

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School



NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2013

2013/14 Calendar



Term 1

Autumn Break: Monday 28th Oct.— Friday 1st Nov,
Christmas Holidays: Monday 23rd Dec.— Friday 3rd Jan.

Term 2

School re-opening: Monday 6th Jan.
Spring Break: Monday 17th Feb.— Friday 21st Feb.
St. Patrick's Day: Closed Monday 17th March
Easter Holidays: Monday 14th April— Friday 25th April

Term 3

Public Holiday: Monday 5th May
Summer Holidays: Friday 30th May
State Exams: Wednesday 4th June

Examination Fees

State Examinations (Based on last year)

Leaving Certificate:	€ 116
Leaving Certificate Applied;	€ 116
Repeat Leaving Certificate:	€ 301
Junior Certificate:	€ 109



Exemptions

Candidates who hold a current medical card or who are dependent on a parent /guardian who holds a current medical card are exempt from paying state examination fees.

Mock Examinations (Full payment before Friday 7th Feb.)

Leaving Certificate:	€60
Junior Certificate:	€60

Please note that the medical card exemption does not apply to the mock examinations. Mock examination fees may be paid by instalments.

Parent/Teacher Meetings

Year	Date	Time
1	Thursday 16th Jan.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
2	Thursday 6 th Feb.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
3	Thursday 5th Dec.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
4 + TY + LCA1	Wednesday 29th Jan.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm
5 + LCA2	Wednesday 20th Nov.	4.15 pm – 6.45 pm

Please note that you should arrive no later than 5.45 pm to ensure that you meet all subject teachers

Year Heads



1 st Year:	Mr. Heaphy
2 nd Year:	Mr. Chesser
3 rd Year:	Ms. Shannon
4 th Year:	Ms. Brooks
5 th Year:	Ms. Howard
LCA :	Ms. Deirdre Feely
TY	Ms. Aileen Dineen

You may contact any of the above by telephoning the school in the first instance. Alternatively you can contact the Principal, Deputy Principal, the Guidance Counsellor, Ms. Annette Murphy, or the school Chaplain, Ms Nuala Murray.

Class Tutors: Each Junior Cycle class group has a class tutor assigned to them. The tutor monitors journals on a weekly basis and communicates concerns to the Year Head.

House Exams

November Tests:

3rd and 5th years; Week beginning Monday 4th November.

1st, 2nd and 4th years; Week beginning Monday 25th November.

Mocks:

Monday 10th to Friday 28th February (Weeks before and after mid-term break).

Summer:

Week beginning Monday 26th May.

Breakfast Club

Our breakfast club is open every morning from 8.30 am to 8.55 am. Students can avail of tea and toast free of charge compliments of the Parents Association.



Important Dates for 5th Years:

UCAS Applications Deadline: 15th Oct., 15th Jan., & 24th March depending on courses. Check UCAS website for full details.

CAO Applications Closing Dates:

Early Online Application: **20th Jan. 2014** (€25)
Normal Application: (online or paper): **1st Feb. 2014** (€40)
Late Online Application: **1st May 2014** (€50)
Late Paper Application: **1st May 2014** (€80)
Change of Mind: **1st July 2014** (€0)

Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE)

Apply online as part of CAO application process by 1st March.

Visit to Besançon, France, Oct 2013.

Fourth Year French students have recently returned from a very successful visit to their exchange partners at Lycée Jules Haag, in Besançon, France.

The group of 16 pupils with 2 teachers, made the journey via Dublin/Lyon and onwards by train. On arrival, they were greeted by their French counterparts and immediately whisked away to settle into their French homes for the duration of their stay.

A very full programme of events had been prepared by our French partners in Lycée Jules Haag, which included mornings attending school, followed by various activities in the afternoon and evening. These included a 'jeu de piste' where students had to find historical landmarks in the city, visits to the local bowling/karting club and a visit to the Citadel, the 17th. Century fortress which overlooks the city and is now a UNESCO World Heritage site.

As part of the cultural exchange our pupils put on a display of Irish song and dance and were soon joined by the French group in a rousing chorus of *The Galway Girl* and *My Lovely Rose of Clare*. The French group were quickly stepping it out to *The Siege of Ennis* and *An Droelin*.

After a somewhat shy start, communication was quickly established and our pupils were soon speaking French and seeing the very real value in studying the language.

Apart from developing their oral skills, firm friendships were formed and everyone is looking forward to the return visit by the French pupils in Spring 2014.

