

Maoin Cheoil na Gaillimhe

Newsletter August 2012 Issue 12

Dear Parent.

Welcome to our August newsletter. There is a huge amount of news and information in this letter so please read very carefully. We will keep things to a minimum so as not to make it too long and ask that if you have any outstanding questions you might call the office for clarification.

OPEN DAY

Open day is set for the 18th Aug this year between the hours of 10am and 2pm. This event is mostly for the benefit of new students to the school, but, please note that on the day we will be taking actual registration for anyone that has not yet done so. There was a huge response to our pre registration in May and there are some changes to the schedule as a result. We will be assigning times to all new students on the 18th so, please, if you have not secured your time for the coming academic year do so on or before the 18th.

At 1pm on the day we will be hosting a public concert of about 45 mins duration with performances from staff members. This is always a highlight of the day and this year the staff are really making an extra effort to put on something very special.



EXAM RESULTS

All the exam results are in. We only got the last of them 2 weeks ago. At this late stage we will keep all the actual paperwork in the office to be distributed by the teachers at lessons and we will text out all the results to the students and parents in the coming week. Anyone not returning to the school will have their result posted out.

On a personal note I will make two points in relation to the results. Firstly they are the highest results I have seen in all my years of teaching. Not only did half of all the students sitting exams score more than 90% which is an incredible result but the national average of high achiever awards was blown out of the water. The National average is about 1:140 and the results at MCnG were closer to 1:10 or less. Secondly I will point out that those that score the highest were consistently amongst those that attended their weekly theory class. The



supporting role that the theory class plays in the development of each student cannot be overestimated. And again they are free to every student of the school so please consider the timetable for theory when booking in for lessons for the coming year.

The MCnG AWARD

This year we are launching the award program to encourage in a positive way the student body to make the most of the school itself and the

supporting organisations in the city itself. Basically there are going to be points awarded to each student that wishes to take part. Points will be awarded for attendance at theory classes and for attending concerts. Similarly, points will be awarded for regular punctual attendance at lessons. Any other music activities like workshops or orchestra will also count. Once a student has achieved a verifiable total mark they will be invited to an award ceremony at the year's end to receive their certificate. We will endeavour to see to it that the ceremony is as special for each student as possible and are in negotiation with senior public figures to come and award the prize. More to follow on that.

PLAYDAY

We had a great day of music making on the 21st of July. A collaborate affair between the adult orchestra of Mr. David Clarke, and the wind section of Mr. Robert Solyom. What was even more special was that this day of music also drew in teachers and players from outside MCnG. The amount of music covered was fabulous and the concert at day's end was a real testament to the hard work and commitment of all concerned. Our thanks go out to Ms. Joanne Cater and Mr. Matt Berrill for their efforts with the wind. It is planned to build on the day next year and help it grow into a camp for wind players that really gives them a concentrated burst of wonderful music making.

COLOURSTRINGS

And so to the main news of the summer. We had a wonderful summer school in colourstrings in mid-July and this was to bridge what is a terribly long summer break. The week was a huge amount of fun and there was a lovely tie in between the music and arts and crafts and a chance to





see and interact with a range of music instruments each day.

However the ongoing development of the colourstrings program got a huge boost this summer when five members of staff went to London to train with the founders of the system of teaching itself. I can say without reservation that after 25 years teaching I have never seen anything like it and I am totally convinced that we are on the very foundation of the most significant development in instrumental teaching that there has been in almost a century. Over 40 years in

development in Finland the Silvay brothers are finally content that what they have is ready to share with the world at large. They have written and expanded and composed for and proven that there is a better way to introduce instrumental teaching. Like their mentor Zoltan Kodaly they have studied the very best material available and drawn it into their unique system of teaching. So much so that educators like Suzuki who has international fame admitted to Geza Silvay that they had solved many of the problems that he could not. Their students are not just professional players but are in fact at the very cutting edge of playing as chamber musicians and concertmasters. Not only that they have produced about 10 times the number of professional musicians than any other teachers working today. All because they have been so generous with their ideas and allowed people in to be a part of it. As you know we have been slowly building something here in Galway. I can now say without any doubt that what will happen here in the next couple of years here will dispel any doubt people might have that this is the very best training available and any parent looking for the best training for their children will see that clearly. I am hugely excited for the next crop of young players. While we were in London I had the opportunity to speak with the Silvay brothers about our school and they have huge encouragement to offer which will include a visit in the coming years either by themselves or by their master teachers. People of the skill of Heidi or Pirrka of the Helsinki colourstrings institute and the Sibelius Academy, or even Mr. David Vinden who is the primary teacher of Kodaly in the British Isles. The Future is very positive for our young people. So we are ready to take on the first group of young players and this will be available in violin or viola, cello, piano and recorder (leading to flute or clarinet).



It is not essential to have completed the kindergarten to begin in the method but it is a huge advantage. If there are any questions then we will be able to answer them by phone or indeed on Open Day if anyone wishes to come along and discuss it.

FINALLY

There are a lot of things going on in and around open day. We ask that you log onto facebook and like our page there and this will mean that we can add things as they become available to us. If you know friends that are not internet friendly then we would be hugely grateful to you for passing on any relative information.

Pictures from the top.

1. The Yehudi Menuhin College in London
2. Mr David Vinden, Kodaly trainer in the Guildhall London and author of multiple books on training in the Kodaly Method
3. Colourstrings summer camp with Katri and Hazel.
4. Csaba (in blue) and Gesa Silvay
5. Geza with Heidi and Pirrka.