

PARENTS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2012

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This newsletter will shortly be available on our school website www.lucancc.ie

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Hello everyone. We wish you all a very happy 2012. It's hard to believe today is the first of February and that our students are back after the Christmas holidays and are busy either at Mock Exams or their daily school work. As always we wish to update you all on the various events and happenings in Lucan CC. We hope that each and every one of our students is working away to the best of his/her ability. Our school is a busy place and we hope you enjoy reading this newsletter which will update you on the many activities taking place in our college.

A NOTE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL (Ms. Birnie)

Happy 25th Anniversary to all of the school community! During 2012 we celebrate 25 years since the staff and students of Lucan Vocational School moved to their new home in Lucan Community College. We will be holding a number of events during the year to mark this special occasion. Read on to hear about the particular events that are planned and keep an eye on our website for more information.

We started the anniversary year with a Whole School Evaluation focusing on Management, Leadership and Learning. I wish to thank all of you who participated in the inspection process by completing questionnaires and to your representatives on the Parents Association who met and raised a wide variety of issues with the visiting inspectors. Our students were (and are) a credit to themselves, to you and to the school and the inspectors remarked on their sense of pride in their school and on the mutual respect and courtesy experienced throughout their visit. They saw plenty of evidence that students are dealt with in a caring and supportive manner and saw very good rapport between teachers and students in the classrooms visited.

They commented on the high standard of teaching and learning observed and on the high expectations that teachers have of students as well as the students desire to work hard to meet those expectations. The Board, management, post holders and all staff were praised for their work and student leadership groups were commended for empowering the student voice in school matters.

While we have only received verbal feedback to date, the written report will eventually be published on the DES website and available for all to read. Finally a big thank you to all staff members who put considerable time and effort into preparing for the evaluation. An event such

as this is a whole school effort and we are delighted that the teamwork approach that exists in Lucan CC was clearly evident to the inspectors.

Here's to continued success for all involved in our school community for the remainder of 2012.

TEXT MESSAGE ALERT

Communication between parents, teachers and students is a vital part of ensuring a positive learning environment in our school. As you know we send reports on student progress home at least twice a year, we publish this newsletter for parents several times a year and we have the college journal available for daily communications. In recent times we have set up a text messaging system. If you have not been receiving text alerts from the school regarding closing dates and times that differ from the calendar, please phone us immediately to nominate a phone number for use for this purpose. This system is being financed from the Voluntary Contribution Fund and no additional cost is being added to parents as a result of this service.

OUR FRONT OFFICE

The office closes weekly on Wednesday from 10:00 to 10:30 for an administrative meeting. Please avoid phoning or visiting during that time.

PARENTS ASSOCIATION

Our Parents' Association is actively involved in the school and meet on the first Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm in the College. New members are always welcome. A recent bag collection (in conjunction with the Greens Schools/TY fundraising committees) raised 135 euro. Another collection will be organised for later in the year so please collect unwanted clothes etc. We are currently looking into the possibilities of developing a Book Rental Scheme and of reviewing the school uniform, in particular the possibility of offering an alternative coat for students. If any parent has experience in either of these areas please contact any member of the Parents' Association. Thanks.

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

The Board of Management meets approximately once a month and discusses items of policy and procedure relating to the school. The Board has recently decided to publish an agreed minute after each meeting to better inform the school community as to the variety of issues discussed and decisions made. The Board expresses its congratulations to the staff, students and parents of the College given the high standard of the recent verbal report from the Inspectors after the Whole School Evaluation.

FIRST YEAR NEWS -(a note from your Year Head)

Well done to First Years on a very good set of Christmas results. During this term we will ask students to focus on consistent revision and to aim for better results in the Summer report. We ask Parents/Guardians to continue signing journals at least once a week. Some parents are signing the journals on a daily basis and this is great practice as you can really see how your Son/Daughter is progressing. We also need more First Years to put themselves forward for the Student Talent Show during Arts Week (6th -10th Feb.)

Class Roche is participating in the St. Mary's Talent Trek Initiative this year. They have been given 100 Euro as seed money in order to raise as much money as possible for our chosen charity St. Vincent De Paul. They will start fund raising this Thursday 2nd February with a first year 'mini-cinema'. During Religion classes on Thursday, First Year students will pay one euro to watch a DVD and crisps and popcorn will be on sale. All monies raised will go to St. Vincent De Paul. Thanks for your support.

SECOND YEAR NEWS-(a note from your Year Head)

When reviewing the *Christmas results* it was great to see that most students have maintained the high standards from last year. However some students may have slipped a little they may need to put in extra effort between now and the summer tests.

