



The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

Develop Me Dedication

By Eoghan O' Leary

On Wednesday the 13th of November the three Transition Year classes battled it out to complete different teamwork challenges, as part of the 'Develop Me' TY programme.

'Develop Me' specialises in bringing experiential learning into the secondary school classroom. Experiential learning is all about learning by doing, through hands-on experiences and activities that help students make better connections between knowledge learned in the classroom and real life situations. The workshop focussed on two areas of learning: project management and understanding effective teamwork. The various tasks students completed also tested students on their ability to perform under pressure, within a specified time limit.

The first game students played was called 'The Search for the Lost Dutchman's Gold Mine.' For this game, students were given the challenge of planning and launching an expedition to the Lost Dutchman's Gold Mine in the Superstition Mountain range in Arizona. With limited time and resources, students had to decide how to approach the challenge, what route they will take to and from the mine, and figure out how to make the best use of the resources, information and advice at their disposal. The aim of the game was to get as much gold as possible and use supplies and other materials to try and achieve this in under 20 days, when each day is about two minutes in real time.

Afterwards, during a debrief, students realised how a different approach to the challenge would have yielded higher results. They learned that they didn't need any more resources, time or luck to do this, just a different strategy.



TY's Patrick, Ethan, Mark, Oliver & Adam working collaboratively



The second game was 'Solving the Problem of Tom's Canyon Ford', a challenge designed to develop a greater understanding of successful team work and the dysfunctions that inhibit team performance. Linking to the first game, students were now tasked with building a bridge for the miners to transport their gold out of the Dutchman's Gold Mine safely. For this challenge, each group became different mining companies, who have come together to build this bridge. With all of their resources tied up in building the bridge, it was vital that the build was efficient as possible, so that the miners could get back to doing what they do best, mining for gold!

Students got to work building the bridge using Connect pieces which are a mix between Lego and Meccano pieces. This had to be done in under 1 hour. TY class A won both games and managed to get 1 point from the record score of 50 in the first game, achieving a score of 49. In the second game, class A built the bridge in 45 minutes, class B did it in 47 minutes and class C got 50 minutes.

Hugh O' Donnell from TYA spoke highly about the workshop saying, "It was a good day of learning about myself and challenging my mind. The highlight was building a relationship with my classmates." Oliver Sanger also enjoyed the day, adding "I thought it was a great day to develop team work skills and I learned a lot such as gathering everyone's thoughts and strategies for the board game. My favourite part was building the towers because it was fun and I liked the competitive element of it."

Overall, the TY's enjoyed the workshop, which challenged them to think critically and work as a team. Thanks to the 'Develop Me' programme facilitators Gerard O' Shea, David O' Shea, and Owen O' Brien for coming to Caimin's and sharing their expertise with us. It was a fun, interactive, and beneficial experience for all students who participated.



The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

Work Experience Reflections

By Oliver Sanger

Transition Years have almost finished their first block of work experience. Each student is getting great hands-on experience in a variety of different sectors and industries. I sat down with some students from TYA to ask them how it's going.

The first student I spoke to was Emel Fitzgerald. She is working in Harmony Montessori in Shannon. Her main roles and duties are working with the children and helping out with the class. This consists of cleaning up toys, playing games with the children, and taking them on walks to the library where she reads to them. Her working day is generally 9am to 12pm. When asked what she enjoys the most about the job, Emel said, "It's fun working with the children and I have gained great skills along the way that I can use in the future." However, the job is not without its challenges according to Emel who added, "they can be very hyper sometimes so it's important to be able to calm them down and get them back into a routine. I've learned a lot in that sense." For her next work experience, Emel plans to work in her dad's barber shop because she says "it will teach me lots of new skills and it's an added bonus that I can earn some money."

My second interview was with Mark Hudi. Mark is working in the Oakwood Hotel in Shannon. He helps with cleaning up the breakfast area in the morning, and sets the tables for the next day. He says, "the pro's are that it's good meeting new people and working with people, getting tips and such but one of the con's is that I didn't get the opportunity to serve customers as I never got a code to the register." Mark said he has gained the experience of working in a busy hotel environment, and social skills. He was able to learn how to clean and set the tables the proper way. For his next work experience, Mark will work in the bakery in the town centre as he still wants to work with people but just wants a change of scenery.

