

# Parents' Association Annual Report 2021-2022

## River Valley Community National School



*"Partners in Learning"*



### Your Committee 2021-2022

Catherine - Chairperson [Luca, Senior Infants]

Elaine - Treasurer [Isla, Junior Infants]

Emily - Secretary [Isabelle, Senior Infants]

Jo - Board of Management [Aoibheann, 1<sup>st</sup> class, Darragh, Junior Infants]

Dave - Board of Management [Jamie, 1<sup>st</sup> class]

Claire [Sam, Senior Infants]

Ray [Leo, Senior Infants]

Suzanne [Arya, 1<sup>st</sup> class]

Vasu [Tvesha, Junior Infants]

# 2021-2022 year in review

2021-2022 was a very successful year for our Parents' Association as we built on the work of the previous year's PA. As our school continues to grow it's great to see the incredible support our families and broader community provide to our school. It is that support and engagement that will ultimately help provide the best learning opportunities and rounded experiences for our children as they grow and progress through school.

Our school motto is "Partners in Learning." A core value of River Valley CNS is **partnership**, where staff, parents and members of the wider community work together to enable all of our students reach their **full potential** in an educational environment which is **welcoming, child-centred, stimulating, future-focused, wholly inclusive and reflective** of a diverse 21st century Ireland.

The PA committee, along with the support of parents worked hard during the year to support the goals and objectives of the school and aligned activities with those taking place in school so that we were truly '**Partners in Learning**'.

The following report outlines some of the key activities and events organised during the year.



# Amber Flag - working together toward a happier, healthier Ireland and to eradicate the stigmas associated with mental health issues

We were delighted when the school re-qualified for the Pieta House Amber Flag this year. This initiative promotes positive mental health and well-being in our communities and we were keen to fully support it.



The PA organised **Active April** again this year encouraging families to get active as the weather started to improve and the days got longer.



On Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April we took part in **Holywell Junior Park Run** and followed this up with a get together and refreshments for all the family in the community centre. It was great to finally have our first ever in-person event after having Covid restrictions for so long.

Many thanks to Sansão who ran a **Capoeira workshop** [Brazilian martial art combining dance, acrobatics and music] for us, as part of Active April, as it's a firm favourite with all the children.



The PA also funded a **6-week programme** with **Star Kids Yoga** in April/May which was a big hit helping the children find strategies towards being mindful, focused and centred.

The PA bought **Tennis** equipment and, along with the school, ran an 8-week tennis programme at the tennis courts in Swords Castle.

We also used funds to buy **gymnastics mats and PE equipment** including space markers, hoops and skipping ropes.

# Green schools Flag – working together for a sustainable future

## Picker PALS

The school started work during the year on earning the **Green Flag** for its first theme of **litter & waste**. It took part in the **Picker Pal program** which saw the children take turns in bringing their families on litter picking adventures in the community.

The PA supported the green schools flag theme with a number of initiatives.

We ran two **textile recycling** events in the school, in November and March, collecting a total of 1110kg in textiles for recycling for which we received €440.

Our **uniform initiative** continues to be very successful and is a great way to pass on uniforms for re-use. Thanks to all those who have supported this initiative which also helps our environmental goals.

We continue to support our '**Little Free Libraries**' at the entrance to the school. Books are free to take away to read and we ask that you also drop off books that you're finished with.

We took part in the **National Spring Clean** with a litter picking adventure and walk to Usher's Lake. The PA sourced litter pickers, hi-vis vests, gloves and bags from Fingal County Council and An Taisce which will be available for future events.

We set up a private **Facebook page** to buy, sell, swap goods amongst our school community and encourage you all to use this resource to give items a new home.

**Facebook - River Valley CNS Parents Association Green Schools Initiatives**





# STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths

River Valley CNS has a strong focus on **STEM** subjects and the PA has looked to support this during the year.

