families engaging in a range of novel and engaging literacy, numeracy and digital events over the five weeks.

## Regional Adult Literacy Coalition 2024

One of the tasks for the Regional Literacy Coordinator was to set up a Regional Adult Literacy Coalition. The Coalition is made up of representatives from across both counties who engage or work with adults in our community who may have unmet literacy, numeracy or digital literacy needs.

**Join us and change your life for the better.**



If you would like to receive a copy of our newsletter or find out more, please scan the QR code.





# Duiske College

## Successful Partnership On The Sports Fields

Duiske College and Coláiste Pobail Osraí amalgamated in 2017 for the purpose of playing Gaelic games in our schools. With both schools having small numbers of players, it was felt that it would be better to pool our resources together in order to compete in the Leinster School's GAA championships.

The amalgamation has proven to be a great success, with teams competing at a good level, regularly winning games, reaching knockout stages and, in some of the years, winning competitions outright. Just as important, there is a very good working relationship between both schools, with students mixing and forming new bonds and friendships with students from another school.

The 2023 / 2024 season has been successful despite not winning any silverware yet. Both the Junior and Senior hurling teams did extremely well to qualify out of their groups and win their semi-finals to reach the South Leinster Final. Unfortunately, in both finals we came out second best, but the players from these teams can look back with pride in their performances throughout the year. Similarly our camogie teams have had much success with both our Senior and Junior teams exiting their championships at semi-final stage after playing well to progress from their groups.

They often say in sport, "you have to lose a final to win one", and that is our hope for next year for these students. Our 1st and 2nd year hurlers have also reached the South Leinster final, which they will play before the end of this year. These students are really looking forward to this game and students and teachers in both schools are hoping it will be a case of third time lucky.

This amalgamation is a great example of innovation and can-do attitude by both schools to provide as full an extra-curricular programme as is possible. The amalgamation is a lived example of ETB Core Values of care, respect, equality, community and excellence in education. The bonds created between our schools and memories shared will last a lifetime.



*Duiske / Coláiste Pobail Osraí Junior Camogie Team*



*Duiske / Coláiste Pobail Osraí Junior Hurling Team*



*Duiske / Coláiste Pobail Osraí U14 Hurling Team*



*Duiske / Coláiste Pobail Osraí Senior Hurling Team*



# An Inclusive School

## Belong To Quality Mark

In Duiske College, we pride ourselves on being an inclusive school with a culture of openness, respect and acceptance. We wanted to capture and celebrate this and so in May 2023, we applied to begin the process of working towards the Belong To Quality Mark which provides a comprehensive approach to developing an LGBTQ+ safe and supportive school.

We began by organising a steering team to organise Stand Up week. We created posters with positive LGBTQ+ messages, noted where LGBTQ+ people had made significant impact in the areas of STEAM, languages and many other areas. We had a whole school celebration, where we outlined what was involved in achieving the Quality Mark and why it is important for our school. Ms Reddy's music students performed songs and music to celebrate Stand Up Week.

We set up a weekly meeting for students and allies who want to help us to achieve the Quality Mark and to have a safe place to meet in school.



Belong To  
**LGBTQ+  
Quality Mark**

We then surveyed our staff, students, parents, guardians and Board of Management, to ascertain how embedded diversity was in our policies, practices and attitudes. All staff completed online training, to ensure that they were equipped to support LGBTQ+ students. Stephen from Belong To visited Duiske College and gave us an inspiring and uplifting presentation and answered any questions that we had.

We are currently more than half way through our journey of ensuring our school is a supportive, LGBTQ+ inclusive school culture and environment. Keep your eyes out for next year when we should be awarded our Quality Mark!

## Silaire

Duiske College was proud to open our first ASD classroom in September 2023. We decided to name the classroom 'Silaire', after a popular, scenic wood in Graiguenamanagh. Our caretaker, Declan, made a beautiful hand-made sign and with little more than a few chairs and desks, we moved in.

We have a team of two teachers and two SNAs. We now have a sensory room that has bean-bags, a couch, a swing, weighted blankets, cushions and sensory lights. We have a bright classroom with many resources and a chill out room with a (donated) cross trainer.

We have two fabulous 1st year students who joined us this year and have taught us so much over the year. Our students enjoy going to mainstream classes and then coming back to Silaire. We encourage our students to bring their friends in for breaks and lunch. We have enjoyed trips to the local café for hot chocolate and some walks by the Barrow.

Silaire has been a wonderful addition to Duiske College and we look forward to welcoming more students to Silaire next year.



# Flourishing Through Learning with KCETB

## Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's Further Education and Training Learner Voice Forum

Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's Further Education and Training (FET) Service held their Learner Voice Forum in the Springhill Hotel last month, and it was a resounding success. In attendance were over 100 learners from a range of education and training programmes across Kilkenny and Carlow. The learners gathered to talk about their experience of learning with Kilkenny and Carlow ETB (KCETB), highlighting the inclusiveness and diversity of KCETB's FET provision. Learners studied a wide range of modules at different levels and in various locations across Kilkenny and Carlow. Some learners are currently engaged in full time and part-time education at NFQ levels 3 to 6, while other learners are attending part-time education programmes at levels 1 and 2, including return to learning courses and ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages). Other cohorts are involved in informal education under the Community Education strand with KCETB. The learner group discussions were facilitated by KCETB staff from different programmes who took on the role of facilitators for the event.

Martha Bolger, Director of Further Education and Training formally launched the event and welcomed all our learners from across the range of FET programmes. Ms. Bolger emphasised the importance of the learner voice in shaping our further education and training provision and supports and, in particular, the identification of areas for improvement.

According to Ms. Bolger "It is of upmost importance to KCETB to hear about the learners' experience. The forum provides us with a valuable insight into a range of topics to include feedback in relation to course experience, access and progression plans following completion of their studies with KCETB."

Part of the learner event involved a panel discussion hosted by Seán Ó hArgáin. The panel comprised of past learners who had progressed from their FET courses with KCETB and are now in employment, self-employment and some have progressed onto third level education. They are living examples of the valuable pathways and progression routes available through KCETB FET's courses.

Thank you to all our learners, past and present, and to our staff for making this event a wonderful success. We are enthusiastically looking forward to hosting the 2025 Learner Voice Forum and we wish all our current learners much success with their future endeavours, hopes and dreams as they flourish through learning.



FET Learner Voice 2024 with Director of FET and Facilitators



VTOS Carlow



Past Learners



Past Learners



# Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service

Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service continues its work with all KCETB learners and the wider public. We have collaborated with other local services to engage with the community and increase awareness of the free, confidential support available. We linked in with Kilkenny Library Services and arranged library visits for learners to explore the facilities on offer. We met with learners and clients on an outreach basis in libraries around the county. This proved to be a successful and engaging experience for all involved.

