



# Parents Newsletter

## October 2023

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### 1. New Acting Deputy Principal:

I am pleased to announce that Ms Kelly McGrath has been appointed as Acting Deputy Principal at the College and will replace Ms Christina Clarke. Ms McGrath will remain on as Year Head to Second Years for this academic year. We wish Ms McGrath the very best in her new role.

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### 2. Enrolment First Year 2024-25

Application Forms for First Year 2024 are now available to download from the College website. The College Admissions Policy for the Academic Year 2024-25 is also available to download from the website. The College will receive applications from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October at 12.00p.m.

- All applications must be delivered in person to the main office at Castleknock Community College.
- The College does not accept postal or emailed applications.
- Please note that any incomplete applications will not be processed.

Application forms can only be accepted at the following times:

- Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 9.30a.m. to 11.30a.m. & 1.30p.m. to 3.30p.m
- Wednesday 9.30a.m. to 11.30a.m.

### 3. Push Notifications:

The College launched 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.**

For further information on the VSWare App and push notifications please click on the link below: <https://support.vsware.ie/en/guides-for-parents>.

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#### 4. Health & Safety

We are making an urgent appeal to parents not to park on the double yellow lines outside the gates of the College and on the main Carpenterstown Road. Those parents who continue to disregard this request are putting the lives of our students in danger. Please be advised that Fingal County Council has advised the College that they have been unable to appoint a traffic warden to assist students crossing at the pedestrian crossing at the Bramley Entrance. Parents and students need to be extremely mindful of this situation as the lack of a Traffic Warden increases the risks for students crossing at the lights on the Carpenterstown Road.

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#### 5. AGM Parents Association

The Parents Association will be hosting their annual Parents Association on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30p.m. in the College Canteen. We encourage as many parents as possible to attend this meeting and in particular we welcome our first year parents to attend.

The Parents association are also seeking nominations for the election of PA Nominee to the Board of Management at Castleknock Community College. Please be advised that the nominee is for a Mother of a student(s) currently enrolled at Castleknock Community. Please see College website for nomination forms.

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#### 6. Parent Teacher Meetings

The first round of our Parent Teacher Meetings will commence in October.

- **Third Year Parents** have received invitations to their meetings on *Tuesday 3<sup>d</sup> October*. Ranganna Ardagh , Broighter, Cathach & Durrow. On *Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October* we will host meetings for Ranganna Kells, Lismore, Newgrange & Tara.
  - Sixth Year Parents have been invited to their daughter/son's Parent Teacher Meetings on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October.
  - Future Dates
    - o Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> November Fifth Year Parent Teacher Meetings
    - o Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November Second Year Parent Teacher Meetings:  
*Ranganna: Binchy, Blackmore, Buckley & Coreless*
    - o Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> November Second Parent Teacher Meetings  
*Ranganna: Finucane, Guerin, Harrington & Robinson*
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#### 7. 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.

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## 8. The Well-Read National Award



The Wellread National Award aims to promote the development of a reading culture in school communities because research has shown that this supports the personal and academic development of young people. The award requires the involvement of all stakeholders including students, teachers, parents, the board of management, and the wider community in reading and associated activities. Over the last year the Library Committee was re-established, and they promoted several creative initiatives:

- Community mini library on the grounds of the school
- Short stories shared with local coffee shop.
- World Book Day Events
- Blind date with a book available in the school library
- Six-word essay completion
- Banned books section in the library.
- Movie of the month in the library
- Parents Blogs on “What they are reading”.
- Staff Book club & staff library.
- What are you reading displays during the community plant sale.

In June of this year the College was informed that it had been successful in becoming a “Wellread Readers for Life School”. In its citation to the College the National Wellread Committee wrote:

*“It was such an enjoyable experience for us to gain an insight into all the initiatives that you undertook as a whole school community to get everybody reading. The enthusiasm and creativity of all the partners involved were evident in your school’s portfolio. We commend you for bringing your school community together in such an enriching and worthwhile manner and maintaining this award over the years.”*

*Mona Metcalfe Well Read National Award & PDST.*

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## 9. One Good School



Jigsaw launched a new programme for schools in Autumn 2021 called the “One Good School” initiative. The College applied and was accepted onto the programme that began in January 2022.

The “One Good School” initiative aims to support the mental health and wellbeing of young people by developing a shared responsibility for mental health across the whole school. The OGS journey is an eight-step journey:

1. Form the team
2. Team training
3. School self-evaluation
4. Analyse results
5. Create an Action Plan & submit to Jigsaw
6. Implement Action Plan
7. Report to Jigsaw
8. Award and celebration

We are delighted to announce that Castleknock Community College has been awarded the Jigsaw “One Good School” Gold Award. Congratulations and thank you to students, staff and parents/guardians and everyone whose efforts over the last two years has ensured the College’s wonderful achievement.



**The Belong To  
LGBTQ+ Quality Mark**

Join over 100 post-primary schools nationwide  
and show your commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion!

## 10. Belong To LGBTQ+ Quality Mark

This year the College will join with *Belong To* in its efforts to secure the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark for schools. The accreditation endorses a school’s real commitment to creating a safe and inclusive school.

As part of the accreditation process, the College will be sending out a text inviting parents to take part in a survey in the coming weeks. Your support with this would be greatly appreciated.

## 11. Vaping among children & young people.

The HSE has written to all schools in recent months to express concern at the dangers of Vaping among children and young people. Dr Paul Kavanagh (HSE)



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.

### **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>

