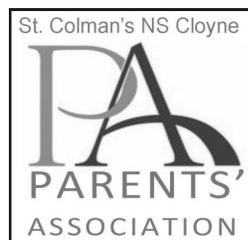


Parents' Association Newsletter

Summer Issue



A Summer Update from the Parents Association

As the beautiful weather continues the Summer Holidays are fast approaching. To keep you all informed, we have put together an analysis of our survey and some highlights of our activities this past year. Should you require further details please ask any member of the PA or you are welcome to attend any of our meetings on the first Tuesday of the month.

(Next meeting is Tuesday 6th September @ 8pm)

SURVEY RESULTS:

The PA would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who responded (57) to our survey. We are delighted to have your feedback and views. We hope to take this into consideration when planning future endeavours. Please refer to the PA Report below to demonstrate our progress so far.



Q1 What is the most important thing the PA can do to help support you and your family? 48 Responded

Communication: The majority of respondents indicated that communication between us and the school regarding activities, events/ fundraisers and facilitating improvement in the school as most important. This includes being kept informed on all school activities and how parents can contribute in general.

Reduce costs: Working with the school to keep costs to a minimum was also deemed important. Suggestions included an easing of voluntary fees and providing additional subsidised resources through fundraising efforts and cost saving initiatives.

Bring the fun! Making the school experience the best possible for children was also cited as important and credit given to the PA regarding organising the various fun events throughout the school calendar year.

Q2 How likely are you to attend PA meetings? 56 Responded

Likely to attend 43% Unlikely 57%

Reasons given for not attending included:

* Work/shift work * Childcare issues * Clash with other commitments (College / hobbies) * unsuitable time/day * previous service on PA

Q3 What issues / topics would you like to see discussed/ addressed at PA meetings? 45 responded.

Traffic/ Road safety issues - Parking and drop off zone issues, discussion re possibility of speed ramps / lollipop lady/ pedestrian crossing

Fundraising - Having specific goals for all money raised. Availing of grants and community opportunities. Advise how we as parents can help.

Cost reducing measures: Funding for school buses for varied activities. Lessen voluntary school fee.

After school activities/options: Discussion on possibilities to enhance the school experience. We hope look into this in coming months – volunteers are needed to help form committee.

Alleviating problems: Discussion on topics such as (1) anti-bullying, (2) safety issues in school yard (3) alternatives to DVD's during wet break (4) structured yard games (5) including the shy child (6) Split class criteria (7) Cárta- limiting gifts in school

Other: New build updates, teacher allocation, upcoming events & guest speakers

Q4 Do you feel informed about PA activities? 52 Responded

Yes - 98% feel informed. No - 2% do not feel informed

Q5 What sort of fundraising events would you like to see the PA organising in the future? 48 Responded

(1) Kids disco (2) Table quiz adults/children (3) Sponsored no uniform/ teachers wear uniform /fancy dress day (4) Cycleton/pedalcents (5) concert/ talent show (6) Fair/festival - craft fair, garden fete, harvest festival (7) cake/ bun/sale or coffee morning (8) Race night (9) Family fun day includes treasure hunt, design a cupcake (10) sponsored walk / run etc.

Q6 We are looking into the provision of after school activities for the children. Please list in order of preference activities you would like to see available at our school. 44 Responded

(1) Music lessons- e.g. Guitar/Piano (2) Speech and Drama (3) Arts and Crafts. Various activities were also mentioned sports, various dance, gymnastics, yoga, martial arts and swimming but not by majority. Also in minority included clubs such as language, Lego, book, science, chess, knitting and computers. The idea of homework / after school club was suggested.

Q7 What is your preferred means of communication. 48 Responded

The preferred means of communication is text message, followed by notes and Facebook (weighted same), email updates and then school website.

Q8 Getting involved. 46 Responded

59% indicated that they were willing to volunteer/ offer their skills/ expertise from time to time. 41% indicated they were unable to commit at this time.

