



COLÁISTE CHIARÁIN

SCHOOL OF SANCTUARY

CULTURE DAY 2023





SCHOOL OF SANCTUARY INTRODUCTION

Our School 's Journey so far.....

Hello and welcome to Colaiste Chiarain everyone!

It is our hope that as you read through this booklet, the sense of who we are and what we do each day to be a place of inclusion, welcome and safety will be self-evident.

There are moments in each school's history when it is important to pause and reflect on the journey of the community as a whole. This is one such moment for us here at CC.

This booklet gives us an opportunity to pause, reflect and celebrate our efforts to become a School of Sanctuary.

Our journey to this point began much earlier than this particular process did!!

We have always placed inclusion, inclusivity and community at the heart of our actions - our Room 40 ASD classroom remains a favourite spot in the school for many of us with the atmosphere of calm and self efficacy that is encouraged and cultivated there pervading the culture of the school as a whole.

Our Stand Up Group has been to the fore in driving awareness, inclusion and a sense of belonging for all and our Student Council and Amber Flag committees have put the wellbeing and mental health of our community firmly at the centre of our interactions. Finally our fabulous Culture Day displays and celebrates all of our vibrant diversity.

However, it was when we formed our Inclusion and Diversity Committee in January 2023 that our goal of becoming a School of Sanctuary became more cohesive and focused in sustaining and developing further that culture of welcome, inclusion and safety.

Our committee is made up of students, parents and teachers who generously give their time, expertise and passion to the project.

Sometimes 'Thank You' is not enough but we can thank those who have brought us this far by showing our continued support and allowing our actions to give power to those words.

To the Committee who work so hard with and for our school 'THANK YOU!' and we look forward to our continued journey.....



LEARN, ACTION, SHARE

Religion Dept Refugee Project

In February and March of 2023 the Religion teachers took on a project around learning about refugees, why people become refugees, how refugees are treated in countries they travel to. This is already part of the Religious Education Curriculum so in all the year groups across the school we decided to use this part of the curriculum as a starting point. We also had some classes watch the film, *The Swimmers* on Netflix. This was followed with class discussions and finally students took on to do projects using the knowledge they had learned. These projects were put on display in the school library on National Wear Red Day. Each class then had an opportunity to go to the library to view the work that had been done.

Around this time the students and teachers on the Diversity Committee also completed a workshop with Yellow Flag about Direct Provision.

"We watched and learned about the movie 'Swimmers' and we learned how tough a day in their life is".

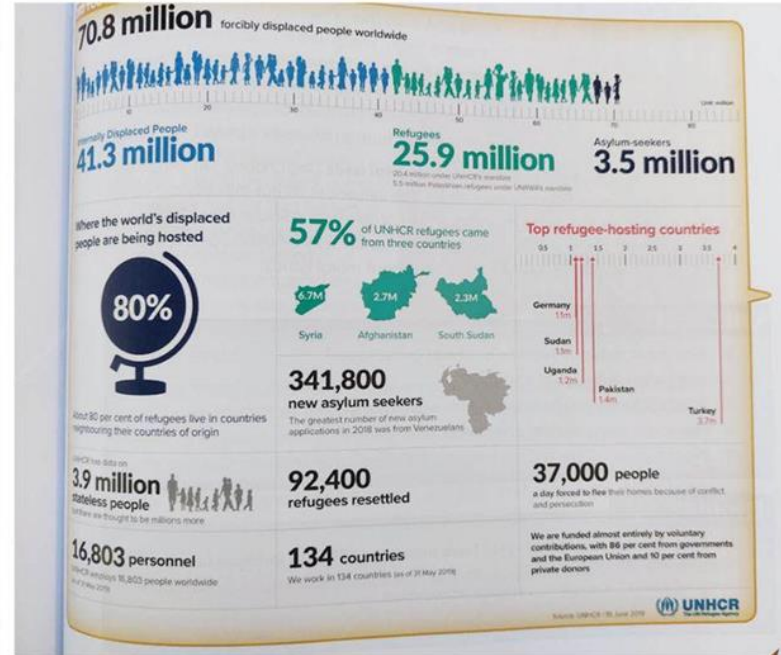
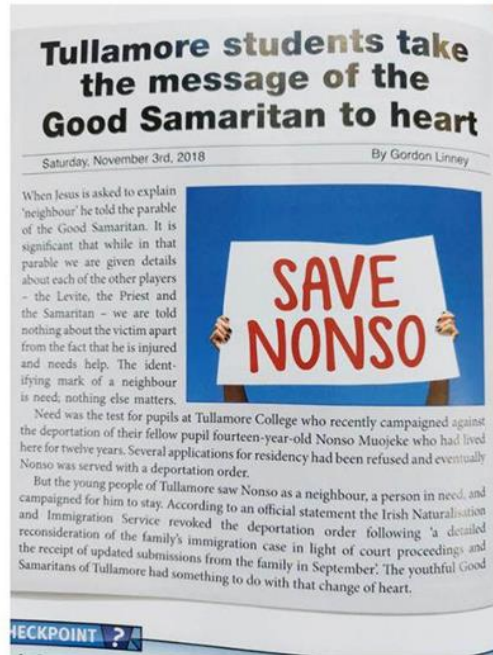
"We learned about what refugees go through to get to a different country".

