



REPORT TO THE PARENT BODY 2006 2007

Mercy Secondary School Mounthawk

Report to the Parent Body
on Teaching and Learning in Mercy Mounthawk
for the academic year 2006 2007

**Compiled by J O'Roarke on behalf of the staff
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INTRODUCTION	3
1. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING summary of developments	4
2. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT	7
3. CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING PROVISION	9
4. HOME SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIAISON.....	11
5. ENGLISH DEPARTMENT	13
6. MATHS DEPARTMENT	15
7. ROINN NA GAELGE	17
8. RELIGION DEPARTMENT.....	19
9. HISTORY DEPARTMENT	20
10. GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT.....	21
11. HOME ECONOMICS	23
12. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT	25
13. SPANISH DEPARTMENT	27
14. FRENCH DEPARTMENT	28
15. GERMAN DEPARTMENT	30
16. METALWORK - ENGINEERING.....	32
17. WOODWORK AND DRAWING	33
18. BUSINESS DEPARTMENT.....	35
19. ART DEPARTMENT	36
20. MUSIC DEPARTMENT	38
21. LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED	40
22. TRANSITION YEAR.....	42
23. L.C.V.P. Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme.....	44

INTRODUCTION

The school endeavours to keep parents informed of progress on a yearly basis through a variety of means. Each household receives a copy of the twice yearly newsletter at Christmas and again in the Summer. The newsletter contains an update on many of the extra-curricular and co-curricular activities in the school. This more formal report focuses on reports on curricular and school planning issues, and as such, is designed to complement the newsletter.

We hope you find it informative.

Tony Behan, Principal.

1. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

summary of developments

This is the 1st year of the 3 year plan under the new Board of Management which took office in September 2006. This current plan will run until 2009.

The plan is divided in 5 main sections: (i) Staff and Resources, (ii) Pastoral Care and Guidance, (iii) Community, (iv) Curriculum, Teaching and Learning and (v) Ethos.

(i) Staff and Resources

1.a Staff

The staff induction manual was updated during the year and a teacher peer mentoring system has been established for new teachers in the school.

The 'Dignity in the Workplace' policy was completed and ratified by the Board of Management.

Joining the staff in 2006/7 were Brian Harkin, Michael O'Sullivan, Gillian O'Carroll, Martha Brassil, Pauline Burke and Sherma Carey.

1.b Plant and Resources

A new waiting room for visitors was completed during the year. The Balcony section of the Gym was re-developed to provide a teaching space for large group activities.

We installed a point to point broadband connection in the absence of an Eircom service on this side of town, and this allowed us to begin the updating of the computer network in the school.

The 'e-portal' system has been installed which, on a phased basis, over the next 2 years, will allow teachers to keep computer records of attendance in each class in real time and to input results for exams.

Phase 3 of the Library went ahead with the purchasing of books for the French, German and Spanish sections.

In relation to ICT development, a mobile laptop trolley was purchased with 10 laptops for use by the Learning support Department. The IT suite in the music room was activated.

IT room 1 was re-organised during the summer to accommodate the developments in Design Communications Graphics.

(ii) Pastoral care and Guidance

ii.a Pastoral Care

After 6 years since amalgamation, the process of reviewing and rewriting the Pastoral Care policy in the school was begun. Work on this policy will continue in 2007/8.

A Volunteer Community Mentoring programme was begun under the auspices of the Home School Community Liaison Local Committee, KDYS and Partnership Trá Lí. This exciting development allowed a number of students to benefit from the support of volunteer mentors who journeyed with them through the year.

A Peer Mentoring Programme where senior cycle students trained to support students in junior cycle was also begun this year with the support of KDYS.

ii.b Guidance

In relation to guidance, phase 2 of the guidance policy proceeded with the clarification and further development of links between guidance and subjects such as SPHE, CSPE, Home Economics etc.

A reviewed schedule of testing and career inventory was implemented during the year.

(iii) Community

iii.a Students' Council

The constitution of the council was reviewed last year. For the first time we held interviews for the post of Head Boy and Head Girl elect from the 5th year class. It was found that students in 5th year had more time to devote to the working of the Council than the Head Boy and Girl had in 6th year.

iii.b Home School Community Liaison

A number of new initiatives took place under this scheme in 2006/7. The Volunteer Community Mentoring Programme was started in first term and reviewed in May. It is hoped to source funding to continue the programme in 2007/08. Details can be found in section 4 below. Further to this a Language Course for the Parents of Non-Irish Nationals was organised after Christmas.

(iv) Curriculum / Teaching and Learning

iv.a Teaching Methodology

In terms of in-service, the focus for the year was on differentiation methods in the classroom. Full staff in-service was provided during the year on the topic by the SESS (Special Education Support Service). Further to the in-service, Subject Departments focused on outlining the differentiation of curriculum in 1st year as part of the subject department policy document.

iv.b Curriculum Provision and Timetabling

In relation to Special Needs, a class was established in 2nd year to allow for the provision of a reduced curriculum for those students who required it on the basis of their IEPs. The Special Needs Department focused on developing a curriculum programme for this group through the year.

Religion was introduced as an exam subject in Senior Cycle to provide a follow through from Junior Cycle.

A timetable review was begun during the year to provide for the introduction of double periods for PE in Junior Cycle in response to DES circulars. It is intended to implement the changes in 2008/9 after consultation.

iv.c Extra-curricular activity

Extra-curricular provision was again extended in 2007. Soccer training for schools competitions began in earnest in the school in as did Rugby training. A Comic club was started at lunchtime as was a 1st year Science Club. A Fair Trade Committee and Amnesty society were developed in Transition Year.

A review of Extra-curricular provision was begun with a survey of teachers, students and parents in relation to attitudes and provision. Feedback on the results was given to teachers at the August meetings in 2007 and the findings will provide the basis for the development of policy in the area.

(v) Ethos

v.a Religion Department

The Christmas Carol service was re-instated last year on December 12th to mark Mercy Foundation day. We were joined by the two Mercy national schools to celebrate the event.

The curriculum programme for senior cycle was rewritten during the year.

v.b Health Promotion

The Health Promotion Committee ran two themed weeks during 2007/08 as part of the programme to promote healthier lifestyles in the school. The first week in November focused on positive mental attitude while the second week in March focused on physical health and fitness.

v.c Social Justice

As in previous years there were several collections and fundraising events for local and international charities with over €40,000 being collected in the school during the year.

Last year it was decided in order to develop awareness of social justice issues, the school would be twinned with a school in Kenya, and thus the Kenya project was born. The project was progressed during the year with the choosing of a school in Kenya and the commitment to raise 15,000 to build classrooms there. 6 students will travel to in 2008 as part of the immersion element of the project.

2. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

A new dynamism has come into the education system with developments in technology and an increased awareness in the system that school-led initiative in planning and curriculum development is a good thing. This dynamism has certainly been evident in Mounthawk over the last year, with significant developments in the integration of technology into subjects and the development of new programmes and initiatives.

School Library

Phase three of the development of School Library progressed during the last year with the introduction of sections for French, German and Spanish literature. Teachers have sourced reading material in the languages that is accessible to students, particularly of 2nd and 5th year reading ages in the subjects.

A section for History is also under development to meet the needs of students who are undertaking projects for the new Leaving Certificate History course. To this end also, the school is strengthening its links with the County Library and visits have been arranged for students to learn about accessing the archives and researching the materials for their projects.

Gaeilge - a new emphasis on the spoken language

In response to Minister Hanafin's initiative to increase the percentage of the Leaving certificate mark for oral work to 50%, the Irish Department in the school has been meeting to discuss ways to develop the emphasis on oral work in Irish in the school. Students currently in 1st year, who opt to do Transition Year, will be among the first cohort to sit the new syllabus.

A number of pilot initiatives to emphasise Irish in the curriculum will be launched next year. Timetable provision will be made for incoming 1st year students to have a conversation class 'ciorcal cainte' at their own ability level, once a week. A pilot project will be run in 2nd year to increase the level of conversational Irish used in class teaching.

T4 - new development in Technical Graphics for the Leaving Certificate

Next year will see the beginning of the redesigned course in Technical Graphics in Senior Cycle. The subject will undergo a name change to 'Design Communication Graphics', emphasising the introduction of Computer Aided Design (CAD) as a compulsory component in the course.

