



# Challenge to Change

A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT IN PRESENTATION SCHOOLS

2010 - 2011



# Challenge to Change

A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT IN PRESENTATION SCHOOLS

## THIS YEAR'S PROJECTS

Different People, Different Cultures, Same World	Presentation Primary School Clonmel	2
Would you let your 5 year old work?	Scoil Bhríde Naofa Kildare	6
Sowing Seeds of Change	Presentation Secondary School Ballingary	10
Global Warming – Fact or Fiction?	Scoil Íde Clondalkin	13
All Things Bright and Beautiful	Holy Trinity N.S. Fethard	16
Difference Doesn't Mean Different!	Presentation Secondary School Rockford Manor	20
Water, Water ... Everywhere?	Scoil Mhuire G.N.S. Lucan	23
Leave Those Kids Alone	Sacred Heart Primary School Portlaoise	25
One Fair World	St. Joseph's College Lucan	28
From Warrenmount to Thailand	Presentation Primary School Warrenmount	31
Our School Garden – A Living Willow Hedge	Presentation Primary School Thurles	34
Many Voices, One Home!	Presentation Secondary School Sexton Street	36
Celebrating Diversity	Presentation Convent N.S. Castlecomer	37
Greenfingers	Scoil Mhuire Clondalkin	40
All Children should be Free	Coláiste Bríde Clondalkin	43
The Human Face of Homelessness	Presentation Primary School George's Hill	46
Water – Liquid Gold in our World Today	Presentation Convent G.N.S. Mooncoin	49
One World	Scoil Áine Clondalkin	52
Busy Green Fingers – Environmental Awareness	Presentation Secondary School Thurles	56
Water Wise	Scoil Mhuire Portlaoise	59
Biodiversity	Presentation Primary School Waterford	63
Poverty and Homelessness	Presentation Secondary School Wexford	66
If you litter and you do not care...	Presentation Primary School Portarlinton	68
Growing Greener	St. Joseph's G.N.S. Mountmellick	72
Child Labour	Presentation Secondary School Waterford	75
I Got Soul but I'm Not A Soldier	Baptist Community School Hospital	77

# CHALLENGE TO CHANGE 2010-2011



**CHALLENGE TO CHANGE** is a development education project aimed at young people attending Presentation primary and post-primary schools.

## CHALLENGE TO CHANGE AIMS TO:

- Raise awareness and bring about a greater understanding of global issues
- Create and foster a critical mindset in relation to inequality, social justice and human rights
- Experience at first hand in a real and concrete way how local action can impact positively on global inequality
- Forge closer links between the Irish students and those in developing countries
- Develop an open, sharing and collaborative dialogue between our school communities and those of our Presentation network abroad
- Disseminate information and good practice

The **VISION** of the project is driven by the Presentation charism and ethos which embraces the challenge of working with those who are marginalised and excluded, for whatever reason. Justice, human rights, sustainability and promoting right relationships are central to the Presentation mission. Collaboration with the Presentation network, through linkages with Presentation schools abroad, is encouraged.

By informing the students and the wider community the project will bring about a heightened awareness, a social consciousness, a broader vision and an appreciation of developmental issues.



# **DIFFERENT PEOPLE, DIFFERENT CULTURES, SAME WORLD**

## **PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL CLONMEL**



We decided to learn more about other countries around the world with a special focus on the lives and customs of other peoples. We especially wanted to include our Irish Traveller community in our project as some of our pupils are members of the Traveller community.

We decided that some of the work would delve into the area of inequalities between the developed and the developing world.

We celebrated the wonderful diversity of our world through talks, stories, research, art, craft, cooking, visitors to the school and a wonderful **Multicultural Day**. The project was open to all classes, staff, parents and members of our school community.



## WHAT WE DID ...



CLASS	ACTIVITIES
Sixth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learned about Native American history, culture and lifestyle</li> <li>• Looked at life in Brazil and its diversity of landscape, people and lifestyle</li> <li>• Studied an extract from <i>Spilled Water</i> which introduced the topic of child labour</li> <li>• Held a Christmas sharing of bread and good wishes with our pupils from Poland, in keeping with a Polish Christmas custom</li> <li>• Responded to Multicultural Day through poetry, projects and art work</li> <li>• Engaged in independent projects on a number of countries</li> <li>• A group worked on a project on Traveller culture</li> <li>• Another group worked on a project on Illiteracy</li> </ul>
Fifth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learned about Hinduism and Diwali, an important Hindu festival</li> <li>• Created Rangoli patterns - an Indian traditional or folk art, which is generally created on the floor on certain festive occasions</li> <li>• Decorated their hands with Mehndi patterns and made traditional Hindu sweets called barfi</li> <li>• Engaged in independent project work on Australia</li> <li>• Learned about the Aborigines</li> <li>• Engaged in Aboriginal dot painting artwork</li> <li>• Learned about Germany</li> <li>• Studied famine in Ethiopia</li> <li>• Engaged in Multicultural Day - ate hot dogs and cup cakes, did line dancing, learned about the American flag and Independence Day</li> </ul>
Fourth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learned about Italy, its people and culture</li> <li>• Enjoyed cooking and eating lots of Italian food!</li> <li>• Examined the work of artists from other cultures</li> <li>• Created a display celebrating the different nationalities in the class</li> <li>• Looked at all aspects of Tanzanian life, beginning with traditional Tanzanian stories/poems and the work of the famous Tanzanian painter, Edward Saidi Tinga Tinga</li> <li>• Created their own painting in the style of Tinga Tinga and created clay animals inspired by his paintings</li> <li>• Examined the lives of the Maasai People in Tanzania, where they live, their work and family systems</li> <li>• Created models of the Maasai tribe</li> </ul>

<p><b>Third</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examined traditions associated with the Jewish and Islamic religions and compared these traditions with Catholic/Christian beliefs and found what we have in common</li> <li>• Pupils of the Islamic religion showed their classmates items of interest relating to their practices e.g. prayer mats, Qur'an, heejab and explained important events/feasts</li> <li>• Members of the Polish community compared Christmas traditions in Poland with those in Ireland</li> </ul>
<p><b>Junior Infants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Looked at and discussed posters of children from other cultures</li> <li>• Dressed up for Multicultural Day</li> <li>• Welcomed parent visitors from many countries and listened to stories about school life, food, religion, weather and special occasions in other countries</li> <li>• Tasted food from many countries including Moldova, India, Pakistan, Poland and America</li> <li>• Enjoyed picture books, including dual language books with stories set in many different countries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Whole School</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrated diversity whenever possible.</li> <li>• Made a huge circle in the yard and sang <b>"It's a small world after all!"</b></li> </ul>

## **The Traveller travelling along**

The wind beating against the wagon

The baby crying to sleep

The fresh hay from the bed

The bacon melting in my mouth

Will my Traveller culture end?

or

My Traveller dreams come true

That my Traveller pride will never die?

*Geraldine, Rang 6*





We may have different religions, different languages, different coloured skin, but we all belong to one human race.

**Kofi Annan**

**I can't read  
I can't write  
It's not my fault  
I am out shone  
by everyone.**

Christina Tobin

**Okay, we are different it's true,  
And I don't like to do all the things that  
you do.  
But here's one thing to think through,  
You're a lot like me and I'm a lot like  
you!**

Robert Alan

*Co-ordinator: Noelle Lambert*

# WOULD YOU LET YOUR 5 YEAR OLD WORK?

## SCOIL BHRÍDE NAOFA KIDARE



### AIMS

- To raise awareness of Child Labour and Fairtrade within the school community and local community

### TARGET GROUPS

Our Target groups were the school community and the local community

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- Primary research of topics using books, internet
- Christmas play to highlight differences between a **Child Labourer's Christmas** and an Irish child's Christmas
- Scripted and filmed a video about Child Labour
- Wrote a song about **Fairtrade** and created a dance
- Held a Fairtrade tasting event for teachers and parents



- Visited the **Ombudsman for Children**, Emily Logan, to compare the rights of children here and abroad
- Invited Dee from **Concern** to deliver a workshop on Child Labour
- Wrote letters to companies accused of Child Labour
- Wrote letters to ministers campaigning against Child Labour
- Compiled a petition against Child Labour
- Sent cards to local shopkeepers and businesses requesting that they stock Fairtrade produce
- Painted t-shirts and wore them in school to raise awareness
- Put up posters about Child Labour around our school
- Delivered presentations to all classes from First Class up about Child Labour



### What the Pupils had to say

“This project made us realise more about Child Labour and helped us to appreciate our stuff more.”

*Katelyn, Age 11*

“You might think the topic isn’t that serious but when you start learning about it you realise it is.”

*Olivia, Age 11*

“I found that even as the project was progressing I was learning more each day along with the class. Every day they would look forward to our update meetings and sharing the new information they had learned. I was surprised at the huge interest they showed in it and their enthusiasm to share any information they learned with each other and also with the rest of the school.”

*Gráinne Nugent (class teacher)*

### WHAT HAS WORKED WELL

- Splitting the class into groups with specific aims worked very well and appointing a group leader to project manage within the group ensured that each group stayed on task.
- The video took time but was effective in what it achieved.
- The Fairtrade tasting worked very well in changing people’s attitudes towards Fairtrade produce as they did a blind taste test to determine if they could distinguish the products from their own favourite brands that they normally purchased. There was a lot of organisation involved too as boiling water was used for the hot drinks!
- As the government was changing we have yet to receive any replies from government ministers and we may not.
- Replies from the companies involved took a long time to come and the class was slightly disheartened waiting for them. Some never replied.



## LINKAGES

- Emily Logan- Ombudsman for Children
- Concern - Dee Clare
- London Office of **Save the Children** charity
- Primark, Addidas, Nike, Nestlé - Companies accused of Child Labour
- Fairtrade organisation

## POSITIVE IMPACT

- The school community is very aware of child labour and its impact on things they buy
- All are aware of the ethics involved in big brands and who they choose to employ
- All parents are being encouraged by children to purchase Fairtrade produce and this mindset is spilling over into the wider community





## FUTURE STEPS

In the future we would like to

- Introduce Fairtrade into the staffroom on a permanent basis
- Hold a Fairtrade bake sale
- Raise money for a charity
- Produce a booklet to raise awareness in the whole community

## CHILD LABOUR

It is very cruel the things they do  
 It is heart-breaking and you know it too  
 They get forced to work  
 Is it really fair?  
 Do their families really care?  
 Crying at night because they are starving  
 Hoping they will get food in the morning  
 Long working hours, very small wages  
 Getting bruised  
 It is all very dangerous  
 Stop Child Labour!

*Aoife, Age 11*



*Co-ordinator: Gráinne Nugent*

# **SOWING SEEDS OF CHANGE**

## **PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL BALLINGARRY**



### **AIMS**

- To learn about and experience each other's culture
- To heighten awareness about the work of Presentation Sisters in Ballingarry and in Chennai, India
- To work on the Millennium Development Goals e.g. Social Justice, Equity, Sustainable Development

### **TARGET GROUP**

Our target group was our Transition Year students who all accepted this project and worked very hard to help achieve our goals and aims.

### **ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN**

Last October, members of our teaching staff visited **St. Anthony's Anglo-Indian High School, Chennai, India**, where they established a contract linking our respective schools. Work on fundraising started straight away. At first, we found it difficult to think of possible ways to raise adequate funds.



We held Kiddie's Discos, Bake Sales and a Table Quiz in our local parishes. Within our school community, we held a soccer tournament and had a car wash for our teachers. On the 7<sup>th</sup> April, we held our biggest fundraiser, a **Camel Night**. We sold 20 tickets each and got sponsorship from local businesses. We raised over €13,000 on this night.

## OUTCOMES

We are almost at our goal of €20,000. Next October, we hope to send 10 of our Transition Year students to St. Anthony's in Chennai. We have established a strong link with St. Anthony's. There is a great awareness of the project in our school as well as a good knowledge of the **Millennium Development Goals**. The project has also spread to our local communities.



This project has strengthened our teamwork and helped us come together as a Transition Year group. People took the initiative to organise fundraising activities and to ensure the efficiency and success of all the events. Advertising our events was a success as everyone promoted it in their local communities. Our fundraising has worked well as we have almost reached our goal.

## LINKAGES

We are linked with **Worldwise**. Some of our Transition Years travelled to Croke Park to the annual seminar in January. We are linked with the **Global Education Experience** through Sr. Jennie Clifford who travelled to Chennai with members of our teaching staff. Through our school community we are linked with the Presentation Sisters who are a vital link with our project. We also linked with St. Anthony's in Chennai as our teachers visited them and we all received letters from pen pals in Chennai. We worked in conjunction with our local Foróige group to organise a Children's Disco and Cake Sale/Coffee Morning. Local businesses contributed greatly, providing sponsorship for our Camel Night and allowing us to advertise our events on their premises.

