

# Sharing Excellence

*“In partnership with parents, guardians, staff, governors and pupils, St Louise’s promotes effective teaching and learning*



St Louise's Specialist College

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## St Louise's Awarded Specialist School Status!



Education Minister, Angela Smith, announces the 12 schools awarded Specialist Status

As you now know St Louise's was awarded Specialist School status for Performing Arts at a ceremony hosted in our school on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2006 .

St Louise's is one of twelve Northern Ireland schools awarded Specialist School status and other specialisms include Languages, Business, ICT, Science and Music.

The announcement, made in the school's Senior Assembly Hall by Education Minister Angela Smith, represents a magnificent achievement for our school and arrived in very timely fashion one day ahead of the Feast Day of our patron saint St Louise de Marillac.

During her speech the Minister lauded the specialist school concept: "The schools will help raise standards not just in the specialist area but across the whole curriculum," she said.

The applications from the 12 successful schools (chosen from an initial entry of 46) included four year school and community development plans, a bid for a one-off £100,000 capital grant and unconditional private sponsorship of £25,000.

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Mrs McCartan, Principal (left) with Angela Smith, Education Minister, before the announcement of Specialist Schools Status on Tuesday 14 March 2006

Mrs McCartan, the Principal of St Louise's, said after the announcement that it was a "tremendous privilege and a great honour" for the school to become one of the first specialist schools. She added that the extra funding would make a difference. "It is really about improving the quality of teaching and learning for all our young people," she said. "It is a recognition of the fact that all young people deserve to be valued equally and enjoy excellence in teaching and learning."

**Specialist Status:  
What the Principal  
said ...**



We feel that the concept of Specialist Schools mirrors closely our own value system in St Louise's College that puts the child at the centre, provides excellence in teaching and learning, and most important of all provides equality of access and opportunities for all our young people to prepare them for life and work in the 21st century.

We in St Louise's have always espoused equality of opportunity and we constantly strive to raise standards through excellence in teaching and learning.

It is our belief, based on the success of Specialist Schools in England, some of which I visited myself, that becoming a specialist college in Performing Arts will help us to realise benefits for our pupils, partner schools and local community.

St Louise's has a strong tradition in Performing Arts stretching back over 45 years characterised by excellence in teaching and learning and a rich, extra-curricular programme resulting in many successful school shows. St Louise's was the first school in Northern Ireland to offer "A" Level Dance, and approximately 10% of Northern Ireland GCSE Drama entries are from this college. We have also taken huge strides in Media Studies over the last 10 years and have many successful alumni working in Performing Arts throughout the world.

As regards the community aspect of the specialist schools initiative, we already have strong community links on which to build, supported by a tradition of excellence in teaching and learning and whole school development often led by specialists in the Performing Arts.

In overall terms, specialist status will allow us to develop further and to celebrate the talents and successes of our young people as we prepare them to be active citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



Education Minister, Angela Smith, who came to St Louise's to announce the 12 schools granted Specialist Schools Status

# Photo Gallery of the Big Day!



An Irish Traditional welcome for the Education Minister and all the invited guests



Lights, camera, action!  
Media Studies Student Mairead Campbell with the Minister



Our drama girls performed their A Level Practical based on 'School for Scandal'.



'Specialist Status' Schools with the Education Minister



A fine performance from our Dance and Drama students who kept the viewers captivated



A gift for the Education Minister  
The Minister pictured with our specialist students, Sister Nuala, Mrs McCartan and Miss O'Halloran

# St Louise's Rocked the Challenge!



St Louise's has won the prestigious Northern Open Final of Global Rock Challenge United Kingdom 2006, held in Grimsby Auditorium on Friday 2 June. They have now been promoted to the premier division in this prestigious competition and will compete automatically next year in the final - all on their first year of entry!

The Rock Challenge sponsored by the 'Be Your Best Foundation' is an international drug and crime prevention vehicle in the form of a performing arts competition for schools.

