

St. Ciaran's College – CEIAG
Newsletter

Future Focus



Welcome Message

- Welcome to the second edition of **Future Focus** — your guide to the opportunities, pathways, and decisions that shape life beyond the classroom.
- Following the positive response to our first issue, this edition continues our commitment to supporting students, parents, and staff with clear, relevant, and up-to-date Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG). At St. Ciaran's College, we believe that preparing for the future is not about having all the answers but about asking the right questions and knowing where to find support.
- In this issue, you'll find highlights from recent careers activities, key information on upcoming opportunities, and practical guidance to help students reflect on their strengths, interests, and next steps. Whether you are exploring subject choices, considering further or higher education, apprenticeships, training, or employment, our aim is to ensure every student feels informed, confident, and supported.
- We encourage students and parents to engage with the content, start conversations at home, and make use of the guidance available through the school. Your future is a journey — and we're here to help you navigate it.

Thinking Ahead: Choosing Your GCSE & A-Level Subjects

- During term two our year 10 and 12 pupils will be making important choices about the next stages of their journey
- Choosing your subjects is an important step — but it doesn't have to be stressful. The right choices can keep doors open, build confidence, and help you enjoy learning. The guide on the next few pages will help pupils and parents think carefully about what suits, both now and in the future.

- **1 Start With Yourself**
- Before thinking about careers or university courses, reflect on how you learn best.
- Ask yourself:
- Which subjects do I enjoy most?
- Which subjects do I do well in?
- Do I prefer practical, creative, or academic learning?
- Do I enjoy exams, coursework, or a mix of both?
-  Enjoyment and effort matter — students often achieve their best results in subjects they like and engage with.

- **2 Keep Your Options Open**
- At GCSE and A-Level, it's important not to close doors too early.
- Some careers require specific subjects (e.g. sciences for medicine, maths for engineering).
- Others value strong grades across a range of subjects.
- A balanced mix (e.g. a humanity, a science, and a creative or technical subject) gives flexibility.
-  If you're unsure about a future career, choose subjects that give you breadth and balance.

- **3 Understand the Difference Between GCSE and A-Level Choices**
- **GCSE choices should:**
 - Build strong foundations
 - Develop a range of skills
 - Reflect interests as well as strengths
- **A-Level choices should:**
 - Link more closely to future pathways
 - Be subjects you are prepared to study in depth
 - Match your academic strengths and work habits
 -  A-Levels are more demanding — motivation and commitment are key.

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- **5 Research Your Pathways**
- Even if you're unsure about the future, doing some research helps.
- Look at college, apprenticeship, and university entry requirements
- Use reliable sources such as:
 - School careers resources
 - University websites
 - Apprenticeship and training providers
-  Don't guess — check

- **6 Talk It Through**
- You don't have to decide alone.
- Speak to:
 - Subject teachers
 - Careers staff
 - Parents or carers
 - Older students who have taken the subjects
-  Asking questions is a sign of maturity, not uncertainty.

Final Thought

- There is no such thing as a “perfect” subject combination — only the right one for you. Choose subjects that challenge you, interest you, and keep your future options open.
- If you need help, guidance is always available at St. Ciaran’s College.
- Pupils, parents/Carers can book a guidance interview with Mr McManus by contacting the school office.

Post-16 Pathways in Action

This half term, our post 16 pupils have been:

- Working hard researching courses and careers. Completing UCAS form and preparing CV's.
- Those travelling to New York for the CEIAG Study Tour attended their first information session with Challenges Abroad in Integrated College Dungannon.
- Pupils in years 12,13 and 14 have attended numerous information sessions from HE/FE and industry partners which will feature later in this edition.

UCAS



Focus skill: Decision-making, independence, and self-presentation.



Preparations for next steps- Year 12

- During this half term in careers lessons 12 pupils have been completing psychometric careers quiz's, researching courses (including entry requirements and role-playing mock interviews.



Year 10: Connecting Classroom Skills to Future Careers

- Year 10 pupils have been exploring how the skills they develop in everyday lessons link to future careers. Through CEIAG activities, students looked beyond subjects to identify key transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and creativity.
- By connecting classroom learning to real-world pathways, pupils are gaining a clearer understanding of how subjects support a wide range of future options — from further and higher education to apprenticeships and employment. This approach is helping Year 10 students make more confident and informed decisions about their next steps.



