

Douglas Community School

Douglas, Cork

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Spring 2010

Principal's Address

It is with great pleasure that I welcome the publication of this school magazine and I hope that it will be a source of interest and pleasure to all members of the school community. This has been a year of transition with Bernard Horgan retiring on 30th November 2009. Bernard gave tremendous service to this school, its pupils and parents over a long period of time and I wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement. I would like to congratulate Mr Chris Hickey on his appointment as Deputy Principal and I look forward to working with him on behalf of the students and parents of Douglas Community School in the years ahead.

At a time of uncertainty, change and cutbacks in Irish Education, it is important that Douglas Community School maintains its long tradition of academic excellence. In this regard I would like to congratulate all of last years Leaving Certificate and Junior Certificate students who performed so well and brought credit to themselves, their school and their families. I would particularly like to congratulate Kevin Twomey who achieved the maximum 11 A's in his Junior Cert and who also prior to Christmas played the lead role in the school drama production, *The Wizard of Oz*. This dual involvement reflects the school ethos developing the whole person. This can only be achieved with a huge input from the teaching staff and I would like to record my thanks to each and every one of them for their dedication and commitment which should never go unnoticed. I would also like to thank all parents, members of the non teaching staff, Board of Management and Parents Association for their continued commitment to the school and its overall development.

This magazine reflects the achievements of our students in the academic, social and extra curricular fields. I congratulate



all those who achieved in these endeavours throughout the recent months and I offer my continued encouragement and support to all those thinking of getting involved. This involvement in the extra curricular life of the school is a vital ingredient in the provision of a broad education where every student is valued as a unique person and allowed to achieve their potential in a holistic sense.

This new decade should prove to be a time of great challenge in education. I believe that Douglas Community School is well equipped to meet these challenges. We will continue to develop our curriculum and provide the highest level of educational provision to satisfy the needs and aspirations of both pupils and parents of the wider Douglas catchment area.

Cuirim fáilte roimh an iris seo agus tá súil agam go mbainfidh gach éinne, idir dhaltáí agus tuismitheoirí sult agus taitneamh as agus ba mhaith liom comhghárdeas a ghabháil do gach éinne a raibh baint acu leis.

Jim Long, Principal



Above: Principal Mr Jim Long discusses with Kevin Twomey his recent "perfect score" of Junior Certificate results. Kevin achieved a remarkable clean sweep of 11 "A" grades, all of which were in higher level subjects.

Left: Pictured on the occasion of his recent retirement, Principal of Douglas Community School for the past 13 years, Bernard Horgan addresses an assembly of students. Students expressed their appreciation and gratitude towards Mr Horgan by organising a collection amongst themselves in order to present Mr Horgan with a decorative glass set to mark his retirement. Staff and students alike wish Mr Horgan a happy and healthy well earned retirement.



Minister For Education Opens New Science Laboratories

Pictured at the official opening of one of three new science laboratories in Douglas Community School is Minister for Education Batt O' Keefe, former Principal Mr Bernard Horgan and Principal Mr Jim Long. Douglas Community School now boasts a dedicated ultra modern laboratory in each of the core sciences of Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Mental Health Public Speaking DCS Students Advance To Finals

5th year students Paudie Marum, Sam O' Mahony, Shane O' Sullivan and Conor Dowling are pictured competing recently in the Cork Mental Health Public Speaking Competition. Victorious over St. Aloyious, the team now progress to the Semi Finals and Finals stage of the competition which will be held at the Silversprings Moran Hotel in March.



Young Scientist Exhibition Report

In its 46th year the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition is much more than a competition, it is an unforgettable experience of a lifetime for the students who take part. The Exhibition itself is the final stage in the competition which is open to all second level students in Ireland, both North and South. As well as the 500 student projects on display, there are a further 4 exhibition halls filled with science and technology based exhibits and entertainment, making it a thrilling event for those who enter and for general visitors alike.

Douglas Community School has a long history of participation in the Exhibition, with many category winners over the years, winning the award for best overall individual project some years ago. Every year the school is by far the best represented boys school in Cork City and County. This year, 20 students entered the competition and 7 were selected to participate in the Exhibition. Stephen O' Sullivan, Luke O' Leary and Eoin Conroy of NS3 studied the possibility of using Catnip as a possible insect repellent. Their fellow third year colleagues Otto Cronje and Daniel Leahy investigated the flammability of various materials after treatment with different washing powders. Kevin Twomey and Padraig Wilson McCarthy worked hard on an interesting experiment to optimise the extraction of DNA from plant tissue. Kevin and Padraig won a "Highly Commended" award. The students worked very hard in the weeks coming up to the Exhibition and reaped the benefits with an enjoyable and successful week in Dublin.

Mr Cian O' Mahony

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Inspectors noted that that the students were friendly, well behaved and courteous and that the atmosphere within the school was one of calm and relaxed industry.