My third interview was with Rhys Regan. Rhys is working in Morrissey's Family Butchers in the town centre. Some of his main responsibilities include mincing the meat and general store work like cleaning and stocking. Rhys said, "it's a good working environment and it keeps me busy throughout the day. The only negative is that the work can get repetitive, kind of knowing what's going to happen when I go into work every day." From this job, Rhys has gained many new skills like how to stay organised and stay on top of his work load. He has also gained useful culinary and knife skills, which he said is "really cool because these are definitely skills that I can use in the future." For his next work placement, Rhys will work with a mechanic, since he has an interest in cars and machinery.



For my next interview, I spoke to Abbie Ryan. Abbie is working in Obair in Newmarket. Obair has been in existence in Newmarket on Fergus for over 20 years and is a community development organisation that works with people from all ages and walks of life to overcome social exclusion as well as to develop social enterprise in the area. Obair supports those who are unemployed or elderly and work to facilitate greater community participation in the area. Abbie's work in Obair includes working in an office, and designing posters for upcoming charity and community events. She said, "I like the hours, I work from nine in the morning until 12, which is nice, but if I'm honest, this is not the sort of work I am interested in doing in the future. That said, I have gained social skills and communication skills as I sometimes went out and worked with the kids. It was also good poster making practice." For her next placement, Abbie will be working in The Old Lodge hotel and restaurant in Shannon, since she hopes to gain hospitality skills for the near future.

My last interview was with Holly Quinn, who is working in Blush Beauty, a beauty salon in Sixmilebridge. Her job is to answer the phone, take appointments, and help to keep the salon clean and tidy. Holly said, "the good thing about this job is that it's a good experience meeting people and working with people in general. I don't particularly like answering the phone, but the more I do it, the more comfortable and confident I feel doing it." It seems Holly has gained lots of good things from this job, saying, "I have developed better people skills and have improved at scheduling appointments for customers, and keeping the appointment schedule organised." For her next work placement as part of TY, Holly will be working in a primary school in her locality, as she would like a future in teaching.

All in all, it is clear to see that our students are gaining a lot from TY and learning lots from their work placements.



The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

Highlighting Issues of Substance Abuse and Financial Fraud

By Emel Fitzgerald

On the 20th of November, two members of An Garda Síochána took the time to speak to our Transition Year, 5th Year and 6th Year students to highlight the dangers of substance use and the issue of financial fraud.

Garda Eoin Daly and Sergeant Dominic Regan from the Kiltrush Garda Station began the discussion on substance abuse by sharing information about the most commonly used drugs in Ireland which includes cocaine, cannabis, heroin and ecstasy. Most shockingly, Garda Daly informed students that Ireland currently has the highest rate of cocaine usage in all of Europe and is the third highest user of cocaine globally.

Daly shared some powerful anecdotes and first-hand experiences, revealing the devastating impact of drug use, abuse and misuse on families and communities in Co. Clare. According to Daly, the most common drug here in Ireland in 2024 is cannabis and he commented, "cannabis is being used in Ireland like it's normal now. It's everywhere."

Daly and Regan explained the procedure that members of An Garda Síochána are required to follow when there is suspicion of someone carrying drugs, or using drugs illegally. If the guards have any suspicion that someone is carrying drugs, they have the right to search their vehicle and conduct a pat down search on the person. If the person refuses to comply with the garda search, they will be brought to the station and questioned. Furthermore, if the guards are under any suspicion that someone is using drugs, they also have the right to take them to the station for testing which will determine what drugs they have been using, and they may decide to carry out questioning to gain more information.

Both guards highlighted the various harmful substances found in drugs because, according to Regan, "a lot of people that are buying and using drugs today do not know what is in them or the ingredients they contain. Even the guards don't always know what they are looking at until these drugs are sent to get tested in a lab in Dublin."



Another interesting topic discussed was the dark world of online fraud and in particular, the new phenomenon that is 'Money Mules'. 'Money mules' or 'money transfer agents' are people recruited by criminals to help transfer stolen or illegally obtained money, as part of a money laundering scheme.

