

CLONKEEN COLLEGE



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Prepared by Transition Year Students

May 2017



Principal's Foreword

As we come to the end of another year at Clonkeen College, it is a time for reflection. The 2016/2017 school year has brought us great success both academic and sporting, in addition to the delivery of a large part of our new building.

There have been many highlights over the past nine months for Clonkeen College. Starting with our fantastic Junior Certificate results in September and the news that over the summer break students from Clonkeen College had been recognised at the CoderDojo Awards. The good news continued when we learned that our colleague, Ms Máire Duffy, had been chosen to receive the prestigious Physics Teacher of the Year Award. We showed our strength in many of our sporting endeavours this year, with a special note going to our 1st Years who shone in both Futsal and

Spikeball. We also achieved successes in Hurling, Soccer, Rugby and Tennis. The high point of our sporting year, however, was our U18 Gaelic Football Team becoming Senior Dublin 'B' Division Champions. Yet again our Maths and Science Departments, excelled with Maths Week and Science Week and the PE Department with an action-packed Activity Week. Students from Clonkeen College brought glory to the school as they were recognised for their entrepreneurship, with ROC Protection bringing home both the Griffith College Enterprise Award 2017 and the Senior Student Enterprise Award 2017.

It was a year in which we promoted mental wellbeing. Events and initiatives ran across the school year, with students engaging in reflective practice, art therapy and learning techniques to mind their mental health.

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Guest speakers ran workshops on topics ranging from internet safety through to the connection between mental wellbeing and substance usage. I am delighted that the fantastic work of our SPHE teachers, Health Promotions Team and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors has been recognised by the awarding of the Health Promotions Flag to Clonkeen College.

There have also been exciting building project developments in the last year, with the handing over of three state-of-the-art science laboratories and preparation rooms in the new building. It was wonderful to return after the Easter Holidays to see the new entrance and the temporary accommodation removed. The school received a new reception, offices and staffroom. We expect all remaining building work will be completed over the summer break and we look forward to enjoying the fully renovated and extended school in the new school year.

As the year draws to a close, we bid farewell to the Class of 2017. We are honoured to have been part of their six years here at Clonkeen College and we wish them the very best of luck both in their upcoming exams and on their future paths. The Class of 2017 will be remembered for their good humour, respectfulness, co-operation, participation in all aspects of school life and for their love of sport, and their commitment to sport in Clonkeen College.

Sport has and continues to be a huge part of life here, at Clonkeen. We are incredibly shocked and saddened at the decision of the Congregation of the Christian Brothers to sell the majority of our playing fields. It goes without saying that we will do everything in our power to have this decision reversed. This hugely upsetting news casts a dark shadow at the end of a wonderfully successful year for the

school. We ask all our school community to do everything it can to help us in our "Save Our Pitches" campaign.

Finally, I would like to thank all our students. Throughout the year they have shown outstanding behaviour, spirit and enthusiasm in all aspects of school life. I wish our 3rd and 6th Years very best wishes in their State Examinations. I would also like to recognise the enormous contribution of our teaching staff who have facilitated and guided our boys to aim high and achieve in all their endeavours. Committed to their subjects, delivering high quality teaching, they have also given freely of their time to ensure that the packed extra-curricular and co-curricular programmes continue to run and enrich school life. Lastly, I must thank our caretakers, administrative staff, SNAs, Parent's Association and Board of Management for their support and huge contribution to the school throughout the year.

To conclude, I hope you all enjoy reading our final edition of the newsletter for 2016/2017. A big thank-you to all who have contributed to its production over the course of the last year, and especially to the Transition Year students and Ms Cullen. I would like to wish everyone in the Clonkeen College community and their families a safe, happy and healthy summer. I look forward to another year together in 2017/2018.

Edward Melly (Principal)

Please note, details of what you can do to help our "Save Our Pitches" and a link to an online petition can be found on our homepage: <https://www.clonkeencollege.ie>

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6th Year Graduation

The 6th Year Student-Teacher Meal took place on Monday 22nd May, in the hall. It was a lovely opportunity for students and their teachers to sit down together to enjoy a meal and conversation in a relaxed setting.

