

2022/2023



# Blue Star Programme

## Final Report

*Let's get creative about Europe!*



## Historical

Please outline below how your school fulfilled the criteria for the historical section of the Blue Star Programme highlighting in particular where technology was used for this project work. Feel free to add photos where you can.

1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Studied Halloween Traditions in Ireland and how they have spread all over the world. They also learned about different Christmas traditions across Europe.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	Studied the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh. We used the internet as a class for research. The children made 3D sunflowers inspired by Van Gogh's sunflowers.
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Classes	Did historical projects on Germany. Shared powerpoints in class and had a class discussion and feedback on the projects.
5 <sup>th</sup> Class	5 <sup>th</sup> Class studied the Renaissance in History, in conjunction with learning about Italy, as the Renaissance began in Italy. We focused on many things that changed due to the Renaissance period such as how Renaissance doctors helped to shape modern medicine, scientists such as Galileo helped to change how people viewed the universe and even invented the first microscope and Renaissance artists changed art techniques with more oil painting and perspective being used.. We also looked at famous Renaissance people, in particular, Leonardo Da Vinci, Michaelangelo and Galileo.
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	<p>Rang a Sé examined the history of Europe and the European Union. We looked closely at how World War influenced the establishment of the European Union and how and when in history each country became involved.</p> <p>We also looked the original founders and their motivations for creating a European Union.</p> <p>Pupils each selected a country from the European Union to investigate using technology and any other research method they preferred. The children presented their projects in both paper/ card format and also as digital powerpoints to their class. The projects examined the following areas: history of the country, geography and topography of the country, tourism and places of interest, climate, vegetation, food, language and sports.</p>



**Whole School Activity:** First Class' assembly was on the formation of the EU and explained the history to the whole school in the form of a play.

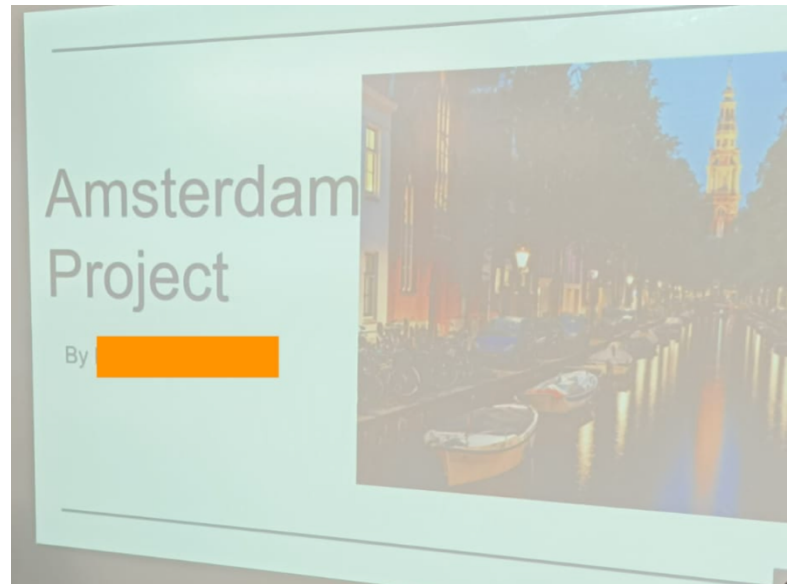
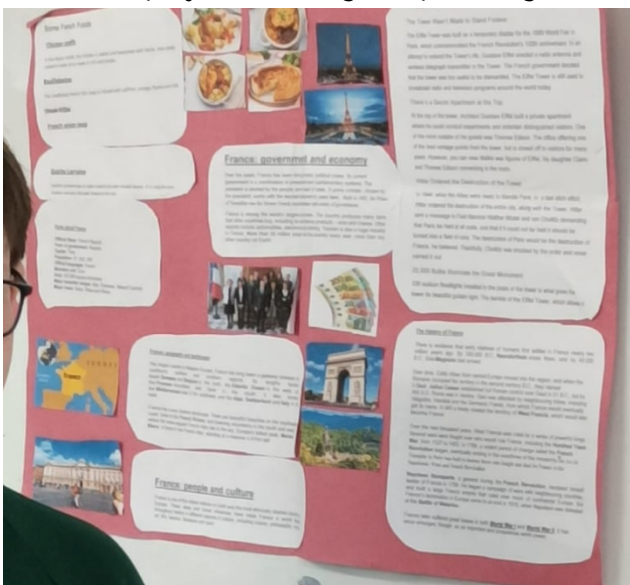
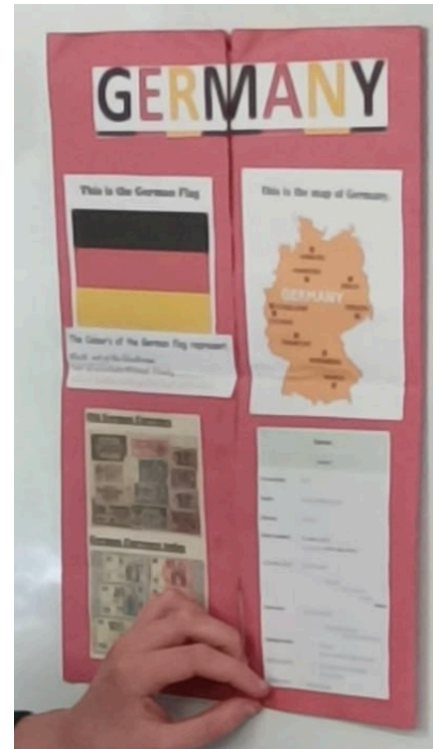




