

MIC PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL AND CHILD PSYCHOLOGY NEWSLETTER



You are very welcome to this, the third edition of the MIC Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Newsletter. Thanks to all our trainees, graduates, colleagues and friends for their contributions to this issue. Once again, we have a fantastic mix of items; from engagements, weddings and baby news to graduation, research activity and awards.

We have settled into a blended mode of programme delivery post-Covid, and continue to do our best to balance the benefits of remote learning for our busy trainees with the much-needed peer support and connection derived from on-campus sessions together.

The DECPsy team and trainees work in partnership to achieve high standards across the taught, placement and research strands of the programme and we are very grateful to all involved for the positive way in which everyone approaches their workload to make this programme operate effectively.

Following a site visit to MIC by a panel from the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) in May 2022, the programme was re-accredited until AY 2025/26. The panel visit afforded us the opportunity to engage in a validating peer review process with a panel of experienced and learned practitioners and academics. As always, the broad DECPsy network of stakeholders showed up for us, from placement supervisors, trainees, graduates, guest lecturers and senior management to ICT, departmental and administrative colleagues.

The application process for a new intake in September 2023 has begun and we look forward to meeting the next generation of Educational and Child Psychologists in the new year. As our DECPsy community grows, we are continually appreciative of the lasting links forged with our graduates. We look forward to hearing your updates when the 'call' for contributions to the newsletter goes out. We are also grateful for your contributions to taught components and value immensely the growing number of graduates who are providing professional supervision to our trainees.

Finally, we want to take this opportunity to thank the trainees, graduates, the DECPsy team and our colleagues at MIC and in the broader profession for their support in our ongoing efforts to secure equitable funding for trainees. We were delighted to receive the news this semester of the NEPS and CDNT bursary schemes for DECPsy Year 3s, and are hopeful that this is a step towards equitable funding for EPs in line with other professional psychology training programmes.

Exciting times indeed!

Dr Therese Brophy

Dr Siobhán O'Sullivan

Joint DECPsy Programme Leaders



DECPSy 2022: Viva Voce Success

Eleven students undertaking the Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology successfully defended their theses at viva voce exams this year. Heartfelt congratulations to :

Dr Sarah O'Shea and supervisor, Dr Laura Ambrose.

'The effectiveness of an online dialogic reading intervention on the oral language skills of students attending DEIS schools in Ireland'.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Mia Treacy (Internal), Dr Sarah Hatfield (External: University of East Anglia) and Dr Julianne Stack (Chair).

Dr Caoimhe McCarthy and supervisors, Dr Margaret Egan and Dr Keeley White.

'All singing off the same hymn sheet?': An Exploration of the Lived Experiences of Joint Work between Irish Primary School Staff and School Psychologists to Facilitate Inclusion between 2015-2020'.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Johanna Fitzgerald (Internal), Dr Penny Fogg (External: University of Sheffield) and Dr Maria Varvarigou (Chair).



Pictured left:

Caoimhe and Sarah on Graduation Day 2022

Dr Sophie Gallagher and supervisors, Dr Trevor O'Brien and Dr Marc Scully

'Refugee and asylum-seeker youths' experiences of education in Ireland: An interpretative phenomenological analysis'.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Margaret Farrelly (Internal), Dr Tony Williams (External: University of Sheffield) and Dr Sabine Egger (Chair).

Dr Alison McFadden and supervisors, Dr Fionnuala Tynan and Dr John Perry

'Test Anxiety and the Effectiveness of a School-Based Intervention at Primary Level'.

Alison's viva voce examination panel: Dr Paul Mulcahy (Internal), Dr Nikki Collingwood (External: University of East Anglia) and Dr Niamh Higgins (Chair).



Sophie, Alison and Caoimhe enjoying Graduation Day!