Developing Executive Functioning Skills Through the Curriculum

- Across all subject areas, pupils at St. Ciaran's College are continually developing their executive functioning skills — the mental processes that enable them to plan, focus attention, remember instructions, and manage multiple tasks successfully. These skills form the foundation for effective learning and lifelong employability.
- In the classroom, pupils strengthen their working memory as they retain and apply key concepts in subjects such as Mathematics and Science. Through extended writing, problem-solving, and project work, they build cognitive flexibility, adapting their thinking to approach challenges in new and creative ways. Lessons that encourage organisation, goal-setting, and time management help pupils enhance their planning and prioritisation skills, while group work and independent study promote self-regulation and perseverance.
- By embedding these opportunities within everyday teaching, our staff ensure that pupils are not only achieving academically but also developing the core skills needed to thrive in further education, employment, and life beyond school.

Building Skills for Life and Careers

- Across all year groups, pupils at St. Ciaran's College are actively developing the skills that will shape their futures. Through a range of subject-based CEIAG activities, students are being encouraged to look beyond individual lessons and recognise the transferable skills they are building every day — from communication and teamwork to creativity, resilience, and problem-solving.
- By linking classroom learning to real-world careers and pathways, pupils are gaining a clearer sense of purpose and direction. This whole-school focus helps students understand that every subject has value, every skill matters, and every lesson plays a role in preparing them for the opportunities ahead.

Business Studies

- Our Young Enterprise groups visited St George's Market as part of their Company Programme. The visit allowed students to explore real-world business environments, develop key entrepreneurial and employability skills, and interact directly with customers—helping them make informed decisions about future career pathways.



ICT

- Our Year 9 pupils proudly represented the school at the semi-final of the Digital Futures Competition on the 4th of December. The girls worked incredibly hard developing their innovative app and delivered a brilliant presentation to a panel of industry judges. Their involvement in the competition strongly supports our CEIAG provision, giving them valuable insight into careers in the technology sector while building essential skills such as problem-solving, teamwork, communication, and creativity. We are extremely proud of their achievement and dedication.



English

- **From A-Level English Literature to Law at Queen's University Belfast**
- This month, we're delighted to feature an inspiring article by one of our former pupils, who has taken their passion for critical thinking and analysis from A-Level English Literature into the world of law. Now studying at Queen's University Belfast, Caitlin Quinn explores the complexities of disability rights and legal frameworks in their thought-provoking piece, *"Is a Gilded Cage Still a Cage? Reconsidering Cheshire West and the Future of Disability Rights."*
- Caitlin's journey highlights how the skills developed in English Literature—argumentation, interpretation, and clarity of expression—can open doors to exciting careers in law and beyond. Read the full article here: The Verdict Online.

<https://www.theverdictonline.org/post/is-a-gilded-cage-still-a-cage-reconsidering-cheshire-west-and-the-future-of-disability-rights>



Home Economics

- CAFRE Haccap syllabus support workshop for year 14 A2 Nutrition and Food Science students. The workshop looked at safety through the food chain when manufacturing ice cream, beef burgers and shortbread. Our students were paired with Mount Lourdes Grammar Enniskilken. Thank you to Loughry for a very informative workshop.



Languages

- This month, our French and Irish pupils have been out and about teaching lively language lessons in local primary schools. The project links closely with our CEIAG goals by building confidence, communication skills and an early awareness of careers in education. We are incredibly proud of how well they represented the school.



Prince's Trust

- Year 12 students have studied 'Career Planning' and for this unit they have researched different careers of interest, the skills and qualities required for their careers of interest, filled in an application form and CV for a job of interest. They have gained an understanding of success criteria for an effective interview performance and then participated in a mock interview.

