



# August Newsletter 2023

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Dear Parents(s)/Guardian(s),

As we prepare to welcome back our students and staff for the new academic year, we would like to take this opportunity to update you on a number of matters.

## Bereavement Notice.

The College community extended its sympathy and support to the Kelly family on the sad passing of Gail Kelly, mother of Aoife & Sophie. May she rest in peace and may her memory be a blessing.

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## Induction Week August 2023

The College reopens on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August for First Year Students with the first of two Induction Days.

### Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> August      First Year Induction

9.30a.m. - 11.30a.m.  
12.00p.m. - 2.00p.m.

Ranganna: Bowler, Casey, Doherty & Duffy.  
Ranganna: Flynn, Kerr, Quinn & Ryan.

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Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August      Third Year Induction      1.30p.m. - 3.30p.m.

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August      Sixth Year & LCA2 Induction      9.30a.m. - 11.30a.m.  
Fifth & LCA1 Year Induction      1.30p.m. - 3.30p.m.

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Monday 28<sup>th</sup> August      First Year Induction      9.30a.m. - 11.30a.m.

Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> August      Second Year Induction      9.00a.m. - 11.30a.m.  
Transition Year Induction.      10.30a.m. - 12.00p.m.

**Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> August      Classes commence for all students.**

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## Communicating with Parents

The College will be hosting a series of online meetings with parents in the coming weeks. These meetings will be hosted on MS Teams Live Events which will be accessible through the College website.

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m.- Meeting with Parents of Sixth Years & LCA2 Students

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m. - Meeting with Parents of First Years 2023

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m.- Meeting with Parents of Third Years 2023

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## Leaving Certificate 2023

The 2023 Leaving Certificate Results will be published on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August, and we extend our best wishes to all our Leaving Certificate & Leaving Certificate Applied Students. Please note that students will be able to access their results through their State Examination Portal. The Guidance Counsellors will be available in the College from 10.00a.m. – 3.00p.m. on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August. They can also be contacted by email.

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## Parents Association

The Parents Association meet on the first Monday of each month and extend an invitation to all parents to join them for their first meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30p.m. in Room 10.

In June of this year Marie King and a team of parents organised the second-hand uniform sale and raised over €2,200 in aid of Pieta House. The support of Marie and her team is always greatly appreciated.

The Parents Association will be planning their AGM for October.

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## Board of Management Update

The College's Board of Management meets on seven/eight occasions throughout the course of the academic year. The first meeting of the year will take place on **Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September**. This meeting will be an opportunity to finalise its targets and goals for the new year. The Board will also review the College's Admissions Policy for the 2024-25 academic year. If there are any changes to the selection criteria and/or methods of selection parents will be provided with an opportunity to review the Admissions Policy in advance of the Board's final ratification.

Please note that the Parents Representative on the Board of Management, **Ms Anne Marie Flynn**, will be stepping down from the Board having served since September 2018. Nominations for a replacement will be sought by the Parents Association in the coming weeks and in advance of their AGM in October. The Board of Management Constitution provides that:

*Two parents elected from parents of children who are enrolled and have commenced attendance at the school (one being a mother, the other a father, elected by the general body of parents of children who are enrolled and have commenced attendance at the school).*

We thank Anne Marie for her commitment and years of service to the College.

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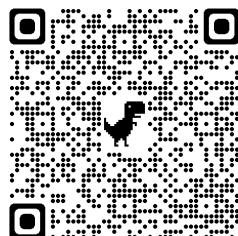
## Help with the cost of school expenses

You may get some help with the cost of your child going to school. The main schemes are the Back-to-School Clothing and the Footwear Allowance. You may also get help with exam fees, school transport fees and assistive technology depending on your situation.

## Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance

The Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance helps meet the costs of uniforms and footwear for students going to school.

To get the Back-to-School Clothing and Footwear Allowance, you must be getting certain social welfare payments or taking part in certain education and training, or employment schemes and your total household income must be below a certain amount.



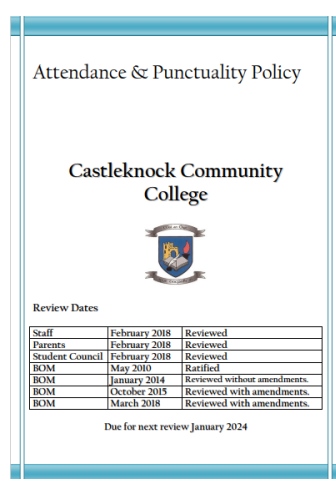
## School books

Each year the College is allocated a Book Grant from The Department of Education. The Grant is provided to support students from low-income families and families experiencing financial hardship. If you wish to avail of this grant, you should email the Principal, John Cronin, in strict confidence: [johncronin@castleknockcc.ie](mailto:johncronin@castleknockcc.ie).

## Exam fees

Students whose parent or guardian have a medical card do not have to pay the examination fees for Junior or Leaving Certificate (normally requested in February each year). Details of the medical card are put on the fee payment form and the parent then sends the form back to the school.

