



St. Louis Secondary School  
Carrickmacross

# Annual Report for Parent's Association

2022

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The aim of St. Louis Secondary School, Carrickmacross, is to foster a school community where all the members live in a friendly environment, where young people are taught to think for themselves, to be responsible for their actions, to hold in respect the world in which they live, and to recognise the importance of spiritual values in their lives.

### **Teaching and Learning**

#### **What we achieved**

- We had a study skills day with follow up sessions for both our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> year students.
- We continue to up-skill our teachers in the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool. All our teachers received wriggle licenses to access further training videos. We also held an inhouse training day for staff. The training focused on areas that were highlighted as a priority as a result of online learning in 2020-21. Therefore, the focus was on the use of onenote and teams. We also increased our investment in It with the purchase of a class set of laptops, a class set for LCA and for LC PE which was introduced this year. We also purchased a number of interactive panels to replace projectors and to help make some teaching methodologies more interactive.
- We introduced Spanish and LC PE
- Offered the decider skills programme to a selection of second and third years and also the relax kids programme for first years
- We had a part time chaplain, a psychologist for 10 weeks
- Our School Improvement Plans are available on our school website.
- We continue to evaluate, expand, and develop our induction programme with first years. There were increased links to key skills in the Junior Cycle such as 'Managing Myself' 'Working Together' and' Communication'. Last year we were limited with aspects of this programme as part of the activities were scheduled during lockdown and we were unable to have parents onsite for the various presentations. Thankfully the students were able to have a live end of year presentation, and it was great to welcome parents back into the school.
- We opened a free breakfast club which is proving very popular
- Once again both our Junior and Leaving Certificate Results were excellent. 28% of our leaving certificate students received over 500 points. We had three students who received over 600 points and one student who received the maximum of 625 points.
- Introduced a debating competition among second years in Louis schools
- Incidental Inspection
- New home/ school liaison officer
- Additional classes to help student most effected by lockdown to bridge the gap in learning

- Introduction of new student leadership teams in Ty

### **Priorities for this year**

- Develop a biodiverse area by the Prowles river to be used as an outdoor learning space and increase students' level of knowledge on living sustainably and love of our community/planet
- Develop our sensory garden
- Continue to up-skill teachers and students in the use of online teaching and learning. Develop a new Digital Strategy
- Continue to implement our 5 yr strategic plan
- Maintain our high standard of results in state exams and in extra-curricular activities. Review our assessment policy.
- Manage the wellbeing of our staff and students over the coming year.
- Progress our application for major capital works project with the department.
- Develop students' awareness on human rights, climate action through various programmes.
- Introduce a book rental scheme for all first and 5<sup>th</sup> year students
- Upgrade parts of the building visually.

### **Extra Curricular**

In St. Louis we know that education also happens outside the classroom as well as inside. The school was restricted in allowing a number of extracurricular activities to take place due to covid-19. All sporting competitions were suspended.

Did manage a foreign trip for Ty and 5<sup>th</sup> years at the end of the year.

This year we intend to provide a wide range of extra-curricular and co-curricular activities designed to provide something for everyone.

- A series of lunch time activities- sporting leagues in basketball and volleyball
- Library is open 4 days a week, board games room at lunchtime, chess club.
- When restrictions were lifted we felt that students needs to renew connections within the classes so every year group attend a day trip to Tanagh or Lough Muckno at the end of the year for some fun, exercise, and team bonding activities.
- Foreign trip to Paris for second years to help with the French cultural aspect of the JC, and a Ty trip to Italy- Sorrento- with a focus on Home Economics
- New first year soccer team
- After school activities for first and second years, funded by youth work Ireland

Students are encouraged from first year to get involved in all aspects of school life, and we have a wide range of activities to offer.

### **Rang Sorcha**

We opened a special class for students with Autism in September 2020, currently have 3 students enrolled. Last April we had our official opening by Gary Cooper CEO Middletown centre for Autism, students also made a contribution on the day. We also upgraded our sensory room

### **Building**

The Board of Management recognises the importance of continually improving our school building and the internal learning environments.

