

# St. Ciaran's Community School



## Christmas Newsletter 2020



### Words of Welcome

Welcome to our newsletter December 2020. We hope that by now all our first years have well settled in, feel part of the St Ciarán's school community, and that by now, have an effective work and study regime.

While this year has been a very different year to what we are accustomed to and has been difficult and challenging for us all, a lot has happened in our school and we hope you enjoy reading about some of the activities over the past few months. Reading about the great efforts and success of our students, even in these difficult times, allows us to see why St Ciarán's continues to be a school we are all proud to be a part of and highlights the great resilience in all our students.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate all our students for their on-going cooperation with our Covid-19 guidelines. We understand that it is difficult wearing masks throughout the day as well as remembering to sanitise, wipe desks, remain in base rooms and to stay socially distanced at all times. We are proud of

all the student's efforts and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them and you their parents and guardians for your support and efforts. We would also like to thank the staff of St Ciarán's, teachers, office staff, cleaning staff, caretakers, supervisors and canteen staff who have also worked tirelessly in difficult circumstances to ensure that all students receive the best possible education, are kept safe in a clean and sanitised environment and ensure that our school is a place where all are valued, all are respected and all are included.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet you the parents and guardians as we would normally in parent teacher meetings but the report which has replaced parent teacher meetings this year will hopefully have provided some useful formative feedback which will help all students and will enable them and you to review their progress to date. The Christmas exams will provide further opportunity for students, teachers and parents/guardians to assess where students are in their educational journey so far. Where a lack of progress is evident and students may be disappointed by their results highlights where students need to consider with you the parents/guardians as well as their teachers, the changes that are necessary to ensure improvement

Congratulations to all the students who have participated in the activities available in St Ciarán's many of whom had notable successes which you will read about in this newsletter. Thanks is also given to their teachers for all their hard work and to you their parents/guardians for your constant support. While this year has not had as many activities, trips or extra-curricular activities as usual, we hope that the New Year will bring positive changes and we look forward to providing these as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the midst of all this activity, our students have displayed a wonderful sense of compassion and

care for those in need. Students were involved in fundraising for St Vincent de Paul, Dublin zoo, Make a wish foundation and many other worthy causes.

As always, we continue to focus on learning & teaching and this year, our literacy initiatives including our DEAR (Drop Everything and Read), Reading Passports have ensured that students always have a focus on reading and its importance, our Teaching and Learning initiatives have focused on providing formative feedback, success criteria for students to ensure they are going in the right direction and achieving their full potential, while our numeracy initiatives have kept our focus on the importance of numeracy in all subject areas.

Our sixth years had their virtual visit to the Higher Options, guidance classes and individual appointments with Mr Oates and this should now have them focused on their career/future choices. It is important that having decided on what they want to do, that they now work hard to achieve this by completing all homework assignments, following a plan of revision of all course work in all subjects and of course, attending school every day until the end of the school year to ensure that they avail of the study and exam tips from teachers as well as the completion of all subject syllabi. Our current 3<sup>rd</sup> years have already completed CBAs as well as exams and students have hopefully already decided how they would like to progress next year and are focusing on what they need to do and achieve to get there.

Attendance at school is essential for all students and especially as we approach the final term. Students should be present all day, every day and we ask that you would ensure your son/daughter/ward attends daily and that you avoid taking them out of school for appointments if at all possible. If students are ill, displaying symptoms of Covid-19 or have been deemed a close contact, we ask that they remain at home and

isolate according to HSE guidelines so as to ensure the health and wellbeing of all.

Finally, a sincere word of thank to you, our parents/guardians, for your constant support of St Ciarán's. The spirit of cooperation has and will continue to ensure that our students, your sons, daughters and wards, will achieve their full potential while at the same time, grow and mature into responsible, well rounded individuals of whom we can all be proud. If at any time you have concerns regarding your son/daughter/ ward please remember that there are many people available here in St Ciarán's to help. These people include our Chaplain, Guidance Counsellor, Tutors, Year Heads, Class Teachers, Principal and Deputy Principal. Please contact the office to arrange an appointment with the relevant individual.

We hope you all have a happy, peaceful and safe Christmas. We hope you all get to spend quality time together as families and we look forward to seeing you all in 2021, a year where we can hopefully look forward to a little bit of normality and better times for all.

**Cara Mc Loughlin & Angela Flanagan**



### **Black History Week**

October was Black History month and the Student Council wanted to celebrate Black History and raise awareness, as well as promote inclusion. They selected interesting and largely unknown

individuals who achieved greatness against adversity and created five short PowerPoints based on these individuals. Tutors showed these PowerPoints during tutorial time to the entire student body. Students learned about Didier Drogba, Jesse Owens, Sister Rosetta Tharpe, Muhammed Ali, Katherine Johnson, Mary Jackson and Dorothy Vaughan.

