

Scoil Dara Newsletter

Scoil Dara www.scoildara.ie

Volume 1

December 2016

Seasons Greetings to all the Scoil Dara community. Included in this Newsletter is a sample of the activities that make Scoil Dara a vibrant community. You will read of numerous achievements by students who have brought great pride to their families and our school. The school is very grateful to all the partners; parents, teachers, board of management and our students for their contribution to living out the values of our trustees, CEIST (www.ceist.ie) and our school (www.scoildara.ie).

I wish to thank all parents and guardians for their continued support for Scoil Dara. We are very grateful for your voluntary contributions received which has made possible the further development of student services including the provision of additional lunchtime seating facilities and upgraded locker systems.

I wish you all a Happy Christmas and New Year

Brian McNamara,
Principal

AWARDS

Daniel Kyne: DCU Academic Scholarship Award Recipient

Congratulations to Daniel Kyne who received an Academic Scholarship Award from Dublin City University on 30th November last, for his outstanding achievements in his Leaving Certificate 2016. Daniel is studying for a BSc in Marketing, Innovation and Technology in DCU. Daniel is pictured with Dr. Anne Sinnott, Dean of DCU Business school, Prof. Brian MacCraith, President DCU and Dr. Brian McNamara.



Sarah McCarthy: MU Award Recipient

Congratulations to Sarah McCarthy who received an Entrance Scholarships Award from Maynooth University on 8th November last, for her outstanding achievements in her Leaving Certificate 2016. Sarah is studying Primary Education in Maynooth University.



Aidan Chan – Winner of Fr. Frank Maher Award

Congratulations to Aidan Chan, a Sixth Year student at Scoil Dara, who won the prestigious Fr. Frank Maher Classical Music Award on Friday 11th November. This is Ireland's largest classical music competition for secondary schools. The competition was held in the Royal College of Physicians in Dublin. Scoil Dara wishes Aidan the very best of luck for the future.

Maynooth University Awards: In October, Maynooth University rewarded the following 6th year students (vouchers worth €75 each) for achieving the highest grades in the summer exams 2016. Well done to all students.

- Science: Daniel Devine, Silvia Dos Santos Gomes
- Engineering/Construction: Connor Heffernan, Jack Bruton
- Arts: Aidan Chan, Jessica Quinn
- Business/Economics: Ronan Smith, Cillian Thornton

GAA Stars

Congratulations to the following girls on their tremendous achievements:

- Megan Lyons who made the Leinster Interprovincial Schools team
- Aoife Rattigan who has been named as Kildare U14 footballer of the year
- Caoimhe Shiel, who received the award of Kildare Camogie U16 Player of the Year

Well done to Megan, Aoife and Caoimhe from all at Scoil Dara.



Autumn Award Ceremony

Our annual Autumn Award Ceremony took place on 17th November. Congratulations to all award recipients and thanks to all for making the ceremony a memorable occasion.



Aoife Ryan
Best Junior Certificate Results

Cian Duke and Daniel Kyne
Joint Best Leaving Certificate Results

Library Week (28 November – 2 December) Scoil Dara Library Visit by Local Author

To conclude Library Week 2016, Laura Cassidy, a local author visited the school on Monday 5th December. This was the second year running that Laura visited the school to inspire students to become more creative in their writing. We are grateful to Kilcock Library, especially librarian Mary Dunne for making the arrangements for these workshops to take place and for part funding the event.

Presentation Day (21 November)

A day to remember the Presentation Sisters and their contribution to education. In particular, their contribution to Scoil Dara.

Maths Week (17-21 October)

Congratulations to Conor Lane, winner of Prism 2016 Scoil Dara Contest and Silvia Dos Santos Gomez, winner of in-school Senior Maths Problem Solving competition. Pictured below with Dr McNamara and Mr McMoreland.



Health & Wellbeing Week (10-14 October)

Numerous events and activities took place during an action packed week including:

- Meditation
- Colour Yourself Mindful
- Penalty Shoot Out
- Inside Out
- Gratitude Wall
- Yoga
- Smile Day – Design your own positive emoji!
- Aerobics
- Random Acts of Kindness Day
- Swiss Ball
- Climb the Heights Skipping Challenge
- Art & Photography Competition
- Funky Shoe Day



Dragon's Den Visited Scoil Dara

Entrepreneur and businessman Bobby Kerr, Chairperson of Insomnia Coffee Company visited Scoil Dara on 5th October to speak to senior business students about his own business journey and to advise any aspiring entrepreneurs. Bobby spoke of the challenges he faced in his career and of his time on Dragon's Den. He informed students that hard work and respect for people, along with innovation, are the key to success in business. Having battled cancer last year, Bobby reminded students that the three most important things in life are your family, friends and health. He asked them to look out for each other, not just in school, but beyond that, as they venture out into the world. We had some great questions from students at the end, including topics such as Brexit, expansion, financing and missed opportunities. Bobby's talk has definitely inspired many budding entrepreneurs.....maybe in future years one of them will be back to address business students??