Our teachers have attended the in-services over the last year and the computer hardware has been purchased to update the Technology room to the new specifications. Work will progress over the summer on transforming Computer Room 1 into the new Technology and Graphics suite. Students who are taking the new subject in 5th year will be the first to use the new facilities. These students will have access to computers for their Design work and will have to develop a portfolio of designs as part of their assessment.

Mobile Laptop Initiative

The success of the national pilot project on the use of laptops with students with Special Educational Needs spurred us to introduce their use in the school last year. A number of laptops were made available for use by students in Learning Support classes, with great success. The work of a number of the students in the project can be seen in the 2007 School Year Book.

It is evident that the use of lap tops increases access for students to the curriculum and also increases their capacity to produce work of a higher standard. The impact on self-esteem is clear. We will increase the provision and use of laptops for students with special needs in the school in the coming academic year.

Pilot Project on the Learning School

The school was accepted as part of a Pilot Project on the Learning School run by the Department of Education and Science, the Education Centres in Munster and the TES (Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education and Science). The aim of the project is to develop the sense of a school as a learning community where students, teachers and parents all learn together.

We have chosen to undertake a project on differentiated learning. Since learning in the classroom occurs at different paces and in different ways, teaching methods must reflect this reality. This was the theme of teacher in-service in the school for 06/07.

In 07/08, a pilot project will take place in 1st year in a number of classes and subjects where teachers will explore methodologies in working with students in a differentiated manner. This is particularly important in 1st year, where classes are of mixed ability. The project will aim to develop strategies for working more effectively with students of mixed ability in the classroom to the benefit all. A report on the project will be written for May 2008.

Transition Units

The school has been accepted as a partner school in an initiative by the NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment) to develop programmes in Transition Year which will be vetted by the council and, if accepted, allow for national accreditation by the Council.

Next year, we will be running a unit in Business and Enterprise which has been developed in conjunction with the ITT, Breda O'Dwyer and Ernst and Young and Co, as well as a unit in Development Education in conjunction with KADE. It is hoped that from our experience in running course in film and young social innovation (YSI) that teachers will progress to developing units in these areas which can then be validated by the NCCA.

3. CAREER GUIDANCE & COUNSELLING PROVISION

Mercy Mounthawk provides guidance classes to every class group and students are introduced to career planning from 1st year. Some classes are timetabled and others by arrangements with individual teachers. Provision is balanced between junior and senior cycles.

Guidance Curriculum for 2006/2007

The Guidance Curriculum is divided into two components:

- Formal
- Informal

Formal Guidance

The formal Guidance Curriculum is delivered using two forms of intervention employing a number of methodologies:

1. Individual contact of a personal counselling nature and careers/vocational guidance
2. Classroom guidance delivered in regular weekly classes / rotating modules/ class

group or year group intervention as required

Informal Guidance

The Informal Guidance programme consists of liaising with other teaching staff/management to promote cross curricular links and to enhance the development of a whole school policy in relation to the delivery of the Guidance Plan. Meetings with Parents/Guardians form an integral part of Informal Guidance.

Grouping of Students

Students participate in the Guidance programme in their year group

Class Organisation/Effective Teaching Methodologies

Year Group	Teaching Methodology
1	Class group/year group intervention 4 times/year x 35 mins
2	Class group/2class group intervention once per term x 35mins.
3	Class group intervention once a term – 2 nd term is for 3 class periods
4	Weekly class x 35 mins
5	Class group intervention once per term *
LCA1	Weekly class x 35mins
6	Weekly class x 35 mins *
LCA2	Weekly class x 35 mins

- * Full day 'Study Skills Seminars' are organized for these year groups
- Additional class/year group intervention is arranged as required

Guidance activities that assist students make informed choices include:

- Personal counselling
- Group counselling
- Assessment using psychometric instruments and inventories
- Career information: Career Library, classroom, personal vocational guidance interviews, attendance at career events, guest speakers.....
- Use of Information Technology eg. Qualifax, career web sites etc.
- Personal and social developmental programmes.

Counselling

Counselling is a key part of the school guidance programme, offered on an individual or group basis as part of a developmental learning process and at moments of personal crisis. Counselling includes personal, educational and career or a combination of these

Aims:

- Provide a framework for the delivery of the school's guidance programme
- Ensure a structured response to students' personal, social, educational and career needs
- Have an inclusive programme providing for the juniors, seniors, non-Irish nationals, special education needs etc. of all students
- Include all guidance activities in the plan: classroom sessions, vocational guidance interviews, attendance at career exhibitions, open days, assessments, personal counselling, meeting with management, parents, staff groups, support agencies etc

Assessment & Achievement

Testing is administered by the Guidance Counsellors to support students, assist student profiling, inform decision making and provide experience for students. All in-coming first years completed the CAT – level D, a standardized, norm-referenced assessment which screen for literacy and numeracy competence. Together with information from feeder schools, this information is used to identify students who may need learning support and those students who need to be academically challenged. The Careers Decision Making (CDM) is completed in 3rd year, to assist subject choice and in LCA2 to assist career choice. The Differential Aptitude Tests (DATs) is administered in fourth year to assist career and subject choice choices . These are followed by the Rothwell Interest Inventory in fifth year and the DATs for students who chose not to do fourth year. Careers Interest Inventory CII is administered to all sixth year

students. Tests results are returned and interpreted in Guidance classes and during individual appointments

Leaving Certificate Students (2006) were tracked and past students welcomed to speak to students. Student profiles are maintained and retained. Folders of student work are also retained.

4. HOME SCHOOL COMMUNITY LIAISON

LINKS WITH LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

First years '07

On May 16th a table quiz took place for incoming first years to assist their transition from primary to secondary school. The quiz was organised by the Local Committee with the help of transition year students. The standard of answering was very high with the winning team from Spa National school victorious by a single point. Ardfert National School took second place, while Holy Family took the third prize. Thanks to quiz master Sr. Maureen and to the primary schools for their participation.

'Okay Let's Go' Programme

In conjunction with the K.D.Y.S the Okay Let's Go programme was run this year to assist pupils in the transfer from primary to secondary school. There was great participation in these evenings with lots of questions and discussion. We are confident that those who participated in this programme will benefit when they come to our school in September. Thanks again to all who took part.

Home Visits

I will continue with my home visits in September. Please contact the school if you would like a visit at anytime. To those homes I have visited in the past year I would like to express my thanks for your hospitality and commitment to your children's education and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Breakfast Club

The breakfast club has been going well since its introduction last year. The programme is proving very popular and those taking part enjoy the variety of foods available. We expect to continue with the Breakfast Club in September.

Volunteer Community Mentoring Project

This project emerged last year from the Local Committee of the HSCL. The project provided 18 young people with a volunteer mentor for the past year. The role of the mentor was to guide and support the young person through the school year.

The evaluation of the project, carried out in May, clearly showed that the work of the volunteer mentors was beneficial for the students involved. The mentoring had a positive impact on the confidence and self-esteem of the students and helped reduce the likelihood of some of the students dropping out of school.

The project was overseen by the KDYS and funded by Partnership Trá Lí. The steering committee also included the Tralee Volunteer Bureau, Department of Education & Science and Mercy Mounthawk Secondary School.

At this stage it is hoped that sustainable funding can be sought for the project which will allow it to carry on its good work with young people in our community.

5. ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

Curriculum

Course work carried out in accordance with Department of Education guidelines in all year groups. Work was done by the department members on strengthening the emphasis on differentiation across the curriculum, particularly in 1st year. - cf. English School Plan.

As always, emphasis was placed this year on providing extra-curricular and co-curricular activities to support the development of literacy and appreciation of literature across the school.

Drama

In February, 5th year higher level students attended a performance of “Othello” in the Concert Hall in the University of Limerick. The production was staged by Second Age Theatre Co. and directed by Alan Stanford who commended the students for their attention and interest. On return to class they worked on a worksheet on the performance. They discussed it critically as a follow up exercise, each student wrote a review of the play.

In March 7th, 5th year students travelled to Cork to see a performance of “Romeo and Juliet” in the Half Moon Theatre presented by the Cyclone Theatre Co – again worksheets, discussion and reviews were used to enhance their learning.

