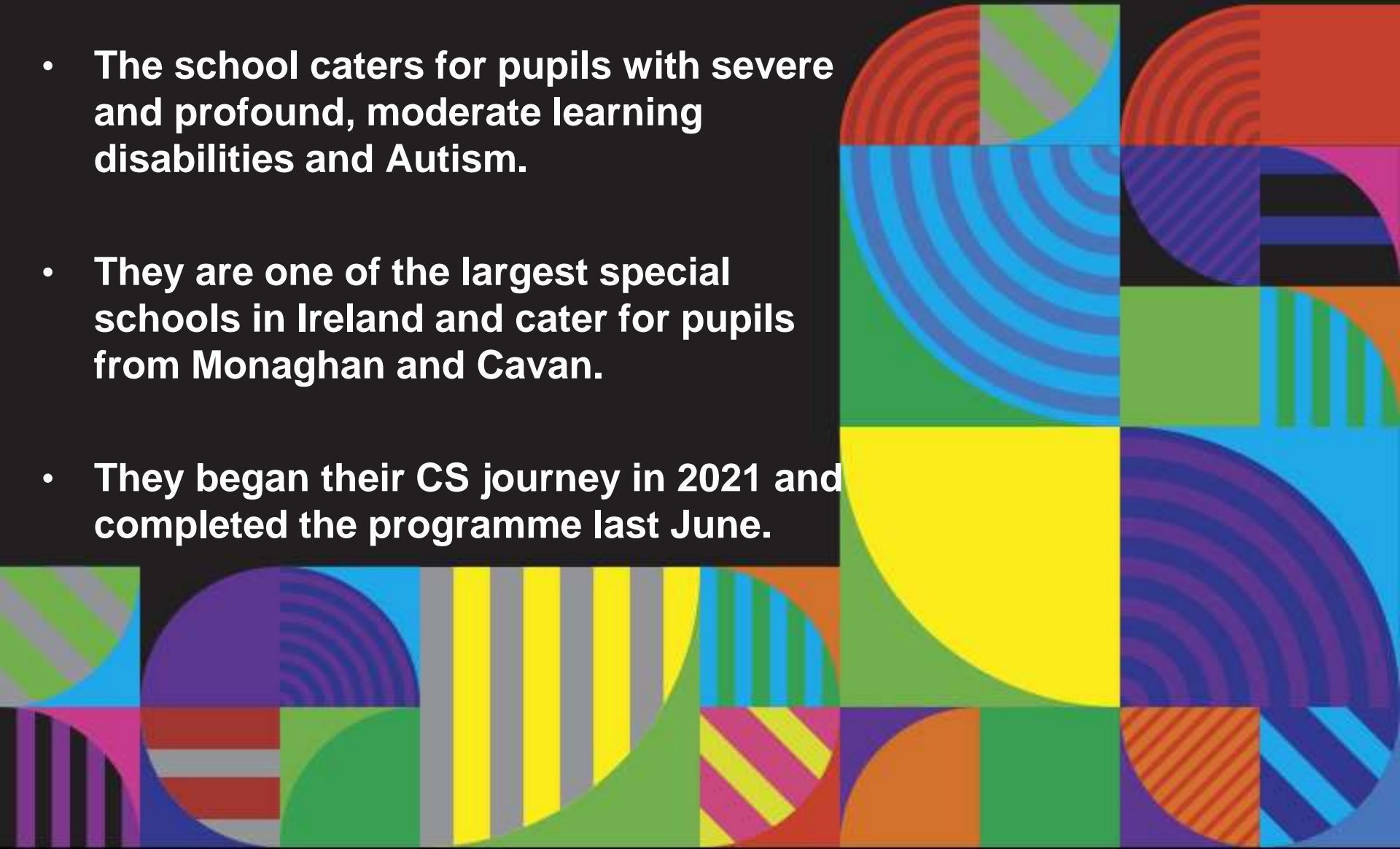


# Holy Family School - Cootehill Co Cavan



- **The Holy family school is a large special school with 172 pupils ranging from 4-18 years. They have a staff of 130.**
- **The school caters for pupils with severe and profound, moderate learning disabilities and Autism.**
- **They are one of the largest special schools in Ireland and cater for pupils from Monaghan and Cavan.**
- **They began their CS journey in 2021 and completed the programme last June.**



# The consultation phase ran from December 2021 – March 2022

- School coordinator conducted a staff survey and presented to board & management.
- Student consultation was held in the hall using visual images of arts & creative activities for non-verbal children.
- I ran a series of drama workshops to explore what types of activities the students liked or disliked and what if given the opportunity they would like to try!
- Student committee was formed with some of the senior students.





## Art forms areas & activities that came up a lot during consultation were

- Visual Arts, Circus & Drama
- Sensory based activities that would appeal to the ASD & Special Care Classes in particular.
- Whole school activities & events.
- Exploring ways to use the new school building – the large hall, the outdoors – sensory garden and different class yards etc.



## Consultation continued throughout March / April 2022 using a very explorative approach through visual arts

- Visual Artist Raquel Montera began a series of explorative workshops and I worked alongside her to support these.
- In addition to the timetabled workshops for Junior & Senior classes, we developed the 'Art Cart' to travel to the Special Care classes.
- We began to timetable more bespoke sessions for individual students who benefited from shorter length and one to one sessions.





**Visual Arts workshops grew into the Happiness Hats project and our first parade – Easter 2022.**



# Creative Week – May 2022





# Linking to the community – Happiness Hats exhibition at Cootehill library to coincide with Creative Week 2022





**Messy Art went down well!**





**With everyone**





**Except for this!!**





**Great support to run the different events came from the TYs from the local post primary school**





**Sensory flower workshops were a real highlight for me**



**Engaging the Special Care classes – I learned so much from the teachers about how to adapt activities and how & what to plan for. Especially for students with more severe & profound needs.**





**A willingness to try new things and the importance of finding specialist providers to work with. In Your Space Circus – Derry.**



**Learning new skills that can be brought back into different subject areas – buying new equipment for PE classes**





**Ballet Poulet by Fanzini Circus created an opportunity for the students to see a live show. This was supported by LAEP.**



**You can't go to a show without a few treats.**







## **Closing out on year 1 & looking at the plan for year 2**

We closed year 1 with a reflection session with the students from the creative committee. The focused on the events & activities that had taken place over the year and used feedback gathered from the taster workshops held during Creative Week.

Ideas that emerged from this included:

- Developing themed events for Halloween & Christmas
- Continuing with the Visual Arts workshops
- Exploring Drama & Performance
- Creating an Arts & Music Festival to close out the 2<sup>nd</sup> year

# Drop everything & dance project April / May 2023







# Bodhran making for Creative Week with Micheal Vignoles - Cliste





# Whole Lotta Hooley Festival May 2023



# Music Generation stage at the festival – supported by LAEP





## Opportunities to perform



# A day to remember





# A whole school celebration



# Underwater World installation as part of the July provision programme for Special Care Classes





Where next?



**Celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the school this October – continuing to support the school at a regional level.**

