

PastPupil | Profile



Áine Harte (Canavan)

Current job title/role:
Doctor (GP trainee)

After leaving St Ciaran's Áine took a Gap Year. During this year she worked as a healthcare assistant and spent some time in Zambia with Fr PJ Gormley, helping with projects started by previous St Ciaran's Peregrini groups. On her return she studied Medicine at Queen's University Belfast. Since graduating in 2017, Áine has worked in various hospitals in the Belfast Trust and Western Trust. At present she is based in Altnagelvin Hospital as part of her GP training.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"The most vivid memory of my first day at St Ciaran's was going on a tour of the school with my

form class 8C, led by my form teacher Miss Sherry. I remember wondering if I would ever be able to find my way around the school without getting lost! During the tour we visited the Oratory, which turned out to be a very important and special place for me during my time at St Ciaran's.

St Ciaran's will provide you with lots of exciting opportunities - grab them with both hands! Enjoy meeting new friends and sharing good times together. I am very lucky that my first year friends at St Ciaran's have remained my best friends to this day."

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Aisling Kelly

Current job title/role:
Digital Mentor at South West College,
and most recently Digital Learning
Technologist

After leaving St Ciaran's Aisling attended South West College in Omagh, where she studied Level 3 Childcare. On completion she enrolled on an Access Course in Healthcare at SWC. Having decided this was not a career she wanted to pursue Aisling looked into media. She was accepted into the Foundation Degree in Creative Media production. After graduating from SWC she completed her third and final year at Ulster University, graduating with a BSc Honours in Creative Technologies. Aisling has worked as a graphic designer, an intern with the health and social care board and a project support officer for the NI Direct editorial team.

Two years ago, she took up a post as Digital Mentor with SWC and is currently working as a Digital Learning Technologist based in the Digital Learning team of SWC.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“Moving from a tiny primary school was a huge change! St Ciaran's was a massive building and classes were a lot bigger than I was used to. Just enjoy every single moment, I still think back to events in school and the craic that we had! Work hard and don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something! And enjoy every moment!”

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Aislínn McCrory

Current job title/role:
**Head of European Commission's
Irish Translation Unit**

After leaving St Ciaran's Aislínn moved to Dublin where she studied Irish and French in Trinity College. She then moved to Galway to do a master's degree in Irish Translation Studies. After completing her master's Aislínn secured a place as a trainee with the European Commission in Brussels, and a job offer followed to stay working as a translator. She has been working for the Commission's translation service now for 11 years in different roles and currently manages the Irish Language Unit.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"My first memory of St Ciaran's is of the day I came in for the entrance tests. Our bus must have been one of the last to arrive because the hall was already full and me and a few of my primary school classmates had to sit at desks

on the stage. I remember thinking how big everything seemed in comparison with Glencull primary school! Even some of the other first years seemed so tall compared to us. I don't know what they had in the water in Roscavey! I also remember that when we started we were given actual maps to find our way around the maze of mobiles out the front of the school. Even so I remember getting lost on the way back from the toilets. Thankfully my sense of direction has improved over the years!

Try new things and make new friends. My best friend Áine from primary school will always be my best friend Áine, but we both made so many brilliant new friends for life in St Ciaran's. Also give all your new subjects a chance. You never know what you might find you love or are really good at."

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Alana McCabe

Current job title/role:

**Music Teacher at St Patrick's Academy,
Dungannon**

After completing her A Levels at St Ciaran's, Alana studied music at Queen's University Belfast. She decided to take a gap year and seized the opportunity to travel around Australia. On returning home, she worked in various roles, including Community Access Project Coordinator for the charity Leonard Cheshire. Additionally, Alana was employed at a local secondary school teaching music to small groups and tutoring GCSE music students. It was this role that sparked her determination to teach, and she completed her PGCE in Secondary Music at Ulster University, Coleraine in 2018.