On February two classes of third year students, with their teachers, attended a performance of “Lifeboat” in Siamsa Tire – directed by Belinda Wilde. Though not directly related to the course, it was felt that a visit to the theatre would be of benefit to their answering of the unseen drama question.

Drama Production

Ms. Máiread O’ Mahoney of the English Department directed some fourth and fifth year students in a performance of Bernard Farrell’s “The Last Apache Reunion”. This ran very successfully for three nights in Siamsa Tire.

Film

On Tuesday 24th April a mobile cinema was in Mounthawk. Three films were shown; “Strictly Ballroom” and “The Truman Show” were shown to Fifth years and Baz Luhrman’s “Romeo and Juliet” was shown to second years. Both students and their teachers appreciated the opportunity to see these films in a real cinema setting as recommended by the D. E. S. guidelines.

Creative Writing

Local writer, Mr. Tommy Frank O’ Connor, ran a six week workshop with interested fourth year students. Under the auspices of “Poetry Ireland”, “Concern” and “Trocaire” they completed a creative writing module on the theme of child labour. They wrote their own script, produced, directed and acted in a short film entitled “Are We Bothered?” In the Dunamais Arts Centre in Portlaoise on Monday 14th May, this film was showcased before a substantial gathering of students, both primary and secondary, in addition to representatives from the above mentioned organisations.

For the third consecutive year, the English Department ran a creative writing competition in conjunction with Book Week / Library Week. Sponsored by the Parents' Council the competition was open to first year, second year, fourth year and fifth year. Entries were of a very high standard. Prizegiving took place in the school library on Wednesday 30th March in conjunction with a poetry reading by three local poets. The prizewinning entries were published in the annual yearbook.

A large number of students in the school entered the students' section of the Listowel Writers' Week.

A fourth year student, Grace O' Reilly, won first prize in the U.C.C. Law Essay competition.

Public Speaking/ Debating

Concern Debates

Once again the school was actively involved in the **Concern** debates. Over five debates, against strong opposition, our team argued that the world is not doing enough to protect the environment, pointed the finger at government's failure to halt the aids pandemic and highlighted the failures of fair-trade to enhance the lives of people in the developing world. The team were narrowly defeated by Laurel Hill from Limerick.

Forum on Europe

The school participated in the All-Ireland Transition Year Forum on Europe Public Speaking Competition. The team of four highlighted and was critical of many of the E.U. policies affecting Europe at the present moment. A wonderful experience, they gained skills in writing speeches and critical analysis of texts. This is a competition that Mercy Mounthawk Secondary School won last year and our present team were narrowly defeated.

Mental Health Public Speaking Project 2007

Mounthawk had a very strong team for this year's Mental Health Ireland's Public Speaking Project and reached the Mid-Western Regional Final in February.

School Magazines

Second Year Magazine

Class 2.5 and 2.6 created their own school magazine called "Unity" a title that reflected Mounthawk's multi-cultural ethos. This magazine sold out and made a substantial profit for the students which will be reinvested in next year's project.

Yearbook

This year's yearbook, under the editorship of Ms. Mangan and her Sixth Year committee, was a great success. It included the Second Year magazine and Fourth Year magazine as supplements. It also contained the winning entries in the Creative Writing Awards as well as individual articles, poems and short stories.

6. MATHS DEPARTMENT

Department Members

Patrick Lyne, M. Bowler, S. Clancy, Á. Clarke, M. Daly, M. Enright, B. Farrell, S. Kissane, M. Leen J. Lynch, M. McAuliffe, A. Mc Ellistrim, S. Mc Carthy, E. Mangan, M. O' Connell, T. O' Hanlon, B. O' Sullivan, N. Raymond, M. Reidy, M. Stack, P. Stack

1st Year maths

All first year students followed the common programme of work as agreed by teachers at the end of the previous academic year. All first year students sat a common summer exam and a common marking scheme was agreed on at the end of year meeting.

Maths For Fun

Mr. Moynihan and Ms Daly continued to co-ordinate the “The Maths for fun programme” with up to 40 students participating over the academic year. The programme was run with small groups of 6 to 8 students. While the programme helped these students who were weak at maths, it also helped them develop their social interaction skills.

2nd Year Maths

Second Year students continued to work on the course material set out for the year. A programme was developed to meet the needs of foundation level students for the Junior Cert.

3rd Year Maths

All Third year maths students completed the course work with their teachers and all members of the Department want to wish them well as they complete their final preparations for their Junior Certificate Examination.

4th Year Maths

Students were timetabled for 4 classes per week and students were divided into 4 classes in accordance with their mathematical abilities.

5th Year Maths

Students were organised into Higher, Ordinary and Foundation classes immediately on receipt of their Junior Certificate Results. A total of 9 classes were formed. Two honours classes were formed, six ordinary level classes were created, each class was of mixed ability and had similar numbers. A foundation class was also formed for students who had selected foundation at Junior Cycle.

6th Year Maths

Sixth year students continued to work on the Leaving Certificate syllabus. There were two honours maths classes, five ordinary level classes and two foundation classes. In a step to address the needs of students, additional maths classes were provided for students at lunch-times.

Maths Week 2007

Math's week ran from the 16th to 20th of October 2006. The purpose of the week was to promote the understanding, awareness and appreciation of mathematics. During the week, Mr. Kissane co-ordinated the - **PRISM** contest. The contest featured two separate mathematical challenges, one for pre-Junior Certificate and post-Junior Certificate candidates. Emphasis was on ingenuity and problem-solving skills rather than knowledge of the school curriculum. Several students did very well.

Also during Maths Week, a two hour quiz for Higher Level Mathematics students was held at the Institute of Technology Tralee. There were eight rounds of questions for teams of three students, with Fifth year students Katie Brosnan, Gavin Fitzgerald and Daniel Finnegan of Mounthawk claiming First prize.

IMTA

The annual IMTA quiz for Higher level students was held in the Institute of Technology Tralee and 2 teams comprising of four students represented the school. Both teams did well and finished mid-table.

7. ROINN NA GAEILGE

Múinteoirí Gaeilge

Nora Brosnan, Kieran Costelloe, Breda Cronin, Mary Crowley, Jim Fitzgibbon, Eileen Kennelly, Máiréad McAuliffe, Rose McCarthy, Eibhlín Ní Shúilleabháin, Bernie O’Herlihy, Assumpta Power, Adrienne Quane, Mary Reidy, Lola Scollard, Sr. Siobhán.

Múineadh an Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach agus sa tSraith Shínsearach faoi mar atá leagtha síos i Siollabas na Roinne Oideachais agus Eolaíochta. Deineadh gach scil teanga, éisteacht, labhairt, léamh is scríobh a fhorbairt de réir achmhainn na ndaltaí.

Cuireadh béim faoi leith ar labhairt na teanga agus ar úsáid na teanga mar phríomh mheán chumarsáide is teagaisc i ngach rang.

Chomh maith leis na téacs leabhair is na dlúthdhioscaí a ghabhann leo, baineadh úsáid as ábhar léitheoireachta breise ar nós Staighre, Dréimire, Foinse agus as Scannáin TG4 mar áis foghlama.

Músclaíodh suim sa Ghaeilge agus grá don teanga taobh amuigh den seomra ranga tríd na hiarrachtaí seo a leanas:

Seachtain na Gaeilge.

