



# THE CLOUNAGH CHRONICLE



## Clounagh Opens Its Doors!

Our recent Open Night was a huge success, welcoming prospective students and their families to explore everything our school has to offer.

The evening was packed with

exciting activities, interactive displays, and opportunities to meet teachers, staff, and current students.

Macey O, Year 8, explained, 'I helped out in English and felt it was a great experience to show off my knowledge and loved helping out all of the P6/7s. I was so happy telling them why they should come to Clounagh!'

Open Night gave families and prospective students a chance to see firsthand the activities, classrooms, and opportunities on offer.

It's a perfect way to get a feel for life at our school and discover what makes our community special. Look inside this issue for more pictures!

**More on page 2 & 3**

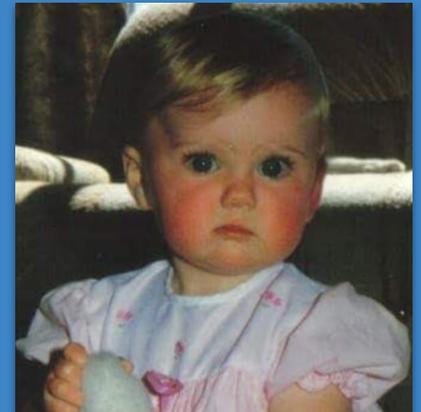
ISSUE No4



LD at Loughry



Eco Club in Action



Tiny Teachers

# SCHOOL LIFE

## A Night to Remember: Our School Open Night!



Visitors were able to try quizzes in classrooms, sample delicious food, and watch science experiments in action. Sports fans had the chance to join in with demonstrations and try out some physical activities, while others explored subject areas and got introductions to the curriculum in each department.

'I wanted to help out to explain to P6/P7 students why they should come. I was showing Clounagh's past play equipment, props and costumes and even letting them try it on! I had a great night even though it was really busy!' said Year 8, Sophie I.

Mrs Morton, Head of History, stated, 'Open Night provides an opportunity to showcase our curriculum and classroom environment to help families feel confident and informed about the transition into secondary school. For parents that offers reassurance, a chance to ask questions, and an opportunity to meet staff and understand how we support pupils academically and pastorally.'

Overall, the evening ran smoothly and received fantastic feedback. Hopefully families left inspired and informed, while students and staff enjoyed showcasing the vibrant and welcoming community that makes our school so special.



# SCHOOL LIFE

## Open Night Continued...



## Surviving the Zombie Attack:

### Teacher Edition!

The bell rings, but instead of students rushing to class, the halls echo with groans. Windows are smashed open, classrooms are abandoned, and a zombie outbreak is spreading fast through the school. With teachers and students fighting to survive, this is one school day no one will ever forget.

The question is though... If a zombie apocalypse suddenly hit our school, which teacher would survive the longest?

Armed with nothing but quick thinking, bravery, and maybe a strong glare, we asked students to vote on which teacher they think would outlast a zombie attack.

The results are entertaining, unexpected, and prove that some teachers might be more apocalypse-ready than we thought...

- 1st place: Mr W Graham
- 2nd Place: Mr Carville
- 3rd Place: Mrs Gray
- 4th Place: Mrs Bridge



# SCHOOL LIFE

## Year 9 LD Gets Hands-On at Loughry

Year 9 class LD recently enjoyed an exciting educational trip to CAFRE's Loughry campus, thanks to a prize won by Eva Sloan in the Meat4Schools competition.

The visit offered students a unique opportunity to learn about food production, cooking, and tasting in a fun, hands-on way.

Mrs Black, Head of H.E. described the day for us, 'The pupils rolled up their sleeves to cook delicious beef smash burgers, tested their taste buds in a sensory session comparing beef with meat-free products – the majority preferred the beef, and explored the Loughry Mini Meat Plant to discover how local beef and lamb make their

journey from farm to fork.'

The experience gave them a better understanding of the food industry, sustainability, and the importance of quality local produce.

Eva S entered the competition to win the experience, 'I entered the competition as it was such a great opportunity to showcase the fantastic job our farmers in Northern Ireland do.'

