



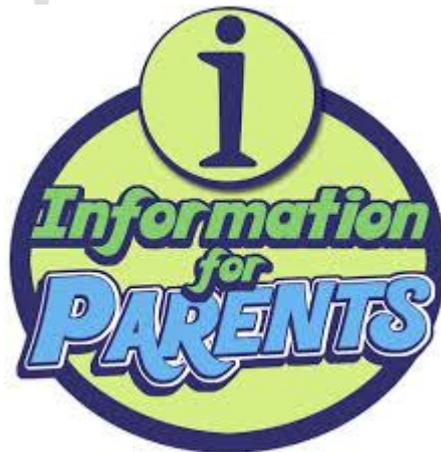
Coláiste Pobail Setanta

Parents Association

Welcome to our College!

Parents Booklet

2013/2014



Find us on
Facebook

colaiste pobail setanta parent association

May, 2013

Note from the Chairperson

As you know the college is only a short time in existence and back in 2009 parents were asked if they would form a Parents Association Committee. The response in 2009 was great and we have gone from strength to strength. We started with nothing but were very willing to do whatever we could to support our new college and to show the staff that they had our full support from the start.

We, and you, are very lucky to be involved in a school such as ours, a fabulous new building and a growing student and staff community... and that is what it is, a community that you will now become a part of

You will have spent time with the staff, understanding what being a parent of a student in second level means, all the changes you and your child will experience but what you may not hear from the staff is how committed they are, giving up their time after hours to coach sports, encourage musical talents, and organise many extra-curricular events and projects. Coláiste Pobail Setanta has a wonderful staff team led by Ms O'Rourke and Mr Dowling.

In fact, though they won't admit it now, your children will get every possible opportunity in Coláiste Pobail Setanta, to set them up to make the best informed career and life choices.

In the coming years you will find out what it means to be a part of this and no matter what commitments or time you may have available to get involved, you will always be welcome.

We owe it to our children to give them the best start in life and as a student in Colaiste Pobail Setanta they are on the right track already!

Noreen Maher

In the following pages, we have provided some information, and tips that we have gathered from our experiences as parents of new students to secondary level, and hope you will find them useful too.

What is a Parents Association?

A parents association is a group of parents whose main concern is the educational development and educational opportunities of their children. It gives us the opportunity to voice our opinions and ideas. It shows the staff and students that we are interested not only in their academic progress but their personal development as well.

Examples of how a parents association can help is by assisting at or organising events and functions for students and parents; collaborating with college management in policy making; fundraising for cultural, leisure and extra-curriculum activities and facilities.

It also gives us a forum for discussing and sharing our ideas and concerns with other parents. When our children were in primary school we collected them, were given notes and were involved in every stage. In second level, it is all different! They go and come home with their friends, don't want you at the school gate, and forget to hand up information notes! Welcome to the teenage world!

But no need to worry, if you get involved in the Parents Association you will have a backup system! You will have heard about the methods of communication used by the College like notes in journals, and text messages etc. but sometimes you need to discuss issues with other parents who may be experiencing the same difficulties or uncertainty as you, and others more experienced may be able to reassure you!

You can join at any time or submit your details by email to our secretary at:
cpsetantapa@hotmail.com

Just to be clear, we do not act as a complaints forum against teaching staff in areas which are the responsibility of the principal or board of management.



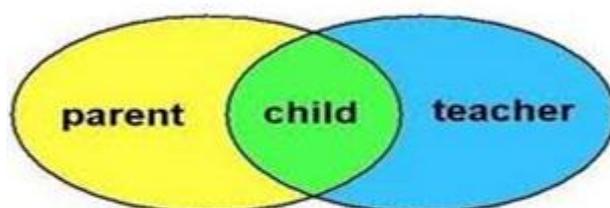
In 2010 we produced our PA Constitution, which outlines our objectives and our role within the College. To give you a better understanding of what we have committed to, details of the objectives are in the next section.

