



## A Message from Our School Principal

As we approach our Christmas break, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you and your families for your continued support this term. In the words of Charlie Mackesy, "I hope you have a good Christmas. Thank you for being spectacularly kind and supportive. It means so much." I wish every member of our school community a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for 2022.

Kindest Regards

Ms Sharon Mallett  
Principal



## Thornhill College Promotional Video

In the absence of a traditional open day we are excited to share with you a short film that captures all that Thornhill College has to offer. Look out for this on our website and social media accounts in the New Year. You can now follow us on our Instagram account: [@thornhillderry](https://www.instagram.com/thornhillderry)



## Congratulations

Dara

Congratulations to Year 14 student Dara McKeever on being selected for the Ulster Ladies Schools GAA All Stars team.

Dara is 1 of 30 girls chosen across Ulster. Well done on an incredible achievement. We are so proud of you!





## Christmas Liturgies



Our thanks go to the RE and Music Departments who gave of their time and talents so generously to produce the wonderful Christmas Liturgy for our school community to enjoy virtually this week. Particular thanks go to Fr Clerkin for providing the Christmas blessing, Mrs Collins for co-ordinating the liturgy, Mrs Quigley for the co-ordinating the school choir and musicians, our Year 8 Jovita for her reading of 'A Night Before Christmas', Ms Mallett for her Christmas Message and Mr McFadden who spent so much time editing all the various components to produce a seamless and reflective piece which celebrates the wonderful talents of our students and allowed us to reflect on the hope and joy of the Christmas message.







## Disability History Month Quiz



Thank you to everyone who took part in the Disability History Month quiz. From all the entrants, the winner was Maebh Keegan 11A. The staff prize went to Dr Garland, who was helped along by his form class 11C. Congratulations to Maebh, Dr Garland and 11C!



## Irish Department

Comhghairdeas mór! A big congratulations to Chloe, Emily, Sophie, Maggie, Holly, Áine, Clodagh and Meghan from 9G who recently visited Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin as they are participating in a new Irish language TV documentary being produced by Dearcán Media for BBC Gaeilge. Maith sibh a Chailíní!!



## RE Department



Congratulations to Mrs Hodgins, our RE department and all those departments who contributed to our cross curricular school project celebrating the life of St Columba.

Thornhill College were announced as the winners of the Post Primary entries in the Colmcille 1500 Schools Competition. Our school received a prize of £350 which has been donated to our SVP appeal.





## Pope John Paul II Award

Congratulations to Miss Lynch and our Year 13 Pope John Paul II Award students, for the very thoughtful Christmas care packs they made for the residents of Owen Mor Care Centre.



## December Dip For Children in Crossfire

Congratulations to Miss McGurk, Miss Lynch and all the Pope John Paul II Award students who joined in on the 'December Dip' in aid of Children in Crossfire.



## Technology Department

Our KS3 students have been busy immersing themselves in a range of practical work in their Technology lessons over the last few weeks. The Year 8's finished making their Post-It Note holders, the Year 9's participated in the festive 'Elf Off the Shelf Challenge' and the Year 10's created beautiful Christmas decorations. Well done everyone!



### Y10 Christmas Decorations

- 1) Open camera app / QR scanner on your phone, point phone at QR code.
- 2) Finally tap the pop up banner and video will play.





Year 8  
Post It  
Note Holders

PIC•COLLAGE



## Yr8 Post-It Note Projects

- 1) Open camera app / QR scanner on your phone, point phone at QR code.
- 2) Finally tap the pop up banner and video will play.



Year 8 Post It  
Note Holders



PIC•COLLAGE

**"Wishing you a Mischievous Christmas"**

"Get the Elf off the Shelf Challenge"

-The Elf



PIC•COLLAGE

**"Wishing you a Mischievous Christmas"**

"Get the Elf off the Shelf Challenge"

