



Headstrong 2020/21

The Highlights of the Year

LGBTI+ Week 2020

The Headstrong Committee played a huge role this year in celebrating LGBTI+ Week, and definitely getting the school in the spirit of it. We ran a poster competition and decorated the school in bright and vibrant colours, both of which were a huge success and were received very well by all students and staff.





Wellbeing Wednesday

Each Wednesday throughout this academic year our entire student body engaged in 5 minute Wellbeing activities to help improve and maintain our Wellbeing. Activities such as calming breathing exercises, chair yoga, mindful meditation proved very popular among our students. As well as these activities students were provided with 5 minute Wellbeing lessons such as connecting with one another, practicing gratitude, respectful relationships, self efficacy, hope and optimism.



Staff Appreciation Committee

Our Staff Appreciation Awards took place on Fridays. Staff were presented with a coffee cup filled with treats and goodies. They also received a personalised certificate, pen and keyring with our event catchphrase ‘thank you for making a difference everyday’. School staff also really valued the ‘feel good’ written appreciations from our students. The staff appreciation awards has been a huge success and have brought great joy to all. It taught our TY class a valuable lesson - the importance of giving to others and how ‘giving’ is a tool in improving our own wellbeing.

Ms Meaney
Ms Meaney is very organised and is skilled at assessing the needs and learning styles of each of her students which allows her to encourage them to reach their full potential. She also provides emotional, physical and social support to her students in between lessons. Thank you, Ms Meaney, for making a difference every day.

Ms Haines
Ms Haines is a valued member of our Religion department and one of our longest serving teachers. Ms Haines is kind and compassionate and creates a classroom atmosphere that is stimulating and encouraging to all. She is passionate about teaching students the importance of freedom of speech and building community relationships. This is evident through her work with the SVP. Ms Haines also devotes her time to organising our school JP2 awards. Thank you, Ms Haines, for making a difference every day.

Ms McConnell
Ms McConnell is an enthusiastic and committed Art teacher. She has a talent for instilling art appreciation and promoting creativity and innovation among her students. She has a keen interest in ceramics and illustrations and is eager to pass this passion onto her students. Ms McConnell also has an ability to inspire students, in particular members in our 2.9 and LCA classes, who create attractive artwork for their Christmas Market and Clonmacnoise tasks. Thank you, Ms McConnell, for making a difference every day.

Mr McBride
Mr McBride is a hardworking and dedicated member of our science department. He promotes a supportive and vibrant learning environment and encourages active participation. His students especially enjoy his lessons with hands on activities, which showcases science in a practical way. He is also passionate about outdoor education.



Smiley Pancake Day 2021

Lockdown hit after Christmas 2020, meaning we were out of school for almost 4 months. We wanted to keep mental health initiatives going, even if it meant doing it remotely. We had to get thinking. One of our ideas was the Smiley Pancake Day for Pancake Tuesday in 2021 where people designed their pancakes with smiley faces. Many people got involved, and it definitely brighten the dark days.

Strava

In lockdown our school also ran a Strava competition. Each student downloaded the Strava app and year groups competed in weekly competitions to see who was the most active. This was a great initiative to get people moving and away from the screens which we were on from 9am to 4pm each day. The top contributors to the leaderboards were also awarded with vouchers on return to school.





Colour to Conquer: Teacher Hair Dye Event

In April of 2021 the committee came up with the idea of an event which would involve staff getting voted by students to dye their hair in aid of Pieta House. This was COVID friendly and brought great joy to the school, even through difficult times. This solidified our efforts in getting the very first Amber Flag for our school. It was a great success and 220 euro was raised for Pieta House!

Mental Health Video & The Virtual Student Congress for Cycle Against Suicide

At the end of April some members of our committee created a video talking about all the work we had carried so far in the year. This was shown to junior students in our school, along with TYs. The video led into the Virtual Student Congress for Cycle Against Suicide which students watched for the remainder of the class period.

<https://youtu.be/Lsh9Ojlobog>

Student Congress 2021 (Virtual)



Amber Flag

As a result of activities such as Wellbeing Wednesday, Staff Appreciation awards, Strava, Colour to Conquer teacher hair dye event, LGBTQI+ week, in May 2021 St. Brendan's Community School was awarded its very first 'Amber Flag' by Pieta House. The Amber Flag award has been presented to St. Brendan's in recognition of our outstanding contribution to mental health and wellbeing in our school community.