"The main part I remember from the lessons and the film is how dangerous it is to go to a different country as a refugee".





LEARN, ACTION, SHARE



Samples of some of the learning resources used in Religion classes to highlight issues for refugees.

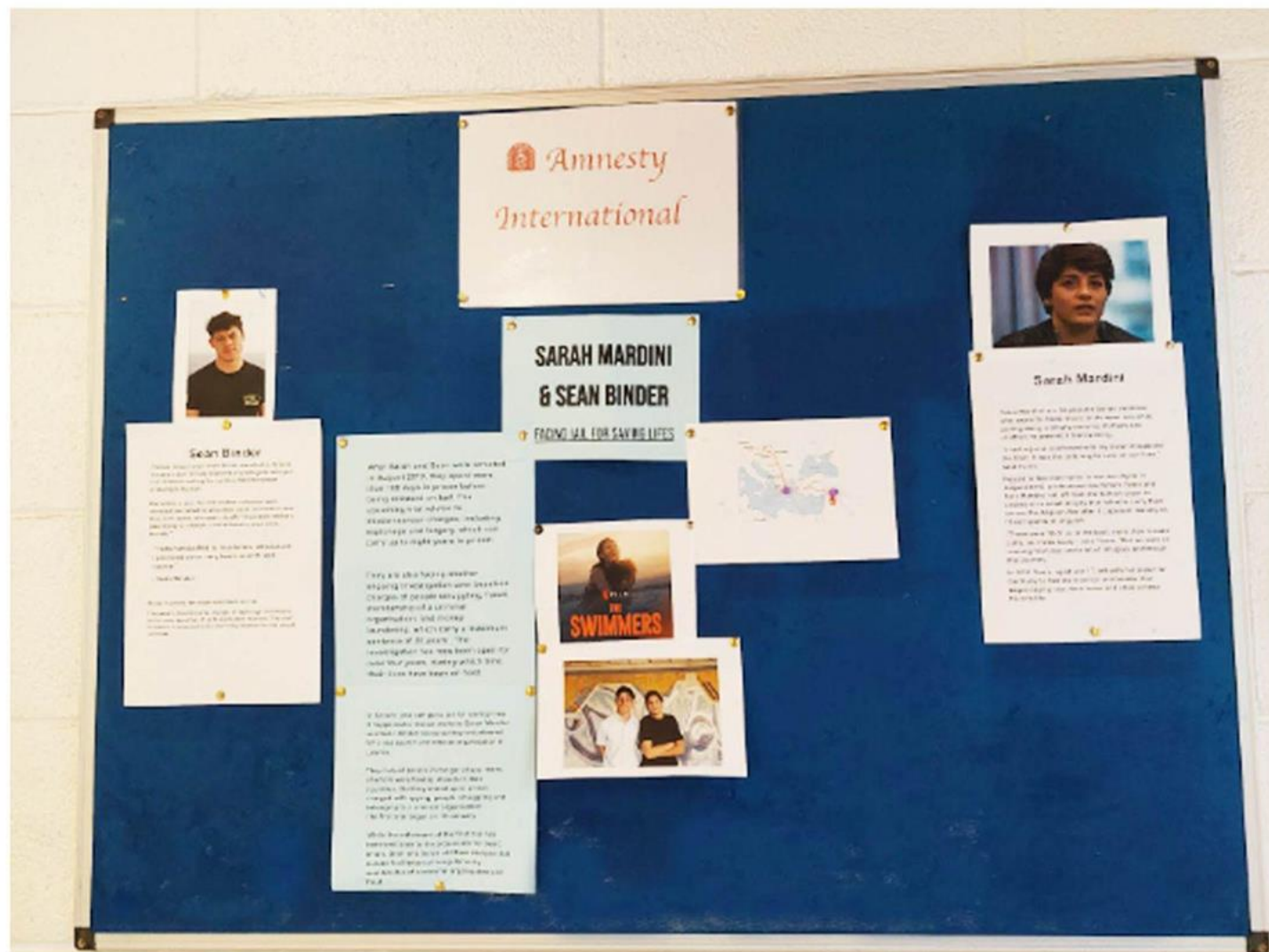


LEARN, ACTION, SHARE

At the time of the Religion classes focussing on refugees, the students in our Amnesty International Group put together this display on one of the school noticeboards.

“Working on the project on activist Sam Binder and Sarah Mardini provided us with great insights on the struggles faced by refugees across the world”

“Being members of the Amnesty International Committee, it was very good to be able to be a part of a project that involved other people in the school such as the Diversity Committee and Religion classes”.





NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

On the 31st of March 2023 the whole community of Colaiste Chiarain took part in the Immigrant Council of Ireland's National Wear Red Day. We gave everyone a piece of red ribbon to wear for the day as they entered the school building. There were announcements on the intercom during the day with important quotes being read out. This was also the day that the school community viewed the refugee projects in the school library.



We are excited to announce the launch of Wear Red Day 2023!

Wear Red Day is an opportunity to send out a strong message that we as communities welcome diversity, celebrate it, and take a stand against racism in all forms.

ICI is calling schools and workplaces to participate in Wear Red Day which is happening on the 31st of March 2023!

