**Coláiste Éamonn Rís honoured by Cycle Against Suicide**

To coincide with Suicide Awareness Week, an awards ceremony recognising the achievements of schools - North and South - was held Friday 12th September at the Department of Education by Cycle Against Suicide.

At the special reception, Coláiste Éamonn Rís was awarded the status of 'Ambassador School' by Cycle Against Suicide, in recognition of their exceptional commitment in the promotion of positive mental health and their efforts to break the cycle of suicide on the island of Ireland.

Coláiste Éamonn Rís was represented at the event by Ms. Ivers, Mr. Ahearne and a group of dedicated students. Representatives of the main Education Bodies, the Education Trusts and the Institute of Guidance Counsellors along with celebrity ambassadors for Cycle Against Suicide Alan O' Mara and Seamus Hennessey, were also in attendance to show their support.

The year-long schools’ programme which required schools to fulfill five success criteria was first launched at the Cycle Against Suicide Student Leaders' Congress in January. This event was attended by 4000 students and 130 schools and was the first of its kind, youth mental health congress in the RDS.

In a statement, Minister for Education and Skills Jan O’ Sullivan added her congratulations to the 30 schools and said ‘The work of Cycle Against Suicide in schools is of vital importance.  We are all only too aware of the tremendous pressures facing young people today.  Many of the messages from peers, traditional media, social networks and commercial interests promote the myth that we all have to be the happiest, fittest, shiniest generation that ever walked the earth. Real life is very different.’

Founder of Cycle Against Suicide, Jim Breen said: “On behalf of Cycle Against Suicide, I commend the extraordinary commitment of the 30 Ambassador schools in 2014. Each of them has gone the extra mile to promote the objectives of Cycle Against Suicide, drive awareness and encourage help-seeking behaviour. Together, we are creating a movement that schools, and students in particular, can take a leading role in.  Cycle Against Suicide’s schools programme provides students with the tools and strengths required to build resilience for their own mental health.  It empowers them to ask others are they feeling ok; in the knowledge that it’s ok not to feel ok; and it’s absolutely ok to ask for help.”

Suicide is claiming the lives of at least 800 people each year on the island of Ireland.

**Cycle Against Suicide** is a voluntary organisation that aims to:

* Offer reassurance that it’s OK not to feel OK; and it’s absolutely OK to ask for help
* Direct people in need to where help is available both locally and nationally.

**Together, shoulder to shoulder, we can break the Cycle of Suicide on the island of Ireland**