As part of our Educational and Career Guidance offering, our Courses for Adults in Kilkenny and Carlow directory was published in August and was disseminated widely around the county. Career Management Skills seminars for KCETB Learners were held in December which were well attended by classroom learners and individuals alike covering Job Applications, CV development and Interview Skills. We held several



*Adult Guidance information Stand at Mac Donagh Junction*

information stands in MacDonagh Junction, attended the Iverk Show in Piltown, presented at the Kilkenny Jobs Fair and provided expertise and guidance talks on the Irish Education, Training and Employment landscape for those newly arrived in Ireland.

Kilkenny Guidance Service also facilitates the provision of therapeutic counselling support for our learners as complementary to the work undertaken with their Guidance Counsellor. This vital support continued throughout 2023.

The service supported 2326 individuals in 2023, as learners continued on pathways in education, training and employment. Our staff underwent extensive training

in Dyslexia Screening for Further Education and Training and are now able to provide this important screening for our KCETB learners. In addition, all Guidance Counsellors completed refresher training with Psychometrix for Occupational, Educational and Personality assessments as all registered test users with British Psychological Society. This allows our learners to gain access to reasonable accommodations for their exams and submissions where required and subverts the need for a costly Educational Psychologist report at FET level.

We look forward to supporting our learners through the changes coming with the FET College of the Future in 2024 / 2025 and beyond.



*Adult Guidance at Iverk Show*



# Scoil Aireagail



*Scoil Aireagail Junior Soccer Team*

As the academic year of 2023/2024 at Scoil Aireagail comes to a close, it is a time to reflect on the remarkable achievements and moments that have defined our school community. From scientific successes to sporting triumphs, our students have truly excelled, embodying our ethos of excellence in education, care, equality, community and respect.

In October, our school was abuzz with anticipation as we prepared to welcome back one of our most distinguished alumni, Colbert Fennelly, an Oscar-winning effects animator. His return will be remembered as a momentous occasion in the school's history, a testament to the powerful combination of dreams and hard work, and a source of inspiration for the Scoil Aireagail family who gathered to celebrate one of their own.

Our Christmas Market was a resounding success, filling our school with joy and community spirit. Families, friends and neighbours gathered to celebrate the season fostering a sense of togetherness and community spirit. The collaboration with local vendors and businesses not only added charm to the event but also reinforced the importance of supporting each other. It was a resounding testimony to the incredible support and camaraderie within our school and local community.

Our students made their mark at the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition. Two of our talented Transition Year students, undertook an insightful exploration into

the impact of Covid-19 on the developmental stage and mental health of secondary school pupils. Their project was submitted under the new category of Health and Wellbeing. By participating in the exhibition, students gained valuable experience in the field of science and technology, along with research and communication skills, all highly transferable and valuable skills.

At our school, we offer a diverse range of extracurricular activities that cater to various interests. These not only



*1st Year students of Scoil Aireagail enjoying Ice-cream - Kealan Holohan, Alex Ryan, Jake Dunphy, Rhys Power, Jimmy White, and Adam Power*





*Scoil Aireagail Intergenerational Community Programme – Cameron Walshe, Grace Fitzpatrick and Aoibhe Murphy*



*National Provision Mapping Showcase, Portlaoise – Dr. Joanna Fitzgerald, Yaroslav Nemyrovskiy and Aine Woods*



*Scoil Aireagail Christmas Market – Transition Year Students Sophia Keane, Ella Mae Rogil, Holly Long and Sophie Maher*



*National Provision Mapping Showcase, Portlaoise – Scoil Aireagail Inclusion Team – Mr. Denis Carrigan, Ms. Roisin Fitzpatrick, Patrick Dungan, Jessica Flynn, Rory Aylward, Yaroslav Nemyrovskiy, Ronan Crowley, and Katie Kinsella*

include sports like soccer, hurling, football, badminton and basketball, but also music, chess, photography and our science club. Notably, our junior boys' soccer team achieved a remarkable victory in the Division 3 final of the Kilkenny Carlow Junior Soccer FAI League and our senior hurling team achieved a similar victory in their Leinster final. These achievements are testament to the teamwork, and resilience of the players and the dedication of their coaches and mentors. These extracurricular activities play a vital role in fostering our students' holistic development, equipping them for success in academics, future careers, and life beyond school.

This year, our school has taken a significant step towards inclusivity by involving students in our Inclusion Team. Comprising members from each year group, the team plays a pivotal role in the school's decision-making process. Their mission is to transform our school into a welcoming environment where every student feels a strong sense of belonging. Through choice, acceptance, and celebrating diverse abilities, they embody our commitment to care and community. We were honoured to be chosen to address the Provision Mapping Showcase event where our team of students and teachers spoke about their work this year.

This year, Scoil Aireagail collaborated with the Mullinavat Active Retirement Group to establish an inter-generational project where students from Scoil Aireagail facilitated digital technology classes for members of our local active retirement community. In return, the seniors taught students card games during lunch time. The result was a delightful blend of youth and experience where both parties came away feeling fulfilled.

As we bid farewell to 2023 / 2024, we celebrate these moments of excellence, care, and respect. They remind us that education extends beyond textbooks—it's about building connections, embracing diversity, and celebrating the bigger picture.



# School Completion Programme Na Siúire

## SETU Junior Access Programme



*Students from Mount Sion Primary School*

In January 2024, a joint initiative between SETU access office and SCP Na Siúire commenced. SCP Na Siúire has had a long-standing relationship with the SETU Access office working in partnership to enhance educational opportunities for students from underrepresented groups to access, participate in and eventually complete courses in SETU.

This programme catered for sixty 6th class students from Mount Sion and De La Salle Stephen Street primary schools, culminating in our graduation on May 1st. Three 4-week programmes took place every Wednesday after school. This programme showcases third level opportunities in Waterford

to students, providing a good overview of college life and increases awareness of Access opportunities.

Every Wednesday for 4 weeks, the students got to participate in general University life. On arrival, the boys queued in the canteen and were treated to a delicious meal by the catering staff. They were encouraged and supported to tidy up after themselves on completion. This was followed briefly by homework time. Each week, lecturers volunteered their time and provided various workshops including maths, a library tour, robotics, art and team building games. A highlight for each group was a trip to the SETU Carriganore campus to



*Dinner time in the canteen*

participate in a sports workshop. This ensured that a varied level of interests were catered for. The majority of the programme took place on the College Street campus.

This is a highly anticipated programme each year for 6th class boys and we greatly look forward to 2025 already!