'I have a real passion for both farming and good nutritious food... This competition developed my skills in communication and my ICT skills in producing a short video.' Check out Eva's winning video entry on our school Facebook page!



# SCHOOL LIFE

## Chalkboards and What-Ifs

Ever wondered what your teachers would be doing if they weren't standing at the front of a classroom?

From dream jobs to unexpected careers, we asked teachers around the school what they would be if teaching wasn't an option. Their answers might surprise you—and prove that teachers have just as many ambitions and talents as their students.

### Mr Emerson

My answer is going to be quite boring because I've always wanted to be a teacher, always loved working with young people as I was a youth worker

in my church for quite a while and it seemed like a natural fit.

### Mrs McDowell

I actually really wanted to be a policewoman and I think I would probably have gone down that route. If I hadn't done that I'd probably have tried to stay at University for longer and I would've really liked a research position.

### Mr Ryan

I think I'd probably be some sort of an accountant because my dad is an accountant as well or I'd be a policeman/ detective because I've good observation skills and Mrs McDowell and I would make a good team!

### Mrs Sloan

Whenever I was your age I wanted to be a lawyer but I don't think I would be very good at it but if I wasn't a teacher, I would be an accountant.

### Mr McClelland

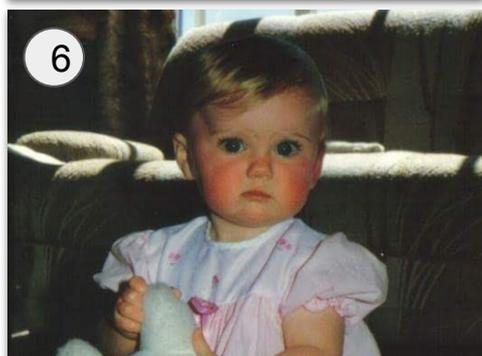
If I wasn't a teacher, I'd be a policeman.

### Mrs Morton

If I didn't become a teacher, I would have liked to have been a social worker whenever I was studying at university but to tell you the truth, teaching was the thing I always wanted to do as I love working with and helping people.

### From Diapers to Desks: Staff Baby Photos

Ever wondered what our staff looked like as babies? We dug out some adorable (and sometimes surprising!) baby photos from around the school. Can you guess who's who?



1. Mrs McClelland 2. Miss Calvert 3. Mrs Gilchrist 4. Mr Irwin 5. Mrs Bridge 6. Mrs Walls 7. Mrs Vennard 8. Mrs Irwin

# SCHOOL LIFE

## Snow, Slopes, and Super Memories: This Year's Ski Adventure



This term, over 40 students swapped school desks for ski slopes, accompanied by four amazing staff members: Mrs J Sutton, Mrs J Reid, Mrs J Black, and Mr W Graham. The destination? Snowy peaks, crisp air, and plenty of fun!

Each day was packed with skiing from morning to evening, whether students were perfecting their turns, speeding down the slopes, or laughing through the occasional tumble. No matter their experience, everyone got a chance to challenge themselves and enjoy the thrill of the mountains.

Mr W Graham, Head of Year 10, filled us in... 'The ski trip was a fantastic week filled with fresh snow, plenty of laughs, mountains of pizza and cosy hot chocolates after long days on the slopes. So many great memories. I can't wait for next year's trip!'

When the skis were off, evenings were just as exciting. Students took part in moonlit walks, lively quizzes, Bingo night, and a special awards night celebrating everyone's efforts and achievements throughout the week.

Delicious meals kept energy levels high, as the Italian cuisine allowed for far too much delicious pasta and incredible pizzas enjoyed by all!

Year 10, Rio M, said 'I absolutely loved the ski trip because it was my first experience skiing. I loved eating out of the local restaurants. We were allowed to fly down the mountain every day and it was class!. Unfortunately, my team didn't manage to win any of the quizzes but we had a great laugh anyway.'

The trip wasn't just about skiing—it was about teamwork, friendship, and enjoying every moment away from school life.

Thanks to the dedication and organisation of our staff, the trip ran smoothly and safely, giving everyone an experience they'll remember for years to come.

By the time the group returned, tired legs and rosy cheeks were proof of a week well spent—and all students came home with stories, laughs, and new skills that will stay with them long after the snow melts.