Every student should be applying herself/himself to *study* as they were advised in the first term. Remember that making the very best effort at any homework given is a fundamental aspect of study and examination preparation. Students need to devote the necessary time (2-3 hrs. per night on homework and study), and they need to have a structured approach to revision. Your tutors will be further developing the study Programme during this term.

Students should be clear that it is our policy that every student takes all subjects at higher level in the Junior Certificate where appropriate. Any decision to take a paper at ordinary level should be discussed with your parents and your teacher.

Our *Parent/ Teacher Meeting* is coming up on Wednesday 28 March. As was the case last year Mr. O'Connor, the Year Head, would love to meet the parents of each student in the year however with a group of nearly 160 students this is not possible. He will be available to meet parents informally on the day, but if you would like to arrange a formal meeting please indicate this to your son's/ daughter's tutor through the journal and he will schedule a meeting.

THIRD YEAR NEWS-(a note from your Year Head)

Congratulations to **Jack Tuite** from class Smith who Captained the under 15 Irish team in Qatar. It is a great achievement which gives recognition for his football talent and potential leadership skills. We look forward to cheering him on for many years to come!

Students are currently doing Mock Exams and we hope that will be happy with your results which will be issued after the midterm break. It is important that you continue to study during the midterm. Practical exams are approaching and we hope that you pay attention to upcoming dates.

Well done students, the Inspectors were very impressed with your work and behaviour.

FOURTH YEAR/TRANSITION YEAR NEWS-(a note from your Year Head and TY Coordinator)

Tenderfoot :

Congratulations to the six Transition Years that were chosen to participate in the Civic Theatre work shop for the three weeks in January. Anh Nguyen, Jenny Oleinik, Declan Beagan, Megan Wrenn, William Swaine and Don Harriington. I know they enjoyed the experience. We must also congratulate Jenny who had written one of the plays preformed. Twenty five students from the TY year were chosen to go to view the performance because they have shown the spirit of TY during the first term so keep up the good work.

Trip to Strasbourg: Early on December I asked the TY Students if any of them would be interested in entering a competition to design a web site for Europe. Eight students volunteered and worked hard and Ms McKenna volunteered to coordinate it. The students were successful and therefore they won a trip for 24 TY students to Strasbourg where they will become MEP's for the day. Instead of a one day trip the students will get to spend a couple of days. This will take place over St. Patrick's Weekend. Congratulations to the team who won this competition on behalf of the school: Gavin Pacini, James Holmes, Mark Hanley, Luke Hanlon, Sean Cullen, Liam Doyle, Adam Conlon and Michael Kenny.

Work Experience: The students are presently out on work experience and working hard. A big thank you to all the employers who were kind enough to take the students on at this time your cooperation is greatly appreciated by the staff and students.

LEAVING CERT. APPLIED (LCA) NEWS

Class Mozart is working very hard at the moment. It is nearing the end of session three which is the busiest session in terms of workload. Apart from completing the mandatory **key assignments** in each subject, the results of which have to be returned to the State Examinations Commission on or before the 6th of February they also have **three task interviews**.

This week Examiners from the S.E.C. are in the school to examine portfolios and conduct interviews in three tasks. On Monday the 30th the students were interviewed on the **Practical Achievement Task**. Students doing this task are required to take on an activity/hobby of which they have little or no prior knowledge, follow it through for ten weeks and write a report on the whole experience. Examiners ask why they choose the particular activity. What skills they learned/acquired, and how they evaluated the whole experience?

The second task interview examined on Tuesday 31st of January is the **Contemporary Issues Task** which is anchored in Social Education. Students are asked to choose a topic/issue which is of particular interest to them, research that topic/issue and produce a portfolio on their findings. This task also includes an element of self- evaluation and evaluation of the whole process involved in researching the task.

The third task which will be examined is the **I.C.T. Task**. This examines the various skills students have acquired since they have begun the L.C.A. course. This subject is a specialism and it never ceases to amaze the level of competence the L.C.A. students acquire by the time they take the Leaving Certificate examinations. A high standard is submitted from Blogs and Power point presentations to producing Newsletters and designing Christmas cards which were sold to fundraise for charity.

The other Specialism is **Hotel Catering and Tourism**. Recently students in Ms. Ryan's class enjoyed a visit to *Bodenstown* and *Carton House* as part of a Key Assignment in this subject area.

Finally thank you all for your hard work and positivity during this session. Good Luck in the interviews and hopefully the effort will pay off when the results come out in August.