# Blue Star Programme



Research projects on Italy completed by 5<sup>th</sup> Class



Research projects on different countries in Europe completed by 6<sup>th</sup>

Please indicate how engaged your pupils were with these activities: A little engaged (1); Engaged (2); Highly engaged (3).

Pupils in the Senior Classes love individual research projects. The Junior Classes love learning through art and play which they also really enjoyed. Pupils were highly engaged (3) by this aspect of the programme.



## Geographical

Please outline below how your school fulfilled the criteria for the geographical section of the Blue Star Programme highlighting in particular where technology was used for this project work. Feel free to add photos where you can.

Senior Infants	Senior Infants looked at the location of France within Europe. They noted the other countries within Europe and identified those which had been visited by some of the class. They looked at the location of Paris and noted some of the landmarks in the city. We used the internet to provide pictures and maps for this part of the project.
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	Studied Belgium & did a walk through past some important landmarks on Google Maps using the class interactive flatscreen Studied Spain and had a visitor from Spain to the classroom who told them all about Spain. Children made a KWL chart on all the things they knew about Spain and made connections there.
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	2 <sup>nd</sup> Class studied the Netherlands, their language, flag, famous people, favourite foods, bordering countries, population, etc.
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Classes	Did projects on Germany. Projects were a mix of scrapbooks, posters, Google Slides, powerpoints and typed projects.
5 <sup>th</sup> Class	5 <sup>th</sup> Class studied the European country of Italy. During this study of Italy we looked at the physical and natural Geography of Italy, famous buildings and landmarks in Italy, we compared the foods eaten in Italy with the foods eaten in Ireland, learned some Italian phrases, developed an understanding of roman numerals and explored some Italian artists.
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	Rang a Sé examined the countries of Europe and those involved with the European Union. We marked them on a map of the world and completed a digital game activity to name all the countries of Europe.

### Whole School Activity:

First Class' assembly contained a display of all the flags of the countries in the EU, which the whole school got to see. These were then displayed in the hall.





# Blue Star Programme



A photo of some of the flags from 1<sup>st</sup> Class Assembly



Senior Infants' research on France

Please indicate how engaged your pupils were with these activities: A little engaged (1); Engaged (2); Highly engaged (3).