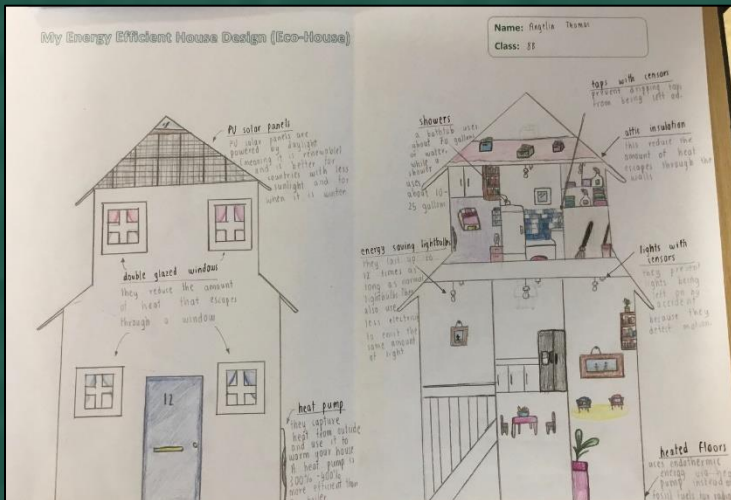
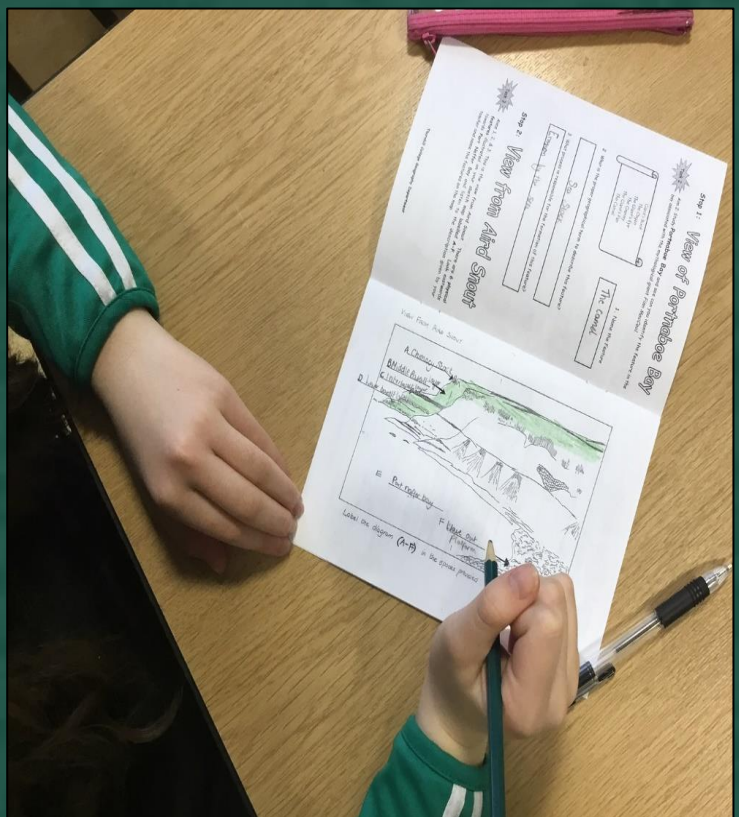
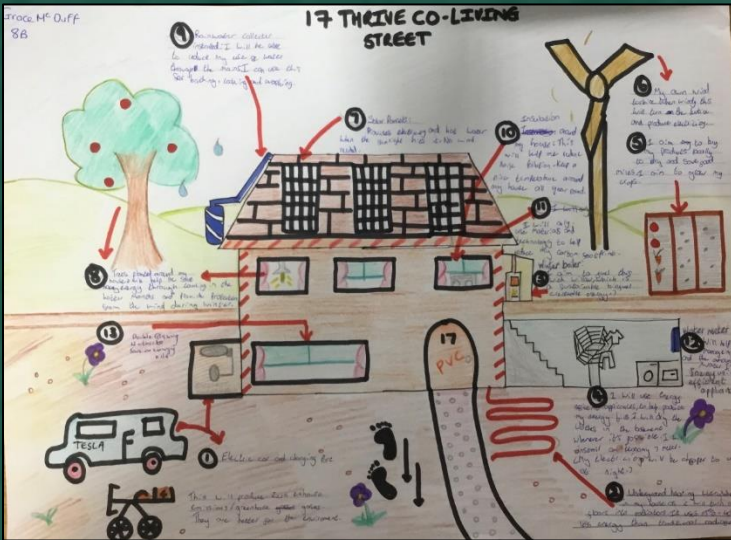
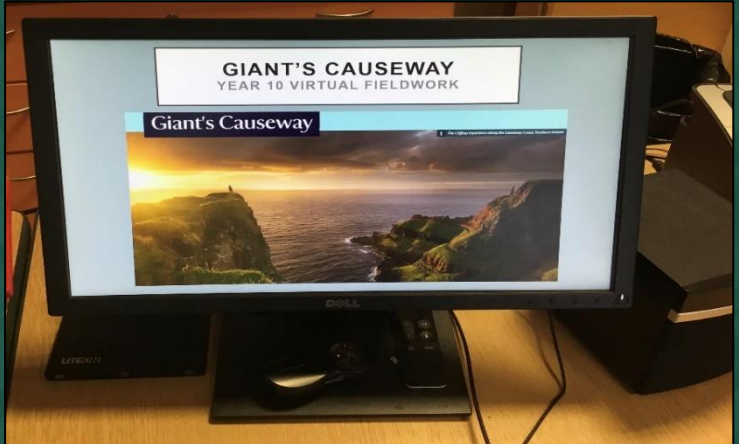
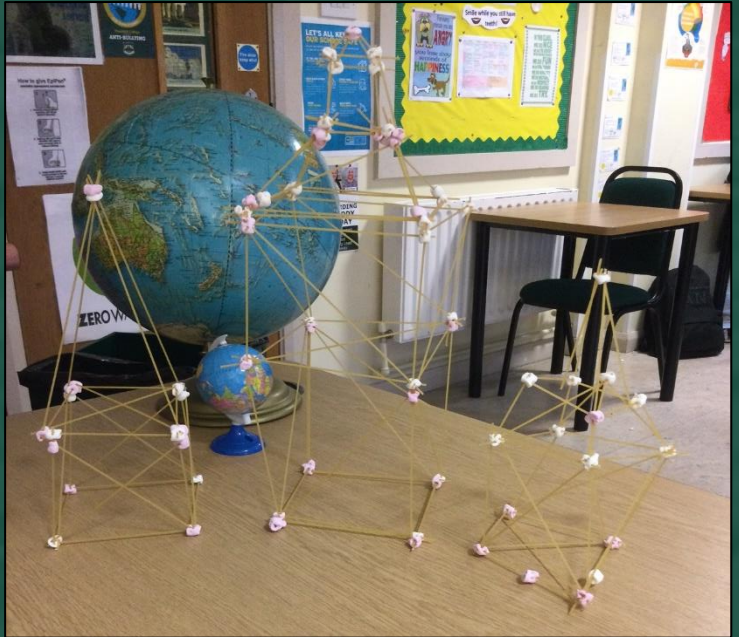
-The Elf