Last year we made several improvements however progress was slow due to covid -19 restrictions:

- We received a Heritage Council grant to restore three windows and five doors at the front of Cistin Essex, which is one of our significant heritage buildings
  - Several parts of the school were repainted, and new furniture installed in several classrooms
  - A number of classrooms have received new blinds
  - We replaced three main heating pipes in the school.
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- A lot of effort has been put into a large number of small maintenance projects as a result of the information supplied by staff at the end of the year.
  - New Lino on main staircase
  - New carpet in library and books will be updated in the coming weeks

### **Sensory Garden**

We continued to develop our sensory garden with tactile planting in the raised beds. Water fountains for birds were made from plastic materials.

Work will continue on this over the year ahead

### **Big Focus on the environment.**

We established a green schools committee, who introduced compost bin in all classes, made a green house from plastic bottles and grew tomatoes and chillies. Biodiverse spaces were developed along the school grounds to develop cross curricular links among subjects.

Planted number of trees which were sponsored by the county Council and in conjunction with our student council. Received our first green flag for waste.

### **Board of Management**

This is the final year of the current Board of Management which was formed on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 2020. The Board met regularly during the year, mostly online. All meetings were

very well attended and properly conducted. The main items addressed during the year: policy development, ongoing financial monitoring (finance sub-committee), staffing and contracts, curriculum provision, school building, covid -19 and general running of the school as reported by the principal.

### **Student Council Report**

Our Students' Council promotes the interests of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the Board of Management, parents and teachers. Members of the council are elected from every class group in the school with senior students acting as officers of the council. It consisted of 24 students. School policies under review or for adoption by the school are considered by the council and feedback given to the principal.

Each year the Council endeavours to initiate something which will benefit the student body. The following is a list and description of activities undertaken by the Student Council during the year.

- Stand Up Awareness week, awareness on inclusion and LGBTIQ+
- Appreciation Certificates to community members and organisations
- St. Louis Network Student Leadership Training Day
- CPR Training
- Policy Review
  - Child Safeguarding Risk Assessment Policy Review
  - Anti-Bullying Policy
  - Uniform Review
  
- Canteen Survey
- Celebrated our new bank holiday for St Bridgit by joining with other le Cheile schools and showcased our student action projects in school
- Tree Planting and outdoor seating areas
- Darkness Into Light
- Collection for Ukraine, raised over €4000 and collected a huge quantity of clothes and food and toiletries.
- Collection for library books
- Swap shop- Focus on sustainable fashion

### **Policy Review**

The following policies were reviewed and introduced last year:

- Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
- Code of behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Admissions Policy
- Updated our Covid -19 Response Plan & Policy

The following policies will be considered this year:

- Student leadership
- Child safeguarding statement and risk assessment
- Code of behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Guidance Plan

### **Attendance**

Attendance continues to improve in the school. This is in some way related to our attendance strategy plan which we introduced a few years ago.

The main problem areas were after Easter time when we saw a significant drop in attendance among our third and sixth years. Teachers often use the last term to focus on exam technique which students miss if they are absent. Some of the courses in leaving certificate are particularly long and time is needed to complete the course, so we urge you to encourage your daughter to continue to attend regularly in the last term. We are aiming to reduce the number of sign-outs this year which rose dramatically over the last two years. Parents will be invited into school for a meeting to discuss the situation when sign-outs reach 10.

### **Finance**

The school is in a healthy financial position as is shown in our annual school accounts. These accounts are submitted to Le Chéile and then to the FSSU. These accounts are either certified or audited annually. The online payment system is now proving very popular with parents and 90% of parents are using this. This is accessible from our website. In the year ahead we would ask parents continue to use this online system and avoid sending cash to school where possible

### **Enrolment**

Enrolment forms are available to download from our school website, or from our school office. The closing date for Expression of Interest applications is November 11<sup>th</sup> this year. Subject sampling workshops will take place on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October and were booked out. Our open day was for students and parents of, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> class took place last Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October

Finally, I want to thank all parents and in particular the Parents' Association for your help, support over the last year.

Ms K Patton  
Principal

