

## Moate Community School wins ISTA Special Award at the BT Young Scientists



Moate Community School was delighted when Transition Year Student Oisín Foley won the Irish Science Teachers Association Award at the recent BT Young Scientist and Technology Competition at the RDS.

Oisín's project was titled 'Rotifers and how they can be used in the classroom'. Rotifers are fascinating micro-organisms

which live in pond water, on moss and lichen. The name rotifer comes from the rotating wheel-like protrusion at their mouth which makes them very interesting to watch under the microscope.

The aims of the project were to develop knowledge on rotifers and to collect, view and identify the different types under the microscope and following this to develop a *Learning Package* that teachers can use in the classroom, based around the idea of discovery learning and stimulating student interest.

As part of the *Learning Package*, Oisín developed a resource disc to accompany the package, with a selection of his own clips and others of interest from YouTube to provide a stimulus to engage, also including an amazing facts worksheet, PowerPoint presentation and possible questions for use in class. Oisín examined the Leaving certificate and Junior certificate syllabus to link the learning package to the stated learning outcomes in the syllabi.

Oisín used the 'Inquiry Based Science Teaching and Learning Framework' when preparing his pack. This framework document was designed by Discover Sensors group (part of Discover Science and Engineering) and is used by teachers when designing their class to promote inquiry based learning.

The Learning Pack was run with First Years and Transition Year Students at MCS. The students loved discovering and learning about the tiny creatures. The activity seemed to develop their interest in Science and encouraged them to question the world around them.

Oisin worked very hard on his project over the last couple of months. The staff and students at MCS would like to congratulate him on winning this award, and also praise his work and the support of his mentors Ms Irene O'Sullivan and Ms Margaret Mandal.

The remainder of the Transition Year students from MCS were brought to the BT Young Scientists exhibition at the RDS on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Jan to support Oisin and to look at the rest of the 520 Science projects on show.