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

*"To date, I have greatly enjoyed this experience. It has really opened my eyes about the North/South divide in today's world while also allowing me to form friendships with people half way around the world ... I now realise how lucky we are, how unfairly distributed things are in our world and this has allowed me to form partnerships with people thousands of miles away. When I think about the possibilities our Immersion Project could bring, I am hit with an array of feelings like excitement, joy, yet also sadness with the thought of a culture shock at the sight of the slums first hand. Looking into the future, we hope to continue to change the negatives in today's world and hope to meet our goal of making our world one world."*

Eamonn T.

*"I feel that the Indian Immersion Project has been highly effective in developing my teamwork, interpersonal, communication and organisational skills. It has been extremely enjoyable to work as part of such a tightly knit group of teachers and fellow classmates and watch the project come together bit by bit. The fundraising ventures were fun and challenging as much of the time we were performing in a pressure environment like the Camel Night or sometimes in a less stressful situation.*

*The communication by letter between ourselves and the students at St. Anthony's has been very interesting. It has taught me a huge amount regarding their culture and the way it differs from our own ... I felt lucky when, over the course of the project, I learned of the poverty that exists in India. The Indian Immersion Project has opened my eyes in this way and I am grateful for that. I have gained a great sense of achievement partaking in the programme."*

Eamonn B.

## POSITIVE IMPACT

Our local community has become more aware of development issues in developing countries such as India. Through our fundraising we raised awareness in our local community and in our school. There was a lot of involvement of people outside our school community. Parents helped out with fundraising. They provided adult supervision, gave up their time to bring us to events, and supported us with our cause.

## CONCLUSION

We are generally very pleased with our project and our performance as a whole. As a group we have learned a lot and our experiences have changed our attitude towards others who are less well off than ourselves. It has also made us more grateful for things in our own lives that we have taken for granted.

**This is a project that we would highly recommend other Transition Years or Fifth Years to take on board. The success of any project is determined by the interest and effort of everyone in the group.**

*Co-ordinators: Teresa Regan, Margaret Murphy*



# GLOBAL WARMING- FACT OR FICTION?

## SCOIL ÍDE CLONDALKIN



### AIMS

- To identify some of the animals affected by Global Warming
- To raise awareness in our community about Global Warming
- To investigate if Global Warming is fact or fiction
- To explore and compare Global Warming with Climate Change

### TARGET GROUP

The whole school from Junior Infants to Sixth Class was involved in the project.



### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

Classes from Junior Infants to Fourth Class looked at some of the animals affected by Global Warming and Climate Change.

Fifth and Sixth Classes explored Global Warming, where and why it's happening and researched the fact or fiction debate.

CLASS	ACTIVITIES
Junior Infants	<b>Butterflies:</b> paintings, masks, clay caterpillars and butterflies
Senior Infants	<b>Penguins:</b> paintings, clay, 'Eddie the penguin saves the world' play, writing
First Class	<b>Arctic Fox:</b> art, reading library books, clay, writing
Second Class	<b>Reindeer:</b> art, projects, library books, writing, eco magnets
Third Class	<b>Salmon and Sea Turtles:</b> Save the Planet posters, projects, research on internet
Fourth Class	<b>Polar Bears:</b> projects, adopted a polar bear, eco magnets, art
Fifth and Sixth Classes	<b>Global Warming Facts:</b> research on global warming, projects, art, workshop English writing.

## OUTCOMES

The children really enjoyed the project and learned how Global Warming is affecting humans and animals around the world. It made them realise how important saving energy is and how they can all make a difference by making small changes in their lives.



## THINGS THAT WORKED WELL

- Whole school approach
- Challenge to Change notice board where all classes could display work
- Regular committee meetings to discuss ideas from the classes
- ECO-UNESCO interactive workshop
- List of recommended Global Warming websites for the different class levels to use

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

*"I really enjoyed being on the Challenge to Change Committee. Kilkenny was so much fun. I never knew so many animals and people were affected by Global Warming. I really enjoyed the Indian Workshop. I will never forget the cool dance she taught us."*

Kayleigh, Sixth Class



*"Challenge to Change was fascinating. When I was in Kilkenny I saw lots of interesting stands and I saw what other schools did. The workshops were fun too. Our school project was on Global Warming: Fact or Fiction? Our school worked really hard. We hope everyone enjoyed our work."*

Allie, Fifth Class



Co-ordinator: Audrey Dempsey

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***



***"By 2030 humanity will need the capacity of two Earths to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> waste and keep up with natural resource consumption."***

*[WWF Living Planet Report 2010]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

# **ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL**

## **HOLY TRINITY NATIONAL SCHOOL FETHARD**



At this stage we cannot remember what inspired us to do this project - perhaps it was the fact that 2010 was the **Year of Biodiversity**.

### **AIMS**

- To learn about biodiversity and its value to the planet
- To appreciate the world's biodiversity
- To study the flora and fauna of our locality
- To look at an exotic ecosystem - the rainforests
- To examine the threats to biodiversity
- To see what we can do to halt this loss

### **TARGET GROUP**

Sixth Class with involvement from all other classes

### **ACTIONS**

- Our first activity was a guided nature walk to our local **Grove Wood**. We used prepared information and activity sheets on this walk.
- We used newspapers, magazines, books and the internet to research our subject.
- Each class produced artwork based on the theme of biodiversity.
- We invited **Ms Labhaoise McKenna, Heritage Officer** with South Tipperary County Council, to talk to us about the flora and fauna of this region.



- With the assistance of a local man, **Mr. Brian Sheehy**, we set up habitats in our school grounds which we checked regularly.
- Fifth and Sixth Classes visited the **Nagle Centre in Ballygriffin**. We were impressed by the community's approach to protecting and enhancing the environment.
- We also contacted **Ms Denise O'Meara, Mammal Ecologist at Waterford Institute of Technology**. Through her research and experiments with us we learned that the Bank Vole, previously uncharted in South Tipperary, visits our school grounds!
- We had two articles published in the **Nationalist** and also on the **local website**.
- We presented the project to other classes in our school.

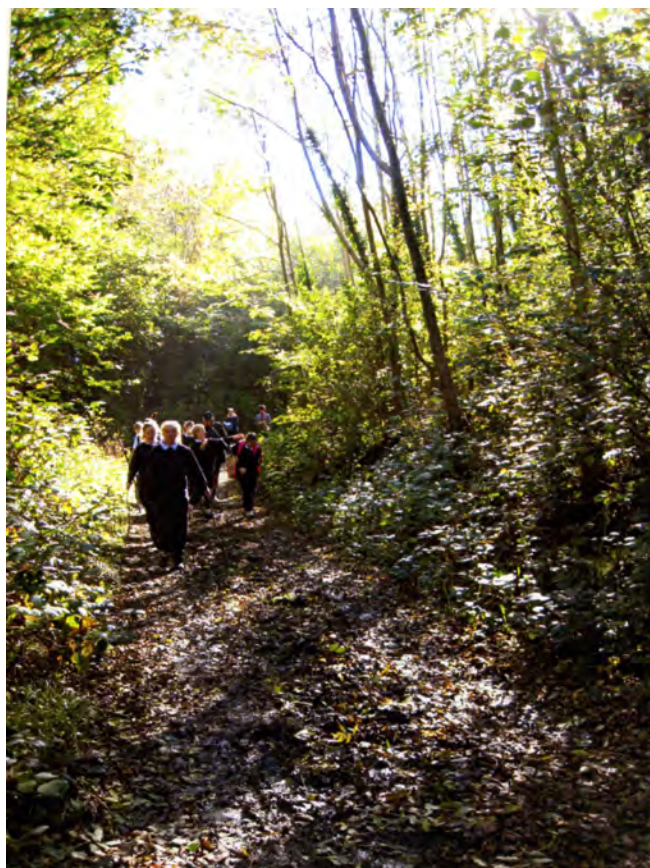


### STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"One of the best things about Challenge to Change was learning new facts on Biodiversity and creating awareness on how we can help our planet for future generations to live safely on. One of the most interesting places I've learned about is the Rainforest. I think it is one of the most beautiful places on Earth and it contains most of the world's rarest and most colourful animals." Ross

"How a small change can make a big difference to the environment." Josef

"Challenge to Change means a lot to me. I've learned so much that I've never heard of before. My highlight of all this great experience would have to be Kilkenny itself. Not only did I have a superb day at the workshops but I have seen and learned so much from others at their stalls. I also met new people." Cassie



## A Day to Remember

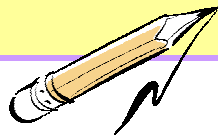
Months of hard work had ended as the 12<sup>th</sup> of May drew closer. It was final. Nine of my classmates and I had been chosen to go to Kilkenny to present our project **All Things Bright and Beautiful** to the Presentation schools across Ireland.

The excitement was palpable as we left Holy Trinity N.S. Fethard at 8.30 a.m. Making sure nothing (or nobody) was left behind, we went on our way.

The bus ride to the Springhill Court Hotel felt like an eternity. I knew what to expect (I was there in 2010) but everyone else was excited and slightly nervous.

The day began with a presentation and a song performed by a school from Kildare. Five workshops followed. After lunch, we watched the drummers' performance which was brilliant. Then the afternoon workshops began. Shane (from Trócaire), Alba from India and Eamon, who plays the drums, were the leaders. I was really interested in my workshop, which was Trócaire. We played lots of games and had loads of fun.

*Sadhbh, Sixth Class*



### OUTCOMES

- Doing this project sparked our interest in the biodiversity of different ecosystems
- We are more aware of the beauty around us
- We understand that our ecosystems are fragile and must be protected
- We realise that we can play a part by
  - Being aware and responsible as consumers
  - Respecting the earth and conserving its biodiversity for future generations
  - Spreading awareness here in the school and in the wider community





# All Things Bright and Beautiful

'All Things Bright and Beautiful' is the title of the project which Holy Trinity National School, Fethard, will present at the 'Challenge to Change' seminar in Kilkenny on May 12 this year. 'Challenge to Change' is a Development Education Project initiated by Presentation Education Office (SE Province) for Presentation Schools.

The pupils of sixth class have focussed their attention on biodiversity at a local level mainly but are also researching exotic ecosystems such as the rainforests and the polar regions. The study of biodiversity takes in everything from the smallest microbe to the biggest whale and everything in between – all plants and animals and the habitats they live in. Humans are part of the biodiversity of the planet and from hunter-gatherers to the present day, have used nature for food, shelter, medicine and raw materials.

The following are some of the facts the students have come across during their research.

One and a half acres of rainforests are lost every



Labhaoise McKenna, Heritage Officer, South Tipperary County Council, working with pupils from Holy Trinity National School on their 'Challenge to Change' biodiversity project.

second with tragic consequences for both developing and industrial countries. Rainforests are being destroyed because the value of rainforests is perceived as only the value of its timber by short-sighted governments, multi-national logging companies and landowners.

Nearly half of the world

species of plants and animals will be destroyed or severely threatened over the next quarter century due to the destruction of rainforests.

Biodiversity alone is worth 2.6 billion a year to our economy. Earthworms contribute over 1 billion euro to the Irish economy in maintaining soil struc-

ture and fertility.

The Irish Barn Owl population has experienced a dramatic decline in recent times. South Tipperary is known to be one of the main strongholds of the Barn Owl in the country and as such is of national importance in terms of conservation of the endangered Barn Owl population.

A total of 82 species of bird regularly winter in South Tipperary.

Bees are extremely important because they pollinate plants, including crops that we rely on for food. There are 101 bee species in Ireland, but bees are declining. Whenever we remove a hedgerow, reseed grass lawns or fields, spray weeds or do other activities that change their habitat, we make it harder for bees to find the food they need.

Much of our local information has come from the South Tipperary Biodiversity Action Plan which was produced by Labhaoise McKenna, Heritage Officer, South Tipperary County Council. We were lucky enough to have Labhaoise visit our school on March 8th when she gave us lots of interesting facts on the flora and fauna of South Tipp. We are also grateful to Liam Burke and Brian Sheehy who are helping us with our project.

Just to end on a cheery note... according to Albert Einstein, "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe then man would only have four years of life left!"

## Pupils track animal movements for biodiversity project

Nationalist, Thursday, May 05 2011

17

Fifth and sixth class pupils at Holy Trinity National School were very lucky recently to have a visit from Denise O'Meara, Mammal Ecologist, at Waterford Institute of Technology. This talk was part of the pupils' biodiversity project 'All Things Bright and Beautiful', which will be presented at the 'Challenge to Change' seminar in Kilkenny on May 12.

