

June 2020 – Parents’ Newsletter

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

As we come to the end of a most unusual academic year overshadowed as it was by the Covid 19 Pandemic I hope this message finds you safe and well. Since closing the doors to the College on the 12th March we have been on a roller coaster journey. Little did we imagine that our students would not be returning to College for the remainder of the academic year and that the state examinations for both Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate students would be cancelled. Moreover, we never thought we would see the day that teachers would award their students their final Leaving Certificate Grade.

Much has changed as students and staff migrated over to online teaching and very quickly came to grips with Windows 365, Edmodo and Microsoft Teams. As we migrated to new ways of learning we encountered many challenges: students who did not have appropriate devices at home, poor broadband facilities and students who struggled with the lack of routine. We have worked through many of these challenges and have established a working group that will plan strategically for the return of students in September.

Many parents have contacted me asking me what will happen in September. I honestly do not know but we are planning for all eventualities. There is a possibility that not all students will return at the same time in September and if that is the case, we will be using our online platform (Microsoft Teams) to deliver our classes. At this stage you may need to review your IT setup in the home. Will your daughter/son have access to a digital device throughout the school day? Our own research indicates that the device that is best suited for students is the Chromebook as this can host the Microsoft Suite of Programme, including Microsoft Teams and has a keyboard, both of which are very necessary for completing assignments. Moreover, you can download the eBook version of your daughter/son’s books onto the Chromebook which ensures that they will always have access to their coursebooks.

We are aware that over the last two months some students struggled to access devices for online learning. Consequently, we are making a special appeal to parents who may work in companies who would be willing to donate second-hand laptops to the College. All devices will be wiped clean and set up with the Microsoft suite of programmes by our IT Department at DDL ETB. If you are interested in supporting this scheme please contact me by email johncronin@castleknockcc.ie

Messages of Sympathy

We wish to extend our sincere sympathies to a number of colleagues and families who have lost loved ones in recent months. We ask that you keep this families in your thoughts and prayers:

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| - Ms Kathleen O’Neill | Mother of Deputy Principal Carmel O’Neill |
| - Ms Geraldine McColgan | Mother of Ian McColgan (Science Teacher) |
| - Ms Anne Cotter | Mother of Sheila Cotter (History Teacher) |
| - Mr Maurice Cody | Former teacher of Castleknock Community College |
| - Mr Con Dennehy | Father of Past Pupils Lauryn (2019) & Kate (2015) |
| - Mr John Byrne | Father of Meg (sixth year) & Ciaran (Past Pupil) |
| - Mr Maurice Cody | Former Teacher at Castleknock Community College . |

School Reports

- We intend to publish our school reports week ending Friday 19th June. We will send a text in advance to alert you to check your daughter/son's VS Ware page.
- Our Third Year students will receive their grades in the coming week and at a later stage we will present these students with the Department of Education & Skills Certificate of Completion along with a School Certificate stating their results.
- Transition Year students will also receive their final grades and at later stage and we will present these students with their Certificates of Achievement.

When printing your daughter/son's School Report please ensure you use the correct template:

First Year Template	First Year Exams May 2020
Second Year Template	Second Year Exams May 2020
Third Year Template	Junior Cycle Report 2020
Transition Year Template	Transition Year May 2020
LCI Template	Leaving Cert I May 2020
LCA I Template	LCA I Exam May 2020

Booklists

Please note that all booklists will be posted on the website in the coming week.

Please note that the College receives a Book Grant each year to support families who may not be able to cover the full costs of the books required. Parents can contact John Cronin in strictest confidence if they wish to receive more information on the Book Grant – 01-8221626 or johncronin@castleknockcc.ie

Uniform

- Grants of Manor Street is the supplier of the College Uniform and their service is available online and by visiting their store on Manor Street. Full details of the College Uniform are available on our website.
- Traditionally, the Parents Association has arranged a second hand uniform sale in June each year however it has been decided to defer this sale due to Covid 19 restrictions. If it is possible to hold this event later in the summer, we will contact you.
- LC1, LCA1 & Transition Students 2020 will need to take care to review the uniform requirements for senior cycle as they will be required to wear the senior jacket, blazer and tie.

Exam Refunds (Junior & Leaving Certificate)

Following the cancellation and revised arrangements of the Junior Cycle and Leaving Certificate examinations, The State Examinations Commission (SEC) is refunding all candidates who have paid their examination fee for 2020.

Refunds were processed on May 26th for all candidates that paid the examination fee online. Refunds will go back to the card/account which was used to pay the fee. The process can take up to 7 days to process.

If candidates have not received the refund by June 10th they should email fees@examinations.ie with their exam number.

Re-Registration 2020-2021 & New Enrolment Policy First Year 2021

As a result of school closure due to Covid 19, we were unable to complete the re-registration of all our students and we will complete this process in August/September. In the meantime, we would greatly appreciate if you could inform the College if your daughter/son is not returning to Castleknock Community College in September. We currently have waiting lists for all year groups.

Please note that the College will publish its Admissions Policy & Procedures for the 2021-22 Academic Year at the beginning of September. This Policy will be circulated to all listed Primary Schools and will also be published on our website. Please note that the College will accept Application Forms to First Year 2021 from the beginning of October for a three week period.