DECPsy 2022: Viva Voce Success

Dr Ronan Cunningham and supervisor, Dr Margaret Farrelly:

'Father engagement with disability services: the perceptions and experiences of fathers and psychologists'

Ronan's viva voce examination panel: Dr Keeley White (Internal), Dr Andrew Richards (External: University of Exeter) and Dr Maria Varvarigou (Chair).

Dr Kate O'Brien & supervisors, Dr Orla Slattery, Dr Richard Bowles, Dr Niamh Kitching.

'An Appreciative Inquiry into Coaches' Perspectives on the Inclusion of Young People with Autism in Sport Clubs in Ireland'

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Michele Dunleavy (Internal), Dr Ryan Cullen (External: University of East Anglia) and Dr Mia Treacy (Chair).

Dr Lydia Mannion and supervisors, Dr Maurice Harmon and Dr Trevor O'Brien.

'Exploring the relationships between psychological wellbeing, religiosity and religious coping amongst adolescents at Senior Cycle level in Irish post-primary schools: An empirical enquiry'.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Patricia Kieran (Internal) and Prof Tom Billington (External: University of Sheffield), Dr Therese Brophy (Chair).

Dr Maria Holland and supervisor, Dr Johanna Fitzgerald

'Getting into the nucleus of the school': Experiences of collaboration between Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators, Senior Leadership Teams and Educational Psychologists in Irish post-primary schools.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Emmanuel O'Grady (Internal), Dr Seaneen Sloan (External: UCD) and Dr Trevor O'Brien (Chair).



Dr Maria Holland, pictured with her proud brother Seán, post-graduation. Maria let us know that she is working with a lovely team in CDNT 9, covering North Cork City and Blarney. She is using her newly-found free time for catching up with friends, walking, and expanding her houseplant collection!

Dr Liz Lane, supervisor, Dr Michele Dunleavy and field advisor, Dr Sarah O’Doherty from the National Rehabilitation Hospital.

‘School life following acquired brain injury: an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the experiences of adolescents, their parents and teachers in the Irish context’.

Viva voce examination panel: Dr Marc Scully (Internal), Dr Nikki Collingwood (External: University of East Anglia) and Dr Basil Vassilicos (Chair) for their expert navigation of the online viva process.



Dr Liz Lane, pictured at the PSI conference Poster Wall beside her poster on the subject of autistic adolescent females and experiences of friendship.

Liz led this piece of research with the support of Fiona-Du-boucher Ryan (NEPS) and Dr Siobhan O’Sullivan, MIC.

Dr Rachael Browne and supervisors, Dr Siobhan O’Sullivan as & Dr Therese Brophy

The perceptions of Irish school personnel of the critical incident training and critical incident response from school psychological services and other agencies: an appreciative inquiry.

Viva Voce Panel: Dr Will Shield, School of Education, Exeter University, Dr Margaret Farrelly, EPISE Department, Internal Examiner & Dr Johanna Fitzgerald (Chair).

Dr Eoin Hassett and supervisors, Dr Therese Brophy & Dr Aoife McLoughlin

‘Examining Educational Psychologists’ perspectives of their role in the Republic of Ireland: An exploratory study using Activity Theory’

Viva voce Panel: Associate Professor William Kinsella, Head of School of Education, University College Dublin (External Examiner), Dr Siobhan O’Sullivan, EPISE Department, Internal Examiner and Dr Maurice Harmon (Chair), Head of Department of Learning, Society and Religious Education.

As always, a huge thank you to the **DECPSy team**; and the **EPISE department led by Dr Fitzgerald**, who ensure that a level 10 standard is maintained across the placement and taught strands of the programme. We are also very grateful to **Caroline Coyne, Dr Julianne Stack, Dr Amy Healy, Dr Rebecca Breen** and all at the **Research and Graduate School** for their support with the viva process for all of the DECPSy students. To **Michelle Glasheen** for psychometric support and **Mary Collins and the MIREC committee** who support the ethical approval process.

Graduation Celebrations 2022, Friday 28th October

Graduand selfie pre-conferring ceremony: Hats on!



