

COLÁISTE ÉAMONN RÍS



**CHRISTMAS
NEWSLETTER 2015**

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Bhur gcéad fáilte go dtí nuachtir na Nollag 2015. I would like to take this opportunity to thank staff and students for all their hard work during the course of the past year and to wish staff, students and parents/guardians a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. I would also like to thank the members of the Board of Management, the Parents' Council and the Students' Council for all ongoing efforts for the benefit of all in the school. On behalf of the school community, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to all in the school community who have been bereaved in the past year.

THE BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The school's current Board of Management is now in its second year of a three year term. The Board consists of eight members. Four are Trustee representatives; Mr. Gerry Forde (Chairperson), Mr. Jim Hurley, Mr Dara Lynott and Miss Ann Walsh. Two are teachers' representatives; Mr. Sean Hurley and Mrs Ann Barry. Two are parents' representatives; Mrs Joan Crean and Mr. Anthony Roche. Dr Tom McLoughlin retired from the Board in June and was replaced by Mr Dara Lynott. Dr McLoughlin served on the Board for eleven years and gave great service to the school community during his term of office. The Board has recently reviewed the school's Child Protection Policy, Admissions Policy, R.S.E Policy and Assessment Policy. It is currently reviewing the school's Data Protection Policy. The school's Anti-bullying Policy will be reviewed early in 2016.

SCHOOL RE-DEVELOPMENT

The school re-development work is well under way at the moment. The new gym is taking shape and a lot of the enabling work for the overall project has been completed. The construction of a new block linking the Art block and TG block is also under way. The completion of these sections and the installation of temporary accommodation will mark the end of Phase 1 of the project and should be completed by mid 2016. This work will be followed by the decanting to the temporary accommodation, the demolition of the parts of the school earmarked for demolition, the construction of the new classrooms etc. and the refurbishment of the part of the Junior Block being retained. Health and Safety is of primary importance so I would ask all parent(s)/guardian(s) to impress on their sons(s) the importance of obeying all Health and Safety regulations pertaining to the site.

THE PARENTS' COUNCIL

A new Parents' Council committee was elected at the A.G.M. in October. Committee members are as follows: Fiona Saunders (Chairperson), Charlotte Creane (Secretary), Yvonne Eaves (Treasurer), Joan Crean, Abina Moore, Anthony Roche, Ann Porter, Alison Kavanagh, Breda Murphy, Colette Black, Dolores Healy, Briggette McLoughlin, Jenny O'Keefe, Karol Jackson, Lynda Harman, Carmel Dowdall, Catherine Hopkins, Claire Molloy-Nolan, Gabrielle Brennan, Nicola Mahon, Orla Roche, Orla McGuinness, Paul Brennan, Yvonne Mahon, Geraldine Merrigan, Maria Reck, Mary Reck and Melanie Carroll. The Council has helped in funding a number of initiatives for 2015-16. €2000 was donated by the Council towards the cost of the Homework Club. The Council donated €1,800 towards partially sponsoring a number of Gaeltacht scholarships for summer 2016. It also donated

€597 towards the Fifth Year Study Seminars held in September. If any parent has a concern they would like discussed or an idea that they think could be of benefit to the school community, they are welcome to attend meetings or to bring the matter to the attention of a Council member. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 12th January @7.30pm in Room 10.

STUDENTS' COUNCIL 2015-16

The Students' Council is the representative body for all students in the school. The body was elected from the student cohort in September. Council members recently received valuable leadership training from Young Social Innovators. It meets regularly to discuss school matters. The 2015-16 Students' Council members are as follows: Eoin Hickey, Dillon Broaders, Hugh Fanning, Kean Kehoe, Ibar Quirke, Darragh Byrne, Seán White, Daniel Bent, Angelo Miculesco, Daniel Lynch, Matthew Creane, Evin Ryan, Patsy Whelan, Shane Doyle, Ryan Healy, Christopher Cash, Tuan Wadding-Hayes, Thomas O'Keefe and Aaron Smythe.

