

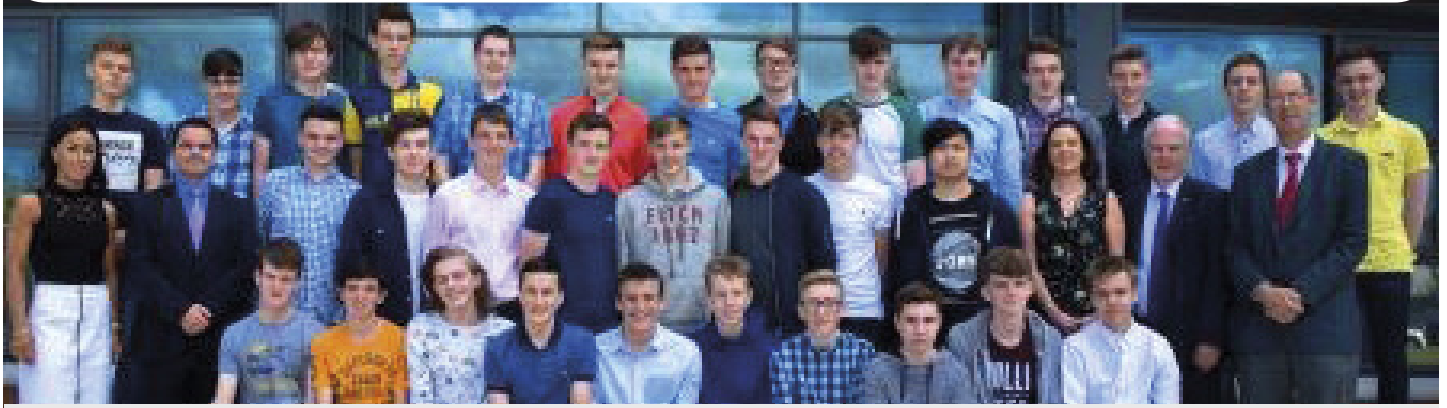


# THE ABBEY *Way*



# END <sup>OF</sup> AN ERA

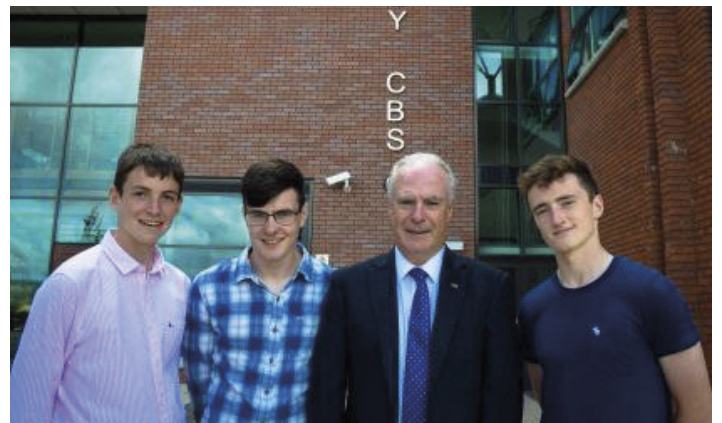
MR MCGOVERN CALLS TIME  
ON HIS ILLUSTRIOUS CAREER AT THE HELM



37 students from the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School achieved at least 8 or more A\*/A grades in their GCSE examinations. Included are: Dan Foster, Cathal Gorman, Ruairi McCormack, Micheal Curtis, Christopher Dunne, Eoin Lane, Joseph Lawrence, Micheal Linden, Gordon Luo, Odhran McCormack, Oisín McKinley, Brendan O'Shea, Peter Smyth, Billy Campbell, Arthur Cespon, James Cooper, Eoghan Donaghy, Jakub Graczyk, Conor Lavery, Cormac Mallon, Ciaran McEntegart, Declan McGuinness, Patrick McVerry, Finn Ovesen, Lewis Cowan, Louis Cunningham, Michael Hoey, Joshua Keenan, Aaron Laverty, Arnas Murphy, Raymond Kelly, Ardan McAvooy & James Price. Also included are Mr Dermot McGovern (Headmaster), Mrs Bernarde Tohill (Year Tutor for Year Twelve), Mrs Catriona McGrath (Head of Middle School), Mr Paul O'Shea and Mr Ronan Ruddy (Vice Principals). Missing from photograph are: Carl Webb, Garrett Canavan, Ruairi Kernan & John Doran.

## Fifth year students at the Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Newry, celebrated after receiving their GCSE results in August, and with good cause!

A delighted Headmaster, Mr Dermot McGovern, congratulated all the students who received their GCSE results after five years of hard work in the Abbey. Over 25% of the year group achieved an outstanding nine or more A\*/A grades. In speaking to the local press, Mr. McGovern paid tribute to his hard working staff, both teaching and support staff and thanked them for all their efforts and dedication to the welfare of their students. He also acknowledged the strong school-parental links that helped the boys to achieve their best. The quality of the results ensured that a large number of the cohort remained at the school and began their A Level study at the Abbey in September.



Mr Dermot McGovern (Headmaster), Abbey Christian Brothers' Grammar School, Newry; congratulates these three boys who achieved an incredible 11 A\*s at GCSE; Dan Foster, Cathal Gorman and Ruairi McCormack. Missing from the photograph is Ruairi Kernan who attained 12 A\*/A grade GCSEs.

## Former Abbey Students Excel At QUB

The following Former Abbey Students won awards in June 2016 from Queen's University, Belfast.



### Patrick Burns

Patrick was jointly awarded the Acumen Resources Prize for the best reflection on the placement experience at the recent Prize-giving Ceremony in Queen's Management School. The image shows Patrick with Mr Paul Walsh from Acumen Resources.



### Sean McAteer

Sean was jointly awarded the Worshipful Company of Actuaries Prize as one of the top two students in Level 1 BSc Actuarial Science and Risk Management and he was also awarded the best student in Actuarial Mathematics Level 1 at the recent Prize-giving Ceremony in Queen's Management School. The images show Sean with Ms Bronagh Traynor from Invesco.



### James Haughey

James was awarded the KPMG Prize for the best second year student in BSc Finance at the recent Prize-giving Ceremony in Queen's Management School. The image shows James with Mr John Poole from KPMG.