PIC•COLLAGE

# Geography Department

Our Year 8 students have been enjoying the challenge of designing their very own Eco-Homes in Geography. While the Year 10's showed their creativity and problem solving skills taking part in the Earthquake Building Design Challenge as well as taking part in their virtual fieldtrip to the Giants Causeway.





## 12 Days of Christmas

Our thanks go to Miss C. Barr, Mrs N. Donnelly and the Staff Wellbeing Team for organising the '12 Days of Christmas' to celebrate the festive season with our staff. A member of staff was randomly selected to win a prize for 12 working days in December with a star bonus winner announced at the end of the 12 days. Well done to all our winners and many thanks to all of those who helped in organising this thoughtful festive surprise!



Day 1 – J. Austin



Day 2 – F. Kearney



Day 3 – S. McDermott



Day 4 – S. McCauley



Day 5 – D. Travers



Day 6 – W. O'Hagan



Day 7 – S. Clarke



Day 8 – A. McDaid



Day 9 – B. Deane



Day 10 – L. Walls



Day 11 – C. Beattie



Day 12 – C. Downey



### Star Winner

Our star bonus winner was K. Lynch from our caretaking staff.



## Winners of Student Healthcare Debate 2021

Congratulations to our Year 14 team on winning the final of the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust, 2021 Student Healthcare Debate. Our girls enjoyed a lively debate with Rathmore Grammar School in the final, who also put in a fantastic performance. Well done to Georgia Sargent, Riya Chugh, Sheethal Olive, Jerina Joseph and Eimhear Doherty. What an achievement ladies, well done!



## Physics Department

This week 11A produced some infographics about our Sun under the direction of Dr O'Donnell to enter a competition run by the European Solar Telescope project. The competition has teams competing from all over Europe. The very best of luck!