Alana currently teaches music in St Patrick's Academy, Dungannon.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember walking into the Assembly Hall and feeling so excited to meet new people in my form class (8C) and to see my friends from St Mary's Ballygawley. We were introduced to our form tutor, Mr "Speedy" McCarron who was a great character!

The most important advice I would give is to be confident and ambitious with your ideas- be brave and follow your own path. You are the main decider in your own success process. At St Ciaran's, you will be part of an incredibly supportive learning community who see the amazing potential in all of you!

I strongly recommend joining extra-curricular groups whether it be arts/GAA/academia. The sense of creativity and teamwork that you gain by doing so are wonderful skills that you will carry with you for the rest of your life.

My greatest memories include being involved in musical productions and events that involved performing/singing. This has certainly had a huge impact on my chosen career path. No one has ever regretted learning a musical instrument and you have two top class teachers in Mrs McGirr and Mr McMullan to guide you!"

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Ashlene McKenna

Current job title/role:
Principal Environmental Consultant

Ashlene always liked geography in school but she didn't want to purely do that in college as it did not seem to have very many direct career paths at the time (beyond teaching).

She did an Environmental Science undergraduate degree in UUC, then a masters in Applied Environmental Sciences at QUB.

She did some temping after university whilst applying for roles, then started with a small, specialised consultancy about 10 months after graduating. Ashlene has been with her current employer for nearly 2 years. All employment has been with environmental consultancies.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I was worried about what class I'd end up in, and if any of my primary school comrades would be in the class with me. I was also excited for a new chapter. I was very nervous as we'd come from a very small primary school (about 40 pupils overall), so St Ciaran's seemed massive.

Try not to worry or put pressure on yourself - you'll end up where suits you, and your teachers will keep an eye that it's at the best level for you. Don't panic if you don't make new friends in the first couple of days, or there's a lot to take in; looking back it probably took me a month before I felt comfortable, and in the end I really loved my school days at St Ciaran's!”

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Barry Mulgrew

Current job title/role:
Civil Engineer/Owner Riverside Civils Ltd

Barry left St Ciaran's after year 12 and went to South West College in Dungannon, where he completed a HND in Civil Engineering. From there he went to UUU and graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering.

Barry took up a position with PT McWilliams as a Site Engineer on dual carriageways and motorways across England and Scotland. He then worked as the earthworks site manager on the new Gin Palace and visitor centre at Hendrick's Gin before returning home. On his return he worked for 2 years for John McQuillan Contracts as a Surfacing Contracts Manager.

In 2019 he set up his own company, Riverside Civils Ltd. "Starting out as a freelance engineer alone, we have since grown to 15 full and part time staff, most of whom are also past pupils of St Ciaran's. Working across the North and

South of Ireland we offer surveying and setting out services for architects and designers, as well as plant hire, ground works contracting and surfacing in both commercial and domestic sectors."

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember being excited to attend St Ciaran's. I was lucky that a lot of my class from St Mary's Cabragh were in my new form class of 8C which made the change a little easier. It was also great making new friends from other primary schools and they still remain best friends to this day.

Enjoy your time, sometimes it may not seem it, but it will fly by. When you look back it's very hard to remember anything other than the good times! You will make great memories and achieve much during your time in St Ciaran's."

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Brian McElroy

Current job title/role:
**Supervising Pharmacist,
Boots Pharmacy, Monaghan**

After achieving the required A-level grades, Brian undertook a Master's degree in the School of Pharmacy in Queen's University Belfast.

Upon completion, he spent one year training as a pre-registration pharmacist with Gordon's Chemist, before attaining a full-time job as Managing Pharmacist in their Omagh branch.

After 4 years in Omagh Brian successfully registered with the Pharmaceutical Society of Ireland and was rewarded with the role of Supervising Pharmacist in Boots Pharmacy, Monaghan. He has been in this role for the last 14 years.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I was nervous but excited at the same time. I remember being taken aback at the sheer size of the school. All the staff were so welcoming and helped me settle in quickly. It was wonderful to look around my new class knowing that I was ready to form lots of new friends for life.