August 2026

<p>Voluntary work</p> <p>I voluntarily helped my local GAA club by watching over a football blitz. I helped gather up and donate to the SVP appeal/ shoebox appeal. I also donated money to Trócaire daily. I also look after my grandparents.</p>	
<p>Skills / Qualities:</p> <p>Good customer service skills Teamwork/group skills Very good verbal and written skills Good ICT skills</p>	
<p>Work Experience:</p> <p>I do not have any work-related experience, but I am keen to get a job I the world of work.</p>	
<p>Achievements:</p> <p>Was a member of club / St. Ciaran's College football team Received merit/ attendance awards in KS3</p>	
<p>Interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I enjoy farming. I enjoy babysitting. I enjoy talking. I enjoy socialising with my friends 	
<p>Referee</p> <p>Mr. A. Loughran St. Ciaran's College 13 Tullybryn Rd. Co. Tyrone BT70 2DQ Tele No. (02885568640)</p>	<p>Referee</p> <p>Mr. M. Kerr St. Ciaran's College 13 Tullybryn Rd. Co. Tyrone BT70 2DQ Tele No. (02885568640)</p>

Co. Tyrone 8th April 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to apply for the position of a waitress job at Tailor's Bar and Restaurant in Ballygawley and I believe that I have the appropriate skills and qualities for the job advertised.

I am a year 12 student currently studying GCSE. I am actively looking for part time employment to fit my school hours. I can work on my own and with others, I am a friendly person. I have good communication skills. I have the determination to complete tasks and work through challenges until solutions are found and I am also willing to learn.

I have no work-related experience to date, but I am keen to get work to improve my employability skills.

I know that your business is a thriving one which has a good reputation in the community. I am confident that I am the right person for the vacancy and that I would also be an asset to your business.

I have attached my CV for your consideration should you have any questions, I would be happy to answer anything that you would like to know.



A collage of various posters and diagrams related to workplace skills and the 20th century. It includes sections on 'What skills employers need to see in a future employee' and 'The 20th Century'. The collage features illustrations and text boxes such as 'I need to talk', 'I need to be a problem solver', 'I need to think for myself', 'I need to be a team player', 'I need to be punctual', 'I need to be creative', 'I need to be friendly', 'I need to be helpful', 'I need to be diligent', and 'I need to be good at decision making'.



History

- Our Year 8 pupils have been discovering the key skills employers value and how studying History can give them a real advantage. History isn't just about the past—it helps students develop critical thinking, research, and communication skills that are essential for future study and the workplace. To showcase these benefits, pupils created vibrant posters highlighting how these skills will serve them now and, in the years, ahead.
- Meanwhile, 10DMW collaborated on an impressive display focused on the 20th century. Working as a team, they honed vital life skills such as discussion, research, organisation, and presentation. Their efforts resulted in eye-catching, informative posters that demonstrate both historical knowledge and workplace-ready skills.

Technology and Design

In November, the Technology and Design Department proudly hosted a *Women in Engineering* event, giving all our Year 10 girls the chance to collaborate, problem-solve, design, and manufacture in an exciting team-building experience. The day was expertly delivered by MEGA and AXON—leaders in engineering both locally and globally. AXON also generously sponsored prizes for our students, adding an extra layer of excitement to the event. We extend our sincere thanks to MEGA and AXON for their continued support and dedication to making engineering accessible, inspiring, and engaging for our students.



Construction

- Our Year 11 Construction pupils have taken their enterprise project to the next level — and the results have been outstanding. Following the huge success of their handcrafted wooden reindeer planters at the School Christmas Market, the group completely sold out, with demand continuing well beyond the event itself.
- Due to the popularity of their products, pupils returned to the workshop to manufacture additional reindeer planters to fulfil further orders. This real-world challenge gave students first-hand experience of responding to customer demand, managing time effectively, and maintaining quality under pressure — all essential skills in both industry and self-employment.
- The project has provided an excellent opportunity for pupils to further develop their construction expertise alongside key employability and enterprise skills, including teamwork, communication, problem-solving, financial awareness, and adaptability. Most importantly, students gained confidence in seeing their ideas succeed in a genuine commercial setting.
- This highly successful enterprise experience highlights the value of practical, skills-based learning and showcases how CEIAG is embedded meaningfully across the curriculum. Congratulations to our Year 11 Construction pupils on an inspiring achievement — and thank you to everyone who supported their enterprise.



LLW GCSE

- For their ‘Employability Unit’, students have learned about the skills and qualities required for employment, how to complete an application form and CV as well as the success criteria for a successful interview performance.

Interests:

- I enjoy playing football with my fri.
- I like going for a walk.