Our **Spring Garden Project** was initiated to give our school and school community a chance to bring nature closer to the children's learning environment. The ability of this project to engage the children across such diverse fields as **science, engineering, maths, environment, art, culture and wellness** made it a priority for us. We successfully applied for a grant from Fingal County Council and received **€1,900** to help with project costs. We also contacted local businesses who donated items such as soil, seeds, bulbs and equipment. We bought 2 garden inn greenhouses and 2 mobile raised beds along with a hot bin composter. We plan to continue to expand this project in the coming year.

Comhairle Contae  
Fhine Gall  
Fingal County  
Council



In May the PA organised a **Cyber Safety Seminar** in conjunction with **CybersafeKids** and **CommSec** specifically for the families and friends of River Valley CNS pupils.



The PA arranged for a **Bricks4Kidz** in-school workshop for all the children in March. The workshop, a Lego Technic build accredited by **Science Foundation Ireland**, aligned with **Engineers Week**. The workshop for 'The Big Rig' also tied in to the **Green Flag** and understanding how trucks can be engineered to be better for the environment.

The PA also supported STEM in the classroom by purchasing **equipment** for the school such as **weighing scales, a trundle wheel, metre sticks, geometric shapes and measuring beakers**.

# Culture Month – embracing our diverse heritage

In May the PA organised a series of activities for our **culture month**. Thanks to the involvement and participation of so many parents the events were a huge success. Some of the activities organised included

- **Language videos** produced by the children and their families teaching us how to say key phrases in 10 different languages.
- In-school **presentations** by parents to the children incorporating language, dance and interesting country facts.
- **Map of the world** in the yard.
- Wear your **national dress / country colours** to school day.
- **Capoeira** and Brazilian **percussion instrument** workshop.
- **Indian dance** demonstration.
- **Children's art** exhibition.

Our main event was held on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May when we opened up the school to extended families to visit and enjoy our **Culture Day** which included

- **Music and dance** performed by both parents and children.
- An **exhibition of cultural items** including items of national dress, musical instruments, artwork, pottery, jewellery and textiles.
- **Presentations** from 1<sup>st</sup> class on projects they worked on over the month.
- A **culinary feast** prepared by our families to showcase our favourite foods from around the world.
- A **book fair**

We rounded off culture month with the production of an 80 page **recipe book** featuring our favourite recipes submitted by both students and school staff.



# Fundraising

Fundraising is an important part of the PA committee's brief as it provides vital funds to support the school and the children's learning environment. Thanks to the generous support of parents, families and the wider community we were able to raise over €8k during the year to spend in support of the school and our children's education and well-being.

Our annual **Christmas Culture Crawl** is a sponsored walk which sends the children on an adventure to learn about and find places of historic and other interest around Swords. In 2021 it was a huge success raising €1,675.

Our **end of year raffle** was supported by both parents and local businesses who provided fantastic prizes and bought tickets raising a total of €2,030.63.

We received a **grant** of €1,900 from **Fingal County Council** for our spring garden project.

Our **textile recycling** initiative raised €440.

Many thanks to **CommSec** who not only sponsored our **Cyber Safety Seminar** with Cyber Safe Ireland but also donated €500 for the PA to use in support of STEM.

We launched our **school lotto** in April as a key ongoing fundraiser. It helped raise €1,610.70 to the end of August.

Thanks to all those who bought books, at the **school book fair** and who buy online from **scholastic book club**, we were able to use points to buy around 150 books for the library.

<https://schools.scholastic.ie/rivervalley-cns-1/digital-book-club>

# Weekly Lotto winners

- Inaugural draw - Angela Garry, Ms. McArdle, Mary Kildea
- Andreína Carbonall
- Grainne Smyth
- Barbato Borza
- Igor Vehlo
- Rose Swan
- Michelle Martin
- Jim Sullivan
- David Burke
- Jim Sullivan
- Claire Lindsay
- Claire Lindsay
- Sarah Byrne
- Yvonne Donnellan
- Andreína Carbonall
- Conor Lindsay
- Grainne Smyth
- Elizaveta Donnery
- Maria Kildea
- Maria Kildea
- Yvonne Donnellan
- Yvonne Donnellan

Our school lotto was launched in April 2022 as an integral part of the PA's fundraising efforts. Many thanks to all those families who continue to support this fundraiser helping to make it a success.

