



# Stratford College

Co-educational Secondary School

Dear Friend of Stratford,

Silver Linings: the COVID-19 pandemic

From the beginning of this crisis our aims were to continue teaching and learning and to maintain a strong sense of school community. When we hear that 1.5 billion students are out of school around the world we know this is about more than just us!

We were shown great leadership by President Michael D. Higgins who spoke about the need for "compassionate leadership" and Taoiseach Leo Varadkar who wished that when this was over people would say "when things are at their worst we were at our best".

So we talked at the beginning of the need to look for silver linings, of savouring the small moments, strengthening our connections and looking for the good in others. And to savour our school community's **celebrations** and **connections on-line** through Class Tutor meetings, **classes**, exams, assessments, **assemblies**, even **graduations!**

You have learnt more in the last three months than many have learnt in a lifetime, from the wonderful role models you have in your teachers, your parents, and your school community. It is a time to reflect on the opportunities you were given and the high expectations we and your parents have of you which allows you to pursue your passions and choices in life.

As we look towards the summer I'd like thank all the staff –everyone who contributed to move our school on-line from the 13th March; Brendan who looks after our building, Janice and Trish who managed our administration off site, to our teaching staff who picked up exactly where they left off the day after school closed and taught to their schedules for 2 months! Teachers and students together learning new skills in a less than ideal learning environment.

At the end of this traumatic year and looking forward to a new one in August, Brendan Kennelly's poem 'Beginnings', seems more apt than ever.

Though we live in a world that dreams of ending  
That always seems about to give in  
Something that will not acknowledge conclusion  
Insists that we forever begin.

*Ms Patricia Gordon*  
*Principal*

## Message from President Michael D. Higgins to secondary school students

President Michael D. Higgins has issued a special video message for students in secondary school.



## Post Primary school parental supports

There are many support agencies and online resources to help parents/guardians support their children through their post primary education. These are just some of the resources and

supports available:

## International framework for reopening of schools and Stratford's reopening

Governments and international agencies are working on frameworks for the safe reopening of schools worldwide. It is worth reading and watching some of these resources to gain a greater understanding of the issues. There are also resources pertinent to Stratford's reopening which you are encouraged to read/watch.



## Summer camps - keep occupied!

The 2020 summer holidays will be quite different for all of us because of the COVID-19 lockdown. Summer camps will look quite different as they move to an online space. Check out some of the following links for ideas for a flavour.

## Summer Reads - relax and escape!

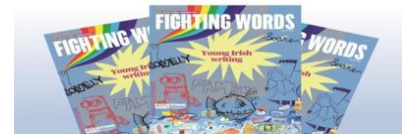
The summer holidays have arrived and now is the time to escape and relax with a great book! Check out the following links for ideas and inspiration.



## 6th Year Graduation - a very special occasion celebrated online

Friday, 15th May 2020 heralded another first in Stratford - an online 6th Year Graduation - hosted by Ms Talbot and Student Council all through Zoom!

## 5th Year student published in Fighting Words supplement - for the second time



Congratulations to 5th Year English student, Nellie Warren, who had her writing published in the 2020 Fighting Words supplement in the Irish Times on 12th May 2020!

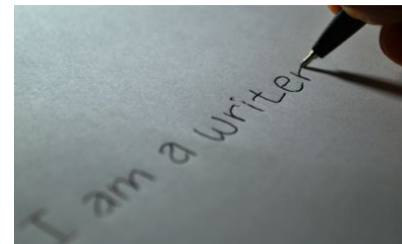


## TY students of 2020 graduate in an online ceremony

Stratford celebrated another first today! An online TY Graduation ceremony on Tuesday 12th May. Congratulations to all the TYs for creating a glittering assembly.

## The Writer's Group 2020 publish their eZine

A huge congratulations to The Writers' Group 2020 on publishing their ezine! They met most Thursdays to share their writing, to discuss books, and to take part in some creative writing exercises and competitions. I'm also delighted and proud to note that, Nellie Warren is going to have her short story published in the, 'Fighting Words', a supplement of the Irish Times for the second time!!

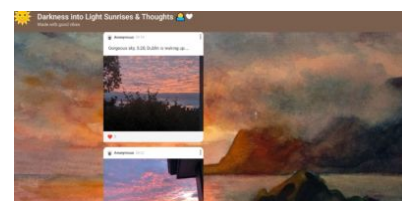


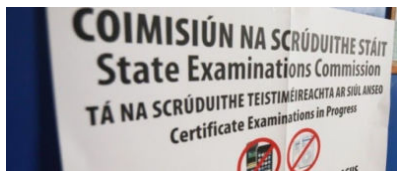
## 08 May, 2020 – Minister announces postponement of 2020 Leaving Certificate examinations

Please see the following links: 08 May, 2020 – Minister announces postponement of 2020 Leaving Certificate examinations

## Darkness into Light Sunrise Appeal organised by Senior Prefects

As we are unable to physically come together to walk for the Darkness into Light Sunrise Appeal in aid of Pieta House, Stratford's Senior Prefects and Ms Finnegan met online yesterday and came up with a great idea. Ms Finnegan set up a padlet page where students, teachers, staff, family and friends could post photos of their sunrises and their thoughts.



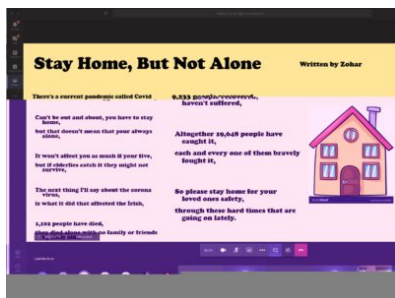


## State Examinations: DES Advice and Resources for Parents and Students

Click on the following links for Advice and Supports for Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle students and their parents/guardians.

## The Irish classroom noticeboard displaying student work - now online!

Ms Maxwell has re-imagined the Irish classroom noticeboard (at the bottom of the stairs) onto padlet so that you can see all the fantastic work that continues while we're in school remotely.



## Making history - the 1st Years host School Assembly online!

Well done to the 1st Years and Ms Kenny who made a little history this morning, Friday 1st May, when they were the first class to host their assembly online!

## Stratford's experience of remote teaching and learning during the COVID-19 lockdown: A Vox Pop



Since Friday 13th March schools in Ireland have been closed but teaching and learning has continued remotely using the power of technology. While the IT infrastructure within Stratford's school walls worked very well, never did we think that we would have to extend it to remote teaching.



## A 6th Year student reflects on the news about the Leaving Certificate exams

Inspired by the news and debates over a solution for the Leaving Cert, 6th Year student Jakob Miller, wrote up a few of his own thoughts last night after watching the latest news.

## Dates for your Diary

**Friday, 28 August:** 1st Year and TY Induction

**Monday, 31 August:** School re-opens for all year groups (pending government/public health guidelines)

## Stratford on Social Media

[twitter.com/StratfordDublin](https://twitter.com/StratfordDublin)

[www.facebook.com/StratfordCollegeDublin](https://www.facebook.com/StratfordCollegeDublin)

[www.youtube.com/user/StratfordCollegeDub](https://www.youtube.com/user/StratfordCollegeDub)