



ST COLMCILLE'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION



ICT News

The Parents' Association is pleased to have been able to provide financial assistance to the school in relation to the purchase and provision of new IT equipment. As a result of this initiative teachers and students now have a PC and overhead projector in each classroom. This greatly enhances the capacity of teachers to be innovative in terms of the delivery of the syllabus in the classroom.

More recently, St. Colmcille's has been selected as one of the 78 second-level schools to participate in a Government-sponsored pilot project whereby 100Mbps of broadband will be provided to the school together with some additional IT hardware made available as part of this scheme. Along with the equipment previously funded by the Parents' Association this ensures that, our current students and those who will enroll in the future will be among the best-equipped in the country in terms of access to the most modern teaching aids.

Funding and Voluntary Subscriptions

Everyone is aware of the huge cutbacks in funding made by the Minister for Education, which in turn has affected our school in many ways.

Now more than ever we depend on your voluntary subscription to provide support to the school, and fund many services which benefit all our children.

These are a few of the many ways we put your money to use: providing funding for a lab. technician, librarian, library books, talks for parents and students, student counselling and support, new computers for the IT lab and sports facilities.

If you pay your voluntary sub of €250 in one calendar year, we can reclaim tax from the Revenue Commissioners. Last year we received a tax refund of €24,000 on your subscriptions.

It is hoped that this large rebate will go towards funding some major school project each year. This year it is proposed to develop 2 new tennis courts and a new basketball court at the side of the school.

While we realise that a lot of parents are affected by the economic downturn, we need your support more than ever for the sake of our children's education.



"Night time" Rear car park area on which it is proposed to develop a basketball court and two tennis courts

Talks for Parents

Throughout the year the PA endeavours to provide talks for parents which are of interest & support. We kicked off this year with a talk on Depression from John Wills (AWARE), due to public interest John gave a follow on talk in the Iona Centre.

In February we had a well attended, informative talk on Dyslexia (detailed to the right). On 23rd March we are hosting a talk on Bereavement /Coping with loss which will be given by Maureen McCabe, a councillor from St John of Gods, & in April, just in time, before exams, we will be having a talk on managing stress.

This talk was given before & proved both useful & enjoyable for parents & students alike. This year the PA once again sought & found a facilitator for a Teenage Parenting Course. The first of these courses has just finished & evaluation from both parents & facilitator is very positive.

A second course is due to start in April. As demand for this course is high, the PA have opted to hand it over to the Adult Education group & from September it will be run on that program. We hope to continue to run interesting & informative topical talks throughout the academic year.

All our speakers are registered speakers & talks are free of charge. Your attendance is very much appreciated.

Talk for Parents on Dyslexia

Deirdre Mc Guinness from the Dyslexia Association of Ireland came out to our school on Wednesday 10th March 2010. The talk was very well attended.

Deirdre gave the parents information through her own personal experience and also through the work she has done over the years with the Dyslexia Association. The talk was very valuable and thought provoking.



Allianz Insurance

This year we took the Pupil Personal Accident Insurance from Allianz. The reason was that Brennan Insurance had not decided on the premium when the application forms were being sent out to parents.

As Allianz were offering a slightly better package, we decided to go with them instead. Both companies are equally good to deal with when setting up the policy, and we have had no complaints so far. However, we have had no contact with the all-important Claims Department. If you have feedback on either company, or the cover they offer, we would be delighted to hear from you.

Contact Antoinette on 0876832825 or send an email to sccsparentsassoc@eircom.net



Feeder Schools

In the 26th November, 2009 edition of The Irish Times, St Colmcille's CS featured prominently in the list of top feeder schools for students who completed their Leaving Cert in 2009. In Dublin City & County, St. Colmcille's was sixth on a list which included many of the top fee-paying schools in the county - a terrific achievement for a school which had its first Leaving Cert in 2005!

This is due to a combined effort by students, parents, teachers and school management. To quote our principal, John McKennedy, 'it represents the very best model of what community education should be about'.

Texting Update

In September 2009 the Parents Association set up the school's texting service with Schools Text.ie So far the response from parents has been very positive and the system seems to be working well. It was especially useful during the bad weather in January!

In order to minimise the cost of texting, we try to limit the texts to one mobile number per family but we can accommodate requests for more if necessary. If you are not receiving texts or if your number has changed, please contact

Antoinette on 0876832825 or send an email to sccsparentsassoc@eircom.net

Project Maths

Project Maths is the phased introduction of revised syllabuses for Junior and Leaving Cert Maths. It has been piloted in 24 schools around the country for the last two years and the first students will sit their leaving cert this summer.