### **1<sup>st</sup> Year 'Rooted in Reading' Passports Initiative**

All first year students received their 'Reading Passports' at the start of December to encourage our student's uptake of reading for enjoyment. We believe that reading for enjoyment reduces stress, improves analytical thinking, boosts vocabulary, writing skills and develops increased memory skills.

Each week, 1<sup>st</sup> years have the opportunity in English class to participate in 'Drop Everything and Read' with a book from home. Students will complete a number of novels between school and home this year. Upon completion, they will receive a 'passport stamp' from their English teacher and record the book in their 'Reading Passports'. Prizes and certificates will be awarded to successful readers in May 2021. With your encouragement and support, we hope to further build a culture of reading in our school community.

### **Green Week**

Students took part in Green Week from the 30th of November to the 4th December. During the week 1st and 2nd Years took part in a poster competition, junior students done lessons in recycling and waste for CSPE and we had our first Green Day as part of our Green Week initiative. Congratulations to our Green Week Poster Competition winners- Nicole Byrne, Ivona Ambrosic, Matthew Carey, Sulet Stander, and Olivia Carpenter. Well done all.



### **LGBTQIA& Week**

The Student Council ran Stand Up Awareness week to promote awareness of LGBTQIA& and foster inclusion in our school. Teachers delivered classes on LGBTQIA& anti-bullying and terminology to Junior students in SPHE and Seniors in RE. We also raised the Rainbow Flag outside the school, ran a poster competition, showed LGBTQIA friendly videos during tutorial and handed out Rainbow Stickers. Teachers also wore rainbow colours to emphasise they are allies.





### TY Lego Workshop

Our TYs took part in a Lego Serious Play Workshop.



### TY Enterprise

Congratulations to our TY mini companies Easy Ex and Eolais who recently won prizes in the Meath Enterprise competition. At home exercise company Easy Ex won 1<sup>st</sup> prize and were overall winners winning €600 for the team and €600 for the school. Education app Eolais won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize in new business idea and received €200. Congratulations to both teams as they beat off competition from all other schools in Meath. Congratulations to all our other TY Companies who are working hard with their business ideas in preparation for the Student Enterprise finals which will take place online in February/March. Easy Ex can be contacted at their website <https://www.easyexstickers.com/>

### TY Make a Wish Foundation Fundraiser

Ours TYs ran a combined total of 43km as part of a fundraiser for Make A Wish Foundation. This was done in their YSI class with Ms Smyth. In total the TYs raised €836 for Make A Wish Foundation.



## Christmas Jumper Day

Well done to the school community for taking part in Christmas Jumper day. We raised 580 euro for our local SVP and Dublin Zoo.



## Music Department Count Down to Christmas

In lieu of our traditional Carol service, this year the Music department had to go virtual and recorded 5 different Christmas carols and tunes to spread festive cheer in the countdown to Christmas. With students from all year groups involved, it was a real showcase of the talent within our school community.

The videos are available to view and share on St. Ciaran's Facebook page.



## Student Council Christmas Raffle



The Student Council ran a Christmas Hamper Raffle to raise money for St Colmcille's Nursing Home and raised 510 euro. Well done to Aoibheann Brennan in 3rd Year who won the Student Council Christmas Hamper Raffle. Thank you to everyone who bought tickets, between the raffle and Oisín Durcan's Reindeer making enterprise.

## Christmas Cards Competition for Community Outreach

The Student Council ran a Christmas Card Competition for First Years. All cards contained supportive messages inside and were distributed to the isolated and vulnerable via the Community Police in Navan. We received some amazing cards but the hotly contested winner was Sulet Stander (pictured below) in 1A. Thank you to Ms Murray our Art teacher for all the help and support and to all the students from other years who contributed cards.



## Letters of Hope-Penpal correspondences with Colmcille's Nursing Home

St Ciaran's Student Council has organised a pen pal system between our Students and the residents of St Colmcille's Nursing Home. Residents have been matched with students who have similar interests. Correspondence will take place every two weeks. This project has been facilitated by the Order of Malta who have a representative in the nursing home that the student council liaise with. The Order of Malta have also provided stationary and are hoping to bring this initiative to other nursing homes in the county. The project hopes to help the elderly feel less alone during this difficult time. Many thanks to Mr Curtin our Woodwork teacher who made a beautiful postbox for the residents in Colmcilles.



## Santa visits Colmcille's Nursing Home

After lots of fundraising the Student Council compiled gift bags for the residents of Colmcille's Nursing Home and delivered them on the 18<sup>th</sup> of December. This special delivery was undertaken by our resident Santa (John Farrell) and 11 representatives of the Student Council. Gifts were delivered to all 37 residents and students sang Christmas Carols upon delivery. A great time was had by all. Well done to the Student Council for their hard work and selflessness and a special thanks to John Farrell and all the staff, students and parents for their support.