Welcome to the Academy: Hats in the Air!



Hats in the air post-graduation!

From left: Dr Sophie Gallagher, Dr Kate O'Brien, Dr Ronan Cunningham, Dr Caoimhe McCarthy, Dr Liz Lane, Dr Alison McFadden, Dr Maria Holland, Dr Sarah O'Shea, Dr Lydia Mannion

DECPsy Personal News



Congratulations to our colleague Dr **Keeley White** who married Bryan on Valentine's day 2022! The ceremony was attended by friends and family from near and far with some of Keeley's friends and family travelling from Canada.

Congratulations to **Olly O'Driscoll** in Year 2 who got engaged to his fiancée Hazel in August. Olly told us : 'We're looking forward to getting married in 2024. Hazel and I met in Mary Immaculate College almost a decade ago so it has been a very happy place for both of us!'



Congratulations to DECPsy Research Coordinator, **Dr Aoife McLoughlin** on the birth of baby Aoibh back in July. Aoibh picked her own outfit for this photo op!

Where are they now??

We caught up with a number of our graduates, who shared some updates from life post-DECPsy!



2020 Graduate, **Dr Aoife Lalor**, working in a CDNT in Kerry, shared some exciting news: ‘I got engaged in London in February and getting married next November so the countdown is on!’ Aoife is pictured here with her fiancé, PJ, also a MIC graduate!

Dr Deirdre Egan, 2020 graduate, dropped us a line to say that she got engaged to Mark in October last 2021 and is wedding planning for May 2023.

Deirdre is working on a CDNT in Tallaght.



Dr Brendan Delaney, class of 2020 got engaged to Clodagh back in February and has just been offered a senior post in Limerick. Congratulations on both counts Brendan!

More Good News from our Graduates!

Also from the Class of 2020, **Dr Eoin Harte** got in touch with an update and good wishes to all the current trainees and lecturers:

I have been working as a Senior Psychologist at St. Gabriel's Foundation in Limerick City since November 2022 having previously worked there as a Staff Grade Psychologist since qualifying in 2020. I am enjoying the new challenges and opportunities provided by this role on a busy CDNT. It was brilliant to see such great photos from this year's DECPsy graduation! Best wishes to the current groups of students across each of the years and the team of lecturers for semester 2 of this academic year and beyond!!



Congratulations to DECPsy 2019 Graduate, **Dr Kayleigh Sheerin**. Kayleigh shared this lovely photo from Venice in the gondola where David proposed.

Kayleigh sends her greetings to the trainees and the team!

Dr Kate O'Brien, class of 2022 was in touch to say that she is working in North Tipperary Children Services and also recently got engaged. Congratulations on both career and personal news Kate!

Dr Saoirse MacCarthaigh from the DECPsy class of 2021 sends best wishes to everyone on the programme. Saoirse is working half time in his private practice and also with a multidisciplinary team in Dublin. Saoirse also recently published a paper from his thesis as follows:

Mac Cárthaigh, S., Perry, J., & Griffin, C. (2022). Do objective data support the claim that problematic smartphone use has a clinically meaningful impact upon adolescent sleep duration?. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-13.

Thanks for the update Saoirse and well done to you, Claire and John on the publication.

All-Star Award for Ciara!

Congratulations to DECPsy Year 1 and Galway camogie star, **Ciara Donohue** on her recent PWC Soaring Star Award. We are very proud to have an All-Star on the DECPsy!



Ciara is pictured above with Camogie Association President,, Hilda Breslin and David McGee, PWC

Dr Hollie Hayes, *Class of 2021* was in touch to say

'I moved back to Cork once everything with the DECPsy was wrapped up and haven't looked back since. I took a breather for a small while and then started work with one of the NEPS teams in Cork over a year ago. I can genuinely say I love it! Every day is so different and you get to use psychology in such diverse ways,All in all, life post-DECPsy is pretty great.

Dr Aoife Cassidy, Dr Claire Donnelly and Dr Hannah Browne, now working with NEPS also checked in.