# The Sciath Beausang Award is shared between Tiarnan Smyth and Ryan McKeown

The Sciath Beausang, an annual award presented to the pupil or pupils deemed to have made the largest contribution to the Irish language in the Abbey, was this year shared by senior students, Ryan Mc Keown and Tiarnan Smyth. The award is presented by members of the local Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge) in honour of the late Brother Beausang, a Christian Brother from Cork who taught Irish across the North in the sixties, seventies and eighties. He is best known for his years spent here, in the Abbey. 'Beau', as he was affectionately known, did sterling work in the Newry and Mourne area to promote the Irish Language and the local branch of Conradh na Gaeilge, take great pride annually in presenting this award to students in Beau's former school.



This year's winners, Tiarnan Smyth and Ryan Mc Keown, were presented with their award by Séamas Mac Dhaibhéid, from the local branch of Conradh na Gaeilge. The presentation took place at Gaeláras Mhic Arghdail, a cultural centre for the Irish Language which opened in recent years. Prior to the presentation the winners and their class mates were given a tour of the facility and heard details of the contribution that their school and its staff down through the generations, had made to the Irish language. As well as the perpetual shield the boys also received a bursary each sponsored by Foras na Gaeilge.



## Successful Induction Programme Ensures that the First Years Settle Quickly

The early days in September saw the Abbey First Year Induction Programme run over two days. The First day's induction lasted from 9:30am until 2:30pm, and the new pupils were joined by their parents for the first part of the morning. The boys were then left to orienteer their way around the school before being joined again by their parents for a garden party to mark the end of the beginning of their time at the Abbey. The first day focused on the administrative side when the pupils were arranged into their form classes, meet their form teachers and their specially assigned senior prefects. Later in the day they also heard from representatives of Translink and from each teacher in charge of the various extra-curricular activities in the school. The new recruits also got familiar with the Abbey's cashless system. The day was very much a 'taster day' where the pupils were able to use the facilities in the school, without the usual level of hustle and bustle of a full house, in such places as the canteen. The second day was a 'fun day'. The

students met with the senior prefects as soon as they arrived to school and were directed to their form class (for those who had forgotten!). Following a brief meeting with their form teacher, the morning session is divided into five parts with a variety of activities including: a treasure hunt, Chinese whispers, name cards, dodge ball and a quiz. The aim was for all students to mix together to get to know each other and to be more confident around the school. With that it was time to join the wider school body for the first time, but to ensure that that transition was smooth, the new Year eight pupils got a few 'perks in the early weeks of term. For example: they were released early for break, lunch and after school, they were accompanied from class to class by the senior prefect and they were even escorted to the correct bus stop at the end of each day during the first week. Did the programme work? Have a look at the following pages to see how the first years settled in!

# Edmund Rice Beyond Borders Initiative Continues to Grow

## Year Thirteen Mini Enterprise

October saw the continuation of the year thirteen Mini Enterprise. It has been another very successful year of sales for the Abbey half-zips with many orders coming in yet again. Members this year included: Ruairi McCormack, Vincent Toner, Noel Kehoe, Cormac Mallon, Conor Jordan, Aaron Ruddy, Arthur Cespon, Michael Cromie, Jake Fegan and Dylan Vardy-Donnelly. Now in the second year of selling the half-zips, the group have raised over £2000 for local charities to date including the Southern Area Hospice, PIPS, the Fr. Peter McVerry Trust and the Zambia Project in school. It has provided the chance for students to put their Business Studies knowledge into practice and learn about some of the key aspects in running a business with members taking on key departmental roles including Marketing, Production, Human Resources and Finance.

## Social Justice

The Advocacy group has just finished off its first year of work in school. The seed was planted for the creation of the Advocacy group last year and in September 2016 nine volunteers began their work to try to make a difference and give a voice to those who have lost theirs within society by seeking justice for others and also living justly in their own lives.

This is a core value in our Edmund Rice ethos and we take pride in educating and encouraging our students to look beyond themselves and to think and act with respect to the marginalised. Subsequently, the students have been provided with opportunities to showcase their God-given potential and to promote leadership skills through a variety of projects, enabling them to live out the vision of an Edmund Rice school. The key focus was homelessness with the rise of this issue throughout Ireland, the UK as well as internationally.

Many activities have been carried out over the year and the aim is that this will now continue into the future. In January 2017, the group School visited the Westcourt Centre where they heard about social justice issues, and the work of the Westcourt Centre. At the centre they also met Mark Fitzsimons, manager of the Morning Star



House hostel which works with those homeless in the Belfast area. That afternoon the students visited Rosemount House in North Belfast to have lunch and meet with current residents who are currently residing there. Rosemount House provides sheltered and professionally supported accommodation for those seeking continued recovery from alcohol addiction, which may also include secondary drug addiction with associated mental health issues. They heard from manager, Charlie McGarry, about day to day life in the hostel and the difficulties the men there faced in trying to overcome their addiction.

The students also presented assemblies to Years eight to eleven on the theme of homelessness which included the causes, the rise of homelessness, strategies to reduce homelessness and to encourage the students to get involved no matter how small. Rather than a presentation by the team for the Year twelve students, the team contacted Fr. Peter McVerry (a past pupil of the Abbey), who founded The Peter McVerry Trust, who has worked tirelessly to reduce homeless. Fr. Peter is a true example of a social justice activist, with the work he has carried out over the years. He came in to chat to the students about homelessness and what they can do to try to make a difference. The students found his talk so insightful and it truly struck a chord with all students. The Advocacy team also had the opportunity of carrying out a one to one interview with Fr McVerry and this was posted on social media again with the key

aim to raise awareness of homelessness. The team has now been invited down to Dublin in June 2017 to help out in one of the trust's key centres and the aim will be to continue this in the future.

Finally, the Advocacy group became involved in the BBC Schools Project in March 2017, linking with Mr Smyth from the Drama Department and Mr Harvey's Faith in Action group. Both groups worked together and created a news report on the issue of social injustice and the work they have been doing this year to try to make a difference. This news report was posted on the BBC news website and numerous social media outlets which provided both the local and national community an insight into key social justice issues as well as providing practical examples of actions that can be carried out to prevent this. The group will continue into next year with Year 13 and Year 14 students both being provided with the opportunity to become involved with the main aim being to build on the foundations laid this year. Not only did these students give their time and energy in leading this ER work, they did so with pride and the true maturity of leaders of the future. They are to be commended for their interpersonal skills in working together as a team of students as well as with all the external agencies over the year. This leadership group have certainly demonstrated through their everyday work that 'a seed has grown.' Well done to all the students involved this year in the promotion of social justice.



# Abbey CBS Survive Extra-Time Test in Rannafast Cup Quarter final

November



Abbey CBS Rannafast Squad 2016, led by captain, Jamie Martin.