The St Louise's entry - "Into the Light" - fought off stiff competition from 11 other schools and colleges, all of whom had been regional winners in their own right earlier in the competition.

The competition final featured over 600 students from the 12 participating schools and colleges and the St Louise's contingent consisted of 50 students who participated as dancers, performers and stage crew.

In addition to being named Overall Winner, the St Louise's entry was also nominated for Best Staging, and it was felt that our performance best exemplified the ethos of Rock Challenge - *to be the best that you can be*. Certainly our team have experienced another Rock Challenge objective both on the night and ever since - a drug-free high!

Congratulations to everyone involved, including our Technology Department who made the set and to our Physical Education Department who provided rehearsal space.



Our girls giving it their all—"Into The Light" in Grimsby

The photograph below shows the girls from St Louise's performing their piece in the Northern Ireland heat of the Rock Challenge in a competition held in the Waterfront Hall on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2006. This performance secured them the place in Grimsby—and the rest is history!!



## Stars in Yer Eyes 2006

An audience of over 500 packed into the Senior Assembly Hall to support this year's contestants in JW Promotions "Stars in Yer Eyes" show.

The packed auditorium was treated to a spectacular evening's entertainment which once again highlighted the wonderful energy, commitment and talent of the girls from St Louise's.

In this school's heat the audience got to choose two of the three winners to go through to the regional final. The panel of judges selected the third contestant.

In third place was Victoria Duffy, Year 11 as Joss Stone; in second place was Maria Adams Year 8 as Stacey Orrico. The winners were sixth formers Christina Conlon, Grainne Kane, Danielle Magennis, Ashleigh McGarrigan, Mary-Jo Reid and Colleen Robinson as the sassy Pussy Cat Dolls.

Congratulations to all the competitors - each one was a star in our eyes!!!!  
A special thanks to Miss Devine who co-ordinated all the acts.



## TELEVISION STARS



Year 14 'A' Level student Alison Franklin appeared in the new six-part RTE series "Teenage Cics".

The series, the first episode of which aired on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2006 on TG4 at 10pm, deals with a Belfast teenager's experience during a summer spent at an Irish college in the Donegal Gaeltacht.

Alison's involvement in a new television series is a major achievement in itself, but it is made even more special by the fact that the series is in the Irish language.

Alison is pictured above with her Irish teacher Mr Kelly.

### More pupils on the box

Year 11 Media Studies students, Aisling McLaughlin and Danielle Robinson appeared with Suranne Jones from *Cornation Street* on an episode of *Celebrity Fit Club* on ITV. They met Suranne in December last year when they took part in her Cinemagic Master Class.

### BOARD OF GOVERNORS ANNUAL REPORT TO PARENTS Academic Year 2004-2005

Anyone interested in receiving the report can request a copy from the school.

## All the way from Brazil to Belfast!



Last summer Miss Tracey Magee, a teacher of Geography in St Louise's, worked as a SERVE volunteer on a house-building project in Brazil and this work was supported by a particular group of Brazilian community workers from the Parnaiba region of Brazil.

The Brazilian community workers in question visited St Louise's accompanied by Redemptorist Father Gerry O'Connor.

In addition to projects such as the one Miss Magee worked on, these community workers also support a number of other initiatives related to women's issues and nutrition.

Our picture shows St Louise's Vice-Principal Sister Nuala Kelly with Miss Magee, Father O'Connor and our Brazilian Guests.

This summer Miss Magee is heading to Thailand in a leadership role with the Irish Redemptorists to work on the Outreach Project with women, children, the elderly and disabled. Look out for an update in our next issue!

## Is it a Bird? Is it a Plane?



A Science Fair, presented by Mr Gerard Hughes of Sentinus, was held in St Louise's earlier this year (Wednesday 25 January 2006) and was attended by two of our Year 8 classes and their sixth form mentors.