MEITHEAL PROGRAMME

The Meitheal programme has been running very successfully in the second level schools in County Wexford for a considerable time now. The programme identifies and trains school leaders among the student cohort, who in turn act as mentors for the First Year students in each of the schools involved in the programme. This has proven to be very effective in combating bullying in the participating schools and also provides leadership opportunities for our senior students. I would like to thank the students who have volunteered for these leadership and pastoral roles this year and commend them for their work to date. The Meitheal Awards day will take place on Wednesday 13th January 2016, hosted by Gorey Community School. Our 2015-16 Meitheal leaders are as follows: Jack Smyth, Kevin Birney, Christopher Cash, Liam Hore, David Enright, Jack McGuire, Ryan Byrne, Niall Dempsey, Shay Cullen, Aron Goodison, Adam Barnes, Joseph Redmond, Domantas Sniezka and Eoin Hickey.

WHOLE SCHOOL EVALUATION-MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING

We are currently working our way through implementing the recommendations of the Whole School Inspection-Management, Leadership and Learning, conducted by inspectors from the Department of Education and Skills last year. Progress is being monitored by the Board of Management.

SCHOOL SELF-EVALUATION

School Self-Evaluation (Literacy, Numeracy, Teaching and Learning)

We are now in Year 3 of the school's Literacy Plan. Among the initiatives in place to promote literacy are 'Drop and Read', 'Book in the Bag' and a First Year spelling competition. All First Years have been given a list of fifty commonly misspelt words from various subject areas. We will be holding a spelling competition in January among First Year classes. The best four spellers in each class will go forward to a final where a First Year champion will be crowned. The winner will get a Kindle. The reading board, where teachers

and pupils post the titles of books they have recently read is proving very popular. Literacy now forms a key element in subject plans.

We are also in Year 2 of our Numeracy Plan. The Plan is working well with significant progress made on most of the targets set for Year 1.

In 2015-16 the School Self-Evaluation focused widened to focus on Teaching and Learning. A School Self-Evaluation Report (Teaching and Learning) has been drawn up and we are now looking at putting a School Improvement Plan (SIP) in place.

STAY STRONG WEEK

A 'Stay Strong Week' in keeping with the school's anti-bullying slogan and in the context of promoting positive mental health was held from Monday 11th -15th November. A number of initiatives focusing on keeping well in body and mind were undertaken. There was also a focus on combating cyber-bullying, with a presentation to all First and Second Year classes by Mr Colin Browne, Microsoft, on the topic. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Browne for facilitating the school and for taking time out of his busy schedule to do. All our First Year students were also given a wristband containing a USB memory stick. The stick contains important information on dealing with and reporting cyber-bullying and also contains the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

AWARDS WINNERS

Well done to Gearoid Finn who won the 2015 Leaving Cert. Student of the Year Award. This annual award is presented to the student who receives the best results in the Leaving Certificate. He is currently studying in UCC. Gearoid is a past-pupil of Rathangan N.S. Gearoid was presented with a silver medal by the P.P.U. to mark his achievement.

Well done also to Christopher O'Dowd and Angelo Misceluscu, joint-winners of the Tony Boland Award for best results in the 2015 Junior Certificate exams. Both students achieved top marks in all subjects. Well done also to all the other T.Y. / Fifth Year students who were awarded prizes at this year's Junior Certificate Awards Evening: Danial Bin Azaharan, Ben Butler, David Corish, Ben Creane, James Crotty, Matthew Currid, Adam Dempsey, Adam Flaherty, Like Flaherty, Andrew Gibbons, Shaun Hartigan, Cathal Hillis, Martin Kehoe, Cathal Kirwan, Conn McIntyrte, Ben McMahan, Cormac Monaghan, Jason Moore, Conor O'Leary, Luke O'Neill, Sam O'Neill, Philip Rawson, Sascha Santschi-Cooney, Aaron Walsh, Tony Wilde, Abdullah Azam, Adam Butler, Cathal Crowe, Jack O'Leary, Aaron Smith, Justin Butler, T.J. Cousins, Luke Dowdall, Peter Doyle, Ryan Lynch, Diarmuid McDonald, Ryan McLaughlin, Sam McSherry, Cian Rossiter, Adam T. Walsh.

MERIT SHEET

As part of the school's emphasis on positive affirmation, students gain merits for the various ways they have achieved or contributed to school life. The merit sheets are filling up in many students' journals so parents are asked to keep a check on how their son is progressing and affirm appropriately.

