

CLONKEEN COLLEGE



SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Prepared by Transition Year Students

September 2019

Welcome Back

As the new school year begins, we would like to welcome back all our students, staff and their families. We hope that everyone enjoyed the summer break and are returning energised and looking forward to all that the year ahead has to offer. We especially welcome our new 1st Years, starting out on their Clonkeen journey. We hope that they will have many happy and fulfilling years with us.

We would like to send our best wishes to a number of staff who have not returned this year: Mr Bennett, Mr Monaghan and Mr Hayes. We also wish a fond farewell to Mr Byrne who retired at the end of the last academic year and to Mary Lynch who retired from our administration staff last March. We hope that they both will enjoy long, happy and healthy retirements.

We welcome some new additions to our teaching staff in the form of Ms Twomey (Irish & Spanish), Mr Gallagher (Geography), Mr McCabe (Irish & French), Ms Harte (English & History), Ms Downey (Maths & Science) and Mr Tierney (English & History). We hope that they will find their time with us both enjoyable and fulfilling.

State Examinations

Congratulations to all our Leaving Certificate Class of 2019 on their fantastic results. We wish them the very best in their chosen paths. A special congratulations to Ciarán Haverty who managed to achieve the maximum 625 points in the exams.



Thank-you to O'Mearáin Photography for kindly allowing us to use this image.

Clonkeen's Shakespeare Summer

Mr J Byrne

The summer of 2019 was remarkable for the connection between Clonkeen College and William Shakespeare. In late June the Arclight Drama Studio, based in Cornelscourt, presented its version of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Dell, the outdoor summer stage in the gardens beside the Royal Shakespeare

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Company's theatres in Stratford-upon-Avon. Arclight is a youth theatre and has appeared at the venue several times in recent years. This year it was the only Irish group invited by the RSC to perform during the festival which runs throughout the summer from June to August.



Arclight gave two performances of *Romeo and Juliet* to appreciative audiences, ranged about the stage on the grass during a gloriously sunny day. Two of the Leaving Certificate class of 2019 took major roles in the play – Romeo was Ronan Cullen and Ciaran Haverty was Tybalt (both pictured). Of course, Ronan ends up killing Ciaran! Ronan's parents, Ciara Phelan and Paul Cullen, are the driving forces behind Arclight since its foundation in 1992. Congrats to all involved! (<https://www.arclightdramastudio.com>).

Much Ado About Nothing was Rough Magic's highly acclaimed presentation at this year's Kilkenny Arts Festival in August. In the square of St. Kieran's College, the actors gave superb performances in a production that was inventive, thought-provoking and very funny. In the central role of Claudio was Clonkeen alumnus Shane O'Regan. Fresh from his success in Ireland and New York as Private Peaceful, Shane delivered a wonderful interpretation of the play's young lover. The scenes where he displays his feelings of anger and betrayal, to his girlfriend Hero, was powerfully acted. The play will tour several venues around Ireland in November. See it, if you can. Details can be found at:

(<https://www.roughmagic.ie/archive/much-ado-about-nothing>).

School Closures

Please note that Clonkeen College will be closed on Monday 4th and Tuesday 5th November to facilitate staff CPD for the new Junior Cycle. This year we are entering Phase 5 with subject specifications

in all remaining subjects (Graphics and Religion in Clonkeen) being rolled out.



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Student Council

Student Council training took place on Wednesday, 18th September for the new Student Council. The elected students took part in training in Leadership in the School Community and learned about the function and role of the Student Council. During their training, the students chose their Chairperson (Daniel Carson), Secretary (Ayman Memon), Treasurer (Liam Downes) and PRO (Tadhg O'Shea). They were later presented with their Student Council Badges. The Student Council will now meet weekly to address student issues in Clonkeen College. Thank you to Ms O'Keeffe, our Student Council Liaison Officer who organised this event and to Mr Pat Murphy who delivered the training.

Higher Options 2019

Our 6th year students attended Higher Options 2019 at the RDS on Thursday, 19th September. It was a very good opportunity for the student to discover the different paths available to them as they think beyond the Leaving Certificate Exams. A special thanks to Mr. O'Hora who organised the visit and accompanied the students.

L1 News

Mark Sullivan and Louis Mitchell

The students in L1 are very excited to be back in Clonkeen this September. We have two new students this year, Kevin Moran and Daniel Woods. Macdara Lambertini graduated from Clonkeen last May and started college in September. We will miss him and wish him the best of luck for the future.

We all had a very busy summer. Mark was in Belgium for a hockey blitz and won a gold medal. Louis went to France with his family. Both Daragh and Luka went to Spain and Robert went to Wexford for his Nana Carmel's 80th birthday.

Creative Hour

Junior Cycle 'Creative Hour' takes place in the Art room every Wednesday between 1.30 -2.30 p.m. This is open to all Junior Cycle students.

A class will take place for Senior Art students on Thursday evening between 4 - 5 p.m. This class is for those preparing a portfolio in order to gain entrance to a Third Level Institution and for those students who require support with the academic element of their Leaving Certificate Art course.