- Sheol an craoltóir, ceoltóir is cainteoir dúchais áitiúil Máire Ní Bheaglaoi Seachtain na Gaeilge sa Scoil Dé Luain 12ú Márta. Lean sí le seisiún cainte, ceoil is amhránaíochta le daltaí 5ú agus 6ú bliana.
- Eagraíodh Tráth na gCeist do dhaltaí na céad bliana. Ghlacadar go léir páirt i gceann éigin de na ceithre babhtaí agus bronnadh trófaíthe ar na buaiteoirí agus na leas buaiteoirí.
- Ghlac daltaí na dara bliana páirt i gComórtas Ealaíona bunaithe ar Sheanfhocail. Cuireadh na hiarratais ar teaspáint ar Sheastán Seachtain na Gaeilge sa Scoil agus ansan go dtí Comórtas Náisiúnta Seachtain na Gaeilge.
- Bhain lucht na dara bliana sult freisin as Ceardlann Rince a cuireadh ar siúl dóibh i Halla na Scoile.
- Múineadh Amhrán na bhFiann agus amhráin Ghaeilge eile don Chéad agus don Dara Bliain.
- Chuaigh daltaí na hIdirbhliana ar thuras go Gaeltacht Chorca Dhuibhne. Thugadar cuairt ar Ionad an Bhlascaod agus ar Ghallarus.
- D’fhreastail lucht na hIdirbhliana ar Dhráma grinn dar teideal ‘Gáire agus Caoineadh ó Luan go hAoine’, a léirigh an Compántas Drámaíochta Fíabín i Má Cromtha. Bhí an dráma seo bunaithe ar Dhánta Gaeilge na hArdteiste.

Gradam Gaeilge

Bronnadh Gradam Gaeilge ’07 ar Nóirín Nic an Bháird, dalta Ardteiste, buaiteoir i gComórtas Aiste Ghaeilge i measc lucht na hArdteistiméireachta.

Scoláireachtaí Gaeltachta

- Bronnadh sé leath scoláireacht, luach €365 an ceann, ar dhaltaí sa chéad agus sa dara bliain. Thug Coláistí Chorca Dhuibhne Teo. iad seo dúinn de bharr an líon daltaí ón Scoil a fhreastail ar Chúrsaí Gaeilge leo i Samhradh 2006.
- Bronnadh dhá scoláireacht eile, luach €730 an ceann ar dhaltaí dara bliana. Fuaireamar iad seo ón gClár Access, Coláiste na hOllscoile, Corcaigh.

Leabharlann

Ceannaíodh luach €500 de leabhair léitheoireachta Gaeilge do leabharlann na Scoile. Tá sé de chuspóir againn nós na léitheoireachta Gaeilge a bhunú sna Ranganna Sóisearacha.

8. RELIGION DEPARTMENT

Junior cycle

The First Years followed the Junior RE Syllabus. They came together as a group to celebrate Mercy Day Mass on 24th September. They visited the Prayer Room throughout the year and they received the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent. The RE Dept. would like to thank Fr. Kevin for meeting with each of the first year classes.

The RE Syllabus was followed with the Second Years. In November they were involved in organising Christmas Shoeboxes for children in Third World countries. They visited the Prayer Room during the year and participated in the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Lenten season. Talks on RSE were organised in May for all second years.

Third Years were prepared for their Junior Certificate examination. They completed their Junior Certificate Journal. They celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Advent.

As a new development, the Young Social Innovators Programme was carried out with some Fourth Years. The aim of this programme was to get young people involved in social action. The two topics chosen this year were Water Safety and Nuclear Power.

Senior cycle

Fifth and Sixth Years followed the Religious Education curriculum. A review and evaluation of this programme was carried out and as a result of this, the Religion Department wrote a new syllabus for senior classes. This will commence in September 2007.

Fifth Years celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation during Lent and in February they participated in a one-day retreat, held in the school hall, and this proved to be a worthwhile and positive experience for all. The retreat was provided by the *need name of group* group

Sixth Years received the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent and visited the Prayer Room during the year. After Easter they were involved in the preparation of their Graduation Mass which was celebrated on May 18th. The theme was 'Thanksgiving for the past, courage for the present and hope for the future'.

One of the Liturgical highpoints during the year was the Carol Service. This was held on 12th December in St Brendan's Church to celebrate the Mercy foundation in Tralee.

Social Action Projects

All students were made more socially aware through various fund raising activities throughout the year. £33,000 was raised and distributed to local and international charities. Christmas hampers were organised for St Vincent de Paul.

A twinning with a Kenyan school (Beausang) was initiated and in February '08 students will visit and work in the area. Three students went to Lourdes as helpers on the Diocesan Pilgrimage.

9. HISTORY DEPARTMENT

Department

Mary Deenihan, Theresa Sheehy, Máiréad O' Mahony, Assumpta Power, Aoife Fitzgerald, Michelle Mangan, Ronan Redican

Junior Cycle

At Junior Cycle the syllabus was followed and completed in all classes.

Second year students completed projects based on historical events and figures from the Junior Certificate course. The teachers involved, along with the students, worked hard on these projects and felt that it was a very worthwhile exercise in terms of revision and gaining an in-depth knowledge of key historical figures.

Teachers feel that trips to local historical sites are very beneficial and decided to look into organising such a trip for 2007/8

Transition Year History Project

Maurice O' Keeffe, a local historian, visited the school during the second term and worked with a group of twenty four transition year students on local history. He spoke with them about Kerry's role in the 1916 Rising and specifically Roger Casement and the landing of the "Aud". He met with the students once a week for an hour. This was followed by a bus trip to Banna Beach and McKenna's Fort, two significant locations in the history of Roger Casement's arrest. Following that he travelled with the students to Dublin where they toured the Dublin City Library. Here they saw all the documents associated with Kerry and its role in the Rising. They also toured the Dail and the Taoiseach's office. At the end of the second term the students produced a research paper on the information they had gathered. The experience was felt to be very helpful to these students, particularly by those interested in pursuing History to the Leaving Certificate.

At the end of the year all History students were asked to submit an essay on an historical figure or event in History to be used as part of their portfolio assessment.

Senior Cycle

In response to the changed curriculum in Senior Cycle, with the introduction of project work, 5th year students travelled to the local library where they learned how to find and reference books for their research topic. They met with the librarian who advised them on how to develop their research skills and how to get the maximum benefit out of the library.

Teachers attended in-service on the new curriculum and found it to be extremely helpful.

Teachers spoke with school management about developing the History section in the school library to facilitate all History students, in particular, Senior Cycle students doing their research topic.

10. GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT

Department Members

Margaret Leen, Nora Quane, Mairéad McAuliffe, Bernie O’Herlihy, Frank Fell, Margaret Bowler, Stella O’Shea, Sinéad Thornton, Nora Quinlan, Eileen Revington.

Junior Cycle

First years began their study of geography, second and third year classes continued their studies. Some of our second years enjoyed very successful field trips to:

- The Blasket island
- Fota Wildlife Park and Middleton Distillery
- A school tour to Barcelona which incorporated various aspects of social, economic, urban and regional geography.

Third years completed their coursework and all members of the department wish them well as they complete their final preparations for their junior Certificate Examination.

4th. Year

This year our transition years theme was *‘The Kingdom of Kerry’*. We studied the physical, economic and cultural geography of Kerry. Transition Year pupils undertook many activities relating to geography.

These included:

- Hill walks
- Trip to Ballybunion beach and cliffs
- Trip to Dunsink Observatory

- Environmental workshops facilitated by Eco UNESCO
- Individual projects on member states of the E.U.

We wish to congratulate a 4th Year student Ben Mc Gilton, who has been chosen to represent Ireland in the European Youth Parliament next September. He will be raising issues on integration of people in the E. U. and issues on terrorism.

Senior Cycle

We had five fifth year and five sixth year classes studying geography in 2006-2007. This is a testament to the popularity of the subject at senior cycle level.

The new syllabus introduced in 2004 has brought with it many changes. These included a change in content, an increased emphasis on geographical skills, a major change in the examination format and the introduction of a fieldwork study as a compulsory element of the course and a component of the terminal exam. Our present Leaving Certs. undertook their fieldwork at Banna last September. This was very successful and our students have now submitted their fieldwork, which is worth an important 20% of the final exam.

Our present fifth years will undertake their fieldwork in September 2007 in Ballybunion. The title of the topic is '*Geomorphic processes of Erosion in a Coastal Environment*'.

We wish all our Leaving Cert students the best of luck in their exams and trust that the geographical skills they have learned will be of use to them.

Resources

We purchased a master copy of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland Trailmaster computer disc and ten licences to enable our students to study maps and photos on the computer. These also give us a three dimensional view of the landscape and are invaluable in developing spatial awareness.

Thirty world atlases were purchased for transition year use.