The pupils were enthralled with Denise's vast and in-depth knowledge of Irish mammals, which she conveyed with the aid of video footage, shot on numerous different research forays into the woods around Co. Waterford. Denise made reference to numerous mammals including the red squirrel which is still doing quite well in South Tipperary, the otter, the Irish Hare, bats, badgers and the pine marten.

She outlined the procedures involved in this research, displayed equipment used and set up research stations in our school grounds to the delight of the pupils.

Denise returned within the week to collect animal droppings and the camera which hopefully would have caught some of the wild-life who prowl the school grounds in our absence. We are currently awaiting DNA results from the lab with great interest.

Denise O'Meara is currently working on Interreg 4A Programme - Mammals in a Sustainable Environment. This programme is led by Dr. Catherine O'Reilly and Dr. Peter Turner. Thanks to all three for giving us this opportunity to experience the excitement, fun and challenge of their work.



Students at Holy Trinity National School, Fethard, photographed while working on their Challenge to Change biodiversity project in the school garden with Denise O'Meara (Waterford Institute Technology)

Co-ordinator: Rita Kenny



# DIFFERENCE DOESN'T MEAN DIFFERENT!

## PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL ROCKFORD MANOR



This year Rockford Manor has chosen the theme of **Interculturalism** for our Challenge to Change Project as we felt it is very relevant for our school. All of our international students, a group of First Years students and LCA students, have co-ordinated and taken on the responsibility of communicating, highlighting and celebrating cultural diversity in our school community.

From carrying out the project, we have discovered that **there are students from over twenty countries in Rockford Manor** including: Algeria, China, Congo, Germany, India, Iran, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, Latvia, Moldova, Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Ukraine and Vietnam.

### AIMS

- To create awareness of cultural difference in different countries
- To understand, celebrate and appreciate cultural diversity and richness within our school
- To organise school events to enable students to learn about each other's culture
- To appreciate the diversity of the different religious denominations represented in our school



## TARGET GROUP

Our target group was one group of students in First Year, Leaving Certificate Applied students and all of our international students from First Year through to Sixth Year.



## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We identified all the different nationalities and religions represented in our school.
- We printed off posters which promote and celebrate diversity and displayed them.
- Our international students made posters saying 'welcome' and 'hello' in their native language.
- First, Second and Third Year students made flags for all the nationalities in our school for our **Our School Community Collage** on the main corridor.

- On the **Open Night** in Rockford Manor, we organised a Challenge to Change Room where we displayed our flags, bunting, welcomes, and diversity posters. We had African music and a slide show of previous Challenge to Change projects playing in the background. We also invited all of our international students to attend and made sashes for them to wear. They welcomed prospective parents to the school in their own language and informed them on the Challenge to Change Project. There were ethnic snacks

for guests to sample such as poppadoms from India, pretzels from the Ukraine, cakes from Germany and biscuits from Italy and Poland.

- On 17<sup>th</sup> of November we held an **Intercultural Coffee Morning** in our school. LCA students made cakes for the event and designed two questionnaires to learn more about different cultures. First Year students set up the tea, coffee and minerals. A great time was had by all!
- We set up a Challenge to Change **notice board** which displayed our actions from the Open Night and Intercultural Coffee Morning.
- We presented all of our visiting international students with a bauble at Christmas time to remember their time in Rockford Manor.
- On the 18<sup>th</sup> January all of our International, First Year and LCA students headed off to Stillorgan Leisureplex for an afternoon of **bowling and bonding**. Everyone had a great time, especially our visiting

students from South Korea who had never played bowling before.

- On 23<sup>rd</sup> March we held an **Intercultural Food Fair**. LCA students were very busy in the kitchen and prepared cuisine from China, Ireland and Italy including chow mein, spring rolls, Gaelic chicken, potato cakes, lasagne, chicken Picasso, pizza and tiramisu. International students from Mongolia, Austria, Philippines, Ukraine, South Africa, Kenya, Iran and Spain also prepared a wonderful selection of ethnic cuisine including Spanish Frittata, Iranian coconut cakes, Philipino fried rice and Adabo, South African Hertzogy Cookies, Kenyan Kuuna Chicken and Austrian Kaffee Gugelhupf Cake. First Year students prepared the venue. We invited Ambassadors from a host of Embassies, as well as former President Mary Robinson. All students involved in the project attended the fair along with our Principal and Deputy-Principal.

### WHAT THE STUDENTS HAD TO SAY

**"I learned about other people's culture and what their country is like, the traditions they have and the languages that are spoken."**

**"It made me feel more open to difference."**

**"People are different and to respect this and if they are from a different country it doesn't really matter!"**

### CONCLUSION

All the participating students really enjoyed the experience. Next time we will broaden our target group to include students in all year groups in the school.

*Co-ordinators: Sarah Hayward, Sandra Joyce*





# WATER, WATER ... EVERYWHERE??

## SCOIL MUIRE G.N.S. LUCAN



Our project aims to highlight the importance of water in our lives and in the lives of those in the developing countries.

### AIMS

- To explore the importance of water in our daily lives and understand that it is a precious resource
- To examine the water cycle and how water gets to our homes
- To compare and contrast water availability and usage in Ireland and in developing countries
- To undertake water conservation methods and to raise awareness throughout our school about our project

### TARGET GROUP

Our Fifth Class pupils led the project in our school. They shared their findings with the other pupils and staff in our school through the use of display boards, posters and presentations.

## WORK UNDERTAKEN

- We examined the **Water Cycle**
  - We conducted **water filtration experiments** - we tested various different materials and recorded how well they filtered water.
  - We studied how **water treatment plants** work and how the water gets to our homes.
  - We conducted **water usage surveys** and created graphs to illustrate our findings.
  - We explored ways in which water is wasted in our homes and locality.
  - We made posters highlighting **water conservation** and gave mini presentations to each class in the school on this topic.
  - We studied **Hundertwasser**, the artist, and created **Raindrop artwork**. We also constructed a **life sized model** of a schoolgirl made from water bottles, to represent how much water we use in one day.
  - We examined **water usage and availability of safe water** in Ireland and in developing countries.
  - We explored the reasons why there is a **shortage of clean drinking water** in some developing countries.
- We explored **possible solutions** to these problems.
  - We invited a speaker from **Trócaire** who delivered workshops on the theme of water.
  - We organised a **cake sale** to raise money for Trócaire. We raised €750 which will be used to supply a community with pumps and irrigation systems to ensure access to safe water.
  - We presented all of our findings to the rest of the school and encouraged them to conserve water.
  - Our school got its third **Green Flag for Water Conservation** this year!
  - We attended the Challenge to Change Seminar in Kilkenny to share our findings with the other schools participating in the project. We had a fantastic day and learned a lot from the other projects. We had an assembly in school when we got home to tell our classmates about the seminar.



*Co-ordinators: Jennifer Barry, Fiona Gleeson, Edel Hayden*



# LEAVE THOSE KIDS ALONE!

## SACRED HEART PRIMARY SCHOOL PORTLAOISE



### GOALS

- To raise awareness among the children in Sixth Class about the prevalence of **Child Slavery**
- To explore the many forms of injustice and exploitation of child workers in **factories and sweatshops**
- To examine **labour laws** and the protection offered to children in the countries studied
- To draw attention to the unconscionable level of sponsorship enjoyed by many celebrities
- To **communicate** the message to the wider school community
- To **dramatise** a scenario which demonstrates the effect of Child Slavery on a victim
- To **re-enact** a child slave at work

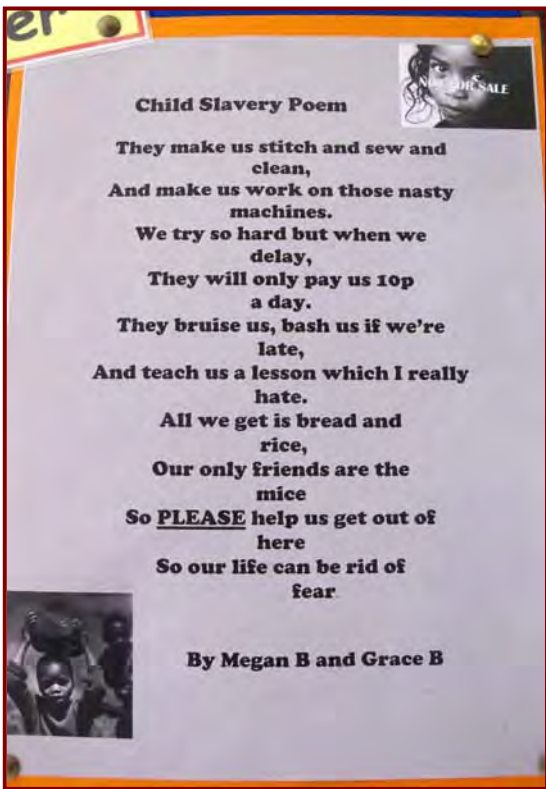
### TARGET GROUP

Our target group is every family in Sacred Heart School and in particular the senior girls from Third Class to Sixth Class.

## ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

*The project is based on child slavery and spreading the message that sometimes children are treated unjustly in various places around the world. This treatment could extend to working in sweatshops, working extremely long hours in poor working conditions and for very little pay. These working hours are regularly to the detriment of their education and childhood.*

We began by brainstorming the topic of child slavery. We undertook **web-based research** about the existence of child slavery in various countries around the world and about companies engaged in using child labour.



We listed a selection of **companies** which appeared from our initial research to be **using child labour**. We wrote to each of these companies enquiring about their policies with regard to using child labour. Of the **fifteen companies contacted** by letter or email, only two responded to our queries namely **Cadburys** and **Gap**. In the case of **Gap**, their response was that they do not use child labour. However **Cadburys** did not deny using child labour in West Africa indicating that according to local practice child labour is "legal". They also indicated that as an international company based in West Africa they are actively endeavouring to end any abusive or unsafe labour by children.

Other activities which we have engaged in, in relation to this project, include writing **poetry**, keeping an **imaginary diary** of a child slave and **simulating a child slavery experience** by engaging in a repetitive, mundane task of sewing in a sweatshop for a sustained period of time.

Our steering committee is made up of girls from Sixth Class and our teachers, Ms Coleman and Mrs. Rafferty. We hope to spread our message to the wider community through our local newspapers.

## OUTCOMES

- More aware of what we buy and where to shop
- Careful not to take clothes for granted and know to avoid certain labels
- Aware of how some children are treated
- Conscious of how lucky we are to have an education and the right to be children
- Aware of child slavery conditions



## WHAT WORKED WELL

- Enjoyed writing letters to international companies
- Can identify the companies using child labour
- Realise the hardship faced by child slaves
- Enjoyed designing logos
- Empathised with child slaves in our mini-slave simulation
- Communicated the message about child slavery to others



## LINKAGES

Various companies including Cadburys, Penneys and Gap

## CONCLUSION

The children thoroughly enjoyed the Seminar in Kilkenny. They enjoyed looking at and learning from the other project displays. They developed their oral and presentation skills.



*Co-ordinator: Deirdre Coleman*

# ONE FAIR WORLD

## ST. JOSEPH'S COLLEGE LUCAN



This year in St. Joseph's two Fourth Year Classes focused their project on cultural diversity and fairtrade.

### GOALS

- To develop an awareness and appreciation of all the different cultural traditions that contribute to our school life here in St. Joseph's
- To celebrate the diversity and similarity of cultures and look at how all cultures enhance the school community
- To promote respect and tolerance for all the cultures, faiths and nationalities in our school and to work to extend this respect to the wider community
- To encourage staff and students to purchase Fairtrade products and to really think about what they are putting in their shopping basket
- To get everybody thinking Fairtrade is fair paid!
- To highlight the benefits to the worker of purchasing fairtrade and to highlight the extent of the injustices that can take place in the production of our tea, coffee and clothes
- To compare working conditions in developed countries with those in developing countries and those who work under fairtrade conditions with those who do not



## ACTIONS

Our first action was to thoroughly research our topics. Each of the students looking at **cultural diversity** took a country and then researched and prepared an information poster on various facts in relation to that country including food, main religion, population, geographical features, festivals, traditional clothing and music. All the students were surveyed to see what different nationalities we have in the school. We found that we have students from **over 30 countries in St. Joseph's** so we are a very culturally rich and diverse school. We prepared a map and made flags for each of these countries and displayed this in the school.

We displayed all of our work during **Arts Week** in the school and later held a quiz for all students. We placed the posters all around the school hall and participants in the quiz essentially had to read through each poster in order to find the answers thus learning about the cultures and customs of over 30 countries. This was really successful and well attended.



The class looking at **fairtrade** also did a lot of initial research in the computer room. This involved investigating different working environments, including hours worked and wages in both fair-trade and non fair-trade environments. We got in contact with **Fairtrade Ireland** who sent us lots of resources including a DVD which we viewed. It very clearly outlined the benefits to the workers and their families of working for a fairtrade company and how much money is put back into the community allowing for better educational opportunities and healthcare.