## Attendance & Punctuality



Attendance & Punctuality Policy

Castleknock Community College

Review Dates

Staff	February 2018	Reviewed
Parents	February 2018	Reviewed
Student Council	February 2018	Reviewed
BOM	May 2010	Ratified
BOM	January 2014	Reviewed without amendments.
BOM	October 2015	Reviewed with amendments.
BOM	March 2018	Reviewed with amendments.

Due for next review January 2024

The College conducted a review of its attendance records for the last academic year, 2022/23. The review has highlighted a number of concerns.

- The number of recorded absences has increased across all year groups but in particular at senior cycle (fifth & sixth year)
- Some parents are failing to contact the College if their child is absent for three consecutive days. This is a mandatory requirement for all parents as stated in the College's "Attendance & Punctuality Policy."
- The number of students recording partial absences (absent for part of a school day) has also increased in the last academic year.

There is a growing concern at a national level at student attendance and in April of this year the Minister for Education spoke about the Department of Education's concerns at the increased level of absences among students since the Covid Pandemic.

Updates on College Strategies to Manage Students Attendance.

## Swipe Cards: Punctuality

The College will be issuing students with new RFID swipe cards at the start of the school year. These swipe cards will allow students to swipe-in at our new contactless swipe card terminals, which were installed over the summer holidays. It is the responsibility of students to ensure that they have their swipe cards with them at all times. Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to record their attendance each morning and afternoon by swiping in before 8.50a.m. and 1.15p.m. each day respectively (with the exception of Wednesday when students only have to swipe in in the morning).



Students who fail to swipe in will be recorded as late and may be placed on lates detention. Any student who is late more than twice in a given week will be placed on detention the following Wednesday afternoon from 12.30p.m. – 1.30p.m.

## Attendance: VSWare App

We are launching a new VSWare notification system in September. This system will send notifications to parents to alert them to any unexplained school absences via the VS Ware APP. These alerts will be issued in the morning and afternoon (with the exception of Wednesday when only a morning alert will be issued). Parents /guardians will also be able to provide notes for these absences and provide notes for future absences via the VSWare App. Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to download the VSWare App between now and the start of the new academic year.

For further information on the VSWare App and push notifications please click on the link below:

<https://support.vsware.ie/en/guides-for-parents>.



## The Dangers of Vaping - Important Message from HSE

Vaping is an emerging risk to the health of children and young people. The purpose of this communication from the HSE is to better inform and support parents and guardians to protect children and young people from the harms of vaping.

Vaping means using an electronic cigarette (E-cigarette). E-cigarettes are battery-powered devices. They heat nicotine mixed with flavourings and other chemicals to create an aerosol that the user inhales.

### **Trends in smoking and vaping among children and young people**

Parents, guardians, teachers and schools play an important role in protecting children and young people from smoking. Smoking among children and young people aged 10-17 years decreased from almost 1-in-4 in 1998 to 1-in-20 in 2018. This is a huge achievement, which puts children and young people on a course for good health throughout their lives.



Vaping has become more common for adults in recent years. Almost 1-in-20 people aged 15 years and older in Ireland vape. Most of these people smoke or have smoked in the past.

Vaping has also become more common among children and young people. Data from 2018 shows that about 1-in-10 children and young people aged 12 to 17 years old used an E-cigarette in the last 30 days. Data focused on 16-year-olds, found 1-in-5 were using E-cigarettes in 2019 which is double what it was in 2015. More up-to-date Irish data is due to be published later in 2023. Based on these recent trends, we expect this will confirm a further increase in E-cigarette use among children and young people in Ireland.

Risks of harm caused by vaping among children and young people Vaping is harmful for children and young people for many reasons:

- E-cigarette use has been linked with acute harms including poisonings, burns, fractures, lung injury and asthma exacerbations.
- Early evidence links E-cigarettes use to cardiovascular and respiratory tissue damage.
- E-cigarettes often contain nicotine, which is addictive and leads to dependence.
- Children and young people are especially vulnerable to the effects of nicotine on their developing brains including nicotine addiction, mood disorders, and lowering of impulse control.
- Other drugs such as alcohol, synthetic cannabinoids, and opiates can be added to E-liquids and consumed through vaping.
- Finally, children and young people who use E-cigarettes are more likely to start smoking compared to those who never used E-cigarettes.
- Longer-term health effects of vaping are uncertain at this point in time.

### **Regulating to better protect children and young people from the harms of vaping**

In 2022, the drafting of the Public Health (Tobacco and Nicotine Inhaling Products) Bill was approved by government. The Bill will ban the sale of E-cigarettes to those under the age of 18 and strengthen regulation of the retail of tobacco and E-cigarette products. We expect the Bill to be brought forward into the legislative programme soon.

## Support for parents, guardians and teachers to protect children and young people from the harms of vaping

Parents, guardians and teachers have been in touch with the HSE for advice on how to protect children and young people from the harms of vaping.

Including E-cigarettes in substance misuse policies and procedures is an important step which many schools have taken to protect children and young people.

A range of resources for schools from the HSE Education Programme were updated and enhanced to include new information on E-cigarettes. Links are provided at the end of this document.

The HSE encourages parents and guardians to discuss vaping with their children and young people.

