



Dr Christy Duffy
Chief Executive,
LWETB

Chief Executive's address

Innovation and the Future

There is a lot of talk about the future right now. And I am not just talking about Brexit, although this has featured highly on the media agenda over the past number of months. But there is a lot of conversation about innovation and where we are going as an economy and a society in Ireland. The government recently launched Future Jobs as the new reality of near full employment hits the streets and we try to strategically place ourselves as a country within a new global digital reality.

And what has all this talk about innovation and the future got to do with LWETB? I would say everything, because education and training are key to developing the Ireland of the future. And you can see in this newsletter how this innovation, which is one of our core values in LWETB as outlined in our five year Strategy Statement, is running through the great work we are currently undertaking. You will see how so many of our students at second level are succeeding at the highest level as we congratulate them on the wonderful scholarships they have achieved. You will see how our schools are piloting the introduction of Office 365 into the classroom and the school and how that will shape the teaching and

learning of the future. You can also see how our Youth Services Unit is embracing a much wider remit in relation to the development of youth services in both counties. And finally our Further Education and Training (FET) section has agreed a three year Strategic Performance Agreement with SOLAS as we prepare to upskill the people of Longford and Westmeath for the jobs of the future.

As we come towards the year end I would like to thank all of our staff in LWETB for your commitment and innovation in your daily work which impacts so keenly on the lives of so many people. I hope you all have a good break over the holidays and look forward to another year working together in LWETB as we embrace innovation and prepare for the future.



As we approach the end of 2018 we would like to take this opportunity to thank all LWETB staff for their hard work and continued dedication throughout the year.

We wish you and all your families a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Annual LWETB Academic Excellence Awards

The annual ETB Academic Awards Ceremony was held on the 7th September in Bloomfield House Hotel, Mullingar. Leaving Certificate Students from LWETB schools were accompanied by family and friends to honour and celebrate their success. Awards were presented by Dr. Christy Duffy who praised the students and schools on their achievements and wished them well for their futures.



Students receiving their Academic Awards pictured with Dr. Christy Duffy CE LWETB and Liz Lavery Director of Schools.

Developing Leaders of the Future

This year has seen outstanding achievement in the Academic field. Students have received entrance scholarships based on their outstanding Leaving Cert results to universities across the country.



Congratulations to Ruairi Trimble past pupil of Lanesboro Community College who was presented with an Entrance Scholarship award from UCD.



Fiona Molloy and Louise Egan were recently presented with scholarships to NUI Galway.



Danielle Madden and Annie Sheehan were presented with entrance scholarships recently to UCD.

Annie also won the Barra O'Brien memorial scholarship (Tormey's) for a student studying law.



Catherine Costello has been awarded an entrance scholarship to Trinity College. Catherine also won a right of residence in Trinity Hall (as a fresher in charge of Irish students) based on her outstanding Leaving Certificate result in Irish.



Sean Horan has been presented with an Ericsson Bursary. The Bursary, worth €1,000 a year along with paid summer internship was awarded to Sean based on his excellent Higher Level Math and Applied Math results.

Leadership and Management in Post Primary Schools – A Look Ahead!

An information evening was held on the new leadership and management structures for post-primary schools on the Monday, October 1st in the Mullingar Park Hotel.

Director of Schools, Ms Liz Lavery, spoke about the new leadership and management structures and what they mean for our schools in Longford and Westmeath ETB. Ms Lavery told the attendees that this was an important time of change and the new leadership and management structures would shape the future of our schools. She acknowledged the considerable amount of work staff had done in relation to identifying the needs and priorities of schools and thanked staff for their input into the process so far.

Ms Martina Hughes from Human Resources presented details of the process and its duration.

Attendees were informed that the qualification requirements for Assistant Principal competitions are:

Assistant Principal I: Fully registered with the Teaching Council; have a

minimum of three years teaching service recognised by DES/ETB for incremental credit purposes.

Assistant Principal II: fully registered with the Teaching Council; have a minimum of one years teaching service recognised by DES/ETB for incremental credit purposes.

A dedicated email address for these competitions has been created and this is: aprecruitment@lwetb.ie.

Staff were reminded that forms should be fully completed. Sections that are not applicable should have n/a inserted in them. Unsigned forms cannot be accepted. Any supporting documentation must be received prior to the closing date.

Ms Lavery spoke about the importance of understanding the competencies of: leading in learning and teaching, managing an organisation, leading school development, and developing leadership capacity when completing the application form, and also during the interview process.

An important piece of the process is the calculation of

seniority. Calculation of Seniority for competitions in 2018/2019 means that Human Resources will have the important task of checking and verifying service calculations of all applicants, and with posts to be filled in all our post-primary schools, attendees were told that this will lengthen the process for all concerned. For those who do apply for a post, it is expected to be at least three to four weeks after the closing date before they receive notification from HR about the next step

In the scheduling of interviews, LWETB will be cognisant of the needs of students, and the HR department ask that candidates should not request a change of time unless it is absolutely necessary. The outcome of interviews will be communicated to candidates within two weeks of the interview.

The evening closed with Liz Lavery stating the importance of the new structures in our schools as we look to the future and wishing all potential candidates the best of luck.

If for some reason you were unable to attend the evening, a copy of the presentation can be obtained by emailing: aprecruitment@lwetb.ie





Embracing ICT for a Brighter Future in Education



Over the past year introductory training for Office 365 has been provided for all Further Education and Administrative staff at LWETB. This introductory training has included Outlook, OneDrive, and OneNote. This professional development initiative is part of a wider strategy to maximise the use of cloud computing services across the whole ETB for secure data storage, and to bring the benefits of more digital learning resources to all our learners.

In the next phase in this plan an ETB wide intranet is being created in Office 365 SharePoint with facilities for each service area to collaborate online and network with other colleagues across the

ETB. The Further Education part of the Intranet is almost complete and further CPD will be provided for staff as it is made available. Youthreach services have been the first to receive this training and all 4 centres have a private site for their staff as well as an area for all Youthreach staff to collaborate.

Intranet facilities will soon be provided for all schools, with Columba College staff Intranet already in place. School intranets are setup to the schools own requirements and can include a Virtual Staffroom, Subject and Program planning sites as well as sites for SEN, Wellness and SSE.