11. HOME ECONOMICS

Department

M.Lucey, A.McElligott, S O'Halloran, M O'Connor

1st Year

1st Year programme is a lively and colourful approach to Home Economics. It covers all core areas of home economics i.e. food studies and culinary skills, textile studies, health, social and consumer skills. It provides an academic and practical foundation for those students wishing to continue the subject to Junior Certificate level. For those who pursue it for one year only, they benefit from valuable knowledge and skills to promote them with a better quality of Life. Active learning is encouraged.

2nd & 3rd Year

Activity-based learning is further encouraged in 2nd & 3rd year, through individual and group cookery assignments, textile and craft work. Craft and textile projects were displayed at the Open Day and this has rekindled an interest in traditional craftwork in the school. Food Studies enables pupils to understand food in relation to optimum health. A Second year student entered the "Young Cook of the year" competition sponsored by Tesco. While we didn't have any major success at a national level, it was very encouraging for the students.

4th Year

4th Years entered the Bord Bia cookery competition. Students had to design a menu comprising of local foods and research of these locally grown produce was also part of this requirement. Nationally there were 1300 entries and Mercy Mounthawk were acknowledged for coming in the top 100. The Food Safety Authority programme "Safe Food for Life" was completed and examined. On completion, certificates were awarded to all students.

5th & 6th Year

Home Economics – Scientific and Social is an applied subject combining theory with practice in order to develop understanding and solve problems. It focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills and attitudes that will enable students to take control of their own lives at present and in the future, whether it is in the home, in the world of work or other life situations. The wide range of learning experiences to which the students are exposed, will allow them to be flexible and adaptable in the changing situation of modern life. It prepares students of both sexes for life in a consumer orientated society and provides a learning foundation for those seeking employment in a wide range of careers, such as the food industry, tourism, clothing and design and the health and social services.

Health Promotion

The Home Economics department has made great strides in the area of health promotion, especially in the areas of healthy eating and physical health.

We held a school-based competition during healthy eating week. This was organised to encourage students to bring their own lunches to school. Students had to design a creative, tasty lunch, using healthy ingredients. It proved to be a very good experience.

During this week the students made posters, held competitions and introduced topics to all junior classes. The Home Economics department was also involved in a yearlong project in designing a healthy eating policy for our school; this policy was completed in May 2007.

12. SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

Outside events

Senior ISTA quiz - 4th place

Junior ISTA quiz - joint 2nd place after a tie-breaking round

Kerry Group Science quiz - 2nd place after a tie-breaking round

Development of Science

1. All Senior Biology classes were brought to Killarney National Park and carried out Mandatory Fieldwork under the supervision of an expert field biologist. *This will continue throughout 2007-2008.*
2. The Senior Chemistry class was brought to the ITT to carry out Mandatory Practical Activities under the supervision of a senior lecturer and 2 laboratory assistants. *This will again take place throughout 2007-2008*
3. Large locked transparent Science Noticeboards were placed outside the Science labs in order to keep teachers and students informed of interesting facts and future events in all aspects of Science. It was updated regularly with material which was topical and of scientific interest. *This will continue throughout 2007-2008.*
4. The Science Dept was very busy on Open Day (Nov 9th 2006) with many of the Science Teachers as well as the current students helping out with the numerous experiments. *This will again take place in Nov 2007.*
5. 9 projects were entered into the Young Scientist of the Year Exhibition. *It is also hoped to have entries to the 2007-2008 Exhibition.*
6. A Science Club was set up at lunchtime in order to improve First Year students' involvement in and love of practical work. The members carried out a number of exciting experiments including exploding cannons, chemical tea, iodine snakes and making homemade lava. *This will continue throughout 2007-2008 and will involve the current members working with next year's First Years.*
7. Contact was made with 4 local Primary Schools and they were invited to bring their 4th, 5th and/or 6th class pupils to the Science labs in order to give them some hands on experience in practical work using good quality equipment. The Mentoring Programme was run by trained Transition Year students who got great experience in putting into practice the Science they learned in First Year. *This will continue throughout 2007-2008 and will involve more Primary Schools.*

- An in-house Young Scientist competition was organised to give students an opportunity to research and develop an hypothesis of their own. A separate Science Trophy was awarded to the student(s) in each year group who put forward the project which was considered to have the greatest potential to develop further. The best of these projects may then be considered for entry into the National Young Scientist Competition. *This will continue throughout 2007-2008.*

Action Plan for First Years

- All First Years will be shown best methods in the handling of equipment in order to build up confidence and for their own safety. Evaluation of each student's expertise will be ongoing with teachers pointing out mistakes as they arise.
- All First Years will be encouraged to be very precise with scientific terms and definitions from the very earliest stage.

Courses attended during the year

Sheila McCarthy	Data-Logging in Chemistry
Sheila McCarthy	Data-Logging in Physics
Sheila McCarthy	Developing Biology Aids
Mary Enright	Developing Biology Aids
Mary Enright	Data logging in Biology + Genetics
Sheila McCarthy	Data-Logging in Biology + Genetics
Jemma Lynch	Attended Dept Junior Science Inservice
Jemma Lynch	Completed online Science safety course

13. SPANISH DEPARTMENT

Department

Joan Daly, Aoife Fitzgerald, Gillian O'Carroll.

Curriculum

- In the classroom, pupils from First to Sixth year were prepared to become competent in the areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing with a view to completing Junior and Leaving Cert exams at Ordinary and Higher Level
- 2007 has been a very successful year for the Spanish Department. We had a Dept. of Education inspection which issued a very favourable report. The report can be accessed on the net at www.education.ie/insreports/des_school_inspection_reports_feb_07.htm
- Department meetings were held throughout the year. Textbooks were reviewed and discussed. Primer Paso is being introduced for First years. Some Senior students used Authentik publication and found it to be very beneficial.
- The orals were held 23rd and 24th April and we had a very positive feedback.
- The Spanish Department prepared displays and posters for Open Day.
- Projects were completed by 4th years who researched aspects of Spanish life and culture. They were also introduced to Salsa classes which were an astounding success.
- First years enjoyed researching for their end of year projects on Spanish lifestyle, personalities, Royal Family, food and history.
- Second years experienced the delights of Barcelona which included visits to Montserrat, Salou, Nou Camp, Tour of City, and Gaudi architecture.
- Mock Papers were ordered for Leaving Cert and Junior Cert classes and exams were corrected externally.
- Information was passed on about courses in Spain and Euro Languages in Ireland.

14. FRENCH DEPARTMENT

Department: Sr. Joan, Kay Bunce, Nora Brosnan, May Reidy, Nóirín Sheldon, Anne Gallivan, Marie O'Connor,

Junior and Senior cycle

- In the classroom the curriculum was followed with a view to proficiency in the four key language skills of Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, the latter skill being mainly geared to Senior level in preparation for Leaving Certificate.
- Mock exams were held for Third and Sixth year pupils from February 8th to February 16th. Papers were provided and corrected by an external company.
- Orals exams took place during the week of 23rd to 27th April. Two examiners conducted these exams and pupils were happy in general with their own performance. In the preceding weeks, teachers voluntarily dedicated their lunch breaks to provide extra tuition to pupils and mock orals were also held.

Transition Year

A variety of classroom activities were carried out. In addition to traditional language classes, students worked on and enjoyed other French related activities such as:

- Viewing French films and videos.
- French calendars. The Beginners French Class worked on the creation of a large French calendar which provided a visual aid to class and enabled pupils to work on core beginner vocabulary such as days, months and numbers.
- Project work. A variety of projects were prepared on cultural topics such as tourism, food, sport, music, fashion, film, literature and general culture in the French speaking world. These projects formed part of their TY portfolios and were assessed at the end of the year.
- Indexing of new material. A variety of new resources were acquired for the French department such as graded readers [see below]. TY students worked on preparing a vocabulary index for each reader, to facilitate reading for all classes.
- Preparatory language activities for the annual trip to Paris were carried out once weekly by student teacher Grainne O Connor. These consisted of fun role play activities on basic French situations such as shopping, ordering in a restaurant etc.

Resources

A wide range of new resources were purchased during the year to augment the library facilities including the following:

- French Extra. Videos with corresponding activities for Junior and post Junior Cert.
- La Loupe. A series of easy readers for the Junior cycle.
- A collection of readers for post Junior and Senior cycle
- Films Les Choristes and Les Miserables.
- Trois Minutes A dvd containing short, humorous sketches of French life featuring important vocabulary and situations. Suitable for the Junior cycle.
- A selection of magazines from the Authentik group for Senior Cycle.