Robotics - Douglas Community School Defends Title

Defending the prestigious title of Lego Mindstorms Robotics Champions, won by last years DCS team, this year's team of Jordan Smith, Daniel Mason, Michael McLaughlin and Eoghan O'Brien with the help of teacher Mr Neil Bronks have been hard at work learning the new skills involved in Robotics and model construction. This year's task is to design, build and demonstrate a working robot capable of picking up a ball from a mount then propelling itself along a set path and "dunking baskets" through a basketball hoop. One of the complexities of the task is to program the robot to repeat the task a number of times, which the team agree is one of the most challenging aspects of the competition. Already the team have impressed their advisors from University College Cork, with Jordan Smith devising a totally original program which they had never encountered before. The challenge of such technical and complex innovation and design is one which the team clearly relish and enjoy, good luck in the Finals!!



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Students have successfully participated in many competitions and quizzes relating to different subject areas such as Science Olympiads, the Young Scientist and Technology competition, Young Social Innovators, the President's Gaisce awards, a robotics competition, photography competitions, German debates, public speaking and maths and business quizzes.

DCS Students Represent Cork At Youth Dáil

Pictured at the recent Óige Dáil assembly at the City Hall are DCS students Cian Ryder, Conor Molloy and Kevin Twomey with teacher Mrs. C O'Mahony together with the Lord and Lady Mayoress of Cork. Óige Dáil invites young people to express their political concerns and stand for election to represent their peers' views and concerns to representatives of the Dáil itself.

These DCS students attend regular meetings as representatives of the Cork City region raising contemporary issues of importance to young people in Cork today. These budding future politicians value the status and relevance of an Óige Dáil in stating the position of young people on important local and national issues. Some of the issues that have been presented to national government include anti bullying policies in schools, setting up mental health directories, assessment of secondary school teachers and youth cafés and clubs.

Highlighting the value of the organisation, the opportunity to discuss issues of significance to teenagers today was seen as especially important to delegates. As one delegate summed up : "our views are listened to by members of the community who have the ability to make change, this coupled with a council made up of passionate and dedicated members makes for a winning combination." As well as having their voices heard in formal weekly discussions, frequent team building activities are organised to strengthen communication and leadership skills. Well done to these articulate, concerned and energetic present, and perhaps future, public representatives.





DCS Students Fundraising For Haiti

Pictured are first year Douglas Community School students presenting a cheque to a representative of Médecins Sans Frontières to aid in the organisations relief efforts following the Haiti Earthquake Disaster. The students of NT1 decided that the best way to raise funds quickly was to organise a raffle. Prizes sourced were a signed Munster rugby jersey and a signed Ireland rugby jersey. After a fabulous effort the students successfully raised over 1000 Euro. Douglas Community School staff members also contributed a further 700 Euro to the fundraising effort by organising a table quiz. Students chose to donate the funds to the Médecins Sans Frontières organisation as it works independently of governments and interest groups and is concerned with the well being of all peoples equally. Accepting the cheque on behalf of the organisation, Gareth, the Médecins Sans Frontières representative, spoke to the students on the importance of the life saving work of the organisation in Haiti and other developing nations.



German All Ireland Debates

Pictured is the DCS German All Ireland Debating Team, Cillian Bracken- team captain, Ronan Doyle, Darren Johnston and Stephen Dorney. The German All Ireland Debates encourage pupils to speak in German. Schools are sent the topic of debate and given two weeks to prepare themselves for the debate itself. Each debater speaks for a timed four minute period with the team captain summing up the argument in conclusion. The debates are organised by the Department of Education and Science and supported by the Goethe Institut and Siemens. Topics vary from "Transition Year" to "The Irish are environmentally aware".

French Breakfast - Le Petit Déjeuner Français

The French Department held their annual French breakfast recently in the school. A wonderful morning of French language and food was had by both students and staff alike. Everyone enjoyed pain au chocolat, crêpes, brioche, baguette, French cheeses, jams, chocolate spreads, chocolat au lait, jus d'orange, jus de pomme and , of course croissants. The idea was simple- "Speak in French and you will be fed !" Key phrases were taught at the beginning of the morning and the students then utilised these effectively throughout the morning. Powerpoint presentations reinforced these key expressions on the school's notice boards. C'était délicieux et bravo à tous!



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Teachers set high standards of expectation for their students



The Wizard Of Oz DCS 2009 Drama Production

On the 1st, 2nd and 4th of December, the transition year students of Douglas Community School put on the tremendously successful show "The Wizard Of Oz". After overcoming numerous obstacles such as flooding in the Douglas area, the show went ahead with only a one week delay.

The production required the students to get involved in acting, dancing, singing, music and set design. This ensured that each of the 98 transition year students had a part to play. No matter what the students were doing, they were enjoying themselves, even though many were preparing to experience their stage debut.

In a brave move this year it was decided to include 1st years in the show, playing the munchkins. The 1st years took part in both matinees as well as the three night time performances. Student Craig Doyle was fantastic in his role of chaperone and rehearsal manager of the 30 strong group.

The cast was led by Jack Buttimer as Toto, with Kevin Twomey as Cheryl Cole, whilst Cian Ryder and Cian Murphy alternated the role of Scarecrow. Similarly, Jack Buckley and Paul Horgan shared the role of the Tin Man with Padraig Wilson McCarthy and Robert Lehane playing the role of the Lion. The roles of the Good and the Bad Witches were taken by Liam Cuthbert and Cian Cadogan respectively. As in previous years, all transition year students participated in the production either on stage or in supporting tasks such as set production and publicity.

