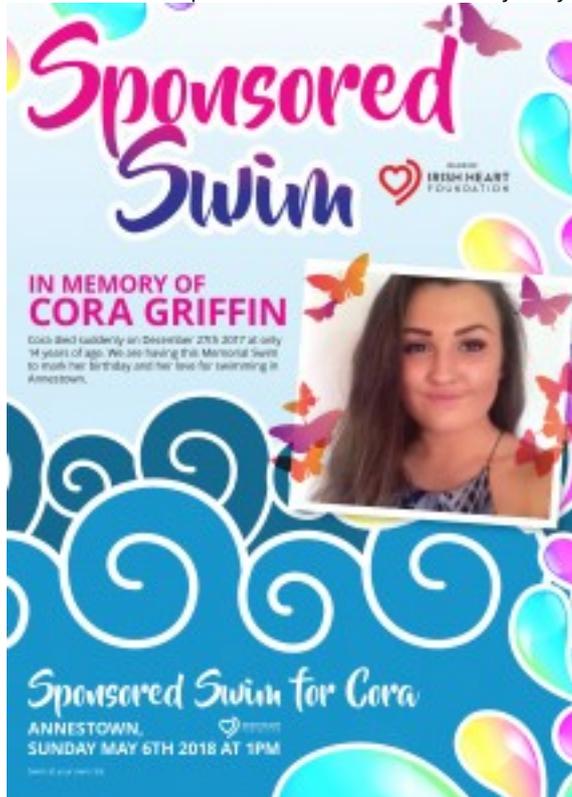


Sponsored Swim in Memory of Cora

A SPECIAL sponsored swim is taking place in Annestown in memory of a local girl who died unexpectedly in December. Fourteen-year-old Cora Griffin from Cois Cille, Dunhill took ill suddenly on Christmas night. She was rushed to University Hospital Waterford (UHW) but sadly died on December 27th. Post-mortem results show that Cora died as a result of Influenza B which caused cardiac arrest. Cora, who wasn't sick and hadn't displayed any flu-like symptoms, is not believed to have suffered from any underlying conditions. Her heartbroken parents Aidan and Sandra say they have been through a "nightmare".



The family had enjoyed a wonderful Christmas Day and Cora had won €100 in the draw at Harney's Bar on Christmas Eve. Although many people of all ages were affected by particularly severe flu this year, Sandra says medics at UHW were shocked that someone so young and healthy could be fatally affected. Cora, who was due to sit her Junior Cert examinations in June, was a student at Ardscoil na Mara in Tramore.

A quiet girl who had a close knit group of friends, Cora enjoyed the simple things in life and loved her family. She was a doting older sister to her two brothers Thomas (11) and Dara (7). "She was like a mother to them," said Sandra. "She couldn't do enough for them. She was a very caring child."

Cora loved musician Ed Sheeran and was thrilled to have received a present of a concert ticket and was planning her trip with best friend and neighbour Ellie.

She loved make-up, style, shopping trips and may have been interested in pursuing a career as a beautician. However, one of her main passions was swimming and she especially loved swimming at the picturesque Annestown Beach on the Copper Coast. "We would often go down and have a quick swim after I came home from work," explained her father Aidan. "It wouldn't have to be sunny for us to go there. There were times when it was almost raining but we still went for a swim and sometimes we were the only ones swimming." Sandra added: "I could be sitting with a towel wrapped around me if the weather wasn't great but she would be in the water laughing at me."

To coincide with her birthday on May 1st and to mark her love of swimming, a sponsored swim will take place on May 6th at 1pm at Annestown.

"We don't want it to be a sad day," said Sandra. "It's going to be a celebration of Cora's life." Participants are not required to swim lengths but are merely encouraged to enter the water and have fun as they celebrate Cora's life.

The event is being held in aid of the Irish Heart Foundation and Cora's family hope the money raised may help save someone

else's life in the future.

People can donate on the day as there will be a number of collection buckets.

There has been huge support for the swim so far and it's hoped that a large crowd will attend on the day. Refreshments will be served in Harney's Bar, Dunhill afterwards.

"Family and friends have been very supportive of us. The entire community has been great," said Sandra. Additionally, Ardscoil na Mara are holding a Blue and White Day on May 1st which will celebrate Cora's love of Waterford GAA. She was a major hurling supporter and attended many matches as part of a group which regularly travels from Dunhill. Cora was in attendance at the All-Ireland Hurling Final clash with Galway at Croke Park in September and thoroughly enjoyed seeing her beloved Déise playing.

Funds from the Blue and White Day will be donated to the intensive care unit at UHW. "They couldn't have done more for us," said Sandra.

"And they tried so hard to save Cora."

The sponsored swim takes place at Annestown on May 6th beginning at 1pm and everyone is invited to attend. For more information contact 086-1984067