*Students from De La Salle*



*Sports time Carriganore*



# Back to Education Initiative Carlow

The Back to Education Initiative Carlow provides part-time learning opportunities for young people and adults, giving them a chance to combine a return to learning with family, work, and other responsibilities.

Courses are offered on a flexible, part-time basis throughout Carlow town and County, affording learners the opportunity to build up their qualifications at a time and pace suitable to their needs. The BTEI currently offers a suite of educational options at QQI levels 3 to 6, covering Computers and ICT Skills, Office Administration, Healthcare, Horticulture, Childcare and Special Needs Assisting.

At the core of BTEI provision is a learner-centred holistic approach, whereby learners are provided with support, advice, and guidance in order to support them to progress personally, academically and professionally.

## BTEI CARLOW PROVISION 2023 - 2024

BTEI Community Strand	St. Catherine's Community Services Centre
ICT/Office Skills	Carlow & Ballon
Horticulture	Carlow & Myshall
Office Administration	Carlow & Ballon
Health Care	Carlow & Tullow
Childcare	Carlow
Special Needs Assisting	Carlow



*BTEI Learner Bridie Nolan giving feedback at the KCETB Learner Voice Forum Spring 2024*

## Highlights

BTEI continues to provide onsite tuition to its many students in Carlow town and County. BTEI Carlow also provided technological assistance through a laptop loan scheme and the continued use of TEAMS VLP as a means of sharing materials and resources. This not only ensures that learners are furnished with the tools necessary to complete their studies at home, but also ensures that they develop or retain skills necessary to navigate an online learning environment.

Keeping with the theme of learner support, BTEI Carlow, in association with Carlow Adult Learning, developed a series of support classes to enhance the learning experience of existing students and to provide a pathway for future students who required intensive skills development before they engage with a BTEI programme.

A language support class was established in October 2023 and will be in operation to the end of the academic year. A digital literacy support class was also established in February 2024 as a means of providing additional ICT support to BTEI students.

Student feedback is always encouraged and, based on feedback received, new modules were introduced this year, including level 3 modules in Computer Literacy and Word Processing and Office Administration modules in Spreadsheet and Reception Skills at QQI Level 5.

BTEI Carlow also continues to work closely with the Adult Guidance Services, providing group and one-to-one guidance support to all BTEI groups. A number of bespoke CV and Interview Preparation workshops were also provided to BTEI students this year.

Additional highlights in the 2023/2024 academic year included the continuation of our blended approach to module delivery. In consultation with the QA department a Palliative Care evening programme, was offered using a synchronous blended learning environment with in-person assessment. Indeed, the tutor associated with the delivery of this module was shortlisted for the John Kelly Award for Universal Design in Further and Higher Education and was invited to present her UDL principles at the AHEAD and UCD John Kelly Awards ceremony in November 2023.

# Coláiste Cois Siúire



*Green Schools*

The entire school community of Coláiste Cois Siúire are delighted to shine a light on another academic year, where our core values of Excellence in Education, Equality, Care, Community, and Respect were at the forefront of all that we achieved.

Coláiste Cois Siúire started the academic year 2023 - 2024 on a high note as we joined our Leaving Certificate class of 2023 in celebrating their wonderful collective results in their State Exams. This special group of young people were the first group to engage in our highly effective Transition Year programme in 2020 and their maturity and fortitude was noticeable over the course of their three-year senior cycle studies.

As the term began, our school community was once again enriched with a number of visiting students from Spain, Germany, Japan and Ukraine.

As the year progressed, our enthusiastic and dedicated staff once again contributed as presenters in Kilkenny and Carlow ETB's TeachMeet professional learning event in October.

Away from the classroom, the school excelled in many sporting areas during

the year, with boys and girls teams competing in basketball, hurling/camogie, soccer, and Gaelic football competitions. With many students participating across multiple sports, we are proud to have such talented and dedicated athletes amongst us. Our wheelchair basketball team travelled to Cork once again to defend their national title, narrowly losing out by one score in the overall final. This was a fantastic achievement for all

involved and a wonderful exploration of empathy and equality.

The senior cycle school tour this year was a trip to London. The trip proved to be a superb opportunity for our students to learn and engage with the history and heritage of this historic city where, along with notable historical sites, they also organised a cultural visit to the famous West End.





Student leadership in action could be seen throughout the academic year, with the Student Council organising a number of events for the school community as well as reporting to the Board of Management about their work in the school. The student council played an important role as a data-gathering group for the school's special area of Ethos focus this year: Community. Led by our Head Boy and Head girl, a student delegation travelled to Grennan College in March to represent the school and to show their findings in an impressive display of work that captured just some of the many community-themed events and experiences that our students had engaged in over the last academic year including promotion of the Irish language in conjunction with the local Conradh na Gaeilge, success at the Garda Youth Awards with a Drugs Awareness Podcast series, paired reading initiatives with our neighbouring primary schools, hand-making sensory fidget blankets for dementia patients in the Mooncoin Residential Care Centre, important

links with local enterprises, the work of our vibrant Parents' Association and more. 6th Year Prefects played an important role in modelling high standards and expectations for younger cohorts, while Peer Mentors assisted with our 1st Year students making the transition from National School to the corridors of Coláiste Cois Siúire. Our Green School committee spent the year building on their successful flag-earning theme of 'litter' to champion the theme of sustainability and helping earn the school's second ever Green Schools' flag.

Wellbeing Week in Coláiste Cois Siúire took place in term one this year with events aimed at promoting positive habits for the mind and body, organised for students and teachers alike. This was complemented by the annual Active School Week in term three featuring the yearly 5K Fun Run and the hugely popular School Sports' Day.

The school's Transition Year programme continued to develop once again this year with a balanced blend of academia, modular subjects and more diverse events. The annual TY bonding trip was to Kilkenny Activity Centre, where students spent an energetic day participating in activities such as zorbing, paintballing and exciting team-based challenges.

In term two we were delighted to celebrate Seachtain na Gaeilge agus Gaeilge 24, which gave our students a chance to explore and appreciate the Irish language and culture through Irish dancing, singing and a giant table quiz.

Coláiste Cois Siúire is extremely proud of how our students and teachers set high standards for our school this year and strove together for excellence in achieving these aims as a school community.



Garda Youth Awards

# Kilkenny Adult Learning



## The Intercultural Cookbook Project

The Intercultural Cookbook Project was run as part of our ongoing Family Learning Programme with the parents, grandparents and carers of St. John's Junior and Senior School Kilkenny. The school is a DEIS band one school and The Kilkenny Adult Learning Service have been running Family Learning classes in the school for parents since 2015.



Course participant Frances O'Sullivan, HSCL Orla Mackey & Family Learning Co-ordinator joined Shannon Redmond on KCLR to share their experience of the Intercultural Cookbook Project.