The children loved learning about other countries in Europe. First Class enjoyed their Spanish visitor to the class. The Senior Classes loved working on and sharing their research projects. Pupils were highly engaged (3) by this aspect of the programme.



## Cultural & Creative

Please outline below how your school carried out the cultural and creative section of the Blue Star Programme focusing in particular on the creative elements of this part of the Programme. Please highlight in particular where technology was used for this project work. Feel free to add photos where you can.

Senior Infants	<p>Senior Infants looked at some similarities and differences between French food at that eaten by us in Ireland. The observed that many of the children actually ate French food on a daily basis in lunches, e.g. Croissants, brioche and bread sticks. We decided to sample some French food in school. We brought in a range of foods that were cut up and sampled by the entire class. We enjoyed this activity. Photos were taken of the event.</p> <p>The children wrote about some of their findings on France and on the points of interest that they had noted. This was displayed in the school hall. Also the children coloured and drew some of the French foods and flags which was compiled into a further display.</p> <p>The children also learned how to say hello, good bye, thank you and good night in French. They coloured a selection of display posters with these words emphasised.</p>
1 <sup>st</sup> Class	<p>We made and enjoyed Belgian waffles, studied artwork from Belgium, used different European languages to count their daily exercise activities in the classroom (German, French, Spanish, Italian, English, Gaeilge)</p> <p>We learned some Spanish dances (Macarena &amp; participated in an online salsa class)</p> <p>We learned to sing Happy Birthday in Gaeilge and Spanish</p> <p>We looked at some cartoons that originated in Belgium: The Smurfs and Tintin and followed a tutorial to draw pictures of Tintin</p>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Class tasted some delicious food from the Netherlands some caramel spread on crackers, gouda cheese and crackers, gouda cheese snacks and chocolate shaped windmills. Some children brought in homemade Dutch pancakes.</p>
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Classes	<p>Study of artist Paul Klee, made artwork inspired by his style</p> <p>Tasted German food – Frankfurters and pretzels that the teacher brought in to share. Other German food brought in were German buns, biscuits, salami, pretzels and Haribo.</p>



# Blue Star

## Programme

5 <sup>th</sup> Class	<p>5<sup>th</sup> Class enjoyed trying some Italian cuisine by having a class pizza party. Many children also brought in different pastas, spaghetti, breadsticks and ciabatta. We also studied Italian artists in detail paying particular attention to Leonardo da Vinci and Michaelangelo. We studied 'The Last Supper' and 'The Mona Lisa', even creating our own versions of the Mona Lisa painting. We also learned about the famous Venice Festival that is held annually and we constructed colourful Venetian masks. We also studied the work of the Dutch artist Van Gogh. We recreated his famous 'Wheatfield with Crows'.</p>
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	<p>Rang a Sé examined the cultural aspects of the countries involved in the European Union through their projects. We looked at the language, fashion, foods, places of tourist interest and famous landmarks of European countries. The pupils used the internet and tablets to source their information and create digital powerpoints or slideshows. Pupils also used the internet and technology to help them to find maps, graphs and digital images to accompany and support their projects.</p> <p>Pupils then completed an art activity whereby we looked at colour and tone and shading or mixing of colours and integrated these with a famous European landmark stuck over the top of the colour mixing and tonal work.</p> <p>Pupils also had a fantastic day of food tasting where we tasted a variety of breads and spreads from around Europe. We had Baguettes, crackers, croissants, Naan Bread, pretzels, chocolate spread, cheese spreads, etc. It was a lovely way to taste and sample new foods while learning about the foods and culture around food from another country.</p>

### Whole School Activity:

- Celebrating Irish Culture - The whole school presented a special Irish music, poetry, dance & drama concert for the parents and school community in the local community hall. Each class played a selection of tunes on their tin whistles, keyboards and accordions. Junior and Senior Infants performed their Irish songs and poems. Second, Third and Fourth Classes presented beautiful céilí dances they have been working on. Second Class treated us all to a special presentation of their drama as Gaeilge. The whole school joined in a selection of fun songs from Báidín Fheilimí to Gráinne Mhaol. A thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all.
- The whole school participated in a '**Bread from Around Europe**' Day and shared different breads together in a special lunch.