Previous Employment Experience:

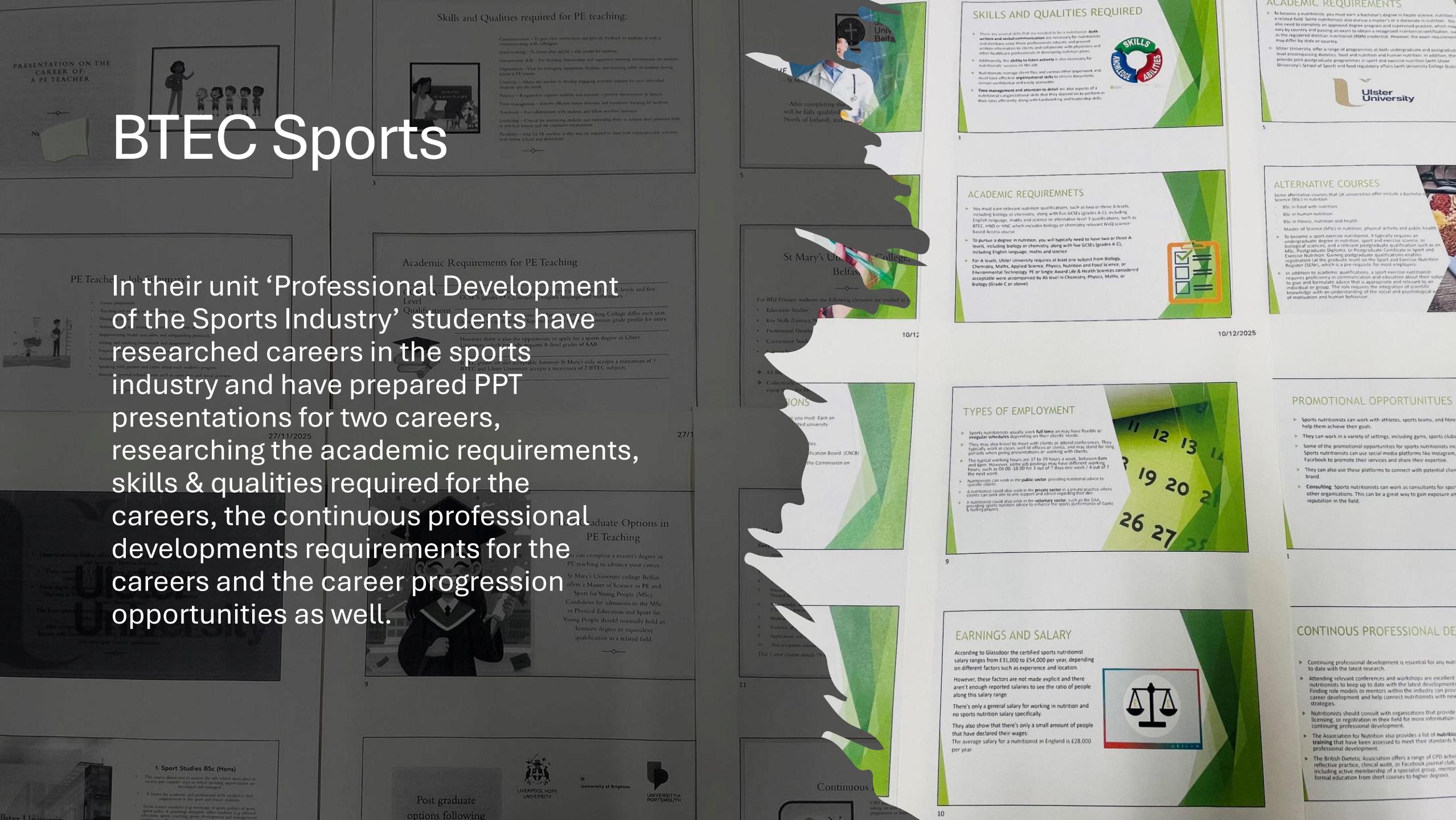
For work experience, I went to my school and helped out with the and helped the teachers.