Office 365 services include many very useful applications for teachers and we hope that in the near future everybody will be able to use these tools as part of their work with the help of our ongoing CPD program. Email and OneDrive have been the focus of our initial training with an introduction to OneNote which is proving very popular with teachers for sharing and collaborating with colleagues and students. Other services in Office 365 include Microsoft Teams, Microsoft Forms, and Microsoft Sway (PowerPoint alternative) which will be included in future training.



Promoting Excellence in Teaching and Learning through ICT



This academic year Columba College was selected to pilot Microsoft 365 in Education. As Principal and former English teacher and JCSP coordinator within our school, I feel Microsoft 365 is changing the way that Columba College operates.

There are numerous benefits to utilising Microsoft 365 to its full potential within a school setting.

1. It increases productivity across the whole school environment.
2. Improves communication and provides better connections between students and staff.
3. It promotes collaboration and teamwork.
4. It is accessible, anywhere and anytime on any device.

These are benefits and buzzwords we constantly hear as teachers, however what does that mean for

me and my classroom? Microsoft 365, is an application available to all ETB staff, consisting of

Outlook, One Drive, One Note, SharePoint and your usual applications of Word, PowerPoint, Excel etc. As a teacher we use many of these applications on a daily basis. What makes this so different?

Not until training was provided and I began to use the various applications in relation to each other did I realise the potential of how Microsoft 365 can:

1. Streamline the administrative duties of teachers
2. Enhance the quality of teaching and learning within our classrooms
3. Promote collaboration within small groups or committees
4. Promote collaboration on a whole school level.

It is the first technology and online application that will have a direct influence on my practice and classroom, with maximum

potential and more importantly with minimal disruption. As an iPad school Microsoft 365 fits seamlessly onto our devices and there are no compatibility issues what so ever. So how do the various applications impact my job?

One Drive is a cloud based storage system, which allows me to back up all my work, notes, plans etc. However, it also allows collaboration among staff, as folders within One Drive can be shared with members of staff. This permits subject departments to set up shared notes folders with all members of the department. This can be added to over the years eventually building up a comprehensive collection of readily accessible notes. This is an invaluable resource to all teachers especially with the introduction of the new Junior Cycle curriculum across a number of subjects. One Drive also provides teachers with the opportunity to share documents and work on them collaboratively. For example, teachers can work together on formulating in-house exams in their own time using a shared working document within One Drive.



One Note is essentially a Digital Binder, created by the class teacher for their

class. It links with Class Notebook, an individual digital binder for the students. Being an avid user of google sites within my classroom in the past, One Note runs on the same idea, while being GDPR compliant. Within English, I have set up a digital class binder for my 5th year higher level English class. This binder contains different sections e.g. paper breakdowns, Hamlet notes, Comparative notes etc. Any notes I upload to the One Note is available



Ballymahon Community College have recently commenced their Office365 pilot programme within the school.



Columba College, Killucan was selected to pilot Microsoft365 in education.

for the students to see on their Class Notebook. Students can submit work through their Class Notebook that only I as a teacher can see. The digital binder also allows teachers to provide various types of notes e.g. PowerPoint, Word, Images, Audio and Video to appeal to all learners within the classroom, while also allowing the teacher to differentiate work for pupils. One Note also allows teachers to receive student feedback, and to self-evaluate the progress of my pupils, whether that be through the assignments that they upload, or through providing the pupils with surveys etc. One Note allows students to become more autonomous in their learning.

SharePoint was an application that I had never used before and it is possibly the most impressive aspect of Microsoft 365, which has the potential to revolutionise how Columba College operates on an administrative level. As a teacher, having your subject folder up to date, having ease of access to SEN documents and knowing your school policies are all an important part of completing your job. SharePoint makes all this extremely accessible. SharePoint is essentially an internal internet for your school.

Within the staff information area of SharePoint, whole school documents and policies are readily available at the click of a button. All SEN documents relevant to staff are together in a folder, allowing ease of access which in turn will inform our practice within our classroom. Within the Subject Department Area of SharePoint, all subject departments have a folder for their subject department plans, schemes of work, assessment tasks etc. This allows for collaboration, and ensuring that the subject department folders are a work in progress among all staff, which can be modified or tweaked at any time throughout the school year and not a physical folder that is opened a few times a

year. The final section of the staff area is the Programmes and Teams section. This section allows for committees, coordinators and teams to work together, plan together and share information together. It is this section that has truly streamlined my administrative duties as a coordinator within Columba College, it has allowed me to work closely with the JCSP Committee, to easily make available to teachers resources and information relevant to the efficient implementation of JCSP across the whole school.

It is early days within the pilot, and I do not claim to know everything there is to know about the programme. As a teacher sometimes when faced with a new challenge we can be overwhelmed by the buzzwords and question how this will benefit me as a professional, both outside and within my classroom and how do I go about the practical implementation of it? Three months in, I am utilising Microsoft 365 more and more each week. It is having a direct influence on my classroom and on the whole school. It ensures we are maximizing our potential as a school and more importantly it is doing so with minimal disruption.



Musical awards at Ardscoil Phádraig

Gaelfhíseán na Bliana

Our Gaeilge and Music departments collaborated recently in entering the Gaelfhíseán na Bliana national video competition as part of Bliain na Gaeilge. Conradh na Gaeilge invited schools



to produce and record a video featuring a song as Gaeilge. Over 300 schools participated in the competition with one winning entry selected in each county. We were delighted to have been chosen as the Longford winner, winning a prize of €1000 for our school. Seán Ó Murchadha visited the school recently to congratulate students and present them with their prize.

Zeminar

Pupil Voice representatives enjoyed a trip to 'Zeminar: A Life-Changing Day for Generation Z' in the RDS recently. They attended workshops,



listened to influential speakers including Pat Divilly and Paul Mannion and took part in fun activities, all geared towards investing in the development and well-being of young people.