Objectives of the Coláiste Pobail Setanta Parent Association

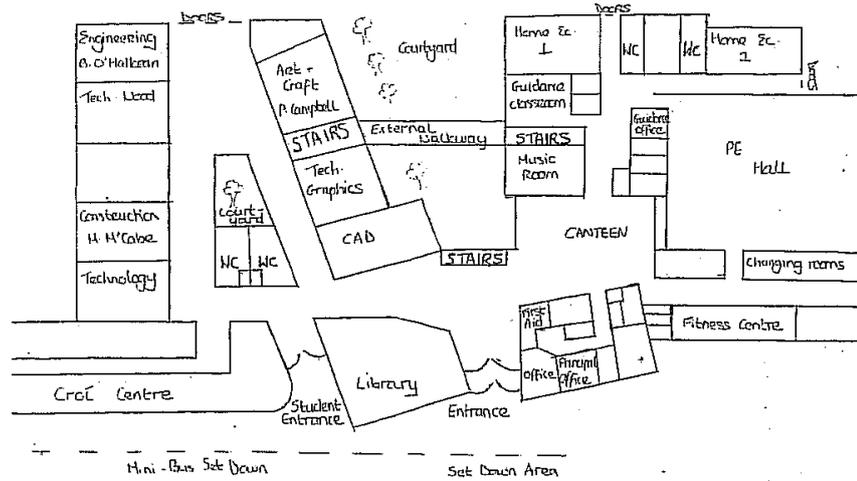
The Parents Association shall promote the interests of the students in the school in co-operation with the Board of Management, Principal, teachers, students and parents.

The Association aims to achieve this by:

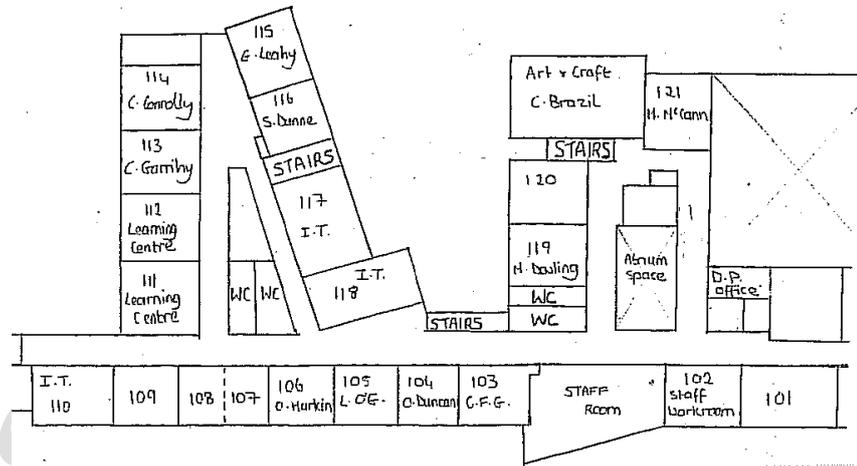
1. Adopting a programme of activities which will promote the involvement of parents in the operation of the school in consultation with the Principal.
2. Consulting with parents, so that parents can express their views on school policy matters relating to the school; to represent the views of parents on matters of local educational significance.
3. Cooperating with, and advising the Principal or the Board of Management on matters relating to the school, when requested. The association should choose two nominees for the School Board of Management (one mother and one father).
4. Supporting the school in extra- curricular activities.
5. Providing access to education and training for parents as required.
6. Informing parents of developments in education and in the school.
7. Raising funds for the benefit of pupils.
8. Using our individual strengths collectively for the benefit of the school and its students.



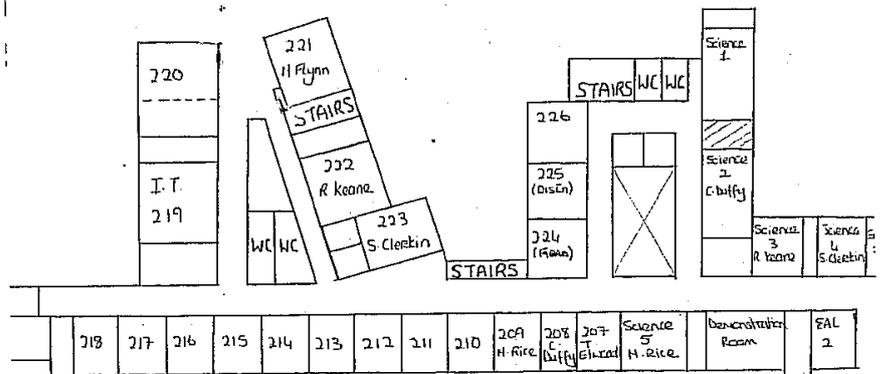
Coláiste Pobail Seanta - Ground Floor



Coláiste Pobail Seanta - First Floor



Coláiste Pobail Seanta - Second Floor



Finding your way around the college A → → → → B??

Our PA Committee

Our association committee was established in 2009 and works hand in hand with the staff of the College in many areas such as developing new policies, providing our ideas and opinions and supporting the staff and students.