A new French section of the school library was put in place where resource material will be stored to be used by French teachers. Readers were put on display where they can be borrowed by pupils.

Language and Cultural Activities

- **TRANSITION TRIP TO PARIS.** The annual trip to Paris took place from 8th to 12th February with seventy five TY pupils going along with seven teachers including Ms Lola Scollard representing the French department. The trip was a big success and pupils enjoyed many cultural and fun activities in addition to having the opportunity to practice their oral skills in authentic situations.
- **FRENCH BREAKFASTS** These were enjoyed by Ms Scollard's TY class and Ms Reidy's Second year class to the accompaniment of French music. These activities took place during the final term
- **EXCHANGE TRIPS AND LANGUAGE STAYS** All information was passed on to pupils during the year and all French teachers encouraged their classes to avail of these opportunities and /or holidays in France wherever possible. A representative of Eurolanguages college visited the school in February and spoke to all post Junior Cert pupils, showing an explanatory video on their summer courses.

15. GERMAN DEPARTMENT

Department Members

Aine Clarke, Breeda Cronin, Stella O'Mahony, Lola Scollard, Emer Griffin (covered Aine Clarke adoptive leave from September 2006 to February 2007) & Franziske Wandtke – German Assistant.

The academic year 2006/07 was once again a highly successful year for the promotion of German Language and Culture amongst the student population of the school. All academic years were exposed to various language skills with emphasis on those integral to the learning of a language i.e. Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking.

1st Year

All three first year German Classes (A Clarke, B Cronin & L Scollard) followed the common programme of work as agreed by the teachers at the end of the previous academic year. A common topic of hobbies was chosen for the year. All these students sat a common exam and a common marking scheme was agreed by all teachers.

2nd Year

Both second year classes (B Cronin & S O'Mahony) continued to work on the course material set out for the year. As these classes were of varying ability, the topics and level of grammar covered varied.

3rd Year

Both third year classes (A Clarke & B Cronin) completed the course work with their teachers and all the members of the Department want to wish them every success as they complete their final preparations for their Junior Certificate Examinations.

4th Year

This year was one class group (S O'Mahony) three times weekly of varying abilities. Franziske Wandtke, our German Language Assistant provided special support to students that have never studied the German language and facilitated a basic beginners German programme.

5th Year

This year consisted of a Higher Level class (A Clarke) and Ordinary Level (S O'Mahony) that covered the course work set out for the year.

6th Year

All sixth year students – Higher Level class (B Cronin) and Ordinary Level (A Clarke) completed the course work with their teachers and all members of the Department want to wish them well as they complete their final preparations for their Leaving Certificate Examinations.

The school was assigned a German Assistant for the academic Year 2006-2007 by the Department of Education. Franziska Wandtke, originally from Berlin worked with us from September to March. A timetable was drawn up and she worked with all teachers and facilitated small student discussion

groups to help improve their spoken language skills and ability. She was particularly helpful in her one to one sessions with all students in the lead up the Leaving Certificate Oral Examinations.

The German Department in conjunction with The Irish Film Institute also provided the opportunity for the Senior cycle classes to see the German film – “ Die Fetten Jahre sind vorbei”. Over 70 students availed of this opportunity which proved to be an enjoyable and educational experience.

The school also participated in the Annual German Language Debating Competition organised by the GDI. Our team debated the topic “Students should work during the school term” and were debating against Presentation Convent, Tralee in the first round of the competition. They were narrowly defeated but can take solace in that, Presentation Convent were the eventual winners of the competition. Well done to the students who represented the school in this competition and special thanks to Pauline Burke for her help in preparing our team for the competition.

16. METALWORK - ENGINEERING

Department: Mr Ray Hickey, Mr. Brian Harkin. Mr Michael O’Sullivan

The ‘06/07 school year proved to be very eventful and extremely busy for the Engineering Dept. The ever professional and popular Mr. Richard Forbes, who had been in the school for two years, decided to move to pastures nearer his home in his former community school in Dunmanway, Co. Cork. He has been replaced by Mr. Harkin for the coming year.

1st year Metalwork

Out of 68 1st year students, 53 have applied to continue on with Metalwork to Junior Cert. We are very satisfied with the 1st year book, “An Introduction to Metalwork” by Ambrose McCreanor, as it suits all levels of ability. All topics are covered and the text itself is excellent. It is a very suitable book as regards student *differentiation*.

It has been decided to take a fresh look at 1st year practical work and cut out some of the labour-intensive exercises and introduce more design and technology in order to keep the subject fresh and exciting. The main aim would still be to introduce students to new skills and allow them to become proficient in these and also that students would acquire an appreciation of the subject.

2nd year Metalwork

Students made great progress in the past year. For next year we feel that students should complete at least one Junior Cert project and one Junior Cert practical exam during the year, in preparation for their Junior Cert. We are very happy with the current revised edition of the Junior Cert textbook “Basic Engineering Technology for Junior Cert” by Sean O’Tuairisg.

3rd year Metalwork

The Junior Cert. ordinary and higher level projects ran from November to the 6th of April. The higher level project was a Model Steam Engine, which proved to be quite tricky and difficult to assemble. The ordinary level project was a lovely Model Vintage Car.

The practical exam was held on Tuesday the 8th of May, and most students were well prepared for this exam.

5th year Engineering

The 15 students took 3 single theory classes a week and a double practical class. Much of the ordinary level theory has been completed and some higher level.

6th year Engineering

There were 9 students in total in this first Leaving Cert engineering class. From September to the Mid Term we concentrated completely on the theory course and completed this in time for the project brief which was received on the 27th of October.

Students not taking technical drawing experienced difficulties in the task of designing and drawing the project. The students were well prepared for the practical exam on the 9th of May, and this ran smoothly.

LCA year 2 Engineering

The year ran smoothly for this group, key assignments and project work was completed by all students on time. For their final year project some students designed and produced “A hanging basket and bracket” while others designed and produced “a clock with an electronic feature”.

In-service

On the 1st of September 2006 Mr. Frank Egan provided a full day course on the setting up and use of the EMCO PC Turn55 CNC lathe.

R. Hickey and B. Harkin attended an ETTA subject association meeting in Killorglin on the evening of October the 12th to discuss Subject Development Planning and Safety Statements

R. Hickey, B. Harkin and M. O’Sullivan attended Round 2 (Freehand Sketching and Digital Imaging) and Round 3 (CAD) of the in-service days provided by the T⁴ Design and Communication Graphics Support Service at the Tralee Education Centre.

Overall the subject is progressing well since its introduction to Mounthawk. The subject is proving to be popular and is growing in numbers but should be taken in conjunction with technical graphics.

17 WOODWORK AND DRAWING

Department:

Diarmuid Murphy, Sean Flaherty, Brain Harkin, Michael O’Sullivan.

The woodwork and graphics department has been growing and developing over the last number of years and this has been one of the busiest yet. As always our aim is to develop students' knowledge and to help them to apply this to solve practical problems and projects. In the last year we welcomed two new staff members to the department, Mr. Harkin and Mr. O Sullivan and they have been a great asset to the. students and the school.

Woodwork - Junior cycle

In 1st year there were five classes in 2006/07 and they covered large numbers of projects from desk tidies to tables and c.d. holders etc. This was a great start if they wish to keep the subject on for the junior cert.

2nd years have been busy with their projects also which they designed and constructed using for the first time the machines in the woodwork rooms. The quality of this work would suggest that next year they will design and make great pieces for the exams.

3rd years have completed their projects for the exam and the standard this year again is very high and the artifacts are of a very high standard.

Woodwork - Senior Cycle

Leaving Cert. students have just completed their practical test which was a four hour exam and the resulting pieces have been sent to the dept. for correction. They have also completed their projects which in general are excellent ranging from model stairs and roofs, chess tables, sugán chair, model lathe, plate rack, display units and tables. The two classes have worked very well and we feel they will do very well in the exams, we know that their woodwork ability and their problem solving skills are excellent and we wish them well in the exams and the future.