During the day the pupils took part in a number of activities, including making a balloon-propelled car and a tennis ball launcher. The highlight of the proceedings was when rockets made by the groups of pupils during the day were launched into the air, reaching heights of up to 100 feet!

A competition ran throughout the day, covering the entire range of activities carried out. Our proud and worthy winners are pictured on page 7.



## Winners of the Science Fair Competition

Here are our proud winners of the Sentinus Science Fair Competition held in school earlier this year. Well Done girls.

### First Place



Margaret McArdle, Caitlin Leonard and Niciara Kelly

### Second Place



Rachel McIlwaine, Natasha McCann and Natalie Lewsley

### Third Place



Tiernagh Bigley, Leanne Selby and Katie McGonigle

## Fun Maths Roadshow

### Who said Maths isn't fun!

Our Year 8 pupils got to enjoy the Fun Maths Roadshow on Thursday 9th March 2006 assisted by a group of Year 13 and 14 students who acted as group leaders on the day.

During the day students worked in pairs to complete a variety of puzzles involving working with shapes, money, spatial awareness and problem solving.



The aim was to give pupils the opportunity to take part in exciting Maths activities and so promote enjoyment of the subject.

Our pupils certainly enjoyed the day!



## Global Leap Project A Huge Success

Mr Kerr and Ms Clarke accompanied Year 9J to BIFHE College Square Building on Friday 10 February 2006. The class was asked to represent the city in a global link-up with a New York City school to mark the two cities' interest in the Titanic. A talk was given by Belfast Historian Henry Bell who commented on the excellent contribution made by the girls. Well done to all involved.

## Art Commendation for Danielle



Danielle receives her Certificate of Commendation from our Principal, Mrs McCartan

Congratulations to Danielle O'Reilly, a Year 10 pupil, on receiving a certificate of commendation in the Texaco Children's Art Competition. This is an outstanding achievement for Danielle and St Louise's, especially considering there were over 50,000 entries for this Art Competition from all over Ireland.

## ♪ Music News ♪

### National Festival of Music for Youth:

The Senior Irish Traditional Group took part in the Northern Ireland Section of the National Festival of Music for Youth, on Saturday 19 March 2006, in Methodist College and achieved High Commendation.

The girls secured a place in the National Festival in July.

Well done to the girls who took part: Leah O'Neill (Year 14) - Fiddle; and Year 13 pupils: Suin McCallan - Fiddle; Ciara O'Neill - Accordion; Flute: Laura Williamson and Niamh Taggart.

We wish them success in Birmingham.

## £ A Taxing Time £ for St Louise's Students!

A group of AS Economics students from St Louise's have received a Special Commendation from the Paymaster General, Rt Hon Dawn Primarolo MP and from the President of the Chartered Institute of Taxation, for their proposal for a 20p tax on bottled water.

The students made the proposal as part of a competition organised by Bournemouth University and the Government funded website [www.bized.ac.uk](http://www.bized.ac.uk)

In the competition the students were asked to devise a tax policy that the Chancellor could introduce as part of his Budget 2006 plans.

The competition received over 500 entries from schools right across the UK with the entry from St Louise's making the final shortlist of five.

Although we were pipped at the post, St Louise's entry was commended for its originality, ease of collection and environmental impact.



Definitely something in the water!  
Our proud Year 13 AS Economics students were Ciara Bunting, Colleen Farrell, Deborah McConville and Mary-Louise McNerney

## Year 12 Mentoring Programme



Year 13 pupils pictured in the Careers Suite during the Mentoring Programme

Eighty year 12 pupils took part in our first GCSE mentoring programme during terms 2 and 3. The scheme involved a team of form teachers and year 14 pupils working with small groups of 5-6 pupils in an effort to motivate and support the girls during preparation for their exams.

The sessions took place in the canteen and careers suite during registration on Thursdays and Fridays and the atmosphere was friendly and supportive. It was a chance for our students to discuss their difficulties and to get practical and useful advice.