Starting a brand new school can be a big step in your life. Just remember the reasons that you chose to go to St Ciaran's. The facilities are excellent, the staff are fantastic and the support and opportunities you will receive for you to fulfil your potential are endless. You will never look back."

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PastPupil | Profile



Briega Nugent

Current job title/role:
**Independent Research Consultant
working on research projects for the
third sector and the Scottish Government**

Briega did a degree in law at Queen's University Belfast and a Master's in Criminology and Criminal Justice at Edinburgh University before completing a PhD there also. She worked for Edinburgh University as a Researcher and guest lecturer and has been an Independent Research Consultant for the past fifteen years.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember us all being in the assembly hall and the room feeling very big. We were put into rows for our different classes and our row was told we were '8C'. I wasn't sure what that meant at the time, but I had a feeling of nervous anticipation and also of being small too. I was excited to meet new people and everyone seemed to be good craic and highly motivated. The school was so busy it felt like I was almost

going into battle to get from one end to the other. The timetable and moving from one different class to another was explained to us in the 'form room' by Mrs McCoy. I liked that this felt like I was taking control and just loved the idea of having the chance to spend real time on subjects I wanted to know more about. It was also brilliant to be involved in subjects I had no idea about too, like 'CDT'. The first day was a blur really, but I remember it being really good fun and already feeling like I had met some very good friends. After the long, crowded bus journey home I was glad to be doing it all again the next day.

It sounds simple - but enjoy it all and follow your heart about what you love to do. When you do what you love good things happen."

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Bronagh Broderick

Current job title/role:
Musician

Bronagh studied music in Queen's University in Belfast, and then completed a Master's Degree in Arts Management and Cultural Policy. She worked for the Alzheimer's Society throughout this time, providing music workshops for people living with Dementia. In 2017 Bronagh left this job to pursue a career as a full-time musician. She now facilitates music workshops as a freelance artist in a wide range of settings, including care homes, schools and nurseries. She is also a singer-songwriter and has been releasing her own music over the past 8 years. Bronagh regularly performs in bars and venues across Northern Ireland.

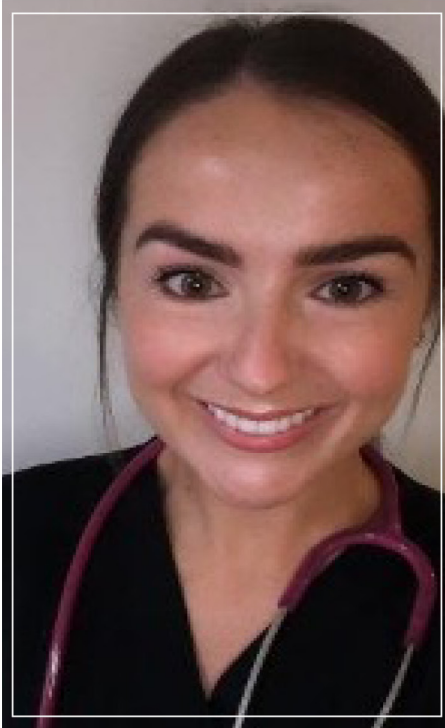
Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I really remember how excited I was. Putting my uniform on made me feel like such a grown up! Getting a new bus made me feel a bit nervous but I quickly realised I had a lot of familiar faces around me.

Don't be afraid to be yourself, it's ok to be different from everyone else!"

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PastPupil | Profile



Bronagh Hackett

Current job title/role:
**Doctor – General Practice
Specialist Trainee**

Bronagh left St Ciaran's and headed to Queen's University, Belfast where she studied Medicine. She graduated in 2016 with MB BCh BAO and shortly after began working as a Junior Doctor in different specialties and hospitals across the North for two years.