Life after the Leaving Cert in Athlone Community College

On Thursday 18th of October Athlone Community College held a careers event - 'Life after the Leaving Cert'. Students had the opportunity to discuss career options with people who work in their areas of interest. Many outstanding companies and organisations gave up their free time in order to inspire the young students. Mr. Ciaran Mullooly, Midlands Correspondent for RTE was the special guest

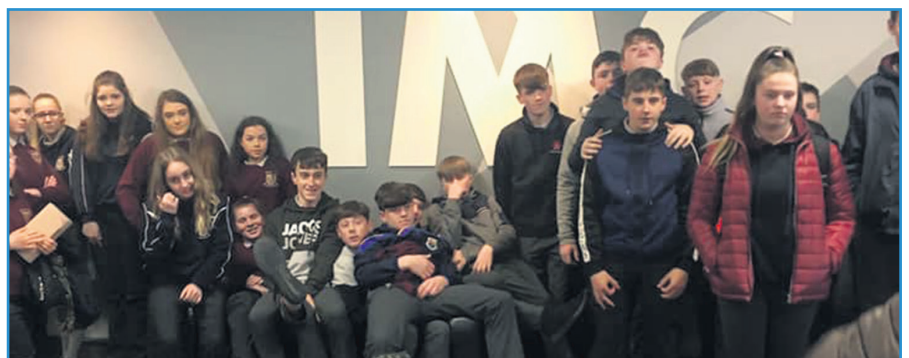
on the day. He addressed the audience, offering solid advice to all on the best way to approach embarking on their career.

Past students, parents, local employers, local organisations and colleges provided students and their parents with valuable insights into their respective offerings. The information received will be of great benefit to both students and parents alike.



Ballymahon study Earth and Space

2nd year students, who are currently studying Earth and Space, commenced Science Week with trip to Athlone cinema to see "First Man", the story of Neill Armstrong and his journey to the moon.



U16 All Ireland Winner

Third year Castlepollard Community College student, Jack Buckley had a busy summer on the pitch and putt courses of Ireland as he went in search of All-Ireland glory. Jack's search came to a happy end recently as he clinched the U16 All-Ireland title in Kilbeggan.



New Autism Unit opened at Columba College

In September 2018 Columba College celebrated the opening of their new education facility to create a more inclusive environment to support the diverse needs of our student population. Tír Na Réaltaí is beautifully designed to welcome all students. The new facility caters for pupils aged from 12 – 18 years and contains a number of features. These include a specially adapted classroom, fully equipped with the latest IT technology and reading square together with a kitchen and a multisensory room. The facility offers fulltime teaching together with SNA support.

Public Speaking Success at Castlepollard Community College

Castlepollard Community College 5th Year students enjoyed a successful night at the recent Mullingar Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition which took place in the Bloomfield House Hotel recently. Megan D'arcy, Kerry Cassidy, Rebecca O'Keeffe and Sian McLaverty addressed a range of issues put forward by the Soroptimist group with great success.

The Soroptimist Competition is one of the most highly regarded Public Speaking Competitions in Ireland and is dedicated to the empowerment of the young female voice in Ireland.

Congratulations to Kerry Cassidy as she was chosen by the Soroptimist judges to represent the Mullingar Branch at the Regional Finals in Athlone on the 19th of January.



Our four competitors pictured with the Soroptimist Organisers and Principal Mary Coyle



Introducing Camogie in Columba College, Killucan



Our new Junior Camogie team enjoying their first blitz in Banagher, Offaly. We would like to wish them all the best going forward.

Students enjoy "La Dolce Vita"

2018 saw 50 students and five teachers from Lanesboro Community College embark on a four-day Continental Tour to Italy, encompassing Venice, Verona and Lake Garda.

First stop was Milan where lunch was enjoyed in this picturesque Roman town dominated by a fantastic medieval castle, followed by a scenic boat trip of Lake Garda. The clear, bottomless water of Lake Garda was jaw dropping as we zoomed by castles, mountains and catamarans on our luxurious speedboats.

Next stop, Verona, the home of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. The highlights included the Roman arena (a Roman Amphitheatre dating back to the year 30 AD) and Juliet's house where we all got a chance to stand on Juliet's balcony and declare our love!

Day Two was Venice, the city of water. As Venice has no roads we had to take a Vaporetto (water taxi) into the city. Some of the famous sights included the Bridge of Sighs, the Doge's Palace, St Mark's Square and St Mark's Basilica (where we saw the tomb of St Mark who wrote the gospels). We were taken through the magnificent Venetian canals by local Gondoliers, allowing us to experience Venice from the water.

On day three we visited Gardaland, one of Europe's



biggest and best theme parks containing six rollercoasters, 32 rides and many shows. That evening we attended a medieval banquet where we feasted on an entire chicken each, using our bare hands and enjoyed a spectacular jousting tournament.

Our final day saw us ascend to a height of 1800 metres in a 360-degree cable car journey to reach the top of Monte Baldo. Here we were struck with fabulous views of the Alps and Lake Garda.

After four educational and fun-filled days all teachers and students returned home to Ireland tired, happy and full of stories and memories.

Comhairle na nÓg Annual Youth Conference

Mullingar Community College, Beauty Therapy students had a great day helping out at the Comhairle na nÓg event in the Bloomfield House Hotel. A massive well done to all the organisers on a superb event.



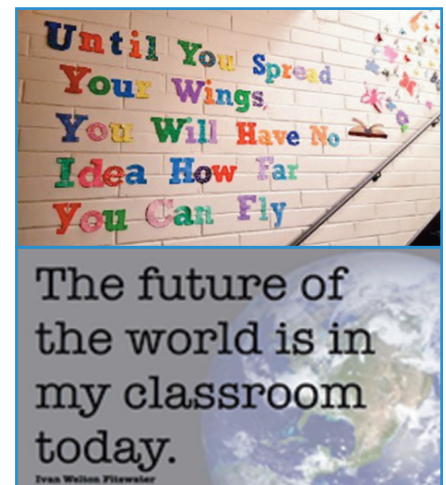
New Developments in St. Anthony's

As usual there have been further developments in St Anthony's since the last article. Over the summer the IT system was completely replaced with the installation of 13 new desktop PCs running Windows 10. The broadband was upgraded to 100MBs and all computers in the school now print from a central copier/printer. All classrooms now have new data projectors which greatly add to teaching and learning. It is a major improvement to the facilities in the school as our existing IT equipment was

starting to creak at the joints!

Recently a new sign, in common with all the other LWETB schools, was erected outside St Anthony's. This will help promote the image of the school in the town, as well as in helping people find us!