Additional Information:

I am a year 12 student currently studying
am actively looking for part time employment
School hours. I can work on my own and
I am a friendly person. I have good communication
I have determination to complete tasks
through challenges until solutions are found
am also willing to learn. ✓

BTEC Sports

In their unit 'Professional Development of the Sports Industry' students have researched careers in the sports industry and have prepared PPT presentations for two careers, researching the academic requirements, skills & qualities required for the careers, the continuous professional developments requirements for the careers and the career progression opportunities as well.



ART

- **Calling All Past Art Students: Share Your Journey and Inspire Future Creatives!**
- Have the skills you developed in art classes—GCSE or A-Level—shaped your career? We want to show current students how versatile and valuable an art education can be, and we need your help!
- We're creating an **Art & Design Alumni Network** to celebrate past students and highlight the wide range of careers that art skills can unlock. Whether your career is in art or another field, your experiences can inspire the next generation.
- Art equips students with **skills employer's love**, including:
 - Creative problem solving
 - Critical thinking and analysis
 - Communication and presentation
 - Collaboration and teamwork
 - Attention to detail and project management
- These skills aren't just for the studio—they're in demand across every industry, from tech to business, education, and beyond.
- We invite all past art students to complete our Google Form <https://forms.gle/S2oD7xCD5GsU77D28>, sharing your journey and how art shaped your life. Your story could spark a current student's creative ambitions.
- **Let's celebrate creativity and show that art skills are transferable, valuable, and limitless. Join us and make a difference today!**



St. Ciaran's College, Ballygawley

ART & DESIGN Alumni

We're reaching out from the St Ciaran's College Art & Design Department! We're creating an Alumni

Showcase to inspire current pupils and would love your support.

If you studied GCSE or A-Level Art & Design with us, we'd like to make direct contact and maybe ask

you a few specific questions that could really help motivate our students.

Complete our short form here:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScVt6XB_aOhN5pV0q4OffQVH1lanXCv-TKi6Ps5YQzstdTjIQ/viewform?usp=header

- Please share this message with any past pupils who might not have seen it—we don't want anyone to miss out!

Thank you for helping us celebrate our amazing alumni and inspire future creatives!



N Beattie nbeattie828@stciarans.ballygawley.ni.sch.uk

Pupil Spotlight

- Our Young Enterprise Dragons' Den competition saw student businesses pitch their products to a panel of judges explaining their ideas, operations, and future plans. The standard was extremely high with all teams demonstrating creativity and teamwork.
- Congratulations to **Glow to Go** who impressed the judges and were awarded as the winning group. Their success highlights how Young Enterprise activities can help our students for the future. Experiences like this give our students valuable insight into the world of work and entrepreneurship while also helping develop skills for their future careers.“
- Well done Girls!!!





Craft Omagh: Apprenticeships & Traineeships

- Year 12 pupils recently heard from Craft Omagh, who outlined their tailored apprenticeship and traineeship programmes for school leavers. Delivered in small group settings, the session highlighted practical pathways into employment while continuing to develop skills and qualifications.



Errigal Contracts: Degree Apprenticeship Pathways

Pupils in Years 12, 13, and 14 welcomed representatives from Errigal Contracts, who showcased their degree apprenticeship programme. Pathways discussed included Quantity Surveying, Civil Engineering, Architectural Technology, and Business, offering students an insight into earning while learning at degree level.