Drawing

This has been a very busy year for the department with preparing for the introduction of the new D.C.G. (Design and Communication Graphics) course.

There was huge uptake in Tech Graph in first year (five classes) and the majority of the students continue the subject in second year. All these students will have the benefit of the new D.C.G. course when they choose for leaving cert. The 3rd years are preparing for the exams and these students will be the first class to start the new D.C.G. course.

Fifth and sixth years are covering the old course and all the classes are doing really well and we are hoping for great results in their exams.

The graphics teachers have been doing in-service for the new course over the last year and there are a number of days yet to do so we hope to be up to speed by the start of next year.

We are at present in the process of ordering new computers, printers, software etc. for the new course and it promises to be an interesting and challenging subject with computer aided drawing (C.A.D.), design, sketching and portions of the old course.

18. BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Department Members

Aisling O'Connor, Sr. Nora, Eleanor Mangan, Martina McAuliffe, Una Carey, Gillian O'Carroll, Cecelia O'Neill, Cora McElligott.

Business Studies Teachers Association of Ireland (BSTAI) Events

The BSTAI ran a number of events during the year which members of the Business Department attended. Analysis of Leaving Cert. Business and Accounting exams and the marking schemes was held in October and later on in the year we had an evening dedicated to the analysis of the Junior Cert. Business Studies paper and marking scheme.

We also attended a meeting on "Whole School Evaluation" and "Subject Evaluation" to assist in the Subject Plan for the Business Department.

The BSTAI also invited John O'Connor for an evening to do a Business Revision Session with the teachers and later a meeting with 6th year students. Many of the Leaving Certificate students attended this event.

4th Year Activities

4th Years set up a school bank during the year and won the regional finals in the ACCA Build a Bank Competition. They also had in Colm Cooper in as a guest speaker to give advice on Money Management.

4th Years also had the opportunity to set up a mini-company and three groups went on to compete in the Kerry Young Entrepreneurs Scheme (YES). Two fourth year groups came 2nd and 3rd in Kerry.

LCA 1 Enterprise Task

For their Enterprise Task LCA 1 divided into two groups and set up two Mini Companies – "Hot Shot Gifts" and "Mother's Day Specials". They learned how to set up, organise and run their own enterprise. "Hot Shot Gifts" sold cards; certificates and fridge magnets for Mother's Day and "Mother's Day Specials" sold candles, roses and key rings. Each student bought shares in the mini-company and received a dividend on the winding up of the company. One student's comment "One learning experience for me was doing my Enterprise Task. It was a great opportunity for me to be able to set up a mini-company as it was something I had never done before."

LCVP Enterprise Activities

In October last two visitors from St. John of Gods attended the school. They spoke to both 5th and 6th LCVP students about what they do as an organisation, how they are funded, what careers they have and so on. In March 5th year LCVP students had to complete an Action Project. As a class they decided to

plan and organise a Fundraising Event for the Kerry Hospice. They got in contact with Kevin O’Sullivan, an entrepreneur who was also trying to raise money for the Kerry Hospice. He visited the school and met with the students. He brought with him a flower arrangement hamper. Each one sold would yield seven euro for Kerry Hospice. The class raised 140 euro.

“Puzzles on Screen”

Two very enterprising 5th year students, David Boyd and Sean Enright, set up a business producing interactive DVDs aimed at the primary school market. “Puzzles on Screen” is an educational aid for teaching Primary School Science. The project grew from the students’ success last year when they came second in Ireland in the YES programme. This year they came 1st in the Kerry YES finals. They also entered a “Business Plan” Competition organised by Griffith College, Dublin and came first in Ireland.

19. ART DEPARTMENT

Department members:

Catherine Harnett, Tom Benson and Anne O Shea Daly.

Art, Craft and Design are three inter-dependent disciplines. Each involves a different way of thinking: Art emphasises ideas, feelings and visual qualities, Craft emphasises the right use of tools and materials, and Design emphasises planning, problem-solving and completion using drawing as a means of thinking. These unite in the basic human drive to shape the world, for functional purposes, and to express and communicate ideas and feelings. The contribution of art to life is a unique and enriching experience for all.

Art, Craft and Design provide a unique part of the education of the whole person, through heart, head and hand, enabling the person to shape his or her world with discernment, and to understand and appreciate the work of others. The benefits of an education in Art, Craft and Design for a student at this development stage extend far beyond a competence in the subject itself. Art, Craft and Design education develops a number of important personal qualities, particularly those of initiative, perseverance, sensibility and self-reliance.

Junior Certificate Programme

The syllabus framework is designed for the full ability range in Junior Cycle. The core syllabus consists of

Drawing - figure and object drawing, Painting, Printmaking, Graphic Design, Modelling, Carving, Construction Craft - batik, ceramics, packaging, soft sculpture, model making, block printmaking etc.

First Year

First year is an introductory year where students are introduced to the basic elements of art craft and design. They generally have a double and a single class of art. Students covered drawing, painting, graphic design, craftwork, and printing and support studies. Some students entered The Credit Union Competition and the Community Gamed Art Competition.

Second Year

Building on skills and knowledge gained in the first year, pupils are encouraged to improve and experiment with techniques and materials. Pupils are introduced to the Junior Cert course and to the concepts of support studies and preparatory work. Pupils generally have a double and two single classes. Second year students covered drawing painting, 3D work,, craftwork, graphic design and support studies.

Third Year

Students are prepared for their Junior Cert Exams. This involves a project, which starts in October and ends in May. There is also a drawing test in May. The project is theme based and consists of preparatory drawings, painting graphic design 31) work and a craft, accompanied by relevant support studies. This project makes up 75% of the students grade , the other 25% goes to the drawing test.

Third year projects will be on display around the school and in the art rooms for the open day in November. Many wonderful projects were produced this year.

Fourth Year

Since art is an optional subject some pupils in fourth year may be taking art for the first time. Therefore lessons are kept simple and interesting but flexible enough to allow the more experienced pupils to excel. This year students covered object drawing and life sketching.

Leaving Certificate Programme

The following is the outline suggested by the Department of Education. Observational Studies, Imaginative Composition or Still Life Design or Craftwork, history and appreciation of art.

Fifth Year

The history of art is introduced as a major part of the syllabus. The history of art makes up 38% of the final leaving cert result.

Students also covered drawing 12%, still life 25% and design or craftwork 25%. The percentages represent the proportion of marks allotted to these areas in the leaving cert exams.

Sixth Year

Students are prepared for their leaving cert exam.

Still Life, Design and Figure drawing were focused on this year. Study in the area of History of Art continued. Students visited an exhibition in Siamsa Tire as part of their course work.

20. MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Department

Ms. Mary Crowley, Ms. Sharon Glancy

Curriculum

1st Year students followed the Department of Education and Science Junior Certificate Music syllabus with emphasis within the classroom on the four core activities, performance, composition, listening and music analysis.

All 1st Year Music students travelled to Cork to a Cork Pops Orchestra lunchtime performance which incorporated many aspects of their learning in the classroom.

2nd & 3rd Year students followed the Department of Education and Science Junior Certificate Music syllabus with emphasis within the classroom on the four core activities, performance, composition, listening and music analysis.

All 4th Year students completed an eight week module in Music. It is based on the theme, "Music in My Community". Students got the opportunity to explore musical activities and resources in Tralee and its environs. Apart from classroom activities students took part in activities such as

- Interviews
- Establishing their own radio station
- Attending musical events
- researching local musical groups/associations in which they may have had an interest

There were also a number of music workshops throughout the year.

- Drumming workshops were timetabled on a weekly basis
- Composition workshops in association with the National Chamber Choir and Dublin City University
- The National Blastbeat Music Project in association with Coca-Cola

All 5th Year and 6th Year students followed the Department of Education and Science Leaving Certificate Music Syllabus. All students had the opportunity to include Music Technology in their final composition submissions.

Extra-Curricular Activities

A number of extra-curricular music activities were open to all students during the year.

The School Choir and Orchestra took part in a number of events throughout the year.

- Mercy Day Mass in September
- 1st year Parents evening in October
- Open Day for incoming students in November
- Annual Carol Service in December
- The National Choral Festival in February
- Awards Night in May
- 4th Year show in May

- *6th* Year Graduation Mass in May

The Mounthawk Chamber Choir also accompanies music students in their Junior and Leaving Certificate performance exams.