# SCHOOL LIFE

## Lights Out: A Look at Student Sleep Habits

How much sleep do our students really get each night? From early alarms to late-night scrolling, we asked students across the school to share how many hours of sleep they usually get. The results reveal some surprising habits—and show just how tired our school community might actually be.

Mrs McDowell, Pastoral VP, helped explain, ‘Have you ever heard of the story Macbeth? I’m a trained English teacher and that’s what I did before becoming a Vice Principal and Macbeth is one of my favourite stories to teach. The main character Macbeth delivers a speech about what went on in the play, in the play he says sleep is life’s chief nourishment because he is telling us that without sleep our bodies aren’t

getting what they need. I really believe that sleep is important for teenagers because actually when we are tired it’s really difficult for our bodies to be fit and healthy.’

NHS’ Healthier Together says ‘Sleep is often overlooked — especially when you’ve got school, social life, and screens keeping you up late. As teenagers, your body and brain are going through huge changes, getting enough sleep is essential to keep up with them.’

We polled our students during form and the results were:

- 0-2 hours: 13 pupils
- 2-4 hours: 33 pupils
- 4-6 hours: 80 pupils
- 6-8 hours: 442 pupils
- 8-10 hours: 118 pupils
- 10+ hours: 3 pupils

While busy schedules and screen time can make sleep difficult, developing healthy sleep habits can make a big difference to learning and mental health. A good night’s sleep isn’t a luxury—it’s essential for students to feel their best and succeed at school.



## More Memories on the Mountain



# SCHOOL LIFE

## A Day in Their Shoes: Life as a Student

Ever wondered what a typical day looks like for students at our school? From the first lesson to the last bell, everyday looks a little different to the one before.

### Justin Tsikira -Year 10

A typical day for me usually begins with double Science or Spanish. I like beginning my day with Science because that's when I'm most alert and able to process hard information and because Science is really fun! In between we have break time where I go on Prefect duty with my friends.



The part of the day I enjoy the most is Form because that's where I get to talk to my friends before we go to class and it lets me prepare mentally for my day!

My most memorable thing in my time at Clounagh was performing in the School Concert! I was really nervous but I reminded myself I could do it and it went really well.

If I could swap with any teacher for a day, it would be Mr Slaine because I think his room is really cool as it has a bunch of instruments which I would spend my day testing out!



### Emmi Traynor- Year 9

On a typical day, I start the day by going to my Form room. Often I have to leave to attend different sports meetings that I am involved in!

My favourite subjects are PE and English because my English teacher is really fun which makes me enjoy the class. I'm very active and enjoy playing different sports such as football, netball, hockey, cross-country, athletics and table tennis!

This year, I loved attending the District D Schools Cross Country with a few of my classmates and achieved a place



in the Ulster's Schools Cross Country Race.

If I could switch places with any teacher for a day, I would choose Mrs Reid because I really love playing sports.

Out of the variety of food sold in the canteen for lunch, I would nominate the Tex Mex Chips as Meal of the Year because the taste is delectable.

### Noah Grant- Year 8

Each morning, I go to form and get signed in. At break I go outside, have a sausage roll and hang out with my friends. I enjoy break and lunch the most because I get to hang with my friends and eat good food from the canteen. I would nominate the Christmas dinner for Meal of the Year because it tasted so good!

In my opinion I wouldn't change anything about the school day due to there being a third lunch added on it is now perfect but I would like to have more Games and PE classes throughout the week.

For one day, I would switch lives with Mr Graham because I enjoy playing sports such as football and basketball.

# SCHOOL LIFE

## Eco Club Spotlight



Our school's Eco Club is making a real difference—one small change at a time. Made up of students who care about the environment and led by Mr Johnston, the club works together to help make our school a greener, more sustainable place.

This year, Eco Club members have been involved in projects such as bird boxes, planting, litter picks, hanging baskets and energy-saving campaigns.

Mr Johnston explained, 'I enjoy watching the pupils work in teams, and all the different year groups working together. The more experienced pupils, the Year 10s helping the newcomers, the Year 8s. I also enjoy all the assistance I get by all the year groups and the work they do.'