Abbey CBS	3-10
St Patrick's Cavan	1-11 (AET)

Abbey CBS survived an extra-time test from St Patrick's, Cavan, in November's Danske Bank Rannafast Cup quarter-final, a victory that earned them a semi-final meeting with St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon.

Conditions were horrendous at times during the course of this tie, but Abbey looked to be in control when they led by 0-6 to 0-3 at the break, with three of those points coming from Dylan O'Hare.

Although Jack Treanor closed the gap to 0-7 to 0-6 after 40 minutes, points from Dara Gough and Eoin Carr looked to have done enough for the Newry side.

However, Cavan came strong with a late rally to secure extra time at 0-8 each, the equaliser scored by Eoghan Clarke in the third minute of added time.

Fourth year pupil, Dara O'Callaghan, gave Abbey a great boost in the first half of extra-time with two goals, making it 2-9 to 0-9 at the turnover, and when Jamie Martin stroked home a penalty on the re-start, Cavan looked dead and buried.

Again, however, they bounced back with a goal from Paddy McPhillips and then points from Gavin Brady and McPhillips, but they ran out of time and Abbey go through to the semis at the end of this week.

**Abbey:** Dara O' Callaghan 2-1, Jamie Martin 1-0 pen, Dylan O'Hare 0-4, Jamie Lynch 0-1, Dara Gough 0-2, Eoin Carr 0-1, Shealan Fegan 0-1

**St Patrick's:** Paddy McPhillips 1-2, Jack Treanor 0-4, Gavin Brady 0-2, Thomas Smyth 0-1, Emmett Boylan 0-1, Eoghan Clarke 0-1.

That, unfortunately, was as good as it got for the Abbey boys as they lost their semi-final tie a week later against the Tyrone representatives, St. Patrick's Academy. The Abbey will have taken heart from their quarter final success over Cavan in particular, since it was the first time they had got the better of the Breffni men, who had been responsible for their Championship exit in each of the previous four years.



Burren's Isaac Farrugia in possession during the semifinal defeat to Dungannon.



Eoin Murdock in action during the Rannafast Cup semifinal.



Goalkeeper, Dean Sheridan, produced heroics between the sticks for the Abbey.



Dylan O'Hare, from Mayobridge, who finished the quarter final with a personal haul of 0-4.



## RE Department Collect Donations for Local Charities

Mrs Lisa Mc Keever (Head of RE Department) pictured with Year eight to ten pupils from the Abbey Grammar School, Newry, presenting their collection of shoeboxes for the 'Good Samaritan Christmas Shoebox appeal' to Mrs. Denise Nixon.

This year a fantastic effort was made by pupils who, on a voluntary basis brought in shoeboxes in abundance, filled with all sorts of seasonal gifts.

Well done to all pupils who contributed and to their RE teachers who supported them.



## GCSE Success Celebrated

Dan Foster (Chemistry/English Language/English Literature/French/Further Mathematics/Music/Physics/Religious Education), Eoin Lane (Biology/French/Irish), Cathal Gorman (Computer Science/Double Award Science/Geography), Ciaran McEnteggart (French/Spanish), Micheal Linden (Drama/Learning for Life and Work), Joshua Keenan (Mathematics), King-Fa Luo (History), Louis Cunningham (Art), Brendan O' Shea (Technology), Patrick McVerry (Construction), Lewis Cowan (Physical Education Studies), Carl Webb (Business Studies), Arthur Cespon (Information Communication Technology), Micheal Hoey (Gaeilge). Mr D Mc Govern, Headmaster, Mr Stephen Comer, Guest Speaker, Mrs B Tohill, Year Tutor.



# Abbey Miss Out in Corn na nÓg Final

December



St Patrick's Maghera	4-12
Abbey CBS	1-10

Maghera, who had lost the Dalton final to Abbey in extra-time last April, got off to a good start and built on it with strong performances in defence and midfield while the forwards provided plenty of movement up front. Even substitute, Jodie McDermott, made an impact in his 20 minutes on the pitch, scoring 1-1, his goal coming with his first touch in the 41st minute.

The Abbey were much more competitive than the final score-line suggests. However, the early goal and the two "soft" ones during the third quarter meant that they were always kept at arm's length chasing the game.

Excellent full-forward, Michael Mulholland, opened each half with a point at the end of the team's first move and those scores were crucial in putting pressure on Abbey's defence.

Shea Cassidy bagged a goal for the winners after five minutes, and although Abbey came back with points from Niall Toner and Odhran Murdock, Maghera led by 1-4 to 0-2 after 16 minutes with Mulholland shooting three from open play.

Sean Conlon, Eoin Reel and Ryan Magill hit back with Abbey points, but Maghera finished the half strongly with two points from Matthew Downey and one each from attacking half-backs Jamie Duggan and captain Lee Brady.

Niall Toner pointed in response to Mulholland's opening score of the second half, but the door was slammed in the Newry side's face with replica goals in the

36th and 42nd minutes – high dropping balls from distance that dipped under the cross-bar for goals claimed by Tiarnan Higgins and Jodie McDermott, the latter just 50 seconds after entering the play.

With Mulholland lofting over his first point from a free in the 45th minute, the score-line stood at 3-10 to 0-7.

Abbey raised their game in the final quarter with points from Odhran Murdock, Sean Conlon and John McGovern, but the Maghera half-backs turned over ball in the 50th minute and it was fed through the chain for Dara O'Kane to shoot low to the net across Eoin Hughes' despairing dive.

Ryan Magill hit back soon after, sliding the ball under Conor McMullan, but Maghera still finished on a high with points from Mulholland and McDermott.

**Abbey CBS:** E Hughes, P McCarthy, D Mallie, R McCarron, J Shiels, O McKeown, A Garvey, S Conlon 0-2, R Kearney, E Reel, O Murdock 0-3 frees, J McGovern 0-2, 0-1 free, R Magill 1-0, N Toner 0-2, Z Murdock 0-1.

**Subs:** O McClelland for E reel (45), L Lundy for Z Murdock (51), A Heggarty for R McCarron (57).





Within the Faith in Action programme the students are encouraged to think and to act compassionately within the school, the local community and our greater society. Subsequently the students have been provided with opportunities to showcase their God-given potential and to promote leadership skills through a variety of projects, enabling them to live out the vision of an Edmund Rice school.