FIFTH YEAR NEWS- (a note from your Year Head)

Congratulations to those students who did their best in their Christmas Exams. Well done! Some students need urgent attention given to certain subjects and now is the time to knuckle down as serious consideration will have to be given to levels i.e. Honours or Pass at Leaving Cert. Level. Please heed advice of teachers. Focus and concentrate in class as this year is very important.

We are looking forward to departing on 30th March for Barcelona and returning on 2nd April 2012. Don't forget your valid passport and your medical insurance card (old E111). Full itinerary will be given to you in the coming days.

Congratulations to all of you involved in our recent school inspection. You were highly praised by the Inspector, so continue your good work and efforts. Well done.

SIXTH YEAR NEWS- (a note from your Year Head)

Students are into their second week of their Mock Exams. Continue doing good work and we wish you all well in receiving your results.

Congratulations to Niall Kelly, Stephen Jones, Rory Downes and Gavin Carabini who represented our school on the Dublin VEC panel Leinster Final in Gaelic Football on Saturday. Unfortunately they lost to Kildare. Hard luck boys.

The Oral and Practical Exams are approaching so we hope you are all prepared and keeping up with the revision. All we ask is that you do your best.

ENROLMENT NEWS

Welcome to our new incoming First Years in September 2012 who will attend their assessment tests on Wednesday 1st February from 12.20 to 15.45 approximately. We look forward to meeting them all and their parents/guardians who will attend their parental interview on the same day.

GERMAN EXCHANGE

On 3rd February Frau Emma Ní Bhríán and Frau Colette Clarke will travel with their 14 German students to Münchberg Germany. We will return on Thursday 16th February. Can students make sure to have all relevant items. Don't forget your dictionary, pens and notebook. As soon as we land in Frankfurt, it will be Deutsch, Deutsch, Deutsch, kein Englisch!! Don't forget warm clothes and good sturdy comfortable shoes. It is a cultural, linguistic and educational trip and students will enjoy the various trips and excursions during their two week experience. They will improve on their German skills and it will definitely be of benefit for their Leaving Certificate later on. We want each of you to be safe and happy. We wish you all Gute Reise!

This year marks the 20th Anniversary of our German Exchange Programme with our friends in Münchberg. The Exchange itself is celebrating 21 years but it actually took place 20 times as one year due to the Foot and Mouth epidemic we were unable and advised not to travel. This is a fantastic experience for our Students, Parents and Staff and it is a wonderful Programme. The fact that we are celebrating our 20th anniversary says it all. The commitment, communication between the two partner schools, and love for this Programme, has and is keeping this fabulous Exchange alive. To mark our 20th Exchange/21st Year we are hosting an evening on 27th April in Lucan Community College. We will have a video Conference with our friends in Münchberg during this evening of celebration. If any of you have been involved or know of anyone interested in celebrating with us contact - Colette Clarke or Elaine Brady (email and phone number at top of page one, of this newsletter) as this is a ticket event as we need to know numbers for the evening for seating and food.

MATHS DEPARTMENT

Can we remind all students that the Maths Resource Centre is open at lunch times? Following the mocks, maybe our 3rd and 6th Years need an extra hand with some aspects of their papers, or

maybe there are some aspects of Maths that our other students are still struggling with. The resource centre is not being used as much as we would like it to be so far, so please encourage your son or daughter to check out the opening times from Mr Duffy in F3, or from their Maths teacher.

MS READATHON

Congratulations to students from Class Roche in first year and Class Walcott in second year who participated in the National Reading week last November. They undertook the national challenge of reading as many books as possible over three weeks. Along with reading many books they raised over €675 for **Multiple** Sclerosis Society of Ireland. This money will provide vital resources for sufferers of the condition. In total students read over 194 books! Well done to all those who completed the challenge.

Congratulations to all those students who participated in Reading Week. After reading their books students wrote about the books that they had read. In addition some students made beautiful and creative bookmarks. The winners of these competitions are outlined below.

Book Reviews

1st Year: O'Driscoll - Dominic Rogers, Harrington - Hazel Keogh, O'Rourke - Joshua Odidison, Taylor - Emma Tuohy, Roche - Gelaine Elises

2nd Year: Brecht - Danielle Murray, Joyce - Adam Kavanagh, Walcott - Epiphania Maming, Plath - Jeffrey Effertin, Shelley - Marion Caminang, Johnston - Abraham Odukoya

T.Y.: Clarke - Cristina Marrin, McAuley - Jessica Freeman, Hone - Declan Beagan

Bookmark Competition

1st Year: O'Driscoll - Dean Rogers, O'Rourke - Martha Paulo, Taylor - Aine Keher, Roche - Amy Cassidy

2nd Year: Joyce - Jesse Reid, Walcott - Heather Wright, Plath - Dylan Feeney, Johnston-Aoife Richards

T.Y.: Clarke-Vanessa O' Donoghue

All winners will receive a €10 gift voucher from Abtree bookstore. Well done again to all students we hope that this experience will encourage you to read every day. Remember ***“Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body!”***

SUPERVISED STUDY

Term 2 of Supervised Study started on Wednesday 25th January. Supervised Study continues for the duration of the Mock Exams and until the end of May. Any student absent from study must have a note to cover their absenteeism.