CHILD PROTECTION

The school's Child Protection Policy has been reviewed and adopted by the Board of Management in keeping with the terms of Department of Education and Skills Circular 0065/2011. The Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools have been adopted as part of this child protection policy. A hard copy of the policy is available to any parent by request or can be viewed on the school's website www.wexfordcbs.ie. The person responsible for dealing with child protection concerns in the school is the Principal (DLP-Designated Liaison Person). In the principal's absence, this responsibility lies with the Deputy Principal (DDLDP-Deputy Designate Liaison Person).

FIRST YEAR 2016-17

The Board of Management offered 112 places in First Year 2016-17. The demand for places greatly outstripped 112 and hence there is a substantial waiting list in place.

TEXT ALERT

Are you getting text messages from the school? If you're not, it's probably because you have changed phone number. Please let us know if you change mobile or landline numbers or address to facilitate updating contact details.

SCHOOL EXCHANGE

Mrs Sinnott is currently planning a school exchange, in conjunction with the Loreto Secondary School, to a school in Germany. Seven of our German students will travel to St. Ursula's Catholic Secondary School in Baden-Wurtenberg in south-west Germany in late April 2016. They will experience life in a German secondary school and stay with German families for a week.

NEW YORK EXCHANGE

Three teachers and seven students from Iona Prep, New Rochelle, New York, came here in early November as part of an exchange programme with a fellow C.B.S school. Our students will be making the trip to New York in the New Year, spending a number of days in the school and taking some time to do some sightseeing in the Big Apple.

CHINA TOUR

Preparations are well underway for the TransitionYear Tour to China from 6th - 16th April 2016. Twenty three students and three teachers will make the trip this year. The group will fly to Beijing and after spending some time there will then travel on to X'ian by train. They will visit the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, the Temple of Heaven, the Summer Palace and view the Terracotta Warriors.

FIRST YEAR TOUR

Preparations are well advanced for the forthcoming First Year tour to Brussels from 24th-28th February.

CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING

CAO/PLCs & Careers:

All 6th year students at this stage have received their CAO books as well as instructions from Ms. Barnwell on the application procedure. Further to this, a parent's information evening was held on Tuesday 17th November, in order to assist parents and guardians in advising students on their best possible options. All students have been strongly encouraged to apply to the CAO system so as to keep their options open for the remainder of the year. In order to avail of an online reduced rate application fee of €25, students must log onto www.cao.ie and make their application before 5.15pm on January 20th 2016. The fee will increase to €40 should a student choose to apply using the paper form. Therefore all students have been encouraged to apply online. Deadlines are extremely strict and students have been warned of the pitfalls of leaving things to the last minute. Choices made at this point may be altered completely at a later date if the student wishes right up until July 1st 2016. A most helpful website in relation to careers and course searching is www.careersportal.ie. This website also has a specific section for Parents/Guardians in relation to guiding the process of career choice for their child.

Should any student suffer from a disability, specific learning difficulty, ongoing illness or mental health condition of any nature, they or their parents are encouraged to speak to Ms. Barnwell. There is a supplementary access route for students in this position called the DARE scheme. Should they qualify for this scheme, they can gain access to the course of their choice on a reduced points basis. They may also be entitled to extra tuition and supports once in college. An additional route into 3rd level called the HEAR scheme is applicable to those students who are experiencing severe financial hardship in the home or who come from a family/area where college attendance is not the norm. There are certain criteria to meet for this scheme also so any student interested should consult Ms. Barnwell. Important to note is that not all colleges participate in these schemes. For example, WIT and IT Carlow have their own access routes which require filling out additional forms. Additional and comprehensive information on all of the above can be found on www.accesscollege.ie. The deadline for form submission in relation to these routes is April 1st and intention to apply for these routes must be indicated on the online CAO form by March 1st.

**** Note:** PLCs have a totally independent process of application from the CAO. Should a student wish to apply for a PLC, they must make an application to the relevant college as it is not a centralised procedure. The process of gaining entry to a PLC is the need to attain at least 5 passes in the Leaving cert as well as successful completion of a short interview. Points are not required. There is a PLC section on www.careersportal.ie. The majority of PLC applications are now done online and deadlines vary from January to February.

