



NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2023

Dear Parents, Students and Teachers,

Term 1 is almost over and it has been a busy one for the Parents' Association. I would like to extend a warm welcome to all the new 1st years in the school and of course their parents/guardians. Primary school most likely seems like a distant memory now. It has been great to meet many of you at our recent events (see below) and we really hope that you will consider becoming involved in the PA in the near future.

Our first event this year was to host the Debs reception in the school. This is a lovely event where last years 6th years meet in the school for an hour or so before they head off to the Debs. I was a 'parent' at the reception this year and I can say that it is so lovely to see the

girls in their finery heading off for the night and to catch up with so many parents at the same time.

Our AGM this year was followed by our guest speaker, Peter Cosgrove. He spoke to us about technology and its impact on us – the phrase I took away was 'Netflix's greatest competitor is sleep'. The talk was inciteful and many thanks to Peter for his time.

The PA also hosted the 1st year parents' social night. This was a good chance for parents to meet and chat about the girls and the school.

We had our annual lunch this year on the 10th November in St. Annes Golf Club. It was a sold out event. Our guest speaker, Maura McNally, certainly got us going early on with her thoughts about education

and feminism, reminding us of 10 things that women were not allowed to do legally in the 1970s! We had a great lunch and then plenty of dancing. It was a really fun afternoon as well as raising funds for the school and this years designated charity, UNICEF Gaza relief fund.

As always, a bit shout out to the active members of the PA, particularly to the committee, Kara Cullen, Liz Tierney, Julie Manahan and Jennifer Rothwell.

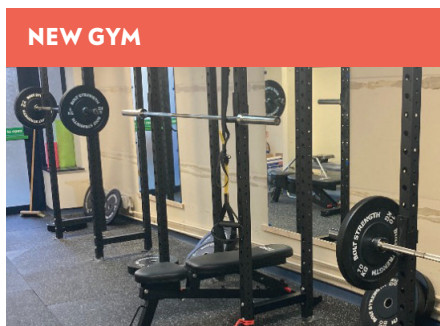
We would really like as many of you as possible to come to our next PA meeting on December 6th.

We sincerely hope that the girls are happy in school and although it seems too early to do so, we hope that you all have a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Louise McKenna

On behalf of the Parents Association

HIGHLIGHTS



DEBS 2023

The Debs reception was held on the 21st of September. There was great excitement as the class of 2023 returned to the school for their Debs reception. The style and glamour on the night was stunning as the girls paraded into the hall while the present 6th years and teachers formed a guard of honour. A fabulous prosecco reception was held in the school hall for the debutantes, their partners and parents from 6.30pm-7.30pm while individual and the group photographs were being taken. Then it was off on the bus to Dunboyne Castle for meal and a disco to dance the night away! Big thank you to everyone who helped out with the preplanning and on the night and to Ms Gogarty and Ms Molloy.

Photos: Owen O Connor



Class of 2023



Guard of Honour with Cary Flanagan



PA Committee Helpers, from left to right Deirdre Whyms, Daphne Andrews, Elaine Herbert, Antonia Strode, Clarissa Bryans, Caitriona Farrelly, Kara Cullen, Judith Murphy

NEW GYM

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR SCHOOL NOW HAS A GYM!

We interviewed Ms Molloy recently to tell us a bit more about the new gym.

Who funded the Gym?

The gym was funded by the school and also some funding came from the Parents' Association donation to the school. We are now in our second year of Leaving Certificate PE and using the gym is a big part of the subject.

What type and the details of equipment that is available in the gym?

- 3 Custom Made Squat racks with Olympic Bars and 100kg of Bumper Plates
- 2 Rowing Machines
- 1 Spin Bike
- Set of Dumbbells
- 3 Benches
- Soft plyo Jump Box
- Slam Balls & Medicine Balls
- Battle Ropes

Who can you avail of the gym room ?

The gym is currently being used in senior cycle PE and Leaving Cert PE. We will be opening it on Thursday and Friday mornings before school after the midterm break for 5th and 6th year students. A past pupil who has trained as a gym instructor will be there to run this.