Scoil Dara - Hosted It's First Trick or Treat for Temple Street Halloween Party on 25th October

The TY Community Care Students put in a huge amount of effort to organise a spooktacular event for the 3rd Class students of Scoil Coca Naofa in Kilcock. All funds raised from hosting the party will go towards purchasing critical digital X-ray equipment which will play an absolutely crucial and life saving role.

The Community Care Class 4A/4B wishes to thank everyone for their donations and help.



SPORTS REVIEW

Student Sporting Achievements (Summer & Autumn 2016)

- Senior Boys Football Team: Competing in the Leinster 'A' Championship for the first time they have already become household names with their epic encounters with Good Council, New Ross which required 240 minutes of football including two replays to produce a winner!
- Megan Lyons: Megan was a member of the Meath Football team that won Minor B Leinster and All-Ireland titles and recently made the Leinster Interprovincial Schools team.
- Aoife Rattigan: Aoife was captain of the Under 14 Kildare Football team that won the Leinster and All-Ireland championship. Aoife was also awarded Player of the Match in the Leinster final and has been named Kildare U14 Player of the Year.
- Caoimhe Shiel, Emily Dunne and Fiona Kyne: All were members of the Under 16 Kildare Camogie All-Ireland winning team. Caoimhe Sheil was also named U16 Kildare Camogie Player of the Year.
- Ethan Devine, Daniel Devine, Conor Harnan, Adam Murphy, Brian O'Reilly: All were members of the 2016 Meath Football Minor panel.
- Aedín Slattery, Aisling Byrne and Erin Leddy: All were members of the Meath Camogie U17 team that won the All-Ireland B championship.
- Caoimhe Slattery: Caoimhe was a member of the Meath U14 Camogie team.
- Eliece O'Brien Elliott: Eliece is a member of the Irish Boxing team and won two All-Ireland medals. She will also be competing in the European and World Boxing Championships.
- Sarah Clarke: Sarah came 3rd place in the All-Ireland U17 Athletics 800m.
- Oisín Farrell: Oisín represented Leinster Athletics in the U14 3000m.
- Erin Leddy: Erin represented Leinster Athletics in the U17 Hammer-Throw.
- Claire Farrell: Junior Girls Captain of Kilcock Golf Club.
- Seán Marks: Junior Boys Captain of Kilcock Golf Club.
- Nikita Vedernikovs: Nikita came 6th place in the Swimming Nationals in the open age group.



PE Activities

- 1st year: Students have already completed their outdoor activity of orienteering module and participated in a gymnastics competition.
- 2nd year: Students have completed an extensive athletics module where they developed their skills of running, throwing and jumping. Several new talents were identified during this module. They are now busy working on their fitness levels in our Health Related Activity module.
- 3rd year: Students have completed their invasion games module which covered sports such as tag rugby, lacrosse and basketball. They are also currently completing their HRA module.
- TY's have had a very action filled term where they have had guest coaches to give tasters of Boxercise and currently a Leinster rugby coach is delivering a rugby module where they sample some rugby at a non contact level.
- One lucky TY class are participating in the Sky Sports for schools mentor programme. They are experiencing disability in sport and what that entails. They are doing activities such as blind soccer and one limb disability volleyball, etc. An elite athlete visits the school twice in the year to motivate the students and deliver an inspirational workshop.
- TY students have also received a two-hour workshop on self defence from a very renowned Taekwondo instructor.
- 5th and 6th year classes still successfully participate in chosen activities in each PE lesson. Our senior PE participation rate is 100% in 99% of all lessons. A healthy positive environment for promoting health and fitness for life is adopted and students react positively to this.
- The PE department is very excited about the announcement from the NCCA that PE has now been passed as an examinable leaving cert subject with measures being put in place currently for implementation.

First Year Study Skills

Study Skills is a relatively new initiative in Scoil Dara set up in 2015 to assist first year students with studying. It is run free of charge by teachers after school. The idea is to create a relaxed and informal atmosphere where students can explore new ways of studying. Many students feel they can't study in advance but instead choose to 'cram' the night before. We remove this problem by helping students to identify their preferred method of study and introduce them to various study techniques (e.g. MindMaps, Flow Charts, Concise Note-taking, etc) which can be used in any subject. This improves their memory and retention of information. Study timetables and goal-setting are also a key element of the course.