We then organised two Fairtrade Coffee Mornings for the Sixth Years and the staff. We targeted the Sixth Years as they will be fending for themselves in the near future and we wanted to encourage them to use fairtrade products when at all possible. We gave out free tea, coffee, hot chocolate. Students were given a wallet card with information on fairtrade products available and the benefits of fairtrade. This again was very successful and very well attended.

## OUTCOMES

Overall the students learned so much from taking part in this project. The international students loved having information about their cultures displayed in the school and the fact that everybody was eager to learn about this and question them on it gave them a great forum to educate the other students.



Some students are very unaware of where their produce is coming from and by taking time to read the displays students were genuinely surprised at the difference buying fairtrade can make. Hopefully eyes were opened and a lot more people will think before they buy.

We displayed our project at the Fourth Year Graduation Night for all the staff and parents. This was one way of spreading our message to a wider audience.

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

"I never realised just how many fairtrade products you can buy, from tea to cotton wool to pineapples and have asked my Mam to now always buy fairtrade when she sees it."

"I think the conditions some people have to work in are just horrific and I can't imagine getting paid so little for hours of work. I really enjoyed the DVD and now definitely want to support fairtrade when I can because I saw the difference it makes."

"I learned that I have to look behind the logo now when buying clothes and think about the conditions my clothes have been produced in. It's hard in Ireland to buy fairtrade clothes but I hope this will change in the future and we will have a wider range available to us."

*Co-ordinator: Ciara Whelan*



# FROM WARRENMOUNT TO THAILAND

## PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL WARRENMOUNT



### AIMS

Our project set out to:

- create awareness of the effects of poverty and injustice on the lives of children and families in a developing country (Thailand)
- undertake a study of that country, exploring cultural differences and similarities in two different parts of the world
- identify ways of helping some of the children in need
- form an appreciation of global interconnections and interdependence

### TARGET GROUP

- Fifth Class
- The whole school community (International Day)

### ACTIONS

- In November, former Deputy Principal **Moya Hand** gave a presentation to the Fifth Class girls about her work with **orphaned children in Thailand** and how funds raised can be used to help the children and their communities.
- Fifth Class, with help from parents and the school community, hosted a very successful **Sale of Work**. The money raised was donated to the orphanage fund.

- Fifth Class carried out a lot of research in relation to the **culture, daily life and education system of Thailand**. They carried out this research by interviewing teachers/parents in our school who had already visited Thailand. They asked Mrs Hand about her experiences of the country. The students also explored many different websites such as UNICEF, Amnesty and Youth for Human Rights.
- They then compiled a Powerpoint slideshow using images and photographs, detailing information about Thailand.
- The students **wrote letters** to the children in the orphanage asking them about their daily lives and gave them detailed accounts of their own day-to-day practices at home and in school.
- A successful **International Day** held on May 6<sup>th</sup> added to the global awareness of interconnections and interdependence between different cultures



## OUTCOMES

- Our students became **more aware of the poverty** that occurs throughout the world, especially in Thailand
- They **informed** themselves about the lives of **children in orphanages** and the possibility of becoming a volunteer when older
- A **positive attitude** was created in relation to actions that can be taken at home and at school in order to help children in need
- The **Cake Sale** organised by Fifth Class raised over €800 which was donated to **Pattaya Orphanage** in Thailand
- The students corresponded with children from another country
- **Letters and photographs** have been sent to our school informing us of the positive impact the fundraising has had on those children
- We intend to continue the link between our school and the orphanage
- Our students gained knowledge and understanding about a country they knew little about (Thailand), learning about local customs, traditions, religious beliefs, food, clothing, climate.
- Working together developed teamwork, presentation, interviewing and I.T skills





### WHAT WORKED WELL

Overall our project was a success and we experienced no difficulties. We were content with the outcome of our project and got great enjoyment from the entire experience.

### LINKAGES

- Pattaya Orphanage in Thailand
- Moya Hand
- UNICEF
- Amnesty International
- Youth for Human Rights

### CONCLUSION

Overall, the impact of the project proved to be very positive and everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

- Our children, parents and teachers were made more aware of the significance and effects of fundraising for children in need and the need for volunteers to work for such organisations.
- The children of the orphanage benefited immensely. The money raised allowed the orphanage to buy educational equipment and carry out necessary repairs.
- We have formed a friendly relationship with children from another country and hope to keep this alive for many years to come.
- Most importantly our own students now realise how fortunate they are in their own lives and how one should never take things for granted.



*Co-ordinators: Elaine Conroy, Johanna Kilroy*

# OUR SCHOOL GARDEN - A LIVING WILLOW HEDGE

## PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL THURLES

Last year we began fruit and vegetable growing in our organic school garden, situated beside our Anniversary Garden, a formal area of plants and walkways opened in 2007 to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the present school building. All classes took responsibility for various vegetables. We grew most of them from seed - cabbage, sprouts, lettuce, tomatoes, strawberries and leeks. All these were grown again in the raised vegetable beds constructed by our caretaker, Kieran Britton. We have been making our own compost for several years and this is perfect for growing our organic fruit and vegetables. Rainwater collected in our water butt provided water for the plants in times of dry weather.



### A "FEDGE" TO PROTECT THE VEG ...

Our garden is, of necessity, north-facing and its boundary is close to the edge of the secondary school hockey pitches. This means that it is open to the coldest of the winds that sweep across the open spaces of the hockey pitches. Therefore, this year, we planned to install a **willow hedge** to act as a shelter and wind barrier. A living willow hedge is called a **fedge** as it acts as both a fence and a hedge. Short willows, about 60cm tall,



were planted in March in a double or treble row. These grew very quickly into tall, soft, springy stems. As they grew, girls from the senior classes **wove** them into a closely grown hedge. This will be kept to a medium height, giving shelter to the plants and an attractive border to the garden. As the fedge grows, it will need to be pruned twice a year and more weaving done to keep it thick and healthy.



We saw last year how successful we could be in the growing of fruit and vegetables with the help of good soil and plenty of water. As a contrast, girls in Fifth Class this year studied the effects of **desertification** on countries in **sub-Saharan Africa**. Here, a combination of lack of rainfall (due to climate change) and over-grazing of animals leaves vast areas of land without enough vegetation to bind the soil together. We used our hedge as an example of how a root system can help to stabilise soils and

how a hedge can provide a wind barrier to protect plants and crops.

### **STUDENTS' COMMENTS**

"It was great fun to see all the worms in the compost!" **Junior Infants**

"Growing our own is much better than buying vegetables in the shop." **Third Class**

"The seeds looked so small. We never thought they would grow." **Fifth Class**



*Co-ordinators: Anne Lanigan, Margaret Healy*



### ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***"As we look forward to Rio+20, we need to connect the dots between protecting the planet and giving people a chance of a better life."***

*[Ban Ki-Moon speaking at Davos]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

# MANY VOICES, ONE HOME!

## PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL SEXTON STREET LIMERICK



### AIMS

- To celebrate the richness and diversity of cultures and nationalities within Presentation Secondary School Limerick
- To compose a musical anthem to reflect this
- To perform our composition in front of a large audience in St. Mary's Cathedral Limerick
- To organise an Intercultural Day in our school

### TARGET GROUP

First Years but also the other Year Groups, in particular our classmates from across the globe.

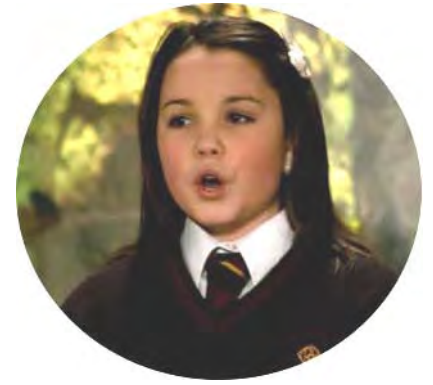
### ACTIONS

We composed and rehearsed a school anthem to celebrate our diversity of cultures in Presentation Secondary School Limerick. A choir of our First Year students and of our wider international cohort in Presentation, performed on 8<sup>th</sup> December in St. Mary's Cathedral. They were in magnificent voice under the masterful direction of both **Kathleen Turner** and, in the preparations, our music teacher, **Gabrielle Casey**. The performance was part of an ensemble organised by **Doras Luimní** to celebrate and encourage the multi-cultural diversity in Limerick City and its environs.

Our involvement in this wonderful occasion began when Kathleen Turner of the **Irish Chamber Orchestra**, based in the University of Limerick, approached our school to invite us to be part of this wonderful event. But what was crucial for us in agreeing was, not just the chance to perform in a great musical display, but to affirm in a very public manner the value we place on the girls who come from all four corners of the globe to study here in Presentation Limerick.



While Kathleen came up with the melody, the students themselves composed, in a very collaborative and fun way, the lyrics. So they reflected the "lingo" of the young students as well as the language of mutual respect, welcome and inclusivity that are at the heart of this project. Our own Presentation students from Nigeria, Somalia, Afghanistan and Poland were just some of the nations represented on the night.



In March, we hosted an **Intercultural Day**. Our students from **Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Romania, Congo, Nigeria, Somalia, Afghanistan, Thailand and Nepal** felt extra proud of their home countries as they shared food, costumes, pictures and words from across the globe. Teachers in our school who have volunteered and worked in Ecuador, Uganda, Cambodia, India, Thailand and the Philippines shared their experiences. Singers, musicians, dancers and performers each added to the eclectic mix.

### **OUTCOMES**

- A heightened awareness of different cultures
- A feeling of welcome and belongingness in Presentation
- Overcoming racism, prejudice and stereotyping

### **LINKAGES**

- **Doras Luimní** which promotes the welcome and inclusion of all nationalities in Limerick
- **Irish Chamber Orchestra** under the guidance of Kathleen Turner with the assistance of **Micheál Ó Suilleabháin**



*Co-ordinator: Neil Carmody*

# CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

## PRESENTATION CONVENT N.S. CASTLECOMER



Our experience of Challenge to Change 2010-2011 has been very positive. The theme we chose was **cultural diversity** which allowed us to study the links that our school and its community shares with other countries. These include Spain, Poland and India.

A colourful theme, it ensured that all pupils from every class could get involved and could get an understanding of what Challenge to Change is about. Our **International Day**, raising money for **UNICEF** during Lent, and **notice board displays** all raised awareness of our project and helped us to achieve our aims.

### AIMS

- To make the children aware of the wider world and how Castlecomer has links to other cultures
- To enable the children to recognise ways of integrating these cultures into our classroom work, e.g. through emailing French pen pals, welcoming the Spanish pupils
- To inform the children about the Polish and Indian cultures in our school by interacting with the Junior Classes
- To present our findings to the rest of the school
- To engage in a range of activities to broaden the learning, e.g. story-telling, drama, creative writing, report writing and art

The main learning outcomes of the project were that the pupils really engaged in active and enriching activities and that each classroom had a part to play in making the project a success.

The pupils felt that they had been challenged to change the way they regard other cultures. **Geography** lessons were livelier and more meaningful this year, **Art** and **History**



were appreciated more and a love of **Cookery** was cultivated in the senior classes - watch out for Castlecomer food writers and chefs of the future!

This year's theme resonated deeply with pupils as it gave them a sense of national pride, comparing the course of Irish history with other European countries.

There was a sub-theme to cater for all pupils: music, food, art, geography, religion, which made the project appealing for us as teachers.



We hope to continue to learn more about our **Polish and Indian cultural links** - this year has given us just a taste. Castlecomer is not home to many different cultures but by studying the links we have and nurturing them the pupils have developed respect for the ways of life outside of their own.

By linking in our Lenten project work with Challenge to Change, the pupils got a real sense of affecting change in the developing world, through working with UNICEF and the campaign for **World Malaria Day**. All the classes learned about UNICEF's work and the senior classes received a letter commending them for their ambassadorship for this cause. It added to the **global dimension** of our work.

Third and Fourth Class really got on board this year, learning about India which enhanced our **International Day**. All teachers were more than willing to participate in and support the project which aided the committee's work greatly.

The experience of the **Seminar in Kilkenny** has certainly made an impression on the pupils who attended - they were greatly impressed by the other displays and were motivated to ask questions, to challenge their fellow Presentation students!

### **COMMENTS**

"I loved learning about different countries and their food, music and culture. I loved tasting food from other countries, especially Polish food! There were all sorts of food from Spain, Poland, France and India!" **Sixth Class student**

"Visiting other stands and chatting with other pupils meant we learned more about development education - like child labour, biodiversity, water, fair trade, orphanages and intercultural events around Ireland. We did a display of our drumming to the audience and we got a big round of applause." **Sixth Class representative at seminar**

*Co-ordinators: Margaret Maxwell, Marie Hughes*

# GREENFINGERS

## SCOIL MUIRE CLONDALKIN



Our school is lucky to have acquired **an allotment in Corkagh Park** which is within fifteen minutes walk of our school. Our challenge this year is to transform a wilderness into a rich, fertile oasis.