Bronagh always loved travelling and is very fortunate that Medicine has allowed her the opportunity to work overseas, experience different cultures and meet new people. In 2018, she moved to Queensland, Australia where she worked in the Emergency Department at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital for two and a half years - spending her free time surfing and sunbathing!

Having just returned home to Ireland, Bronagh is now ready to embark on the next adventure in her career as General Practice Specialist Trainee in 2021. She is looking forward to the challenges ahead!

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My first day at St Ciaran's was also my sister's first day as a new teacher in St Ciaran's - Mrs O'Donnell - so it helped a little that it was a new beginning for both of us!

I think most people feel the same on their first day - a mixture of nerves and excitement. I mostly remember being in our form class for the first time and feeling relieved that everyone seemed so friendly. Luckily, I already knew some of my classmates, but I remember being excited to get to know all the new faces too and make new friends.

Just try to enjoy it as much as possible and get involved in whatever you can whether it is music, sports, drama or The Peregrini - because you really will make the best memories, great friends and have heaps of craic along the way.”

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PastPupil | Profile



Cara Dinsmore

Current job title/role:
Shooting Director/Producer

After completing her A levels in Music, English and RE Cara went to Queen's University Belfast in 2015 to study Film Studies. She was always passionate about media and film, but still found it scary jumping into a course leading to a career in a very competitive industry. However, she loved every minute of the degree and especially enjoyed her work placement. In her final year while with Cinemagic, she got to work on their film festivals and meet directors and actors such as Saoirse Ronan. She also worked as a trainee songwriter on their feature film, Grace and Goliath.

After graduating with a first-class honours degree Cara decided to do a Master's in Media and Broadcast Production in Queen's. The course was much more TV and documentary based which was the direction she wanted to pursue.

Near the end of the Master's degree in 2019 she was offered a job as an assistant producer with television production company Strident Media. She began working on a programme for TG4 called Beidh Aonach Amárach, which was directed and produced by another St Ciaran's past pupil, Bernadette Morris.

"It was a fantastic experience getting to travel around Ireland, going out on shoots and meeting loads of interesting people."

Cara was only contracted with the company for that production, but they decided to keep her on, and she has been working for Strident Media for over a year and a half now.

She has received credits as an assistant producer on a range of different programmes that have been

broadcasted on networks such as BBC and RTÉ. Last year Cara gained experience as a self-shooting assistant producer on series 9 of the very popular Rare Breed for UTV, and she is currently working as a shooting director on Rare Breed series 10.

"Whether it's filming on farms or coming up with ideas for new television shows, I really love the variety in my job. No two days are the same."

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember being really nervous about my first day at St Ciaran's. All of my closest friends from primary school were going to another secondary school and I was worried about making new friends. Going into a class with a lot of new people seemed quite scary at the time, but I really didn't need to worry.

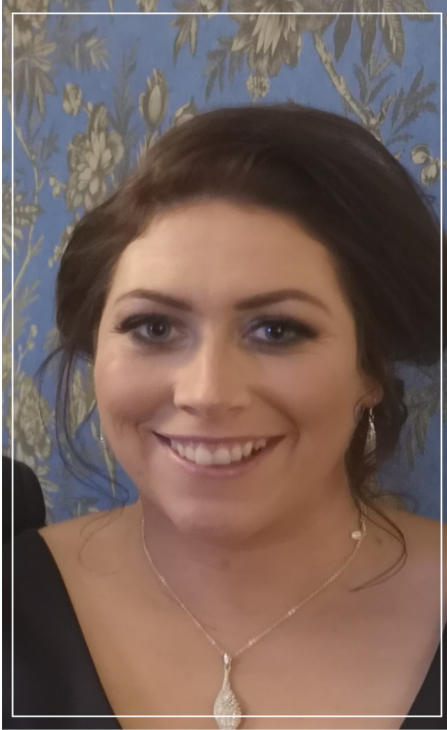
Everybody was so welcoming, and the teachers and school staff were always looking out for us. It wasn't long before I formed great friendships with classmates who I'm still friends with today!