Texting Service We now operate a mobile texting service to parents/guardians to convey important messages or reminders.

1st Year Maths Club

A maths club for 1st years takes place for 1 hour every Wednesday evening after school. Students who are having difficulty with Maths should benefit greatly from this service.

Contact Mr. Davoren for more details.

SCHOOL WEB SITE

Log on to our web site for up to date information, news, links and photographs. The address is: www.stpatrickscomprehensive.ie

Student Journal

Parents are requested to sign the journal once a week to monitor their child's progress.

1ST YEAR HOMEWORK CLUB

A Homework Club for first years takes place, Monday and Tuesday 4:10 – 5:10 and Thursday 3:40 – 4:40.

We believe that this is an excellent opportunity for your child to get some homework completed before leaving school as well as to receive support or clarification with any aspect of homework with which he/she may be having difficulty. There will be a teacher available during the Homework Club to assist your child if they are having difficulty with any particular topic.

We strongly encourage your support in having your son/daughter attend on a regular basis if he/she is having a difficult time getting homework completed. Price is €30 for the term. Contact Ms. McDonnell for details.

St. Patrick's Comprehensive School
presents



11th to 14th December

Tickets €12

A show not to be missed!

CONCERNS-QUESTIONS-QUERIES

Please feel free to contact reception at 061 361428 and you will be put in contact with the relevant personnel.

STUDY GUIDE

Don't panic - If you don't already have one - prepare a timetable covering each subject and each topic you are intending to cover.

Timetables help to be organised, less stressed and breaks down what you have to do and when by.

Draw up timetables of when your exams are and what you are going to revise with the weeks leading up to the exam. Check out mocks.ie to download your free timetable!

Hint: Start with the subjects you dislike. Spend more time on them. Your favourite subjects will be easier.

Basic study guide

- Read and make use of your notes, this is simple enough but if this method of study doesn't make things stick, don't do it for the sake of it maybe copy key points on small revision cards, this breaks down revision into more digestible chunks. You can get excellent **revision notes** on mocks.ie
- Make use of diagrams and draw out your own.
- Get friends and family to test you on what you have taken in. This will help you keep your mind alert and to see what you have remember.
- Practise exams using past exam and sample papers to get used to the questions and the timing. If you don't already have them you can download past papers from www.examinations.ie .
- Above all, stay active. Do not study longer then 20 minutes at once, your brain will stop taking in information.
- Exercise has been proven to help. In your breaks do some exercise to limber up for your next session of revision.

OPEN NIGHT

Our Open Night for prospective students and their parents will be held on
Thursday 14th November,
from 7pm to 9pm

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Chairperson: Martha McNamara
Secretary: Orlaith Fennell
Treasurer: Hannah Wrixon

New committee members always welcome.
The PA can be contacted on **086 2615851**

After School and Saturday Morning Study

Students can avail of supervised study sessions for 2 hours after school each evening and between 10am and 1pm every Saturday.

For more details contact Ms. Dineen and Ms. Murphy

CHOOSING LEAVING CERTIFICATE SUBJECTS

As students work their way through Transition Year, or Junior Certificate Year (if they do not take Transition Year), they are faced with choosing the subjects that they will take for their Leaving Certificate cycle. Parents and students sometimes express the fear that students may rule themselves out of some third-level college courses by failing to choose the right subjects.

However, Leaving Certificate subject choice is not as full of pitfalls as people might imagine, and what follows is a rough guide.

Most students take seven subjects for the Leaving Certificate. All students must choose a mixture of subjects, including "core" subjects and some optional choices.

All students take Irish, unless they have grounds for being exempted. Generally speaking, they take English also. Most students will take another language, usually a modern European language, although the range of languages is increasing.

With a number of exceptions, students who apply to honours degree courses of the National University of Ireland (NUI) must present Irish, English, and another language. However, the exceptions to the NUI third-language requirement are increasing, and students without a third language should check the individual course requirements carefully.

The "three-language rule" does not apply to other universities or to the institutes of technology. Trinity College Dublin requires applicants to present English and another language, as does the University of Limerick. One language will satisfy the requirements of most institutes of technology.

Mathematics is an entry requirement for practically all courses in many third-level colleges and colleges of further education. Students are usually advised to take one laboratory science subject.

A very small number of courses require two laboratory science subjects, such as medicine and dentistry in Trinity College and in University College Cork or the five-year medical degree in Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). NUI Galway, RCSI, or University College Dublin (UCD), will accept one science subject for entry to their six-year medical programmes.