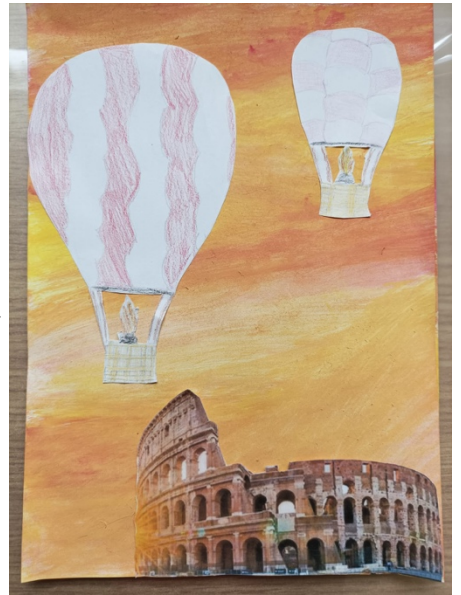


# Blue Star Programme

1<sup>st</sup> Class Homemade Belgian Waffles



6<sup>th</sup> Class  
Beautiful  
Artwork on  
European  
Landmarks



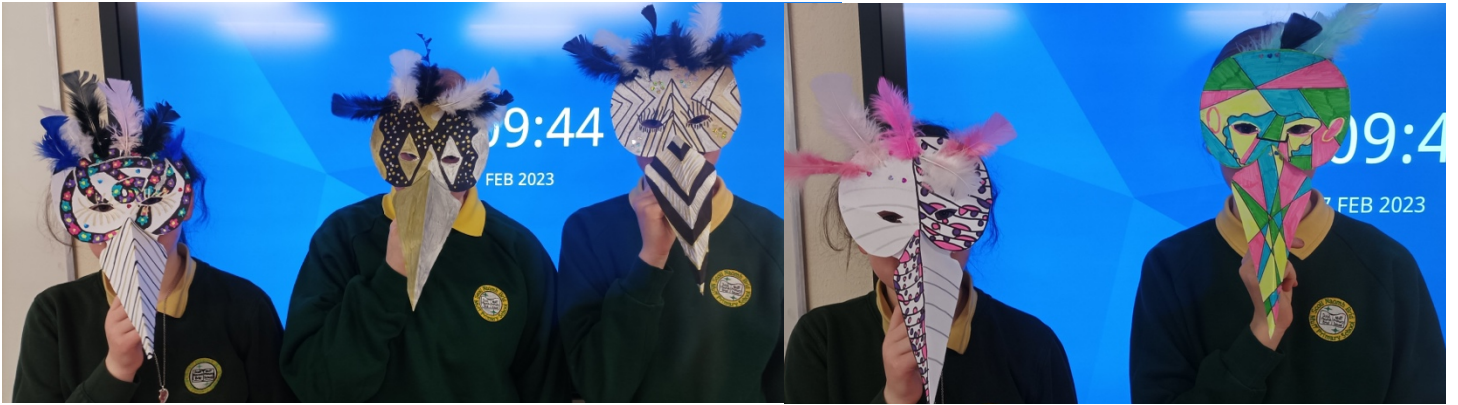
6<sup>th</sup> Class  
Breads of  
Europe  
Sharing  
Platter







# Blue Star Programme



5<sup>th</sup> Class Venetian Masks

Please indicate how engaged your pupils were with these activities: A little engaged (1); Engaged (2); Highly engaged (3).

