

Summer 2020 Issue No. 1

Welcome message from Dr Johanna Fitzgerald

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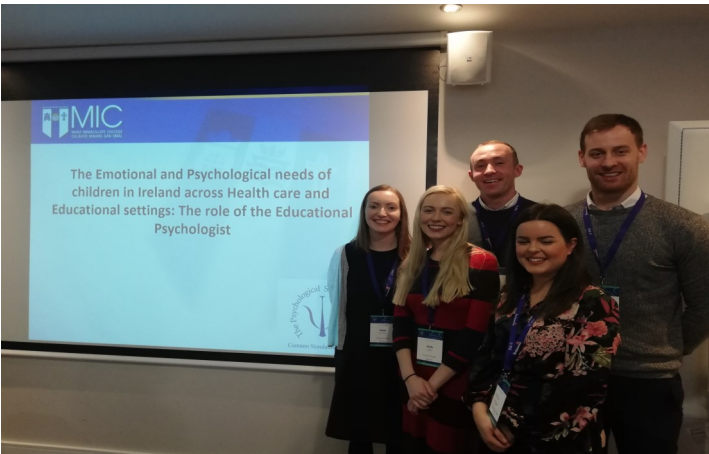
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Welcome to the first edition of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology Newsletter. We are thrilled to be able to celebrate your successes and achievements and share them widely! Faculty in the Department of Educational Psychology, Inclusive and Special Education value the positive relationships we have fostered with you, and delight in the collegial and supportive relationships you have developed with each other. The DECPsy programme is one that we are enormously proud of in the college and our wider community of educational and child psychologists continue their ambassadorial work with professionalism and vigour. As important members of this DECPsy 'tribe' our hope for you is that you grow and build on the valuable experiences you gain from and bring to this community to positively influence the fields of educational and child psychology. We look forward to learning with you and from you.

PSI Conference 2019

PSI Conference 2019

Pictured- Catriona Curtin, Aoife Lalor, Eoin Harte, Roisin Hogan and Brendan Delaney



Last November five of our trainees travelled to Kilkenny to present their research at 2019 PSI Annual Conference in the Newpark Hotel. The title of the Symposium in which Catriona, Aoife, Eoin, Roisin and Brenden presented was The Emotional and Psychological needs of children in Ireland across Health care and Educational settings. Their presentations were very well received. Well done to all involved.

The MIC Contingent

Pictured-Catriona Curtin, Aoife Lalor, Eoin Harte, Dr Margaret Farrelly, Brendan Delaney, Roisin Hogan, Dr Claire Griffin O'Brien & Dr Therese Brophy.



Class of 2019



Class of 2019 with the Dean of Education Professor Emer Ring

Where they are now

In October 2019, the first Cohort of the Doctorate in Education & Child Psychology programme graduated from Mary Immaculate College. These students have gone on to represent the College and the DECPsy programme in areas of Education psychology all over Ireland.

Dr Lainey Keane is working as a psychologist on the St Gabriel's School Age Disability Team in Limerick.

Dr Maura Moriarty is working as a psychologist in Enable Ireland in Tralee, Co. Kerry. She wanted to add, that she hasn't much news to report on right now with the pandemic but she reported that she has gotten really into buying house plants! She said that she is bad at keeping them alive but she enjoys them all the same!

Dr Alison O' Keeffe is working as a psychologist in St Joseph's, Charleville.

Dr Carol Slattery is working as a psychologist with the Disability Psychology Team in South Tipperary Therapy Services. She also presented on her doctoral research in Malmo, Sweden in October 2019. Her research was entitled, "An exploration of the AFI model in an Irish educational context".

Dr Orla Murphy is working as a psychologist in School Age Disability with the HSE in Clare and with the Brothers of Charity in Galway. She also presented at the NEPS Annual Conference in Kilkenny, November 2019

Dr Charlotte Carey is working on the Early Intervention Team in North Tipperary Disability Services.

Dr Kayleigh Sheerin is working in Kerry Intervention and Disability Services in Tralee. Kayleigh is also completing a "Climb Mount Everest Challenge" in aid of Barretstown. Together, with four other MIC graduates, she hopes to essentially climb the height of Mount Everest (that's 8,848 metres!)... she is currently working her way through the mountains and hills of Kerry to achieve this!



Dr Aoife Olsthoorn is working with the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS) in Portlaoise. She most recently co-presented on the topic of 'Words Their Way', a developmental spelling approach... she did so via webinar. She also co-published "The Limerick Reading Initiative: A Reading Intervention targeting at struggling readers in primary school" in the Support for Learning Journal and in a NEPS research publication. She is also working on two other publications. Aoife presented at the PSI Conference in Kilkenny 2019.

Aoife is getting married in Crete in August and she is very excited!!

Dr Elaine McCarthy has been working in the Department of Child, Adolescent and Family Psychology in North Lee, Cork City. She is loving life! Covid-19 permitting, she is due to marry James surrounded by close family in West Cork this August!

Dr Billy O' Meara is practicing as a psychologist in St Joseph's, Charleville. He also proposed to Aisling in December

Graduation Day 2019



Class of 2019 with members of the team and their supervisors

'I want to be a Psychologist'

I want to be a psychologist, where does one begin,

The DECPsy course at MIC, regarded as a definite option.

An application and an interview, followed by a hopeful wait for a place,

All before the journey began, a new set of challenges to embrace.

Excitement, uncertainty and apprehension, some feelings on that first day,

But everyone was so welcoming and friendly, I really have to say.

Introductions, icebreakers and an overview, we were given a definite plan,

It all seemed a bit daunting, but thankfully nobody ran!

