

Coláiste Muire

Summer Newsletter

2023

Tel 065 6829497

Email admin@colaistemuire.ie

Web www.colaistemuire.ie



Message from the Principal

As we come to the end of the school year it is an apt time to stop and reflect on the year experienced by all in Coláiste.

This year has been wonderful in that we resumed normal school life and activities. We moved away from all of the Covid restrictions.

I am most grateful to all students and staff who have made this a most memorable and special one in so many ways.



It has been a year of highlights including many victories in many areas of school life. These are reflected here in the accounts and photographs. These are a mere glimpse into some of the activities throughout the year. It is very heartening to read reflections on school life from Billie (a first year) and Roisin (a sixth year). These reflections show us all what Colaiste means for all of us. It is fantastic also to read Aoife's experience of Senior Cycle in L.C.A.I and Aisling's in Transition Year.

I am extremely privileged to be Principal of Coláiste Muire and to be immersed in such a thriving, dynamic community.

I wish our Junior Cycle, Leaving Certificate and L.C.A. students well in their forthcoming exams. I know you will do your very best. I wish you all a very happy, restful summer. I would also like to thank Staff, Parents, Parents Association and our Board of Management for their continued support of all our endeavours.

Jean Pound
Principal



Year in Review



Metamorphosis

My polished decks were brand new with neatly tied laces. The comforting smell of a fresh Pynes shirt lingered in the air. Around me, hundreds of other girls emerged from cars with anxious, inscrutable eyes, equally as daunted by the building that lay before them. Parents, mothers, fathers, guardians gave each a tight, anxious hug, more afraid for this process than their own daughters. I could feel my own Mam brimming with emotion as she readied herself to let me go, to let me venture in to the building that would catalyse my growth. And so I trod off with a bag bigger than myself to join 160 other perfectly naive girls. We were well equipped with vivacity and a curiosity which would certainly kill the cat; thank god for those nine lives. As I walked through the doors for the first of many times, I delighted in the fact that I had no idea what was ahead of me. At that moment I was just innocence, drowned in a body, soul and uniform I had yet to grow in to.

I think of Colaiste Muire as the place that facilitated my metamorphosis. The building is my chrysalis, the shell which allows for the transformation of every student. Here the culmination of our everyday experiences and relationships have led us to who we are today, to the butterflies teetering on the edge, begging to take flight.

The concept of school is so unique. From the age of five, you gather with likeminded peers almost everyday. You take a variety of classes—some of which you like, and others you don't—all to prepare for a daunting set of exams. What percentage of our lives is spent in education? I think if you ask almost anyone they will have distinctive memories of their school-going years, of the shenanigans they got up to. Maybe French class was the bane of their existence and maybe the banter they had in a science class has never been matched since. Graduating from school is probably the biggest milestone yet for a seventeen or eighteen year old. After all, we have been in some sort of school since our earliest memories; it's all we've ever known. And now the people that I have spent the last six years with will branch in to vastly different lives, in to vastly different futures, a million miles away from the 9-4 school day we have all become so comfortable with.

What should I feel? I have such a multitude of emotions. There are so many things that I will miss, and so many that I won't. It's hard to know what to be—happy or sad? Relieved or terrified? I am comfortable in my ambivalence, to feel a little bit of everything.

It's amazing how much we change in such a short space of time. I went from asking the person beside me what they're wearing to the next disco to what course they want to do. Learning about natural numbers became implicit differentiation. Talks about summer trips to the Gaeltacht have become leaving cert holidays, summer jobs, and the perils of finding accommodation. It's scary...next thing you know we'll be talking about taxes for fun.

As we are coming to the end, I look back on my years at Colaiste as a vivid, beautiful time-lapse, a movie.

It is a tumultuous story of adolescent solipsism to recognition and gratitude. I will miss the equality of a Junior Cert classroom, the simplicity of a second year existence. I will miss the quirks of a Colaiste Muire experience that are not just unique to secondary school students

but specifically to our school: the Mission weeks, the mass at the beginning of every school year, the Talent Shows, the Seachtain Na Gaeilge concerts, the musicals. The incredible talent in such tight doors. These are the things that you could find nowhere else but here. They are what give Colaiste a particularly familial dynamic.

It would be a lie to say that I have always loved school. I think every student can relate when I admit this. But I am grateful that each chapter of my secondary school journey, the times that I hated and the times that I loved, have culminated to where I am right now, to the person I have become. For a period of time I begged for it all to be over. And now, suddenly, I desperately don't want it to end. Absolute, utter irony!