If you're not in yet you can join at any time at <https://www.ourfundraiser.ie/org/rivervalleycns>



# Financials

Balance brought forward from prior year

4573.30

## Income 2021-2022

Textile Recycling November 2021

248.00

Bank interest

0.23

Christmas Culture Crawl [sponsored walk]

1675.00

End of year raffle

2030.63

Fingal grant for garden project

1900.00

Net Lotto proceeds April - August

1610.70

Textile Recycling April 2022

192.00

Corporate donation CommSec

500.00

Total Income

8156.56

## Expenditure 2021-2022

Library books [net of scholastic points]

225.11

Sport [Tennis equipment, Gym mats, Space markers, Hoops, Skipping ropes]

1651.66

STEM [Bricks4Kidz workshop, measuring equipment]

870.30

Garden [Greenhouses, raised beds, equipment, hot bin composter, sensory mirror]

2050.41

Environment / Green Flag [Clothes rack and hangers, reuseable plates, cups & cutlery]

96.49

Active April [Yoga classes, room hire]

660.00

Culture Month [Recipe book, outdoor map, bunting]

725.35

NPC annual membership

45.00

Total Expenditure

6324.32

Closing balance

6405.54

# SPONSORS

Many thanks to all those who supported our activities over the course of the year.

Our annual raffle would not have been possible without generous donations from parents and local businesses. Special thanks to the following businesses who gave prizes for the draw

- Finance for Homes
- Ashbourne Upholstery
- Andrea Hair
- Jennifer Creedon Nutrition
- Image Fitness
- Forrest Little Golf Club
- Super Valu Pavilions
- Jo Crowley Neuromuscular Therapist
- Pomodorino wood fired pizza & pasta
- Style Club Pavilions
- D'Chilli Shaker
- Dunnes Stores Pavilions
- Mundo Capoeira
- Milano Pavilions
- Beech Vista Garden Centre
- Dublin Meat Company
- Rituals Pavilions

Thanks to the following for supporting our Spring Garden Project

- Fingal County Council
- JWP Halpin builders
- The Garden House Malahide
- Peter O'Brien Landscapes
- Keelings
- Keoghs

Thanks to CommSec and Cyber Safe Kids Ireland for sponsoring and delivering our Cyber Seminar.

Many thanks to CommSec for the very generous donation of €500

Thanks to Fingal County Council for providing us with hi-vis vests for all the children in the school. Thanks also for the litter pickers for our spring clean.



# PA 2022-2023

The Parent Association is the structure through which parents/guardians in a school can work together for the best possible education for their children. The Education Act, 1998 sets down the role of the parent association. The Parent Association works with the principal, staff and the board of management to build effective partnership of home and school.

Every Parent and Guardian is automatically a member of the Parents' Association. The committee is elected at the **Annual General Meeting** to work on behalf of all parents in the school.

We invite all parents to attend our **AGM [via Zoom] on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> September at 8.30pm.**

At that meeting we will review the accounts for the last year, elect the incoming committee and briefly discuss plans for the upcoming year. It's an opportunity for all parents to put forward suggestions and to offer support for the work of the PA.

There are plenty of activities that need the support of a strong committee, as well as ad hoc help from parents, in order to be successful and we ask you all to please consider how you might be able to help out over the coming year, even if you can only offer up a couple of hours.

In order to elect a committee we need **nominees for the positions of Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer as well as ordinary committee members.** The Board of management automatically has two parent members on the PA committee. We'd appreciate if you could email your **intent to go forward for the committee** or to make an offer of **ad hoc** help in advance of the meeting by **email [pa.rivervalleycns@gmail.com](mailto:pa.rivervalleycns@gmail.com).**

Thanks for reading our annual report. Here's to a successful year ahead!

Finally, on a personal note, sincere thanks to all of the outgoing committee for your hard work, support and commitment over the course of the year.

Catherine [Chair Person 2021-2022]

Thank you for your continued  
support