An Garda Síochána, in association with FraudSMART are trying to raise awareness about financial scams and advise people, particularly young adults and teenagers, to be aware of the risks and consequences of acting as 'money mules'. According to FraudSMART, there have been 9,000 cases of money muling in Ireland over the last three years. In this scheme, money mules are asked to hand over their bank account details and are offered 10% to 15% of what is put into the account. The account is then used to launder money that is stolen from other scams. Some people are recruited through social media apps like Instagram or Snapchat, but some are recruited by people they know too.

Garda Daly highlighted some of the consequences of acting as a 'money mule', for example, the chance of a criminal record as a money mule, and there is also the danger that by acting as a money mule, you might be helping other criminal activities that are funded by the money being laundered through your account. Garda Daly referred to a garda investigation that took place in south Co. Kerry earlier this year, where up to 60 suspected 'money mules' were identified, some of which were only 16 years old and in secondary school at the time. He is urging young people to be vigilant online, and shared some tips on how to do so:

1. Be careful with offers to make easy money online.
2. Never give your bank account details to anyone unless you know and trust them.
3. Never allow your bank account to be used by someone else.





The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

SCIENCE WEEK 2024

By Oliver Sanger

This year's Science Week was a huge success, thanks to our brilliant science teachers and students. The week was filled with events that encouraged curiosity and showcased the talents of science students from all year groups.

The week kicked off with a First Year Science Quiz on Monday the 11th, which took place in the canteen. Organised by TYA and TYC, the quiz was an exciting opportunity for first year students to test their scientific knowledge and have some fun while doing it. 150 first year students took part in the quiz and it was great to see their enthusiasm and participation. There were prizes on the day for the winners! (see picture below)



Winners of the First Year Science Quiz

On Wednesday the 13th, 27 Physics students from LCI and LC2 hosted a brilliant Physics Fair which gave them an opportunity to display their impressive physics demonstrations. The event, which ran from 2pm to 3:20pm in the main reception area, featured 18 engaging physics demonstrations which were on display for students and staff to admire and discuss.

The aim of the event was to celebrate science week, but also the hard work and dedication of our Physics students. There were a number of prizes awarded to students on the day, including awards for 'Best Communicator' and 'Best Design'. Geo Bituca from LC2 was awarded the 'Best Communicator' prize for LC2, while Callum Sutton from LCI earned the same accolade for his clear and informative explanations of his project. In addition, Colin Devitt (LC2) received a 'Highly Commended' award for his excellent presentation, while Luke Molloy and Matthew Repunte, both from LC2, won the 'Best Design Award'.

Callum Sutton's project was a model launched rollercoaster. The LCI student said, "I got the idea when I was with my friend at Alton Towers and he asked me how a launched rollercoaster works. The idea just popped into my head that this should be my physics project. The project works by pulling

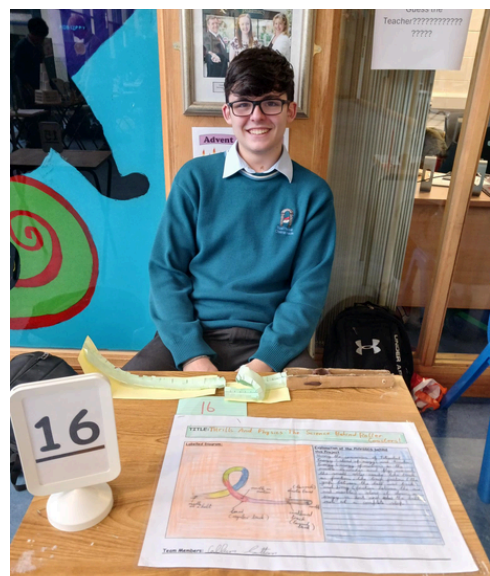


Left to Right: Callum Sutton (LC1), Colin Devitt (LC2), Geo Bituca (LC2), Luke Molloy (LC2) and Matthew Repunte (LC2)

back an elastic band with a metal marble. This elastic creates potential energy. When the elastic is let go, it flings forward, creating kinetic energy. This energy passes onto the marble which traverses the track, and while it moves, air resistance, and friction slow it down, while it expels heat and sound energy, until the marble comes to a complete stop."