We would be delighted to hear from you if your school or workplace would be interested in participating in Wear Red Day 2023.

If you want to join us you can register [here](#).



DOWN'S SYNDROME SOCKS DAY



Rock Your Socks

World Down Syndrome Day!

Chromosomes are what make us all unique. Most people have 2 copies of each chromosome. Did you know individuals with Down syndrome have 3 copies of chromosome #21? That's why World Down Syndrome Day is celebrated on 3-21 every year. Help us celebrate and raise awareness by rocking your favorite pair of fun socks.

Why socks?

Because under a microscope, a pair of chromosomes look like a pair of socks!!!



CELEBRATING LANGUAGES

In Coláiste Chiaráin it is of utmost importance to expose our students to the various different cultures within our school community and also the wider local, national and global communities. In collaboration with Languages Connect, TY students take part in the Think Languages programme each year. This allows students to experience new cultures

and builds awareness of the opportunities that arise through lifelong language learning.

To further promote language learning and appreciate European languages, we also celebrate European Day of Languages on the 26th of September.





AUTISM UNDERSTANDING

Coláiste Chiaráin is very proud to have a specialist class for six students on the Autism Spectrum and supports over twenty other individuals on the spectrum within the school community.

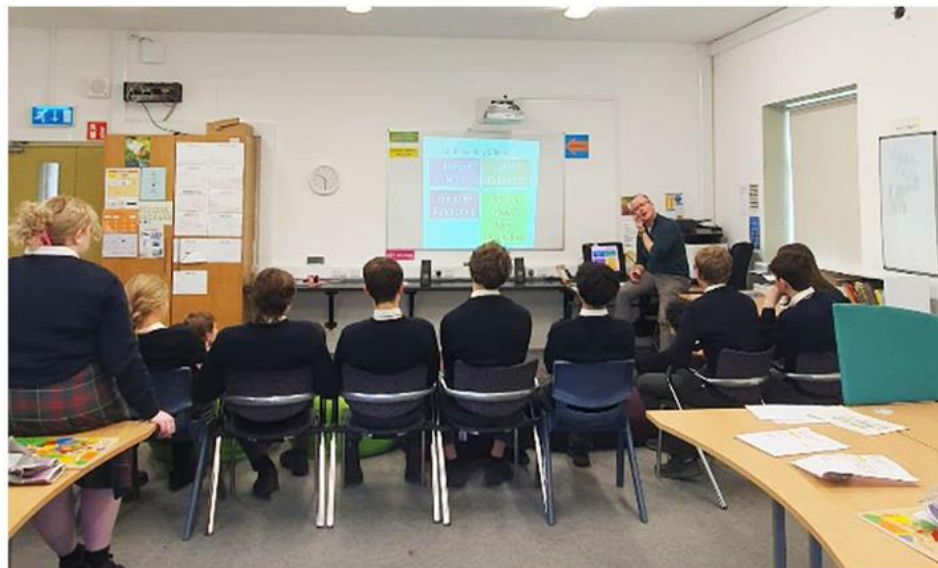
As part of moves to increase inclusion and understanding Coláiste Chiaráin's Room 40 hosted all 570 students during the year with an interactive workshop to develop learners' understanding of a range of neurodiversity themes.