The aim is that students will develop planning and organisational skills which will benefit them greatly not just in school, but also as adults. The emphasis is on removing the stress normally associated with study and creating happy, confident, independent learners who love learning! We have just finished an 8 week programme with a group of first year students and they are now feeling confident and prepared for their Christmas exams. We will resume the Study Skills group after the February mid-term to plan for the Summer Exams.

Transition Year (TY) Community Care

TY Community Care 4A/4B have had a very busy first term. The purpose of the community care module for transition year students is to give them an opportunity to get hands on in their community, to make a difference at local, national and possibly global levels. The 4A/4B class will be working on a multitude of projects throughout the academic year that provide a sense of duty and service to the wider community. In term 1 the students were focusing on two separate areas, care for sick children and care for the elderly. The students firstly worked alongside Temple Street Children's Hospital and organised a 'Trick or Treat for Temple Street' Halloween party to raise funds for Temple Street Hospital. The students invited 3rd class children from Scoil Choca Naofa to the Halloween bash and we received very generous donations from both Scoil Choca Naofa and the Scoil Dara community. Almost 300 euro was raised and all proceeds went to help sick children.

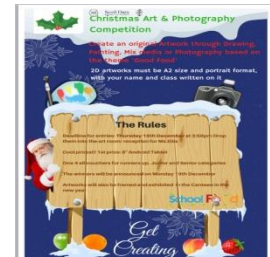
The students are also working towards attaining a certificate of merit from 'The Friends of the Elderly' school programme. The students have to take on four tasks which demonstrates service to the elderly community, one of which will be a Christmas afternoon in the 3rd Age Centre in Summerhill. We were lucky enough to have Mary Nally, founder of the 3rd Age Centre, come in to visit our students and to enlighten them about the importance of working with elderly people who possibly live alone. For Term 2, our goal is to create a book of life stories and guidance which will be a collaborative project between the clients in the centre, and the TY students in Scoil Dara.

Lunch Time Clubs

Scoil Dara now has a lunchtime Maths Club for first-year students each Monday which has been very well received. There is also a supervised 'Chill Room' (as it has become known) from Monday-Thursday for students who prefer a quieter space. Here, students engage in reading, board games and just *chilling out* in a safe environment.

Art

There was great interest in Scoil Dara's Christmas Art & Photography competition, entitled 'GOOD FOOD'. The generous prizes were sponsored by the School Food Company, food providers in the School's Healthy Eating Canteen. The Junior student winners were: Lillian Okeke, Grace Nangle and Maya Htut. The Senior Student winners were: Chloe Kane, Eleanor Dunne (group entry) and Cian Flavin & Nika Helnyk. The MD of the School Food Company presented the students with their prizes on Monday, December 19th. Artworks will be framed and exhibited in the School Cafeteria in the New Year. We are also planning an exhibition evening to invite parents to view our students' wonderful art and photography talent whilst having light refreshments!



Green Schools

Following on from achieving the Litter and Waste flag in May 2016, Scoil Dara is now preparing for attaining the Energy flag. We are currently looking at our energy consumption and are in the process of lowering same! Top tip for home....Shut down all technology gadgets at night! Even on standby energy is being used.

Cyber Awareness and Internet Safety Talk

On 3rd October a Cyber Awareness and Internet Safety talk was given by Jeremy Pagden here in Scoil Dara. A link to the Parents Handbook that accompanied this talk is available on the Scoil Dara Website. We were delighted to see parents out in such numbers at the talk.

Healthy Eating

Scoil Dara now operates a Healthy Eating policy with only healthy food served on the school campus. Students and parents interested in availing of the *cashless payment* option in the school's cafeteria are advised to request a FOB from the staff in the school's cafeteria.

Carol Service



Our annual Scoil Dara Carol Service is scheduled for December 21st. This is always a tremendous occasion to bring all our students, teachers, board of management members and parents together to experience the spirit of Christmas and celebrate being a living community. During the week leading up to Christmas, the students and teachers bring their talents out into the local community which includes visiting Presentation Sisters in Shalom Nursing home.

Celebrating 25 Years

We are now celebrating 25 years as Scoil Dara post amalgamation of St Joseph's CBS and Scoil Iosa. To mark this milestone, a Gala concert is being organised which will feature present and past students and teachers of Scoil Dara. This is provisionally scheduled for February 2nd 2017. Please mark the date in your calendar! We thank Scoil Dara's Parents Association for their work in supporting the production.

Follow us for up-to-date news and photos on our Website at www.scoildara.ie and on Twitter @scoildara