**DOES THE SUN AFFECT CLIMATE CHANGE?**

The sun is one of more than 100 million stars in the milky way

The sun lies at the heart of our solar system

If the Sun were responsible for global warming, we would expect to see warming throughout all layers of the atmosphere

But what we actually see is warming at the surface and cooling in the stratosphere. This is consistent with the warming being caused by a buildup of heat-trapping gases near Earth's surface, and not by the Sun getting "hotter."

The warming is caused by greenhouse gases coming from burning fossil fuels is over 50 times greater than the extra warming coming from the Sun itself

By the Solar Sisters

**WHAT IS THE SOLAR ATMOSPHERE?**

UNLIKE EARTH, THE SUN DOESN'T HAVE A SOLID SURFACE, BUT IT DOES HAVE A SUPERHEATED ATMOSPHERE, MADE OF SOLAR MATERIAL BOUND TO THE SUN BY GRAVITY AND MAGNETIC FORCES; THE SOLAR ATMOSPHERE COVERS A BROAD RANGE OF TEMPERATURES AND DENSITIES FROM THE SOLAR SURFACE, VIA THE CHROMOSPHERE, TRANSITION REGION, AND TO THE CORONA.

**PHOTOSPHERE**  
THE LOWEST LAYER OF THE SUN'S ATMOSPHERE IS THE PHOTOSPHERE — THE INNERMOST LAYER THAT WE CAN OBSERVE DIRECTLY. IT TAKES ABOUT EIGHT MINUTES FOR SUNLIGHT TO REACH EARTH. THE PHOTOSPHERE IS A LAYER THAT IS 400 KM (250 MILES) THICK. THE TEMPERATURES IN THIS LAYER RANGE FROM 100 °C AT THE TOP TO 700 °C AT THE BOTTOM. THE PHOTOSPHERE IS ALSO THE SOURCE OF SOLAR FLARES, BURSTS OF FIRE THAT EXTEND HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF MILES ABOVE THE SUN'S SURFACE.

**CORONA**  
THE THIN LAYER OF THE SUN'S ATMOSPHERE IS THE CORONA. IT APPEARS AS WHITE STREAMERS OR PLUMES OF IONIZED GAS THAT FLOW OUTWARD INTO SPACE. TEMPERATURES IN THE SUN'S CORONA CAN GET AS HIGH AS 1 MILLION DEGREES C, AS THE GASES COOL, THEY BECOME THE SOLAR WIND. WHY THE CORONA IS UP TO 100 TIMES HOTTER THAN THE PHOTOSPHERE, BEING 100 TIMES FURTHER FROM THE SOLAR CORE, HAS REMAINED A LONG-TIME MYSTERY. RECENTER SUGGESTS THAT THE CORONA BEING HEATED AS WAVELIKE OR QUANTUM-LARGE STRUCTURES MAY HELP RAISE THE TEMPERATURE. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY (DECEMBER 2019), A SPACECRAFT TOUCHED THE SUN. NASA'S PARKER SOLAR PROBE HAS NOW FLOWN THROUGH THE SUN'S CORONA AND SAMPLED PARTICLES AND MAGNETIC FIELDS.

**CHROMOSPHERE**  
THE LAYER OF THE ATMOSPHERE ABOVE THE PHOTOSPHERE IS CALLED THE CHROMOSPHERE (MEANING "SPHERE OF COLOUR"). IT IS VISIBLE AS A THIN REDDISH RING AROUND THE EDGE OF THE SUN DURING TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSES. THE MOST VISIBLE AND IMPRESSIVE FEATURES OF THE CHROMOSPHERE INCLUDE FILAMENTS AND PROMINENCES. THESE GIANTIC PLUMES OF GAS ARE TRAPPED BY MAGNETIC FIELDS ABOVE THE PHOTOSPHERE, REACHING ALTITUDES OF 150,000 KM ABOVE THE SUN.

**TRANSITION REGION**  
ABOVE THE CHROMOSPHERE IS A VERY THIN LAYER OF THE SUN'S ATMOSPHERE ABOUT 100 KM THICK. OVER WHICH THE TEMPERATURE RISES AND INSTANTLY FROM 7700 DEGREES C IN THE UPPER CHROMOSPHERE TO OVER 500,000 THOUSAND DEGREES C IN THE CORONA. THIS REGION IS CALLED THE TRANSITION REGION. THE TRANSITION REGION IS VISIBLE AS A LON, BRIGHT FOOT OVER THE SURFACE OF THE SUN AND PERHAPS AS A THIN BRIGHT RING AROUND THE PROMINENCE ITSELF. THE LARGE, BRIGHT STRUCTURES ARE MAGNETIC LOOPS IN THE SOLAR CORONA.