Is there anyone you would like to thank?

Thank you to Ms Coghlan and Ms Crowley for overseeing the project and liaising with the company who installed the gym. Thank you to the parents who support the school with their contributions and who support the Parents' Association events, without these funds it would not have been possible to install the gym. Thank you to the PA for their work with fundraising.



SELF DEFENCE

We are delighted to announce that a new self-defence TY Module course has commenced this year. It is an initiative and partially funded by the parents association. Compound Martial Arts is facilitating the course. Compound Martial Arts (CMA) was founded in 2016 in North Dublin. They provide high level martial arts training to Kids, Teens, Men and Women, as well as having a lot of fun.

Head Coach (CMA) is Oisín McCabe (Shown in the picture). Oisín has a Black Belt in BJJ & Karate and a Brown Belt in Judo.

We interviewed Head Coach Oisín McCabe recently to tell us a bit more the course.

What are the benefits for the HFC girls taking the TY Module self-defence course?

The benefits of the course are the physical benefits of learning actual techniques that they can use to defend themselves. Learning techniques that they can get themselves away from situations they are not comfortable with, and if they cannot get away, that they can protect themselves to the best of their ability. A major benefit is the girls understanding and being shown that there is a legitimate form of defence they can use. That they are capable of obtaining skills that can be effective in a self-defence situation. Another big benefit is understanding that self-defence is not just a physical thing but it also defence in terms of building confidence, so that no means no. Also self defence

against the implied threat of violence where intimidation is something that is less effective on them if they have built up some confidence through their own physical abilities etc.



How is the course going?

The course so far seems to be going great. The girls are enjoying the class during the interactive techniques. They are having fun, laughing and everyone is having a good time. So that's important because at the end of the day, people don't learn to defend themselves because they want to learn to defend themselves, they learn to defend themselves because they end up doing an activity they really enjoy that just so happens

to be a great form of self-defence. My aim is that they find some enjoyment from the Brazilian jujitsu that we are specifically focusing on. Hopefully they will continue and will go on to do some further training on their own.

Oisín, is there anything else you would like to add?

The last point to add is that the proof is out there and it's easily accessible for anyone who wants to see it. We have on average 40 teenagers on the mats in a team jujitsu class in CMA and of that 40 at least 10 of them are young women. The young women are very formidable because they trained consistently. When the women and the young men training together, a lot of the time the young women are actually taping out the young men. They are able to control position and dominate the rounds. This is nothing to do with the physicality, it everything to do with the fact that their techniques are superior. Some of our longest serving members are women and a lot of them are now assistant coaches in the team.. If at any time any of the HFC girls would like to come up to train at CMA, they are most welcome. It's a very friendly atmosphere with other girls that would be delighted to have another training partner. They would be absolutely blown away by how skilled the young women who train at CMA are. The proof is out there, they don't have to take my word for it they can just come and try a class and they can find out for themselves!

BENEFITS OF LEARNING SELF-DEFENCE

Self-defence classes not only teach you how to protect yourself in dangerous situations but also provide numerous other benefits for your physical and mental well-being

Learning how to defend yourself can offer the following advantages.

1.

BOOSTS CONFIDENCE

One of the primary benefits of self-defence classes is that you will learn important techniques to protect yourself in dangerous situations. These techniques can be invaluable if you ever find yourself in a threatening situation. Ultimately, these will make you feel safe about yourself and boost your confidence and self-esteem.

2.

IMPROVES PHYSICAL FITNESS

Self-defence classes involve a lot of physical activity, including cardio, strength training, and flexibility exercises. These classes can be a great way to stay active and improve your overall physical fitness.

3.

IMPROVES MENTAL HEALTH

Self-defence classes can also have a positive impact on your mental health. Self-defence training such as martial arts has been shown to reduce symptoms of mood disorders. A study found that practicing martial arts had a positive effect on well-being and could help reduce symptoms associated with internalizing mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety.

4.

TEACHES SELF-DISCIPLINE AND SELF-CONTROL

Self-defence, like martial art training, requires a great deal of focus and discipline. You will learn techniques that require precision and practice, and you will need to develop self-control to execute these techniques correctly. The discipline and self-control you learn in self-defence classes can be applied to other areas of your life as well.

