

Portmarnock Community School – Board of Management



Principal's Report to the Parents' Association

Academic Year 2018 – 2019

Presented to Parents' Association AGM on Thursday 3rd October 2019

List of Activities and Achievements for Academic Year 2018/2019

- PCS received a very good report following a Department of Education & Skills' inspection in Home Economics in May 2019.
- Trustee Responsibilities: The school participated in several activities and events organised by the Joint Trustees. These included students and teachers participating in in-service and training programmes organised by the Loreto Education Office including the Middle Leadership Course and Student Council Training. All staff and members of the Board of Management have availed of training in Child Safeguarding
- We continued to be involved with 40 other schools in the Country who have been taking part in a major review of Senior Cycle Education in Ireland
- Excellent Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate Results were achieved in the State Examinations – once again some key features from an analysis of State Examination results are that our students are achieving results well above the national average in a majority of subjects and they are also attempting Higher Level papers – well above the national average
- Student Leadership: We have continued to expand the Student Leadership & Student Voice opportunities in our school including student council and student leadership and mentoring teams
- The following policies were reviewed – Participation in Physical Education Policy. We also completed a comprehensive review of the Special Educational Needs Policy, the Suspensions & Exclusion Policy and the Critical Incident Response Policy. For all policies visit school website (www.portmarnockcommunityschool.ie)
- Drug & Alcohol Awareness Workshops for Parents: We continue our work with the North Dublin Regional Drug & Alcohol Taskforce and Cross Care who give advice and support for a small number of students with particular needs. An evening class organised through the Adult Education Programme offered more in-depth information and supports to parents/guardians who wanted to learn more about the services on offer
- The Adult Education programme continues to grow in numbers attending and in the range of courses on offer. The BOM extends thanks to Adult Education

Director, Mr. Michael McNeive on the continued growth in profile and success of our Adult Education Programme

Extra-Curricular Activities:

- **Mapping Project:** The school was accepted into the European Foundation Erasmus research project as result of the mapping project. This was by way of invitation based on the achievements and success of students in national and International competitions to date. Two teachers and six students will continue to represent Ireland alongside teams from Portugal, Germany, Spain and Latvia over the next year. It will involve visits to the respective countries engaging in workshops and the sharing of ideas and resources in the area of humanitarian open street mapping.
- **Les Miserables:** Past and present pupils performed the music and songs of Les Miserables on a night which all present will never forget. The talent was inspiring and the audience showed their appreciation for the singers and musicians with several standing ovations. Thanks to Ms. Molamphy and Ms. O'Driscoll and a whole host of support crew the project fundraising for a Community Theatre at PCS got off to a magnificent start.
- **Variety Show:** The annual variety show was another terrific success. €1,800 was raised for St Francis Hospice. Many thanks and well done to Ms O'Driscoll, Mr Maynes and Ms McGlynn and all the students involved.
- **Development Education** continues to offer our students unique opportunities for leadership, team work, global civil responsibility and humanitarian enterprise in the tackling global issues
- **Report on the Lesotho Project 2019**



Due to the high number of students involved this year, 54 students in total, the project was expanded to include more schools and projects while in Lesotho than ever before. These projects included teaching Art, Music, Irish, English and Science in a number of different primary and secondary schools, teaching local children to swim and play chess. and painting nearly 30 classrooms. Our students were also instrumental in the installation of computer rooms in local schools and refurbishment of a school library. They also worked in very hot conditions helping with the construction and painting of a fence around the newly built early childhood development centre at Ha Hlalele.

The trip was a tremendous success, with the students being activity involved in a number of different projects while in Lesotho. Unfortunately, some of the

teacher unions in Lesotho implemented a teachers strike during the second week of the trip, this did mean we had to curtail teaching in some schools, however the students were then given more painting and maintenance work in the school buildings, which resulted in even more work being completed than initially hoped for. The students were a credit to their parents and represented the school and their country with dignity and pride. The trip was a triumph and gave all involved a most memorable and worthwhile life experience.

- The BOM is deeply appreciative of the generous, voluntary contribution of all staff members in providing co- curricular activities for our students including Sport, Choir, the Musical, Drama, Debating, Dance, charity events as well as a whole myriad of student trips and Development Education

The Parents' Association:

- The PA meets once a month during the year. It reviews draft policies which this year included Special Education Needs Policy and the Suspensions and Exclusion Policy. Members of the Association organised fund raising events as well as a very successful Careers Fair for Leaving Certificate and Transition Year students. Many thanks to the Parents' Association for helping with the hospitality at the reception after the Sixth Year Graduation Mass and TY Evening of Celebration. The Parents' Association is regularly updated on school events at meetings. The Board of Management is deeply appreciative to the members of the Parents' Association for their partnership and support.