Do not worry. Everyone is in the same boat and you will find your feet in no time. Work hard and take part in as much as you can. The teachers will give you so many opportunities to shine and gain confidence. I look back with the fondest memories of performing at many wonderful musical events, representing the school in public speaking competitions, and the incredible trip to Zambia with St Ciaran's Peregrini.

Enjoy every second! You will make great friends and have wonderful memories."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Carmel Gallagher (McConville)

Current job title/role:
**Senior Accountant
at Kelly & O'Neill Ltd**

After completing her A Levels, Carmel studied Accounting with French at Queen's University, Belfast. The third year of her degree was spent in Luxembourg on placement with KPMG, one of the 'Big Four' professional services firms in the world, where she worked in the Investment Funds and Real Estate departments.

Carmel was subsequently offered a graduate professional training contract with KPMG Ireland, based in the audit department of the Belfast office. This involved working on the audits of local companies, as well as large multi nationals, both here and in England. Carmel completed her Chartered Accountants Ireland examinations whilst working.

After qualifying as a Chartered Accountant, she decided to move a bit closer to home, taking up employment with a local accountancy practice, and she has been there since. Carmel undertook additional professional exams, becoming a member of the Association of Tax Technicians.

Her current role is a varied one and includes accounts, tax, audit and forensic accounting.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I had gone to St Matthew's Primary School in Garvaghey which was a very small school. I went from having 28 people in my school to 28 in my class in St. Ciaran's so it definitely was a fish out of water experience. I was worried that I wouldn't know anybody or get lost, or worse, not be able to find my bus to get home! I remember being taken into the assembly hall and being told to line up in our classes. We were then taken to our form room by our form teacher Mr Casey (RIP) who was a lovely man - I never heard him raise his voice in 7 years, despite the best efforts of some of the eejits in our class!!

It is normal to be nervous starting a new school but try not to worry - you will quickly get into the swing of things. Enjoy every minute and don't be afraid to get involved with as many things as possible from sport to music and drama. St Ciaran's is a school for everyone with fantastic teachers who will push and challenge you to be the best you can be. You will meet some great people who will remain friends for life - it's the craic and fun that you have with these people along the way that you'll remember long after you leave the classroom behind - good luck!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Catherine Canavan

Current job title/role:
Pre-registration Pharmacist

After leaving St Ciaran's, Catherine took gap year to get her desired grades, while working part time in a community pharmacy to gain experience. She attended Queen's University Belfast to study Pharmacy and graduated (remotely) with a Master's degree in July 2020. Catherine is now completing her pre-reg year and will be fully qualified in July.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember feeling a mix of nerves and excitement in the first few days. I was the only girl in my class at primary school so I knew things could only get better! The building seemed massive, but

thankfully there were a few familiar faces in the school which helped. I actually met my best friend on the first day because we had the same school bag!

St Ciaran's offers so many opportunities both academic and extra-curricular, so try to make the most of everything that comes your way. Don't stress too much about what to do in the future - do your best, be yourself and the rest will work itself out. It all goes by in a flash so enjoy every minute!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Christopher Quinn

Current job title/role:
Pharmacist in Galway

Christopher enrolled in the MPharm Master of Pharmacy course at Queen's University Belfast in 2008 after completing A-levels in maths, biology, chemistry and physics at St Ciaran's.

In 2010, after completing 2 years of the pharmacy course he took a year out to work as a cross community support worker with The Spirit of Enniskillen Trust. It was here that he realised having an upbringing in Roscavey and attending a school like St Ciaran's aren't privileges that all young people are lucky enough to come by.

In 2011 Christopher returned to university to complete the remainder of his course. After graduating in 2013, he completed a preregistration year in Omagh which allowed him to register as a fully qualified pharmacist in 2014.