The project aimed to bring parents in the school community together as there are at least 27 different nationalities represented in the school. We believed that an intercultural cookbook would encourage course participants to become involved in this uplifting project, celebrating, diversity and cultural exchange.

Parents got involved in recipe sharing, focusing on building social networks for positive mental health, healthy family meals, recipe swapping, cooking demonstrations, library visits, local outings, meals on a budget, baking at the school and meeting at the Adult Learning Service, Patrick Street to cook and use the computers. The group also made aprons for the children for their cookbook photo shoot!

This book is more than just a cookbook, it is a celebration of intercultural exchange and community spirit. It was shortlisted for an Aontas Star Award 2024 which was held in Croke Park in March 2024.

The International Cookbook has also won an EPAL Award (Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe)

## Hug Your Book

The Hug Your Book programme is running in several schools and Family Resource Centres across Kilkenny and Carlow. It has been a great hit with parents of the Presentation Primary School Kilkenny where parents and children took part in a Teddy Bear's picnic with tutor Emma Twohig.

The Hug Your Book Programme is for all parents who want to make reading fun and learn new ways to support their children's literacy skills through fun and rewarding activities. The Hug Your Book Programme can



A child making a paper craft

be developed to support children's language and literacy development as well as social and emotional needs.



## Awards Ceremony

On Thursday the 25th January 2024, KCETB hosted an Award Ceremony for learners where English was not their first language. It was held in the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny. This event highlighted the perseverance and dedication of language learners within the Kilkenny Adult Learning Service and celebrated the accomplishments of individuals who embarked on their journey of learning the English language.

Over 200 learners attended on the day from many different nationalities and backgrounds. It was a very enjoyable and successful event where learners were presented with QQI Awards ranging from Level 1 to Level 4.

This event not only celebrated the linguistic accomplishments of its participants, but also served as a testament to the power of education in fostering inclusion, understanding, and unity within diverse communities.

Among those who attended on the day was Victoriia Pliuva from Ukraine, who shared her personal journey of overcoming language barriers and adapting to a new culture. She expressed how learning a second language requires time and patience and thanked the hard work and efforts of the staff at Kilkenny Adult Learning Service. She now hopes to gain employment in the Healthcare sector.



*Presentation of QQI Awards for ESOL Learners with KCETB*



*Presentation of QQI Awards for ESOL Learners with KCETB*



*Presentation of QQI Awards for ESOL Learners with KCETB*



*Presentation of QQI Awards for ESOL Learners with KCETB*



# Coláiste Eoin Hacketstown



*TY Show, Buggy Malone,  
Students Malachy Byrne and  
Jaymie Bracken*

Coláiste Eoin Hacketstown has experienced an exceptionally successful year so far. Notably, our past pupils from last year have been honored with scholarships. As well as the KCETB Student of the Year Award for 2022 / 2023, Ailbhe Maguire also received two other highly prestigious awards from UCD, the AD Astra award and Scholar's award after achieving 7H1's in the Leaving Certificate, while Toby Garland received the Scholars award from DCU.

In November, our school hosted a lively Lip Sync event where over 300 students enthusiastically danced and sang and entertained the entire school community. This year was a three-night extravaganza that can only be described as the finest and most professional yet. This whole-school well-being event has become a significant highlight on our school calendar. In Hurling, the senior south Leinster hurling D title was won, along with the under 16 team securing the south Leinster hurling shield.

Coláiste Eoin emerged as the schools B Gaelic football final winners. The FAI schools' South Leinster Minor

soccer team delivered an outstanding performance, securing a fantastic victory for the girls. The 1st and 2nd year girls' basketball team made it to the Leinster semi-final in the basketball arena in Tallaght. Additionally, the school excelled in badminton, with both boys under 14 and under 16 teams as runners-up, and girls under 14 and under 16 teams reaching the finals and in athletics, our 1st year boys won their heat and came

3rd in the finals and the 1st year girls came 2nd in the heat and came 5th in the finals.

We also celebrated what must be a record of 30 years of the TY show, with our Deputy Principal Mr. Burke never missing a single show in that time. This year's creative show combined elements from four iconic productions: The Wizard of Oz, Buggy Malone, Chicago, and The Greatest





Showman. Furthermore, we had a hugely successful grandparents/special persons day, hosted by the schools Ethos team, where once again the whole school community and the wider community came together to enjoy tea and cakes, accompanied by music and dancing provided by the students. TY students had fantastic success with Junk Kouture—designed by Casey Cullen and Lillian Swift and modeled by Megan Weekes. Their creation, 'Nature's Fairytale,' took to the Helix stage at the regional finals.

During Inclusion Week, we celebrated diversity and hosted impactful events, including a healthy breakfast for 1st-year students, an international lunch for the whole school, and a guest speaker, 'Rory's Stories', spoke to the whole school about the importance of school attendance, the challenges he faced in secondary school and how he overcame Dyslexia and ADHD to become a successful writer and influencer. After the whole school talk, we formed the words "We Belong" by getting the entire school to stand together out on the playing fields, symbolizing unity and inclusion and how all students are valued in our school.

We launched a new School Newsletter this year, 'The Eoin Echo', which has been a great success. Some of our TY modules, workshops and activities this year included Forensic Fun, Segways, Taekwondo, Horticulture, DIY, GAA coaching, Tidy Towns, Biodiversity Garden, Drive School, Coco's Law, a trip to the Baltinglass outdoor



education centre and a Foreign Tour to Florence, Verona and Venice. We had a Student Exchange programme again this year with a school from Mouthe in France. Our 6th year Meitheal students did a fantastic job in helping our 1st year boys and girls to settle into life in Coláiste Eoin. We held a whole school wellbeing fancy dress event for Halloween with prizes galore and a Christmas Carol and Christmas

Quiz event for all our students took place in the GPA in December 2023.

Our Parents' Association met throughout the year and we welcomed new members again this year. The Parents Association donated prizes for the Halloween and Christmas events, as well as sponsoring well-being week, among many other things. The school year is far from over; we're gearing up for an action-packed sports day, a key feature of our Wellbeing Week, and we are eagerly anticipating our end-of-year awards ceremony.

A heartfelt thank you to the committed staff, the diligent students, and their supportive families—together, we can proudly proclaim a job well done to everyone involved. We wish the Leaving Certificate Class of 2023 / 2024 all the best for the future.



# Family Learning in Carlow Adult Learning Service

Family learning is an approach to education that welcomes families to get involved in intercultural and intergenerational programmes which support the parent, grandparent, or carer as the child's first educator. Family Learning can help parents improve their own skills while supporting their children's education. The Family Learning approach aims to foster positive attitudes, relationships, and aspirations among family members and the school community. It involves social interaction, collaboration and sharing between individuals of different generations and backgrounds.