### AIMS

- To begin development of our allotment in Corkagh Park
- To include the whole school in this process
- To develop the children's awareness of where their food comes from - from seed to fork
- To create an awareness of sustainable living
- To explore the importance of water
- To set up a basic irrigation system

### TARGET GROUP

The whole school community was involved including teachers, staff, pupils and parents.

### OUR PLAN

- To develop the school allotment slowly but surely starting this year
- To include the whole school so that this project can continue over a number of years and be a work in progress for the foreseeable future



## ACTIONS

- **South Dublin County Council** rotovated and weeded out the plot for us.
- We installed **6 raised beds**
- While this work was going on we **propagated seedlings** in each classroom
- As soon as the allotment was ready each class transferred the plants they had started to the allotment - **peas, beans, lettuce, cabbage, spinach, beetroot, potatoes, strawberries, loganberries, raspberries, swedes, onions and parsnips.**
- We also have tomatoes, wildflowers, a wild meadow area and an irrigation system
- The **irrigation system** was designed and built by Sixth Class pupils
- Our scarecrows, **Millie** and **Justin**, keep watch over our precious crops. Junior Infants, with the help of our caretaker John, created our scarecrows.
- We planted a **fruit tree** during **National Tree Week**
- We visited, watered and weeded regularly and are now enjoying our harvest



## OUTCOME

Greenfingers was a very successful project. The whole school really got involved. They enjoyed the trips to the allotment and learning about growing their own food. Millie and Justin have been a great success.

We look forward to developing the allotment further next year. We hope to begin a **wildflower garden**, create a new **herb wheel** with plants from our school garden and plant some **fruit trees**.

We stretched our greenfingers this year and hopefully next year they'll get stronger and stronger.

We hope our work in school and on the allotment will raise awareness of the importance of **biodiversity, self-sufficiency and sustainability**. Our work, we hope, will be an inspiration to other schools and parents to become part of the **GIY** revolution!



*Co-ordinators: Siobhan McKiernan, Naomi O'Dowd*



## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***Ireland now has one of the highest per capita spends on Fairtrade Certified products anywhere in the world.***

*[Fairtrade Ireland, February 2011]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***



# ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE FREE

## COLÁISTE BRÍDE CLONDALKIN



This project is about raising awareness of **child labour**. Transition Year students investigated various aspects of the topic including **what child labour is, where it occurs in the world and what organisations are campaigning to stop it.**

### AIMS

Students undertook to

- Explore the causes of child labour, where in the world it is occurring and the effects of child labour upon the child
- Research about companies which employ children to produce products which are sold to western countries at cheap rates and in turn are then sold in shops in these countries at expensive rates
- Identify the various charity organisations trying to combat child labour in countries such as India and Brazil
- Create an awareness campaign both in the school community and in the local community
- Raise money for the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF, through doing various fundraising activities within the community

### TARGET GROUP

All students were targeted. By informing young people about the injustices around the world, they are being educated about what is happening in other countries. They will also gain an appreciation of the fact that they have the opportunity to receive an education and are empowered to speak up against global injustice.

## ACTIONS

- Students carried out research and compiled the information.
- The students watched two films - **Blood Diamond** and **Slum Dog Millionaire** - as well as other documentary clips on the topic from **You Tube**.
- Students presented a **powerpoint** presentation on the topic.
- Fundraising was carried out in the school
  - Two lunch-time talent shows entitled **C.B. Factor**, in aid of **UNICEF**
  - A one hour sponsored silence in aid of **UNICEF**
  - Students made bracelets from wool which were distributed within the school for a donation
- Students made a **short film** on Child Labour with themselves acting as the child labourers. This placed them in mindset of a child labourer.
- Awareness about the project was raised in the school by means of a **poster competition** on the theme **Stop Child Labour Now**.
- Announcements were made over the intercom relating to project events in the school.
- Students made a presentation on the topic to a **Second Year CSPE Class**.
- Through the **UNICEF** sponsorship cards, awareness was created both in the local community and within the school.
- A representative from **UNICEF** was invited to the school to meet the class and to give a presentation about their work in developing countries.



## OUTCOMES

Students were given the opportunity to really get involved in creating awareness about child labour. They commented that they did not realise that so many children were subject to such harsh conditions. Some remarked how they appreciated the opportunity to attend school. Students were better informed on the issue as they were given an insight into real life case-studies of child labourers. **They learned the facts of where products sold in Ireland come from and whose hands helped to produce them.** Through the project, skills such as teamwork, research, communication, artistic, IT and presentation skills were enhanced.

## WHAT WORKED WELL

The topic itself was chosen by the students. This created a more insightful interest to investigate the causes and effects of child labour. It allowed students to reflect upon their own lives and to inform others within the school and the local community about the issue. Students really enjoyed getting involved in the fundraising activities. Students who presented the project in Kilkenny really enjoyed the day and found it to be a very worthwhile experience.





Different year groups within the school were made aware of the project and were encouraged to get involved. The poster competition allowed all students to contribute to raising awareness and spreading the message of the project.

### **POSITIVE IMPACT**

The project gave students the opportunity to do something meaningful in trying to raise awareness of the issue and to gain a deeper understanding about what is happening globally to many children and teenagers of their own age group. All year groups in the school were invited to get involved in the activities organised by the Challenge to Change project class, allowing for a whole school approach to occur. Students truly felt a sense of achievement in participating in the project.

### **CONCLUSION**

Students thoroughly enjoyed doing the project. Not only did the class group become better informed about global injustices but they also gained new skills, in particular communication skills. The project enabled students to individually take on a task and to be responsible for getting it completed. As a result of doing the project, students have become more aware of their own lives and how they are grateful to have clean running water from their taps and not having to travel for miles to get water or have to work in a dark factory making clothes. This was further illustrated when the class spent a few class periods making bracelets to raise money. When they distributed them, they returned to the class feeling a little disheartened and said "After all our work we only made a bit of money - that was child labour." They were able in some small way to get an understanding about the life of a child labourer.

*Co-ordinator: Michelle Abbott*



## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***"The International Labour Organization estimates there are 215 million child labourers aged between 5 and 17 years old."***

*[International Labour Organization, 2010]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

# THE HUMAN FACE OF HOMELESSNESS

## PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL GEORGE'S HILL



Having looked at the different Challenge to Change Topics back in October, Fourth Class settled on Homelessness. We chose this topic because the children were interested in learning why and how people become homeless. When we began discussing this topic the children mentioned seeing homeless people living in doorways and sleeping rough around Dublin. They felt a great deal of empathy for these people and felt it was unfair that they did not have a place to call home.

### AIMS

- To investigate the plight of homeless people in Ireland and in India
- To develop empathy towards the homeless
- To gain an understanding of the agencies involved in helping the homeless

### TARGET GROUP

We hope to educate children, teachers and parents within our school about the plight of the homeless in Ireland and abroad. Furthermore we would like to highlight the people who help the homeless and to encourage everyone to support homeless charities.

### ACTIONS

- We contacted agencies in Dublin who help the homeless, namely **Focus Ireland** and the **Dublin Simon Community**. They sent us information packs with useful resources, DVDs, and worksheets which we used in class.



- **Sharon Keogh** from the Dublin Simon Community visited us in school to talk with us about homelessness and the work of the Dublin Simon Community.
- We participated in the **Dublin Simon Community Fun Run** in the Phoenix Park on October 9<sup>th</sup> 2010. We raised €453.62 for the homeless. We were pictured in the **Irish Daily Mirror** dated the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2010 presenting a cheque for this amount to the Dublin Simon Community.
- We organised a **Christmas Food Appeal** for the **Capuchin Day Centre** who provide food for the homeless.
- We visited **Brother Kevin** in the Capuchin Day Centre, Bow Street, Dublin 7 and received a tour of the facility. We interviewed him about his work.
- We contacted **Trócaire** to seek information about their Lenten Campaign. **Selina Quinn** from Trócaire came to visit us and spoke with us about Trócaire's work in **La Confianza, Honduras, Central America**. She told us how Trócaire is helping the locals to rightfully reclaim back their land from greedy landlords who force them from their homes by means of intimidation and acts of violence. These people are homeless for periods of time throughout the year due to the landlords forcing them from their homes and burning them down and also because of flooding at certain times of the year.
- We **wrote letters** to **Giselda**, a young girl from La Confianza and told her about our lives here in Ireland.
- We wrote **acrostic poems** with the word Home and through these we expressed what having a home means to us.
- We presented our project to our whole school at a school assembly and answered questions from teachers and pupils alike.



## OUTCOMES

- We learned all about the reasons why people become homeless, be it poverty, addiction (drugs, drink, gambling), mental health issues, domestic violence, natural disasters and war.
- We developed empathy towards the homeless.
- We learned about the importance of the community and society's role in helping the homeless. We also learned about the different agencies involved with the homeless here in Ireland and worldwide.
- We fundraised for local homeless charities and Trócaire and we encouraged parents, teachers, friends and families to support these good causes going forward.

## CONCLUSION

We really enjoyed taking part in this project. We learned a great deal. We were successful with our aims, learning about the causes of homelessness, developing empathy towards the homeless (we really are very lucky to have homes) and we are now aware of the different agencies that help the homeless. We also understand it is all our responsibilities, young and old, to help out those less fortunate than us.

## WHAT THE PUPILS THOUGHT

**"Challenge to Change really helped me to learn about homelessness. I was glad to do our fundraising activities and felt I helped someone."** Destiny, Fourth Class

**"Challenge to Change helped me understand about homeless people and to be grateful for what I have."** Ar-raiyan, Fourth Class

**"I really liked doing Challenge to Change, it was so much fun. I'd like to do more work with the homeless."** Mia, Fourth Class



Co-ordinator: Lorna McAuley



## **A Challenging Thought ...**

**Currently there are over 1 million displaced people from the Ivory Coast in neighbouring Liberia. Women and children make up 85% of the refugees.**

*[UN Peacekeeping Better World Campaign]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***



# **WATER - LIQUID GOLD IN OUR WORLD TODAY**

## **PRESENTATION CONVENT G.N.S. MOONCOIN**



### **AIMS**

- To help pupils to recognise that water is an integral part of our everyday lives - we depend on water
- To identify the sources of the water we use
- To highlight the volume of water we use in comparison with developing countries
- To make the pupils aware of the hardships encountered due to a limited supply of water - looking at families in developing countries and how their lives are affected

### **TARGET GROUP**

Fifth and Sixth Classes led the project in our small rural school. The younger classes were invited to

- Make posters on **How We Use Water** and **I Can Save Water**
- Take part in quizzes
- Listen to presentations on the **Water Cycle** by Fifth and Sixth Class pupils

## ACTIONS

The water theme was explored through the various areas of the curriculum.

SUBJECT	ACTIVITIES
Geography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupils studied the <b>Water Cycle</b>, stressing the fact that the volume of fresh water on our earth is limited.</li> <li><b>Water treatment</b> and the process necessary to supply us with clean water was examined</li> <li><b>Developing countries</b> were located on the globe and their climates were studied, especially the effects of droughts and flooding.</li> </ul>
Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils explored the <b>three states of water</b> - liquid, gas and solid. They related this to water on earth that is frozen in ice-caps.</li> <li>The pupils carried out an experiment on <b>water filtration</b>, mirroring one of the processes in water treatment.</li> <li>Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes visited <b>Castlecomer Discovery Park</b>. They were given a comprehensive presentation on the Water Cycle, Water Treatment, Water Usage and Water Pollution. They then tested water in a stream in the park. The examination of invertebrates in the water samples taken determined the purity of the water. The children enjoyed this visit immensely.</li> </ul>
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a <b>trundle wheel</b> the pupils measured the length of our schoolyard. They then considered how many times they would have to walk up and down to cover a distance of five kilometres. Many children and women in the developing world walk this distance and further daily to collect water.</li> <li>The pupils listed all the <b>daily uses of water</b> and calculated approximately how many litres one person uses each day.</li> </ul>
Visual Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using <b>posters</b>, all classes depicted water usage and ways of reducing our water usage.</li> <li>Our final display was prepared.</li> </ul>
SPHE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pupils discussed <b>personal responsibility</b>. Our actions contribute to a sustainable supply of water.</li> <li>The pupils looked at organisations like <b>Trócaire</b> and <b>Irish Aid</b> that work to provide a water supply for people in developing countries. We are all part of a wider community and our actions affect people all over the world.</li> </ul>
English	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupils wrote accounts of the visit to Castlecomer Discovery Park</li> <li>They composed poems about water</li> </ul>
Drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fifth and Sixth Class pupils gave presentations to the younger classes on the various aspects of the project</li> </ul>



## CHALLENGE TO CHANGE SEMINAR IN KILKENNY

On 12<sup>th</sup> May we travelled to Kilkenny to display our project at the Challenge to Change Seminar. The pupils took turns answering questions on their project, viewed the other impressive displays and took part in the workshops provided on the day.