Time is ticking and soon we will walk through those doors for the final time. I want to do it all, I want to stay forever and not miss any of the moments that take place here. The school scandals, the banter and the magical talented times when people shine. I want to remain as a statue in Ms Crean Lynch's classroom eternally.

But I also want to go away. To leave it all behind. To rush along with the tide of the world because it waits for no-one. To find my purpose. I am a butterfly who has grown to love my Chrysalis. But I cannot help it, my wings are forcing their growth. I am outgrowing the shell of this school.

I wish it was as simple as two roads diverging in a yellow wood. Instead it seems like a maze. Colaiste Muire shaped me, gave me the gift of opportunity, and set me on the path of my yellow brick road. My time here has been my constant, and as I come to the end, I know that whatever any of us chooses to do, we will all find our Emerald City.

Our metamorphosis is complete.
The butterflies spread their wings.
And they fly.

It is six years later and I sit in the same canteen, except now it is the very last time. I think back to my very first day, and laugh at my naivety at twelve years old. I choose to hold every memory I have of here like a present. It is time. The tears are rolling as the 160 girls hug teachers and each other for, possibly, the very last time. We are all unified in a multitude of emotions. The clock strikes four and the movie ends. I delight in the fact that I still have no idea what is ahead of me. However, in this moment I am complete. I walk out the doors; my body and soul I have grown in to, my uniform I have grown out of.



Roisín Farrelly

6th Year

Conversations with the SRC

From my experience of being on the SRC, it provides a pathway of communication between students and teachers. In order to create this, however, quite a lot of hard work and focused preparation is required so that students– and especially Leaving Certs– have the smoothest experience in school.

Our first big endeavour was mission week and, although we had help from teachers along the way, the whole promotion and organisation aspect was on us; especially for the leaving cert show (which is a full performance production of many different types of acts purely for the entertainment of our school community). As a result of Mission Week's grand return this year, after an unfortunate 2 year break, we did feel a little under pressure. I think that what we pulled off, though, was a huge success and a triumph for the year. After all, with the help of our school community we managed to raise €10,000 for our partner school in Kenya.

Along with big events like this, our main role as Student Representative Council executives is to create the much needed connection between students and teachers. Once a month we hold a formal meeting with both prefects and vice prefects of all classes in the school to discuss ways in which we can improve our school as a whole. These meetings gave us a chance to meet with all year groups to update them on student business and discuss problems that have been arising, with the help of our (staff member/teacher) we help answer any questions that students may have. An example of a topic discussed regularly at meetings is our efforts to promote sustainability within our school community.

Another way in which we have connected students with members of our school community is by meeting with the school's Board Of Management, who we are currently creating a wishlist for on behalf of current and



future students of the school.

We also work with other groups in the school like the Stand-Up and Green Schools committees to help promote their events and views. For example, we helped the Stand-Up committee create an awareness video for Stand-Up week in November last year and also helped them organise a bake sale to raise funds for their chosen charity.

Overall, although being part of the SRC added extra work to an already very busy Leaving Certificate year, it has been a great experience and I have learned so much that I will bring forward with me to the next stage of my life. Also, it is always nice to give back to the community that has supported me since I arrived only 6 years ago.

Niamh Morris

SRC PRO 2022-23

Transition Year Reflection

“Never be afraid to try something new because life gets boring when you stay within the limits of what you know”

As I reflect on the past school year, I can't help but feel grateful for the myriad of opportunities I've been given to grow and learn. From undergoing new experiences and forming friendships, this year has been one of my most memorable yet.

While every Transition Year course has its perks, I have to admit that Colaiste's is certainly something special. This place, in particular, encourages students to try and experience things for the first time and they integrate these amazing opportunities within school hours. Even in the initial weeks of TY, we went to Birr Outdoor Centre. It was many students' first time camping in tents and we did numerous adventurous activities including; Archery in the woods, pier jumping, kayaking and river walking.

Other prominent workshops I did this year were, Fencing and Songschool. Actual fencing foils and sabres were used, along with donning full fencing armour. We learnt basic attacks and defence techniques, and as part of the session, we played competitively in matches. I never would've encountered Fencing if it wasn't for Transition Year here in Colaiste Muire. The Songschool Programme was memorable due to the amount of fun I had doing it. In groups, we had to formulate our very own song, lyrics and melody. This was something I had no prior knowledge of but enjoyed it nonetheless. We had to perform in front of our class, and while my songwriting skills had improved, my singing voice certainly had not!