Learners were given practical exercises to begin to walk a mile in someone else's shoes as the opportunity to ask any questions to help break down barriers to better understanding.

An undoubtable highlight of the presentation was a talk by Sixth year student Roisin Coyne who is on the Autism Spectrum and has lessons in Room 40 herself.

Roisin's presentation highlighted her own perspective of differences on the Autism Spectrum as well as encouraging her peers to keep developing their empathy further.

It was also a chance for Roisin to promote her book which has recently been published showing the latest stage in her own personal journey which she is looking forward to continuing after her graduation from the school in 2023.





STAND UP WEEK

Images from Stand Up Week 2022

Stand Up Week 2023 6th-10th Nov.





CHILD TALKS - GIVING A VOICE TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE

Child Talks is an annual event from the Ombudsman for Children's Office to mark World Children's Day that hears directly from children and young people about the issues that matter to them.

To celebrate Child Talks sixth year, we came directly to you live from the Helix.

Child Talks gives children a platform to share their views and experiences on issues that are important to them. Inspired by the Location, the theme of this year's event was 'The Ireland I would like to live in...'.

Our speakers aged 10 to 17 addressed an audience in The Helix on a range of topics, including neurodiversity, mental health, vaping, and LGBTQI+ support.

We brought students from our Diversity Committee, our Student Council and our Stand Up Group to this event marking World Children's Day.





WORLD MUSIC CLUB

The learning, actions and sharing that has taken place in our club:

We have learned songs such as Belle Mama, Kali kokha, Khuluma isintu, Masakhane and Mwana wa nzako.

Students have shared songs from their culture for other students to learn more about the world around them.

Our aim is celebrate our students' diverse backgrounds, promoting inclusion, empathy and tolerance.



THE DIVERSITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE PRESENTS TO YOU

