


<p>Name</p>	<p>Ms. Jennifer O’Leary <a href="mailto:116375751@umail.ucc.ie">116375751@umail.ucc.ie</a></p> 
<p>Title of study</p>	<p>An investigation of the effect of school connectedness on the occupational engagement of primary school students.</p>
<p>Supervisor(s)</p>	<p>Dr. Bryan Boyle &amp; Dr. Helen Lynch</p>
<p>Background/Abstract (350 words max)</p>	<p>The core definition of school connectedness by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2009) is “the belief held by students that adults and peers in the school care about their learning as well as them as individuals”. Connectedness has been identified as an indicator of wellbeing and essential to the Health Promoting School Framework of the World Health Organisation. In the comparison of the two My World Surveys, the most comprehensive study of young people’s mental and wellbeing in Ireland to date, students sense of school connectedness was reported as a key concern as it is significantly reduced in 2019 compared to 2012 (Dooley et al., 2019). A significant amount of research has been conducted in defining school connectedness and exploring various outcomes of school connectedness in various disciplines including public health, education, and psychology. However, little research has explored the effect school connectedness can have on student’s occupational engagement. This qualitative study aims to gather an understanding of how a sense of connectedness/ belonging to a student's school environment can affect their school-based occupations through a case study approach.</p>

	<p>Furthermore, this research strives to determine occupational therapy’s position in developing a whole-school approach to supporting school connectedness. This study aims to add to the evolving role of a school-based occupational therapist in Ireland.</p> <p>The research aims of this study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To better understand perceptions of connectedness in the school environment among students and their school personnel.</li> <li>• To further understand what determines a sense of connectedness to the school environment according to the students and the school personnel.</li> <li>• To explore the relationship between student’s school-based occupations and their sense of school connectedness.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Publications (e.g. articles, conferences etc)</i></p>	<p>O’Donoghue, C., O’Leary., J., &amp; Lynch, H. (2020). Occupational Therapy services in School-Based Practice: a Pediatric Occupational Therapy Perspective from Ireland [awaiting publication]</p>
<p><i>Link to Orchid Profile/ Research gate profile/Iris profile or website</i></p>	<p><a href="https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jennifer_Oleary8">https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jennifer_Oleary8</a></p>
<p><i>Biography e.g. qualification/training/work history (200 words max)</i></p>	<p>Jennifer is a full time Master’s by Research student. Following graduation as an occupational therapist from University College Cork 2020, she was awarded the Children’s and Young Peoples’ Research Masters Studentship with the Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science. Jennifer has a particular interest in school-based occupational therapy practice. Following the completion of a study exploring the perspectives of paediatric occupational therapists of school-based occupational therapy, Jennifer chose to continue her research in this area of practice. With an interest in wellness, her research focuses on student’s sense of school connectedness in a primary school environment in Ireland. While conducting her research, Jennifer also contributes to tutorial and academic work in the Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science including one to one tutorials, assistance with development of teaching and materials for the paediatric programme and the undergraduate research class.</p>

	Jennifer is also a member of the International Networking Group for School-Based Occupational Therapy (connected to ENOTHE), which includes presenting on her research and networking with school-based occupational therapists and researchers globally. Jennifer is also a member of the UCC Students' Union Wellbeing Crew, promoting active wellbeing programmes for the University's student body and advocating for students throughout the University.
<i>Funding body (if relevant)</i>	Studentship funding awarded through the Department of Occupational Therapy and Occupational Science