The students thoroughly enjoyed the eccentricity of the production, from the humorous take on modern pop culture to seeing their classmates in such elaborate and colourful costumes. For those lucky enough to attend the "Wizard of Oz" we're sure that you will agree that the production maintained the high standards and fun expected with every DCS Show. Looking forward to next year's production!!!



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The extensive range of co-curricular and extracurricular activities provided by a dedicated staff is one of the great strengths of Douglas Community School. The variety of activities on offer ensures a high level of participation among students. Among the many co-curricular activities provided are visits to the Blackrock Observatory, theatres, galleries, museums, cinemas, libraries, the Dail, local enterprises, science exhibitions and lectures



Right: DCS students are updated on the continuing fundraising progress in Douglas Community School's ongoing support of the Cardinal Nsubuga School in Uganda. DCS is developing strong links with this school to aid in its structural and educational development. A strong bond has quickly developed between both schools and two DCS teachers have recently travelled to Uganda to visit and even teach some classes at the school. A detailed report of this visit will be included as part of the next issue.



Above: Pictured with Alderman Jim Corr are DCS students Robert O' Reilly, Brian Murray, Séan O' Sullivan and Shane O' Sullivan at the recent Irish language Quiz held at the Rochestown Park Hotel. Organised by Gael – Taca Corcaigh, 30 schools from around Cork competed through 8 rounds of general knowledge exclusively through the medium of the Irish language. After a hard fought contest, Douglas Community School was to achieve a tremendous third place finish in the overall standings. Comhghairdeas le gach éinne a ghlac páirt ann!

Douglas Community School Choir

The school choir features students from first to sixth year, and is involved in a number of important occasions in the school year. The choir performed at the Advent Service, where they sang a mixture of traditional carols (O Holy Night and Oíche Chiúin), some more unorthodox numbers (Los Pesces En El Rio), and even a past Christmas Number One (Merry Christmas Everyone).

A number of students from the school choir were invited to perform Christmas carols in St. Luke's Nursing Home and St. Finbarr's Hospital during the week before Christmas. They were warmly welcomed in both, where they sang traditional carols as well as a few more modern Christmas hits. The choir has since received an open invitation from both St. Luke's and St. Finbarr's to perform again, and hope to do so in the coming months.

The choir will perform the Irish and Ugandan national anthems at a Developmental Education Morning to be held in the school on April 19th. This event will be attended by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Micháel Martin, as well as developmental professionals. Also in attendance will be Joseph Matovu and Grace Nakuya, two teachers from Cardinal Nsubuga School, which Douglas Community School has been developing links with in the past year. Mr Ciarán Ó Conaill



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"Teachers havecreated rich, colourful and stimulating learning environments...Subjects are very well resourced."



Drama Workshops

Transition Year Students Coaching Local Primary School Students



Pictured above are a selection of DCS Transition Year students with a group of students from St. Anthony's School attending a recent Drama Workshop in DCS. Over the past number of years DCS has run a series of workshops which actively engage local primary school students in experiencing varied exercises in dramatic performance, these exercises range from acting, singing to music and dancing. With a strong emphasis on fun, experimentation and active involvement, Thursday mornings have proven to be hugely enjoyable and successful in transforming parts of DCS into its own "Fame Academy".



Principal Jim Long and DCS students proudly present cheques to The Cork Simon Community and Douglas Lions Club following this year's Christmas Charity fundraising efforts. Through the organisation of raffle draws and table quizzes a magnificent sum was raised towards such worthy causes, well done once again to all involved.

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" Many members of staff have furthered their professional development through a variety of post graduate and in service courses...It is evident that members of staff are a professional and dedicated group of people, who show care and concern for their students."



DCS Athletics Team Victorious In Milan Italy

Pictured are DCS athletes Cullen Lynch, Ian Tobin, Mark Seacy, Jamie O' Sullivan, Patrick Coleman, Andrew O' Keefe and Emmet Bracken who, along with coach Stephen Macklin recently travelled to Italy to take part in the IAAF Cinque Mulini International Cross Country championships. The athletes took part in the Youth 6 Km race and raced to a superb win, with 6 athletes finishing in the top 18. The races were held in the town of San Vittore Olona just outside Milan on a wonderful course. The course proved a big hit with the athletes with fast sections, small sharp banks and a trip through some old historic mills. Well done to all the athletes, who had an experience I am sure that will stand to them in the World Schools Championships in April.

Pictured right are the Douglas Community School U 16 Munster Football Champions with the trophy won earlier in the year. The team will soon be travelling to Portman Road, home of Ipswich Town Football Club. As well as coming under the watchful eye of Mr R. Keane the team will take part in a challenge match against the Ipswich Town Academy Team. We wish the team every success in what will no doubt be an enjoyable and competitive experience.



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"It is to be commended that all students are encouraged to take higher level courses for the certificate examinations"