WORLD MUSIC

UKULELE

CLUB

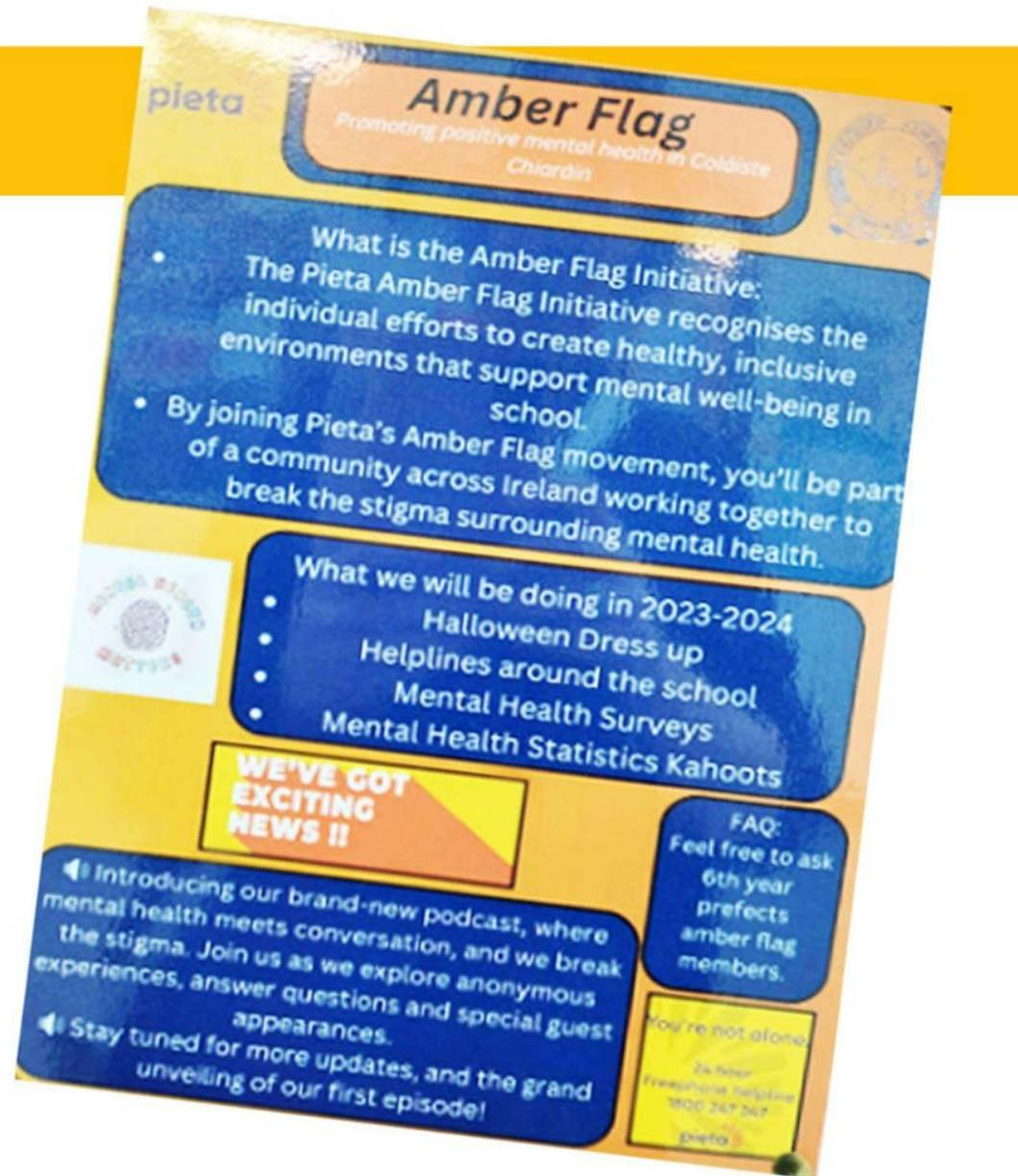




AMBER FLAG

This committee is made up of some of our sixth year prefects. Their biggest project this year is their new podcast where they will be interviewing people about how they look after their mental health. The inaugural podcast was recorded with Aishah Akorede when she joined us for Culture Day. You can listen to it here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uEnCpz4pDr3OOmFcKVJAv7jXpVCLzIGL/view?usp=drive_web&authuser=0





My experience of moving from Trinidad to Ireland

During the first stage of lockdowns due to the Coronavirus, schools in Trinidad and Tobago closed down for over 2 years, during this time, my mother, who was a teacher, feared that our education was being irreversibly impacted, she gave us 2 weeks notice, before we moved to Ireland.

The hardest part of moving, easily, was leaving behind the friends I'd made back home, and attempting to make new ones. After a few weeks, I had adjusted to the vastly different climate and culture, and had begun to make new friends though I did miss the warm weather of the Caribbean, as well as the beauty of the islands, though I eventually realised the beauty of

Ireland as well. The kindness and hospitality of its residents also soon became apparent, as many students within my school helped me adjust to the sudden change

I've now grown to appreciate the opportunities the country of Ireland offers me. Ireland now feels like a second home to me, as my extended family on my dad's side and I think I'll remain here for the rest of my schooling and although the sudden move to Ireland was a splash of cold water, I've grown to appreciate the risk my mother took for me. Even though, I still do miss my friends and country





CULTURE DAY IN COLÁISTE CHIARÁIN

Colaiste Chiarain annual culture day is a day where the students of Colaiste Chiarain get to celebrate their country's culture. This special day allows the students to showcase and educate others about their country's identity and traditions. Student Chloe Nejera in 3rd year said, "It's a day where one can celebrate and embrace the traditions and practices where they are from. while also teaching and sharing with others". Every year each country makes up a stand including a small poster containing facts about their country, national dishes, traditional music, dress and dance. All teachers and students of each year group are then invited to explore the countries' stands. Invitations are also sent out to parents to come along and check out our Culture Day.

For me, it's phenomenal to see all the teachers, staff and students come together and put in so much hard work to take part in this day of celebrating each other's cultural individuality and differences. To then see the response of the students get so involved and interested is amazing.