## Family Activities

Carlow Adult Learning Service has a long history of bringing Family Learning to families in Carlow and, since the recent designation of DEIS status to a number of schools throughout Carlow in 2023, demand has grown considerably. Carlow Adult Learning Service facilitated a weekly Family Learning games night for Ukrainian families in Ballon Community Centre during 2023 / 2024. For parents and children, this class provided an opportunity to improve their English language skills while children benefited from enhancing social skills, including cooperation, turn-taking, developing fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination, as well as learning number, shape, colour, and word recognition and encouraging flexible thinking. More than that however, it offered the opportunity for families who had experienced the upheaval of flight from their homes to simply play together.

## Celebrating cultures

Parents, grandparents and carers of Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal, St. Joseph's, Bishop Foley and St. Mary's CBS are coming together every Wednesday to take part in an intercultural project which celebrates the diverse school communities with a focus on traditional arts and craft such as beading, embroidery and weaving.

This project aims to give adults an opportunity to share and celebrate their culture, heritage, traditional crafts and hidden talents with the wider school community.

## Hug Your Book©

A number of Hug Your Book© programmes are running in schools throughout Co. Carlow. Hug Your Book© is based on the balanced literacy framework and it welcomes participants to come together to look at a new children's book each week with an emphasis on new words, rhyming schemes, authors, illustrators and reading writing and talking. Parents find that this has really helped their children become excited about books and learning, whilst also serving as a bonding experience for the parent and child – all the while growing a love of reading within the home environment and building a library along with it!

We are also looking forward to holding a 'Breakfast Buddies' event for all Hug Your Book© participants and their 'buddies' at an event planned for May 15th, International Day of Families. We will welcome Lána McCarthy Hug Your Book© founder and SETU lecturer to facilitate a workshop for parents, grandparents and carers. We encourage participants to bring along a 'Breakfast Buddy' to share the benefits of the programme with their families.





# Carlow School Completion Programme

As part of the significant expansion of the DEIS Scheme, Carlow School Completion Programme went from a cluster of 6 schools to a cluster of 12 schools, 3 Post Primary and 6 Primary in Bagenalstown and Carlow Town. Not only has our cluster grown but our Team has also expanded with the hiring of 4 new Project Workers. Fiach Walker, Naoise Kelly, Nicole Clarke and Robyn Alcock have joined our current Team of Angela Fleming, Administrator, Marita Brennan, Project Worker and Sinead O’Keeffe, Co-ordinator.

The Project workers have been undertaking evidenced based training in areas such as positive mental health and well-being and social and emotional well-being.

In working with young people, the SCP Project workers support the young people to develop social and emotional competencies in the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship management and responsible decision-making. These competencies are protective factors that encourage and equip young people to deal with daily challenges and the stresses of life.

Under the direction and support of our Local Management Committee, and in particular the support and guidance from our Chairperson Mr Gerry Mc Gill, we are actively supporting young people in reaching their potential in school.



*Carlow School Completion Programme personnel: Naoise Kelly, Angela Fleming, Robyn Alcock, Nicole Clarke and Fiach Walker*

# Spotlight on Early Learning and Care at Ormonde College



*Tertiary Course Launch L-R: Jennifer Collins, Deputy Principal College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny (KCETB), Martha Bolger, Director of Further Education and Training (KCETB), Sarah Barron, Adult Education Officer (KCETB), Una Hayes, Principal College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny (KCETB), David Denieffe, Vice President - Student Experience (SETU).*

## Development of KCETB's College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny

In 2023 / 2024, development of the College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny progressed, moving towards an all-encompassing and dynamic educational further education and training model, including undergoing a transformative rebranding process emerging with a new logo and signage bearing the new name. As part of the strategic development establishing the brand as the premier choice for further education and training in the county, several locations have been renamed with plans for expansion. The initial phase commenced with the renaming of a number of provision locations as campuses of the new college including Ormonde Road Campus, Nuncio Road Campus, Gaol Road Campus, Island Mill Campus, Grennan, Thomastown and Equestrian Campus, Newtown, Thomastown. This change demonstrates the commitment of KCETB towards accessibility and inclusivity for learners going forward.

As part of the ongoing development at the College, a state-of-the-art timetabling software, tailored to meet the diverse needs of our student body was introduced. This initiative optimised scheduling efficiency while accommodating the phased introduction of various educational provisions. The software facilitates seamless coordination across multiple campus locations, ensuring a smooth transition into the new academic landscape.

To streamline communication and enhance visibility, the college amalgamated promotional efforts, consolidating prospectus materials to encompass full-time FET provision. This integrated approach aims to provide comprehensive information to prospective students while promoting a cohesive institutional identity.

To support this initiative, the College has started the process of establishing dedicated committees to oversee promotions and programme development. These committees are comprised of experienced professionals tasked with driving innovation, enhancing outreach efforts, and ensuring the continued relevance and quality of educational offerings.



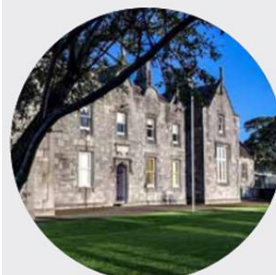
A significant development in the formation of the College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny is KCETB's newly established Tertiary links with the South East Technological University (SETU) launching four degrees across Kilkenny and Carlow, aimed at increasing progression from further to higher education outside of the traditional points system. The first year of these degrees will be hosted and delivered at KCETB FET Colleges, after which learners who successfully complete the year, will progress seamlessly to higher education at SETU. The collaboration is reflective of a national drive to establish alternative routes to pursuing degree courses by creating more unified further education and training (FET) and higher education (HE) sectors. The Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science Unified Tertiary System Policy, launched by An Taoiseach Simon Harris, signified a historic change in how learners access third-level education. These degrees will form a pathway for KCETB's Further Education and Training graduates.

As part of this development, the College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny will offer the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in IT Management Year One with progression to SETU Carlow and the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Public Health and Health Promotion Year One with progression to SETU Waterford.