Another unique feature of TY here is the sheer variety of subjects offered. Japanese and Chinese were weekly classes, languages that would be rare to find a place to learn in person, here in the town of Ennis. As part of these subjects, we learnt an immense amount about the culture and customs in each respective language. Furthermore, we had a Japanese Drum Workshop where Samurai Zi-Pang Drummer came from Japan to perform for us in the Danlann. Philosophy was a subject of great interest to me and in my opinion, is super cool that it is offered here. We discussed many thought-provoking topics and were encouraged to speak out about our beliefs. We also studied the Ancient Greek philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, which was interesting beyond measure.

Thinking back on this year, I can recall a plentiful amount of things I enjoyed about TY. Firstly I formed new friendships and deepened my existing ones greatly. This past year has helped everyone feel like a year group, something we sorely missed out on due to Covid. It made it even easier to converse with new people due to the fact the original classes from Junior Cycle were all mixed. Another factor that further improved my friendships was the sheer number of group projects we did throughout the year. Some of these included the mini-company, YSI (Young Social Innovators) and the John Hooper Statistics Competition.

What I found great about TY was that we often looked at the fun side of subjects. In maths, we did a fun competition called Peter's Problems, in Home Ec we baked delicious goods, in Irish we went to the cinema to watch 'An Cailín Ciúin', in English we watched several movies and entered the Press Pass Competition. We had much more freedom in deciding what we wanted to do, which was greatly beneficial. We could choose what novels we wanted to study and choose the topics for presentations or projects.

While we didn't have a trip abroad, the trips we did attend were much more frequent. Going somewhere once a week wasn't an uncommon occurrence. Some of the excursions that stood out to me were; Kilmainham Gaol, Spike Island and The Ploughing Championships. Another unforgettable experience of Transition Year would have to be the Musical. Every class performed in two numbers in the show 'Mamma Mia' and we missed periods to go to dance or singing rehearsals. We all had an amazing time and it was many students' first time performing on a stage. Over the course of the year, we had a myriad of guest speakers come present to us. We had people talk about topics like; Enterprise, Clare County Council, technology, engineering, what it's like to be a lawyer and Refugee work, to name a few. It helped me get an insight into lots of different industries and/or sectors. Finally, we had two blocks of work experience in TY. Doing work placement was exciting and I discovered so many things. I worked first as an Apprentice Electrician, where I was testing the integrity of the electrical systems in a new building and on my second, I got to work in Shannon Airport and saw the inner workings of the place.



As a result of my decision to do Transition Year, I have achieved a great deal. I was involved in several projects which allowed me to attend prestigious events. My mini-company group got through to the Student Enterprise County Finals, I got to attend the YSI Speak Out at Mary Immaculate College, I was a part of the Climate Detectives Project and which was directly linked to the European Space Agency. My biggest school achievement this year was that I represented my class for our Ennis 2040 project, I spoke in the Clare County Council Chamber and went to Dublin to speak in the Dáil, where I met the Minister for Finance, Minister for Education and Minister for Transport. Several times, I found myself in the newspapers this year!

Albeit TY is certainly not just a year for academics. This past year, I had so much more time to improve my extra-curricular activities. I have an immense passion for ballet. I danced as a member of the Irish National Youth Ballet and performed in over ten showcases throughout the year. As part of that company, I got to meet The Lord Mayor of Dublin, The President's Wife, Sabina Higgins, visit the Mansion House and various appearances in the newspaper.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation for this Transition Year course. I felt it was extremely helpful for me, especially in terms of deciding my future career direction. As part of Career Guidance, we had to form our CV and Personal Statement. We also went to the University of Galway open day, which gave us an introduction to a wide variety of college courses. Since we were able to sample every subject this year, I was confident in choosing my subjects for Leaving Cert, something I couldn't do at the end of third year. In conclusion, I found Transition Year to be extremely beneficial. I learned a lot and I feel I've grown and developed in many ways. I'm excited to take what I've learnt and apply it in the future!

Aisling Hammond
Transition Year

Transition Year



Congratulations to our Transition Year students who graduated from the programme in May. What a year it has been! Event organisation, work experience, workshops, trips, competitions and a whole lot more! A year where you tried new things, met new people and learned more about opportunities available to you! Special word of thanks to all Transition Year students who made positive contributions to our school community this year—volunteering for our Open Day, Breakfast Club, Sports Coaching and more!



Transition Year Gallery



My Experience of Leaving Cert Applied

About the Programme

Leaving Cert Applied is a programme designed to provide students with practical skills that will prepare them for the world of work or further study. The programme includes academic coursework and vocational training, which can help students develop a wide range of skills that they will use in the future. Additionally, the programme is designed to help students who struggle with attending school and completing schoolwork. The course encourages them to try their best at school as it is also a group work course. The 2-year programme consists of 4 half-year blocks called sessions. Credits are awarded for key assignments and modules completed throughout the two years. These credits are added to the students' final exams.