This year in the Faith in action course seven pupils in Year 14 were given the chance to lead and implement fundraising initiatives. In term one these students worked collaboratively with the newly formed Advocacy leadership group in Lower sixth and participated in our inaugural 'Sleep Out' to raise awareness and funds for Homelessness in our community. Additionally the boys then focused on organising the senior citizens Christmas party at Ashgrove Nursing Home, which was a glowing success. The fellas entertained the guests with bingo, food, and presents and not to mention a very special visit from Santa himself (Blain Mc Grath).

In term two the fellas were given some lessons in teaching: this in turn would help them to prepare an RE lesson to teach to the Year 8 pupils. They taught the younger



pupils about the work of Mary's Meals and more importantly they set up a drive to encourage the first years to donate a school bag with stationery so it could be sent out to Malawi. This was a successful campaign and over 50 school bags are on their way to help those pupils in Malawi have a more positive educational experience.

Finally, the boys worked with the English and art Departments to set up a poetry and art competition for the first year pupils. The winning poem was then printed in the Abbey Ester card that was delivered to Ashgrove Nursing Home. The art work for this card was also a competition that the fellas set up with the 2nd year pupils. Congratulations to Niall Rice in year 8 for



creating a lovely poem and to Mark Lennon in year 9 for the beautiful art work.

This leadership group have certainly demonstrated through their everyday work that 'a seed has grown' and we have no doubt will continue to reach out to the marginalised as they embrace their lives after the Abbey. Throughout the course of the year the pupils raised in excess of £1300. I hope they will bring their experiences into the future with them and encourage them to continue to put their faith into action!

Well done and thank you to Jack Caraher, Niall McKeivitt, James McGovern, Matthew Linnie, Adam Gadja, Aidan Mc Namee, Blain Mc Grath

## Abbey Pupils visit the Westcourt Centre



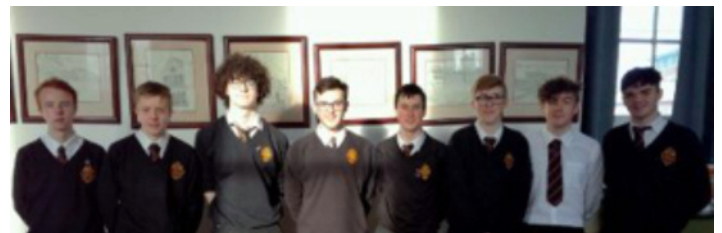
On January 27th a group of students and teachers from The Abbey Christian Brothers Grammar School in Newry visited the Westcourt Centre.

The group are interested in social justice issues and wished to learn about the different areas of work ongoing at the centre.

First up, the group were introduced to the recent history of Westcourt and current initiatives at the centre including: The Strengthening Families programme – this globally recognised and evidenced parenting programme provides a unique opportunity for both parents and young people aged 12-16 to work together to improve their relationships. (Visit [www.ascert.biz](http://www.ascert.biz) )

The Link Centre Secondary Pupil Support Service – Visit <http://www.spsstheLinkcentre.org>  
Belfast Hospital School TOPS project for young people suffering from anxiety and depression – Visit <http://www.belfasthospitalschool.org.uk/TOPS.aspx>

The group then met with Mark Fitzsimons, manager of the Morning Star House hostel for homeless men in Belfast. Mark talked about



the reality of homelessness and how the age profile has changed drastically in recent times with more and more residents now under the age of 25. Mark then took questions from the students and discussed the main reasons for homelessness and the prospects for supporting people back into attaining suitable accommodation.

That afternoon the students visited Rosemount House in north Belfast to have lunch and meet some of the men currently residing there. Rosemount House provides sheltered and professionally supported accommodation for those seeking continued recovery from alcohol addiction, which may also include secondary drug addiction with associated mental health issues. (See [www.rosemounthouselimited.org](http://www.rosemounthouselimited.org))

They heard from manager Charlie McGarry about day to day life in the hostel and the difficulties the men there faced in trying to overcome their addiction.

Before leaving Rosemount, the group visited the community garden area which is maintained by the residents and is dedicated to the memory of deceased former residents, staff and family members.



# Zambia Immersion Project Continues to Provide a Lasting Legacy

February



The Abbey's Zambia Immersion Project is now in its fourteenth year. Since its inauguration in 2003 our International Social Justice project has been a core principle underlying our school work as a faith-based community. Our links with the community of Livingstone have enabled both our pupils and staff to live out their Christian values by engaging in a journey of compassion and justice. This is done through the preparation for the Journey and the time spent in Livingstone.

Without doubt the Zambia Immersion Project has improved the living conditions and education for local communities in Livingstone. Over the past fourteen years, the work undertaken by the Abbey has ensured that:

- two bore holes have been installed to allow access to fresh running water.
- Teachers' allowances in Linda and Libuyu Community Schools have been paid to ensure young people have a decent start in life through education.
- The educational fees, books, uniforms and all educational requirements have been provided for the children in Lubasi and Lushomo children's homes.
- The local hospice has been fitted with state of the art equipment, as well as a small chapel being built.
- Ngwenya and Libuyu plots have had irrigation installed and money provided for livestock to help create self-sufficient communities.

These improvements brought about by the Zambia Immersion Project would not happen without the generosity of our students, the staff of the Abbey and the local community. Fundraising events in the current academic year 2016- 2017, have

included: The 'Giro de Zambia', a sponsored Spinathon which was a tremendous success, a Christmas Jumper Day, two Bag packs, The Great Abbey Bake Off and Our major fundraiser, 'The Abbey Lip Sync' battle which took place in the Canal Court on Thursday 16th of March, 2017.

These events and fundraising initiatives have helped raise valuable funds for those marginalised and in need in Livingstone. Most importantly, however, all of this would not have occurred without the focus, determination and drive of the Zambia Immersion Teams responsible for raising crucial funds and visiting our Zambian neighbours. These teams of students have shown real character in their tireless efforts to raise money and awareness of the difficulties and hardships communities in Livingstone face every day. They lead by example and embody our Christian Brothers' and Edmund Rice ethos as a community steeped in faith, by reaching out, connecting and sharing in the lives of the marginalised in Livingstone, Zambia.

During the Immersion project in Zambia the pupils and staff immerse themselves in the Zambian culture. They teach in three schools; they visit and play with the

children in two orphanages (many of whom have been orphaned as a result of AIDS); they visit the local hospital and hospice and spend time with the patients. As part of the immersion the group also visit local communities with Sr. Mary Courtney from St Francis' Day Care as she and her staff administer medication to the sick. In addition, they work with families trying to make a living in the local quarry or the Ngwenya and Libuyu plots. It is our aim to support and encourage independence and self-sufficiency in Livingstone by assisting communities to look after their future by saving money through establishing a Credit Union system.