HISTORY NEWS:

Research Topic - 5th Year History Visit to City Archives: On Monday 21st November, 5th Year students visited the City Archives, Pearse St, as part of their preparation for their Research Topic. This was preceded by a visit to a specialist bookstore and a brief stop off at 'The Mansion House' where the 1st Dáil was held in 1919.

At the archives, students were given reader cards and introduced to researching methods, including working with newspaper and book catalogues and using microfilm/microfiche. Students benefited from the day and returned to class with interesting research and ideas for their projects. Upcoming events - History workshop for first years - 8th and 9th of March

Tomi Reichental (History and German Depts): Tomi visited and spoke to our TY, 5th Year and Leaving Cert History and students and our 5th German students about his experiences. Tomi was captured by the Nazis and sent to Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1944, when he was nine years old. He survived along with his mother, brother, aunt and cousin. Thirty five members of his family perished. The talk he gave to the students was extremely well received. It gave an educational first hand insight into life in Germany during the war and of course the concentration camps. He answered many questions for the students after his talk.

MOCK EXAMINATIONS

The Mock examinations are going very smoothly. We hope that students will be happy with their results. Some of you have to work harder if you wish to receive your desired grades. It is important to just do your best and not compare yourself with anyone other than yourself. Concentrate on your own ability and work as best you can. Many of you have practical exams approaching and oral exams in languages. We wish you well.

GUIDANCE DEPT. NEWS

The closing date for the submission of **CAO applications** is 1st February at 5.15pm. Students will have an opportunity in early May to make changes to their application when the Change of Mind facility opens. This facility is free of charge. Students who are applying for the HEAR and DARE access routes to Higher Education have until 1st April to submit the required documentation.

PLC Applications to Colleges of Further Education:

At the moment students are applying for PLC courses. Students apply directly to the Colleges of Further Education for the course of their choice. Students can apply to as many colleges as they wish. We would strongly recommend students to apply for PLC courses as they offer a progression route to Higher Education.

TY Subject: Transition Year students will be having small group interviews during the week beginning 6th February with their Guidance Counselor to discuss subject choices for 5th year. after mid-term break, students will be given their subject option forms which are to returned by Thursday 23rd February.

5th Year Career Interviews and feedback on DATs : 5th Year students will be having career interviews with their guidance counselor from now until the end of May. The students will also receive feedback on their DATs tests.

STUDENT COUNCIL

The Students' Council is working away as usual. This term as part of the student card scheme that was run four places have been offered to our school to attend Áras an Uachtaráin on the 28th February where there might be an opportunity to meet the President whilst getting a tour of the Aras. Meetings are on **Mondays at 1pm in the guidance room**. All students are welcome to attend.

Thank you to our student representatives from all year groups who met with the inspectors to give an impression of life as a student in Lucan Community College. The inspectors were impressed with how well they could articulate the strengths of the school and could make suggestions for improvement.

OUR NEW FRONT GARDEN

Thanks for the many positive comments on our new front garden. This garden was designed by Peter Weber of Aspects of Landscaping with our LCA class Mozart and their Horticulture teacher Ms McKeever. The students worked on a variety of garden designs and suggested appropriate plants for the garden. They also worked with Sonairte the National Ecology Centre. They were successful in securing a grant from the Co Council to assist in the financing of the garden. Class Mozart assisted Peter with the planting of the garden recently and all agree that it really adds to the pleasant welcome that we like to offer to all visitors and to those within the school community. What a good example of student, teacher and community cooperation and teamwork!

25TH ANNIVERSARY

The official launch of our 25th anniversary celebrations takes place on Wednesday, March 7th 2012. We would like to extend a warm welcome to you all for this event, but due to a lack of space we are unable to do this. If you would like to attend, please send an email to ciaranduffy.lucancc@codubvec.ie to ensure a ticket for the event – we would love as many parents and guardians from the community as possible to attend this night. It promises to be a joyous occasion of song, story-telling and reflection. There will also be light refreshments afterwards. Please let any other members of the community know about this occasion who may have any connections with the school, or who may be interested in joining in our celebrations.