The pupils also enjoy a pizza party at the end of the year, as a thank you for all of the hard work they have done, it's good fun to get the gloves off for a day, and chill out, listening to music!

Year 10 student, Darwin, stated, 'I go to two clubs in Clounagh; basketball and Eco Club. While I enjoy the competitive spirit of basketball club, the calm atmosphere of Eco Club is just the picture perfect way to unwind on a Tuesday afternoon before going home!'

Eco Club is always looking for new members with fresh ideas. If you're passionate about protecting the environment or want to get involved in making changes at school, Eco Club is the perfect place to start.



# SCHOOL LIFE

## The Principals of Our Past!

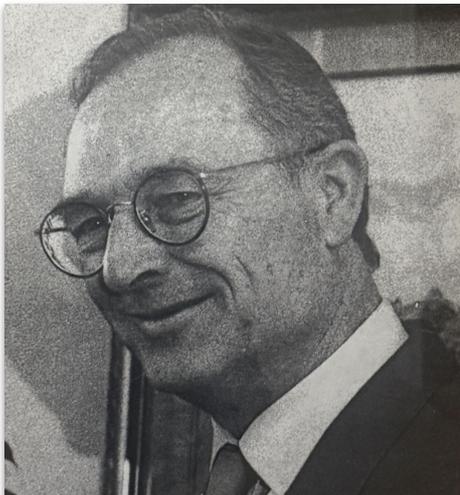
Our school has been shaped by many principals over the years. Each one has helped guide the school, support students and staff, and build the community we are part of today. Here is a brief look back at the leaders who have made a difference.

### Mr David Watson (1958–1984)

As one of the early principals of our school, Mr Watson helped lay strong foundations and high expectations for students, many of which are still important today.



**Mr Gerald Hampton (1984–1995)** — During this time, the school continued to grow. Mr Hampton oversaw changes to the curriculum and school facilities.



**Mr Norman Dickson (1995–2005)** — is remembered for his focus on student wellbeing and inclusion. New support systems were introduced to make sure all students felt safe, supported, and valued at school.



**Mr Trevor Canning (2005–2016)** - Leading the school into a more modern era, Mr Canning helped introduce new technology and strengthen links with the local community.



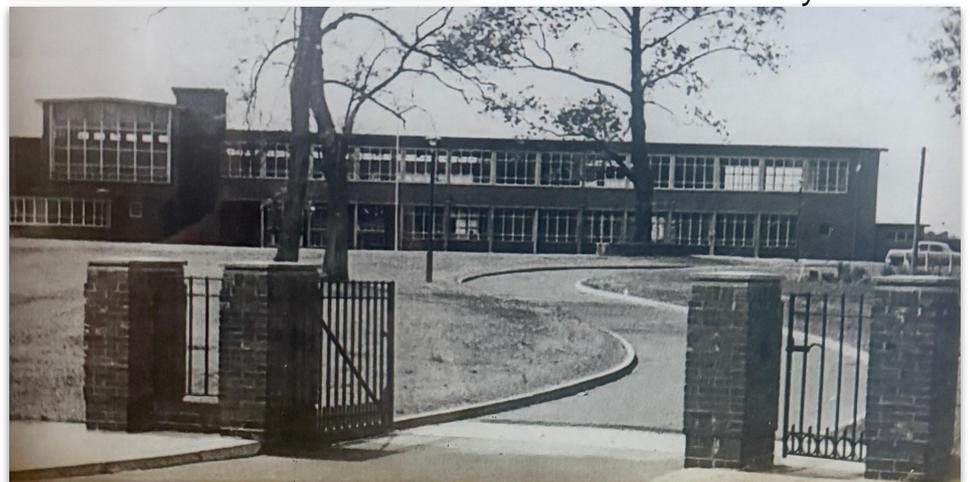
**Mr Raymond Hill (2016– 2023)** - Fortified the school and led with resilience through unprecedented times. Mr Hill was a steadfast leader through challenge and change.



**Mr Phillip Elliott (2023–present)** - Mr Elliott continues to build on the work of those before him. With a vision for the future, Mr Elliott is focused on helping every student do their best and feel proud to be part of Clounagh!