The Abbey CBGS Zambia Immersion Project effectively reminds our whole school community of the on-going need for assistance in Zambia and how it is our Christian duty to help those less well off than ourselves.

The Baton will be handed to the ZIP team of 2019 during the new academic year of 2017-2018.

**Mrs C Mc Grath**  
Senior Teacher.



# Lip Sync for Zambia



In March, the Zambia Immersion Team took to the stage again in support of the project, this time hosting a "Lip Sync for Zambia" in the Canal Court Hotel. This fundraiser followed the huge success of the "Giro d' Zambia" Spin-a-thon in December 2016.

From Christmas time, staff and pupils alike had been working hard to perfect their acts, with the help of choreographer, Erin Coghlan, from the Sacred Heart Grammar School and her team of backup dancers who assisted throughout the evening. The tireless efforts of all involved ensured the huge success of the event.

On the evening, we had a fantastic turnout. The support from all in attendance was tremendous, and the evening was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone. With the acts varying from Prince, to Michael Jackson, to Bruno Mars and even One Direction, there was a performance for everyone to enjoy.

Starting the evening off was Mr Harvey, Mr Ruddy, Mr Rooney and Mr Patten as 'Take That', followed by Mrs Collins as 'Amy Winehouse'. We are in no doubt that Mr Rodgers' performance of 'Elsa' from Disney's chart topping movie 'Frozen' will ever be forgotten by his year nine group. For Mrs McGrath and Mrs Elmore, who thought they'd achieve a landslide victory with their mini Ant and Dec aides - unfortunately they were pipped at the post. Even students were in shock at One Direction's "wardrobe malfunction" on stage, and we were all given the scare of our lives as Kristian Chada "performed" as Miley Cyrus. On a more positive note, the crowd were star struck as the glamorous 'Beyonce', performed by Ryan McKeown, stole the stage, and many agreed that Rory's attempt at the Spice Girls was entertaining indeed. Many parents were even able to receive a blast from the past with Cathal Gorman's Michael Jackson and Cormac's performance of Prince/Tom Jones. The

students were also able to enjoy modern day artists such as Drake and Tiaran's Bruno Mars act. Keith Garvey finished the night off perfectly with his performance of OutKast. During the interval, the winners of the Culloville Lip Sync (in aid of 'Fight on for Shauneen') performed their winning 'Sister Act'. However, the highlight of the night had to be Mr Savage's brave attempt at 'Meatloaf', which everyone in the crowd enjoyed, none more so than Gerry himself. The audience voted for their favourite acts by kindly donating money into buckets for each act during the second interval. Surely Gerry was the runaway victor, but it was just not meant to be, as in the end, the winner was Oisín McKinley, for his superb performance as Freddie Mercury. I'm sure I speak for everyone (except perhaps Gerry) when I say how delighted we were for Oisín.

Judging the acts was headmaster and team member Dermot McGovern; dinner lady, previous team member and school icon, Mags McGivern and Tracey McKeown, mother of team member, Ryan McKeown, all of whom did a superb job.

Credit must be given, however, to all members of staff who participated not only in the performance aspect of the event, but also those who worked tirelessly to ensure the event ran as smoothly as possible. A sincere thank you to each and every one of you!

The final total raised on the night was £17,500. The enormous generosity of pupils, staff and the wider Abbey community made the event a huge success, enabling us to continue to support the lives of our friends in the community of Livingstone.

#ZIP2017  
Cormac Mallon





The day of departure came around very quickly for the whole team and there was a creative mix of exhilaration, uncertainty, nervousness and hope amongst the group.

Although we knew that we had a long journey in front of us we couldn't have been more ready - or so we thought! The months of fundraising, raising awareness and opening our mind sets to the injustices of the marginalised in the community of Livingstone could never have fully prepared us for the life changing immersion which we were about to embark on.

We said our goodbyes to family and friends, filled up on a wonderful cooked breakfast from our fantastic canteen staff and departed our safe haven of the Abbey school for our first flight from Dublin to London. We then travelled on to Johannesburg before embarking our last flight to Livingstone. The flight to Livingstone was full of singing and banter. There was a real sense of camaraderie and identity in our team and we regaled about the stage performances that had taken all of us out of our comfort zones a few weeks previous during our headline fundraiser 'Abbey does Lipsync'.

Upon arrival at the small airport Of Livingstone we were greeted with the hospitality, warmth and acceptance that would be encountered on each and every day thereafter during our time in Zambia. Sr Mary (The Franciscan Nuns) picked us up after a barrage of mosquitos had attacked our pale white skin and we proceeded to St. Francis day care to be greeted by the fantastic compassionate, caring and serving staff who are committed to improving and enhancing the lives of the people of Livingstone.

We were assigned schools in teams of four where we would offer remedial support in literacy and numeracy for the next two and a half weeks. After the school lessons each morning we spent our afternoons building friendships with the children of Lubasi Orphanage. All of the residents of Lubasi have had challenging starts in life, but their unending warmth, welcome and enduring smiles made each of us feel that we indeed don't have troubles at all.

Whilst at the schools - Linda Community School, Libuyu Community School and Ngwena - the small groups of children of different age ranges and ability levels presented many challenges to us. These children come from a range of different tribal backgrounds and their

first language and dialect is often very different to many of the other children around them. As we soon learned there were over 70 tribes in Zambia each with their own cultural identities. Many of the children also faced extreme levels of poverty sharing their materials for class each day pencils. Class sizes were very large with one preschool class in Libuyu school having over 60 students in it. Each team worked primarily on Numeracy and Literacy skills and the sheer eagerness to engage and to want to learn was amazing and inspiring to each and every member of the team. Many of these children would have to get up as early as 5 O'clock in the morning just to walk to school. During break time the pupils engaged just like all other pupils in any other school yard in any other part of the world - "African yard ball" - witnessing this would certainly give the Abbey lads in the cage a run for their money! These children played football in their bare feet with an entire school chasing one ball made from plastic bags and other items of rubbish. They played with energy and pride and more often than not on an empty stomach as many of these young people would only get one meal a day. Meals did not constitute a breakfast, lunch and dinner with a sausage roll in the canteen at break, like you or me, rather it comprised a small bowl of maize a day. We had truly never experienced anything like this but these children never complained of hungry, never sought attention or sorrow for their situation, they lived each day with joy, happiness and faith in God.

