



Japanese Ambassador Visits Coolmine!



Ambassador Norio Maruyama, the Ambassador representing Japan in Ireland, paid us a visit on Monday to pass on some important lessons and messages, and also to have a chat with our Senior Cycle students currently studying Japanese at Coolmine. Accompanied by Ms. Connolly and Mr. Hirohama, the Ambassador was welcomed into our school and brought to the Reading Room to introduce himself to our Japanese learning students. He had many insightful stories and advice to share with everyone, including two messages and one question for everyone.

Mr. Maruyama's first message for them was to continue their studies in Japanese. He also showed his appreciation for Mr. Hirohama, saying "Without a teacher, you cannot learn." The students were made aware of the new JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) programme that Japan offers to international students looking to go to university in Japan. The programme also encourages native English speakers to stay and volunteer/work in educational facilities to teach Japanese people English pronunciation.

The Ambassador's second message for the Japanese learners was more of a question: Have you ever heard of the man Lafcadio Hearn?

As he expected, the name Lafcadio Hearn was unknown to everyone in the room. Patrick Lafcadio Hearn is a half-Irish, half-Greek writer who moved to Japan and wrote about the Japanese traditions and culture in the English language as a way of communication to the Western world. He was a very important figure in history, especially in Japan, which was fascinating for the Coolmine students to find out about. Mr. Maruyama wanted to raise awareness about the existence of the unknown Irishman, and urged the students to go to University College Cork, who has over 200 digitalized archives of Hearn's works.

Lastly, the Japanese Ambassador had one final question for our Seniors: What is your favourite anime?

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