Chemistry is essential for Veterinary Medicine in UCD, Pharmacy in Trinity, and Human Nutrition and Dietetics, the degree course jointly taught by DIT Kevin St and Trinity. Chemistry is also specified as one of the two laboratory sciences necessary for medicine, dentistry or pharmacy in UCC. Chemistry is a course requirement for the five-year medical degree programme in UCD and RCSI.

A business subject is rarely an essential requirement for business or commerce at third level, although many students choose one from Accounting, Business or Economics because they enjoy the subject. The five most frequently required subjects are: Irish, English, a third language, mathematics, and a laboratory science subject.

Applicants should check the prospectuses and websites of individual colleges, or the Qualifax website, www.qualifax.ie, for more information.

Student Exchange Programme with Meranier Gymnasium in Lichtenfels, Germany

On Tuesday the 1st October 2013, 3rd and 4th year students headed off to Lichtenfels in Germany, accompanied by German teachers Ms E.Gilbourne and Ms S.Hickey, as part of our Student Exchange Programme.

It was indeed a week of cultural enlightenment for the 20 students who visited the local German school. The students stayed with their German host families and experienced life in a German family, first hand. The days were filled with attending classes in the host school and sightseeing. Memorable trips were organised to the beautiful medieval town of Bamberg, to Nuremberg (a shopper's paradise!) and the Documentation Center at the Nazi Party Rally Grounds, all guided by Herr Zach, their very enthusiastic History teacher. The visit to the Audi Museum appealed to our car and technology enthusiasts.

The host families made every student literally feel at home. We are now delighted to be welcoming the 20 German exchange students to our school in September 2014. Our wholehearted thanks to all the parents for their ongoing support of this valued programme.

Our German language students win the regional round of the GDI All Ireland Debating Competition

Our 4th year German class entered the GDI All Ireland Debating Competition which is organised by the Goethe Institute and sponsored by Siemens,

Ireland. Our proud students won the regional round of the competition which was held in Limerick on the 18th October. Representing our school were Amy McLoughlin (team captain), Cian Petticrew, Danny Quinn-Drumgoole and Pierce Pigott-Levers and supported by their fellow classmates and Ms.Hickey, their German teacher. One of the main aims of the competition is to enable students to use their German outside the classroom and to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of the German culture and language. We are very proud of our students and encourage them to keep up their German debating skills.

CAO Applications

Before you fill out your CAO form:

- Make an appointment with your Career Guidance teacher in the next two weeks and go through your choices and options. It is still not too late to ask for prospectuses for different colleges or call the college / university of your choice and ask them to talk to you about the course. You can usually download the university or college prospectus from the university website.
- Make sure to check the basic entry requirements for the courses you're interested in. This information will be in the prospectus. For example, the National University of Ireland has some language requirements and some courses require a certain results in Maths, as well as the necessary points.
- Take your personal self into consideration – would you be happy living away from home to complete your chosen course? If not, there may be a similar course at a nearer college / I.T. / university to your home.

When filling out the form:

1. Put aside an hour and concentrate solely on completing the form.
2. Applying online on www.CAO.ie is cheaper than the paper application and is less prone to errors. If you are applying online get someone to look over the application before you finalise it. But if you are applying offline, make a photocopy of each one and get a teacher / parent to check that everything is filled in properly before you post them off. The advantage of the online system is that it will flag a course code used in the wrong list or an invalid course code. It will also flag the common error of using the current year in the date of birth entry.
3. When filling in the CAO make sure to put the course you really want to do as first choice NOT what you think you'll have the results for. The order in which you fill in your choices is THE MOST IMPORTANT step in the process. Choose your course in the order of preference - put your dream course at the top and assume that you are going to get 600 points.
4. Make sure and include a low point's course somewhere on the list as a fallback option.
5. Make sure to apply for the DARE and HEAR scheme, if eligible. (See www.accesscollege.ie) It's worthwhile double checking what you've put on the form. Then you can treble check your course choices when you get the Statement of Record from the CAO which lists the courses you have put down on your application. It's worth remembering that you are not pinned down to the choices you list this month you can also use the change of mind facility up to 5.15pm on July 1.

If for any reason you need to contact the CAO Applications office it may be contacted between the hours of 9:30 - 13:00, and 14:00 to 17:15, Monday to Friday.

Address:

Central Applications Office,
Tower House,
Eglinton Street,
Galway, Ireland.

Tel. +353-(0)91-509800

Fax +353-(0)91-562344

More info can be found at www.cao.ie.