Q9 What's your view? (€5 birthday gift initiative) 47 Responded

In favour of initiative - 75%, against initiative - 25%

Suggested Tips for parents:

In our recent survey 75% of respondents indicated that they were in favour of the Cárta/€5 gift initiative for junior/senior classes. It is entirely up to parents to adopt this guideline. If you are a parent/guardian who does, please write €5 limit or gift guideline on the party invitation/ text message. Discretion is advised when handing out invitations so as not to upset other children.

REPORT ON PA ACTIVITIES 2015-16

Fundraising: Our fundraising efforts are task driven. We are grateful for all your suggestions and will consider them going forward when the need arises.

Many Thanks to all the school community who helped us achieve the following:

1. Clothes Collections with Lenrec raised €896. The next collection will be after the summer. Date to be confirmed.
2. Christmas Cards (Those made by our children) raised €840
3. Craft Fair/Raffle/Bake raised €4727, Book Rental received €2281 (the proceeds from the raffle) and Accelerated Reading €806 as requested by the school.
4. Pancake Tuesday raised €545. Kids love this event! This money went towards the badges for Flag Raising Day.
5. Easter Egg Kids Raffle raised €125 (more of a fun event than a fundraiser)
6. Bingo Night raised €812
7. Sports Day. €1500 of the Proceeds will go towards reducing the Annual Voluntary Contribution fee for families as done last year.

In addition to the monies paid out as mentioned above, we have paid towards many other initiatives as outlined below.

Grandparents Day. This is a fun day for the kids. We supply the welcome teas and coffees and delicious donated baked goods.

The celebration following the 1st Penance night. Third class parents co-ordinate the night and baking etc. and we the PA pay for their treats.

Confirmation Night. A parent from the confirmation class co-ordinates this night and treats are funded by the PA.

Proclamation Day and Flag Raising Day. Badges were given to each child for the commemoration of 1916 from proceeds of Pancake Tuesday.

Clay Hand Prints for the 6th Class departing is funded by the PA.

A talk for 6th Class by a Nurse is funded by the PA.

Junior Infants Intro Meeting & Intro day for parents and child. We introduce ourselves on the intro night and provide refreshments. On the Intro day we sell crests at a reduced price and provide refreshments.

Sale of School Uniform and Tracksuits. McCarthy Sports come to the school to sell uniforms and tracksuits as organised by the PA.

Response to Traffic/ safety concerns. Traffic lights/warning signs have been fixed. Repainted road markings. We have further requested that the road be re painted through the village. Ongoing dialogues with the engineer in Cork County Council to have 2 crossings to allow all pedestrians cross the road safely.

After School activities: We are now informed regarding your preference for activities namely Music, Speech and Drama and Arts and Crafts. We are seeking volunteers to help look into this for next year and will discuss at Sept. meeting.

Alleviating problems: We would like to include the points you've raised in future agendas where we would like to encourage lively discussion and problem solving solutions.

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THANK YOU

We would like to thank every member of Staff at St Colman's NS for their unwavering and continuous support of each of our events. We would be unable to organise any activity without it.

To you the parents, we would hope that this is a snapshot of the work a dedicated group of parents carry out on behalf of our children. We would like to really encourage more parents to be actively involved in PA activities and help raise funds for the school in a fun way. However, every little helps, and we would like to thank anyone who has baked a cake, or bought a raffle ticket during the year – your contributions all help us to achieve our aims to enhance the school experience and keep costs down for all.

Thanks also to those that sit on committees within the school like Board of Management, Book Rental, Active Flag, Communication and Library to name a few. To the parents who facilitate the stamps every Tuesday and to those who are tasked with the everyday running of the PA this year: your commitment and efforts are greatly appreciated.

Best of luck to 6th Class as you move on to greater things in secondary school with the whole world at your feet.

Finally to the children, on whose behalf all this effort is made, we hope that you have had a wonderful year and that the events we organised have been fun. Enjoy the summer everyone.

