



Parents' Update

Monday 1st February 2021

Dear Parents(s)/Guardian(s),

I am writing to update you on our progress over the last month and to provide you with further updates with regard to our Online Teaching & Learning. At the outset I wish to congratulate the majority of students who have migrated over to the MS Teams Platform and who have engaged with their teachers and SNAs in a positive and respectful manner. I also want to acknowledge the teaching staff at Castleknock Community College who have worked extremely hard in the most challenging of circumstances to provide for the students in their care. My thanks also to the parent community who continue to support the College in these most challenging of times.

Bereavement News

We extend our deepest sympathies on the sad passing of Ms Fiona Brady's father, Matthew Brady, (15th January 2021). We also extend our sympathies to the Kavanagh family on the sad passing of Ms Donna Kavanagh (23rd January 2021) who was a parent of Calvin Kavanagh a graduate of the College in 2020. May they rest in peace and may their memories be a blessing.

Update from the Department of Education & Skills – Friday 29th January

On Friday 29th January The Department of Education & Skills wrote to all schools informing them that they will remain closed in line with public health advice. The letter does not provide any indication as to when schools will reopen and states that further updates will be provided to schools in due course.

State Examinations Sixth Years & Third Years

We greatly appreciate the enormous challenges facing our Sixth & Third year students at this time. There is no doubt that their situation is not helped by the uncertainty surrounding the State Examinations in June and the practical & oral examinations which are scheduled for the coming weeks and months. Our message to these students has been to continue to prepare for their examinations while at the same time taking care to prioritise their own wellbeing. We have told Third & Sixth Year students that the mock examinations have been deferred and in the event that we are in position to return safely to school after the midterm break then we will endeavour to hold the mocks at the end of February/early March. Any decisions about mock exams will be made alongside further updates from the Department of Education & Skills.

Parent Teacher Meetings Reports

We will be publishing Parents Teacher Meeting Reports for Second & Fifth Years in advance of the midterm break. These reports will be available to download from VS Ware (Parents Account) and the College will text parents when these Reports are available to view. Reports for other year groups will follow after the midterm break.

Managing Online Learning

We thank parents/guardians for their ongoing support and cooperation with the College in ensuring that that your daughters/sons are engaging so well with teaching and learning online. We would ask parents/guardians to take some time with their daughters/sons to revisit our revised “Online Etiquette” document attached. It is important to note these guidelines and behavioural expectations in order to ensure the safety of all participants.

In particular, we would remind you of the following:

- CCC is using Microsoft Teams for online learning and have an email account for educational purposes. Under no circumstances should the login or password details be shared with other students.
- The online classroom is a formal setting and all engagement in classes should be formal.
- Please continue to email tutors and teachers by 8.30a.m. if your daughter/son will be absent from online classes.
- Please refer to your daughter/son’s VS Ware page regularly for updates on engagement etc. under the Behaviour Section.
- We would ask all parents to check that the microphone and camera are working on the device your daughter/son is using. A working microphone and camera will enhance the online learning and interaction experience for all.
- The College reserves the right to refuse entry or remove a student from the class for inappropriate online etiquette and behaviour.
- *It is absolutely prohibited to photograph, screenshot, film or record another person without their permission and approval and/or for that material to be shared with other people either from one device to another or on the internet.*

Staying Safe Online – Webwise Guidelines for Parents

We are encouraging all parents to remind their daughter/sons of the need for good practice when using any online platform. The following link from Webwise is worth accessing

<https://www.webwise.ie/parents/covid19-online-safety-advice-for-parents/>



Activities for Students

Creative the World's First Virtual Opera



[Creative Writing Workshops for Young People | The Journal of Music](#)

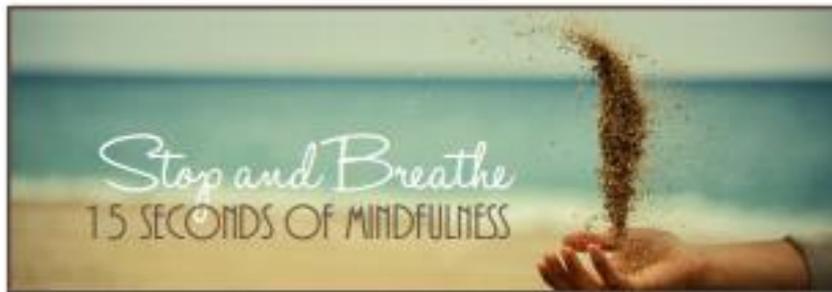
INO is looking to work with young people aged 14-18, living outside of Ireland's main urban areas, to help create the world's first virtual reality opera community opera.. What is a community opera? Put simply, it's just an opera made with professional artists in collaboration with people from different communities.

journalofmusic.com

<https://www.irishnationalopera.ie/news/2021/creative-writing-workshops-with-david-lordan>

Revitalise 2021 Foróige – Free Online Health & Wellbeing Events

A promotional poster for "Revitalise 2021 Foróige". The top half is yellow with white line-art icons representing various activities like music, fitness, and technology. The bottom half is white with yellow and blue text. It lists the dates "FEBRUARY 8TH - 26TH" and "Free Online Health and Wellbeing Events." It also lists several weekly programs: "HIIT 2 FIT", "WHOSE CLIMATE? OUR CLIMATE! BEAT THAT BASE", "TECH 4 TEENS", "NUTRITIOUS & DELICIOUS BUILDING BEATS", "TIKTOK DANCE", and "GRAFFITI @ HOME". Logos for "foróige", "hi healthy Ireland", and "Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall Fingal County Council" are visible at the bottom.



"We just stop whatever we're doing and take three to five mindful breaths". A mindful breath is a slow, deep breath during which you focus your mind on your breathing. This extremely simple technique is particularly effective when you're feeling upset or stressed. But because of the way our minds spin along, gaining speed as we zoom through the workday, its useful any time. It will help slow your speeding mind and improve your concentration. As our minds become agitated, it's hard for us to focus, and it's a time investment you can make on even the busiest of days, since the entire process takes no more than about 15 seconds.

5 minute Mindful breathing - How to do it

The most basic way to do mindful breathing is simply to focus your attention on your breath, the inhale and exhale.

- ☞ **Find a relaxed, comfortable position.** You could be seated on a chair or on the floor on a cushion. Keep your back upright, but not too tight. Hands resting wherever they're comfortable. Tongue on the roof of your mouth or wherever it's comfortable.
- ☞ **Notice and relax your body.** Try to notice the shape of your body, its weight. Let yourself relax and become curious about your body seated here—the sensations it experiences, the touch, the connection with the floor or the chair. Relax any areas of tightness or tension. Just breathe.
- ☞ **Tune into your breath.** Feel the natural flow of breath—in, out. You don't need to do anything to your breath. Not long, not short, just natural. Notice where you feel your breath in your body. It might be in your abdomen. It may be in your chest or throat or in your nostrils. See if you can feel the sensations of breath, one breath at a time. When one breath ends, the next breath begins.
- ☞ **Be kind to your wandering mind.** Now as you do this, you might notice that your mind may start to wander. You may start thinking about other things. If this happens, it is not a problem. It's very natural. Just notice that your mind has wandered. You can say "thinking" or "wandering" in your head softly. And then gently redirect your attention right back to the breathing.
- ☞ **Stay here for five to seven minutes.** Notice your breath, in silence. From time to time, you'll get lost in thought, then return to your breath.
- ☞ **Check in before you finish.** After a few minutes, once again notice your body, your whole body, seated here. Let yourself relax even more deeply and then offer yourself some appreciation for doing this practice today.

John Cronin
Principal