Last year in 2022 we had a total of fifteen stands but that number was conquered by this year's total of twenty five stands. It was incredible to see more people help take part to make Culture Day another huge success. Student Finn Crehan in 5th year who took part in both Culture Days reaction was, "It was good to see that there were even more cultures being represented and other people who weren't necessarily associated with that culture, still interested and wanting to learn more".

We also had the honour of a past student and now Miss Universe Ireland Aishah Akorede came to visit our Culture Day of 2023.

The days leading up to Culture Day and the preparations for it was something I found very exciting. I really enjoyed the activities of preparing my favourite dishes with my family, decorating the poster and preparing the stand for the day. It was also incredible to meet new people of the same culture and share each other's different traditions. It's unbelievable to see the huge difference between Culture Day last year and this year. Last year, the Philippines stand which I took part in, had 3 people in comparison to this year where we had 11 people get involved which was outstanding.





CULTURE DAY IN COLÁISTE CHIARÁIN

It is my great pleasure to address you this morning and to open our Culture Day for 2023, a very special and significant day in the life of our school in which we celebrate diversity, inclusion and togetherness here in Coláiste Chiaráin.

Our Culture Day is a day which embodies the values which we as a school strive to live every day. In 1980, over 40 years ago, our school community was established to provide multi denominational, inclusive education for the people of Leixlip and surrounding areas. Therefore, it is right that in the founding spirit of our school, we celebrate the various cultures, denominations, languages, religions and beliefs that shape and make

our school the rich and vibrant school to which we are proud to belong.

In our school, we come from various backgrounds, speak different languages, practice diverse traditions, and have unique stories to tell. This is what makes us special; this is what makes us who we are. And it's important to recognize that this diversity is something to be celebrated, cherished, and embraced, rather than feared or ignored.

Cultural diversity is like a jigsaw, a beautiful puzzle of different colours and patterns which helps to form the bigger picture of our school. Each of us represents a unique piece in that jigsaw. Each of us comes from

a particular culture. Leave one of us out of that jigsaw and the picture looks remarkably different. Not quite the same. So, inclusion is the key to unlocking the full potential of our diverse community. It means ensuring that everyone feels valued and welcomed, regardless of their background or differences. When we include every voice, we create a vibrant, thriving environment where individuals are empowered to be their authentic selves. Inclusion is not just a nice gesture it is a fundamental human right, and it is at the core of building a strong, supportive community.

When we are included, we feel like we belong and a sense of belonging is what makes us feel at home.





CULTURE DAY IN COLÁISTE CHIARÁIN

Indeed, it's essential for our well-being. It is in our best interest to foster a sense of belonging for all. When you walk into these school gates, you should feel like you belong. No one should ever feel like an outsider here. We must all work together to ensure that every member of our school community feels that they belong here, that they are accepted and valued for who they are.

The great Christian multiculturalist and promoter of diversity, St Francis of Assisi, in his great prayer for peace in the world, asked God to ensure that he would never seek to be understood but to understand. He also asked God to ensure that he would love rather than be loved.

St Francis recognised that embracing others and all that makes them human as the first step was the way to peace. Unfortunately, we see many examples, both locally and internationally where others seek to stamp out differences and enforce their own world views and cultures on others. Where cultural differences are seen as threats and those who are different to us seen as aliens, it only leads to discord, upset, distrust and conflict. Communities cannot be built on such values. As a school, our culture day provides us with a wonderful opportunity to learn, to explore, to experience and to celebrate all that makes us different and yet so similar.

This celebration of difference is the heart of it all. Let us not just tolerate our differences; let us revel in them. Each culture, each tradition, each individual has something unique and beautiful to offer. When we celebrate our differences, we learn, we grow, and we become more enriched human beings. We become global citizens who appreciate the rich tapestry of humanity.

So, let's make a commitment today. Let's pledge to celebrate our cultural diversity, to ensure inclusion, to foster a sense of belonging, to stand together in togetherness, and to joyously celebrate our differences. Let's enjoy learning about each other's languages, music, dance, food and traditions.

Remember, in unity and diversity, we are not only stronger, but we are also more enriched as individuals. Embrace one another, learn from one another, and together, we will create a brighter and more harmonious future for every one in our school.

Thank you.

Mark Neville, Principal,





DIVERSITY COMMITTEE





SCHOOL OF SANCTUARY PLEDGE

Four completed 'SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY PLEDGE FORM' documents are displayed, each from a different school. The forms are titled 'n Places of Sanctuary Ireland SCHOOLS OF SANCTUARY PLEDGE FORM'.