For next year's first and fifth years it will begin in September 2010 with the introduction of Strands 1 and 2. The new syllabuses incorporate changes to the content and approach to teaching and learning. Further information is available on the National Council for Curriculum Assessment (NCCA) website www.ncca.ie/projectmaths

Parents Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools (PACCS)

Parents need to be aware of their rights and responsibilities in both the Education Act and the Education Welfare Bill. It is vital that parents have this information so that they can play a proper role as partners in the education of their children.

PACCS is an Association that represents parents of students in 92 community and comprehensive schools in Ireland today. The Association at local level is made up of representatives from areas feeding into the local school. There is a regional structure comprising of seven regions.

Each school nominates two parents to attend regional meetings. St. Colmcille's Community School Parents Association are now members of PACCS on a local and national level, and this should benefit both parents and children in our locality. For more information go to the PACCS website www.paccs.ie

New Uniform Supplier

Spurred on by our disappointment with the quality of the school jumper supplied by Arnotts

last year and given the seemingly high cost of the uniform in the current recessionary climate we decided to investigate the cost and quality of other uniform suppliers in the market.

We are delighted to announce that we have found a new supplier who we are confident will supply us with a high quality product at a cheaper price with an excellent quality of service, The School Wear House, Unit 3, Ballyogan Business Park.



As part of our contract with them, they will supply us with a complete team kit in the school colours for each year we continue to do business with them.

They will be visiting the school in early June, details will be provided at a later date. Also look out for the second hand school coat sale to be organised with the help of the School Student Council. Finally, we are investigating launching a healthy feet campaign for the students in the school. Watch this space!



Website

Our new website is under construction – we'll let you know when it's finished.

Scoliosis Screening

On Monday the 22nd February the Parents Association arranged for a scoliosis specialist to come to the school and screen first, second and third year girls.

This service had previously been withdrawn from schools in the Dublin area due to HSE cutbacks.

However, with the proceeds from the colour day held on Friday the 5th of March being donated to the orthopaedic scoliosis fund in Our Lady's Children's Hospital, the Hospital was happy to provide this service to the school.

With an incidence of 2 in 100 girls in the general public showing signs of scoliosis, we feel it was a very worthwhile event.



Carl Malone Remembered



We wish to extend our sincere sympathies to the family and friends of Carl Malone, and the entire school community, on his unexpected and untimely death.

Carl was a very popular 5th year student and is sadly missed by all.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dilis.

Young Scientist 2010

Congratulations to all the students who submitted projects to the Young Scientist, particularly Cian Rynne who won first prize in the Biology and Ecology category, and a special award from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Also, Cathal Treacy & Ciaran O'Brien whose project was 'Highly Commended'.

Well done to all!

Art Exhibition

The ten-year-celebration art exhibition opened on Thursday, the 4th of March, in the Pearse Museum. It was officially opened by Declan McGonagle, the director of NCAD. Only 23 pieces were selected for exhibition, with six coming from past pupils studying in art college, so it was an honour to be chosen.

All of the pieces looked very impressive when framed and hung on the wall, and the opening evening was very enjoyable. There was a raffle, speeches, photographs and refreshments, and everyone was very congratulatory to the young artists.

The exhibition is a great success; the first of many for several students.

Caitríona Ryan 3P, artist – Gone with the Wind.



You are invited to attend the opening of
"Ag Ceiliúradh Deich Mbliana ar an Bhfód"
A selection of work by the students of
St. Colmcille's Community School (2000 - 2010)
at the Pearse Museum,
St. Enda's Park, Grange Road, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16
on Thursday, 4th of March at 7pm.
The exhibition will be introduced by
Declan McGonagle,
Director of The National College of Art and Design.
"Ag Ceiliúradh Deich Mbliana ar an Bhfód"
will run until the 18th of March.



Mock Interviews

A scheme run by the Parents' Association with assistance from Ms Kenny - the career guidance teacher - has been in place for a number of years now whereby 6th years are offered a mock interview with someone from their chosen career area.

We have a list of parents and members of the community who volunteer to be interviewers. Students submit a letter of application and their CV in advance of the interviews which are usually held in November.

The response of students who have taken part was overwhelmingly positive and the interviewers were very impressed and complimentary in their feedback.