We hope that this is the first of many such schemes and take the opportunity to thank the dedicated team of mentors and to wish the girls good luck in their exams.

## Book Week Fundraiser

The English Department 'Read On' for Year 9 pupils launched in Book Week raised £1,161.48 for the Northern Ireland Care Fund for Children.

(More from the English Department on page 10)

## Danielle Has The Key

St Louise's girl Danielle Shields has been nominated as one of four Northern Ireland Young Entrepreneurs of the Year at the recent Key Programme graduation day at the Europa Hotel, Belfast.

Danielle's prize is the holiday of a life time in Canada where she will attend the Young Enterprise International Conference in August.

A total of 900 pupils throughout the North and South of Ireland attended KEY Programme training camps this year and out of these only eight (4 North and 4 South) were selected.

As we sat nervously awaiting the announcement, Danielle became increasingly pale, but when the names were read out everyone in the St Louise's contingent jumped and cheered and congratulated Danielle!! There were some tears too as Danielle received her prize and got her photograph taken.

Everyone involved in the Key Programme, especially Miss Connolly and Miss Magee, are very proud of Danielle and we await the news of her trip! A definite article for the next Sharing Excellence Newsletter. Well done Danielle!



Our photo shows Danielle (left) with the other three winners.

## Business Insight Conference

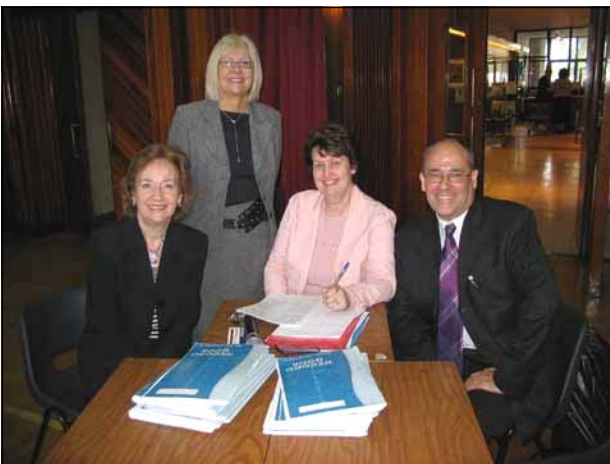


Pupils and invited guests at the Business Insight Conference hosted by St Louise's

On Friday 5th May 2006 Year 13 students and twenty local businesses participated in a Business Insight Conference.

The main aim of the Conference was to increase the level of understanding that young people have about self-employment and enterprise.

The Business Insight Conference was highly participative and throughout the day the students engaged in various activities associated with setting up and running a small business.



Miss O'Halloran, Mrs Lappin and Mr O'Halloran (seated) with Business Insight Speaker

## Careers in Construction

On 8 February 2006 the Lagan Group, on behalf of Business in the Community, gave a presentation to Year 12 on Careers in the Construction Industry. Several female presenters spoke to the students about their jobs, e.g. quantity surveying and waste management. An exhibition was mounted which the students had an opportunity to tour and ask questions.

## Young Women's Inspirational Conference

On 27 January 2006 a small group of Year 13 students attended the Young Women's Inspirational Conference in the Waterfront Hall, sponsored by Training for Women Network and Action Cancer. The aim of the conference was to inspire young women, to encourage them to make the most of every opportunity and to think more broadly about their careers options and cancer prevention.

## Book Swap for World Book Day

Members of our English Department recently organised a Book Swap for pupils to mark World Book Day. The Book Swap, which took place in the school's Junior Assembly Hall, was a major success with hundreds of books changing hands. Our photo shows Miss McGahan pointing out to two young readers the reading interests of the various English teachers.