Our activities vary from fundraising for the College (e.g. raising funds for the school defibrillator, library supplies; sponsoring the inter-class basketball competition) to organising speakers and information evenings on relevant topics.

We have a very strong committee of dedicated parents and are always open to new members and ideas to ensure we represent fully the College community.

Any parents new to the College or who have first year students, and any parents who might now be interested, are welcome to come to our meetings at any time.

We meet once a month. If you feel you can't attend meetings we would welcome support in other ways, just make yourself known to any of the committee members listed below (you may see familiar names of friends or neighbours so please contact us at any time or via the College). Our email address is: cpsetantapa@hotmail.com

One way we particularly need parent volunteers is to support the Learning Unit at exam time. We offer assistance by sitting with students who may need someone to read the questions or to write what the student dictates, on the answer sheet. As part of the State Examination system, all students with learning difficulties can apply for this service, so by volunteering in our College for term exams you are helping the student become familiar or comfortable with this service. One less stress at exam time! Contact the PA Secretary if you can spare some time to assist or watch our Facebook Page for information near exam time.



The Parents Association Committee members 2012/2013 are:

| | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Chairperson: | Noreen Maher | cpsetantapa@hotmail.com |
| Vice-Chair : | Anke McElligott | |
| Secretary: | Valerie Byrne | cpsetantapa@hotmail.com |
| Treasurer: | Lorraine Uzell | |
| PRO: | Jean Murdoff | |

Association members and supporters:

| | | |
|------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| Anita Diggin | Ciara Farrell | Julie Francis |
| Asma Farhan | Dolores Quigg | Sinead Cosgrove |
| Julie O'Sullivan | Carolyn Colvin | Lorraine O'Brien |
| Aasiya Saleem | Bernie Bennett | Amanda O'Donnell |
| Sandra Cooke | Liam Onofrei | Chika Chukwuazi |
| Sinead Edgeley | Regina Hendrick | Maria Cummins |

When most of us started out as first time parents of a second level student, we all had questions, needed clarity or understanding of the college policies, and the day-to-day routine of a second level student and their school day. Through word of mouth, chatting with other parents (especially of those already in the college) we learned more. Some might seem obvious or you may be aware of them already but in the section below, we have selected some of the more common questions – and their answers – that you might find useful in navigating through the maze!



Frequently Asked Questions and Tips

Books

Q- My son is in first year and always seems to leave a book or copybook in his locker, any suggestions to help him be more organised?

A- A good idea that some parents have found helpful is to buy ziploc A4 plastic pouches – one for each subject with the book, hardback, and copybook inserted, label it with the subject name and your student only has to grab the pouch and run to class!

Q- My daughter seems to have a very heavy book bag – is there any way of lightening the load?

A- One suggestion is to replace ‘hardback’ A4 copies with a soft/plastic cover version available in local stationery/book shops e.g. Easons.

Q- My son says that he’s always rushing to class and then finds he’s forgotten a book from his locker, any suggestions?

A- Colour-coding each subject on the timetable and putting matching colour stickers on the books helps speed up finding books in the locker for the afternoon classes. The same applies to hardbacks which may have one cover colour for all the subjects.

Timetable

Q- My son struggled in the early weeks – leaving books at home or in the locker, how can I help him be more organised?

A- Copy the timetable for home and enlarge one for inside the locker door –will help to get into a routine. In the first few weeks you can help by checking the timetable and be aware of days when they need their PE, Art or Tech Graphics bags etc. to have them ready.

Journal

Q-Are we supposed to check the journal each night?

A-It's a good habit to start, you are expected to sign the journal when your child has finished homework each night, and it gives you the opportunity to observe any comments from the teachers or tutors. Sometimes there are notes from the tutor for your attention that have to be acknowledged by your signature.

Communications to & from the College

Q-How will I know if there is an event or school meeting?

A-The College usually uses different coloured flyers, text messages, or tutor's notes in Journals. From experience we have found that the teenage students tend not to hand up notes on the day they get them and the notes get mixed up with others in the bag! If you need to contact a teacher or tutor, you should write a note in the journal.

The Parents Association now has a Facebook Page to keep you informed and provide more details or reminders. Check it out – Colaiste Pobail Setanta Parent Association and 'like' and 'share' our page.

Uniform

Q –I know the uniform supplier is Grants but apart from the crested uniform of jumper, tie, PE kit, and girls shirts and skirts are there other items that are standard uniform?