The children absolutely loved this part of the programme as it offered every class a great chance to participate, and who doesn't like art and a chance to taste some new delicious food. Pupils were highly engaged (3) by this aspect of the programme.



## Institutional

Please outline below how your school carried out the learning for the the Institutional section of he Blue Star Programme highlighting in particular where technology was used for this project work. Feel free to add photos where you can.

1 <sup>st</sup> Class	First Class performed their special assembly on the theme of 'Solidarity' and the EU. It was very clever in getting across the messages that underpinned the setting up of the EU and that still underpin it, values that are important for individuals in school and work.
3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Classes	Researched MEP Maria Walsh before her visit.  Listened to 1 <sup>st</sup> class assembly and discussed the key messages afterwards.
5 <sup>th</sup> Class	5 <sup>th</sup> Class wrote to our local councillors and TD to aid our Green Schools aim of having the children walk to school more safely and therefore help the environment by cutting down on car emissions. We got many responses from the local councillors and TD. We even had a class visit from Councillor Terry Crossan and road engineers from Donegal County Council. We asked for more pedestrian crossings, traffic lights at the main junction and the speed limit to be reduced outside of the school.
6 <sup>th</sup> Class	Rang a Sé examined how the European Union works and collaborates together to help and assist all the countries involved with it. (we observed a powerpoint on the European Union and a second one that focused on Brexit). We looked at how Brexit came about and how this affected our country of Ireland and our involvement with the European Union and Great Britain.  Pupils were fascinated with the various currencies and how they have changed as a result of being part of the European Union and the different exchange rates applied. The pupils examined how goods and products are transported around the countries and the implications that this has for Ireland and trading. We also linked this in with Fair trade around the world.





1<sup>st</sup> Class Assembly on Solidarity and the EU

Please indicate how engaged your pupils were with these activities: A little engaged (1); Engaged (2); Highly engaged (3).

The children enjoyed the Assembly and the visit to the school by MEP Maria Walsh. It was a real celebration day at the school and was attended by the Board of Management. The pupils of 5<sup>th</sup> Class were highly motivated with their Green Flag work in contacting local Councillors and TD. The Councillor and members of the Board of Management also visited their class this year which was really special for them and taught them a lot about the power of advocacy and the importance of the pupil voice. Pupils were highly engaged (3) by this aspect of the programme.



## Europe Day Celebrations

Please outline below how your school celebrated Europe Day and how these celebrations included the wider school community. Feel free to add photos where you can.

### **Europe Day in Scoil Naomh Bríd**

We had a very exciting day at Scoil Naomh Bríd last Friday when we had our special visitor Maria Walsh MEP come to visit the school as part of our work on the Blue Star Programme.

We have been learning all about Europe in every class and we had a special day to celebrate Ireland's 50th year of being in the European Union.

The whole school played their musical instruments for our special visitor. Then we had a special assembly from Rang a hAon that was very clever in getting across the messages that underpinned the setting up of the EU and that still underpin it, values that are important for individuals in school and work.

Then we had a very informative question and answer session with Maria Walsh where the children asked questions and she gave them a good insight into her work and into the parliament.

Then it was outside to participate in our Wake-Up dance with a Spanish twist, dancing to some fun Spanish music. With a final blast of our hit song 'Scoil Naomh Bríd,' our celebrations came to an end.

As part of the Blue Star Programme, the children have been learning about European history, geography, culture and the institution of the European Union. The assembly presented information about the history and geography of the EU, the music and dance explored culture and Ms Walsh gave us great information for the institutional part of our studies.

It was a great day to be in Scoil Naomh Bríd and we are so proud of the children and their fantastic manners. A huge thanks to the Maria Walsh for coming and teaching our children so well. Who knows, we may have some future parliamentarians in our midst!