Open Days and Speakers:

31 students attended WIT open day on Tuesday 8th December. It was a very beneficial day as students were able to attend various talks on courses offered in the college. They were also able to speak to current students and Lecturers in order to ask any questions they may have had. On the way down we stopped into Waterford College of further education (WCFE), where students received information on the multitude of Plc (Post leaving cert) courses on offer. They were then able to tour the campus and speak to the relevant students and teachers involved in each course. Plc courses can help students gain access to 3rd level should they be unsuccessful in doing so from their Leaving Certificate. They can also be a very strong option for students who are not yet ready to make the full transition from Secondary school to 3rd level.

To date we have had speakers in from N.U.I. Maynooth, D.C.U. and W.I.T. There will be further speakers throughout the year and students will be updated as these talks arise. Attendance is strongly encouraged bearing in mind that their CAO choices can be changed later in the year.

Careers Appointments:

All 6th year students have been encouraged to schedule at least 1 careers appointment prior to the CAO deadline with the majority having done so. However there are still a number of students I have not yet seen and so I would encourage parents/guardians to have them make an appointment immediately after the Christmas break. Any queries may be directed to Ms. Barnwell @ cbswexgc@gmail.com.

3rd Year/TY Subject Choice:

Ms. Barnwell will be conducting a number of information sessions with all 3rd year and Transition year groups during February/March. The purpose of these sessions will be to inform students of their options moving forward in terms of subject choice/LCVP programme and TY programme (for 3rd years). An information night will also be held for parents/guardians of same in order to answer any queries that may arise. The new points system will also be discussed at this information evening. A comprehensive booklet will be given to each student outlining each subject's content as well as the implications of subject choices for 3rd level courses. Once all of the material has been distributed, students are welcomed to make a one-to-one appointment if needs be in order to discuss their own particular situation if they are confused as to what to choose. They will then complete a form indicating their subject choices in order of preference. This form will likely be due back prior to the Easter holidays. An Information Night on T.Y./Fifth Year will be held in early March.

Counselling:

The counselling service within the school is an inclusive one which is available to all students. This is a private and confidential service which allows students experience a safe place in which to discuss any issues they may be experiencing.

Sharing a problem is strongly encouraged by the guidance and counselling department so as to deal with it as quickly and effectively as possible. Simply talking and sharing can be of huge benefit to a student who is under emotional pressure. With the range of difficult issues that teenagers can face these days, it is of utmost importance that they seek help as soon as possible if they feel they are not coping well. We often think that admitting struggle is a sign of weakness, but we all struggle sometimes. We all get overwhelmed sometimes. We all need help sometimes. Acknowledging this is not a sign of weakness.

Bearing the above in mind, there are numerous ways to make an appointment with the Guidance Counsellor (Ms. Barnwell). Students may self refer by simply calling to the office and asking to schedule an appointment. They may ask a trusted teacher to organise an appointment for them if they feel reluctant/unable to do so themselves. Alternatively, parents/guardians may contact Ms. Barnwell directly via phone (school number) or email @ cbswexgc@gmail.com to discuss any concerns they may have or to arrange a meeting.

GAELTACHT SCHOLARSHIPS

The Board of Management and the Parents' Council are subsidising six Gaeltacht scholarships again this year to Coláiste na nOileán in Connemara. Three Second Year and three Fifth Year students will be receiving scholarships worth €700 each. For further details see the Irish subject link on the website or contact your son's Irish teacher. Given that the aural and oral components account for 50% of the Leaving Certificate Irish exam, a visit to the Gaeltacht is highly recommended to improve competency in the language.

MOCK EXAMS

While the Department of Education and Skills waive Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate fees for medical card holders, the school will have to collect mock exam fees from all students to cover Mock Exams costs. The Leaving Certificate Mock Exams fee will be €110 this year and will be collected in advance of the exams by Ms Power. The Junior Certificate Mock Exams fee will also be €110 this year and will be collected by Mrs Scallan. If you wish to pay by cheque, please make the cheque payable to C.B.S. Wexford.

CYCLE AGAINST SUICIDE

Our T.Y. students will attend the Cycle Against Suicide Congress in January 2016, where students from all over Ireland will participate. The motto for this year's Congress is 'together we can'. Preparations are also under way for a Ceilí Against Suicide involving T.Y. students from each of the five secondary schools Wexford town as well as Fifth year students from Bridgetown V.C.. The ceilí is scheduled for 12th February 2016.

