

# Cultural odyssey for pupils



Mayor Cllr Ger Carthy pictured with a group during the Erasmus + programme in the Our Lady of Fatima School. Pic: Jim Campbell

STUDENTS AND teachers at Our Lady of Fatima School in Wexford had their welcoming banners out recently as they played host to staff and pupils from

schools in four countries across Europe. Visitors from France, Germany, Italy and Turkey took part in the Erasmus+ programme which brought

them to the Wexford town school for a week of culture, learning and fun. Designed to develop educational partnership between schools interna-

tionally, the programme focuses on the idea of inclusion of all students, particularly those with disabilities. Programme coordinator Glenda McKeown

explained that teachers and four pupils from the school will get the chance to travel later in the year to Italy in March and to France in May. She said that the week

had been very much a community event and local businesses and amenities were both supportive and supported.

The visitors stayed at the Talbot Hotel and got the chance to partake in a variety of activities during the week including trips to Johnstown Castle, Kilkannon Garden Centre, the Railway Yard Gallops, and much more.

The week opened with a school assembly which was addressed by the Mayor, Cllr Ger Carthy and also by the visitors themselves who outlined their own teaching methods and structures.

On Tuesday, the day was spent on a shopping expedition for the purpose of creating traditional local recipes for inclusion in a visual cookbook which is due to be launched in May. The teachers subsequently attended a meeting while the pupils enjoyed a fun afternoon at LeisureMax.

Wednesday took in more of Wexford's tourist trail with trips to Johnstown Castle, horse riding in Dun-

cormick, and lunch in Kehoe's Pub in Kilmore where the group then spent time exploring the pier and surrounding area.

On Thursday, the group visited the Delta Sensory Gardens in Carlow, Kilkannon Garden Centre and went shopping in Enniscorthy town.

Finally, Friday saw the group take part in five workshops: in music, cooking, sports, jewellery making, and circus skills. That night, all participants attended a Culture Night in the school which gave people to sample different foods from all of the different cultures. There was also plenty of singing and dancing and the winner of the logo competition, a student from Turkey, was announced.

Ms. McKeown said: "The group departed then on Saturday and we are very lonely without them. We had over 42 people visiting and we were so happy to show them around our beautiful county. We made great friends and had a lovely week."





son, Darina Gleeson and Fergal O'Hanlon providing some music for the culture night.



Daniel O'Leary and Beverly Sinnott



Sarah Howlin, Sadhbh Maloney and Tracey

# EU programme unites schools through culture

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N and adults alike enjoyed a medley of music, exotic foods and good conversation at the culture night in Our Lady of Fatima school.

The evening marked the end of a busy week for the school and their European visitors. As part of the Erasmus+ programme, five schools from Turkey, Germany and France, sent representatives over to spend time with staff and students in the Wexford school. The aim of the programme, which is the new EU programme for education, training, youth and sport, is to encourage schools to develop partnerships with participating organisations.

Erasmus+ coordinator in Our Lady of Fatima Glenda McKeown explained what the programme and their involvement is.

'One of the objectives is to develop an education partnership between six schools and focus on learning. We are all learning from each other, and there are so many different areas where the programme will be relevant for these students such as in their future schools and in the community. The project is inclusive in itself because it involves children with and without difficulties.'

Our Lady of Fatima school have partnered with five schools: College du Sacre Coeur in France, St. Peter's Schule in Germany, Istituto Cometa Stella in Italy and Murat Secondary FVK in Turkey.

'During the spending time with staff and students from the five schools, Glenda said that she has learned a lot about the way schools operate elsewhere.

'It was always good to learn more for the good of the students and for the good of ourselves,'



Anthony and Sylvia Boyd

representatives from the Board of Management and Parent's Association.

'We invited a lot of people from the community because we want to let people know what's happening. We are involving as many people as possible,' explained Glenda.

Following the conference, the guests were shown around the community, visiting interesting sites such as Johnstown Castle and a local sensory garden. Other activities included shopping in Enniscorthy, horse riding in Duncormick



Flowers were presented to Rita Waters (principal), Glenda McKeown and Melissa Sinnott by Murat Aslan (Turkey), Mario Zoppi (France) and Danielle Lovollee (Italy) with help from Levin Nedic.



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