



Erasmus+

Wonder Stories



Students today live in a society where they are always competing and comparing themselves to one another. We really enjoyed reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio and know that it has made a significant impact in the classroom, sharing the important message #ChooseKind.



To promote inclusion and compassion, Léargas organised a Wonder story competition this year. We were delighted to receive entries from both pupils and teachers about how they #ChooseKind in their classroom. We read inspiring stories promoting, recognising and celebrating acts of kindness in the classroom throughout the year. Turn the page to read one of those Wonder stories.

Erasmus+ Inclusion and Diversity

Inclusion and diversity are essential elements of Erasmus+. We believe everybody should have the opportunity to participate in international projects. Léargas supports many strands of Erasmus+ in Ireland. Our main aim is to ensure that inclusion and diversity inform the majority of Erasmus+ projects across the sectors of Youth Education and Training.

If you are interested in learning more about Erasmus+ and the funding opportunities your organisation can apply for please get in touch.

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Siobhan Mc Kenna is a teacher in Gallen Community School, Ferbane Co. Offaly. This is her Wonder story.

My name is Siobhan Mc Kenna, and I'd like to tell you about one of the ways that our school raises awareness of the need for a positive attitude to mental health and help-seeking behaviour. Our school recognises the need to be inclusive of every member of our school community, and we always look for ways to encourage others and increase their self-esteem. We are a school of about four hundred students. Last year our chaplain asked if any students would like to join a group called the "School's Ambassador Programme". A large number of students expressed an interest in joining it. She chose a steering group of 28 students representing every year from first to sixth. This group met up and brainstormed. Our project was to raise awareness of the catch-phrase for



the Schools' Ambassador programme which is "It's ok not to feel ok, and it's absolutely ok to ask for help". The name of the individual project changes from year to year. This year's project was 'Empower Your Voice'. Our brainstorm included ideas such as a computer animation, art work and essays and poetry.

We discussed how using negative and positive words impact us. Some words hurt us like stones being thrown at us, but some words can heal us like pure balm being poured on our wounded selves. Some use their voice to put people down and say hurtful things, but when we use our voice to help and heal and let them know it's ok not to feel ok and it's absolutely ok to ask for help, we are being truly the selves we are meant to be. We let people know about empowering your voice in school and that using three words 'Are you ok?' could show someone that somebody else cares.