We accompanied some of the school children to their homes after school. This was truly an eye opening and humbling experience. Many of the houses we went to were extremely poor and had no running water or electricity. As many as ten people would stay in a room the size of one of the language assistant's rooms in the Abbey. As for toilets, there were none in their houses so they had to use a makeshift toilet that was below any level of human dignity and it led everyone to appreciate how lucky we are with all our luxuries that we take for granted daily. However, there was not one sad face among any of the people we visited and we were truly humbled by the level of hospitality and friendliness we were greeted with within these extremely poor compounds.





We accompanied St Francis Day Care Centre workers on visits to the local compounds and helped the volunteers of St. Francis distribute HIV medicine. The patients ranged in age from as young as 12 to the most elderly residents of the compounds. All patients were dependant on the medicine provided by St Francis day care, who since their establishment, have worked collaboratively to help reduce HIV by 40% in the community of Livingstone. This service is dependent on donations from the whole Abbey school community and because of your generous donations they have been able to help thousands of people with HIV. Alongside providing medicine we also learned of the self-development schemes which helped local communities by selling animals and setting up plots which we were lucky enough to visit and help at. Although Mr McGovern nearly put his back out we still managed to spread over 3 tonnes of soil and meet many of the farmers there who have been greatly helped by

the water pump and irrigation system that the ZIP teams have been influential in raising funds for in the past.

We spent a significant amount of our time at Lubasi Orphanage. For many of the team Lubasi holds memories that will never be forgotten such as playing football, dodge ball or even partaking in arts and craft with the children who don't have parents and close family to care for them. Many of the team think of Immanuel aged 3, who seemed detached from the rest of the children and would never smile. It was only when we played with him on the swings and gave him his first football that he was unable to stop smiling. Each member of the Zambia team will remember those enduring smiles forever.





Our visits to the local quarry in Ngwenya bore witness to how local families earn a small income to support their families. Whilst there we helped the locals break rocks. We were only working for a short time but by the end of it we all had blisters and we were physically exhausted. It really opened our eyes to the reality of the poverty and struggle these people faced. To put into context one wheelbarrow of stones was worth 5 kwacha which is the same as about 40p. During an hour's work we barely broke enough stone for one whole barrow. At the quarry we saw some distressing sights - numerous children around the age of 10 or even less: a number of pregnant women breaking rocks also. This was extremely hard to see as this would be unheard of back home but here it was normal life and a normal way of earning money. Everyone had to work to provide or else they may not have been able to pay for food for their single meal that day.



This Immersion experience was one that can only be described as an emotional rollercoaster. Whether it was a baboon stealing Cormac Mallon's Fanta on possibly the hottest day of the year or greeting people daily at the market or in the compounds - we met so many inspirational people who struggle just to survive every day, but do so enriched with a deep sense of faith and belief in God. This journey was the experience of a life time and one that will stay for each and every one of us for the rest of our lives. We are each indebted to the energy, commitment and support of the entire school community who allow this project to continue to engage, support and learn from the Zambian people. Each and everyone of you have indeed allowed 'a seed to grow'.

Zikomo from the ZIP team

**Kristian Chada**



## Ulster Final Success for the cast of 'An Scrúdú Béil'



Mr. Mc Govern, Headmaster, is pictured congratulating the pupils and staff involved in the play.

The Irish Department in the Abbey Grammar School are celebrating the success of their Irish Language play, *An Scrúdú Béil*. The play, written by former Head of Irish, Seán Mac Labhraí, won Best Post Primary School Play and the top overall prize of 'Scóthléiriú Na Féile', at the Ulster Festival held in the Marketplace Theatre in Armagh in March. That victory saw the Abbey travel to Mullingar for the All-Ireland Drama festival for the first time since 2006. And the plaudits kept on coming in the Westmeath town. The Abbey won their competition for Best 'Post 16' Play and were also presented with a trophy for the Best play from outside the Gaeltacht areas. Their All-Ireland adjudication score was an impressive ninety-seven and a half out of a total available marks of one hundred. The play was performed by the members of the AS level Irish class under the direction of their teacher, and Head of Irish, Mr Seán Gallagher, and the renowned drama teacher, Mr Paul Mc Parland.

## Irish Public Speaking Success for Abbey duo

The Irish department are once again celebrating a double success at the Ulster Final of the prestigious Abair public speaking competition. Newcomer, Tom Magill, won first place in the Junior Category with his sceptical look at the forever changing school curriculum. Conor Lavery, a former junior winner, now competing in the senior competition, was placed second in Ulster for his insightful commentary on the rise in Mental Health issues in modern life.

## Nationwide 'Seachtain Na Gaeilge 2017' Celebrated in the Abbey

In March the Abbey joined hundreds of schools and organisations, North and South, in a week-long celebration of the Irish Language. The Abbey's programme kicked off with the first ever 'Tionóil na nGaeilgeoirí', an assembly of all Irish speakers in the school from first to seventh year, including those pupils who no longer study Irish at the school but who were educated in the Irish medium sector. The assembly was addressed by Dr. Niall Comer, past pupil and son of former senior teacher, Tom Comer. Dr. Comer had recently been elected president of Conradh na Gaeilge, the National Gaelic League and this return to his alma mater, was his first official engagement as president. He spoke to the four hundred or so pupils assembled about his journey towards fluency in his native language and also about the possibilities and opportunities that now exist in the Irish Language sector. Following the assembly each year group took part in a series of events to celebrate Irish language and culture. The year eight pupils took part in an Irish language Quiz, organised by Miss Cullen and Miss Griffen. The year nine pupils got a flavour of Irish dancing and what life at a Gaeltacht course was like, by taking part in a Céilí. In year ten, we had an indoor football tournament, where the players were only allowed to use Irish. At the end of the week, the winning teams for each class played off for



the title of 'Gael ball' Champions. Years eleven and twelve, were given the opportunity to watch the sixth year pupil perform their Scoil drama entry, 'an Scrúdú Béil'. The A level classes linked up with the Sacred Heart to attend a workshop hosted by former BBC producer, Louise Smith, now of NMDC, that gave a fantastic insight into the world of Irish medium media. Seachtain na Gaeilge, 2017, was action packed and full of prize winners and was enjoyed by staff and pupils alike. Seachtain na Gaeilge 2018 has a tough act to follow!



We were notified of our acceptance to the Community Arts Partnership's 'Poetry In Motion' scheme at the start of the school year. The school had initially applied some years ago, and had been able to renew the application to be considered for subsequent years without any hassle, so we were very pleased to find out in September that we would be taking part in the 2016/17 cycle and had been assigned Marion Clarke as our working poet.