Following this Christopher relocated to sunny Devon to work for Boots. He stayed there for a year before moving to the bright lights of London. Devon proved to be too much of a home from home, so after a year in London he returned to beautiful Exeter on the South

Devon coast. After spending a few very happy years there working for Boots in lots of different clinical and managerial roles, Christopher returned to Ireland in December 2018.

After working as a locum pharmacist in Galway for a few months he took up a position with Boots in Galway City in November 2019.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"Sitting in Mrs. Harvey's classroom at the 'lads' table, then trying to find my way around a huge school! I remember not knowing anyone in my class, but I got to know my classmates really quickly. That's almost twenty years ago and they remain some of my very best friends to this day.

Go your own way and try as many diverse opportunities as you can. Don't be afraid to try different subjects, sports and projects as that's the only way you will learn what you truly love doing. You'll get plenty of help and support at St Ciaran's so with hard work you're set up for success."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Ciara Halligan

Current job title/role:
**Community pharmacist in
McKenzie's Pharmacy, Belfast**

After leaving St Ciaran's Ciara completed a Master's Degree in Pharmacy (MPharm) through the University of Ulster, achieving a first class honours degree "down in no small way to the help from my teachers at St Ciaran's." She then carried out her pre-registration year with Medicare in Belfast. Ciara worked as a locum pharmacist, travelling between Belfast and Dublin, gaining invaluable cross border experience. After almost a year as a locum, she was offered a full-time position with McKenzie's Pharmacy in Belfast, working as a community pharmacist. Given the current health climate, Ciara's work provides an essential service to the community, creating a great deal of job satisfaction and an even greater sense of responsibility.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember feeling quite nervous but excited on my first day as I only knew one other person in my year, and she wasn't in my class. The building seemed so big, even though I had been in it before. I really thought I would get lost, but I always felt better knowing Dad was never too far away. Everyone was very helpful and supportive. My advice would be to enjoy every minute as the years fly by!! It's normal to be nervous starting a new school but you will meet loads of new people who will become great friends. Also, don't be afraid to get involved in sport, music or drama activities - you will love it! I did."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Claire McGarrity

Current job title/role:
Marketing & Bid Writer

After leaving school, I went to QUB where I got a first in English, before doing an MA in Creative Writing at the Seamus Heaney Centre. I began working in the construction sector and my current role at Farrans Construction involves writing proposals for contracts throughout the UK and Ireland. I also did a marketing diploma and manage the company's digital marketing. On the side, I still enjoy writing articles and short stories and have had work published in The Irish News and The Irish Times 'New Irish Writing' section.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"A lot of us came from small primary schools and were naturally nervous about practical things such as finding your way to the right classroom and making sure the Aughnacloy bus didn't drive off without you (easily done when 15 yellow buses came rolling through the gates at the same time!). I remember small things, like being very concerned about how to scrunch my new, grey school socks in the particular way that all St Ciaran's girls did. Looking back, it had nothing to do with socks and everything to do with my biggest anxiety: would I fit in?"

In saying that, I think my nervousness was matched by excitement. I have a clear memory of being delighted with my freshly printed timetable. You were suddenly responsible for getting yourself from A to B, following this new timetable and grappling with brand new subjects like French or Technology & Design.

Everyone had their own favourite subjects but for me, I couldn't wait to get to the English department. I look back with very fond memories on those classes where

we read 'Of Mice and Men' and Mrs O'Donnell brought in a fresh onion to symbolise the layers of a poem! I was lucky to have teachers with great energy and capability throughout my time at St. Ciaran's.

I would say to new students that your focus should be on 'settling in', rather than 'fitting in'.

It is easy to think of the first few months of 'big school' as a race to fit in; how quickly you can fit into a group of friends or the top-achieving group in every class? In reality, your priority should be feeling settled and comfortable in your new school environment. It's so important that you feel you can be yourself and talk to trusted teachers if you're feeling overwhelmed. The friends will come naturally then, and if you work hard, the achievements will come too.