Although each principal was different, they all shared the same goal: to make our school a place where students can learn, grow, and succeed. Their leadership has helped shape the school we know today!



# SPORTS NEWS

## Coach's Corner Spotlight: Head of Girls' PE Takes the Lead

This issue for Coach's Corner, we caught up with Clounagh's Head of Girls' PE to learn more about her role in the school, her sporting background and what inspires her as a coach.

Mrs Reid is the Head of Girls Physical Education at Clounagh as well as one of the our Year Heads in the Pastoral Team. She has been teaching in Clounagh for around eight years, playing a huge role in school sport and student life during that time. Before joining Clounagh Junior High School, she worked as a PE teacher in Ballyclare Secondary School, where she gained valuable experience that she has brought with her to Clounagh.



Her love for sport began back when she was a student herself. She explained that having access to a wide variety of sports, both inside and outside of school, helped spark her interest and encouraged her to get involved from a young age. That passion

has clearly stayed with her throughout her career!



When asked about her favourite thing about coaching, she said it is seeing the girls develop their skills outside of school. Watching students grow in confidence and ability through sport is one of the most rewarding parts of her job.

Sport doesn't stop for her at the school gates either. Hockey is also her favourite sport to compete in, as she grew up



playing it and has always had a strong passion for the game. Outside of school, she plays hockey for Lurgan Ladies, staying actively involved in the sport she loves. Mrs Reid is also involved in running the annual Ski Trip, many extra curricular activities, Tug of War and more!



Finally, an interesting fact about Mrs Reid that many students may not know is that she used to play in a pipe band — proving her talents go beyond the sports field!

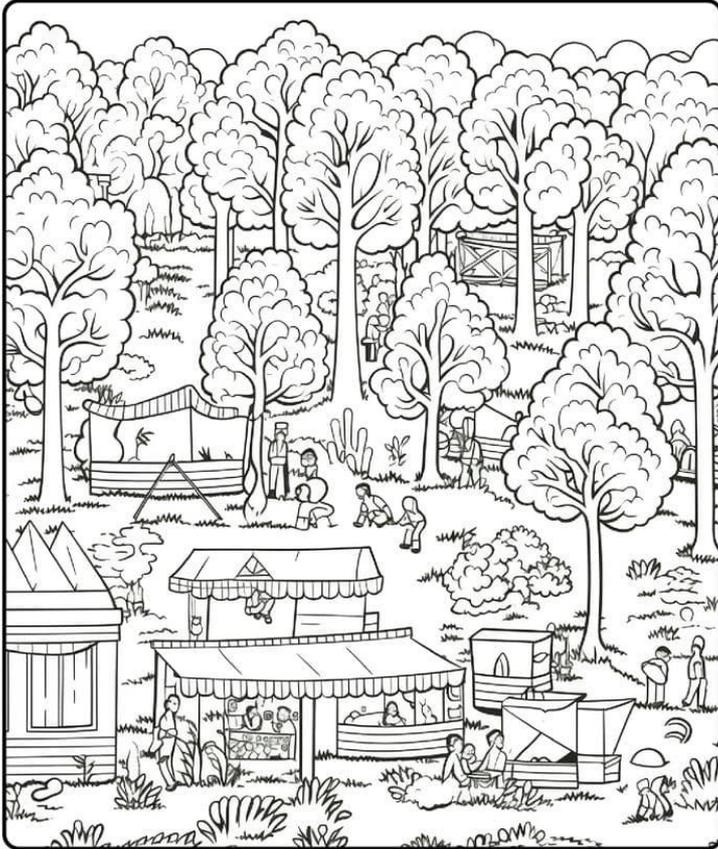


# WELL BEING CORNER

## Two Looks, One Challenge

Take a moment for yourself!, Can you spot the 8 differences? Look closely at these two scenes

and see if you can find all the changes—challenge your eyes and your brain!



## Behind Our Pages

This issue of The Clounagh Chronicle would not have been possible without the dedication and creativity of so many people across our school.

Students gave their time, ideas, and talents to write, photograph, design, and edit content, while staff offered guidance and support throughout the process.

