

www.stratfordcollege.ie
and
www.stratfordns.ie

Stratford Schools



Secondary and Primary School News

Vol 3. No. 1 February 2014

Stratford College News

Classics Trip to Rome

5th and 6th
Year Classical
Studies
students are
visiting Rome
from 23rd–26th
February.

Battle of the Bands

The annual
event organised
by TY mini-
company
students is on
Wednesday,
5th March.

World Book Day

Stratford
Schools will
celebrate books
on Thursday,
6th March with
many events.

Seachtain na Gaeilge

The annual
SnaG concert
will be held
during 10th—
14th March,
amongst other
events.

Whole School Inspection

As you are aware, the school has been subject to a Whole School Evaluation by the Department of Education and Skills over the last few weeks. This included meeting with the Board of Management, parents and students, a survey of parents and pupils, as well as extensive discussion with teaching staff, and observation of classes and teaching techniques.



The staff, followed by the Board, received a detailed presentation of the inspection findings last Thursday, 13th February, and we are all absolutely delighted with the findings.

The inspectors acknowledged the uniqueness of Stratford College, from the point of view of ethos but also in the exceptional standard of education

being provided. They described the school to us as an 'inclusive academic environment' reflecting an ethos of 'tolerance and kindness'. Feedback from parents, students and their own observations consistently highlighted that students feel safe and cared for, and that the school is 'leading the pack' in adapting to changes in education in Ireland.

The detailed report will be available towards the end of April, and will be made available through both the school website and through the Department's own website. It is interesting to read recent similar inspections of peer schools.

On behalf of the Board, and indeed as a parent, I would like to thank Ms. Gordon and the entire staff for their absolute commitment to educational excellence, and for creating such a positive atmosphere for our children to enjoy.

We knew all of this already, but it is wonderful to have such strong independent external validation of what Stratford College represents.

*Cormac Murphy,
Chairperson,
Board of Management*

Image: www.tcd.ie



Mamma Mia! A triumph!

There was great anticipation for the school musical - an adaptation of Mamma Mia! - and the wait was worth it!



ABBA music seeped through the corridors in the days before the performances and students could be seen in 1970s garb as they



prepared for the dress rehearsal. There were two performances - Wednesday, 27th November and Thursday, 28th November. Well done to Ms. Coogan, Ms. Mahon, the stage production team, the performers and all the teachers involved in the musical.

Photos: Ms. O'Kelly

Great Italian Ski Trip

Ms. Finnegan, Mr. Desmond with most of the TY students and a



scattering of 5th Year students went to Italy on this year's skiing trip.

The weather was quite balmy for this time of year, the skiing was excellent and the food hearty and filling! Lots of laughs were had and everyone had a ball! Thanks to Ms. Finnegan and Mr. Desmond for organising such a terrific holiday. Go to the Stratford YouTube Channel and enjoy

Photo: Ms. Finnegan

School abuzz with Arts Week



Ms. Reynolds gave the opening address to the whole school on Monday, 11th November for Arts Week 2013.

"We have an exciting and broad ranging arts week planned for you.

You'll be in the fortunate position to meet with a selection of artists: from writers, to rap artists, to poets and dramatists and to visit our national museums that celebrate Art, History and Classics. Why have an Arts Week? We are in the privileged position of holding our own Arts Week because here at Stratford College we value the Arts and the benefits it brings to our students."

Photo: Ms. Donohoe

School Hall Repainted

During November the Stratford National School Parents Association organized the repainting of the school hall and the corridor leading to it and the classrooms.



A lot of time and effort went into this big project and it is greatly

appreciated by staff, pupils and parents.

Along with the repainting of the school hall and corridor, new noticeboards have been installed.



It has made such a difference to the look of the school and enhances the fantastic art work done by the pupils with their teachers.

Mr. Murphy

Photos: Ms. O'Kelly

Learning to Type



3rd and 4th Class pupils are learning how to type in school by

using the website, Dance Mat Typing from BBC schools.

Pupils start off at Level 1 and can progress right through to Level 12 doing little exercises along the way. Learning keyboard skills is a great skill to have and the pupils are really getting good at it.

Mr. Murphy

Image: www.bbc.co.uk/schools/typing/

The Reading Tree

During September, Ms. O'Kelly, the librarian, asked each pupil from Infants to 6th Class to write the name of their favourite book that they read during the Summer and to write why they liked this book. Some pupils decorated their leaves beautifully.

Mrs. Walsh's Art Class pupils

helped to paint the Reading Tree which is proudly displayed outside the 3rd and 4th Class classroom.



Ms. O'Kelly

Photo: Ms. O'Kelly

100MB Broadband Access

Throughout November and December the infrastructure was put in place by the Department of Education's contractors for 100MB Broadband Access for Stratford College.

On Friday, 10th January Stratford College switched over to 100MB Broadband Access. This will lay the foundations for the challenges of 21st century teaching and learning.

By upgrading to 100MB and by having a state-of-the-art Wi-Fi system throughout the school, teachers and students will be in a position to utilize this technological infrastructure to implement its

eLearning programme to its maximum potential. The school's eLearning programme will utilize mobile devices, Stratford Moodle, ECDL and eBooks (where free), amongst other technical advances to help Stratford College students learn 21st century skills.

The next step in advancing the eLearning Programme is to rollout WiFi access to students. The vision for Stratford College is for students and staff to "Bring Your Own Device". This will enable students to create digital projects and to do online research as directed by their teachers during class.

Ms. Gordon

Stratford Schools raise €1600

Students in both schools participated in this year's MS-Readathon. Congratulations to the 1st and 2nd year students who participated in the MS-Readathon (who read lots of books between mid-October to mid-November)! They raised €750.28 for the charity Multiple Sclerosis Ireland. The pupils in Stratford N.S. raised approximately €900.

All students who participate receive



a certificate and are entered for a National Draw. Students can also win prizes depending on the amount they raise for the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Ireland.

Image: www.msreadathon.ie

Briefs

Stratford National School Parents Association are holding their AGM in the N.S. hall on Wednesday, 26th February at 7.30pm

Friends of Stratford Schools, Private **Members Draw**. Cost of entry is €50 for fundraising draws from now until June 2014.

Green Schools. Old computers, batteries and other disused electrical goods were collected for recycling in December by WEEE from both schools.

During **Social Action Week (Mitzvah Week)** a car-load of food was collected by Stratford College students for Focus Ireland. 1st Year students won the prize for the class who donated the most food.