Parents' Association

We would also like to extend our sincere thanks to The Parents' Association. Over the last year they have continued to support the work of the College through a host of different activities: The second hand uniform sale, the Mock Interviews for LC2, the Spring Talk by Wayne Denner on the theme of "Protecting your online reputation" and through a wide range of extracurricular programmes.

It was regrettable that the Parents Association was not in a position to host its annual Plant Sale but we are confident that the plant sale will bloom again in the not too distant future.

Learning outside the Classroom

We are proud of our students who represented our College so well in extra-curricular and co-curricular activities throughout the year. We have listed some of the highlights below.

Festival of Music

Students from Castleknock Community College were among students from across Dublin to perform at the annual Festival of Music in the National Concert Hall on 10th March. The college choir and the solo performances from Maria Naspanya (First Year) on piano and Anna Friel (Kells) on the violin were outstanding.

Global Passport Award

The College was awarded its first Global Passport, the Citizen's Award, in April. This Award recognises the work of the College in promoting Global Citizen Education through Development Education in Transition Year. There are plans for a presentation of this award to take place in October.

Volunteering for All Award

This year the College Chaplaincy Team worked with the youth volunteering group Localise to achieve the Volunteering for All Award for the college. We hope to celebrate this achievement in a ceremony with representatives from Localise when we return to school. The Chaplaincy Team continued to work along with Localise while the school was closed through their *Reach out Through the Lockdown Campaign* which encouraged young people to stand in solidarity with older members of the community by making short video messages to let those cocooning know that they were thinking of them.

Debating

Transition Year students Dearbhala Peelo and Precious Adeoye travelled to Cambridge University to compete in the Cambridge Union Schools Debating Competition on 7th March. Dearbhla was due to participate in the Oxford Union Competition with Rachel Fogarty Keane on 14th March, an event that was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Young Social Innovators

The Young Social Innovators Awards were announced on the 6th May and we were delighted that our Transition Year Team received a "Highly Commended" award in the Health and Relationships Category for their project *Not Without my Father*.

Fingal Local Enterprise Awards

Our senior mini company team were announced winners in the Fingal Local Enterprise Awards on the 7th May. We congratulate students Molly McCarthy, Katie Farmer, Poppy Conroy, Megan Cheevers and Nicole Olden for their success in this competition.

Pramerica Spirit of Community Award

Rebecca Colley of LC2 was one of twenty exceptional young people from across Ireland to be selected as a national finalist of the Pramerica Spirit of Community Award. Rebecca, was due to receive her award at a ceremony in Belfast on 30th March which has been postponed until a later date.

Sporting Success Stories

- **Dublin Champions:** Our senior footballers were crowned Dublin Champions when they defeated Malahide Community College on 25th February.
- **Cross Country:** Our junior girls' team were placed second in the Leinster Cross Country Finals on Feb 12th with Gara Williams placed first and Madeline Buckley placed second overall.

- **Camogie:** The Junior Team became Dublin Champions on 24th January after a very decisive win against St Mary's Naas.

Couch to 5k Challenge

The Couch to 5k group trained every Wednesday from January and many students and teachers from the team participated in a Parkrun at Porterstown Park on the 7th March with great success.

Kenya 2020

The Kenya 2020 group had a busy year fundraising for their project to build a school in Kenya. The group raised over €20,000 over the course of the year and although they did not get the opportunity to travel to Kenya themselves, their efforts have made a great difference in the lives of the many students who will benefit from the improved facilities at their school.

Young Scientists

Alison Egan and Caoimhe Harrington of Transition Year received the Eli Lily Special Award in the Intermediate Competition at BTTSTE 2020.

Planning for the new Academic Year (2020-21).

At this stage we cannot confirm the roadmap for reopening the College in August/September 2020 as we await guidance and direction from the Department of Education & Skills. In the meantime, we can provide you with a provisional calendar for the next academic year.

First Term	School Year begins on Thursday 27th August 2020
College Closed	Monday 28 th September 2020
Midterm Break	Monday 26 th October – Friday 30 th October 2020 (incl.)
College Closed	Monday 7 th December 2020
First Term Ends	Tuesday 22 nd December 2020
Christmas Holidays (incl.)	Wednesday 23 rd December 2020 – Tuesday 5 th January 2021

Second Term	College re-opens on Wednesday 6th January 2021
College Closed	Monday 18 th January 2021 – Junior Cycle Staff Training Day Department of Education & Skills.

Midterm Break	Monday 15 th – Friday 19 th February 2021 (incl.)
College Closed	Wednesday 17 th March 2021 – St. Patrick’s Day
Second Term Ends	Friday 26 th March 2021
Easter Holidays	Monday 29 th March – Friday 9 th April 2021 (incl.)

Third Term	College re-opens Monday 12th April 2021
Bank Holiday	College closed Monday 3 rd & Tuesday 4 th May 2021
Third Term Ends	Friday 4 th June 2021

*Junior & Leaving Certificate Examinations commence on Wednesday 9th June 2021

Please note that the above dates may be subject to change as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic

Wishing you a peaceful, safe and restful Summer break,

John Cronin
Principal