After a half-day training in Belfast, during which the teachers were made aware of the scheme's goals and its structure, the visits began. Our poet was able to spend up to 4 hours (at a maximum of 3 visits) with the participating students, and these sessions were a lovely, buzzing hive of creativity!

9 Donard had studied poetry within our schemes at the English department, so I knew there was plenty of talent to be dug out of them! However, what the boys really responded to was the creative freedom. They weren't confined to any particular subject or poetic form, the way they might have been in an English assessment task. Although Marion is a master of the short Japanese form of poetry and the boys produced plenty of tanka, they were also encouraged to bring in meaningful objects and to use images, photos and paintings as inspiration. They were even wielding pastels to illustrate their work on one occasion to help draw out imagery within the poems.



The boys themselves really responded well to this type of work. On hearing which poems were selected for the anthology, the chosen pupils seemed delighted and surprised. I was also pleased as there were some gems produced from pupils who don't always score highly in their English assessments, but were obviously inspired by the workshops and produced some lovely pieces.

Being selected for the Seamus Heaney Award was something the pupils will never forget! Words such as "overjoyed" and "shocked" have been thrown around, but the whole experience was hugely positive and the class would "highly recommend participation in this programme to other schools." From my point of view, it has been a joy to see the delight and enthusiasm that this scheme has generated; a true highlight in my professional experience.

## Dan Foster Recalls a Visit to Heaney Country to Remember the Inspiration Behind the Award

One of the certainties of A Level English Literature is the study of the poetry of our own Nobel Laureate, Seamus Heaney, born in County Derry, whose birthplace is the site of the new centre for the study and preservation of the vast contribution to the Irish literary canon, the Home Place. Here and the surrounding area is what shaped the work of the most distinguished poet of the last century, and was the destination for a class trip to more thoroughly understand the context of Heaney's poetry, putting it into Heaney's perspective as a young man in Bellaghy.

In the fiftieth anniversary of Heaney's first book of poems, *Death of a Naturalist*, and his death still in recent memory, enthusiasm for Heaney's work is as fervent as ever, leading to the creation of the tour around Heaney country taken by our class, led by poetry fanatic and Heaney aficionado, Eugene Kielt. It seems few people are as aware of Heaney's background and roots as Eugene, nor as excited about his life and work, culminating in an informatively engaging tour lauded in reviews from newspapers, poetry fans, and, of course, the AS literature class.

Having arrived at Laurel Villa for tea and scones before we set off, it was clear our tour of Heaney country had already begun; linen prints of Heaney's poems hung framed from the dining room walls, petrified wood which inspired Heaney's poem *Relic of Memory*, and Eugene shared stories about his personal memories of Heaney and

other Northern Irish poets during his career in the Villa.

We then set off in the school minibus, driving to significant locations which shaped or starred in Heaney's poetry, complete with readings such as 'The Forge' read outside the forge, and 'Mid-Term Break' on the very street where Heaney's younger brother was tragically killed in a car accident in 1953. We drove to the football pitch where Heaney is remembered not for his poetry, but for his legendary performances on the local team, and the river Moyola, which inspired Heaney's musings on identity and love in his 1972 collection 'Wintering Out'.

The tour ended at Heaney's graveside, where we met his brother, Charlie Heaney, who shed some light on Heaney's character growing up, and saw his modest headstone bearing little other than the quote, 'Walk on air against your better judgement.'

One of the more sobering points of the day was made as we passed surveyors planning the new motorway that will cut across, scar and destroy cultural landmarks immortalised in Heaney's poetry. Despite protests from poets, environmentalists and concerned residents, it seems the world Heaney grew up in will soon be confined to his lyrics, the only part of Heaney country which can never change, and the only part that keeps it alive.



# A Busy Year for the Music Department

2016-17 was another busy but exciting year for the Music Department. We began with the annual school mass where music was provided by the Traditional Group, led by Year 14 student Tiarnan Smyth. A visit from Linley Hamilton from the Ulster University Music Department helped encourage a number of both Sacred Heart and Abbey 'A' level Music students to explore music as a university option. As always, our Christmas season was busy, with our musicians performing in a range of shows from Carol singing in Buttercrane and the Jazz Band welcoming Santa to town; the Newry Business Christmas Dinner in the Canal Court to our annual Christmas Concert. For the first time this year, the Jazz Band were also invited to perform in Victoria Square to help raise money for Children in Crossfire. Various groups performed at internal events such as the first Christmas Fayre and Remembrance Mass.



The Spring term involved preparation for both Warrenpoint and Newry Feises. In Warrenpoint the Jazz Band were placed 1st, whilst the Abbey Choir placed 2nd in Hymn singing. In Newry the Jazz Band also placed first, whilst the Abbey Choir earned numerous 2nds and 3rd places. The Brass Group placed 2nd whilst a large number of individuals competed, many being awarded 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Highly Commended. The Traditional Group competed in the Newry Traditional Feis and were placed 3rd in an incredibly tight class.

Ronan Burke in Year 14 was named as the most promising young adult singer of the feis following a number of stunning performances including the moving Gethsemane.

Our Guitar and Drum Night was held on March 2nd with a range of performances from first year through to Year 13. This event is unique in our school calendar as the acts are created, rehearsed and set by the pupils themselves. Acts such as Jamie McAleenan, Year 12, performed using a loop station, whilst Jordan Lively, Year 12, brought Jonny Cash to the Abbey for one night only. Enda Farrell performed a stunning version of 'The Last of Us' Theme. A number of resident school bands such as The Session and Kantus also performed, entertaining the audience.

The Spring Concert on the 29th March showcased a range of performers and ensembles from throughout the school year. The orchestra opened with both the Abbey Choir and Senior Choir performing. The Rolling Tones, Jazz Breakers and Jazz Band performed a range of music with both Jordan Lively and Sacred Heart student, Sarah Sands, performing on vocals. Smaller groups such as the brass group and traditional group performed along with a number of stunning soloist performances such as Fionntan Greggory on saxophone, Cian Carragher on piano and Ronan Burke on vocals.

During this term the Ulster Youth Choir visited the school to hold a workshop and auditions. A number of students were successfully offered places in the main choir, training choir and Junior Choir. The Jazz Band was invited back to the annual Ulster Youth Jazz Showcase where a number of school Jazz Bands were invited to perform in the Black Box in Belfast.