Preparations for Christmas are already underway with cakes being baked by the students and orders being taken for the school dinner to be held on the last week of term.



'Learning should take place in a climate founded on the collective well-being of school, community and society'
A Framework for Junior Cycle (DES, 2012)

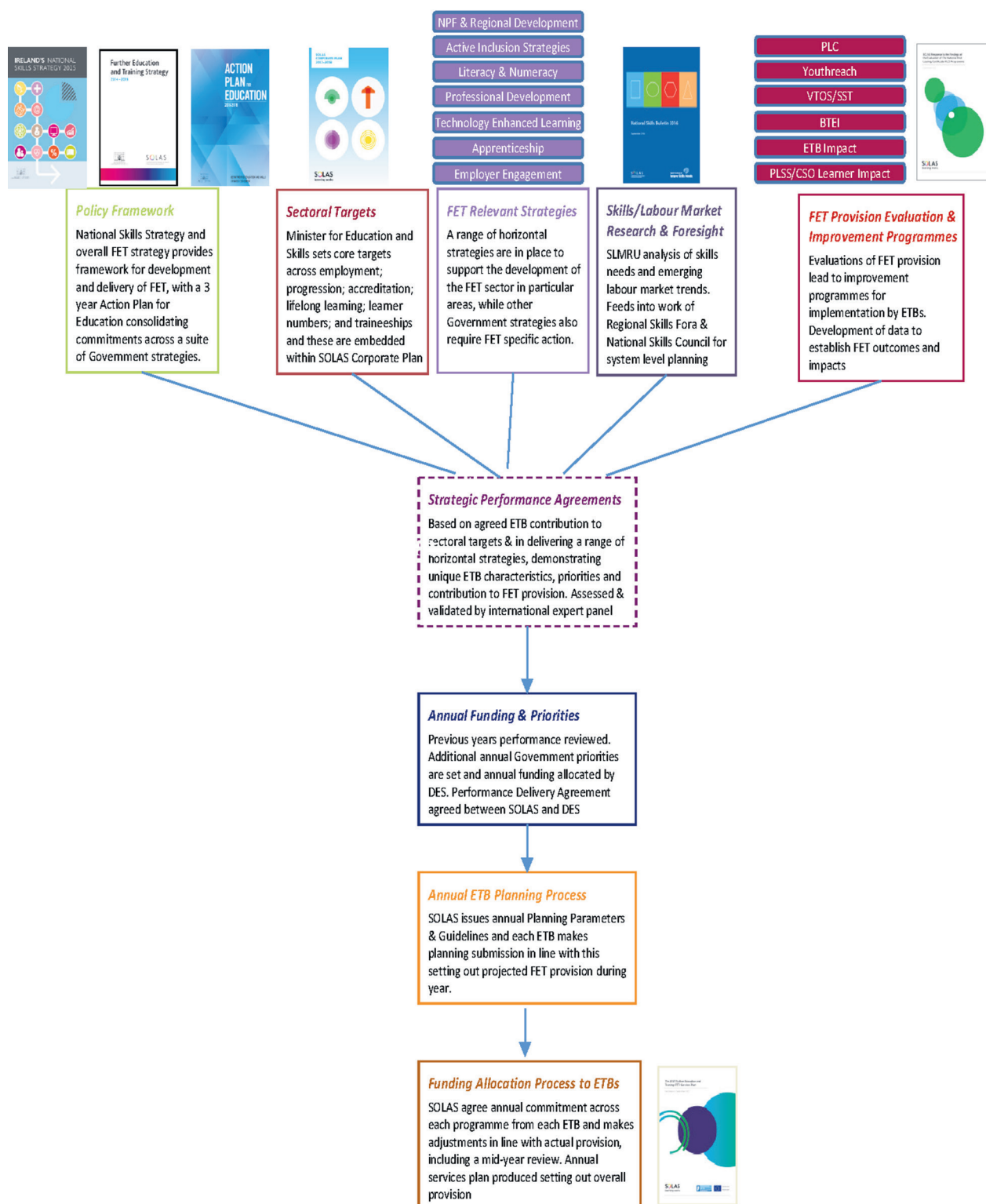


LWETB Shaping the Future of FET with Strategy Performance Agreement

As set out in the SOLAS Corporate Plan 2017 to 2019, national sectoral targets for Further Education and Training (FET) were agreed with the

Department of Education and Skills. Each Education and Training Board (ETB) is requested to propose how it will contribute to the achievement

of these sectoral targets. Strategic Planning relates to the development of a strategic planning performance agreement between SOLAS and LWETB. The process was supported through the provision of a strategic performance agreement template. This is a high level document



which reflects the FET ambitions, strategies and plans of each ETB, and indicates how LWETB will contribute to the achievement of the national FET sectoral goals.

The development of strategic performance agreements between SOLAS and all the ETBs in 2018 marks an important milestone in the development of a strategic, integrated and outcome-focused further education and training system. These agreements linked the unique context and profile of each ETB to a set of strategic priorities and commitments to deliver on both the overall FET strategy 2014-2019 and other FET relevant policies, strategies and initiatives. Our strategic performance agreement sets out plans for LWETB's contribution to six core national FET sector targets, agreed between SOLAS and the Minister for Education and Skills within the SOLAS Corporate Plan, to be delivered over the period 2018-2020.

LWETB was requested to undertake both the three-year strategic planning performance process and detailed 2018 specific planning over the same time period. To date the process has been undertaken and completed. The process involved:

- Preparing a three strategic performance agreement between the LWETB and SOLAS
- Preparing a 2018 plan and funding request for agreement with SOLAS
- Preparing outline plans for 2019 and 2020.

Currently LWETB is working with SOLAS on the publishing of its

Strategic Performance Agreements. This is an opportunity to do a national FET Sector launch which will focus on the key national outcomes as well as being an occasion for LWETB to promote its activities.

