

Loreto Secondary School, St Michael's

Student Council Annual Report, 2019-2020

The outgoing Student Council, that of 2018-9, welcomed its three new members in **September**. These were Head Girl Laura Brady and Deputy Head Girls Nkechi Ozougwu and Rachel Ward.

The first order of business was to formally mark the arrival of St Michael's new principal, Mr Seán Kelly, which was done by means of a special notice board of welcome, a large hand-made card and a staff special elevenses with both sweet and savoury treats baked by Council members. Mr Kelly was also presented with a potted plant for his office and a bouquet of fresh flowers. The notice board artists were 2nd Year students Abby Byrne and Amber Preston and their work was assembled by fellow 2nd Year Niamh Potts.

It was also the 2018-9 Council which took its place at the Council stand and at the Council's notice board on Open Night later in the month and the same Council which met with the school's Board of Management to present its "End of Office" annual report and financial records.

October was equally busy as the outgoing Council promoted the Council's work in all year groups and prepared the polling station and ballot papers for its second ever proportional representation elections.

The 2019-20 Student Council was then fully formed and appointments were made to specific roles.

6th Year Representatives

- Laura Brady: Chairperson
- Nkechi Ozougwu: Assistant Chairperson
- Rachel Ward: Assistant Chairperson

5th Year Representatives

- Didi Bashford: Policies Coordinator
- Caoimhe Bowens: Senior Public Relations Coordinator
- Jodie Christie: Senior Treasurer

TY Representatives

- Sophie Crowe: Policies Officer
- Eve Harlin: Policies Officer

3rd Year Representatives

- Kirsty Coen: Junior Public Relations Coordinator
- Steffi Finegan: Secretary
- Casey Grey: Public Relations Art Officer

2nd Year Representatives

- Luna Guerrero Diniz: Public Relations Officer
- Niamh Potts: Joint Public Relations Art Coordinator
- Victoria Putynkowska: Joint Public Relations Art Coordinator

1st Year Representatives

- Alex Connor: Public Relations Officer
- Holly Cronnelly: Junior Treasurer
- Ana Murphy: Assistant Secretary

The newly elected Council members attended several events shortly after their election: the Loreto All-Ireland Student Councils Seminar, the Meath Comhairle na nÓg AGM and the ISSU RGM. Congratulations to Abby Byrne, Amy McEnroe and Kaka Ozougwu who were elected to Comhairle and who now join fellow Loreto students Sharilyn Enyinnaya and Emily Hayden on our local Comhairle.

In early **November** the Council's annual Good Citizenship Campaign meant that all senior students eligible to have their names entered on the national register of electors had the opportunity to do so. The other annual event which took place in November this year was the Student Council's Subject Choice Forum for all TYs and 3rd Years. Many thanks to all the enthusiastic 6th Year Subject Representatives who spoke to next year's 5th Years about their subjects in such an informed and helpful manner. Thanks too to the Science Department's "Mr Bones" who made his annual appearance at the biology stand!

November also saw the coming together of the school's Perfects, Peer Mediators, Well-Being Team, Social Justice Group, and Student Council in an effort to ensure the school's participation in the Green Schools initiative. Since then, considerable progress has been made in relation to new recycling arrangements.

Another November joint project occurred when the Student Council and Social Justice Group worked together to mark "Stand Up Awareness Week" with colourful and informative notice board displays, rainbow-painted windows and a range of class time activities.

In early **December** the Council conducted an extensive review both of its Constitution and of its FAQs document. Both were subsequently updated.

Victoria Putynkowska prepared the Christmas notice board inspired by the students' determination to participate in Green Schools. 90% of all the materials were recycled from former Council displays and the Christmas display itself was remodelled and re-used for the New Year's notice board. It was cleverly re-worked yet again for the Springtime board.

The final activity of 2019 was the Council's and the Well-Being Team's inaugural Canteen Christmas Lunch; one for Seniors and another for Juniors. The canteen was decked out festively and the lunch tables were suitably dressed for the event. There was a jolly Christmas playlist, Christmas jumpers and even a reported sighting of Santa Claus at one of the 6th Year tables!

January brought the WSE inspection and the Council prepared and presented an extensive file of the work which it had carried out in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Next on the "to do" list was policy formation and policy review. This began in early **February** and was still ongoing in **March** when the global pandemic was declared. Didi Bashford, Eve Harlin and Sophie Crowe (working from the minutes of Secretary Steffi Finegan) did Trojan work in the compilation of all of the Council's policy consultation response documents. These were then presented to management. During this time, meetings were no longer the usual 50 minutes once a week. Instead, they happened two and even three times per week!

All policy consultation meetings are open meetings at which Council members may be joined by any student from 1st Year to 6th Year who wishes to participate. The Council had completed its submissions on the Mobile Phone and Electronic Device Policy and on the RSE/SPHE Policy when school closures were announced. The Uniform Policy report had to be finalised and sent to management remotely.

Since March 11th, the Council's Public Relations team has also prepared several virtual notice boards for the school's website and prepared a progress report on its activities to date for the Board of Management.

And so, the Student Council's work has come to an end for the summer months and it is only fitting at this time to thank our three 6th Years for their enthusiastic and excellent leadership throughout this most extraordinary of academic years. We wish them all the best in their future studies and careers. And we wish the entire school community a summer of wellness, hope and sunshine after what may be the most collectively challenging time of our lives.