The following night, Tuesday May 23rd, all 6th Year students returned to the school, with their families for their Graduation Mass & Ceremony. Fr Arthur celebrated Mass while music was provided by the choir, with teachers Ms Fulton, Ms Gibson and Mr McGloughlin. After Mass, Mr Melly spoke about the Class of 2017 and their contribution to school life in Clonkeen College, before all students were presented with their certificates by Mr Michael Blanchfield, Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Special awards were presented to Jonathan Hayes (Class of 2016) for his contribution to sport and to Conor Dunne (Class of 2016) who received the most points in Clonkeen College in Leaving Certificate 2016. Jonathon stayed on to present this year's Sportsman of the Year award to joint winners, Seán McDonald and Ronan Hayes. Congratulations to both students.

Chairperson of the Student Council, Ned Quirke, then delivered a speech taking us from the Class of 2017's first moments in Clonkeen College, through many memorable years to the present day. He then presented a video prepared by fellow classmate Naoise O'Conluain to mark the occasion. The final task for the night was to present the award to this year's Student of the Year. Congratulations to Naoise O'Conluain who was chosen as Student of the

Year 2017. The evening was brought to a close with some refreshments provided by the Parent's Association.

It was a beautiful evening, that celebrated a fantastic group of students. Thank-you to all the staff (both teaching and non-teaching), parents and students who put in so much hard work to make it such a memorable evening. We wish the very best of luck to all our graduates in their Leaving Certificate Examinations!

Science on Stage 2017

Congratulations to Ms Máire Duffy who has been selected to participate in the Science on Stage Festival 2017. Ms Duffy will represent Ireland alongside seven other Irish Science teachers at the festival, which takes place every two years and will be hosted this year by the Kölcsey Convention Centre in Debrecen, Hungary. This year's event starts on June 29th.



The festival sees primary and STEM teachers from across Europe come together to present their most innovative ideas. Ms Duffy will present her project "Homemade Electrosopes".

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State Examinations

All of our Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate students have been very busy preparing for their respective exams. For many students, the exams have now started as oral and practical exams were recently held in the school.

The Leaving Certificate class sat their Oral Irish and French exams upon their return from their Easter holidays. Although, these exams can be daunting for some, all our boys took them in their stride and were happy with their performance.

The Music practical exam followed for the extremely talented students in our 6th Year Music class. Next for our Leaving Certificate students was the LCVP exam which took place on 3rd May. The students sitting this exam were generally pleased on their exit from the exam hall with many saying that it had been a fair exam paper.

Practical examinations in Art took place during the second week in May. The Junior Certificate class had their first taste of the exams with their Art practical, on May 10th, while the Leaving Certificate Art students sat a two-day exam on May 11th and 12th. Their poster theme this year was Gothic Film Festival.

Well done to all the students on a great start to their certificate exams, and to their teachers who helped them prepare, offering guidance and support throughout these exams. We wish this talented group of students the very best of luck in their written papers in June.

ROC Protection

Congratulations to the three 5th Year students, and founding members of ROC Protection, Carl Cullen, Cormac Spain and Ross Byrne, who were awarded the National Senior Enterprise Award, at the national finals which took place in Croke Park on May 3rd.



This year has seen their Transition Year enterprise go from strength to strength, building their customer base, developing new lines and picking up the Griffith College Enterprise Award too. Being awarded the National Senior Enterprise Award in May brought this wonderful year to a fantastic finish. To top it all off, the boys were then invited to feature on the Late Late Show, on May 5th, for the second time this year. Congratulations to the three boys and to their teacher Mr Sheehy.



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The Anthology 2017—launch

Clonkeen College's Creative Writing Class launched The Anthology 2017 on Friday 28th April 2017. The book includes short stories, drama and poetry from students in Clonkeen College. This year's cover was designed by 3rd Year student Roman Gyrin.



Clonkeen College Press Chairperson, Ronan Cullen, welcomed all invitees to the launch and spoke about the work that he and his fellow classmates had put in over the course of the year to produce the anthology. Alan Nolan, an author and illustrator, then took to the stage to speak about the difficulties involved in being an author. Commending the work of all those who contributed to The Anthology 2017, Mr Nolan commented on how professionally written and produced this year's edition was

Invitees enjoyed some light refreshments and soaked up the celebratory atmosphere. We spoke to some of the Transition Year students who had written for and produced the anthology this year. Chalmers Nyakwende (D1) wrote about Anthony Joshua while Stephen Hyland (D1) created a fictional story called '18 months' and really enjoyed the experience "I thought it

was a very enjoyable experience. I learned about all the hard work that goes into creating a book". Under Mr Toomey's expert guidance the students in the Transition Year Creative Writing class have produced yet another fantastic anthology.