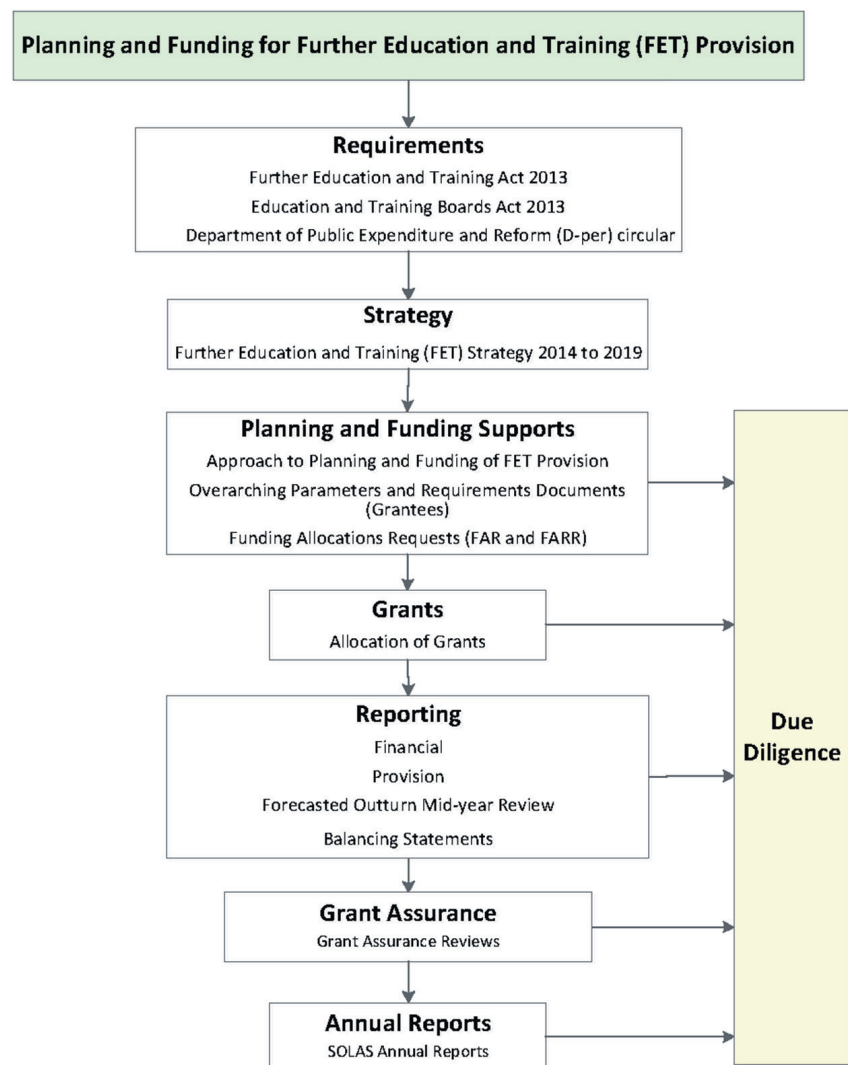
Overview of the Strategic Planning System

The agreements have provided a means to harness policy, strategies, targets, labour market insight and a continuing process of programme evaluation and improvement to set out a clear direction for ETB development from which annual plans can then flow and be

linked to resource allocations.

Next Steps: The 2019 Planning Process

The planning process for next year is now underway with a number of significant January and April 2019 deadlines. To comply with the requirements of our strategic performance agreements LWETB must follow the Planning and Funding Process. The diagrammatic representation has been provided here provides an overview of the annual process which LWETB is now engaged.



Tourism in Longford

With many students and parents still fretting over course and career choices, it is well worth pointing them towards the Tourism with Business Level 5 course at Longford College of Further Education.

With Center Parcs Longford Forest due to open next summer, this is an excellent course option for anybody keen to work in the hospitality area.



This course awards 390 CAO points and is eligible for the SUSI grant.

On the back of Center Parcs and Fáilte Ireland's Hidden Heartlands campaign, tourism is set to be one of the main employers in the region.

Students who complete level 5 can seek employment or use the 390 CAO points for further college entry.

Alternatively, they can progress to the level 6 course and gain direct entry into year 2 of the Hospitality degree or the Business degree in Athlone Institute of



Technology. With the rising cost of student accommodation, it certainly makes sense to start a degree locally in Longford College of Further Education. They are still accepting places for a number of courses and other options include Business Levels 5 & 6 / Payroll & Clerical Level 5.

To enrol or for more detail go to www.longfordcfe.com

Longfordcfe welcome Mr Jim Bird, School of Health Sciences, University of Southampton

On Monday 19th November 2018 the Department of Nursing and Healthcare in Longford College of Further Education was absolutely delighted to welcome Mr Jim Bird (Lecturer, Senior Admissions Tutor, Practice Visitor and Deputy Programme Lead) from the School of Health Sciences, University of Southampton. Mr Bird spent 2 hours with our students discussing the process of applying to study Nursing at the University of Southampton. He was very engaging as he didn't just talk about the applications and admissions process, he also spoke about his experiences of Nursing and some of the Students who are already studying at Southampton who are very inspirational. Mr Bird showed us a power point

presentation, a short film about Southampton University and then had a question and answer session. The students who attended the talk found it to be extremely helpful and a worthwhile visit. They gained a valuable insight into the life of a student nurse in Southampton University and we would like to thank Mr Bird for his visit.



Nessa Griffin, nursing coordinator LCFE, Mr Jim Bird, Lecturer University of Southampton, Maura Casey PLC Co-ordinator LCFE.

New Career Opportunities

Home Instead manager, Mary Costello, held an information session in the FEC, Clonown Road, Athlone. Attendees heard about employment opportunities within the company. There was great interest in the session and a training course will be happening in January for people who wish to pursue a career in this field. LWETB will work in collaboration with Home Instead to run this training.



Longford Courses for the Future

Adult Learning Longford had a busy autumn with students returning for courses and new students signing up for courses in basic education. There are general courses in Communications, Childcare, Computer Skills, Basic Reading, Writing, Spelling and Maths. There has been such a demand for a new course in Health & Safety Awareness in Granard that two courses have commenced.

A group of students from Longford attended the Aontas Further Education Learners Forum in Athlone on 18 October and had a very enjoyable day there.

Almost 400 students achieved QQI certification in October and their hard work and achievements will be celebrated at our annual Presentation of QQI certificates in Longford

Rugby Club on 12 December.