The Leaving Cert Applied class have school Monday to Thursday. You are given the opportunity to go on work placement every Friday to experience the world of work which might help you find an eventual course that best suits you.

You are asked to work 8 to 10 weeks on work placement every Friday. Your attendance is the most important part of Leaving Cert Applied as it goes towards your credits at the end of the year and you can't get credits if you're not in school. The program consists of key assignments and tasks that you complete in each class. You are also interviewed for about 10 minutes about your seven tasks at the end of each of the four sessions.



My Experience

When I heard about the Leaving Cert Applied programme, I didn't know what it was about. I asked Ms O'Regan to help me understand it. I learned it was a more practical course that focused on practical skills and work experience rather than all heads in books. I finally decided to give it a go because I wasn't the best to attend school in my Junior Cert years and thought I might find it easier to go to school if I was doing LCA. LCA has definitely helped me to develop as a person. One of the things that I've really notice is that I'm much more confident in myself. During the two years I've also learned a lot of practical skills in I.T, Office Administration and Customer Care etc. I've also participated in lots of group work and presentations, things that I didn't see myself doing before. All these experiences have helped me to be better able for new challenges that I might face in the future.

Another thing that really helped throughout the programme was that all work was completed in school. There is little to no homework which lets us revise different things in our own time in the evenings. It's helped me develop better study skills, management skills and organisation skills, all of which I use in all my classes. Lastly, LCA has helped me get along better with people in my class as the classes are small and you're always talking to everyone else. We have done so many things together as a class and this makes us communicate more with each other. Overall, I'm really glad that I did LCA and would recommend it to other people.

Aoife Glass
LCA

Sport

Camogie



Coláiste Muire has had a very successful year in Camogie. This year, the school fielded seven teams across 1st year to 6th year which highlights how the sport is going from strength to strength in our school.

Our Junior Camogie team won the Junior BAll-Ireland in March in a thrilling match against Borris Vocational School. They won on a score line of 1-13 to 0-9. This was a fantastic achievement for this team and their coaches. The Junior Camogie team also went on to win the County Junior A title in April. They team were victorious over a very strong Scariff team. Our second Junior team competed in Munster and Clare competitions also.

The Senior Camogie team competed in the Munster A competition having been promoted following their success at Munster B level last year. The girls lost out to a very good Ursuline Thurles team in the quarter final. They then entered into the Munster League, where they had victory over Presentation Thurles in the semi-final and went on to win the Munster final against Colaiste Choilm Ballincollig. The Senior team also retained the Senior County A title by defeating Scariff in a very entertaining final in Fr. McNamara Park in April. This year also saw Coláiste

Muire enter an Intermediate Camogie team into Munster Competition. The team reached the Munster final but lost out narrowly to Presentation Mitchelstown. It is encouraging to have so many senior cycle students playing camogie in our school.

Our 1st year camogie team took part in two county blitzes this year as well as the Munster Blitz in Mallow. There were three first year teams at each of these blitzes. The girls really enjoyed representing Colaiste Muire on these exciting days out.

Looking forward to more camogie participation next year!



Gaelic Football

This was an action packed year for Gaelic Football in our school.

Colaiste Muire Black contested The County A Final and were narrowly defeated by Spanish point, Colaiste Muire Red reached quarter final stage. In the 1st Year County Blitz, Colaiste Muire Black won the County A Final and Colaiste Muire Red lost the B Cup Final by a point. At the 2nd Year County Blitz, Coláiste 1 contested the A Cup Final and narrowly lost out to St. Flannan's College, while Colaiste 2 played a very competitive game against St. Caimin's in the A Shield Final.

The Junior B Team reached the County B Semi-Final, while Junior A narrowly lost the County A Final against Kilrush. They went on to reach the Munster Plate Final where they were narrowly defeated by Kinsale CS. The Senior's won the County A Final, before narrowly losing the Munster Final. The future is bright for football in Coláiste Muire!

Sport

Soccer



The Junior Girls Soccer performed admirably throughout the Munster A Competition, but fell short against Ursuline before Christmas. They displayed their teamwork, talent and dedication to the team. Later in the season, they won the Clare Cup. In the final, goals came from Saoirse Kent, Amy Hennessy, Kate Jones, and Sophie McNamara, who distinguished herself in stepping up from the first year panel. Ria Meaney stepped up to go in goals with our regular keeper Sarah Hickey out injured, and she proved a safe pair of hands despite not having experience in that position. There are high hopes that this impressive panel of players can continue to improve and grow as a team!