In the days following the launch we had even more exciting news from the class, when it was announced that an article prepared by Mr Toomey and a number of student contributors would be published in the Irish Times. The article "A schoolbook with a difference: one written by pupils" appeared in the Irish Times Culture section on Thursday, May 4th. In the article, Mr Toomey speaks about the conception of the project and it's aims, while the students talk about what it means to them to be involved in this process.



The Anthology 2017 and the article in the Irish Times are a wonderful representation of the how creativity is nurtured and encouraged in Clonkeen College. Huge congratulations to the students of Clonkeen College Press, the contributors from all years in the school and Mr Toomey on this fantastic achievement.

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Green Schools: Annual Spring Clean

On Wednesday, 26th April we held our annual Green Schools Day of Action, taking part in An Taisce's National Spring Clean. Students from all year groups took to the school grounds and the surrounding areas of Meadow Vale and Pottery Road to remove litter and waste.



The Green Schools Committee and Ms Evers-Nolan, divided each year group into teams and supplied them with a bag, gloves and a litter picker. They were then assigned areas to tackle. In total, thirty-three bags of rubbish were filled. The group that picked up the most litter in each year group were rewarded with a prize at the end of the day. The winners were:

1st Year – Ben D'arcy's group

2nd Year – Stephen Doran's group

TY – Luke Hannigan's group

5th Year – Joe Clarke's group

6th Year – Christian Kelly's group and Daniel Flatman's group .

Congratulations to the Green Schools Committee, Ms Evers-Nolan and all who participated, on a hugely successful Day of Action.

LCVP Enterprise Action Project

This year's 5th Year Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) class carried out the enterprise project element of their programme over the course of the month of May. They continued with previous classes' extremely successful Sports Day enterprises, organising and manning a tuck shop and setting up a sumo suit event. Although this year's Sports Day ended prematurely due to the adverse weather conditions, both groups managed to make a profit.

This class of budding entrepreneurs also ran two other fantastic events. The first was a movie afternoon for 1st Year students on May 9th, while the second was the running of Clonkeen Café which operated daily during the month of May. The café served hot drinks and light snacks.

The setting up and running of these enterprises was a tremendous learning experience for the boys. Well done to all the students and their teachers Ms Dunlop and Mr O'Brien on their successful completion of the enterprise project.



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Mental Health Ireland Talk

On Thursday, 27th April, Michael Noble, from Mental Health Ireland, visited the school to speak to 2nd Year students. Mr Noble spoke with the students on the topics such as interacting with the self, human interaction and connection, talking, noticing the quiet and dealing with disappointment and sadness. This talk compliments the work that has been done throughout the year by the 2nd Year SPHE teachers, and Ms Healy, in the area of mental wellbeing. Thank you to Mr Noble for a most interesting talk and to Ms Healy who organised the visit.



TWSG

Following two years of fundraising, in November 2016, Clonkeen College Third World Support Group (TWSG) was delighted to open a new school in Assam, India. Having completed one successful school build, the group signed a contract, in January 2017, with Action Aid to build a new eight-classroom school in Malawi, at a cost of €40,000. We plan to build this over two years.

Fundraising for this new venture continues apace. We would like to express our thanks to the parishioners of Foxrock Parish who very

generously donated €4,281.45 in a church gate collection. We were able to add to this figure when Bank of Ireland donated €1,250, through their Give Together Fund. Our final non-uniform day of this academic year took place in April, raising a further €825 and the annual TWSG concert, on May 25th added €425. We would like to thank Mr McGloughlin and his musicians for putting together a wonderful show and the students and families of Clonkeen College for their continued support.

As the year draws to a close we would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who has supported our work so generously over the last year. As the group goes forward into its twenty-fourth year, we know that with your support we can achieve even greater things for the poorest of the poor.

Gaisce Hike

On Wednesday, 10th May, Ms O'Keeffe, Ms O'Rourke and Mr O'Shaughnessy accompanied a sizeable group of Transition Year students as they set out on the adventure journey part of their Gaisce President's Award. The group departed the school, heading for Crone Wood, where they would start their 16km hike to Lough Dan Scouting Centre.