'We are keeping well and are enjoying our time working in NEPS since graduating last year. Four of us joined NEPS after graduating, and it is great to work alongside friends we made on the DECPsy course.

Well done also to **Ciara Raleigh and James Groarke** who presented their research at the NEPS Business Day on the 5th December.

Doctoral Studentship Award for Madeleine

Congratulations to DECPsy Year 1, **Madeleine Dolan** recipient of the MIC Doctoral Studentship Award, a postgraduate research merit award offered by open competition to eligible applicants. This prestigious award is presented to candidates based on their academic record, research record and research proposal for their doctoral thesis.



Pictured above with Professor Michael Healy, Vice President of Research, Madeleine receives her award.

Graduate Diploma in Autism Studies

Madeleine, and fellow Year 1s **Elle Drohan** and **Emma Teahan** also graduated from the Graduate Diploma in Autism Studies from MIC in October 2022. Well done to all.

DECPsy Involvement at PSI Conference

Well done and thank you to all who presented at the Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI) conference in November. There were so many contributions from the DECPsy and we are very proud of all of your work and the growing research rich culture within the programme. Thanks also to the **Research and Graduate School** for their funding support and to **Lisa Stafford and all at the PSI** for their consideration of the circumstances of our trainees during registration.

The contributions were as follows:

Year 1 Hilary Dolan

Investigating the impact of the birth of the first child on Women's General Self-efficacy according to their romantic attachment style

Year 2 Aoife Mulrooney

The Platform of Choice: Responding to the Post-pandemic needs of students with Mental Health conditions by rolling out an Online Platform of Psychology Supports in Higher Education

Year 3

A Symposium on *Eliciting the Perspectives of Stakeholders*, chaired by Dr **Margaret Farrelly**, pictured below. With **Catriona Kennedy, Ciara Raleigh, Emma Bohan and Kate O' Neill** presenting their doctoral research. Thanks to DECPsy supervisors Drs Fionnuala Tynan, Therese Brophy, Paul Mulcahy, Siobhan O'Sullivan, Suzanne Parkinson, John Perry and Keeley White.



A Symposium on *Wellbeing and Inclusion in the school context* chaired by Dr **Therese Brophy** with **Elaine O'Keeffe, Orla O'Callaghan and Kate Mulcahy** presenting their doctoral research. Thanks to DECPsy supervisors Drs Laura Ambrose, Keeley White, Fionnuala Tynan, Trevor O'Brien and Niamh Higgins.

James Groarke pictured below at PSI, presented his doctoral research on *Knowledge, Attitudinal and Behavioural Effects of a Climate Change Education Intervention on PP Students in Ireland* at a Climate Change Symposium (Supervisors Drs Therese Brophy and John Perry).



PSI Conference

Graduates

A Symposium on *An Interpretive Phenomenological Approach to Educational Psychology Research: Exploring Experiences in Irish PP schools* chaired by **Dr Johanna Fitzgerald** at which 2022 graduates **Dr Maria Holland, Dr Sophie Gallagher and Dr Liz Lane** presented their doctoral research. Thanks again to their supervisors: Drs Trevor O'Brien, Marc Scully, Johanna Fitzgerald, Michele Dunleavy and Sarah O'Doherty (NRH).



Maria, Sophie and Liz are pictured above at the conference.



DECPsy Year 3s enjoying the PSI conference. From left: Kate O'Neill, Emma Bohan, Ciara Raleigh and Catriona Kennedy



Relaxed and happy post presentations! From left: Dr Johanna Fitzgerald, Dr Therese Brophy, Catriona Kennedy, Kate O'Neill, Ciara Raleigh, Emma Bohan, Dr Liz Lane, Dr Maria Holland, Dr Margaret Farrelly and James Groarke

Professor Des Swan Award for Excellence in Educational Psychology Research

Congratulations to the nominees for the **Professor Des Swan Award** for Excellence in Educational Psychology Research, **Dr Lydia Mannion** and **Dr Sophie Gallagher**. Both Lydia and Sophie were commended for the quality and contribution of their research to educational psychology.