## CONCLUSION

The pupils gained much knowledge and confidence during the process of completing the project. The pupils enjoyed the experiences along the way and are more informed about water issues in our world today. The school is very proud of the efforts of all the children in the school. We intend to further explore aspects of water usage on our path to our third Green Flag.

*Co-ordinator: Breda O'Shea*



# ONE WORLD

## SCOIL ÁINE CLONDALKIN



This year we, in Scoil Áine Clondalkin, decided to celebrate the diversity in our school by raising awareness of the multitude of different cultures found within our classes. We are extremely proud to have **over twenty nationalities** in our school and we enjoyed learning about each other's cultures.

### TARGET GROUP

The whole school community was involved in the project.

### AIMS

Through our Challenge to Change project we wanted to

- **Develop links** between ourselves and other countries by writing to penpals from around the world and by learning about the different countries that our students come from
- **Raise awareness** of and celebrate the cultural diversity of our school by having an **International Day**, which included art, music, food, literature and games
- **Celebrate** our different cultures and tastes in the creation of a **multicultural cookbook** with recipes from the school community



- **Become aware** of the differences and similarities among the diverse community in our classes
- **Develop** a feeling of a community which is **inclusive** of our differences through a whole school art project



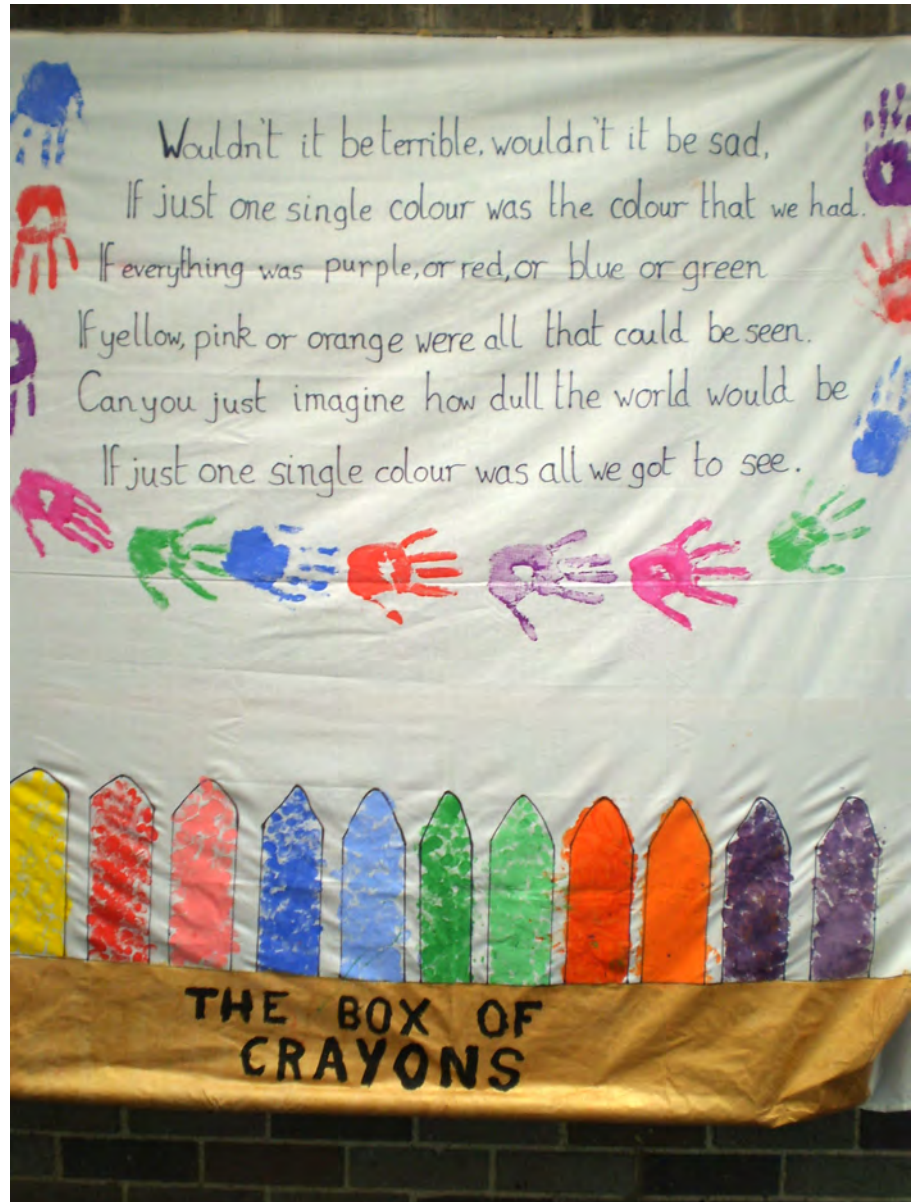
## ACTIONS

- Each class from Junior Infants to Sixth Class chose a **country and culture** to learn about. The children learned some phrases, rhymes, and songs, listened to traditional stories and created some artwork.
- The Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Classes made links with children around the world by **writing letters** to students in **Taiwan, Poland and Uganda**. The children were able to learn about life for children in these countries and what differences or similarities there were between them. The children really enjoyed being able to communicate with children from different countries.

“I loved writing to my penpal because I got to see what they got to eat or do in a different country. My penpal was a boy, it was great I got to make a new friend.”

- Gabriele, Fourth Class

- We held an **International Day** in the school. Parents cooked and brought in dishes from around the world, which the children got to sample. The children also got the chance to play **games from around the world** such as Polish hopscotch. We had **art and musical instruments** from different locations around the world. Second to Sixth Classes completed a **quiz** which they found very enjoyable. The quiz questions were based on projects that volunteers from Fourth to Sixth Classes completed on each country represented in our school.



- We completed a **school canvas** where each child in the school participated by placing their **thumbprint** on crayons, which represented all the different people in the world. This illustrated the message conveyed through the poem **The Box of Crayons**.
- We made an **multicultural cookbook** which celebrated all of the different cultures in our school. Children brought in over a hundred recipes which were collated to make the cookbook. The children were very involved in the process. Their drawings illustrated the cookbook. The book was very well received by the school community and to date over two hundred copies have been sold.
- Throughout the year we had an **international display board** in our playground which gave information and phrases based on a country represented in our school. Different countries were displayed every couple of weeks.

## LINKAGES

Through our project we made links with children and schools in **Taiwan, Poland** and **Uganda**. We also developed a greater link with **parents** by inviting them to share parts of their culture by bringing in recipes, teaching us rhymes and showing us their national dress.



## CONCLUSION

The Challenge to Change project this year has developed a stronger sense of community in Scoil Áine. Everyone who took part in the project has a better understanding and appreciation of other cultures. The children got to celebrate and learn about different cultures through the International Day, pen pals, projects and the school cookbook.

*"I loved everything about International Day. There was lovely food from every country I could think of. There were great activities and big smiles on every face."*

This project was very enjoyable and made a definite impact on the whole school community. The children took great pleasure in learning about each other's different cultures and were extremely appreciative of how lucky they are to be surrounded by so many cultures in their school. There were so many possibilities available to teach the children about the importance of multiculturalism that at times it was difficult to choose what we would do.

The children enjoyed being involved in a project that related to their own lives as students in a school with such diversity. All the children took great pleasure from being able to teach each other about their own cultures, traditions, dress and food. The International Day and the multicultural cookbook were successful in bringing together all that the whole school had learned and showing how we should all be proud of our uniqueness.



*Co-ordinator: Michelle Prendergast*

# BUSY GREEN FINGERS - ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

## PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL THURLES



As a class we decided to concentrate on environmental issues, and improve our own **carbon footprint** in our school. The school has received the Green Flag status and we as a class wanted to do our bit to help keep this achievement and even improve upon it.

### AIMS

- To make more students environmentally aware, firstly on a global level and then at a local level
- To show how our actions can have a positive effect on the global environment
- To promote waste management in our school through reducing, reusing, recycling
- To have an environmentally themed day, *Green Day*, in our school
- To make students more aware of recycleable objects
- To increase the use of compost bins in our school
- To create a costume out of recycleable objects for our school fashion show

### TARGET GROUP

Students and Teachers in our school

### ACTIONS

We decided that the best way to help the waste management in our school would of course be to make the students aware. So throughout the course of our project our main focus was to raise awareness among the students of how they can help sustain a healthy environment.



Firstly we researched the threats to our global environment and discussed these in class to see how we can relate these back to a global level.

We held an **Environmental Week** to help us achieve our goal. During this week we ran an **awareness campaign** in which we visited each class and outlined how they can help. We highlighted the three different types of bins in our school, and helped them distinguish between the compost and recycling bins. We showed them a chart which pointed out what materials go into each bin.

During this Environmental Week we also held a **Green Day** in which all students wore the colour green to help us raise awareness. We held a cake sale on this day in which all cakes and buns were covered in green icing. We had posters and diagrams up around our cake stalls to once again draw the students' attention to environmental issues.

We also created a recycleable costume out of newspapers to show the students in our school the creative things that can be done with waste materials.



## RESEARCH

### Threats to Our Global Environment

**Plastic:** Plastic is one of the major toxic pollutants of our time. Being a non-biodegradable substance, there is no way whatsoever you can safely dispose of plastic waste.

So the only way to reduce the hazards of plastic is to reduce its use and force a reduction in its production. We encouraged this in our project by encouraging students to reduce their use of plastic bags and reuse any ones they may have.

**Pollution:** The air, water and soil all over the world have been, and are still being polluted in many different ways. This pollution affects the health of living things. Air is damaged by vehicle fumes while fossil fuels form polluting gases. Oil spills pollute sea water and kill marine life. Chemical waste pollutes river water, killing wildlife.

We can help reduce this in our school by switching off lights when rooms are not in use, use a bicycle or walk short journeys instead of travelling in cars and try to buy environmentally friendly products.

**Waste:** As humans we produce a lot of waste. Most of this is buried in enormous landfills or burned in incinerators. Both of these actions can be dangerous for the environment. However all our rubbish is not all rubbish.

It makes sense to re-use and recycle our waste instead of just trying to solve the problem of where to put it. Organic matter can be put straight into a compost bin in your garden. Recycling banks are now available in every town. Use recycled paper to help save trees.

## **OUTCOMES**

Students enjoyed taking part in this project.

The Environmental Awareness campaign was a huge success and the students in the school learned a lot about what they can do to help.

The Green Day brought the whole school community together as they all wore green to help raise awareness.

By creating the recycleable costume the school community became aware of the creative things that can be done using recycleable items.

We thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the Challenge for Change project. We learned a lot from doing our project, particularly that our actions on a local level can have an effect on a global level. Our project has been a great success as we have managed to help raise awareness about waste management in our school.



*Co-ordinator: Bobby Bracken*



# **WATER WISE**

## **SCOIL MUIRE PORTLAOISE**



Our project was based on water and spreading the message that water is our most threatened and precious resource.

### **AIMS**

- To enable pupils to recognise that water is a precious natural resource
- To explore the importance of water in the daily lives of our pupils
- To undertake water conservation measures
- To examine the impact of water
- To recognise water as a force of nature that has to be respected
- To link with our application for our third green flag for water conservation
- To understand that we are one people living in one world

### **TARGET GROUP**

Every family in our school and in particular the senior girls from Third to Sixth Classes.

## ACTIONS

- We explored water, its cycle and its properties.
- In conjunction with the Green School Committee we conducted surveys on water usage throughout the school and at home.
- We discovered how much water we use when we do our simple day-to-day household tasks.
- Our mottos became 'Turn off the flow before you go' and 'Take a shower, but don't take an hour'.
- We compiled a list of Ten Commandments for saving water.
- We organised a fundraising activity for the people of Pakistan.
- We invited the **Ambassador of Pakistan**, her Excellency Mrs. Naghmana A. Hashmi, to our school on the 6<sup>th</sup> of April to present her with a cheque for €400 which we raised. She also spoke to us about the difficulties that the Pakistani people went through and the advantages and disadvantages of water.
- We investigated how water can be saved by using different methods.
- We involved the whole school in demonstrating through art work that water should be valued and appreciated.
- **Anne Marie Kelly**, from Laois County Council, came to talk to us about water conservation.
- We held a jersey day to raise money for the Japanese tsunami victims.