Exiting the school, the group found themselves faced with the first challenge of the day, when they realised that the bus company had sent a 52-seat bus that would not be able to access the starting point for their walk. This challenge proved only a minor problem to our resident GI Joe, Mr O'Shaughnessy who took the map and directed the bus to an alternative starting point on the Old Long Hill.

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It was a glorious day for hiking. The sun shone down as the group made their way onto the Wicklow Way and followed the path over Djouce to Luggala and onwards to the day's destination at Lough Dan. A dip in the cool lake soothed the tired limbs of the walkers and Ms Gibson arrived with supplies to fill all hungry tummies. Before long, students and teachers alike were feasting on a plate of her best Spaghetti Bolognese. The boys spent a relaxing evening at the lakeside, before preparing a bed time snack of homemade mini pizzas in the scouting centre's new pizza oven.



Following a good night's sleep, the group set out on the final leg of their expedition, along the Wicklow Way. Their second day's hike was a considerably shorter 8km, that took them over Pad-dock Hill to the village of Laragh.

The group enjoyed their lunches before returning to school. Well done to all the students who completed this part of their President's Award. For most, this was the final challenge on their way to achieving their Bronze Award. A big thank-you, as always, to all the teachers involved and especially to Ms Gibson and Mr O'Shaughnessy for organising the trip.

Transition Year Adventure Day

On Monday, May 8th our Transition Year students participated in our first TY Adventure Day. Students gathered at the school at the start of the day, where they were issued with a list of challenges and instructed to be back at the school at 3:15 p.m. that afternoon. At the end of the day, points would be awarded for all completed tasks, with points deducted for late return to school. The boys needed to draw on their time management, research and map reading skills in order to maximise their chances of success.



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It was a very enjoyable day for all involved with many memorable moments captured in the boys' photo logs. In the end, after photos were checked and totals verified, the winning team was announced. Congratulations to the team made up of Oisín Cullen, Darragh Cunningham, Tommy Claffey and Brendan Dunne. A big 'thank-you' to Ms Mooney and to the three Transition Year tutors, Mr O'Shaughnessy, Mr Brennan and Mr Benson who put together and ran this event.

TY Kayaking

Over the past number of weeks, each of our Transition Year classes has had the opportunity to travel to the river Barrow to kayak.



For each group the day started early, with a 7:00 a.m. departure from the school. After a short stop for breakfast rolls, the boys arrived at their destination where they were kitted out with wetsuits, helmets etc. The morning was spent learning the basics, with many students finding themselves taking an unexpected dip in the waters of the Barrow, as they learned to manoeuvre their boats.

Following a stop to enjoy their packed lunches on the banks of the river, the group set off south. They navigated weirs and rapids, with many continuing to capsize, before arriving at their journey's end in Kilkenny, in the late afternoon. They changed into their warm, dry clothes and boarded the bus back to school, tired, after a very enjoyable day on the water. Thank-you to Mr O'Shaughnessy who organised kayaking and accompanied the groups.



Connemara Trip

On the Wednesday before the Easter Holidays, a large group of 1st Year students with a few 2nd Years and TY students, departed from the school for the annual Connemara Trip. In the sacred halls of Clonkeen College, this trip has become the stuff of legend. This year news of Mr Faherty's love of Craig David, spread like wildfire among the group. It did not, however, reach those outside of the camp, due to the newly imposed mobile phone ban during the trip.

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This year's change to the rules, was brought about in the hope that the boys in the group would interact and communicate with each other. As 'Craig David-gate' proves, this was a very successful venture. With mobile phones out of sight, the kettle was brewed, the biscuits opened and the evening-time 'craic' was mighty.



Daytime in Connemara brought with it the usual activities for which Recess is well-known. The boys spent many enjoyable hours hiking, kayaking, sailing, orienteering and rock climbing. Some of the braver gentlemen embraced the harsh Connemara environment, taking a dip in the very chilly waters of the lake.



It was a tired group of young men who returned to Dublin at the end of the trip. As

always, it was a wonderful trip with many highlights for those involved. Thanks must go to the teachers who organised the trip and accompanied the boys: Mr O'Shaughnessy, Mr Faherty and Mr M Brennan.