Pictured above from left: Dr Sophie Gallagher, Professor Des Swan, Dr Katie Cronin, UCD (Award winner and MIC BEDPsy alumnus), Dr Lydia Mannion.

Posters at the PSI Conference, Nov '22

We also had 2 posters, one from **Dr Sarah Jane O'Shea** and **Dr Laura Ambrose**:
The effectiveness of a dialogic reading intervention

Dr Liz Lane, **Fiona du-Boucher Ryan** (Placement supervisor) and **Dr Siobhan O'Sullivan**: *How do autistic adolescent females experience friendship?*

Recent DECPsy Publications

Egan, D., Egan, S. M., & Brophy, T. The Growth of Forest School: A Review of the Evidence Base. *An Leabh Og – Irish Journal of Early Childhood Studies*, Volume 15

Mac Cárthaigh, S., Perry, J., & Griffin, C. (2022). Do objective data support the claim that problematic smartphone use has a clinically meaningful impact upon adolescent sleep duration?. *Behaviour & Information Technology*, 1-13.

DECPsy Outreach Work

On foot of **James Groarke's** Climate Change Education Intervention in schools, and his links with the Native Woodland Trust, 50 students will get the opportunity to plant a native oak tree in Ardan Wood near Kilbeggan in Co Westmeath in the new year.

The Woodland Trust, led by Engagement and Reserves Officer, Jeremy Casey and his colleague Aisling Kennedy (Reserves Officer at Native Woodland Trust), with support from the local Westmeath branch will provide the equipment and trees for every student to plant one oak tree each. The event will include:

1. Introductions and safety talk
2. Guided woodland walk
3. Tree planting demo and safety talk
4. Tree planting



Well done James on this positive initiative and thanks to the Woodland Trust.

Sharing DECPsy Programme Information

Year 3 trainee, **Emma Bohan** presented to the students on the MA in Psychology in UL for the second year in a row on 'My journey to the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology' on Thursday 24th Nov. Well done Emma and thank you for representing the programme so well!



*My Journey to the
Professional Doctorate in Educational & Child Psychology*

EMMA BOHAN
YEAR 3 TRAINEE

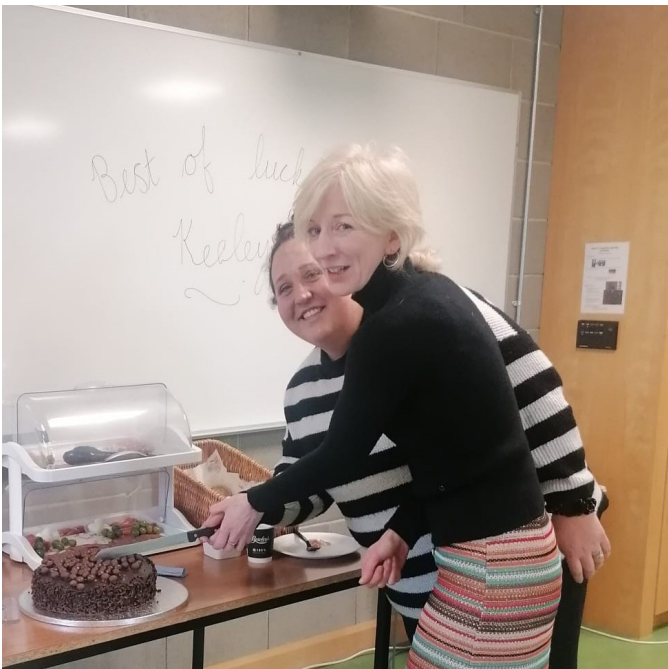
Farewell to Keeley!

We were so sorry to bid farewell to our great friend and colleague, Dr Keeley White in early December. Keeley is taking up a position with CAMHS. We will miss you Keeley but know that you will be back to share your clinical and research expertise in the future. Best of luck in your new role!