Skills for Work courses are aimed at adults who are employed, either as employees or self-employed. These are short courses, usually 28 or 35 hours and can be uncertified or lead to QQI certification at levels 2 or 3. Presently, seven courses are taking place under the Skills for Work Programme. These courses include farmers, employees of a nursing home, transport company and self-employed. These courses are tailored to the needs of the workplace so subjects covered range from basic IT communications for farmers, the writing of an incident and other work reports and spreadsheets for work accounts.

There is a continued high demand for English language courses and there are almost 250 students

attending classes in Longford, Lanesboro, Ballymahon, Granard and Edgeworthstown. Courses are generally for four to six hours per week and can start at different times subject to demand.

Family Learning also offers English classes for parents are who have children attending DEIS designated schools. The focus is on parents supporting their children at school, engaging with the school and education and promoting a positive experience of the education system as well as learning English language. Other recent courses for parents in the schools include Mindfulness, Family budgeting, Crafts and Helping your children with Maths homework.

For further information on part-time courses in Basic Education in Longford Contact Frances Stephenson at 043 3345609.

Student Forum

On the 18th of October last the Shamrock Lodge, Athlone was host to The AONTAS Learner Forum Regional Meeting. 74 adult learners attended the event - six students from the Mullingar VTOS programme. All students involved were delighted to be given the opportunity to



share their experiences of adult learning and voice their opinions in relation to current FET provision from a learner perspective.

There was very positive feedback received from students attending

FET courses in LWETB. Some of these comments included:

- "Good to hear other people's experiences and ideas"
- "I enjoyed the chance to voice my opinion and views"
- "I liked being able to communicate with different people"

Team Building at Boda Borg

While the work load continues Longford VTOS still had time for staff and learners to enjoy a trip to Boda Borg at Lough

Key recently. It was a very interesting experience to say the least!!! A great team building exercise for all.



The students visited Collins Barracks to view the Celtic art at the National Design centre as well as looking at the role of women artists pre 1916.



Guest Speakers visit Mullingar VTOS

Emer Sheerin, Maynooth

Liz Glennon, LWETB FET
Guidance Service – CAO
Workshop for Adult Learners
returning to College.

Theresa Ryan, Access Officer, AIT Athlone gave a presentation to learners wishing to access third level courses in AIT Athlone.



New approaches in VTOS Longford

The first month for year two was dedicated to sampling modules and they have now selected which award they wish to go forward for. They are currently on work placement every Friday which will give them invaluable experience in the workplace and add to their skills set.

In the first week of September we welcomed our new intake of first years who are just beginning on a new and exciting journey in their lives. They have established themselves as a cohesive group working well together and enjoying the benefits of adult education.

Happy Retirement

Longford VTOS would like to acknowledge Audrey Callinan who retired this year after many years of dedicated service to Longford VTOS and wish her all the best.

Recruitment Information Day

BTEI Longford Tourism students, from our Granard and Ballymahon centres, received a warm welcome at the Center Parcs Recruitment Information Day, held in Longford Rugby Club, on Friday 12th October.

Significant links had been forged with General Manager Darragh Feighery, who kindly met with our students and prospective employees, earlier in the year. As a result, we were in opportunistic mode at the information day.

Center Parcs staff were on hand to detail potential employment opportunities and students were

both impressed and encouraged by the level of information and range of jobs offered.

This opportunity, certainly gave an impetus to the learners' determination to complete the QQI level 4 Tourism programme and to progress to the QQI level 5 in Tourism and Business. After that, Center Parcs!

In addition, we were recorded for a vox-pop with Newstalk's Henry McKean which aired that evening and our picture featured in the Irish Independent and the Longford Leader newspapers.

Before year end, the Tourism students will visit The Vaults Live, Dublin's newest visitor attraction,

where immersive theatre meets history. Teelings Whiskey Distillery is also on the itinerary. Locally we plan to visit Knights & Conquests in Granard, Co. Longford, recently opened as a new visitor attraction. Some students hope to gain placement here for Work Practice. Future tour guides in the making!



Pictured are some of our students, from Left to Right: Eileen Donnelly BTEI Co-ordinator; Minister Heather Humphries; Minister Kevin (Boxer) Moran; Gladys Dunne; Desislava Andreeva and Karolina Novak.

Guidance Pilot Project

The service has had a busy few months continuing to provide a quality, professional and informed guidance counselling and information service. John the Guidance Information Officer has started sending a "FYI email" to all co-ordinators across the ETB highlighting upcoming events, national and local initiatives and LWETB occasions which are of interest and worth noting for our programmes. If



Our Guidance Team L-R: Liz Glennon, Fiona Murphy, John Doherty, Caroline Cornally, Patricia Reilly.

you have anything you would like included in the FYI email alert please email John at jdoherty@lwetb.ie.

The service is currently leading a pilot project in conjunction with the National Adult Literacy Association (NALA) whereby guidance and counselling is offered to participants on their distance learning programme. This is the first time such a service has been offered to their students and the feedback going forward has been extremely positive.

One of our clients and current BTEI student, Emanuel Konimyan, was featured in the RTE production "This Crowded House" which was aired on Wednesday 31st of October 2018. The episode is on the RTE player and showcases the value in further education. It is great to see the positivity portrayed by the presenter Brendan Courtney in returning to education as an adult.

Staff Autism Awareness Training Day

Autism awareness training for staff took place in November which was very well attended from across the ETB. It is recommended that such training be extended to tutors and instructors. Following from this we are hoping to arrange further training events for staff.

Staff from the service attended a number of events, Longford Business Expo, Centre Parcs recruitment and information day, the Next Step event in Longford and the RAPID inter-agency information events in Mullingar and Athlone.



Celebrating 30 years of Youthreach

2018 / 2019 is a very exciting year for Youthreach as the programme is 30 years old! In celebration of our 30 Year Anniversary, the NAYC hosted a One-Of-A-Kind national Youthreach event in the National Sports Campus (NSC) in Blanchardstown. This event brought together learners and staff and invited guests from all over the country.

The Sports Arena was filled with sporting events - a combination of lots of different activities designed to give a taster to all learners. These included everything from Rugby, Volleyball, hockey and gymnastics to dodgeball and tug of war! There was a 360-degree stage in the middle of the arena which was used for special guest presentations as well as the fantastic Rory's Stories, Zumba and other entertainers to create a great atmosphere.