Speaking of his love for the subject, Callum added, "my favourite thing about physics is the experiments. They're fun, interesting and they show us how many things work in the world around us, things I never knew before. I also enjoy physics because it's a lot of maths, and I personally like maths."

Callum was thrilled to win the 'Best Communicator' award for LCI, saying "I sometimes find it difficult to explain what makes sense in my head to others, so to know that I was able to explain my project effectively was very rewarding."



LC1 student Callum Sutton, winner of the 'Best Communicator' Award for LCI



The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

SCIENCE WEEK 2024

By Oliver Sanger

Colin Devitt, winner of the 'Highly Commended' award sat down with The Caimin's Connection to discuss his project. He explained, "My demonstration had me dropping a tennis ball on top of a basketball to demonstrate the transfer of momentum. This occurs as when the basketball hits the ground it compresses, almost like a trampoline for the tennis ball, and because the basketball is much bigger than the tennis ball, it transfers a lot of momentum to it sending it flying into the air. I came up with this idea after seeing a video on social media of this exact demo so I decided to find out the physics behind it and to demonstrate it for myself." Colin enjoys Physics, in particular, "the more practical side of it like when we get to do the mandatory experiments as I find these to be very fun."

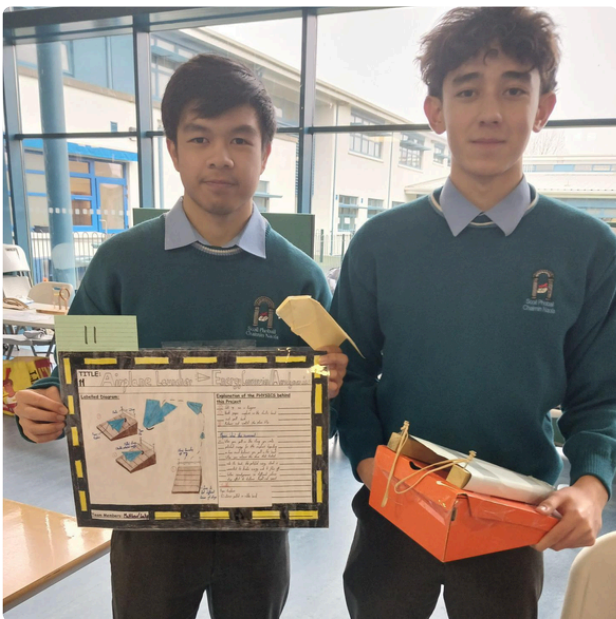
Speaking of winning the prize for 'Highly Commended' project, Colin said, "I very happy to have won the 'Highly Commended Award' for my project as it meant that the students and teachers enjoyed leaning about the physics behind my demonstration." Speaking of his plans for after school, Colin added, "After my leaving cert, I would like to pursue a career in something like engineering as it is very hands on and also has some elements of physics in it to."



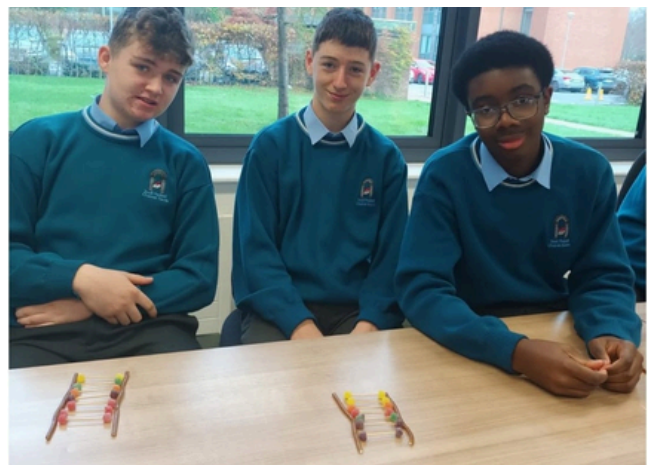
TY students pictured outside the Kemmy Business School in UL

Another highlight of the week was the TY's visit to TUS Limerick. Students enjoyed a great day learning about the latest developments in science and technology. The trip allowed them to see how science is applied in the real world and inspired them to think about potential careers in STEM fields.