We are also hoping to welcome An Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny TD to the school on Friday February 24th, but this has still to be confirmed. It would be a perfect opportunity for An Taoiseach to see at first hand the wonderful students we have here in Lucan Community College and to address them as we celebrate our 25th Anniversary.

We are also forging ahead with our plans to have some representation in the St Patrick's Day Parade 2012. We would like to pick some of the most creative costumes from this year's Arts Week dress up day to represent the school in the parade, particularly from our 1st and 2nd year students. We would like to have all of our sporting teams represented in their sporting uniforms and to have some representatives from the Music and Art Departments. If you think your son or daughter would like to get involved in this, please encourage them to speak to Mr. Smyth or Mr. Duffy ASAP. If you as a Parent or Guardian, have any skills or talents which would lend themselves to helping in organising this venture, please contact the front office on 01 6282077 or by emailing michaelsmyth.lucancc@codubvec.ie. Ideally, we would love to have a float in the parade, so if you have the means to supply us with a truck or other craft skills necessary to create a float, please contact us ASAP.

ARTS WEEK 2012

This year's Arts Week is promising to be bigger and better than ever before. We have over 30 different workshops on offer for our 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th year students. The workshops range from play writing, drama and theatre, to modern dance, capoeira (Martial arts movement), African drumming, mask making, felt crafts and song-writing. We look forward to the mobile cinema returning to the college for the week.

This year's festival is being organised by a dedicated team of hard-working staff, and we thank them sincerely for all of their help. Particular thanks to Ms McKenna, Ms Quirke, Mr MacCraith and Mr O'Connor for their efforts. Our night time shows are always a huge success and tickets

sell out fast for them every year. On Monday we see the return of the Variety show (starting at 7.30pm – tickets €5) and our Battle of the Bands will be on Thursday 9th February. Our ever popular Teachers' Talent (?!) show will be on Wednesday, February 8th at 7.30pm. Tickets for this night are priced at €10 and always sell out very quickly, so please ensure that you get your tickets immediately!

Can we please remind all students taking part in Arts Week to remember to bring in their €10 for their day of workshops, to offset the sizeable costs of the workshops to the school. Without this donation, it is not possible to have the wide range of workshops on offer.

Our dress-up day this year will be on Friday February 10th. The theme for this year's event is 'Reeling in the Years' to coincide with our year-long celebration of our 25th Anniversary. This gives students and teachers the opportunity to dress up as their favourite pop/rock-star, politician, film star or even an event of the last 25 years. This encompasses the 80s, the 90s and the last 12 years of the 21st century. So, get thinking about your costume and remember that the more creative costumes always look best. We would prefer you to try and create a home-made costume with little expense instead of renting or buying an expensive one.

Happy Arts Week to all!

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES: Thanks to all the teachers and volunteers who have given up their time to help out and support our after-school programme.

Other EXTRA-CURRICULAR NEWS

So much is happening that space does not allow us to report it all. Please look at the school website-www.lucancc.ie to see photos and reports on all events.

IMPORTANT DATES

Wednesday 1 February - Students finish at 11.55am. Incoming 1st year assessments 12.30 – 4pm

Monday 6 – Friday 10 February - College 'Arts Week'

Friday 3rd – Thursday 17 February - German Exchange trip (in Germany)

Monday 13 – Friday 17 February - Mid-term holidays. . School closed

Monday 27 Feb – Friday 9 Mar - LCA Work Experience II

Thursday 1 March - 5th year Parent/Teacher meeting 4.15pm – 6.45pm

Wednesday 28 March 2nd year Parent/Teacher meeting 1.30 – 4pm

(students finish 12.30)

Friday 30 Mar – Mon 2 April - 5th year trip to Barcelona

Monday 2 – Friday 13 April - Easter Holidays & Gluais training during Easter holidays (T.Y.)

Monday 16 April - School re-opens.

Tuesday 24 April -1st year Parent/Teacher meeting 4.15pm – 6.45pm

Wednesday 9 May -Sports Day (1st and 2nd years)

Monday 14 – Friday 25 May -1st year assessments tests

Wednesday 16 May - Students finish at 12.30pm for staff meeting

Tuesday 22 May - Transition Year Graduation Ceremony/Parent Meeting 7.30pm

Wednesday 23 May - Leaving Cert Graduation Ceremony 7.30pm

Thursday 24 – Monday 28 May - 2nd & 5th year Summer exams

Friday 1 June - End of Year Ceremony (last day of school)

Wednesday 6 June 2012 - Junior and Leaving Cert exams begin