Commenting on this exciting new opportunity, KCETB Director of Further Education and Training, Martha Bolger stated:

*'Through these opportunities, learners will have the opportunity to apply directly to one of our Further Education and Training Colleges and enjoy the first year of their degree without fees with a guaranteed opportunity to progress to SETU. This is an exciting departure for KCETB and underpins our core belief that learning has the power to transform lives and build communities'*

#### College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny Locations:



**Ormonde Road Campus**  
Kilkenny  
R95 W2XN



**Gaul Road Campus**  
Kilkenny  
R95 Y6PH



**Nuncio Road Campus**  
Co. Kilkenny  
R95 EV77



**Danville Campus**  
Loughboy, Ring Road,  
Kilkenny



**Island Mill Campus**  
Grennan, Thomastown,  
Co. Kilkenny R95 NN8X



**Equestrian Campus**  
Newtown, Thomastown,  
Co. Kilkenny R95 EV77

Newly named Campuses - College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny

The development phases of the College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny during 2023-2024 reflect a proactive approach to educational excellence and institutional advancement. Through rebranding, technological integration, campus expansion and curriculum innovation, the College has positioned itself as a dynamic hub of learning, poised to meet the needs of a diverse student body and will thrive in an ever-changing educational landscape.



**Coláiste Breisoideachais agus Oiliúna Cill Chainnigh**  
**College of Further Education and Training Kilkenny**

New Logo - College of Further Education and Training, Kilkenny





# Music Generation Kilkenny



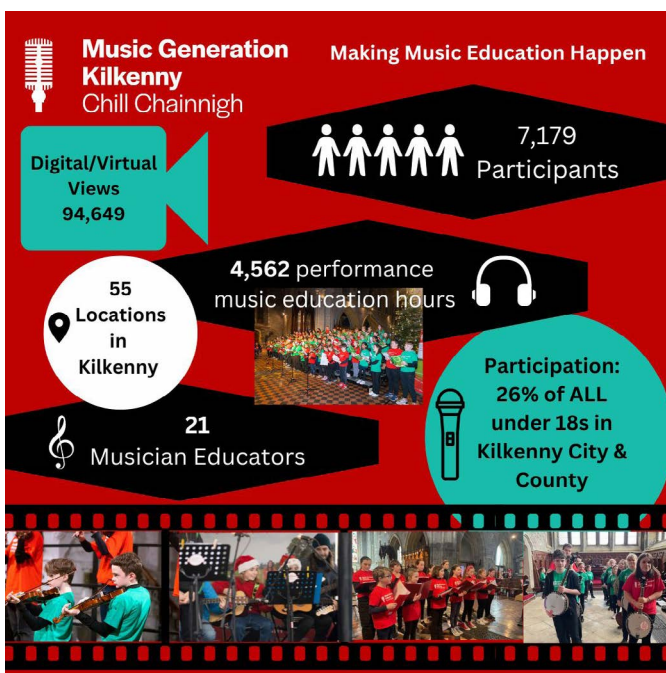
Music Generation Kilkenny young string performers in the Christmas SINGOUT concert at St. Canice's Cathedral led by Musician Educator Andreea Bouros  
Photo: Patrick Browne

Music Generation Kilkenny had a very successful year of music making in 2023/2024 with **7,179** children and young people participating in music programmes across the city and county. Over 26% of the total population of 18s and under, across the whole county of Kilkenny, took part in a Music Generation programme in 2023, with 4,562 hours of performance music education delivered to children and young people in the county.

The vision and ethos of Music Generation Kilkenny is to transform the lives of children and young people through access to high quality performance music education. Underpinning this vision are the values of access, quality, inclusion, diversity, creativity, partnership, and sustainability. At its core are children/young people and musicians.

Currently, Music Generation Kilkenny runs partnership programmes in:

- 24 primary schools across five strands: vocal, ukulele, string, percussion and the 'Music Makers' programme aimed at Junior Infant to Second Class pupils. This strong foundation supports the progression of children and young people into Music Generation Kilkenny's after-school music hubs and will continue to support hub programme planning and development in 2024 / 2025.
- 2 secondary school programmes delivering small group tuition on acoustic guitar, electric guitar, mandolin, banjo, and piano/keyboard in addition to a TV programme across several Kilkenny secondary schools.
- SEN programme - an inclusive music programme in 2 school settings in Kilkenny City.



Ireland AM - Castlecomer Trad Ensemble perform live on Ireland AM for St. Patrick's Day Kilkenny Festival led by Musician Educators Karena and Paula Dowling



Music Generation Kilkenny runs after-school music hubs for young people who want to learn an instrument or explore their singing skills in a group setting:

### CREATIVE MUSIC SPACE

An after-school rock and pop music hub runs in partnership with Foróige at the DRUM, MacDonagh Shopping Centre on Thursdays delivering small group lessons in ukulele, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, drums and singing.

### SOUTH KILKENNY MUSIC HUB

In October 2023 Music Generation Kilkenny launched an after-school rock and pop music hub in partnership with Coláiste Cois Siúire, Mooncoin, to service the south Kilkenny corridor and provide small group lessons in acoustic guitar, electric guitar, bass guitar, and drums. The hub is due to expand it's provision in September 2025 due to popular demand.

### TRAD HUB AND ENSEMBLE

An after-school traditional music hub, runs in partnership with Foróige at the Courthouse, Castlecomer. This hub provides an opportunity for young traditional players to get involved in fun weekly lessons and performance opportunities. Instruments include fiddle, bodhrán, concertina, whistle, flute and banjo.

### UILLEANN PIPE HUB

An after-school Uilleann Pipe hub, runs on Wednesdays in Kilkenny City. In March 2024 for St. Patrick's Day Kilkenny Festival, Music Generation Kilkenny presented 'Try the Pipes' at the Parade Tower, in partnership with Na Píobairí Uilleann and Kilkenny Pipers Club.



Kilkenny Youth Choir perform with Greendale High School Wisconsin USA. Conductor Mike Jones, USA.

An information video for our after-school music hubs can be found on the Music Generation Kilkenny youtube channel.



Music Generation Kilkenny SING OUT primary school choir in concert at St. Canice's Cathedral  
Photo: Patrick Browne





*Young Music Generation Kilkenny participant at JINGLE BELL ROCKOUT*

## Highlights of the year include:

The year kicked off with vocal workshops for young musicians for Culture Night, followed by a series of drumming and vocal workshops in partnership with the Bookville Kilkenny Festival.

In December 2023, young musicians from the Creative Music Space entertained on the festival bandstand in 'Jingle Bell Rockout' in what is becoming a popular annual community event for our young musicians.

**SING OUT** – Singing in a Winter Wonderland. Music Generation Kilkenny's annual Christmas concert was a great success in December 2023. 200 children from six primary schools performed in a packed St. Canice's Cathedral alongside young musicians from the Creative Music Space. Joining them onstage were the young violinists from the Music Generation Kilkenny primary school string programme. This programme of whole class violin began in primary schools just after the pandemic and has gone from strength to strength, with children learning violin from 3rd – 6th class. There are currently over 500 children learning violin across schools participating in the primary school string programme.