TY student Olive Lynch shared her thoughts on the day. "We started off the day in UL with a workshop, where we learned about cells and we even made our own cells using jelly tots and liquorice, sticks and tooth picks. We got to really embrace the college lifestyle and adventure around the campus for a while before returning to the grounds for a brilliant lecture on genetics and their history. It was truly fascinating and I really enjoyed it. I thought it gave such a good insight into how far back genetics goes, and how much everything has evolved and changed over time. Overall, it was a really enjoyable experience and it was very educational."



LC2 Physics students Matthew Repunte and Luke Molloy, winners of the 'Best Design' award



TY students Cillian, Ciarán and Godson with their cell prototypes

Also during Science Week, LCI biology students held a fantastic science show for a group of student's from St. Conaire's primary school.

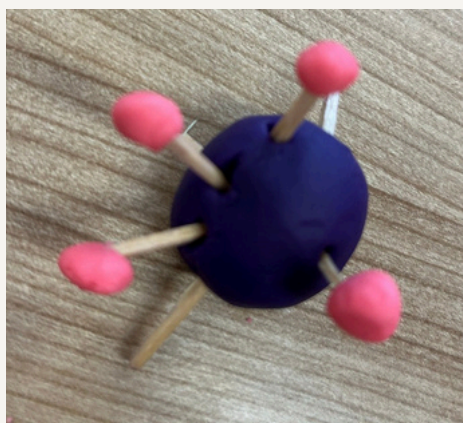
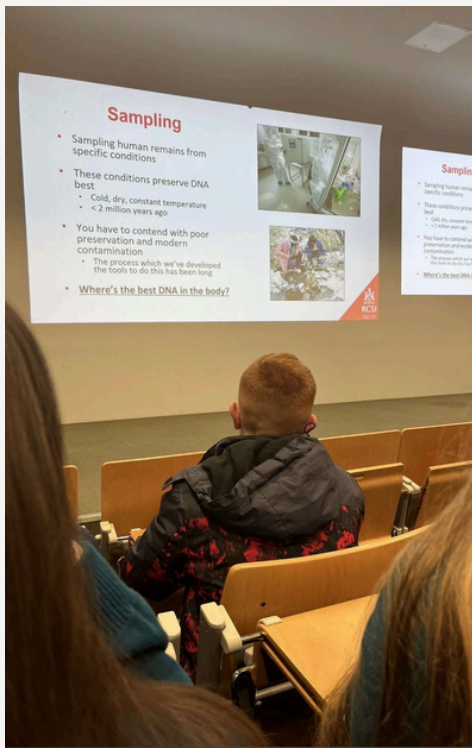
Science Week was a great success, inspiring students to think about the world of science and the subjects they are studying. We can't wait to see what next year's Science Week brings!

UL BIOLOGY TRIP

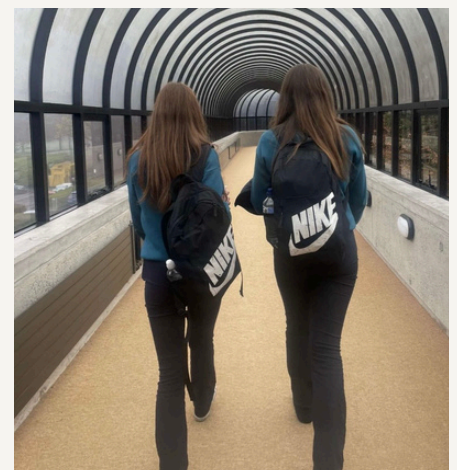
SCIENCE WEEK - 12/11/24

Written by Caoife Gunn, Aoibheann McCarthy, Katlyn Higgins, Dylan Tobin and Ciarán Ryan (TYC)

On Tuesday the 12th of November, TY B and C went to UL for science week. We listened to a scientist named Niall tell us about DNA and genetics. We made a model of a DNA strand in the shape of a double-helix with cola laces as the sugar phosphate backbones and jelly tots and toothpicks as nitrogenous bases. We also made virus and bacteria structures out of playdoh.



We explored the UL campus. We looked at the eating facilities, the dorm hall, classrooms and the Brown Thomas statue. Then we went to a lecture entitled, 'The Genetics of Irish History'. The lecturer spoke about DNA sampling and how to harvest DNA. The easiest bone to get DNA from is the petrous which is at the base of the skull.