## OUTCOMES

- We heightened the children's awareness of water as a natural resource that has to be protected
- The children valued the links between the school and our worldwide community
- There was a great sense of team work and co-operative learning as the children in all the classes worked on the project
- We had a brilliant day when the Ambassador of Pakistan visited
- The children enjoyed the process and those lucky enough to go to Kilkenny saw the projects undertaken by other Presentation schools, and met fellow students from around the country
- Children are more thankful for the water that comes to the taps in our homes and schools

## LINKSAGES

- Ambassador of Pakistan, her Excellency Mrs. Naghmana A. Hashmi
- Portlaoise Pakistani Community
- Ann-Marie Kelly, Laois County Council
- RTE



## POSITIVE IMPACT

- The information compiled helped the children in our school understand how water is a valuable resource.
- The whole-school community was involved in the project as they donated money to the Pakistani people for flood relief.
- The **Action Day** brought the whole school together.

## INVOLVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

- Parents kindly donated money to our fund raising projects.
- Anne Marie Kelly from Laois County Council.
- The Ambassador of Pakistan came to our school and we had a tremendous day as RTÉ also came to film the visit. We were on News Today on RTÉ Two that evening.



## PUPILS' COMMENTS

"Going to Kilkenny was great fun because we got to go to the workshops and they were really enjoyable. We got to see other projects and I learned loads".

"I never realised how much water we wasted until I started doing this project".

"It was fun explaining to our families and friends about the water facts we learned at school".

"I found it interesting that only one percent of the water in the world is drinkable".

*Co-ordinator: Norette Heaphy*





# **BIODIVERSITY**

## **PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL WATERFORD**



### **AIMS**

- To bring the countryside to town
- To increase the variety of habitat available to wildlife
- To make our school as environmentally friendly as it can be
- To make our school more beautiful
- To give the children an opportunity to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables
- To help the children appreciate that we are part of the web of life, not separate from it

### **TARGET GROUP**

Fourth Class girls from Ms Drohan's class were the steering committee and they coordinated and presented the project.

All classes were involved in planting and caring for the garden. Eight girls attended the seminar in Kilkenny in May.

## ACTIONS

Last autumn everyone in the school planted daffodil bulbs. We also planted fruit trees, apple, plum and cherry. We planted currant bushes. In spite of the terribly cold winter most survived.

We put up bird feeders, a bird bath and nesting boxes. Unfortunately the birds did not use any of the nesting boxes so next year we will move them and see if they prefer a different location.

Every morning the Fourth Class girls took turns filling the feeders with seeds and nuts. They also filled the bird bath with water. During the cold weather the frozen water had to be thawed with warm water to make sure the birds had access to drinking water. We



made an observation space with binoculars and identification charts so that the girls could see, identify and record the feathered visitors.

In April we cleared an area in the sun and began to plant shrubs and flowers that are especially attractive to wildlife. We put up insect houses to attract butterflies, ladybirds, bumblebees and other insects.

We sowed vegetables in the raised beds, carrots, parsnips, turnips, beetroot, lettuce, onions and radish. We also planted peas indoors and planted them out in May, when the danger of frost was over.

We bought butterfly larvae online at [www.insectlore.co.uk](http://www.insectlore.co.uk). We got five caterpillars in a jar with food. When they spun a cocoon we transferred them to a special butterfly cage and waited. In about three weeks they hatched into beautiful Painted Lady butterflies. We fed them with sugar syrup and released them into our butterfly garden.

All the Fourth Class girls helped make the beautiful display we brought to Kilkenny.

## OUTCOMES

The girls were very enthusiastic about the project. They faithfully tended the bird table during all the ice and snow. Here are some comments from the girls themselves:



**"What I liked most was feeding the birds and watching them through the binoculars. I loved looking at the cocoons waiting to see them become butterflies."**  
Leah



**"What I liked about the project was all the planting and feeding the birds. In the mornings we pick butterflies and birds on the interactive white board and everyone has to guess what they are. Even in the rain, snow, wind and cold we succeeded in taking care of our birds. Now we are waiting for our caterpillars to hatch."**  
Lolade

**"I liked the project because it was fun to learn about birds and butterflies."**

**The artwork was lots of fun."** Rachel

**"My favourite parts of the project were when we were growing the peas, feeding the birds and having the butterflies hatching in our class. It was exciting and fun. We are also growing lettuce, potatoes and flowers. I am enjoying it all."**  
Annie-Rae

The girls who went to Kilkenny really enjoyed the day. It gave them a bigger audience for their project and they learned a lot from the other children who were there. They were able to bring a very comprehensive report back to their classmates.



When we got back we set up the display in the school, for a week, to allow all the classes to see it. The butterflies hatched out and were a great attraction. The girls were very enthusiastic and many of them have developed interests which will, we hope, be with them into adulthood. The school has a beautiful new wildlife garden which will improve over the years. It was great to see the other projects and meet so many Presentation schools. Thank you for all your hard work and congratulations to all the participants.

*Co-ordinator: Catherine Kinsella*

# **POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS**

## **PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL WEXFORD**



### **AIMS**

- To highlight issues relating to poverty and homelessness in the light of the current recession
- To encourage our school community to contribute to **St. Vincent de Paul**, an organisation with which we have forged links over many years

### **WORK UNDERTAKEN**

We began our work in October 2010 with class discussions and media monitoring. The students set about raising awareness through a school poster campaign. They also invited Ann Dempsey, the local area President of St. Vincent de Paul, to speak to the Transition Year Classes.

Work began in November on the **Christmas Hamper Collection**. The entire school community donated to the collection, which commenced as the first snowflakes began to fall on December 20<sup>th</sup>.



- When we returned to school in January 2011 the students set about raising awareness of the work of St. Vincent de Paul through **Fred's Fashions**, the local charity shop.
- A survey was completed by Fifth Year students on their attitude towards charity shops.
- The students aimed to promote the shop through a **Fashion Show** called **More Dash Less Cash**. On a budget of €20 per group, the students bought an outfit which they were then going to customise and accessorise.
- Once all the work was completed we invited **Kitty Hynes** who established the charity shop to take a first row seat at our fashion show.
- The show was a great success and many students and staff hot footed it to Fred's after school that day!
- The First Year students were surveyed again and their attitudes had changed dramatically. Many of the students who previously said they would never set foot inside a charity shop were now planning on shopping in Fred's!

The students were really amazed at how their project challenged the mindset of so many people.

Overall the project worked well. The response from the school community and the help, support and goodwill from the St. Vincent de Paul Society were invaluable.

*Co-ordinators: Niamh Cullen, Fiona Devereux*



## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***“It’s your task to listen very carefully, be humble. Don’t go into a place thinking you know more than the people there..”***

*[Nelson Mandela, speaking on the role of the Elders ]*

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

# **IF YOU LITTER AND YOU DO NOT CARE, YOU WILL PUT A HOLE IN THE OZONE LAYER**

## **PRESENTATION PRIMARY SCHOOL PORTARLINGTON**



This year, our Challenge to Change project was entitled "*If you litter and you do not care, you will put a hole in the ozone layer*". We examined how we care for the earth and the negative impact we may have under the headings:

**Water Conservation**

**Global Warming**

**Dumping our Waste on others**

**Rainforests**

**The impact of World Trading on Farming**

### **AIMS**

- To develop a sense of justice (Social Conscience)
- To encourage the children to work as a team - project work, spring clean up, meetings and discussions
- To develop self esteem and confidence of all pupils
- To appreciate and give gratitude for the many blessings we enjoy in the developed world
- To develop a sense of pride in our local environment and a feeling of responsibility to care for our natural resources
- To raise awareness of inequalities in our world



- To understand the water cycle and the importance of conserving water
- To identify the causes, consequences and possible solutions for de-forestation
- To explore how we, as humans, contribute to Global Warming and how we can make small changes in order to ensure that the Earth is protected for future generations
- To look at how we dump our waste across the world and see if it is a matter of human ignorance or lack of facilities that causes this threat to our environment
- To compare the situation across the globe
- To conduct a case study on the impact of coffee/cocoa production on farming

**TARGET GROUP**

Senior Classes took charge of the project but the whole school participated and parents and the wider community also became involved.



**WHAT WE DID**

<b>RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We researched plant life, animal life and peoples of the rainforests.</li> <li>• We surfed the web to see how Ireland copes with recycling and dumping waste across the globe.</li> <li>• We examined causes, consequences and possible solutions of <b>deforestation</b>.</li> <li>• We examined the negative impact of <b>world trade practices</b> on farming.</li> <li>• We explored how we as humans contribute to global warming and how we can make small changes in order to ensure that the earth is protected for future generations.</li> <li>• We recorded the information using pictures and graphs.</li> </ul>
<b>WATER</b>	We explored the <b>water cycle</b> , how we use water, how safe is our water and how we can conserve water.

<b>INJUSTICE</b>	We raised awareness of injustice and exploitation in developing world countries.
<b>GLOBAL WARMING</b>	We made a <b>powerpoint presentation</b> for the whole school and parents to demonstrate the negative impact of global warming.
<b>DAY OF ACTION</b>	We held a <b>Day of Action</b> to highlight injustice and demonstrate what each one of us can do to help save our environment - Art work, (Art from Waste Competition), recycling projects, powerpoint presentation, slideshow, drama and litter "rap".
<b>SPRING CLEAN</b>	We participated in <b>Spring Clean</b> in our locality in conjunction with the <b>Tidy Towns Competition</b> .
<b>BULBS</b>	Every child in the school planted a bulb in the school grounds to instil a sense of awe and appreciation of nature.
<b>GREEN CLASS</b>	A <b>Plaque</b> was awarded each week for the class that made the best effort to go green.
<b>ORGANIC GARDEN</b>	We established an <b>organic school garden</b> - growing herbs, vegetables and flowers.
<b>ECO/UNESCO</b>	We visited the <b>Greenhouse, Eco/Unesco Headquarters</b> in Dublin, where we participated in the Young Environmentalist Awards.
<b>ECO WALK</b>	We participated in an <b>Eco Walk</b> in the Slieve Bloom Mountains.





## WHAT THE STUDENTS SAID

*"I feel proud of the effort we put into the project as a group."* Lucy

*"It has made me take an interest in caring for our environment and what we can do to help others."* Aoife

*"It has influenced me to recycle more and not throw rubbish on the ground, to use less paper and to cycle to school."* Róisín

*"I have become aware that we should buy products marked with the fairtrade logo and support charities in the developing world such as Trócaire and Bóthar."*

## CONCLUSION

The project was a great success and wonderful learning experience for everyone involved. Its cross-curricular dimension added to its educational value, as it integrated many subject areas - English, Irish, Maths, Drama, P.E., Art and Crafts, Music and Computers. As the name suggests, it challenges us to change. The most important message we got from the whole experience is that what we do matters and each one of us can make a difference in our world today.



*Co-ordinator: Mary Kieran*

## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***A bag of coffee beans sold for \$50 in the Developing World can retail for about \$2,900 in the Developed World.***

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

# **GROWING GREENER**

## **ST. JOSEPH'S G.N.S. MOUNTMELICK**



This year we made a whole school effort to grow greener in a variety of ways.

### **AIMS**

- To appreciate our local environment, its importance and beauty
- To learn about the miracle of growth
- To learn how to care for and grow our own plants, shrubs and vegetables
- To come to appreciate self-sufficiency

### **TARGET GROUP**

This year our target group was the whole school from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

### **ACTIONS**

#### **Emo Court**

Pupils from Senior Infants to Fourth Class went to visit Emo Court. The children saw the beauty of the trees, leaves and fruit of Emo Gardens. Classes examined barks, looked carefully at leaves and buds and collected leaves and fruit. Second Class planted acorns they found in Emo. The acorns have started to grow. Hopefully we will be able to plant



them around the school. The children have come to appreciate nature in their local environment.



### MEG

Children took part in the **Mountmellick Environmental Group** competition where they had to design posters to make people more aware of how we can be greener. We had many winners and the children were very proud to accept their prizes.

### Planting around the school

Fourth Class planted snowdrops, daffodils, hyacinths, tulips and crocuses in January. All bulbs were watered and watched carefully. There was great excitement when these bulbs began to flower in Spring. Fourth Class also planted shrubs around the school to make our school a more pleasant place to visit. Fifth/Sixth Class did projects on flowers and learned many interesting facts about them!

### Our School Garden

Each class had different vegetables to plant

Class	What we planted
Junior Infants	Cress
Senior Infants	Cress
Senior Infants/First Class	Basil, coriander and parsley
First Class	Sunflowers
Second Class	Beetroot, radishes, strawberries
Third Class	Lettuce

Fourth Class	Broad beans, peas
Fourth / Fifth Class	Onions
Fifth / Sixth Class	Potatoes
Sixth Class	Carrots



Children planted their seeds and watered them. Once the vegetable was strong enough to withstand the weather it was re-planted outside in the garden.

