



Villiers School

Celebrating 200 Years

9 April 2021

“Clean up your phone, sexual consent and sexual assault” initiative.

Villiers is an international school and one of only four in Ireland offering the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme; this brings a diversity of boarding students from many countries, principally, although not exclusively, European.

A series of three informal 45-minute conversations (followed by a two-hour evening of film and discussion) were held on consecutive weeks with the boy boarders in our school, and separately with the girl boarders).

All three conversations were deliberately held in the same room where boarders relax to watch films and play card games etc. and were held on Sunday mornings: this was to enhance the separation from formal class teaching. All conversations were chaired by the residentiary chaplain.

The first session began with an examination of the distinction between responsibility and accountability: linguistic distinctions only to be found in German and English and not in other European languages.

We then posed the question of ‘what is the primary sexual organ?’, in order to realise that it is always the brain.

Having covered the above, we then examined sexual consent laws in four English-speaking countries: the UK, Ireland, Canada, and Australia (the latter being in the form of an online quiz). We discovered the great similarities between the different jurisdictions and what constitutes consent in sexual matters.

The second session covered the subject of sexting, sextortion and so-called “revenge porn”. New laws concerning this were signed into law by the President of Ireland in December 2020. These new laws were discussed in depth and then what might be done as an opportunity to “clean up” our mobile phones and particularly any pornographic images on them. Reference was made to social media sites (e.g., Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram) as well as means of communication such as WhatsApp, Telegram and Signal.

Again, it was reinforced about the implications and consequences of our responsibilities i.e., accountability. There was also repeated emphasis made that the brain is the primary sexual organ.



Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick, V94 F983, Ireland.

Phone +353 61 451447 **Email** info@villiers-school.com **www.villiers-school.com**

Headmistress Jill A Storey, M.A. H.Dip. Ed. (Hons), Dip. in Rem. Ed. (Hons)



Villiers School

Celebrating 200 Years

The third session concerned what to do if subjected to sexual assault. Personal testimonies from victims/survivors were shared with the students. Great importance was placed on precise reporting, the workings of judicial authorities as being evidence-based; the need to tell someone; a trusted friend, parent, guardian, or adult at school.

Discussion was held about childhood trauma and how toxic stress can trigger hormones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, putting them at greater risk for disease, homelessness, prison time and early death, if left un-treated.

All three talks culminated in a private showing (with the boy and girl students together) of the recent film *Resilience – The Biology of Stress and the Science of Hope* directed by James Redford (late son of the actor Robert Redford). This hour-long film was followed by an hour's conversation via Zoom with Rachel Fairhurst, a trauma therapist specialist.

Brother Graham Sawyer
School Chaplain



Villiers School, North Circular Road, Limerick, V94 F983, Ireland.

Phone +353 61 451447 **Email** info@villiers-school.com **www.villiers-school.com**

Headmistress Jill A Storey, M.A. H.Dip. Ed. (Hons), Dip. in Rem. Ed. (Hons)