I would also encourage Year 8 students to be open to trying new things. It is something that I regret avoiding a lot in school myself. I was afraid of the opinions of others or that I wouldn't be 'good enough' so I didn't put myself out there in trying a new sport or sitting with different people at lunchtime. Trying to always be perfect is a battle that no-one can win, so commit to always trying your best. That's the best way to tackle new challenges.

Most of all, I would advise you to relax and enjoy it all! St. Ciaran's is a great school with many caring teachers and staff. A huge part of the person that you are becoming is shaped by your school experiences so focus on making them as positive as possible. Good luck!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Colleen Daly

Current job title/role:
**Compliance Manager at Allstate
Northern Ireland**

I studied English and Politics at university, I was a poor student in every sense of the word so perhaps the less said about that the better! After graduation I went travelling for two years in America and Australia, and when I returned home I applied for, and rather surprisingly, got a place within Allstate NI on a trainee Software Developer program. Allstate NI is a subsidiary of the Allstate Corporation, one of the largest property and liability insurance companies in the US. After 2 years as a Software Developer, I moved to a new role as a Business Analyst which was less technical, more people focused, and I loved it. A Business Analyst works with the technical teams and the business stakeholders to help design Allstate's IT systems, and as our business partners were based in our parent company in America, I was able to avail of many wonderful opportunities to travel to and work in Chicago. In 2010 I went back to university to study Law part time, while continuing to work at Allstate. When you're paying for a degree yourself you are more inclined to go to class and work hard. I graduated with a First Class Honours before my third son was born. Shortly after I returned from maternity leave in 2017, an opportunity came up within Allstate's Legal and Compliance department for a Regulatory

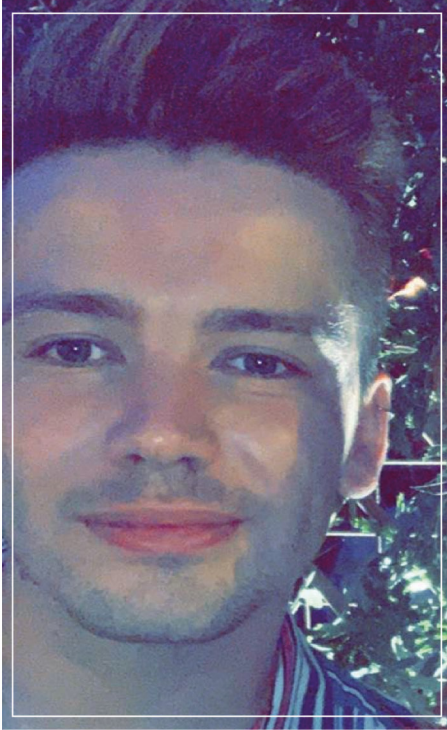
Compliance consultant to oversee the data privacy function of our organisation, which I successfully applied for. I continue in this area today, overseeing a wide array of legal and regulatory issues including data privacy, immigration and ethics, while managing a team of compliance consultants. In 2020 I started an LLM in Employment Law.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"We had to sit tests that day and I remember being so nervous and worried about how I would do - perhaps I should have been more nervous about all subsequent tests! Two pieces of advice; the first is so simple but I didn't appreciate it at the time. The harder you work at school the more choices you have in life, so give yourself more choices. Secondly, I loved school, which is strange as I frequently got into trouble, mainly for talking when I should have been listening. I put this down to the fact that I had great friends and we always had plenty of craic and much to discuss. Surround yourself with good friends who are great craic and with whom you have much to discuss, just maybe don't discuss it during class!"

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Conor Mullin

Current job title/role:
Deputy Area Manager in a supported living service for people with learning difficulties and mental ill health.

After St Ciaran's Conor completed a BA honours in Fine Art in Hereford College of Art. When he finished his degree, he worked in Health and Social Care, utilising the skills developed in Art and Design in providing activities for adults with learning disabilities. Conor returned to college, completing a level 5 management course in Health and Social Care. He is currently deputy area manager in a supported living scheme for adults with learning disabilities and mental ill health.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My first memory of St Ciaran's is how big the school looked compared to my primary school. Also, don't be afraid to ask for support and help from your form teacher or indeed any class teacher. Your teachers want the best for you.”

