



I remember back in October 2009 when I attended my first AGM in the school. Listening to the speeches and thinking, I would never have the nerve to do what they are doing...and here I am today, so, not only did my children gain their education in KH. I too have learned from my experiences as a parent and member of the parents' association.

For some of the new parents who are not familiar with what exactly the PA role is in the school I would like to give you a brief explanation: The aim of the PA is to promote the welfare of the school and it's pupils through co-operation and communication between parents, staff and the governors and to encourage social and other activities among its members. The PA is a forum to discuss matters of mutual interest and concern in relation to our children's education. Membership of the PA is open to all parents and guardians.

We are affiliated with the National Parents Council Post Primary (NPCpp) who are the voice of and ad-vo-cate for all parents and guardians of young people in post-primary education. This organisation engages with the department of education to ensure that the views and opinions of parents are considered in discussions relating to the evolution of our education system. Examples of the work done by the NPCpp are the recent surveys of parents and students in relation to the Leaving Cert and Junior Cycle exams which they communicated to the dept of Education in advance of policy decisions. We are also affiliated with COMPASS who are a constituent body of the NPCpp, COMPASS represents all parents who chose to educate their children in schools or colleges which promote a Protestant or a minority ethos.

We had a busy October which started with an interesting evening of education and entertainment for the parents. Our guest speaker on the night was Siobhan O'Higgins. Siobhan is a member of the Active Consent Programme team from the College of Psychology in NUIG. Then a few days later was the inaugural "Ladies Lunch" in Castleknock Golf Club. Over 100 ladies comprising of current and past parents of the school attended on a glorious autumn day. Guest speaker at the event was past pupil and Olympian Heike Holstein. A raffle during the event allowed us present Heike's two chosen charities The Laura Lyn Foundation and My Lovely Horse Rescue with €610.00 each. I would like to thank Amanda, Jacquie, Gail, Fionnuala and parent volunteer Elisabeth NEW ZUM(Nuzum) for their help with this event. Thanks also to all who sponsored prizes for the raffle. This year's lunch unfortunately had to be cancelled but we hope to be back again next year.

Again, in October under the leadership of Amanda, assisted by Gail and Jacquie the PA hosted the Form 6 Mock Interviews in the school. Thanks to the many volunteers the evening was a great success. Unfortunately, due to Lockdown the Career's Evening for Form 5 was cancelled however, Amanda has remained in touch with the schools Careers department to offer assistance in any way we can.

I would like to highlight that without volunteers these career events would not be possible. We rely on parents and past pupils to help out at these events. Even though you may not have a child currently in 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year, we still need your help if at all possible. One day your children will benefit from these events so please fill out and return the Volunteer Form which can be accessed in The PA section on the school's website. We are indebted to the Past Pupils Union whom we work closely with, constantly helping to fill any gaps we have at careers' events and often at short notice. The PPU has a huge network and their members continue to play a role in the school long after they have left.

The PA ran a Recycled Uniform Sale on the last day of term in December. This is a popular event with parents who can pick up items of uniform at hugely reduced prices. A lot of



organisation goes into running this event and I would like to thank all the volunteers who helped out at such a busy time of the year to make this a success.

In January the PA hosted the Prefects and Mentors supper which takes place in the school. We also invited members of the PPU and Board of Governors. This is our platform to thank them for their work and have a social chat in a relaxed environment and it is always an enjoyable evening.

On 12<sup>th</sup> March we all received that dreaded email informing us that the school would be closing due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Little did we know that the school would not reopen until August.

During the school closure the PA continued to have meetings via zoom and kept in touch with the headmaster to offer our help to the school in any way.

One of the greatest disappointments of all was having to cancel the Valedictory celebrations for last years 6<sup>th</sup> year. All was not lost however and under the leadership of Kerri O'Reilly assisted by Form 6 housepersons, Rev. Campion and the head boy and head girl the 6<sup>th</sup> years were treated to a virtual valedictory in May, which proved a huge success.

Each year the 6<sup>th</sup> year pupils order hoodies with their names printed on them and this was being organised just before lockdown. The PA decided as a gesture of good will that we would purchase the hoodies for the pupils. The school kindly assisted in the distribution of the hoodies. A small compensation for what they were going through at the time.