That first semester was busy, adjusting to our new life,

Lectures, assignments and school placement, the deadlines they were rife.

As our friendships developed, our group began to bond,

Support, encouragement and a good laugh, each of us ready to respond.

When the professional placements started, things seemed to get more real,

Our experiences and work as trainee psychologists, a training near ideal.

With disability teams, NEPS, primary care and CAMHS, experience was provided,

Our skills, our knowledge and our kindness, brought support to those we guided.

While the taught modules and placements brought structure to each semester,

Our research projects and theses certainly were a tester!

From summer schools and literature reviews to ethics and data collection,

We all got used to our work and endeavours being open to honest dissection.

The sometimes endless hours of reading, writing, and correcting,

Resulted in many moments of personally reflecting.

And then came the much anticipated Viva, time to defend what we had completed,

Hoping during Covid, that internet connection would not leave us defeated!

As we near the end of the journey, we can look back with a smile,

New friends, fond memories and personal triumphs, our sanity intact all the while!

We are grateful for our lecturers and the commitment they did show,

Much credit we should give them, for that which we now know.

As we head out into new opportunities and our psychology careers,

We can feel confident in the training given over these past three years.

While wanting to be a psychologist was certainly no small ask,

I burst with pride being part of this group, who bravely met that task.



Publications, Conferences & Achievements

Conferences

Aoife Lalor

Aoife presented her research at the Psychological Society of Ireland Annual Conference 2019. Title : *An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of The Zones Of Regulation Cognitive Behavioural Intervention on Emotional Regulation Outcomes for School-Aged Children With Autism Spectrum Disorders in Ireland*"

Aoife gave a poster presentation on "Appreciate Inquiry as a Process for Positive Change within an ASD Teacher Consultation Group" at the NEPS Business Meeting 2019.

Brendan Delany

Brendan presented his research at the Psychological Society of Ireland Annual Conference 2019. Title: *'The Impact of Trauma-Sensitive Schools Training on School Staff Members' Ability to Respond to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)'*

Brendan presented his research at the National Educational Psychological Service Annual Business Meeting 2019. Title: *'Responding to Childhood Trauma: The Role of Trauma-Sensitive Schools'*

Brendan gave a poster Presentation at the National Educational Psychological Service Annual Business Meeting 2019. Title: *'An Investigation into School Refusal Behaviours in a Rural Primary School: A Soft Systems Methodology Approach'*

Eoin Harte

Eoin presented his research at the Psychological Society of Ireland Annual Conference 2019. Title: *'Developing Student Mental Toughness: The Potential Impact of Autonomy Support from Teachers'*

Eoin presented his research at the National Educational Psychological Service Annual Business Meeting 2019: title *'Developing Student Mental Toughness: The Potential Impact of Autonomy Support from Teachers'*

Achievements

MIC Doctoral Award

Congratulations to Eibhlín Ryan, a year 2 trainee, who was recently selected as the recipient of the prestigious 2020 MIC Doctoral Award following the MIC Postgraduate Awards Competition. Eibhlín's is currently completing her doctoral research under the supervision of Dr Margaret Farrelly. The research is entitled "How do children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) attending special ASD classes in mainstream primary schools perceive themselves and their educational experiences? Child, parent and teacher insights

Contributions

Niamh Moore, final year trainee, contributed to a 'Bridge Back to School: An Autism-Friendly Learning Resource for Summer 2020. It is a wonderful resource for helping students adjust back to school and can be accessed

here <https://supervalu.ie/view/var/files/real-people/Autism-Friendly-Shopping/Bridge-20back-20to-20school-203.pdf>

Viva Voce Success

It is with a sense of great pride that we offer congratulations to ten of our DECPsy students who successfully defended their Doctoral thesis. In unusual circumstances, Fiona, Brendan, Eoin, Deirdre, Emma, Roisin, Niamh, Aoife, Catriona & Elaine all passed their Viva Voce exams. This is a huge achievement for the students involved and the DECPsy team as a whole. A special note of thanks is due to all the supervisors involved as they were instrumental in this process; Fiona - Dr Trevor O'Brien, Dr Paul Mulcahy and Dr Laura Moore, Brendan- Dr Claire Griffin & Dr Maeve Dooley, Eoin-Dr John Perry & Dr Therese Brophy, Deirdre-Dr Therese Brophy & Dr Suzanne Egan, Emma-Dr Jennifer Pope & Dr Suzanne Egan, Roisin- Dr Maeve Dooley & Dr John Perry, Niamh-Prof Emer Ring, Dr Lisha O'Sullivan & Prof Eugene Wall, Aoife - Dr Margaret Farrelly, Catriona -Dr Claire Griffin & Elaine- Dr Stella Long

We are immensely proud of these students and we have no doubt that they will go on to achieve all that they hope for.



Personal News



The newest member of the DECPsy family arrived last Summer. Therese Brophy, her husband Paul and their daughters Áine and Eimear welcomed beautiful baby Cara in June 2019.

Saoirse MacCarthaigh will cycle along the Wild Atlantic Way from Kinsale to Malin Head in July. This cycle will be in aid of ASIAM, the autism charity. If you would like to support Saoirse on his cycle you can donate here <https://www.idonate.ie/saoirse-maccrthaigh455>.



Farewell & Thank You

The DECPsy team would like to thank Maeve Dooley for her huge contribution to the programme. Maeve will be stepping away from her role as Research Coordinator to focus more on her private practice but we are delighted that we will still benefit from her clinical skills and expertise through her teaching on the programme.