A *'QUIT4Youth'* Resource has recently been developed for local HSE Health and Wellbeing services to support them in their response to the needs of young people who smoke and use E-cigarettes. The HSE is working on further resources to support parents and guardians.

We will monitor this situation and continue to develop our response, resources and supports. We will continue to work with parents and guardians, schools, the Department of Education, Department of Health and all stakeholders to ensure we protect children and young people from the harms of smoking and E-cigarettes.

Links to information and resources -

<https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/tobaccocontrol/resources/e-cigarette-resources.html>

## Maintaining Uniform Standards.



The College takes great pride in its uniform. It is imperative that all students honour the College's Uniform Policy. We remind students on a regular basis that they make a major statement about their commitment to the College by the manner in which they wear their uniform.

**Footwear** - what is acceptable and what is not acceptable? The College policy is that students may wear black footwear with black soles. We are appealing to all parents to support us in regard to this matter.

**PE Uniform** - The College policy states clearly that only the official school PE tracksuit must be worn for PE Classes & extracurricular activities. Senior students, in particular, have not been fully

compliant in relation to the wearing of the school hoodie and tracksuit bottoms.

Students wearing or carrying non-uniform items will have them confiscated at the student entrance/tutorial.

**Hoodies** - From the start of the new year students will not be allowed to wear the school hoodies instead of the school jumper or jacket.



## Allergy Awareness

We would like to remind all members of the school community of our allergy awareness procedures. Nuts or products containing nuts should not be consumed in the College and should not be brought onto the premises. We thank you for your co-operation with this matter.

## HPV Vaccinations: Information for Parents and Students

The Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme is underway. The Laura Brennan HPV vaccine catch-up programme is for some people who did not get the vaccine when it was offered to them in school. The HPV vaccine protects against the HPV virus which can cause cancer.

### Who can get a vaccine?

The catch-up programme offers a HPV vaccine to:

- females in 2nd to 6th year of secondary school
- females under the age of 25
- males in 2nd to 4th year of secondary school
- males in 5th year who skipped Transition Year

If you are 16 or older and eligible for the catch-up programme, you can [book an appointment online](#).

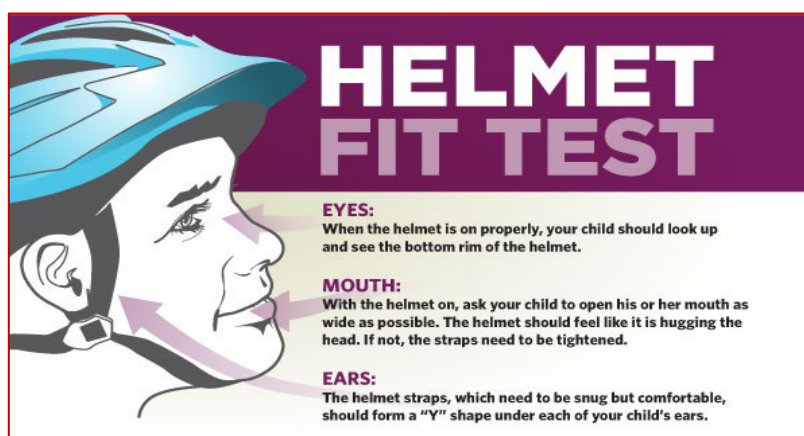
Vaccination clinics are being held across Community Healthcare Organisation Dublin North City and County, including on Wednesday 19th July from 9:30-16:30 at Corduff Health Centre, D15 T9NH and on Tuesday 13th June, 9:30-16:30 at North Strand Health Centre, D01 CC81.

## Health & Safety Parking at front of the school

We are reminding all parents not to park on the school grounds or on the slip road at the entrance to the College. As more students intend to cycle to the College in the coming weeks it is imperative that they are given every opportunity to cycle to and from school safely. Only parents whose children have a medical condition are permitted to enter the College grounds.

## Cycling to School – Wear a Helmet

Can we once again make a special appeal to all students cycling to school to wear a helmet.



## New Bike Racks & Service Station

Thanks to the Parents Association the College has invested in additional Bicycle Racks and A Bicycle Repair Maintenance Centre. Students who cycle to school will now have access to this facility.



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## Summary Calendar – Academic Year 2023-2024

### First Term

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m.

Meeting with Parents of Sixth Years & LCA2 Students (Online)

Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m.

Meeting with Parents of First Years 2023 (Online)

Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> September at 7.00p.m.

Meeting with Parents of Third Years 2023 (Online)

Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2.30p.m.

College Open Day – First Year Students 2024

College Closed Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September

Midterm Break Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October – Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023 (incl.)

College Closed Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December

First Term Ends Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

Christmas Holidays Monday 25<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 (incl.)

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## Second Term

College re-opens Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024

College Closed - DES School Planning Day Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Mock Exams Commence on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024

College Closed Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Midterm Break Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (incl.) College Closed

College Closed - DES School Planning Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2024

College Closed Monday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024 – St. Patrick's Day Bank Holiday

Second Term Ends Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

Easter Holidays Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March – Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024 (incl.)

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## Third Term

College re-opens Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Bank Holiday College Closed Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Third Term Ends Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024

State Examinations Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024

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