For those of you who wonder what the PA spend our funds on, apart from funding the valedictory dinner, prefects supper and the Pre Debs event the PA send out a Wish List to the various clubs and departments in the school who submit a request for funding of items that are not part of the current school budget but would benefit the group. Last year for example we were delighted to provide the school library with board games, trophies and spot prizes for TY students and flags for International Day for European Studies. We also approved to finance a cabinet for the Photography Club to display their pictures. The committee decides on who gets the funding and in doing so we look at issues such as the number of pupils that will benefit from the request, if the funding is available from the school etc. Some years we decide to let the fund build up so we can make one or two larger contributions.

I would like to thank the committee members for their help and dedication throughout the year.

Gail our secretary, who continuously works hard behind the scenes and I would like to thank Richard who has just completed his 3<sup>rd</sup> year as treasurer and who has kindly offered to remain on the committee next year as our COMPASS rep. Thanks to Elaine Clarke and Fionnuala Gilmartin for representing the PA on the Board of Management. Congratulations to Fionnuala Gilmartin on behalf of the parents on her recent appointment to the Board of Governors'. A big thank you to Susan Leitch who helps out with the costumes for the Drama group. I would like to thank Amanda Gillick and her assistants, Gail and Jacquie Lyons for all the hard work and long hours they spend assisting the Career's department. I would also like to thank outgoing members Lauretta Eustace and Joanne King for their help on the PA.

During the year the committee updated our Logo inline with the school's new logo for the 250 anniversary and we launched our own FACEBOOK page. Unfortunately, we don't have much to share with you at present but please follow us for updates. We have cut down on



our printing and postage costs while also being kind to the environment and we are now contacting you via email as opposed to sending you lots of information by post.

I spoke recently to Derick Maybury our Director of Sport, who updated me on his plans for the school's sports department. Derick is an ambitious and dynamic leader. He works closely with Kerri O'Reilly who manages the Extra Curricular activities and together they have great plans for Sport and Extra Curricular Activities in the school.

I now wish to acknowledge the help the school extends to the Parents' Association. The headmaster Mr. Ronan together with his PA, Lorraine and Sile Jio in the Marketing Department. Sile has been a constant help to the committee over the year and with the assistance of her husband Stephen, set up this virtual AGM for us this evening. Thank you Sile and Stephen for making this possible. Thanks to the school caterers who provide food and refreshments at all our events and housekeeping who help with the collection and storage of unwanted items of uniform. Without their help the Recycled Uniform sale would not be possible to coordinate. And I can't forget Mary in reception who is always so obliging.

Going back to the Headmaster Mr. Ronan, on behalf of the parents and guardians I would like to thank you, the teaching and support staff, and your team for all the hard work and long hours you have given the school to ensure our children return to their education in a safe and healthy environment. The school wasted no time from the date of the mandatory closure in preparing for the day the school would reopen. Who thought at the time this would take over 5 months? Immediately the school embarked on a major clean up and availed of the school closure to carry out maintenance and improvements on the buildings and school grounds. Then the bombshell dropped that the leaving cert exams would not take place and the school had the task of dealing with the predicted grades system. The school offered counselling to all the students and in particular to those in Form 6, through the pastoral care team and house persons. And all through Lockdown Rev. Campion entertained us in his daily reflection. There is so much to be grateful for in this wonderful school and I know you are all behind me in saying a huge 'Thank You' to Mr. Ronan and his wonderful team.

As there is no further business to discuss, that brings us to the end of our AGM. Thank you all for joining us and we look forward to meeting you again when restrictions allow. We will continue to look at ways to overcome the difficulties imposed on us by Covid 19. In the meantime, the committee are happy to represent you and help the school and your children in any way we can. We can be contacted by email at:

[parentsassociation@thekingshospital.ie](mailto:parentsassociation@thekingshospital.ie)

These are extraordinary times and I will leave you with this reflection:

*Some days are better, some days are worse.*

*Look for the blessing instead of the curse.*

*Be positive, stay strong, and get enough rest.*

*You can't do it all, but you can do your best.*

Stay safe, and Goodnight.

Hilar David - Chairperson