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Green-Schools

The Green-Schools committee have had a busy two years working towards our Energy Flag. In March, a member of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Council visited the school to carry out our Green-Schools inspection. The inspector was highly impressed with the enthusiasm of both the committee and teachers; in particular our noticeboard was also highly praised. In April three members of the committee, Ms Nolan and Ms Reynolds attended the Green-Schools award ceremony at the Helix in Dublin City, where we received our Energy Flag and certificate of achievement. This is Clonkeen College's second Green Flag.



The Green-Schools committee is eager and excited for a new school year and the start of our work towards our next flag. Over the next two years we will be working in the area of water as we pursue our Water Flag. We have lots of exciting ideas to come and are hoping to recruit

new members this term. The committee meets every Monday in Room 19 at lunchtime – all new members are welcome!

A number of students from the school joined several thousand students to march in Dublin in the Global School Strike for Climate on Friday 20th September. The strikes conceived originally by Greta Thunberg, a teenage Swedish climate activist, demand action to prevent further global warming and climate change. Here at Clonkeen, in our pursuit of our Green Flags, we've already started on the road to making small changes that we hope will help make an impact. We know that it's a case of a little done and a lot more to do as we make efforts and remind everyone in our whole school community of the importance of making environmentally sound choices in our everyday lives.

Better Options

A college fair for students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties will take place at the Conference Centre at Marino Institute of Education on the morning of November 18th. Students will be able to meet with representatives from all Irish colleges and universities and access information on the DARE scheme, the CAO Application Process and what to expect at third level. Students interested in attending this event can find out more information at www.ahead.ie/betteroptions

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The Anthology

The creative writing team in Transition Year is at hard work getting the library up and running for all students. Members of the class have been helping out with the cataloguing of the books in the library.

The class has also been busy working on Anthology 2020. The work has been divided between a number of teams. We have a marketing team that is undertaking the promotion of this year's anthology with a poster campaign. As submissions come in, our editing team will prepare them for publication.

We are hoping to receive lots of submissions this year and call on all students to give creative writing a try. This year, we have decided to launch a new blog on the school website. Watch this space for more news on that front!

TY GAA/Future Leaders Programme

Once again this year, our Transition Years will be partaking in the GAA Future Leaders programme. The course is designed to develop the leadership skills of students and encourages students to practically apply their new skills within the school and wider community. Students will

complete the following modules - nutrition, performance analysis, coaching, journalism and event management. In order to successfully complete each module, students must complete each end of module task. A cert will be given for every successful module completion. Upon finishing the whole programme, students receive the GAA Future Leaders Award.

One of the main parts of the programme is the organising of an event. The whole class will be organising a day blitz for each year group in or around the month of April. Furthermore, the students are currently organising for guest speakers to visit the school. It is hoped that we can arrange visits from a performance nutritionist, a yoga instructor, a wellbeing speaker and a recognised strength and conditioning coach.

In order to practically involve themselves with the course, students will be making themselves available to go to school games to take stats (performance analysis), write up match reports/interviews (journalism) and anything else that might be linked to the programme. All match reports/interviews will be available on our Clonkeen College Future Leaders WordPress blog. More details will be available in the next newsletter.

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TY Achill Trip

Wow, what an experience! Our trip to Achill has been one of our greatest adventures! We will never forget the days we spent on that beautiful island.

The adventure started when the buses pulled into a petrol station and the teachers told us we would be going on a twelve kilometre walk. We walked through fog and over bridges and we got to see a stunning sunset, before boarding our busses and continuing to our hostel.



The next morning we were divided into three groups for the activities. The group I was in set off for the beach to do some surfing. Although, many were tired as they struggled into their wetsuits, the fresh sea air soon perked everyone up and we waddled to the water, our surf

boards in tow. We had a quick introduction to surfing before we were let loose into the water to test our new skills.



As expected the water was freezing cold, but soon we adjusted to the temperature and before long everyone was trying their best to catch a wave and try to stand up on their surf boards. We had lots of time in the water and although none of us are likely to become pro-surfers we had a lot of fun in our many attempts and fails. After we changed back into our dry clothes we enjoyed a barbeque at a local lake. The remainder of the day was spent hiking on Minaun Mountain where we, again, enjoyed stunning views.



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Friday morning was bright and the air cold. After the previous day, we were all really excited to get stuck into more activities. We were doing coast-eering and kayaking. Again we had to get into wetsuits and go down to the sea. The weather



was perfect and the sea was calm. To get used to coasteering, we started with jumps from small cliffs but soon we progressed to jumping off six metre cliffs. Every time we jumped in we had to scale the rocky cliff to jump in again. After a great morning in the sea, we enjoyed another



lunchtime barbeque. Our last activity of the trip was kayaking, on Friday afternoon. We each took a kayak and headed into the lake. It was very windy which made it difficult to steer but soon everyone was making good progress and we all

had a good time.



We were tired on Saturday morning as we boarded the busses to travel back to school, but we all agreed that we had had a fantastic time in Achill. We'd like to say a big thank you to the teachers who organised the trip and to those who came with us to Achill: Ms Mooney, Mr O'Shaughnessy, Mr Lynch, Ms Murray and Mr McMenamin.

Mountain Biking

Some of our Transition Year students have been mountain biking in Ballinastoe Wood, Co. Wicklow as their Thursday activity. All have been having a fantastic time on the trails. A big thank you to Mr O'Shaughnessy and Mr Brennan for accompanying our students and also to @Biking.ie for having us!