**SOLAR WIND**  
SOLAR WIND OCCURS BECAUSE THE SUN'S EXTENSIVE TEMPERATURES HEAT UP PARTICLES. UNDER THE ENERGY ALLOWED THEM TO ESCAPE THE GRAVITATIONAL PULL. THESE LAUNCHES CREATED BY THE SOLAR WIND CREATES THE HELIOSPHERE, WHICH EXTENDS PAST PLUTO AND INTO THE HELIX BELT. SOME PARTICLES IN THE SOLAR WIND ARE DIRECTED TOWARD EARTH'S POLAR REGIONS, AND CAUSE THE AURORAS IN THE EARTH'S ATMOSPHERE.

**ATMOSPHERIC HEATING**  
THE ATMOSPHERE IS HEATED BY SEVERAL COMPLEX PROCESSES, BUT THE SOURCE OF HEAT IS ALL PHOTOSPHERE. BY HITTING THE SUN'S ATMOSPHERE, HEATING OCCURS WHEN SOLAR RADIATION STRIKES A PARTICLE OF SOME MATERIAL AND IS ABSORBED.

## Christmas Hampers

This year a total of 55 hampers were produced through our Christmas Hamper Appeal. These hampers are currently being distributed to local charities and community groups. Our thanks go to Mr Morgan, the Year 13 Mercy Group and our support staff for their efforts in organising this wonderful act of charity.

## A Word of Thanks...

A word of thanks to our fantastic canteen staff for the lovely Christmas dinner all our students enjoyed on Thursday 9th December.

Our thanks also go to them for preparing the beautiful Christmas buffet lunch for staff on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> December. Your culinary efforts were thoroughly enjoyed by students and staff alike over the festive season. Many thanks!



## Christmas Decorations

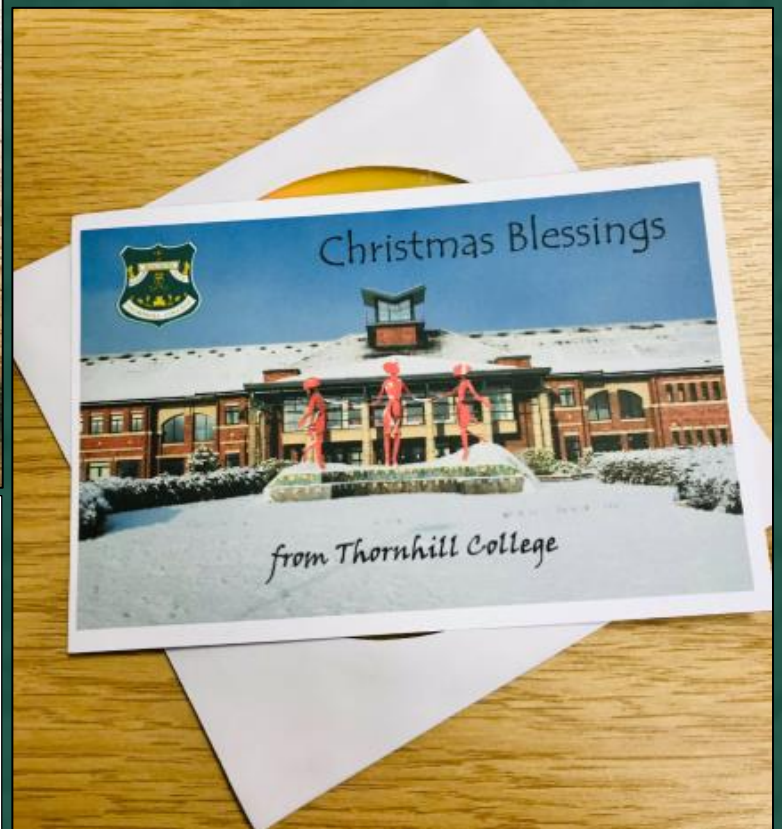
Huge thanks to our Technology & Design department for the beautiful Christmas decorations featuring the words of our school song 'Proudly Waves the Mercy Banner'. Some of these even made the long journey to Malibu, California and have been proudly displayed on past pupil and actress, Roma Downey's Christmas tree.



