

FÍS celebrates 11th anniversary



FÍS, the film project for primary schools, celebrated its eleventh anniversary at the FÍS Film Festival held in the Helix, DCU, on 3 November.

at the FÍS Film Festival, the awards were attended by over 950 people including 830 primary school children from all over the country, their teachers and parents.

This year's very special guest was Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills, who presented the Aileen MacKeogh award for outstanding achievement in film-making to Redeemer Girls' NS, Dundalk for their film - *The Jelly that wouldn't wobble*.

Representing school and community at national level

The FÍS Film Festival is a great celebration for the lucky finalists who represent their schools with pride. To participate in an awards ceremony in the grandeur of the Mahony Hall is very special. From a curricular perspective, FÍS is a fantastic way to mediate a particular curricular strand/strand unit, while integrating a variety of subject areas. It also affords opportunities to engage with the local community. For example, the pupils of St Attracta's NS, Charlestown, were visited by former army officer Michael McGrath (grandfather of a present pupil in the school) and he told the pupils about the time his army cadet class performed the guard of honour at President John F. Kennedy's funeral in 1963. Scenes were recreated from a number of perspectives. "The FÍS film festival offered endless learning opportunities for our students. It brought the curriculum to life in new and exciting ways embracing the role of technology in our classroom. It allowed many new talents and strengths to come to the fore. It created and developed a whole new area of interest for the children. It facilitated the teaching of the key skills of teamwork, understanding,

critical thinking and problem solving all the while emphasising the importance of good communication. We thoroughly enjoyed participating in this wonderful project." Brian McDermott, Principal, St Attracta's NS, Charlestown.

Learning at all levels

FÍS is a key digital engagement project in a joint collaboration between PDST Technology in Education and IADT Dún Laoghaire. Students pursuing their Master's degrees in Film and Media produce the entire show – a true rich task carried out with all the demands and rigour of a full-scale production. Therefore, FÍS brings third level pupils and primary school pupils together and along

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with participating teachers, all are provided with learning opportunities. FÍS enables children to learn about the techniques involved in storytelling through film. These skills include: planning, scripting, storyboarding, cameras, lighting, audio, music, set design, post production editing, costume and of course acting. Throughout the process, children also develop skills in communicating, working in a team, taking responsibility, collaborating with others, making decisions and problem solving.

Participate without submitting film

It is possible to participate without ever submitting a film and many schools do this. Why not introduce film-making to your class and when you and your pupils become more confident, consider

submitting a film then. PDST Technology in Education issued a grant to your local education centre to purchase film-making equipment or software to be available for schools. With new multi-purpose devices, scenes can be captured, edited and produced all on the one device.

Support for teachers

The FÍS classroom resource pack offers the primary school teacher a structured approach to introducing film as a cross-curriculum medium into the classroom. It was developed by teachers for teachers and contains 16 lessons that support the development of children's creativity and critical response. A FÍS technical manual is also available with clear practical information about film making processes and techniques at www.fisfilmproject.ie/teacher-resources/resource-pack

PDST Technology in Education also designed a FÍS summer course and this was scheduled in many education centres in the summer of 2014 and 2015. You can also avail of the FÍS interactive online course or approach your local education centre and ask if any face-to-face support sessions are taking place in your locality. If you know of other teachers in your school who are interested in FÍS and considering implementing it in their classrooms, PDST Technology in Education, through the education centre network, can fund a tutor to deliver a whole school ICT training session (a minimum of 10 participants is required).

"FÍS is an inspiring and heartwarming event which showcases the amazing creativity of school children across Ireland. Winning this award allowed us to show that although our children have additional needs, they are able to be successful on an equal standing with all of the children in Irish schools." Michael Fabiziak, teacher, Little Angels Special School, Letterkenny.

More information

Log on to www.fisfilmproject.ie for more information on all of the above and view details of all the winners, including their films. The deadline for entry is the end of



Pupils from Redeemer Girls' NS, Dundalk celebrate winning the Aileen MacKeogh award for outstanding achievement in film-making. Back row (L-R); Michelle Condon, teacher, Redeemer Girls JNS; Dr Annie Doona, President IADT; Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills; Ciara O'Donnell, Director, PDST; Patrick O'Rourke, Principal, Redeemer Girls NS, Dundalk



Participating schools celebrate while Master's students in film and media broadcasting from IADT produce and film the entire show.



Pupils from Redeemer Girls' NS receiving the Aileen MacKeogh Award for Outstanding Achievement in Film-Making for their film – *The Jelly that wouldn't wobble* from Jan O'Sullivan, Minister for Education and Skills with Dr Annie Doona, President Dún Laoghaire IADT (L) and Ciara O'Donnell, Director, Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) (R)

June in any school year, so there is no need to commit before then! There are some pre-determined categories for 2016 - Decade of centenaries and Our Active School.

Films selected for the 'Decade of Centenaries' award will convey a story or moving images that commemorate the anniversary of any key centenary event between 1912 and 1922. Films may comprise of historical enactments, explorations of records and primary source material, interviews with historians among other methodologies to commemorate a range of events.

These may include, the Lockout, the Sinking of the Lusitania, the Easter Rising, the Civil War and the Treaty amongst others.

The 'Active School Flag' category will accept films that tell a story depicting how schools strive to achieve a broad and balanced PE programme or how schools promote inclusive physical activity across the school day/year for all members of its community. For example, this story may be documentary in style capturing footage of the Active School Week in addition to ongoing PE, physical activity and school sport. It may also

portray a PE related activity through fiction, action, adventure or other film genres.

Student voice

In considering the merits of any initiative like FIS, the student voice must be the strongest, "I had so much fun doing the Fis project with all my friends. I loved getting into costume and acting but I also learned how much there is to do to make a movie", pupil of Redeemer Girls' NS.

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