Key Targets Areas for Development – Academic Year 2019/2020

Continue work on the School's Strategic Plan with 5-6 Key Operating Themes

1. Management and Leadership
2. Teaching and Learning
3. Partnership with Parents and Others
4. Wellbeing
5. Student Voice
6. School Buildings and Infrastructure

1. Management and Leadership

- Review of Post of Responsibilities – last reviewed 2017/2018
- Embedding DES *Looking at our School 2016* Document – A Quality Framework for Post Primary Schools
- ACCS Training in Leadership and Management
- Middle Leadership Course with Loreto Education Trust
- Education Leadership – Drumcondra Education Centre
- Extensive Staff CPD on leading Learning in the classroom

2. Teaching and Learning - Looking at our School

The aim of developments within this key area is to develop and support the following:

- Provide further CPD in our third area of School Self-Evaluation – ‘The use of Formative Feedback to Improve Student Engagement’ (Year 3) as well as keeping a focus on Literacy and Numeracy – see school website for School Self- Evaluation Reports
- Digital Strategy Framework (Year 3) – see website for school’s Digital Learning Plan www.portmarnockcommunityschool.ie
- Continue with end of year surveys to gain baseline data for school improvement process – Second Cycle of SSE (2016-2020) and academic tracking
- Implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework – Day 3 of Training will place on Friday 27th November 2019 and will focus on Assessment in our school context. Students entering 1st year in September 2019 will be the first cohort of students undertaking a full programme under the new Framework for Junior Cycle. As all new subject specifications include ongoing feedback, formative assessment, CBAs, assessment tasks as well as final examinations, there is a need to avoid ‘over-assessment’ and to minimise the cumulative burden on students and teachers of multiple assessments across the full range of subjects. In this context, the Classroom-Based Assessments will substitute for other assessments currently undertaken in the school such as in-house examinations. We will be reviewing our assessment policy to plan for the replacement of in-house examinations with Classroom-Based Assessments for students, where relevant.
- To complete the review of the following policies to support learning, wellbeing and inclusion: Anti-Bullying Policy, Religious Education Policy, School Tours Policy and the School’s Admission Policy.

3. Partnership with Parents and Others:

We continue to work with parents and other organisations to promote PCS as a school for the whole community.

We will do this through our association with the following groups:

- The Parents’ Association
- Adult Education Programme
- Action Ireland Trust & Fingal County Council
- Local Sports and Athletics Clubs
- The Arch Club
- The Musical Society
- Prosper Fingal
- North Dublin Regional Drug & Alcohol Task Force & Crosscare
- Road Safety Training and “Be in Control” programme with local Gardaí
- Shared Reading & GAA coaching with the local primary schools

4. Wellbeing

- Wellbeing will be reported on through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) for the first time in 2020. Wellbeing will show in a separate area of the JCPA. It is in this area that schools will report on student achievement in CSPE, SPHE and PE. This will be facilitated by the use of the descriptors which have already been developed and reflect the appropriate language of learning.
- Work with Parents' Association to support Wellbeing
- Induction programme for new first year cohort of students
- Extensive Extra-Curricular programme for students
- Wellbeing activities on offer for all staff

5. Student Voice

- Student Council
- Prefect Team
- 4th, 5th and 6th Year Leadership and Mentoring Team
- Student Focus Group - reviewing school policies
- Senior Cycle Review Group
- Action Research Project re: Student Voice in the Classroom
- Homeless Committee

6. School Buildings and Infrastructure

Replacement of the K Building:

This project is one of the school building projects on the Department's ADAPT 2 (Accelerated Delivery of Architectural Planning & Tendering) Programme. The Department has just completed procuring a Project Manager for the ADAPT 2 Programme, which currently contains 16 school building projects. Rogerson Reddan Associates have been appointed as the Project Manager for Portmarnock Community. They have been tasked with appointing a Design Team – (Architect, Quantity Surveyor, Civil & Structural Engineer, Mechanical & Electrical Engineer and Project Supervisor for the Design Process) for the Portmarnock Community School. The Tender Evaluation of a Design Team meeting will take place in the Building Unit of the Department of Education & Skills in Tullamore on 17th October 2019

Major Refurbishment of the Main School Building:

The Brief Formulation Report for this Major Capital Building Programme also contains details of a major refurbishment of the main building which is 40 years old and in need of significant upgrade. This will include acoustic remediation works to protect from airborne noise generated by the proposed new North runway at Dublin Airport.

The Design Team will also explore options for the creation of a new main entrance, including pupil entrance between the new and existing buildings in order to improve general circulation throughout the school and will also include the creation of adequate car parking for staff and visitors, adequate set down and pick up for pupils arriving by school bus, by car or by bicycle.

4TH Anniversary 1979 - 2019

Portmarnock Community School