A – yes, shirts must be white, boys trousers must be grey, socks must be navy, and shoes black.

Q- my son always seems to come home either without his jacket or someone else's jumper. Any ideas?

A-Grants offer a name printing service, when ordering uniforms, for a small charge

Q-My daughter is starting first year, does she have to wear her PE uniform in school for the day?

A-Unlike in Primary School, students in second level only wear their PE uniform for the PE class duration, so you will need to buy or use a second schoolbag for PE gear.

Lockers

Q –My son keeps losing his locker key – any suggestions?

A-Each Tutor will hold spare keys if you put it in an envelope with your student's name on it, he can then go to the Tutor when he needs a key, but remind him to return the spare! Another idea is to use a combination lock where he only needs to remember the number code to unlock it.

General information

Did you know that there are 'clubs' that your student might find useful or interesting? Apart from the obvious sports, music etc there is also extra help available during lunchtimes with Maths, Spanish etc (check with your student's tutor for more details as the availability and subject may vary from term to term) There is also a homework/ study time after school especially useful for first years and those in exam years.

The college canteen provides hot and light lunches which can be pre-ordered (not expensive) in the morning before class, if your student gets fed up of sandwiches!



How to keep cool and support your child during exam times

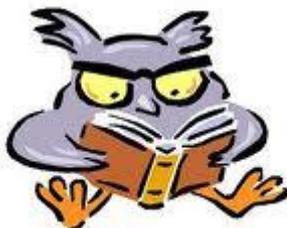
According to helpline sources many students feel that the greatest pressure at exams time comes from their families. The following tips were sourced from www.nspcc.co.uk, [www.schooldays.ie](http://www schooldays.ie) an article in the Irish Independent 23 May 2011 as well as parents general experience

- Watch out for signs of exam stress – irritability, not sleeping well, losing interest in food, headaches and stomach pains - a balanced diet can help them feel more energetic during exam periods (high-fat, high-sugar foods and drinks leads to hyperactive, irritable and moody episodes).
- Encourage sleep – this will improve concentration (teenagers need between 8-10 hours sleep a night)
- Help them to study and revise by providing a comfortable area to work – no distractions with electronic devices which should be banned during study/homework time.
- Planning a study schedule can ease the panic.
- Talk to them about feeling nervous, that it is normal, and encourage them by reminding them of how much work they have done, to help them feel confident.
- Be flexible – when your child is revising all day, don't nag them about chores or tidying their room, allow some down-time to watch TV or hang out with friends, and encourage them to go out for walks in the fresh air – remember, exams don't last forever!

If it's getting too much – have a bar of chocolate handy – for yourself!



Recommended Reading



David Coleman - *Parenting is Child's Play – the teenage years*

Karen Sullivan – *You want to do what?*

Padraig Lawlor/Philip O'Callaghan – *Make It Happen – a success guide for teenagers*

Links:

www.cpsetanta.ie

[www.schooldays.ie](http://www schooldays.ie)

www.askaboutireland.ie

www.scoilnet.com

www.skool.ie

www.focal.ie

Useful Sites:

Department of Education www.education.ie

National council for curriculum assessment www.ncca.ie information on junior/senior cycle curriculum

State examination commission www.examinations.ie for exam papers and marking schemes

Qualifax - National Learners Database www.qualifax.ie database of courses and careers

National Parents Association for Vocational Schools & Community Colleges

www.npavsc.ie

Health Service Executive www.hse.ie health services, family support, healthy eating etc

Road safety Authority www.rsa.ie pedestrian and cyclist info

Anti-bullying Centre, Trinity College www.abc-tcd.ie

Internet safety www.webwise.ie all aspects of internet safety and info on facebook, youtube etc

<http://www.gotateenager.org.uk> – includes a 'teenglish' jargon buster!

Parenting : The delicate, persistent, evolving dance, to stay one step ahead of the wool being pulled over your eyes!



Parenting Quotes!

Children grow up to be adults.....but Parents are Parents forever!

Parenthood is the art of bringing your children up without putting them down....

Before I got married I had six theories about bringing up children; now I have six children, and no theories. John Wilmot

Your children need your presence more than your presents. ~Jesse Jackson

Don't worry that children never listen to you; worry that they are always watching you. ~Robert Fulghum

Parents often talk about the younger generation as if they didn't have anything to do with it. ~Haim Ginott

The trouble with learning to parent on the job is that your child is the teacher. ~Robert Brault

If you have never been hated by your child you have never been a parent. ~Bette Davis



Good luck on your journey!