5.

TEACHES SETTING PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Did you know that good verbal skills can be an effective tool for self-defence? Self-defence classes can teach you how to set personal boundaries and communicate assertively.

6.

PREVENTS ACCIDENTS

When you learn martial arts and self-defence, you're improving your ability to move your body in the right way at the right time. This helps you develop better reflexes and coordination, which can be helpful not just in fighting but also in everyday life. Being able to move quickly and confidently can help you avoid accidents and respond to unexpected situations.

*At the end of the Self Defence classes the girls will be given a list of local Martial Arts facilities where they can continue learning Martial Art skills. It would be very beneficial for them to continue Martial Arts to reinforce what they have learnt during their TY Self Defence module

CAREER SPOT



Hello, my name is **Katie Holmes**.

I am currently studying a masters in 'environment and sustainability' here in London with the plan to become an environmental consultant.

I sat the Leaving Cert in 2014, with my sights set on nursing in Trinity. Though I wasn't entirely certain about my choice post-Leaving Cert, nursing felt like an exciting and promising option.

Early on in my nursing studies, I had the dreaded realization that nursing, as much as it was noble and important, wasn't my true calling. I continued to study nursing for two years before summoning the courage to change course. I had been feeling really lost from day 1 but the prospect of changing after investing two years was daunting. I was afraid of falling behind my friends and starting over.

After some soul-searching, I settled on BESS (business, economics, and social studies) at Trinity College. Going back to first year was a terrifying move, but it turned out to be the best decision I could have made. I decided to embrace every opportunity with open arms, joining various societies and saying yes to every new

experience. One society that quickly captured my heart was the Vincent de Paul (VDP) society. As an arts student, I found myself with more free time to both study and volunteer. I participated in soup runs, after-school clubs, and, of course, countless social events.

In my third year of BESS, I made the choice to major in business and political science. I loved being given the chance to study topics I was genuinely passionate about, including US politics and marketing.

My involvement in the VDP grew, and I was elected vice president of the society, which had become one of Trinity's largest societies. As I entered my final year, my studies delved even deeper into areas that fascinated me. I collaborated with a social enterprise to assess its impact on society, with the hope of securing additional governmental funding.

My time with VDP provided invaluable insights into this sector. Furthermore, I was elected as one of four Central Societies Committee officers responsible for funding, running, and establishing new societies in Trinity. This role brought me incredible opportunities, including meetings with the provost, collaborations with the student union, and interactions with various college staff members and living on campus! (Although it was cut short due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic)

Post-graduation, I found myself at a crossroads, unsure of my next step. I had grand plans to travel through South America, beginning with yoga teacher training in Peru, but the pandemic disrupted those dreams. Instead, I continued working in office administration and as a barista; jobs I

had held throughout college.

In 2021, I took a leap of faith and moved to London with two Trinity friends, embarking on a new chapter with no jobs or concrete plans. After a brief period of unemployment, I secured a position with ASOS, working in menswear merchandising. My time at ASOS was a revelation, and I gained invaluable experience in working with different time zones and cultures. It was a fantastic Launchpad into the "London scene," where I formed friendships and experienced the city in a whole new light.

While there were countless reasons to stay at ASOS (free clothes, discounts, and incredible friendships), I felt a growing passion for environmental sustainability. It became apparent that breaking into the sustainability sector without the right foundational knowledge was challenging, nearly impossible in London. So I made the decision to leave ASOS and managed to get a less intense job.

I now work for a Venture Capital company and I'm enjoying building on my existing knowledge of this sector from my undergrad and learning so much every day.

Having more time has allowed me to start studying for a master's degree in 'environment and sustainability.'

My hopes for my career after I graduate are to work in sustainable business consulting. I want to help transform businesses so that they can operate in a way that is positive to the environment and has a positive impact on the world.

I would love to talk to you if you have any questions; just send me an email X.

IN FOCUS WITH KATIE

We interviewed Katie recently and asked her the following:

What technical skills have you relied on to get to where you are today?