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DAY** – Young musicians from the Music Generation Kilkenny programme travelled to the convention centre in Dublin in March to celebrate the 'We are Music Generation' ten year celebration. They took part in workshops and performances in a festival-like day filled with incredible music-making and musical inspiration.

**SONG COLLECTIVE** - Throughout the month of April, young Kilkenny musicians showcased their musical talent through writing, recording, releasing and performing their own songs, through the 'Song Collective' Workshops facilitated by Music Generation Kilkenny, in partnership with Foróige, and with funding from Kilkenny County Council and Creative Ireland. The aim of the 'Song

Collective' project is to support young musicians to create in their own communities and to establish a vibrant youth music scene in Kilkenny. The month of workshops culminated in an outdoor performance and EP launch in collaboration with singer song-writer and TikTok star from County Kilkenny, Robert Grace.

**UKE JAM** – 837 children who learn the Ukulele weekly throughout the academic year as part of the Music Generation Kilkenny primary school Ukulele programme came together in the Watergate Theatre in May for a spectacular jamming session called 'UKE JAM'.

Primary school playgrounds came alive in Summer 2023 to the sound of samba drumming when 2,357 children participated in 'Summer Drummers' across fifteen primary schools in Kilkenny City and County. Schools are poised for the programme again throughout the month of June, 2024.

**TRADCAMP** – TradCamp is a partnership between Music Generation Kilkenny and Music Generation Tipperary. Young traditional musicians from both counties come together for a week long camp culminating in a concert in each county. In 2023 they performed in the Medieval Mile Museum and in the Dome for the Clonmel Junction Festival.

In 2023 / 2024 Music Generation Kilkenny delivered toddler music workshops, rhythm workshops, youth drumming workshops, song-writing and sound production workshops, participated in Bookville Kilkenny, Yulefest Kilkenny, Cruinniú na nÓg, St. Patrick's Day Kilkenny Festival and partnered/collaborated with Foróige, Na Píobairí Uilleann, The Kilkenny Pipers Club, Kilkenny Childcare Committee, Kilkenny County Library Service, The Civic Trust to name a few.



# Carlow Adult Guidance Service

Over the past few months, Adult Guidance has been busy with various programmes and events aimed at providing support and encouraging the wider benefits of learning for our clients.

## Carlow Institute Open Day

A bus was organised for learners and clients to attend the annual Open Day in Carlow Institute. Clients and learners on different programmes, including VTOS, Youthreach, Carlow Youth Training, and Learning for Everyday Life (St. Catherine's), had the opportunity to explore the full range of services that CIFET offers, engage with career counsellors, and connect with educational programmes. The morning was filled with inspiring sessions, interactive workshops, and networking, marking a significant step in many of our client's career and education paths. Also, in collaboration with Carlow Institute of Further Education we will be continuing with the Bridging programme for learners from Youthreach and Carlow Youth Training as they transition to the next stage in their education.

## Tullow Outreach

Our outreach initiative in Tullow, hosted monthly at the Forward Steps Family Resource Centre and Tullow Library, continues to make educational resources accessible to adults in the local area. This service has become a cornerstone for many, providing crucial support and guidance in career planning and skill development, helping individuals to unlock their potential right in their own community.

## Library Familiarisation Week

During the week of 25th September, we held our Library Familiarisation Week in Bagenalstown, Borris, Carlow, and Tullow libraries. This event was designed to highlight to the community the benefits of the adult guidance service as well as the wealth of resources available in their local libraries, from ICT resources, job-search tools and educational materials to online language resources.

## Support for Ukrainian Residents

Recognising the unique challenges faced by our Ukrainian residents, Adult Guidance organised CV workshops at the Seven Oaks Hotel and also provides dedicated translator services on Monday and Friday afternoons. These workshops were particularly beneficial in helping participants craft compelling CVs, a fundamental step towards employment in a new country.

Our efforts to support International Protection Applicants (IPAs) included information sessions and personalized appointments at the Capuchin Friary, Tullow's Irish Bar residential centre, and St. Brigid's in Carlow Town. These



*Member of Carlow Adult Guidance Staff answering a query at KCETB stand during Intreo Jobs Fair event in local Hotel.*

sessions were focused on providing IPAs with the necessary tools and knowledge to navigate the job market and educational opportunities in Ireland effectively.

## INTREO Jobs Fair

The INTREO Jobs Fair on 14th March at the Seven Oaks Hotel was another highlight, featuring three specialised CV workshops conducted by our Guidance staff. Our staff fielded numerous queries from attendees and followed up with 1:1 guidance appointments. The fair provided a platform for job seekers to meet with potential employers and learn about various KCETB programmes and employment opportunities.

## KCETB Apprenticeship Expo

Adult Guidance was proud to participate in the KCETB Apprenticeship Expo on 29th January and the Volunteer Centre Event on 8th February. These events allowed us to engage with the broader community, showcase our services, and expand our network of partners and collaborators.

In conclusion, the past few months have been incredibly productive and rewarding for Adult Guidance. We are committed to continuing our work in providing high-quality guidance and support to adult learners and job seekers. Thank you to all our participants, partners, and referral agencies for their ongoing support and enthusiasm.

# Quality Assurance - A FET overview



Sarah Barron and Amanda Butler presenting on key QA topics at the QQI event '20 years of the NQF'

The Quality Assurance (QA) department has a key role in supporting, managing and monitoring the quality systems in place in Further Education and Training (FET) at KCETB. Implementation of quality assurance systems is central to a quality culture environment. The core systems in place that provide structure for robust quality assurance include:

- Managing the authentication, results approval and appeals processes for all FET centres
- Monitoring, interpreting and reporting centre related data
- Managing the programme validation monitoring and review process.
- Processing applications for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)
- Supporting academic integrity initiatives
- Liaising with national and international awarding bodies
- Supporting apprenticeships and second provider training
- Supporting and participating in the governance and management of quality functions
- Supporting and participating in the self-evaluation, monitoring and review functions
- Managing key quality assurance documents and the change management system
- Publishing documents, resources and information on the QA website and portal

For more information on the role and functions of the QA Team, please visit our website [www.kcetbqa.ie](http://www.kcetbqa.ie)

## Integrating TSU processes

In January 2024, QA implemented a revised quality system for the management of training services assessment and quality assurance activities. A series of new forms, changes to the QA Portal and a revised process for submitting assessment material have been part of continuous improvement initiatives. These changes were supported by a well-attended training session and continued support from the QA team.

## Academic Integrity focus

There has been an increased focus nationally and internationally on academic integrity in recent months. KCETB have been very active in this space and has developed a policy, created resources and delivered training to increase awareness around the potential threats to academic integrity and how to deal with assessment malpractice.

