AROUND CARLOW TOWN

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A VIP visits local Polish youth club

The councillor Agnieszka Pacyga talking to parents

THE POLISH community in Carlow is alive and kicking, thanks to the hard work and dedication of the 'Equal Chances' Polish youth club. The local club, set up in 2008 by a group of Polish teachers and parents, celebrated the end of the school year with a visit by the councillor of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland, Agnieszka Pacyga.

Polish boys and girls travelled from Kilkenny, Athy, Naas and Newbridge to take part in the club alongside children from Carlow, Bagenalstown and Tullow. Ms Pacyga presented certificates and books to the club's best pupils before watching their rendition of 'the class of orthography'.

The local club, which promotes the Polish culture and tradition among youngsters, is also proving a great help to parents, who learn English to integrate in local life.

"This was the second visit of the representative of Polish government in Carlow. She was impressed with the work of teachers and parents in the development of the children's mother tongue. She was amazed by the friendly, home-like atmosphere in the club and the amount of happy faces in school," said club director Marta Szutkowska-Kiszkiel.

Throughout the school year, the children have been busy preparing shows and projects and participating in a variety of events, including St Patrick's Day and International Days.

"It is part of our policy to promote integration and respect the diverse cultures that coexist in Carlow," added Marta.

"I would just like to thank the following people for support offered throughout the academic year: minister Mary White; Ray Murray, principal of Presentation College; all the staff in Presentation College; Marian Duffy; Mairead Donohue; Tara Kelly; Thomas Farrell; Seamus O'Leary; Ana Lopez; Tom O'Sullivan; Dariusz Wróblewski; Paul Higgins; and many more people without whom we wouldn't be able to operate efficiently," added Marta.

Polish boys and girls performing during the Councillor's visit