The Large Hall next door provided a "creative" space. The area was split in two - one half of the room was a performance area with a stage and bleachers and seating for 580. This stage had a schedule of events to include music performances from learners from a number of centres, some invited performers as well as some key-note speakers and an amazing play. The other half of the hall was an exhibition space of stakeholders relevant to our young people. This area was divided into three zones to include: Progression, Health & Well-being and Centre Showcases.

Upstairs included a number of rooms which played host to workshops for our learners. Exhibitors and workshops included partners and stakeholders such as ESF, GAISCE, SpunOut, NYCI, YSI, SOLAS Apprenticeships, AONTAS, Léargas,



PLC Colleges, BIMM, Irish Cancer Society, RSA, National Dairy Council, safefood, and Microsoft. There were two MCs, Evanne Ní Chuilinn and 2FM's Emma Power which really brought the whole event together and kept everyone engaged.

It was a fantastic day of celebration for our young people rooted in sport, activity, fun and a real focus on health and wellbeing!

A banner celebrating Youthreach's 30th anniversary. It features a large cluster of colorful balloons (red, yellow, green, blue, purple, orange) at the top. Below the balloons, the text '#WeAreYouthreach' and '#30YearsOld' is displayed. The Youthreach logo is prominently featured in the center, with the hashtag '#YRFEST' to its right. The NAYC logo (National Association of Youthreach Co-ordinators) is to the right of the Youthreach logo. At the bottom, there are logos for the Irish Government, the European Union, etbi, SOLAS, and the Department of Education and Skills. Below these logos, a line of text states: 'Youthreach is co-funded by the Irish Government, the European Social Fund and the Youth Employment Initiative as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020.'

Contemporary Issues in Ballymahon Youthreach

Ballymahon Youthreach introduced Contemporary Issues into its timetable this autumn. These classes have been based on "theme weeks" which are based on national/international events and/or student suggestions. The first week was based on *Animal Rights*. The students researched animal cruelty, endangered animals and the effects of human activity on our wildlife. To follow on the awareness campaign, students made a trip to the zoo where they further explored animals they had researched.



Mental Health Week

At Ballymahon Youthreach Caroline organized our Mental Health Week where students were encouraged to explore ways to reduce their stress levels and build up their resilience. A 5k walk of both students and staff formed a central part of the week. She held physical exercise competitions including skipathon, isometric squat and the plank. We held a digital detox day where students and staff avoided using phones and computers for the day. A guest speaker came in to talk to the students about their mental health. Group discussions, art projects, posters, pyjama day and board games formed part of the week as well.



YRFest and Delvin Youthreach

Delvin Youthreach were delighted to be part of the YRFest celebrations which was organised by NAYC celebrating the 30th anniversary of the start of the Youthreach Programme in 1998. Delvin Youthreach was the first Youthreach centre in Westmeath. We opened our doors officially as Youthreach in 1991 having been a Fás programme since 1989.

We joined over 1,500 other young

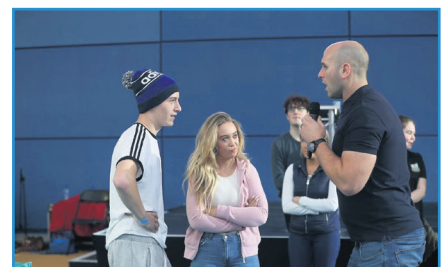
people and 600 adults in the Sport Ireland National Sports Campus in Blanchardstown. The Minister for Education and Skills, Minister Joe McHugh spoke about seeing the importance of young learners for the future economy.

We really took in everything the event had to offer. We even managed to get three students up on stage with Rory stories (much to everyone's delight)

YOUTHREACH

We did the long jump and hang tough challenge. The atmosphere and student engagement was amazing. We were delighted to be in attendance.

A great day all around and a nice chance to catch up with our colleagues from around the country. Let the pictures tell their own stories. #WeAreYouthreach



Mini Competition in Kilbeggan Youthreach

This year our Level 5 students opened their mini company and have been at work in Santa's workshop. They are in the process of producing 25 Christmas Eve boxes to create some magical memories for children. The boxes are handmade and include Reindeer Food, Hot Chocolate, a blackboard so children can leave a message for Santa and of course Santa can reply, colouring pages, crayons and a Christmas Eve Checklist. Parents can add to the box with pyjamas, DVDs etc, they can be personalised also. The box can be used every

Christmas eve for children thereafter. They are being sold for €29.99 and below is a sneak peek of what is to come. Anyone wishes to order a box please message our page. Thank You.



Defibrillator funding

Summer 2017 the students of Kilbeggan Youthreach raised €1200 for a defibrillator for the Midland Gateway Industrial Estate by organising a concert, BBQ event within the centre. From the 26th November ALL students are going to be trained and certified in CPR and defib lifesaving skills. We are currently in the process of purchasing the defib and are working with the local community in order to ensure that the defib is placed in the appropriate location within the industrial estate



Soccer Success

At This year's YRFest Longford Youthreach were given special recognition by FAI CE Mr. John Delaney for the emphasis placed on football as an integral part of our curriculum, our football matches played abroad and our success in various tournaments throughout our time in Longford town.



All Ireland Champions

Longford Youthreach are also the All-Ireland Youthreach Gaelic Football Champions of the inaugural tournament held in the Mayo GAA Centre of Excellence in June.



We refurbished our I.T. Room during the midterm break and we are really pleased with the way it has been reconfigured



European Union
Investing in your future
European Social Fund



Youthreach is part supported by the Irish government and the European Social Fund as part of the ESF Programme for Employability, Inclusion and Learning 2014-2020

Youth Work in LWETB – Leading, Advancing and Expanding

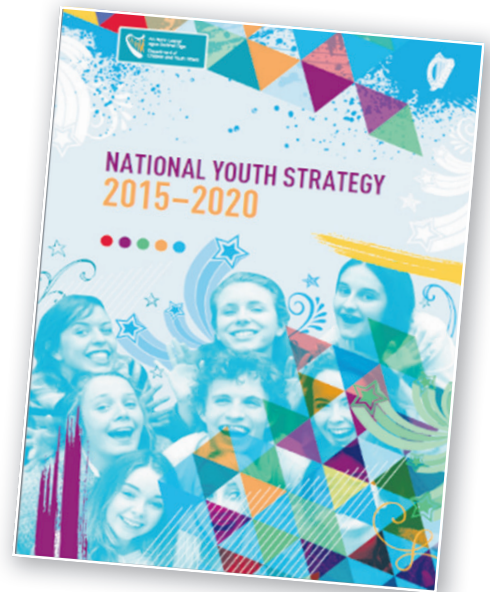
As the only body with a statutory responsibility to support Youth Work in Ireland, LWETB is driving the development of new and increased services for young people across Longford and Westmeath. We welcome this responsibility and have a dedicated unit assigned with carrying out this important duty. The Youth Services Unit is led by our Youth Officer, Maria Fox, who has been with LWETB since 2007 (originally with Co Westmeath VEC). Maria manages and co-ordinates the Unit and is supported by Martine Lynch, our Youth Support Officer.