### WHAT WORKED WELL

- Each class taking part in the project
- Our trip to Emo Court
- Watching and taking care of the vegetables, plants and shrubs

**LINKAGES** - We made links with the Mountmellick Environmental Group.

### CONCLUSION

Overall our project was a great success. Our school looked beautiful throughout the year. Our school garden is beginning to bloom. The children have become more aware of how to grow and care for plants, vegetables and shrubs. They have also learned how it is possible to be self-sufficient.



*Co-ordinator: Elaine Boland*



# CHILD LABOUR

## PRESENTATION SECONDARY SCHOOL WATERFORD



At the beginning of our Challenge to Change experience, we as a team decided that our aims would be totally for the good of the world and for others.

Our main task was to make the younger students, in particular First Years, more aware of the ongoing problems involving Child Labour in the developing world. We wanted to do this as we felt that it is such a big problem in the world and as the younger students are quite innocent of the problems that are faced each day in the developing world.

### AIMS

- We wanted to make the younger students more grateful for the luxuries and the opportunities that they are offered in life, by showing them the huge difference between their lives and the lives of those in the developing world.
- We wanted to carry out a successful workshop that would incorporate all of our ideas and goals and that would successfully educate the girls in a fun and relaxed atmosphere about the problems the children face in the developing world.
- Also by doing this project we wanted to learn more information ourselves about the topic and to be able to convey this information to the students.

- Our last goal was to develop some new skills, both independently and as a team. Some of the skills we hoped to develop were skills in Communication, Organisation, Teamwork, Teaching.

We were prepared to work hard to achieve all of our goals

### TARGET GROUP

We targeted the First Year students of classes C1, C2 and C3 in our school. We also wanted to educate the school community using posters with relevant information and informative notice boards.

### ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN

- We researched a few topics at the very beginning and after some discussion and thought we decided that we would focus on Child Labour.
- Meetings were held every Wednesday at 3.15 p.m.
- We researched the topic Child Labour in great detail and looked at all aspects.
- We prepared a informative piece on a particular aspect of the topic we were given and at our next meeting we had the opportunity to inform the group of what we had learned so everyone was informed on all aspects and everyone was on the same page when it came to information.
- We brainstormed to decide what our actions would be.
- We decided to conduct an awareness workshop.
- We attended a course that gave us the skills to effectively give a successful workshop.
- We decided on a format which we would follow during each workshop.
- The class split into 3 teams, 1 team for each day of the workshops.
- An outline timetable for the workshop was drawn up and variation was added to each workshop.
- Each of us was assigned an equal amount of tasks to do in the workshop.
- Each workshop was completed in a very efficient and successful manner.
- Each participant was given a task - to go home and tell three people about what they had learned.
- The participating First Year students gave us feedback on their experiences of the workshops.





- A report was compiled on each workshop.
- We organised a poster awareness campaign in the form of a competition to raise awareness throughout the school.
- We prepared a display on the topic for our exhibition in Kilkenny.

## OUTCOMES

The main outcome of our project was the level of awareness that was raised by our group. We managed to educate 70 First Year girls about child labour and gave each the challenge to go home and educate 3 people on what they learned. We worked so hard, constantly working to achieve greater standards in our work and pushed ourselves to the limit to work in a way which benefited everyone. We found that people passed on the information and there was good participation in the poster competition.

We delivered 3 workshops over the course of 3 days where we educated First Year students in a fun and educational environment. We enhanced our communication and team building skills and we worked together very well.

## STUDENTS' COMMENTS

**"I loved taking part in the project. It gave me the opportunity to mix with the other girls and to broaden my knowledge on the topic. It gave us the chance to work with the younger students and the day in Kilkenny was great. I loved the workshops and getting to know new people. Overall the challenge was a fantastic success and I loved being a part of it." Claire**

**"Challenge to Change is a great experience. It allowed us to use our talents in a way which benefited the group. I was allowed to experiment with artistic ideas throughout the project and got to take part in drama as part of the workshops. Both of which allowed me to pass on my talents. I loved working with the girls and learning all about the topic. I thoroughly enjoyed the project!" Orlaith**

**"Challenge to Change was a great experience. It allowed us to work on a topic that we wanted to work on. We got to meet new people researching some similar topics and shared opinions. It was great and I loved being able to decide what we wanted to do and how we could do it and also working with the First Years, teaching them all about child labour." Megan**

*(Report by Megan Dukés)*

*Cc-ordinator: Mary McNamara*

# **I GOT SOUL BUT I'M NOT A SOLDIER**

## **JOHN THE BAPTIST COMMUNITY SCHOOL HOSPITAL**



**Child Soldier in Uganda**

Our project investigated various forms of child labour in our world today. We researched the causes of child labour and what laws exist to protect the children.

### **AIMS**

- To research how children are treated in developing countries
- To understand why children are forced into these terrible conditions
- To participate in a workshop once a week with Irish Aid

### **TARGET GROUP**

Our school and local community.

### **ACTIONS**

- We researched child labour in the fashion industry, coffee plantation, cocoa bean plantations, sports, child soldiers and sex trafficking
- In each of these areas we produced posters to highlight the reasons why child labour exists and how the children are treated
- We produced a powerpoint presentation on legislation introduced by UNICEF to protect child labourers
- We participated in a flash mob in the Crescent Shopping Centre in Limerick to raise awareness about child labour
- We were involved in a series of Irish Aid workshops which explored child labour issues through dance, music and drama



## WHAT WE LEARNED

- Child soldiers are forced to fight, lay mines and be sex slaves to older soldiers
- Child soldiers are sent into battle high on drugs to give them courage
- 450,000 children, aged 6-14, are employed in cottonseed farms in India
- Children are forced to work long, unpaid hours in terrible conditions and are often threatened or beaten
- Poverty and lack of opportunity are major causes of child sex trafficking
- Child sex trafficking is usually driven by family plight and the traffickers desire for profit and cheap labour
- Children's rights are part of the EU human rights policy
- UNICEF set up Grafton camp for recently demobilized soldiers



## CONCLUSION

Child soldiers exist in all regions of the world where there is armed conflict. Unknown to us, many of the products we purchase use child labour. Children who are involved in child sex trafficking are exposed to HIV/AIDS. Rehabilitation centres for child soldiers to be re-educated are becoming popular in countries such as Brazil and Sierra Leone.

... without all countries working together, child labour will continue ...

(Article written by Roslyn Ryan)

Co-ordinator: Anne Keane



## ***A Challenging Thought ...***

***There are estimated to be 250,000 child soldiers in the world. 40% of child soldiers are girls.***

[[www.warchild.org](http://www.warchild.org)]

***Now ... Does this Change your Thinking ... ?***

## A WORD FROM THE EDUCATION OFFICE

**Someone** once said that the best way to eat an elephant is in bite-sized chunks. How true that saying is! With so much inequality, injustice, unfair relationships and practices in our world today, one can feel powerless and helpless. Add to that the growing threats to our global environment, natural and man-made catastrophes and disasters and we really feel overwhelmed by the sheer enormity of the task of making our world a better place. Rather than take on such a mammoth task we can find ourselves paralysed and end up doing nothing.

**Not** so for all the students throughout the country who took part in this year's Challenge to Change project. They have well and truly cracked that nut by their approach of acting locally and thinking globally. They have found that small but strategic local actions can have a far-reaching global impact. For instance, primary school pupils intent on reducing their carbon footprint took to travelling to school on foot or by bicycle. A small but manageable action in itself, but think of the effect if everyone were to take a leaf out of their book!

**As** our 'Challengers' reflect on what has happened for them over the year we can see that they have really internalized the learning and made it their own. Eamonn, a second-level student from Ballingarry, captures this transformative experience:

*"I have greatly enjoyed this experience. It has really opened my eyes about the North/South divide in today's world ... I now realise how unfairly distributed things are in our world ..."*

**Another** student looks back and remembers that:

*"I learned how a small change can make a big difference to the environment."*

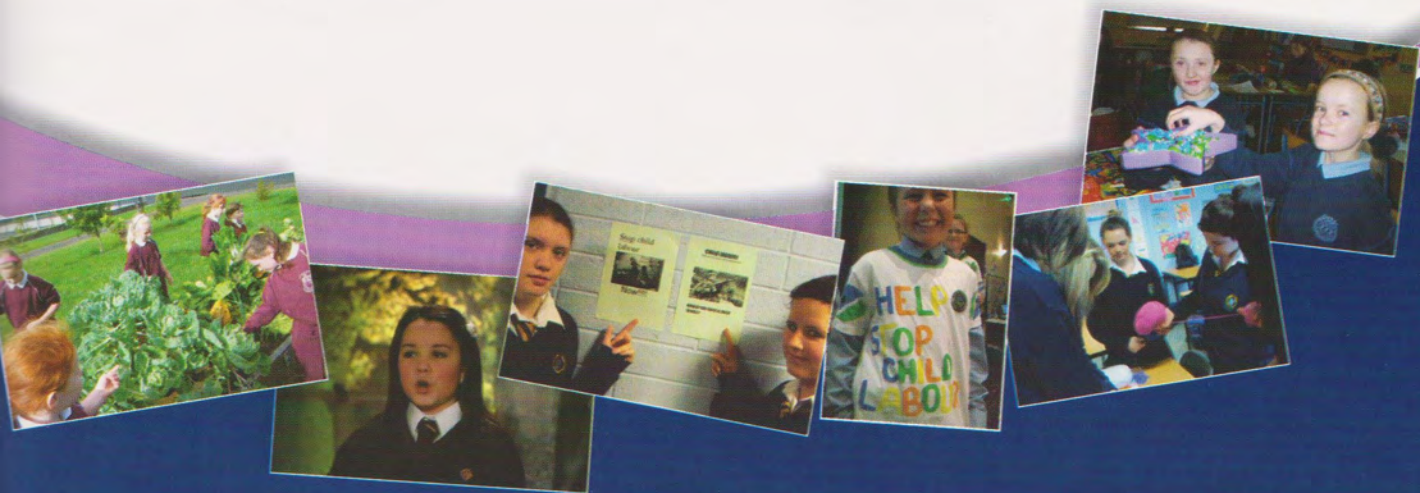
**Whole** communities are being transformed due to the passion of these young people. Water-use surveys were carried out in many homes and awareness of wasteful use was raised. One student from Lucan talks of her new-found knowledge of Fairtrade and describes how she is spreading that message:

*"I never realised just how many Fairtrade products you can buy - from tea to cotton wool to pineapples - and have asked my mam to always buy Fairtrade when she sees it."*

**We** extend our thanks to all our students, teachers, co-ordinators, Principals, parents and all associated with this year's projects for their active involvement and participation. The funding provided by Irish Aid and Presentation Trustees is much appreciated. We look forward to making a difference for the ninth successive year with **Challenge to Change 2011-2012**.

*Liam and Margaret Mary*





# Challenge to Change

**Presentation Education Office**

346 Orwell Park Close, Templeogue, Dublin 6W

Margaret Mary Healy

T. 01 450 9430 E. [preseduc@eircom.net](mailto:preseduc@eircom.net)

Liam Kilbride

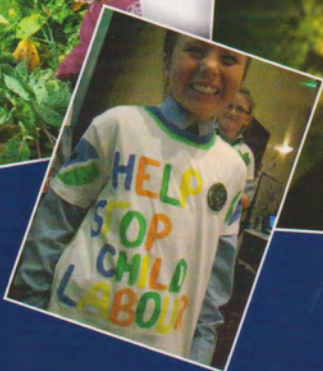
T. 01 408 9742 E. [liamkilbride@eircom.net](mailto:liamkilbride@eircom.net)

Presentation Education Office gratefully acknowledges the project funding provided by Irish Aid, Development Education Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and by Presentation Trustees.



# Challenge to Change

A DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION PROJECT IN PRESENTATION SCHOOLS



# Challenge



**Irish Aid**

Government of Ireland  
Rialtas na hÉireann

**Presentation Education Office**

346 Orwell Park Close, Templeogue, Dublin 6W

Margaret Mary Healy

T. 01 450 9430 E. [preseduc@eircom.net](mailto:preseduc@eircom.net)

Liam Kilbride

T. 01 408 9742 E. [liamkilbride@eircom.net](mailto:liamkilbride@eircom.net)



Nano Nagle 1718 - 1784

Presentation Education Office gratefully acknowledges the project funding provided by Irish Aid, Development Education Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and by Presentation Trustees.

The views expressed are those of Presentation Education Office and project schools and can in no way be taken to reflect the official opinion of Irish Aid.