The team distinguished themselves with

outstanding performances against difficult opposition, culminating in a close defeat at the quarter final stage of the Munster A Competition to St Marys, Middleton. The fact that the majority of the team will be playing at senior level for the next few years is proof of the talent we have here, and the promise of better days to come down the road. The Senior Team got the silverware they deserved by winning the Clare Cup, defeating St Annes, St Caimins and St Josephs in the final. Goals from Saoirse Kent, Hannah Saidi, Judith Egan, and Amy Hennessy throughout the tournament proved how capable the attacking players are, with several players contributing goals and assists. They were admirably led by Eabha O' Driscoll as captain. Notable mention goes to Hannah Clune and Aoife Melody who will leave very large shoes to fill for our junior players.

Volleyball

Coláiste Muire has cemented its place as the best volleyball school in Ireland, reaching the All-Ireland Final in every competition this year, all in the A division.

In the Senior competition, the school reached both the League and Cup A All-Ireland Final. After going through the League undefeated, the team lost a nail-bitingly close match 3-2 to Holy Family, Newbridge, in December. The team returned for the Cup knockout competition where they beat Holy Family 3-0 in the final in May, avenging their previous defeat. This was a tremendous achievement for this group of players, winning their first All-Ireland Title!

In the Cadette competition, for under 16 players, the school again finished

top of the league. The team defeated Portlaoise College in the semi-final 2-0 before overcoming St. Brigid's College, Loughrea 2-1. The team showed tremendous character and team work to fight back from a set down to win the title!

The Junior team, consisting of first and second years, started their competition alongside 120 other teams in January.

The team went through the competition without losing a set, beating Holy Family, Newbridge in the final 2-0 in May. This was an impressive performance for a group of players who only began playing volleyball in school.

Volleyball has been a growing sport in the school over the last few years, with over 80 students playing each week.



Sport

Athletics

This has been a really successful year for both cross-country and track and field in our school. In cross-country, at North Munster Schools, Coláiste won Best Girls School with gold medals across Minor, Junior, Intermediate and Senior. At Munsters, the Senior and Junior Girls qualified for the All-Ireland Finals, with individual gold going to Louise O'Mahony. At the All-Ireland Cross Country, Louise Mahony led her team to the silver medal with a brilliant individual silver!

For Track and Field, Coláiste runners came away with 20 medals from North Munster Schools Finals, with individual goals from Louise O'Mahony, Meabh Kelly, Caoimhe McNamara, Juliane Gea, Faye Mannion and the Junior Relay Team. At Munster Schools, the team won 8 medals overall with gold medals for Louise Mahony, Faye Mannion and the Junior Relay Team! In June, both Faye Mannion and Louise O'Mahony won silver medals in the 1500m and 3000m respectively!



Swimming

After a very successful day at the Munster Schools Swimming Championships, the Colaiste girls return with 22 medals! Ella Holly and Elin Blake took bronze medals in individual events. All swimmers performed superbly with Leah O'Connor and Olivia Cosgrove also achieving top 10 finishes. The junior relay of Roisin Hogan, Mia Holly, Ingrid Murphy and Leah O'Connor won silver medal in their freestyle relay and bronze in the medley. The intermediate team of Ella Holly, Amy Ryan, Sarah Cosgrove and Fatima Sánchez took bronze in both freestyle and medley relays. The senior team of Elin Blake, Olivia Cosgrove, Aoibhinn Cullen and Muireann Corry took bronze in the freestyle relay and 5th in the medley (with Jessica Brophy). The full team also included Lucy Crean, Noelle O'Connor, Claudia Haugh, Ellen Henry, Lianda McGuire and Keelin Forde. All Colaiste swimmers performed superbly taking top spots in their heats, in a huge field of over 700 swimmers from secondary schools around Munster!



Sport

Badminton

This year we had three wonderful teams representing the school in Badminton competitions.

The U14 played brilliantly in their first competition and while they played brilliantly they missed out on the final by just a few points.

The U16 team made it through the Clare Competition to the County finals and unfortunately after a brilliant fight just lost out to Scariff Community College.

The U19 team qualified straight for the Munster final but unfortunately due to the snow were unable to attend the competition and showcase their talents.

No doubt they will all be back with a vengeance next year and get another chance to play for our school.



Basketball

Students participated in the South West Region in Division A at u16, u19, Junior (2nd year) and Minor (first year). The students played teams from 2 Castleisland school, 2 Tralee Schools and Crescent Limerick. Despite not making regional semifinals the players gained immense experience while competing against teams at the highest level in schools basketball. The whole school was promoted to A division but missed out on development at this level due to Covid restrictions on play. As a result the school has requested a move to the B division next year.