In response to needs identified by the Youth Officer and in collaboration with external stakeholders, additional funding is constantly being secured by LWETB for expanded youth services to meet the needs of young people in both Longford and Westmeath. This follows the successful reconfiguration of the Department of Health (DoH) funded services in 2017 culminating with the establishment, in conjunction with the Midland

Regional Drug and Alcohol Taskforce (MRDATF) and the HSE, of the community-based under-18 drug and alcohol prevention and treatment support service in the region. This success is the result of our ever increasing engagement with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) and the DoH (through the MRDATF). These close working relationships are grounded in the principles of co-design, collaboration, needs/evidence based and innovative approaches to youth work. In 2018 we will administer €500,000 in funding (an increase of approximately 5%), serving over 3,500 young people in 6 professional (staff led) projects. We also provide grants to support the work of 35 voluntary youth clubs like Foróige and the Scouts across the two counties where 360 committed adult leaders provide weekly youth work activities to 1,400 young people.

As an educational methodology and approach the work of the Unit is fully integrated in the ETB structure, under the Schools Directorate while also working collaboratively across both the Further Education and Training (FET) and Organisation Support and Development (OSD) Units. We ensure that youth work services are provided in a planned and considered manner, and recognising the needs of the communities and the young people they serve. We also make sure that the necessary standards of accountability, good youth work practice and governance are in place in these groups and organisations.

The LWETB Youth Services Unit



is committed to meeting our responsibilities in addressing and contributing to a better lived experience for all our young people. The Unit will continue to lead in the design and delivery of services by highlighting needs and gaps where they exist, making applications and overseeing implementation. We will work in partnership and collaboration with government departments, our LWETB partners and beyond to address current and future youth service needs and welcome new ideas and innovations that will support our services to young people.

If you would like to hear more about the work of the Unit or make suggestions regarding our 5-year Youth Work Plan which is currently being developed, we would love to hear from you.

Maria Fox can be contacted at mfox@lwetb.ie and directly on 086 3839451

Martine Lynch is at mlynch@lwetb.ie 044 9348389



An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Oige
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs



Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery

A health-led response to drug
and alcohol use in Ireland 2017-2025



Longford Autism Foróige Club

Longford Autism Foróige Club is now in its second year. The group meet every Saturday in the Attic House and was established to meet the needs of young people with Autism, to give them a place to meet, to be comfortable, and enjoy a youth club setting whilst getting the opportunity to mix with other groups.

Our group has grown from strength to strength in the last two years, from just six members at the start to 15 members today supported by a few volunteers and their parents.

In the last year the club entered the Aldi Foróige Citizenship awards, where our project "to help Bethany House and the Homeless" was recognised at the national event as "One to watch" into the future which was a major accomplishment for our enthusiastic members. We raised much needed funds for the charities through baking and selling cakes/breads at the Flancare car boot sale.

Longford Autism Foróige Club is now looking forward to planning our Xmas outings we will be heading, Funtasia Water Park and lots of cinema and bowling trips. We are also continuing with our Keep Fit programme with Longford Fitness.

So on behalf of all at Longford Autism Foróige Club
Thank You for all your support over the last two years.



Beetroot at Backstage Youth Theatre

"Backstage Youth Theatre (BYT) in association with Backstage Theatre Canal Studio productions performed a new play Beetroot in late September 2018. The play was devised with members of BYT and written by Lucy Montague Moffat with the help of LWETB funding. The production involved 24 members of the group both on and off stage. The play was directed by Helene Montague and choreographed by Anica Louw of Shawbrook Dance. This was the fourth production we have done in association with Backstage Theatre."



Youth Exchange

A group of young girls from Athlone Youth and Community Project are currently taking part in a Youth Exchange Programme. The nine girls aged 16-20 years are from Battery Heights, Woodlands Grove and Willow Park in Athlone. For eight of these young people this is their first exchange and a completely new and very exciting experience. This trilateral exchange entitled WE Media is made up of young people from Ireland, Italy and the UK.

The first leg of the Exchange took place from 11th to the 18th of August 2018. The group travelled to Sermugnano, Italy to take part in a week long programme of activities, trips and workshops focusing on the theme "Women in the Media". Over the course of the week the girls took part in many workshops using a range of creative methodologies to explore a range of related topics such as the treatment of



women in different countries and cultures, gender imbalance, expectations of women in the home and in society, the changing role of women and the portrayal of women in the media.

Through group work, games, activities and social events the girls really got to know each other, learned about the different cultures of each country and built friendships with each other over the course of the week. They travelled to the beautiful ancient city of Viterbo where they explored the historic sites, had a beautiful

Italian lunch and did some shopping. It was a fantastic week that the group will never forget.

The second part of this project takes place from the 2nd to the 8th of January 2019. This time the Irish group will host the Italian and UK groups in Esker Youth Village in Athenry. Here we will reconnect with each other, explore the impact and changes that part one has brought about, introduce our visitors to the Irish culture and visit our local town of Athlone as well as the cultural city of Galway. We look forward to further exploration of the theme, more interesting and sometimes challenging discussion and lots and lots of fun



**An Roinn Leanaí
agus Gnóthaí Oige**
Department of Children
and Youth Affairs



**National
Lottery**



**An Roinn Oideachais
agus Scileanna**
Department of
Education and Skills

SOLAS

An tSeirbhís Oideachais Leanúnaigh agus Scileanna
Further Education and Training Authority



QQI AWARD