# Blue Star Programme

Article in local newspaper  
'Inishowen Independent' re  
Maria Walsh's visit to our school

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INISHOWEN INDEPENDENT | Tuesday, 23 May 2023

**NEWS**

## MEP visits Muff school

**SCOIL NAOMH BRÍD HOSTS MEP MARIA WALSH**

PUPILS AND staff at Scoil Naomh Bríd in Muff welcomed MEP Maria Walsh to their school last Friday as part of their studies on European culture and the European Union.

**DAMIAN DOWDS**

Ms Walsh, a Fine Gael Member of the European Parliament for the Midlands-North-West constituency since 2019, held a question and answer session with pupils where she responded to queries about everything from net contributions to the EU budget, to the need for better guidelines for social media companies and the prospects of her home county of Mayo winning Sam Maguire this year.

Between plays and a dancing demonstration that saw the whole school community gather in the courtyard, Ms Walsh clearly enjoyed herself and drew great energy from the pupils.

"It's really cool to be here and it's been a super effort from you all," she told pupils, before having a word in principal Teresa Ward's ear and revealing, to screams of delight, that the children would enjoy a special homework pass!

**Planting seeds**

MARIA WALSH, who famously won the Rose of Tralee in 2014, visited the Muff school as part of the Blue Star programme which teaches primary school pupils about European culture and the EU through creative activities and projects.

The scheme is designed to foster a better understanding and knowledge of Europe amongst primary pupils and how it affects the lives of Irish citizens.

"It's wonderful to think we have young people, as young as the children here in Scoil Naomh Bríd, who are getting to learn about the EU, understanding its importance and engaging with it," MEP Walsh told the *Inishowen Independent*.

"Ultimately, the purpose of the Blue Star programme is planting seeds in these youngsters, helping them see what's beyond their community, county and the country.

"So when they hear on the news about EU solidarity, or about the war in Ukraine, or about new members joining the EU, they can understand that in a very gorgeous way."

Scoil Naomh Bríd principal Teresa Ward agreed on the benefits of the Blue Stars programme.

"Our pupils have done a lot of work on the Blue Stars programme, and it was a great honour to have an MEP visit the school," she said. "Maria did a great job telling the children about the European parliament where she works."

Scoil Naomh Bríd recently got its 9th Green flag, an EU-sponsored award.

"The children have been learning about climate change and how transport and carbon emissions impact on the environment," principal Ward said, "and are also learning to be active citizens.

"Fifth class students did a walkability study of transport to the school, along with Aengus Kennedy from An Taisce, and have submitted some proposals to the roads engineers at Donegal County Council.

"It's important for children to learn how to use their voice."

**Women in politics**

LATER ON Friday, MEP Walsh hosted a roadshow at the Central Library in Letterkenny to promote greater participation by women in politics.

"As someone who got elected for the first time in 2019, I was disappointed in my Fine Gael party in failing to get a woman elected in the Donegal local election," the Mayo representative said. "We ran four female candidates, but I took that as a bitter defeat.

"Two of them were working in Joe McHugh's office and already doing some of the work of a councillor, I was really disappointed that we couldn't see them over the line.

"I made a promise that I'd have as many conversations as possible as women getting involved ahead of the 2024 elections.

"We're nowhere near the number of female candidates, across parties and independents, that we need to be.

"I'm really encouraging every woman, not just Fine Gael members but anyone interested, to get involved in politics. We need to build momentum and get more women into politics.

"And more young people too. I'd love to see some way of city or county councils reserving a number of seats for the under 25s."

**Mica crisis**

NO POLITICIAN can visit Donegal without facing questions on the mica crisis, and Ms Walsh says she's as perplexed as everyone else as to why the redress scheme remains stubbornly in neutral.

"I fundamentally don't understand why our Government haven't resolved this yet," she says.

"It should have been resolved within months of the first houses being discovered with it.

"I have to give credit to Deputy Joe McHugh for making his stance [he voted against mica legislation last year and was suspended from Fine Gael] because we need bravery like that.