Tennis

It's been a busy year for tennis in our school. We participated in the Munster Schools Tennis competition and entered 3 teams in the U16 and U19 competitions. We played some superb doubles and singles matches with home advantage in Ennis Lawn Tennis against teams from Limerick, Cork and Tipperary. Although the results didn't go in our favour, the tennis on display was Wimbledon-worthy with some epic tiebreaks to decide the games!

Every Tuesday, we play tennis at lunch. This is open to everyone who wants to learn the basic skills or just want to have some fun with friends. Everyone is welcome and we are always looking for more to join us!



Reflection from a 1st Year

In light of approaching my second year in Coláiste, I now realise that I had nothing to worry about and luckily this year had more ups than downs!

The summer before entering secondary school is something I'll never forget. Throughout the summer, I was ecstatic but also anxious about the "new people" part. In primary school, I was relatively quiet and stuck with the people I knew, but, for secondary school I was willing to nip that in the bud. I remember that all I was thinking about was secondary. During that time I was thrilled at the idea of starting a new and fresh chapter of my life. I was so excited to take part in Mission Week and have a locker which my sisters talked about so fondly.



Waking up on the first day of school was such a good feeling. The sun was out and the birds were singing and I knew it was going to be a good day. I briskly got ready and left my house. When we approached the school the nerves were kicking in but I pushed them to the side in hopes of a good day. When I walked into the canteen I was relieved to see two girls which I was friendly with in primary school were in my class. We walked up to our class director's classroom and received our locker keys, journals and timetables. Following that, we were brought back down to the G.P for lunch where I met a few other classmates. After that, we did a scavenger hunt around the school in which my team and I came second. When I came home I was definitely more excited more than nervous about secondary school.

During my first term, I really got a feel for secondary school life. Of course, we got to do our first in house exams which were not as hard as I thought they would be, but the highlight of my first term and first year would have to be Mission Week. Getting to see everyone supporting each other was really inspiring for me. Also coming up with a mission week performance was really enjoyable. Being able to come up with a dance with your friends was really entertaining and really showed us how to trust each other as we were still getting to know one another. Taking part in volleyball was also really enjoyable as it was a sport which was new to me at the time, and it felt very fair as the majority of us were just starting out because of secondary school.

Heading into second year has really made me reflect on my first year in Coláiste. I feel like I have now gained so much more confidence from performing at mission week to doing presentations in class, I really feel like I have come out of my shell and gained so much more self-confidence just from being in this positive environment. I have also realised that there was absolutely nothing to worry about. I was so nervous about meeting new people but now I realise that everyone was in the same boat. Although I had friends from primary, I wanted to break out of my comfort zone and meet some new people. I am definitely looking forward to second year, although maybe not the CBA's, but we have to get past that, but, for now....

First year over and out ! (nearly)

Billie Hussey
1st Year

Sport



The Musical



My name is Holly Dunphy and I played the part of Sophie Sheridan in Coláiste Muire's production of Mamma Mia. Once the auditions concluded and the double cast was announced, we dove straight into rehearsals. We got a timetable each week and worked hard from September all the way through to showtime in late November. Rehearsals were always a blast, and it was amazing to see the show take shape as we neared opening night.

This mammoth production involved a cast of more than one hundred people, including directors, choreographers, documentarists, make-up teams, set crews and a double cast of 24 leads and dozens of extras. It really was a team effort and the memories and friends made during the production has been the highlight of my time to date in

Coláiste Muire.

Holly Dunphy
Transition Year

Music & Art



Thank you!

Thank you to all our singers, musicians, dancers and performers who contributed their talents to many school events throughout the year. This has included Christmas Carols in Carrigoran House & Ennis Senior Citizens Function, Seachtain na Gaeilge, Coláiste Fest, Graduation Mass, Trad Music Lunch Time Sessions and many more! We are all looking forward to listening and watching you all perform again next year!

Community

Ceiliúradh

Ceiliúradh CEIST was a day for us to celebrate our community and our ethos. Community spirit, being fair and just, respect for all and high quality teaching and learning are central to our school.

This years motto was "One Good Deed". We encouraged everyone to do something kind for a friend, a classmates, a colleague, a family member. In school this week, we celebrated this in many ways. This included lighting of our CEIST Candle, positive affirmations on lockers, 'CEIST' with members of Sisters of Mercy, Tree Planting Ceremony in our new outdoor area and "One Good Dead" envelopes for staff!



Mission Week

The final count of Mission Week took a few weeks to finalise. We are looking forward to sending €10,000 to the Mercy College in Kenya. This will go directly towards educating girls in the area!

We would like to thank all students and teachers who took part during the week, from dress-up days to lunch-time concerts to the Leaving Cert Show. Everyone played a part and we are very proud of what we all have achieved!