Colleagues and students get together to wish Keeley farewell and good luck in her new post.

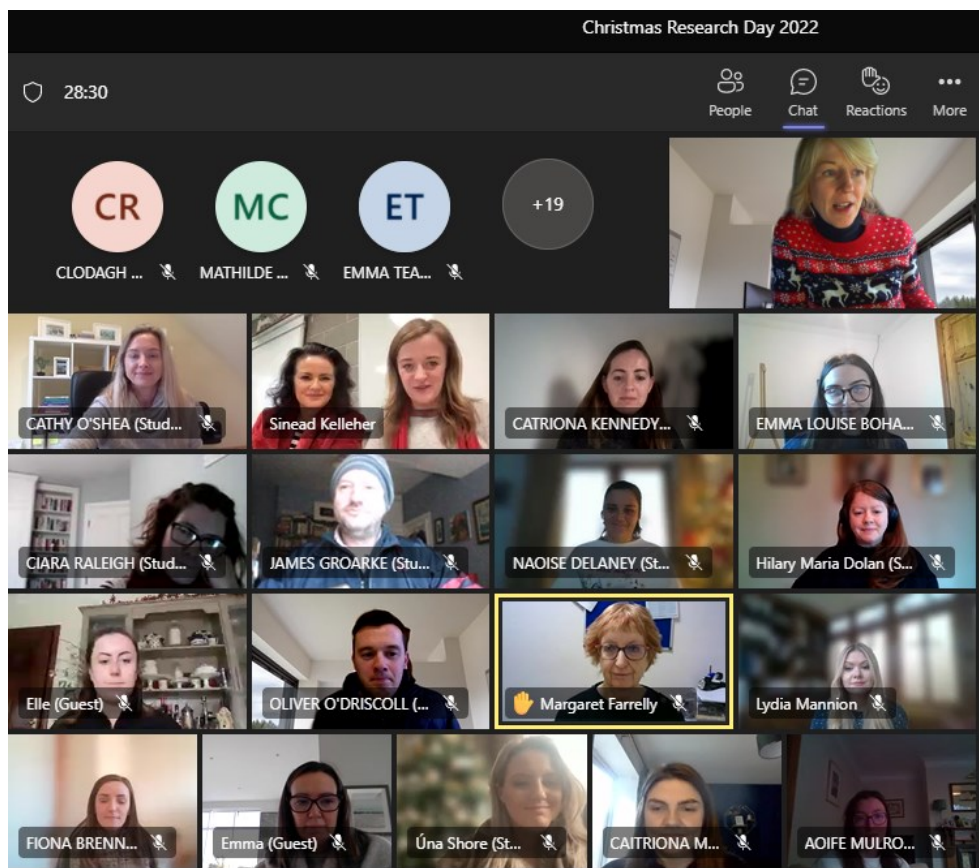
Cutting the Cake



In a re-enactment of her recent wedding day, Keeley and Therese cut the farewell cake!

Christmas Research Day

Our Christmas Research Day took place on December 9th. This event provides a great forum for all 3 groups to meet up to discuss and share research ideas. We had a late pivot to Microsoft Teams this year due to a country wide weather warning. Thanks to Sinead and Lydia for all of their work to move everything online at short notice, and to all the trainees for their positive response to the schedule change.