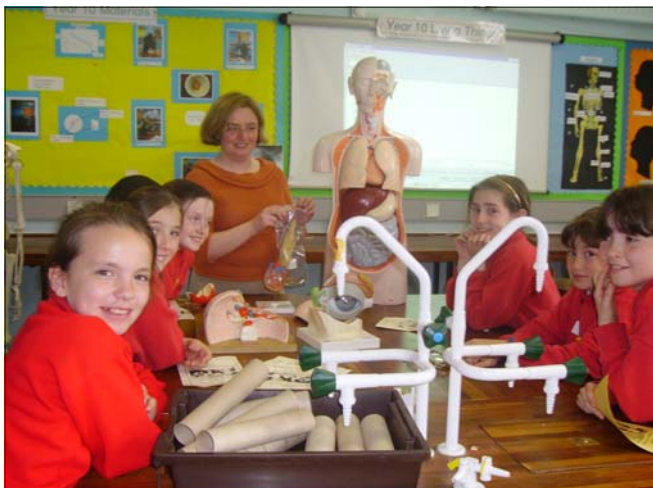


## A Taste of St Louise's For Primary 6 Pupils

On Monday 22 May St. Louise's Comprehensive College opened its door to hundreds of primary six pupils from our partner primary schools. Pupils had the opportunity to experience life in St. Louise's first hand by following a fun-filled programme of events. Four departments were selected to take part in these action packed taster days. Firstly pupils were taken to the Art Department where GCSE and A Level art work was being showcased. Pupils then browsed through the work before creating for themselves a work of art, under the helpful guidance of the experienced Art Department. With their masterpiece complete, pupils then paid a visit to the Science Department, always a favourite on Open Night.

Pupils from our Partner Primary Schools enjoying the activities in Drama, Art and Science during the Taster Days at St Louise's

There pupils observed some experiments and carried out their own investigations with the assistance of the highly skilled Science teachers. Just two months ago, the then Education Minister Angela Smith announced that St Louise's was to become a specialist school for Performing Arts. For the first time since that announcement, the highly acclaimed Drama Department shared their success with the local primary school pupils. All budding young actresses and dancers were taken through a variety of routines designed to build confidence and raise self esteem. To complete the day pupils spent the afternoon in the purpose built Sports Hall. They participated in a range of vigorous activities to channel the energy of the enthusiastic pupils. Before departing the winning team was presented with a trophy. A thoroughly enjoyable day was had by all.



# We Continue To Be Really Good Sports

## Caoimhe Receives Ulster Colleges Camogie All Star 2006



Caoimhe with her treasured trophy (Miss Connolly—right)

Caoimhe Quinn, a Year 12 pupil at St Louise's, is the captain of the school junior Camogie team. Caoimhe is still only 16 years old, and is the youngest player to receive an All Star award this year.

Caoimhe is an outstanding and dedicated player who always gives 100% on the field of play. She has played exceptionally well this year and she, along with her older sister Mairead, captain of the senior team, were selected to go to the Ulster Colleges All Star trials this year.

This is just recognition for all the hard work and dedication that Caoimhe puts into her game, both here in school and at her club, O'Donovan Rossa.

The awards ceremony took place in the Suffolk Inn, Belfast, a glitzy affair attended by all of the top Camogie people in Ulster. On a night to remember, Caoimhe received her award from former All Ireland Senior All Star and current Ulster Camogie Player of the year, Jane Adams, who is also a past pupil of St. Louise's.

Well done Caoimhe! Everyone in St. Louise's, especially the members of the Camogie Club, would like to congratulate you and wish you every success in your future sporting career!

## Year 8 Netball Tournament

The Year 8 Netball squad played at St. Louise's Invitation Netball Tournament on 12th April 2006.

Local schools were invited to take part in a one day tournament of Netball games here in school. This is an annual competition. St. Louise's were the winners of the Division 2 group of teams. The winning team is included in the photograph with the squad of players from Year 8 who all took part in the event.



*We hope you enjoyed Vol 1 Issue 3 of our Sharing Excellence News-letter. The next issue will be circulated during the first term of the new academic year 2006/2007.*

*The staff and governors of St Louise's take this opportunity to wish all our pupils and parents a very safe and happy summer.*