Parent's Association

The role of the Parents Association is to support pupils and staff through fundraising, providing practical help and by contributing to the development of school policy.

This year the Parents Association provided catering for the students who performed in the school musical (Mamma Mia) during the month of November. Teams of parents rotated over four nights and provided finger food, sandwiches and fresh fruits to the students and orchestra during the various intervals. The Parents Association also helped with the Leaving Cert graduation party held for parents and students on the evening of the 25th of May.

We are hoping to keep supporting these events and we also have other exciting plans for next year. We are always looking for new members to join our team. It is a great way to have a better understanding of your daughter's education in the Colaiste Muire. It is also a nice way to meet other parents from different year groups and share ideas.

If you are interested in joining the Parents Association, please feel free to contact Souhila Hogan (colaistemuirepa@gmail.com)



Wellbeing

Talent Show

Colaiste Muire Talent Show was the first year we showcased the exceptional talent in our school. 25 students entered and preformed before our five judges - Aoibhinn Garrihy, teacher Gemma Hassett and students Sadie Morgan, Ciara Frawley and Isabelle Maleady. Our show was hosted by the talented Maeve Wall and Ella Courtney. Our overall winner was Neila Ryan who performed a Leo Capaldi number with the piano. Congratulations to all who entered. Kate Jones & Saoirse Kent were in 2nd while Hannah Saidi & Sadie Shalloo were in 3rd. Looking forward to next year.



Coláiste Feist

Colaiste Feist took place in May. All classes engaged in various events, activities and team challenges. Transition year students organised many events. 6th Year students took on the teachers in a soccer match, the teachers winning on penalties! The week ended with an outdoor concert with food trucks and picnic blankets with performers from a variety of year groups. Colaiste Feist was the highlight for many students this year and we are looking forward to next year already! Special word of mention to TY4, TY5 and Ms. Howard for organising and running all these fantastic events this year. Also, thank you to Aoife McDonnell who recorded and documented activities throughout the week for us all to look back on!

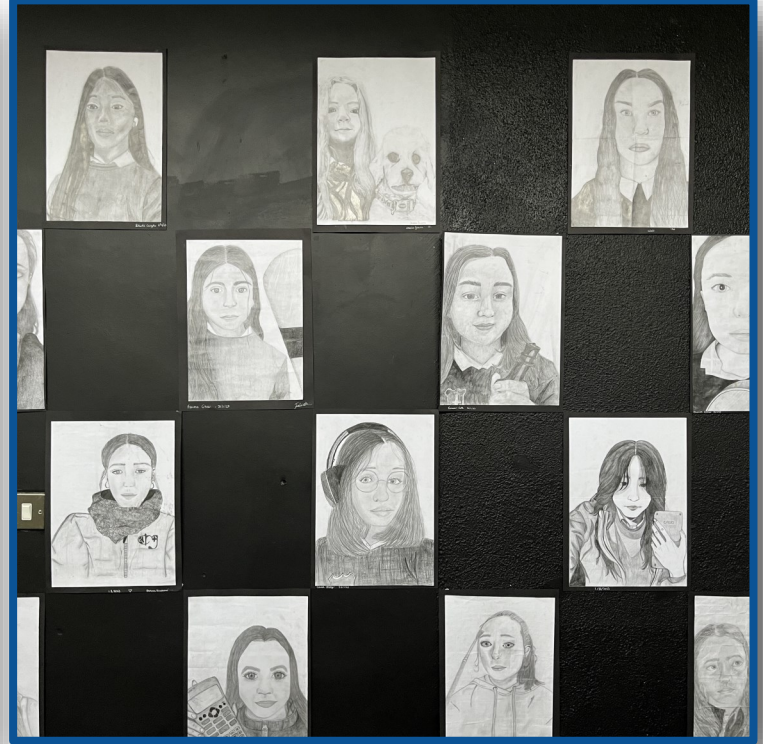


Awards Day



Well done to all students who received awards at our Junior, Senior and Sports Award Ceremony last week. Thank you to Eimear Considine and Roisín Garvey who presented the awards! Student of the Year 2023 is Leanne Healy, Sports Girl of the Year 2023 is Hannah Doyle and Hannah Clune was the recipient of the Companionship Award!

Art on Display



A Short History

Nearly two hundred years ago, Dublin native Catherine McCauley was horrified at the amount of destitute young girls on the streets of Dublin. Using her inherited wealth, McCauley used it to provide education to women to give them the same opportunity as men, founding what's now known as the Mercy Order.