The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

Rugby Rivalries

By Eoghan O' Leary

The St. Caimin's UI4 and UI5 rugby teams had an excellent outing on the 14th of November, when they participated in a school blitz organised by Munster Rugby. The event took place at the Shannon rugby club in Limerick.

This blitz went really well for the St. Caimin's UI4 team, who won all four of their games.

Second year student Rory Jones was among players whose performance stood out on the day, although every player contributed to the team's overall success. Of all the teams to participate in the blitz, St. Caimin's was the team that stood out, having defeated four teams in four matches. It was tough for the other teams to compete with that and Caimin's represented themselves and the school very well.

I spoke to first year student Eoin Holland who was playing on the day and asked him what he thought about his team's performance. He said, "I thought Rory Jones was a standout player for the team. We were pleased with how we played and we're delighted to get a four out of four winning streak. I probably would have liked it if it was more competitive or if there was a trophy involved or medals for the winning team but it was still a great day and was great to come out on top. The team from Newcastle West was definitely the toughest team we played against, but luckily we still managed to win and we are delighted about that. We pulled together as a team."

Overall, the St. Caimin's UI4's and 15's had a great day out, with some exceptional displays of rugby seen all over the pitch. They are going to be a tough team to beat in the next competition.





The Caimin's Connection

Keeping you up to date with the latest news in our school community

TYA (Emel, Eoghan, Oliver)

29th November 2024

Issue 20

Lifesaving Lessons

By Emel Fitzgerald

On the 6th and 7th of November, Garda Ken Butler from the Traffic Policing Unit in Ennis delivered the Lifesaver Project to our Transition Year students.

Launched in October 2023, The Lifesaver Project is a road safety education program delivered by members of An Garda Síochána to secondary school students. It is a hard hitting and realistic road safety presentation highlighting the devastating effects that road traffic collisions have on people's lives. It is a 2 hour programme of interactive engagement, supported by video inserts and personal experiences of road traffic collision victims and/or their families. The program delivers a strong road safety message that everyone needs to hear and help address the current rising death and serious injury collisions on our roads.

During the morning session, Garda Butler presented students with different scenarios involving horrific road accidents on Irish roads. He discussed each scenario and interacted with students, urging them to discuss and decide whether the person in the accident was right or wrong. This was a powerful exercise and tested student's existing knowledge of the rules of the road.

Next, he spoke about the four main causes of road accidents:

1. Using mobile phones whilst driving.
2. Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
3. Speeding.
4. Not wearing a seatbelt.

Garda Butler explained, in detail the dangers of these behaviours on the roads, and showed students some videos of real accidents that have ruined people's lives due to one of the causes mentioned above.

Butler selected some students to take part in an interesting activity called the 'Bouncing Ball Challenge.' The idea of this challenge is to dispel the myth that people can drive and text at the same time. The challenge tested students' ability to throw a tennis ball from one to the other, or up in the air while texting a short message on their phone. Unsurprisingly, most students failed to make the catches. The purpose of the exercise was to point out to students that if you can't successfully catch a tennis ball while texting, you can't possibly expect to drive a car if you are on your phone.

During the day, Ken shared some personal experiences, including a tragic story about his friend who got into a serious



road accident on his motorcycle as a result of drink driving and ended up paralysed from the neck down. He explained the importance of education, and the role open dialogue can play in informing young people about dangers on the roads.

Students also learned about the importance of wearing a seatbelt when in the car. Garda Butler explained that there is a small device in seatbelts called a pretensioner, which secures the person safely in their seatbelt, in order to reduce the risk of injury in the event of a crash.

Butler also shared some interesting statistics which show that girls are less likely than boys to wear their seatbelt correctly. There is evidence that some girls wear the seatbelt under their arm to avoid ruining their hair and makeup.

Abbie Ryan described the programme as "very interesting. I enjoyed listening to Ken's own personal stories about accidents he has responded to. Some of his stories were really shocking." Hugh O' Donnell added, "Ken was highly informative, and I learned a lot about the dangers of the roads." Finally, Patrick Baylon said "I found it quite intriguing, and I thought the videos were good to help you understand more in depth about the dangers that exist on the roads."



Garda Ken Butler with TY students