School 1: Coláiste Chaitríona
Name of school: Coláiste Chaitríona
School address: George Rd, Liscannore, Co. Dub.
School e-mail address: info@colaiscechaitriona.com
We, Coláiste Chaitríona, pledge our support to the City of Sanctuary vision that Ireland will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. As a school, we recognise the contribution of refugees, migrants and people seeking sanctuary to Ireland. In working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary we pledge to:
1. Learn what it means to be seeking sanctuary and about the lives of refugees, migrants and marginalised groups in Ireland.
2. Take Action to support sanctuary seekers in the daily life of the school.
3. Share this new knowledge and understanding with the school's wider community & the Schools of Sanctuary network.
We are committed to working towards becoming a recognised School of Sanctuary and we are willing for our school to be added to a list of Schools of Sanctuary Ireland.
Signatories below should include representatives of management, staff and students
Name/Position/Class Date
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Laura O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
Further signatories may be added on extra pages if required.
Please email this completed form to your local City of Sanctuary group or to schools@nationalcitysanctuary.org

School 2: St. Mary's R.C. School
Name of school: St. Mary's R.C. School
School address: 100, St. Mary's Road, Liscannore, Co. Dub.
School e-mail address: info@stmarys.ie
We, St. Mary's R.C. School, pledge our support to the City of Sanctuary vision that Ireland will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. As a school, we recognise the contribution of refugees, migrants and people seeking sanctuary to Ireland. In working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary we pledge to:
1. Learn what it means to be seeking sanctuary and about the lives of refugees, migrants and marginalised groups in Ireland.
2. Take Action to support sanctuary seekers in the daily life of the school.
3. Share this new knowledge and understanding with the school's wider community & the Schools of Sanctuary network.
We are committed to working towards becoming a recognised School of Sanctuary and we are willing for our school to be added to a list of Schools of Sanctuary Ireland.
Signatories below should include representatives of management, staff and students
Name/Position/Class Date
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
Further signatories may be added on extra pages if required.
Please email this completed form to your local City of Sanctuary group or to schools@nationalcitysanctuary.org

School 3: St. Mary's R.C. School
Name of school: St. Mary's R.C. School
School address: 100, St. Mary's Road, Liscannore, Co. Dub.
School e-mail address: info@stmarys.ie
We, St. Mary's R.C. School, pledge our support to the City of Sanctuary vision that Ireland will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. As a school, we recognise the contribution of refugees, migrants and people seeking sanctuary to Ireland. In working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary we pledge to:
1. Learn what it means to be seeking sanctuary and about the lives of refugees, migrants and marginalised groups in Ireland.
2. Take Action to support sanctuary seekers in the daily life of the school.
3. Share this new knowledge and understanding with the school's wider community & the Schools of Sanctuary network.
We are committed to working towards becoming a recognised School of Sanctuary and we are willing for our school to be added to a list of Schools of Sanctuary Ireland.
Signatories below should include representatives of management, staff and students
Name/Position/Class Date
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
Further signatories may be added on extra pages if required.
Please email this completed form to your local City of Sanctuary group or to schools@nationalcitysanctuary.org

School 4: St. Mary's R.C. School
Name of school: St. Mary's R.C. School
School address: 100, St. Mary's Road, Liscannore, Co. Dub.
School e-mail address: info@stmarys.ie
We, St. Mary's R.C. School, pledge our support to the City of Sanctuary vision that Ireland will be a welcoming place of safety for all and proud to offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution. As a school, we recognise the contribution of refugees, migrants and people seeking sanctuary to Ireland. In working towards becoming a School of Sanctuary we pledge to:
1. Learn what it means to be seeking sanctuary and about the lives of refugees, migrants and marginalised groups in Ireland.
2. Take Action to support sanctuary seekers in the daily life of the school.
3. Share this new knowledge and understanding with the school's wider community & the Schools of Sanctuary network.
We are committed to working towards becoming a recognised School of Sanctuary and we are willing for our school to be added to a list of Schools of Sanctuary Ireland.
Signatories below should include representatives of management, staff and students
Name/Position/Class Date
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
* Michael O'Sullivan 6/4/22
Further signatories may be added on extra pages if required.
Please email this completed form to your local City of Sanctuary group or to schools@nationalcitysanctuary.org