While communicating and listening are not ‘technical skills’ these have been invaluable to me in navigating the professional world. I can talk to anyone and have worked on my skills of ‘active listening’. Microsoft word, excel, PowerPoint are invaluable too – take the time to learn the basics!

What books or articles have made the most significant impact on your career?

‘*Everything I know about love*’ by Dolly Alderton. I know it’s a cheesy book, but this taught me that we are all moving through life at different paces, failure is an important part of growing up, life is good but hard and that self-awareness is essential. I also recommend ‘*How to Fail*’ by Elizabeth Day. This book is built on celebrating the things that haven’t gone right in life. I find it very comforting to know that failure is a universal and very important part of being human.



How do you continue learning & growing as a professional?

Say yes to any development course that is offered in your workplace. Sign up to anything that you think would be positive in your professional development (public speaking, how to manage time effectively) – even if you think you don’t need help in a certain area, you will learn something new.

I attended every single Microsoft Excel course ASOS ran, and this has been hugely advantageous in my career.

Who are your mentors? Who inspires you?

I’m very lucky to be incredibly close to my aunt who has been my mentor since I was 17. She has held various high-powered roles within the finance industry, so has always helped me with any decisions; be that in life or my career. She has also been instrumental in introducing me to colleagues or friends that she has who have been able to help me in a professional sense.

How did you find & connect with your mentors?

Mostly through my aunt. I also recommend reaching out to people you admire on LinkedIn. Find people who are doing what you want to be doing and connect with them. Dublin is also a very small place so look to your parents friends and neighbours. They might be able to put you in contact with someone or have some valuable advice.

What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

Don’t be afraid to ask!

Sometimes the hardest path can be the steepest learning curve!

Don’t waste your time worrying about the shots you haven’t even taken!

Your opinion isn’t the only one and is not always correct.

Are there any expectations you’ve had about your career that turned out to be different from reality?

I naively thought that once I finished in college knowing what area I wanted to work in would come easily to me – this is not the case. It’s ok to take your time figuring out what you want to do after school and college. The path of our professional life is a long one, don’t be afraid to take a few detours or the longer route.

Final Thoughts or advice?

It sounds silly, but I didn’t realize there was so much to learning and life after the Leaving Cert ! It is not going to define your life and you have so much power to change the direction you find yourself going. If you’re not happy tell someone – talk to the college, parents, teachers, friends – a problem shared is a problem halved. Also, manners matter!

“ **FAILURE IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF GROWING UP** ”

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Our fourth annual Parents' Association Lunch fundraiser was held in St. Anne's Golf Club on Friday November 10th. Guests enjoyed a Prosecco reception, lunch and there were goodie bags and some fabulous raffle prizes. Many thanks to our sponsors Nolans, Denali Builders, MKN Property, William Fry and Spar Vernon Ave. Our wonderful guest speaker was Maura McNally, who spoke about education and feminism. This year we had a new addition of music which got the crowd up and dancing well into the evening. It was a great success, thank you to all the parents who came out to support this event.

Our raffle prizes included vouchers donated by **Staffords, Dunnes, Kinara, Escape Gym** and prizes from **Hampers & Co, Gilna, Studio 124, Seamus O'Halloran** and fabulous silk accessories and a designer dress from **Jennifer Rothwell**.

Please show our gratitude to these local businesses by supporting them throughout the year.



CALENDAR 2023/24

PA Meetings: @8pm

Wednesday, 6th December

Tuesday, 9th January

Wednesday, 7th February

Tuesday, 5th March

Wednesday, 10th April

Tuesday, 7th May

PA MEMBERS 2023

Chair: Louise McKenna

Vice Chair: Kara Cullen

Secretary: Julie Manahan

Treasurer: Liz Tierney

Communications: Jennifer Rothwell

Email:

paholyfaithclontarf@outlook.ie

Twitter: @hfclontarf

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Quiz: 7 March 2024

TY Show: 18-22 March

NOTE

*All parents and guardians are automatically members of the Parents' Association and very welcome to attend all PA meetings.