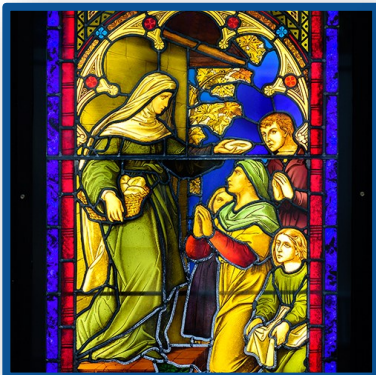
For Catherine, the heart of a Mercy education is the sound development of the student's religious understanding and openness to God's consolation. The opportunity to grow in personal knowledge of the Christian faith, the help of God manifest in the sacraments, and the irrevocable promises revealed in the life of Jesus Christ, was, for her, the most important gift of a Mercy school to its students. While she insisted on thorough instruction in necessary academic and work skills, Catherine's deepest educational conscience focused on the religious education of all students in her care: on strengthening the grounds of their faith, hope, and love, and nurturing their awareness of the true sources of joy and confidence. To her, occasions for such life sustaining learning are the central service a Mercy school ought to offer to students.

Having expanded across Ireland, in 1854 the Sisters of Mercy set up a house of order in O'Connell's Square at the request of Dean Kenny of Limerick. Six Mercy sisters immediately got to work, helping the sick and poor and providing an education. The location as we know today was established in 1941 and housed boarders up to 1984. Coláiste Muire Ennis has taught a long line of mothers, grandmothers and even great-grandmothers!

A lot has changed since then, and yet, much has stayed the same. Our school has continued to grow and flourish with a vibrant and diverse student body, passionate teachers and a commitment to education and the vision of Catherine McCauley.

Eilis Strand

Transition Year



New Students!



Hi, I'm Sofia Kiselyova and I'm in 3rd Year. I came to Ireland a year ago because of the Russian war in Ukraine and I would like to tell you about my experience here.

Some differences between Ireland and Ukraine such as, languages, traditions, food, mentality and mindsets of the people and religious things, were quite challenging for me. I didn't really have any problems understanding English, as I have studied it back home, but because of my accent, people get the wrong impression and think that I am not able to communicate and talk. This is the hardest part of being in English speaking community, rather than that, everything else is good here. People also reasonably, stopped pronouncing my surname, as they find it very difficult to pronounce.

Still, I'm happy to be in the Colaiste. I met new people and friends with different views on life, and the most difficult classes for me are English and Religion, as they require too much writing on philosophical topics which we had never gone through in my previous school. Some classes such as German, Business, Religion, Irish and History are new to me, but I am really grateful to be here.

My name is Sofia Pesliak. Last year was full of events; both bad and good. The war broke out in my country and my nation dignified the right to freedom and independence, defending democratic values. Among the good events is that we got to Ireland, where we were warmly welcomed and helped.

I really enjoy studying in Colaiste Muire, because here I got to know many teachers and found new friends. Although, teaching is somewhat different from the Ukrainian school, I am very interested in learning, especially those subjects that are completely new to me, like Business, and Home Economics, including other subjects that are quite interesting too. Apart from studying, what I really like here, is that there are so many parties and everyone works together, has fun and even the teachers participate too.

During this year, I had the opportunity to see many performances by Colaiste students, but I liked The Fest, the most.

P.S: I hope my English has improved!
Thank you for everything



My Story in Ireland began in July 2022. My older sister tried and did everything so that I could stay in this county in comfortable conditions. It all started with my studies, as it was very difficult for me to find a school here, because the schools were closed and would only open on the 28th of August. We started looking for a school in the centre of Ennis, and I remember meeting a woman who was very nice to us in the Colaiste. I spoke English but it was my first time talking to a native speaker, and the women spoke very fast, but I felt embarrassed to ask her to repeat herself. Anyway, she was very sympathetic to the situation and I started school on 5th of September, which happened to be my birthday also.

I got in a very friendly class and had a cool teacher. The first months were difficult to get involved in classwork and I was asking myself, what am I doing here? Why do I speak English? Why am I in a foreign country? How can I not seem strange in the other girls' eyes? There is no one here, and I am alone...

I struggle with this loneliness even now, but I also met a couple of people with whom I am not afraid to talk. I am grateful to all the teachers who helped and assisted me all the way.

In conclusion, I can say that the year in Ireland was not as bad as I expected, but I still want to go home as soon as possible.

Gallery



Acknowledgements

Thank you to all students and teachers who contributed to our newsletter this year. Special mention to Dinadee Gamage (TY) who designed the cover of this years newsletter! We are very proud of each students achievements, results and participation throughout the year! Thank you for contributing to our school community and we look forward to seeing you continue to grow throughout the year!