

# St Laurence's NS Parents Association NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025 edition

We're only three and a half months into the school year, yet so much has already happened within our school community.

Every parent and guardian is part of the Parents' Association. If you don't have time to participate as a Council member or volunteer, we always welcome new ideas, skills, suggestions, and contributions you may wish to offer.

This year, several new subcommittees are actively brainstorming and developing exciting projects. All initiatives are works in progress and may evolve over time as they grow and take shape.

- ✓ Talks & Activities for students
- ✓ Recreational Space Upgrade
- ✓ Garden Refresh
- ✓ Book Fair
- ✓ Halloween Walk revamp
- ✓ Halloween Costume Swap
- ✓ Smartphone Free Primary School
- ✓ Colour Parade Community Event
- ✓ Pre-Loved Uniform and Communion Clothes-Swap
- ✓ Parents Peer Support Group
- ✓ School Safety and Walk to School
- ✓ Community Reading Group
- ✓ New Fundraising Drive



If you would like to learn more about any of them, please reach out.

- Contact us at [parents.council@sallinsns.ie](mailto:parents.council@sallinsns.ie)
- Check out our noticeboard or stay tuned into your class WhatsApp announcements
- Follow our social channels



## The Parents Association in numbers

- ✓ 9 new Parents Council members
- ✓ 13 parents now on the Council, representing all classes
- ✓ 15 Sub-committees created for the many projects underway
- ✓ 67 parents actively part of the volunteering community
- ✓ 2 new social media channels: Facebook and Instagram
- ✓ 24 class WhatsApp admins in place and actively sharing communications
- ✓ 2 new tech helpers: Coin-zilla, the coin-sorting machine and Tappy-bert, our card reader for contactless payments.
- ✓ 1 Re-turn recycling bin in the school: meet Duncan!

## What we have achieved so far ...

- ✓ The annual bonding Bog Trip for 6<sup>th</sup> classes took place in September
- ✓ Halloween Walk Fundraiser, which brought in just over €7,000
- ✓ Halloween Clothes Sale, which raised €230
- ✓ The Reading Club for second class children started in November, with a new parent coordinator in place
- ✓ The Pre-loved Book Collection took place on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of November
- ✓ The Christmas clear-out pre-loved clothes collection was held on 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of December, bringing in €100
- ✓ The Recycled Bottles bank initiative kicked off with our brand-new planet pal, Duncan, raising €26 and saving 149 bottles from landfill on day 1 !
- ✓ 6 Visual Communication Posters put in place throughout the school
- ✓ The official garden upgrade started
- ✓ School Logo refreshed
- ✓ New Communication and Fundraising policies drafted

The **Halloween Clothes collection** was a great success, due in large part to the dedication and hard work of our parent volunteers, **Muireann and Rosie**, who have this important message to share:

‘Thanks so much so students and parents for participating in the Halloween costume donation and sale. €230 was raised for the school but more importantly, this contributed to reducing waste by reusing perfectly good costumes.

The fashion industry is said to be responsible for 10% global carbon emissions and in Ireland we throw about 110,000 tons of textiles into our household waste each year, well above the EU average.

We would like to thank you therefore for contributing to this small reduction and hope that we can continue to contribute to change’.





Thank you to everyone who generously contributed to our **pre-loved books drive**, to the volunteers who helped with the collection and especially to **Deirdre Flanagan** for coordinating.

The donated books will be available to purchase at the next Book Fair in early 2026 for a small, nominal price, helping to ensure that all children have greater access to engaging reading materials. This initiative not only fosters a love of reading, but also raises valuable funds to support additional resources for our school.

Any books that remain unsold after the Fair will be used to enhance classroom libraries and will be shared with the community libraries dotted around Sallins.



### School Garden Upgrades

The Council is delighted to support a series of upgrades to the school garden that will promote biodiversity and create an inclusive, welcoming outdoor space for all pupils. These improvements will offer children more opportunities to learn about nature, sustainability, and the importance of caring for their environment.

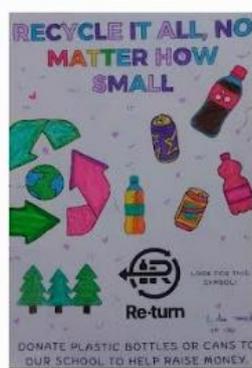
We officially kicked off the project this November with a group of budding environmentalists, the SNA team, our caretaker Kevin, and Parents Council Vice-chair Deirdre, who helped plant 120 bluebell bulbs, 100 summer snowflake bulbs, and a selection of native wildflower seeds in the shaded areas along the woodland and the music corner of the garden. More updates to come as the garden continues to grow!



### New Bottle-Recycling Bin Launch

We are delighted to announce the introduction of a new bottle-recycling bin, Duncan, further strengthening the school's commitment to recycling and environmental awareness. Every bottle recycled will help raise valuable funds for the school while teaching pupils the importance of reducing waste and protecting our planet.

Duncan will be at the front of the school on selected Fridays, and we'll remind you to bring along a recycling bottle then ! Or you can find it on any other day in the school garden near the scooter and bicycles stands.



As part of the launch of our new Duncan initiative, the children, led by the Student Council and coordinated by Ms. Stapleton, have created a series of beautiful posters now displayed throughout the school.

These posters highlight the importance of a circular economy, sustainability, and caring for our environment. They also encourage all pupils to bring recyclable bottles/cans to school, supporting the school ongoing Green Flag and Feet on Friday initiatives. We will let you know in advance when Duncan will be at the front of the school taking them in.



One of our newest Parents' Council Committee members, **David Bowen**, generously gave the school logo its first upgrade ever.

History tidbit: the digital logo was originally created by scanning the crest stitched on a school jumper!

By overcoming the limitations of 1990s technology, David restored the original colours of the St Laurence's NS crest and created a renewed, vibrant artwork for the school to use across all our communications.





The Parents Council, in partnership with Tobii Dynavox Ireland, procured 6 eye-catching visual communications posters for the school.

These colourful, easy-to-use visuals are here to help every child communicate, connect, and shine.

Designed to empower students of all abilities, the posters provide clear, accessible communication tools throughout the school environment.

They will help students of all abilities express themselves and engage more confidently every day, boosting communication for all students and bringing even more positivity to our school environment.



The Parents' Association, in partnership with Bags2School, ran our annual Christmas Clear-Out appeal this December. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped load the bags and to everyone who donated their pre-loved clothing.

We raised €100, which will go towards the many activities planned for the rest of the school year, as well as 10% of the total going to the LauraLynn Foundation.

All photos shared with permission.