"From the EU side, I've been told a group of MEPs are to visit and that will help raise awareness.

"Mica campaigners have made presentations to the Parliament, and I know more are meeting with the Commission soon.

"As one mica campaigner remarked when last they visited the parliament, it feels as though we need an accident to happen before it's taken seriously.

"May it never happen, but if it does we should be ashamed."

■ Staff and students dance in the courtyard at Scoil Naomh Bríd

■ Board of management members Theresa Ward, Pat McGonagle, Roseeene Johnston-Harkin, MEP Maria Walsh, Michael McMenamin and Fergal Tuffy with Mary Newport at the front. Missing are Fr John Walsh and Sínead Smith.

■ Scoil Naomh Bríd staff members Johanne McColgan, Marian Gallagher, Margaret McCarron, Siobhan Curran, Martina McCallon, Teresa Ward, Maria Glackin, Maria Walsh MEP, Karen McNally, Patricia McLaughlin, Maria Conway, Sínead Smith and Anne McLaughlin. Missing from staff photo are Simone McLaughlin and Aisling McGeer.

**JIVE FOR JUNE**  
IN SUPPORT OF DONEGAL HOSPICE

in association with Highland Radio

To Sign-up or Donate please contact Isobell on  
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Video your performance and send it to: [thedonegalhospice@gmail.com](mailto:thedonegalhospice@gmail.com) and we will post it up on our facebook page: [Facebook.com/donegalhospice](https://www.facebook.com/donegalhospice). Get friends and family to visit the page and sponsor your talented efforts.

Donations can be made via our idonate page: [www.donegalhospice.ie](http://www.donegalhospice.ie) or phone Isobell on: 074 9125656 or 087 2389607 for a Sponsorship form

All funds raised will go to patient care, or Palliative Care patients in Donegal

Please list any visits to your school by Ministers, MEPs, TDs, Senators, Ambassadors or other VIPs as part of the Programme:

Maria Walsh MEP Friday May 19<sup>th</sup>





## Element Quizzes

Did your school participate in the Element Quizzes? If so do you complete all four Element Quizzes? Please provide any additional feedback you had on the quizzes here.

Senior Infants complete all four quizzes and completed the on line forms subsequently. They all loved this activity, although found some of the questions difficult.

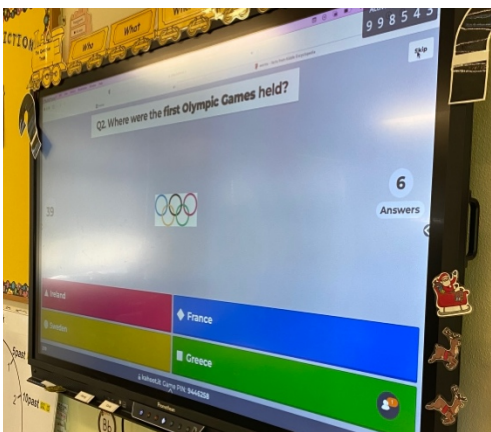
1<sup>st</sup> Class completed all the BlueStar Programme Quizzes on the EU using Kahoot on the school iPads. They had so much fun and looked forward to it each week. They were so surprised to learn about Ireland the how well they had done in the Eurovision in the past. They loved playing in pairs and teams and were so delighted when the whole class got an answer correct.

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Class completed one quiz online and really enjoyed it.

5<sup>th</sup> Class completed all four quizzes and thoroughly enjoyed them all. They were pleasantly surprised by how much they knew. Thank you for producing such enjoyable and comprehensible quizzes.

Rang a Sé completed two out of the four element quizzes using our school iPads. They found these very enjoyable and had great success as we had already covered most of the material in them. The quizzes were an excellent way to reinforce and reaffirm learning about Europe and the European Union and another great opportunity to develop the children's technology skills.

This was a really fun and highly engaging part of the programme.



Kahoot screen from one of the quizzes