## QQI Dialogue meeting October 2023

In October 2023, Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) representatives travelled to Carlow to meet KCETB senior management and QA staff. This was an opportunity for KCETB to provide strategic updates to QQI, including a follow up report from the Inaugural Review. Progress to date and key highlights were presented. In addition, KCETB provided updates on recent and planned programme development and the ongoing KCETB and SETU collaboration. QQI also provided strategic updates.



## VPL Biennale - People, validation and power: democracy in action?

In very exciting news for Kilkenny, the international 5th Validation of Prior Learning Biennale was held in Kilkenny from 6-8 May 2024. The conference, jointly hosted by Canada, Ireland and the USA, discussed validation of prior learning in the context of our conference theme: 'People, validation and power: democracy in action?'

## Certifying a Major Award through RPL

In August 2023, KCETB processed an RPL application for a full level 6 award. This was a key milestone for KCETB. The work was supported by an external RPL consultant who reviewed the learner's experience against the QQI award for 6M5130 Media Production. The RPL process validated and recognised the knowledge, skills and competencies of the applicant in the Media Production field. There was great pride and sense of achievement when the certificate for the award was received and presented to the applicant in September 2023. Having the award is not just a personal achievement, it will also facilitate and enhance career progression opportunities for the applicant.

## Moving office

The QA team have moved! We are no longer located in Bishop Birch Institute. The new office is located on the Danville campus. Our address is:

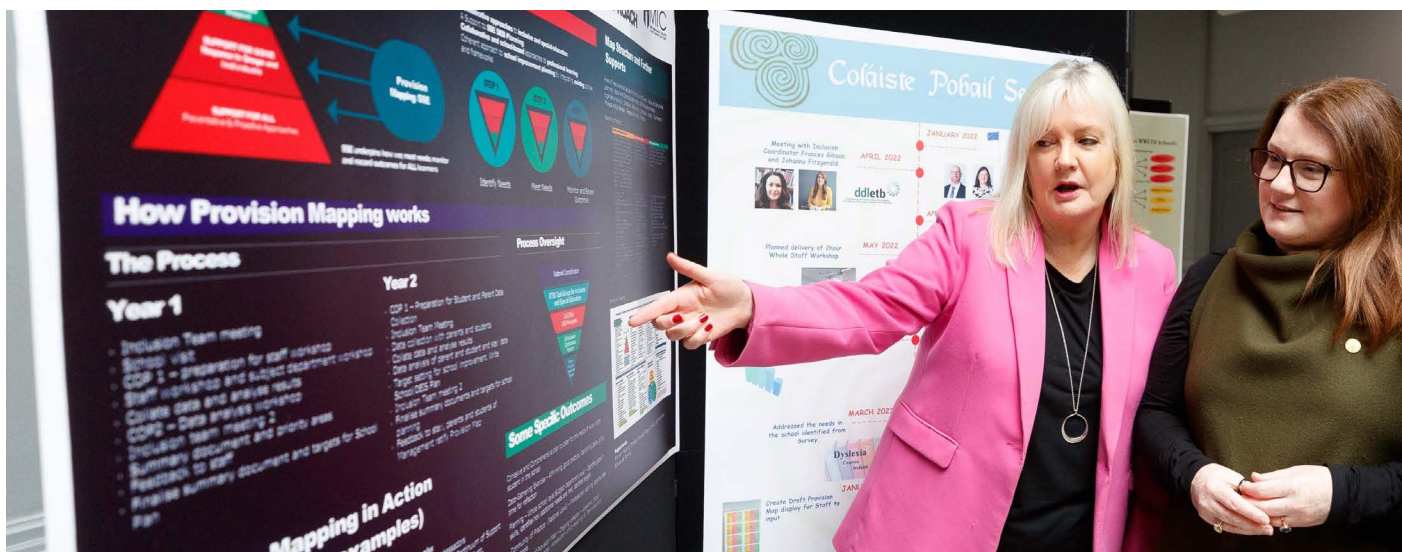
Unit 10 Danville Business Park, Ring Road, Kilkenny R95 W293; Telephone: 056 781 3098

The KCETB QA office is located in Unit 10 - Danville campus.



KCETB staff (Amanda Butler, Sarah Barron and Martha Bolger) collaborating with partners at the VPL Biennale

# Empowerment in Action: The Rising Growth of our KCETB SEN Community of Practice



Principal Cathy McSorley with ASD Co-ordinator Marian Treacy, Kilkenny City Vocational School at the recent ETBI SEN Mapping Showcase.

Since its formation in 2022, SEN Coordinators and teachers from across our 13 schools in KCETB have been meeting throughout the year to plan, collaborate and coordinate SEN provision through our dedicated SEN Community of Practice space.

This has had a huge benefits for our students, teachers, and schools. It is a highly effective and efficient way of operating. By sharing resources and planning together, it brings a richness and diversity of experience to all our students.

This year, our KCETB SEN Community of Practice had the pleasure of hosting guest speaker Jean Reale, Assistant Professor in Academic Practice at Mary Immaculate College, Limerick. Jean facilitated a thought-provoking workshop for our COP members on introducing Universal Design for Learning practices in our classrooms.

Our Community of Practice continues to expand, being a positive support network for our school personnel and offering increasing opportunities for peer-to-peer learning. This year, we had the privilege of hearing from three of our KCETB schools who shared valuable insights and expertise on Student Support Planning and Inspectorate Evaluation Learning Experiences. Our Community of Practice continues to enrich our collective knowledge and collaborative growth.

Our eight KCETB schools engaging in the ETBI/MIC Provision Mapping pilot have been working closely with KCETB Inclusion Coordinator, Linda McCormack,

to develop their individual implementation plans. Our schools have been engaging in dedicated Provision Mapping Community of Practice meetings throughout this academic year, reviewing and reflecting on their experiences to date and forward planning for the next steps in their process.

On Tuesday the 16th of April, three of our KCETB schools took centre stage at the ETBI Provision Mapping Launch and Showcase. Firstly, the Inclusion Committee of Scoil Aireagail presented on their work to date with prioritising student voice and student agency within the Provision Mapping Process. Kilkenny City Vocational School was represented by their School Principal Cathy McSorley who joined a lively panel discussion on the educational benefits of integrating Provision Mapping with School Improvement Planning.

Tyndall College, Scoil Aireagail and Kilkenny City Vocational provided exceptional poster displays on the day outlining the work of their schools in embedding School Provision Mapping practices within their school communities, a fantastic representation from KCETB on leading inclusive education across our schools!

Through shared expertise and best practices, our SEN Communities of Practice continues to elevate education standards, ensuring excellence of education for all students in every classroom.

By Linda McCormack  
KCETB Inclusion Coordinator