Centenary Shield

Well done to 6th Year student Seán McDonald who was selected as a member of the U18 Irish Schools' Team that took part in this year's Centenary Shield. The annual competition, which is contested by teams from Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, England and the Republic of Ireland, took place this year between 16th February and 21st April.



Although the team got their campaign underway with wins against Wales and Northern Ireland, losses to Scotland and 2016 Champions England, meant that the Ireland team finished third overall. Congratulations to the English team who retained the title.

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SPORTS' DAY 2017

Mr J Lynch

As always, Sports' Day showed how important our green field is to Clonkeen. A great gathering of students, teachers, parents, sport and fun. And all this despite the weather. It may have curtailed the day in the end, but not before many performances of note.

In 1st Year Darragh Lynch lead the way with wins in the High Jump and Shot. Andrew O'Donovan also gained two medals, winning gold in the 400m. The other title went to Oran Keane-O'Hagan (Long Jump) and Eoin Manning (Discus).



In 2nd Year, Sam Ó Catháin won the two track titles, while Stephen Manning won two golds in the Javelin and High Jump. Joshua Kelly (Long Jump), Eoin Cooney (Discus) and Rory Dunne (1100m) completed the roll of honour.

Seán McGrane continued his gold-medal winning ways in 3rd Year with two titles; but he was

pushed all the way by Jack Moragahan and Byron O'Gorman, who both won a gold and a silver. Shaun Toner completed the title winners on the day. Special mention to Daniel Fitzgerald-Socci (2 silver) and David O'Dowd (2 bronze) who were the other multi-medallists from the year.



In the older years Ciarán Haverty (100m/400m), Finn McGowan (100m/Javelin), Ciarán Glansford (Discus/Shot) and David Dunwoody (Discus/Javelin) were our multi-title winners. The rest of the titles went to Shane Murphy, MacDara Ó Midheach, Darragh Cunningham, Cormac Spain, Jim Kennedy, Adam Waldron, Seán McDonald Rory Fitzpatrick and Daniel McMorrow. Well done to the 6th Years who turned out in force for their last Sports' Day. Seán McDonald, our joint Sportman of the Year along with Ronan Hayes, won three medals on the day as did Jim Kennedy (gaining a relay gold) and Rory Fitzpatrick. Adam Waldron and Daniel McMorrow also added to their golds. Other multi-medallists were Martin Jensen and Enda Linehan.

Special mention to Mark Dowling, Enda Linehan, David Dunwoody and Daniel McMorrow who, on the day of their graduation made sure the Javelin and Long Jump competitions were

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completed. Similar to the six fantastic duels that we have seen between Jim Kennedy and Liam McDermott over the years in the High Jump, the four made sure that 6th Year brought their sporting relationship with Clonkeen to a fitting end by completing their 6th and final Sports' Day. We're determined that we'll be saying the same about the current 1st Years in five years' time.

Special thanks to the Parents' Association who organised the burgers for everyone despite the non-barbecue weather. Well done again – it's a real feature of Sports Day now. As is the Ice-cream van, which certainly wasn't hampered by the weather! Mr Hedderman, again, created the fantastic track and field for us all to enjoy. Aply helped by Mr Gormley. Thanks to Mr Sheehy and Mr Howley for putting all the pieces together; along with Mr O'Shaughnessy, Mr Faherty and Mr Brennan for creating the Obstacle Courses; now a firm favourite every year. Every teacher, also a firm favourite every year, ran the various events of course. No Sports Day without us!! And finally, Ms Dunlop's and Mr. O'Brien's 5th Year LCVP class was on hand with the tuck shop, tea/coffee, and the Sumo Suits – perhaps that could be an event in itself next year lads! Well done!

Clonkeen Sports' Day – coming to our field near you for many years to come.



House Exams and Summer Holidays

As the term, and indeed the 2016/2017 school year, draws to a close we would like to wish the best of luck to all our 1st, 2nd and 5th Years in their House Exams. We hope that they will all be pleased with the outcome, when they receive their reports in the coming weeks.

We hope that everyone in the Clonkeen College community has a safe, happy and healthy Summer Holidays and look forward to returning to school refreshed and ready for the challenges of the coming year. This year we will leave it to Mr B Simpson to say...