If you would like to help out by becoming one of our interviewers please contact Ms Kenny through the school or Sandra O'Reilly (mobile 0876799679) or sccsparentsassoc@eircom.net



Completed Projects

The Parents Association, since its conception has been involved with some major projects in the school. The astro turf pitch which provides a fantastic facility for the school was done in conjunction with Astro Soccer League.

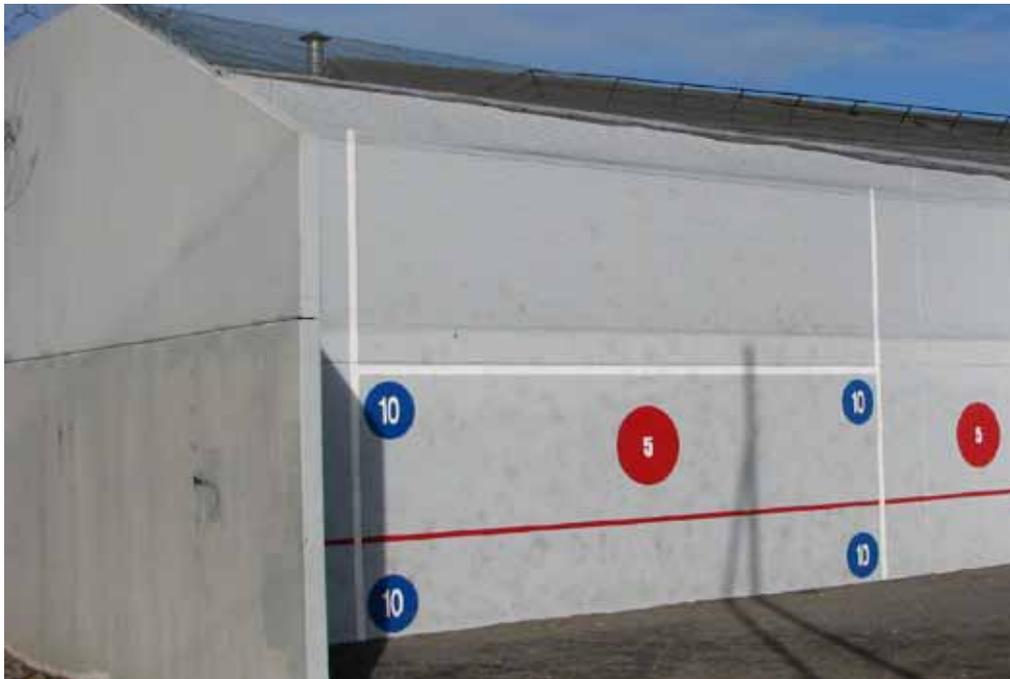
The major school extension to allow transition year to be offered to all students was funded by Parents Association and the Department of Education.

This extension included a meditation room with lovely stained glass windows which was funded by the Carmelites, Parents Association and school fund raising.

We have also provided funding for sports facilities such as the back pitch and hurling wall along with the GAA.

The school library, IT and lab aid support is an ongoing commitment from the Parents Association. Mr John McKennedy has a fantastic vision for the school to be, one of the best both physically and academically. On entering the school now one gets the feeling this is being achieved.

As an Association we hope to continue to be in a position to support this work, in conjunction with others, to have a school we can all be proud of!



Hurling Skills Wall

The new hurling wall which was erected with funding from the parents association has added yet another great facility to our schools portfolio. The students in the school especially the hurling enthusiasts now have permanent place to practice their skills both at lunch time and after school. It is fitting that we won our first under 18 schools hurling title in the first year that the wall was erected and the senior hurling team are now to represent Dublin in the Leinster final. The skills wall will help with the development of our skills and hopefully bring many more winning trophies back to the school.

Alan O'Connell - 5th Year
(Member of the u18 school hurling panel)

DEBS

The Debs Ball is being held on the 6th October 2010 this year.

A very competent committee comprising of a number of 6th year pupils have proved to be very adept at organising this major event on their calendar.

PA members Linda White & Mary O'Donoghue have been liaising with the debs committee.

As in previous years the Parents Association will be hosting a Pre-Debs Reception providing drinks (non-alcoholic) and nibbles in the school.



This gives parents and students an opportunity to catch up with old friends on this very special occasion.

We look forward to seeing you there.



Pitch drainage - the "visible lines" show the extent of the drainage works which are now fully completed.