Following the Easter Break our Year 12, 13 and 14 each completed their examination performance to a high standard. The choir provided music for the Induction Mass, accompanied by Tiarnan Smyth on guitar. We finished the year with the Jazz Band being invited back to the Blues on the Bay Festival where they performed a 30 minute set in Warrenpoint Park to a huge crowd.

A new school show was decided upon and auditions are now underway for 'How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying'. 2017/18 will be busy.



## Farewell to the Class of 2017





What a day! Blue skies, record temperatures and a few red faces the following day! Over the last few years ER Fun Day has had a few variations; sports, fun activities and last year saw an action-packed "Abbey's Got Talent" competition. So what could be achieved this year? It was important to include a presentation and reflection on the incredible work of EREBB (Edmund Rice Education Beyond Borders) led by Mrs Elmore, who visited the team out in India and experienced first-hand the on-going work of Edmund Rice's mission and vision. But what about the boys and Abbey staff? How about a challenge to 'go beyond the Big Stone'? Yes, a physical task to climb Slieve Martin but also one to challenge expectations and attitudes of going further in life and seeing the world from a different perspective, and how better to do it than by walking and talking with your friends!

The views from the Cloughmore Stone were beautiful but as the ascent continued the views of Rostrevor and Warrenpoint became miniaturised, the Wicklow Mountains just a silhouette due to distant mist and the black spot of the cairn pointing the peak of the mountain still a long way off! From the top was an incredible view of 300+ Abbey boys and staff in colourful football tops as they

weaved their way up like insects on a determined mission. Three 3rd years sprinted the final steep ascent to touch the cairn first, a ritual completed by all that made the effort to go beyond and breathe in the incredible panoramic views: Carlingford and Cranfield tightly secured by Slieve Foy and Slieve Donard, Newry, Hilltown, villages and farms and infinity beyond. Under a beating sun all rested and drank in the scene before starting their descent to the park below.

It wasn't just gravity that helped our return but the promise and aromas of a BBQ. Almost 400 burgers and refreshments were served with efficiency and humour and those with money bought sweets or ice creams from the restaurant. All that was left to do was either sit and rest in the shade of the big ancient oak trees or play football in the park with friends. Yes, challenges were taken and many achieved, but most importantly great memories were made of a wonderful day out.

Thanks to all who helped and took part; the spirit of Edmund Rice was alive and well that day!





# After Forty Years the Board of Governors and Senior Management lead the Tributes to Mr Mc Govern on his Retirement

June saw Mr Mc Govern announce to the Abbey Community that he will retire on 31st October 2017. Whilst it should come as no surprise that a person who had spent forty years on the staff of the Abbey (twenty two of which as the Headmaster), should make such an announcement, the news still came a shock to many in the Abbey, as the reality that the school would be beginning the process of looking for a new leader began to hit home. The school's various social media platforms were inundated with messages paying tribute to the Headmaster. Chairman of the Board of Governors, Seán Óg McAteer, led the tributes along with the Vice-Principal, Ronan Ruddy.

Speaking on behalf of the Board of Governors, Mr Seán Óg McAteer said: "As Chairperson of the Board of Governors of the Abbey Christian Brothers Grammar School, I would like to pay tribute to the outstanding contribution made by Dermot McGovern to the life of the school over four decades.

As a teacher first and then as principal for the past 22 years Dermot was so to speak "One of our Own", He is an Abbey man, in his role and as a principal he espoused everything that is good about an Abbey man.

Taking over as the first lay principal after more than one hundred years of dedicated service by the Christian Brothers to the people of the area, the transition was seamless for the ethos of Edmund Rice was very much in the heart of Dermot McGovern.

Dermot has left us now with a new school to be proud of. The location might be in a different end of Newry but the spirit of the school is still the same. The achievements in academic terms in Dermot's time have been excellent and in sporting terms, the Hogan Cup victory will still rank amongst one of his greatest days.

We could not have asked for a better Principal over the past 22 years. We, as a Board of Governors, have been privileged to work with him, to have his counsel, to know that the children at the Abbey were getting every opportunity under Dermot's leadership to be the best that they could be. At all times we knew that the Abbey, its staff and its pupils, its culture, its ethos and its history were in the best possible hands with Dermot McGovern as Principal. All we can say is a humble "Thank you – Go raibh maith agat, a Dhiarmuid!"

Mr Mc Ateer went on to acknowledge the other very significant departures from the Abbey staff in 2017. He continued: "Dermot, of course, is not the only significant departure from the staff this year. A number of Abbey stalwarts, whose names have been synonymous with the school for generations have ended their association with the school. On behalf of the Board of Governors, I would like to extend our best wishes in retirement to Mildred Rooney and Maurice McKeivitt, both of whom retire from the school's support staff, having previously spent their entire careers on the teaching staff giving many years of dedicated service.

Dr. John Mc Cavitt, a past pupil and senior teacher is also retiring and we wish John well and thank him for his contribution to the life of the Abbey. Mr Dessie Tennyson, former Head of Irish, moves to pastures new in Donaghmore with our grateful appreciation of his time spent amongst us, and finally Mr Joe Smyth's experience will not be lost to the School with his retirement as Joe will remain part of the school staff in a new role. Fad saol agus sláinte, a chairde.

Vice Principal, Mr Ruddy, told the Abbey Way: "Dermot has spent forty years as a member of staff in the Abbey. He had been a teacher for five years when I first encountered him in 1982 as a first year pupil when he taught me Maths. I remember vividly two things about him which he has held right throughout his career. Firstly, he was an excellent Maths teacher who knew his subject and could explain things clearly to those of us who were not in any way mathematical. Secondly, he was kindly to everyone and the relationships that he built up with classes were excellent.

As I passed through the Abbey his career had progressed to Head of Computing by the time I left in 1989. The pace of promotion continued very quickly because in July 1995 it was Dermot the Headmaster who appointed me before the beginning of his first year as Principal. I have worked with him throughout those 22 years and for 17 of them as a member of the Senior Management Team.

At this level you get to see Dermot as the true person that he is. His great passion for the Abbey and providing only the best for Abbey pupils shone through every day. This led him to challenge and support all of us to be the very best that we could be. Working closely with him though also gave me the chance to see not only his strong leadership but also the human qualities of respect, dignity and compassion that so characterised his years as a Principal. Generations of students and indeed staff members can be grateful for his kindness and support. Dermot, being the person that he is, made all of us strive to be the best people that we could be. That is a legacy not cast in bricks and mortar but a legacy that makes the Abbey such a positive experience for so many people. An achievement of which he can be justifiably proud."