

# Mount Lourdes Student Council

## Progress Bulletin - 2022/2023

During 2022-23 the Student Council held five meetings with Mrs Cullen to discuss key issues put forward by the student body. This bulletin outlines some of the main actions taken and key progress made.



### PE Kit

PE kit change was a key focus area. Students across multiple year groups were concerned with the thin, transparent PE T-shirt and the tight 'rugby style' fit. A more functional crew-neck sweat-shirt was favoured over the existing half-zip hoodie. Yr 12 councillors Emer Murphy, Bella Nethercott and Aoibhin Kelly worked in collaboration with SLT, the PE Department and O'Neill's Sportswear to design the new kit.



The new Mount Lourdes PE kit

Multiple CAD drawings were passed back and forth before the final designs were agreed upon. The new PE kit went on sale in June 2023 along with new school PE socks and a new school hat. Huge congratulations to the entire Student Council 22/23 and in particular Yr 12 students Emer, Bella and Aoibhin for making this happen.



Above: New School Hat CAD Drawing

Martina Madden - O'Neill's Sportswear discussing designs with the Yr 12s



## Canteen Efficiency/Value for Money

Yr 14 councillors brought forward the issue of canteen overcrowding at break and lunch times. Size of lunch portions was also an issue. The Student Council as a whole was clear that menu options had improved greatly as a result of the hard work of the canteen staff, the previous year. However, shorter queues and larger portions were still needed to improve the canteen user experience.

At a meeting between SLT and Mrs K Colton on 1<sup>st</sup> February, a decision was made to investigate 'SIMs Pay', a new cashless system for managing school payments. At a further meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February, Mr G McMahon (SIMs) briefed SLT, IT, office and school administration staff on how the new system would work and how it could improve canteen efficiency, thereby allowing greater numbers of students to use the service while speeding up the process. The new 'app based' system involves online payments for canteen, school trips etc. New quicker finger-print scanning technology will speed up till payments. The system will also provide the canteen with the ability to accept food orders for pre-packaging and quicker distribution later in the school day. Potentially it can also be used to take Study Hall attendance, which will be a useful upgrade to the current system.



This investment by the school is designed to not only improve students' experience of using the canteen but also to make the canteen as a business more viable. Recent food inflation costs and Brexit issues affecting supply chains have forced canteen prices up. Greater future profitability would enable the canteen staff to provide larger food portions as well as increased food variety. The new cashless system should be up and running for Halloween.



Finally, canteen supervision was increased to deal with overcrowding issues and Mr K Colgan installed a laptop in the canteen for canteen staff to communicate directly with students via email for purposes of auditing the menu, advertising new menu offerings etc.



Student Council Election Day, October 2022

## **Vending Machine/Tuck Shop**

Yr 11 councillors Niamh McAllister and Saorla McBarron requested the provision of a vending machine/tuck shop, particularly in the St Fanchea's area of school which is isolated from the canteen. Niamh and Saorla met with Mrs K Colton to outline the proposition. G Quinn and K Colton investigated several vending providers for healthy drinks/snacks and results were discussed with the wider council. Issues such as high vending costs to students, questionable health quality of snacks provided and decreased canteen usage as a result of the machines were all discussed. A healthy-snacks 'tuck shop' in St Fanchea's Building was agreed at a meeting with the canteen manager as a solution to the issue whereby the canteen would supply and staff a break-time tuck shop in the St Fanchea's far office. This service was due for launch on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>, February. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen canteen staff shortages in February, this plan has had to be postponed and will hopefully launch in the near future.



**Niamh and Saorla discuss plans with Mrs Colton**

## Uniform Reflectivity

Yr 11 and 13 councillors brought forward a request for greater school blazer reflectivity, in order to improve safety for students. At the April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, a range of blazer samples with built in reflectivity were provided from local uniform retailers and demonstrated. It was agreed by the Student Council that reflective arm bands were the favoured option. After discussion with SD Kells, Enniskillen, a mock-up blazer was created for presentation to the Mount Lourdes Board of Governors who granted the proposal. The new updated blazer will be introduced for all Year 8 students from September 2024.

## School Furniture

At the Student Council meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, Mrs Cullen asked student councillors to put forward their suggestions for improving social spaces in school in line with improving mental health and well-being of students. As a result of this, a new built-in seating area is currently being planned for outside the school Oratory. This will make this central area of school more comfortable for students to relax in, during break and lunchtime. Also, the tennis pavilion mobile hut will be refurbished to function as a softly seated, multipurpose area, suitable for use by staff with groups of students. Funding for these school improvements will come from money collected last year by Mrs Donnelly's Fund-Raising Committee.





## **Other Issues**

A wide range of other issues were dealt with during the school year including extra-curricular activities, non-uniform days, mobile phone policy and bookstore access. Whilst it was not possible to positively address every issue, progress was made on many and work will continue in the near future to further improve our school for all who use it.

## **Student Council Co-ordinators Conference**

A conference for Student Council co-ordinators in Co. Fermanagh, chaired by 'My Voice' (Education Authority), was hosted by Mount Lourdes on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2023. This meeting gave an excellent opportunity for local school co-ordinators to get to know each other, share ideas and discuss potential opportunities for future student council collaboration. Thanks to all our neighbouring schools for attending and making the event so successful.

## **Below: Co. Fermanagh Student Council Co-ordinators**



**Below: Student Council Election Day: 25th October 2022**



**Below: Mount Lourdes Student Council 2022-2023**