## Christmas Carols



We are delighted to share a recording of our amazing school choir singing some of our best loved Christmas Carols. Copies have been sent to local care homes this week. Thank you to Mrs Quigley for preparing the choir and Mr Mc Fadden for organising the recording.



## University Mock Interview Thanks



We would like to extend our thanks to our former pupils Ellen McFadden, Clodagh Laverty (Occupational Therapy), Deirdre Gill, Sarah Owens, Cobhlaith Frame, Brogan Byrne, Natasha Curran, Niamh McIntyre (Midwifery), Dearbhla Nash, Emma McGinty, Maria McDevitt Glenn, Ellen O'Neill, Arpana Sojan (Nursing) and Christina Doherty (Dietetics), who have kindly agreed to act as mentors for our Y14s as they prepare for university interviews this year.

Our students career choices cover a wide range of areas. If any parents / carers are in a position to offer virtual mock interview support to our students in the future, we would be delighted to have you on board. Please contact Mrs Hunter (Head of Careers) by sending an email to our school email account at [info@thornhill.derry.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@thornhill.derry.ni.sch.uk) mentioning your career area, and she will be in touch in the new term.

## Crafting for Charity Winners

Our Year 13 Crafting for Charity Enrichment group recently held a raffle to raise money for the annual SVP Christmas appeal. There were 4 prizes of beautifully hand crocheted blankets, produced by the Year 13 Crafting for Charity group and Mrs Hodgins. The group raised £102 for SVP and the lucky winners were:

**Grace Bradley 8A**

**Teagan Rankin 11C**

**Jodie Reilly 14C**

**Mrs M Connolly (Staff)**

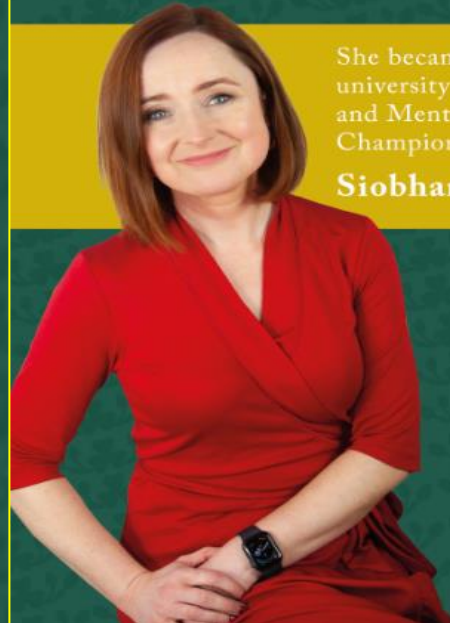


## Gaelic

Congratulations to both the u16 and u20 Gaelic Squads on qualifying for the Quarter-Finals which are due to be played after the Christmas Break!



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils



She became a  
university professor  
and Mental Health  
Champion for N Ireland  
**Siobhan O'Neill**

#YouCanToo



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils



She became assistant  
director of Finance with  
Western Health  
& Social Care Trust  
**Eimear McCauley**

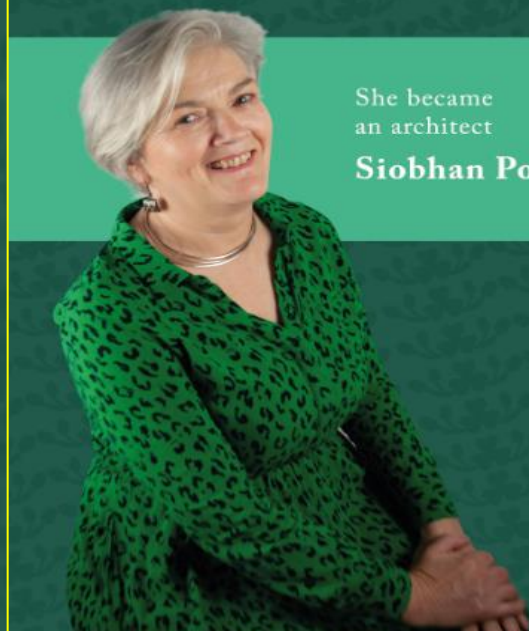
#YouCanToo

#PastPupils

#YouCanToo



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils



She became an  
architect  
**Siobhan Porter**

#YouCanToo