C.B.S. TALENT SHOW

Well done to all the students who took part in this year's Talent Show in the Dun Mhuire Theatre which took place on Thursday 8th October 2015. The afternoon and evening shows were very successful. I would particularly like to thank Ms. Spellman and Ms. Kavanagh in particular, for the countless hours of hard work they spent with the students in auditioning, organising and rehearsing for the show. I would like to also thank all the staff who volunteered to help at the evening show.

CHRISTMAS FAIR

The Christmas Fair held on Friday 4th December was a tremendous success again this year with huge numbers attending. I would like to thank Mrs Barry and Mrs Codd for all their hard work in making the project happen. This annual event helps to spark a great deal of entrepreneurial spirit among the students. I would also like the parents and students who supported the event on the day and helped to make it such a success. Well done to all T.Y, 1st and 2nd year students involved.

SCHOOL SAFETY

I would like to remind all students to take great care while entering or exiting the school grounds or exiting the school into the school yard. Our site is limited in terms of parking facilities so it is important that we all are vigilant and aware of the risks of vehicular traffic. The bollards have helped keep the footpath clear of parked vehicles. I would also like to remind parents dropping off students to park safely before allowing passengers get out rather than stopping in traffic and allowing passengers out.

EXTRA SUPERVISED STUDY

It is hoped to organise Supervised Study for Leaving Certificate students during the February mid-term break in advance of the Mock Exams and during the Easter holidays. Supervised Study may also be available for Junior Certificate students during the Easter holidays. Details in relation to cost/times/dates will be finalised in the New Year.

LOURDES

Fifth year students will be invited to apply to travel on the annual pilgrimages to Lourdes next term. Each year Coláiste Éamonn Rís sends four students on the annual Diocesan Pilgrimage in May.

UNIFORM

School jackets are available from Mr. Hegarty. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are asked to ensure that their son(s) present themselves in school in full uniform. The school jacket is an integral part of the school uniform for all years. Those wearing non-uniform jackets will have them confiscated. Students presenting out of uniform are in breach of the school's Code of Behaviour and will have sanctions imposed, up to and including being sent home. Your help in enforcing the wearing of the uniform is greatly appreciated.

CHAMPIONS

Congratulations to Dale White, Sixth Year, who recently became a double World Champion for the second time in Kickboxing - 74 Kg title for 16-18yr old boys in Orlando, Florida recently.

Congratulations to John Brady, Third Year, on his selection on the Irish Under 16 Golf Team. John plays off scratch and is a member of Rosslare G.C. He was a member of the Leinster Interprovincial Under 16 Team which won the Inter-Provincial title in July. He also the captured Connacht Under 16 Boys Title in June. Well done also to Jack McGarry, Sixth Year, who was also a member of the successful Leinster Inter-Provincial team.

Well done also to Eoghan Mahon, Fifth Year, on his selection on the Irish Surf and Lifesaving Squad and Angelo Miculescu on his selection on the South East regional basketball team.

SENIOR HURLING

Well done to the Senior Hurling team on their performances in the Leinster 'B' Championship. They narrowly missed out on a play-off spot following a victory over Gorey C.S. and drawing with Enniscorthy C.B.S. and narrow loses to Bunclody FCJ and Abbey C.S.

NO-UNIFORM DAY

Thank you to all who contributed to our no-uniform collection on Friday 11th December. €1,015 was raised for various charities.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

School re-opens Wednesday January 6th January 2016

Second Year P/T Meeting Thursday 14th January 2016 4.30pm-6.45pm. Classes end at 3.45pm.

First Year P/T Meeting Monday 25th January 2016 4.30pm-6.45pm. Classes end at 3.45pm.

Mid-term Break 15th – 19th February 2016 inclusively.

Junior Cert. Mock Exams Friday 5th February 2016 –Friday 12th February 2016.

Leaving Cert. Mock Exams Monday 22nd February 2016–Wednesday 2nd March 2016.

Easter Holidays Wednesday 17th March 2016-Sunday 3rd April 2016.

Mar fhocal scoir,

Nollaig Shona daoibh.

