

Discussing the Importance of International Peace:

A Visit from the British Ambassador



Coláiste Chú Chulainn was delighted to welcome **British Ambassador Paul Johnston** to our school for a special visit focused on the importance of democracy, diplomacy, peace and positive international relations.

As part of his visit, Ambassador Johnston met with our **Student Ambassadors**, engaging in a meaningful discussion about his role as British Ambassador to Ireland and the importance of building and maintaining strong relationships between countries. He provided students with a valuable insight into the world of international diplomacy, explaining how ambassadors represent their countries, promote cooperation, strengthen international partnerships and work to resolve differences through peaceful dialogue.

A key focus of the discussion was the **importance of democracy and diplomacy in maintaining peace and stability**. Ambassador Johnston highlighted the value of mutual respect, communication, understanding and cooperation between nations, emphasizing that positive international relationships are built through dialogue and a willingness to understand different perspectives.



The Ambassador also explored the **history and significance of the Good Friday Agreement (1998)**, discussing its vital role in the Northern Ireland peace process and the relationships between Britain, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Students gained a deeper appreciation of the challenges faced during the Troubles and the importance of the Agreement in helping to establish a more peaceful and cooperative future. His discussion highlighted how years of negotiation, compromise and political cooperation helped bring about this historic agreement, demonstrating the power of diplomacy in overcoming conflict.

The visit provided an excellent opportunity for our Student Ambassadors to reflect on the importance of **leadership, active citizenship, respect, inclusion and peaceful conflict resolution**. These values are central to their roles as student leaders within our school community. The discussion also reinforced the message that diplomacy is not limited to international politics; the same principles of listening, understanding, compromise and respect can be applied to everyday relationships and interactions within our school.

Following his meeting with the Student Ambassadors, Ambassador Johnston addressed a **whole-school assembly**, sharing his experiences and insights with the wider student body. His address encouraged students to recognise the importance of democracy, international cooperation and the responsibility we all share in promoting peace and understanding.

Following the assembly, **our Student Ambassadors had the wonderful opportunity to enjoy lunch with Ambassador Johnston**, allowing them to continue their conversations in a more informal setting, ask further questions and gain additional insights into his experiences and responsibilities as a diplomat.

This visit was a particularly valuable experience as part of our School of Sanctuary journey, reinforcing our commitment to creating an inclusive, welcoming and respectful school environment where diversity is celebrated, different perspectives are valued and every student has a voice.

The visit also reflected our school ethos of **"Success for All"**, demonstrating the importance of empowering young people to become informed, compassionate and responsible global citizens.

We sincerely thank Ambassador Johnston for taking the time to visit Coláiste Chú Chulainn, engage with our Student Ambassadors and share such important messages about democracy, diplomacy and peace. It was a memorable and inspiring experience for our entire school community.