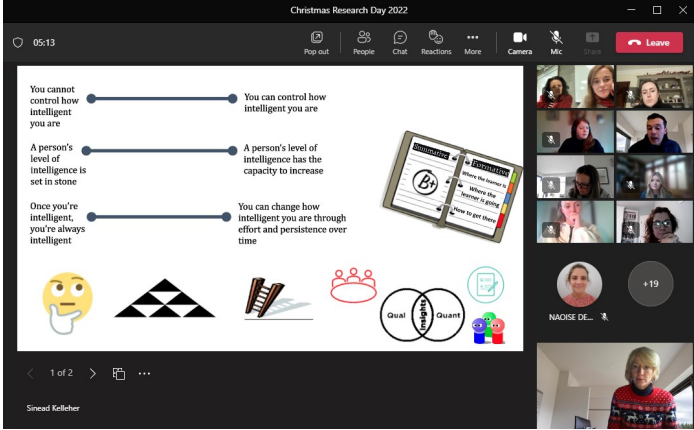
Thanks to **Dr Amy Healy**, **Sinead Kelleher** and **Dr Lydia Mannion** for their research sessions, and to all the trainees for participating and engaging online. Thanks also to our HoD Joh for popping in to hear the 3 minute thesis pitches.

Please note: The Christmas Jumper competition was suspended due to a rule dispute, but we hope to **KNIT** it into the schedule more successfully next year!

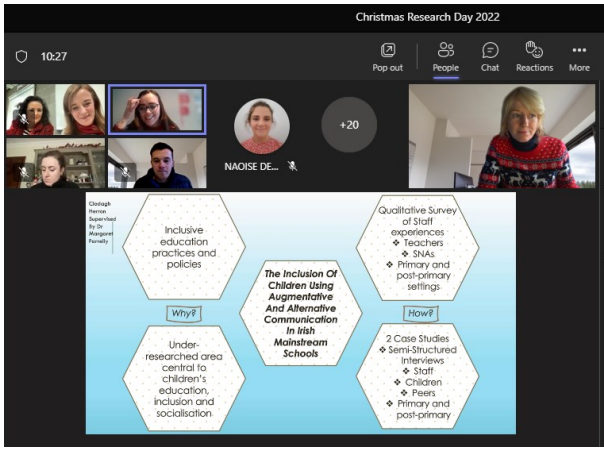


3 Minute Thesis Competition: Christmas Research Day

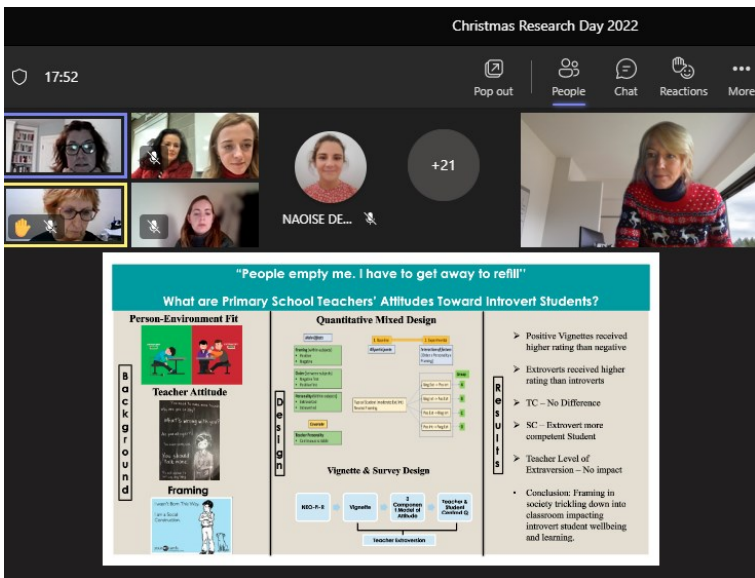
Well done to Year 2s Olly O’Driscoll and Clodagh Herron Rice and Year 3 Ciara Raleigh on your presentations for the 3 minute thesis competition. All three were expertly delivered to give a great sense of the topics within 3 minutes. Well done to Ciara who emerged as the winner following a Qualtrics poll.



Olly in Year 2 , pictured above, sharing his 3 minute thesis presentation, well done Olly!



Another great 3 minute presentation from Clodagh on her research, well done Clodagh.



Ciara, pictured top of the left on Teams, delivers her 3 minute thesis pitch, well done Ciara.



That’s all for now. Happy holidays everyone and all the best for 2023!