Initial auditions were held for students from 1st, 2nd, 4th and 5th Year to have an opportunity to take part in the bi-annual musical in January 2007. Final casting for the show will take place in 1st term. The show will run for 4 nights in Siamsa Tire, Tralee.

21. LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED

Teaching Team: Sr. Bernadette Costello, Sr. Nora Flynn, Michelle Mangan, Bríd O’Sullivan, Sinéad Thornton, Suzanne O’Halloran, Linda Kane, Ray Hickey, Ena Harty, Nora Quinlan, Ann O’Shea Daly, Máiréad O’Mahony, Margaret Bowler, Tadhg O’Sullivan, Diarmuid Murphy, Michael O’Sullivan, Kieran Costelloe, Jemma Lynch, Seán Geary.

Positive Aspects of the Year

1. Nineteen students completed year 2 of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme.
2. Twenty two students completed year 1 of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme.
3. In order to encourage good behaviour and a more congenial learning environment among year 1 students, the year head and the LCA coordinator, in consultation with the students, devised a set of class rules, which was signed by the student and parents. This proved successful in maintaining good behaviour and co-operation in the classroom.

Activities Undertaken

1. Both Year 1 and Year 2 students attended a Fáilte Ireland exhibition in Killarney. The students found this a valuable and worthwhile event.
2. Year 2 students went on a visit to FAS.
3. Sixteen students successfully completed the FAS Safe Pass course.
4. Year 2 students organised a fund raising colours day for charity.
5. Year 2 students completed tasks in Social Education, ICT and Practical Achievement. As part of the Social Education task, students examined various contemporary issues such as Drugs, Alcohol, Boy Racers, Teenage Pregnancy, etc. In ICT, students produced websites on various topics such as computer storage, career directions for LCA students, drugs, fitness, etc. Other students produced learning centres and booklets. For the practical achievement task, some students took the driver theory test or attended out of school activities.
6. Year 2 students completed practical examinations in Hair & Beauty, Engineering and ICT. They also completed oral examinations in Irish, English and Spanish.
7. As part of the Leisure and Recreation module, the year 2 students went to Banna Leisure Centre once a week for four weeks. They found this to be a very enjoyable experience.
8. Year 1 students completed tasks in Drama in January which involved writing a script, acting it out and video recording it.
9. As part of the Graphics and Construction module, year 1 students produced various wooden pieces including wishing wells, flower pots, etc. for their task which was examined in May.
10. As part of the Vocational Preparation & Guidance Enterprise task, the year 1 students formed two mini companies. One group designed and produced cards, magnets and certificates for Mothers Day. The other group produced and sold key rings, candles and artificial roses.
11. Year 1 Craft and Design group produced various pottery items for their May task.

12. In-service was attended by some of the teaching team.
13. Work experience was timetabled for Year 1 on Tuesdays and on Wednesdays for Year 2 students and was monitored by Sr. Nora Flynn and Seán Geary.

Plans 2007/8

1. To establish a Leaving Certificate Applied core teaching team.
2. To attain higher consistent attendance at work experience.
3. To promote attendance throughout the two-year programme.
4. To establish and coordinate submission dates for key assignments and emphasise to students the importance of meeting deadlines.
5. Improved management and planning of student tasks. To try to get the students to be more organised and plan their tasks more efficiently so as to avoid panic as the deadline approaches. To look at computer access for typing of tasks.
6. To promote positive, good behaviour in the classroom
7. To implement the use of PDAs to record student class attendance.

Conclusion

We are proud to have nineteen of our students complete the two-year programme. The programme has been worthwhile and of immense benefit to these students. We wish our Year 2 students well in their final examinations. We look forward to working with our present Year 1 students, the incoming Leaving Certificate Applied students, in September 2007.

22. TRANSITION YEAR

Introduction

The TY programme continues to benefit from whole staff support for its ideals and practical realisation. This is especially true of the eight teachers who volunteer their time as **Core Team** teachers. This year saw the introduction of half term meetings which greatly assisted the planning and execution of activities such as the Portfolio Assessment, (the development of Portfolio Assessment was set as a primary goal for the programme this year) and the End of Year Show. As always management commitment allowed flexible timetabling, access to appropriate structural resources and teacher availability to run the programme's co-curricular elements.

Curriculum

The **breadth of curriculum** continues to be a strength in the programme. This year we experimented with an element of pre-selection in subject areas which students were not in a position to select at senior cycle. Allowing students to choose (for example Woodwork) meant they received a more substantial experience of the subject than hitherto fore where these subjects ran as modules. At the review it was recognised that this practise should be continued while the **"taster approach"** to the Senior Cycle options should be continued.

Co-curriculum

Likewise the breadth of the **co-curriculum** was seen as a strength in the programme. Great staff commitment to these extras continues to be the core of their successful implementation. This year our involvement with Fair Trade and a variety of Special Needs groups was identified as particularly successful. An area identified as requiring development in 2007/08 is the manner in which students volunteer for involvement in the co-curriculum. Perceptions that the same students are dominating the voluntary events needs to be addressed through the development of a more formal requirement to become involved in a minimum/maximum number of projects.

The timetabling of the co-curricular elements will be slightly modified in 2007/08 with a focus in planning Activity Weeks. Also at a timetabling level involvement with the NCCA in the piloting and development of **Transition Units** will allow certain co-curricular activities become part of the mainstream curriculum.

Development plans

Staff have also decided to develop a **"sweep-up" monitoring group** to ensure each individual student is endeavouring to engage with the curricular and co-curricular aspects of the programme.

The existence of a clearly stated written programme was also identified as important. A request to management for contact time in September to plan this programme was stressed. In particular staff wish to develop greater formal cross-curricular/interdisciplinary elements under an umbrella theme.

In relation to the development of the Portfolio Assessment it was felt that every endeavour should be made to clarify its process and product for all incoming students and their parents at the earliest

opportunity in the Academic Year. Toward that end we have instigated a **Parent/Student Portfolio Night**. Set for the first evening of the new term it is intended that the 2007 class will display their work for the incoming class and their parents. It was also emphasised that each individual teacher grade the student work prior to placement in the Portfolio.

The Core Team also intend to circulate the Assessment Guidelines to all TY staff at the planning day in September.

The current format of the Parent Teacher meeting has also been examined in relation to its effectiveness for Transition Year which sees the student involved in 28 subject areas. In the coming Academic Year we intend to pilot a **Student-Parent-Teacher Progress Review** linked to the students Portfolio Work. Rather than meeting with all his/her teachers, the parent and student will meet with a member of the Core Team and examine the overall engagement with the programme.

In overview the 2006/07 Programme was most successful. Portfolio Assessment continued to develop, the cohesion of a Core Team system also continued. New co-curricular elements added much opportunity for both staff and student alike. Finally an excellent Review meeting set the scene for further development in the coming Academic Year.

23. L.C.V.P.

Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme

Department

Mr. Frank Fell, Ms. Una Carey, Ms. Aisling O'Connor, Ms. Martina Mcauliffe, Sr. Bernadette Costello and Ms Betty Farrell.

The primary aim of the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) is to prepare young people for adult life by ensuring that they are educated in the broadest possible sense, with an ability to cope with and thrive in an environment of rapid change. Out students are encouraged to deveop skills and competencies fundamental to academic and vocational success.

As in previous years, the new 5th year LCVP students were grouped in class 5.1.

In 2006/07, as part of the study of 'My Own Place' and as part of the examination of Local Voluntary organisations in Kerry, the 5th and 6th year LCVP classes had visiting speakers from St. John of God, Kerry Service.

Visits to businesses included a trip to Louis Mulcahy Pottery shop to study a local successful business. The trip next year will be to Kerry Group.

Enterprise activities in 2006/07 included a 1st year Table Quiz where all the proceeds were donated to Vincent de Paul. A very successful 'Mothers' Day Hamper' campaign was also run by students with the proceeds going to Kerry Hospice. All these activities encourage and develop both initiative and enterprise in the LCVP students.

16 students took the LCVP exam in the 2007 Leaving Certificate with a number of students using the points from the course to secure their places in college.