



## *In Memoriam - Maura Kennedy*

Maura Kennedy joined the staff of Carndonagh Community School in 1993 having taught for two years in Drogheda and three years in Bray. She also spent a year in Gerona in Spain perfecting her Spanish language competency. She arrived as the finished article in terms of subject mastery. She brought a vigour and commitment to promote her subject through effective preparation and planning, inspired teaching and engagement with her pupils. Her vibrant and colourful persona reflected the language and culture she loved.

Within several years she had built a subject department from one teacher to a department with four Spanish teachers, increasing the numbers of pupils choosing Spanish year on year. She co-ordinated the department superbly - she was meticulous with booklists, exams, reports - Maura was professional in everything she did.

Her energy and enthusiasm for her subject extended beyond the classroom - Maura was one of the original promoters of the European Day of Languages which is now an annual fixture on the school calendar. She encouraged the Primary School Languages Initiative with a number of our National Schools and managed the Foreign Language Assistant scheme which brought Spanish language assistants to Carndonagh to support the pupils' oral language skills by having access to a native speaker.

Her organisation and attention to detail were legendary. This was best exemplified by her promotion of the Spanish Exchange Programme and her cultural trips to Spain. From the initial request for approval to the Board, planning, permission letters, risk assessments, organisation and scheduling of flights and transfers nothing was left to chance. If you were travelling on one of Maura's tours all you had to do was turn up! She had everything covered. So

many of our pupils have benefitted from her Spanish Exchange Programme through experiencing a real sense of the language and culture.

Maura was a lively conversationalist as her car pool will testify and always good company. She was a regular at all school social functions.

Her first battle with illness was met with a steely determination and courage, and all her colleagues and pupils were delighted to have her resume her teaching career. And resume she certainly did, throwing herself into her teaching with the same passion and energy as before.

The return of her illness in 2019 caused widespread dismay but her colleagues were confident that if anyone could overcome the disease it would be Maura. We prayed for her and wished the best for her and her family. Maura bore her illness again with great dignity and resolve. She fought it with all her great spirit, for herself and for her beloved family. In the end her fight was in vain. We recognise the great loss to our school but can only imagine the tremendous loss to her family. We know they can take pride in Maura's achievements and the esteem in which she was held by her colleagues and her pupils.

We thank Maura for all she brought to Carndonagh, as a very fine person, as a loyal colleague and for her legacy in the Spanish department.

Que Dios esté contigo siempre.