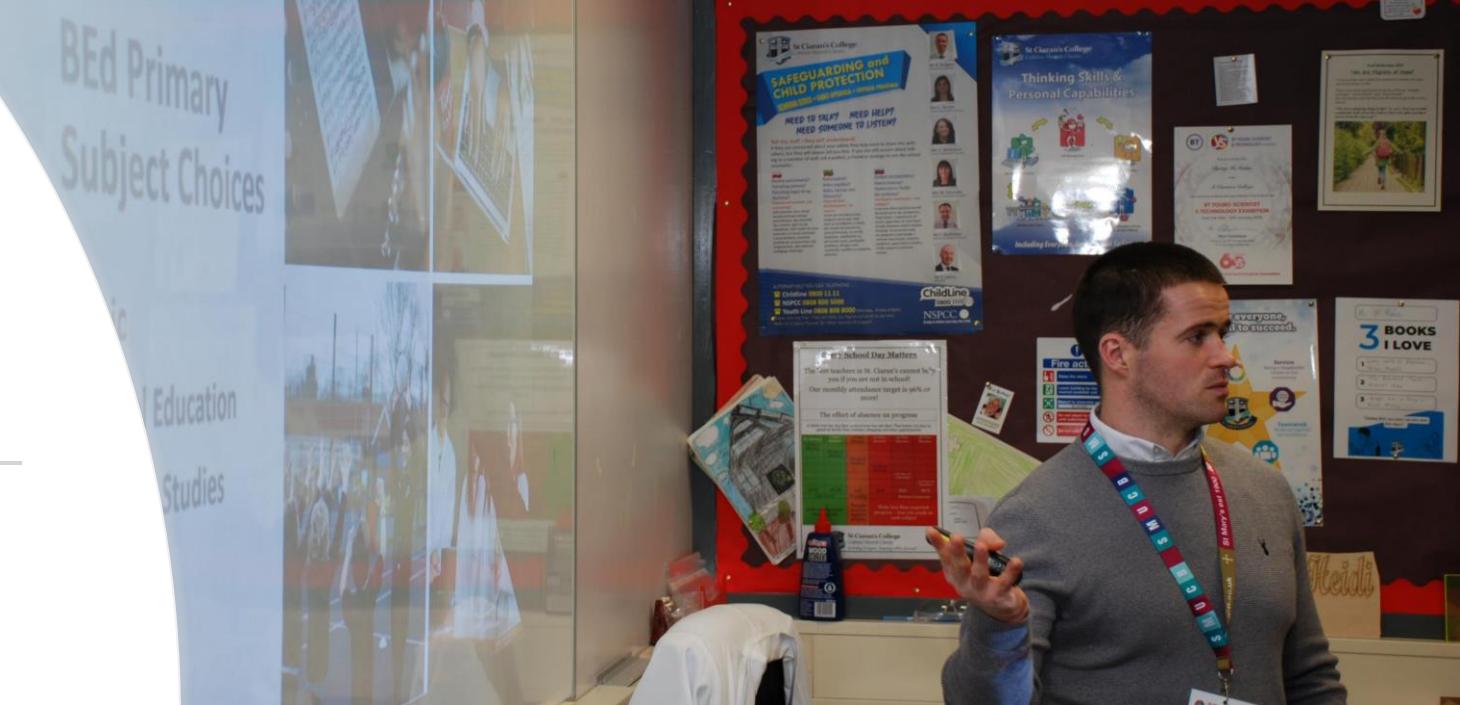


Ulster University: Talented Athlete Programme

- A group of Year 14 pupils took part in a session with Ulster University, focusing on their Talented Athlete Programme. Students were guided through the application process and learned how the scheme can provide enhanced entry requirements alongside full-time higher education study.

St Mary's University College: Teaching Pathways

- St Mary's University College delivered an informative session for pupils exploring teaching as a career. The talk covered the application process for both BEd and BA pathways, with a follow-up virtual session planned in the new year to support pupils in preparing for interviews.



Opportunities and Events

- Term two will see year 14 pupils start to get offers back from university courses, be invited for interviews and aptitude tests.
- Pupils in KS4&5 will have the opportunity to attend talks for HE/FE colleges including CAFRE, SWC.
- We will continue to welcome a range of employers from Construction, Engineering, IT, Finance and more to talk to pupils about apprenticeships and HLA opportunities.
- Departments will continue to promote CEIAG through classroom learning, industrial visits and guest speakers.
- Yr12 pupils will attend the MUDC LMP careers fair in Loughry
- St. Ciaran's will host our 3rd Future Focus Careers Fair on Wednesday 18th of February for pupils in our transition years.

Upcoming Events

HE/FE

- **QUB Civil Engineering Higher Level Apprenticeship - Meet The Employers. Wednesday 4 February 2026, 7pm - 9pm** [Register online](#)
- **Science At Queen's, Tuesday 17 February 2026, 5.30pm - 9pm** Registrations open in the New Year.
- Ulster University -The Derry~Londonderry Degree Apprenticeship Fair will be held on 31 January. Register below
<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/apprenticeships/events/2026/derry~londonderry-apprenticeship-fair#register>
- South West College open days – Dates on poster



How can you help!

- To find out how you can help our students prepare for life and work please contact our head of CEAIG
- Mr B. McManus

bmcmanus823@c2kni.net