

New Student Council Elected for ICD

The Student Council is an integral part of Integrated College Dungannon and was set up in the college's first year.

“At ICD we listen to the concerns and opinions of our students because we recognise that if students are happy at school they are more likely to succeed”, explains Mrs Yvonne Beggs, Student Council Co-ordinator.

The Student Council consists of 22 students who have been elected by their form classes to represent them. At our first meeting of the year a committee is nominated and agreed. This year our Chairperson is Rachel Lesslar from Year 14, Vice Chairperson is Emma McShane from Year 13 and the Secretary is Sarah Boyle from Year 13. Under their leadership the Student Council hope to have an active year of debate, fundraising and fun together. In November a training session is planned with a NICCY representative visiting ICD to help the students focus on their vision and action plan for the year ahead.

In the past 10 years the Student Council have been involved in a vast range of activities. ICD achieved bronze and silver Ecoschools Awards for recycling and gardening initiatives organised by the Student Council.

The college's environmental work has also supported the 'Yellow Woods Campaign' and the 'Fones4schools' recycling scheme. In 2005 the Student Council made an application to the 'BT Schools Award' and were £2000 winners in a communication skills and citizenship project. This grant helped to create a communal garden area at ICD for students and staff to enjoy.

We were also very proud to achieve a Gold Gulbenkian Youth Award for the Student Council's outstanding contribution to co-operating and understanding in the wider world. This is displayed by the effort that is put into fundraising. Between 2002 and 2007 the Student Council raised £3119 for the UNICEF Day for Change Campaign by organising non-uniform days. Other charities which we have supported over the years include the Marie Curie Fields of Hope Campaign, Trocaire 24 hour fast, Children in Need and Samaritan's Purse Christmas Shoe box Appeal plus many more.

The Student Council enjoy highlighting the outstanding achievements of individual students and have become involved in many award schemes. Eight ICD students have been awarded the Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Award for Young People, for fantastic personal achievements and improving the lives of others. Last year's Chairperson, Colin Gervin received a 'Deutsche Bank Spotlight Award' for

campaigning achievements. Students from the college also ran a workshop at the Annual NICIE Conference to teach other schools how to develop an effective Student Council.

Within College life the Student Council have been involved in deciding changes to the uniform, updating college policies, setting up buddy systems, reviewing canteen services, improving provision of lunch and after college clubs and organising rewards. Integrated College Dungannon was also one of the first schools to have student representatives on the Board of Governors. Since 2001, Student Council representatives have been attending Board of Governors' meetings to share student opinions and aspirations for the college.

Mrs Yvonne Beggs, co-ordinates the work of the Student Council. "Having a Student Council provides an effective line of communication between students, staff and the Board of Governors. It also helps develop life skills such as debating, teamwork and leadership. I have watched students' self-confidence grow as they fulfil their role as Student Councillor and I look forward to working with the newly elected Student Council in the year ahead."