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PastPupil | Profile



Cormac McGirr

Current job title/role:
Solicitor

After completing my A-Level results at St Ciaran's, I went on to study music at Queen's University, Belfast. I graduated with a Bachelor of Music (BMus) in June 2016. As a Singer, I originally thought that I would continue my Music studies at Master's level in England or Scotland upon graduation; however, some months prior to graduating, I decided to go in a completely different direction. I applied for postgraduate study at the School of Law at Queen's University, Belfast, with the view of studying Law in the interim period and thereafter proceeding with my postgraduate Music studies.

I successfully applied to study Law at postgraduate level and I graduated in December 2018 with a Master's in Law (MLaw) degree, which was a 2-year full time postgraduate course. During my final year of the MLaw course at Queen's, I decided to sit the admissions test for entry to the Institute of Professional Legal Studies ("the Institute") at Queen's University, which is the professional institution at which Law graduates in Northern Ireland gain their professional qualification to become either Solicitors or Barristers, whichever they decide.

I was offered a place of study at the Institute and, having decided to train as a Solicitor, I successfully applied for a Training Contract at McGale Kelly & Company Solicitors in Omagh in conjunction with my professional training at the Institute.

I graduated from the Institute in June 2020 with a Postgraduate Diploma in Professional Legal Studies (PGDip) and I was duly enrolled as a Solicitor of the Court of Judicature in Northern Ireland in October 2020. I am now employed full time as a Solicitor at McGale

Kelly & Company Solicitors in Omagh, where I currently practise in the areas of Conveyancing, Wills, Probate, Employment and Family Law, to name a few. To date, I have not fully returned to my classical singing; however, I hope to do so at some stage in the future (if my current career allows me the time to do so...).

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:
"My main memory of my first day at St Ciaran's was the mistake of entering a certain Mrs McGirr's classroom and addressing the teacher (my mother!) as "Miss" and being laughed at by the students in the room, all of whom knew that I was "Mrs McGirr's son"!

My advice to anyone starting St Ciaran's this year is to relish being a student at such a brilliant school. Any time that I return to St Ciaran's, the friendly warmth that always existed when I was a student there resonates throughout the building. You are being educated by great teachers who have your best interests at heart. Take part in as many extra-curricular activities as possible, especially musical activities. If you are ever offered the enviable opportunity of participating in a St Ciaran's musical production, do it - you will not regret it! I have been a cast member in two St Ciaran's productions, namely Musical Memories in 2007 and Hairspray in 2011, and I returned in 2019 as Assistant Director of St Ciaran's production of Legally Blonde: The Musical to put my combined knowledge of Music and Law to the ultimate test!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Dermot McMeel

Current job title/role:
Senior Lecturer in Creative Technologies

Dermott studied Architecture, this was followed by a few years travelling and working his way around the world, he visited countries including Malaysia, Turkey and the USA. Dermott found working as an architect was not as interesting as playing and experimenting with the technology and tools he was using. He completed a PhD at Edinburgh University, studying how technology changes Architecture and Construction. Dermott met his future wife and moved to New Zealand where they settled and had a family. He now works at a University in New Zealand.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I tend to remember stressful events most clearly. My first day of primary school I remember VIVIDLY... because it was so filled with anxiety and stress (I was eventually ushered in by the headmaster and spent an unclear amount of time under my desk!).”

I don't have much of a memory of my first day at St Ciaran's, which I think means it was a good day! It was not stressful... it was a really good experience. I found my love of mathematics there (or was shown it by Mrs Dolores McVeigh). I participated in debates thanks to Mrs McStay and was exposed to art thanks mostly to Mrs Quinn's patience with me and a few friends messing around in the art room.

The world is changing very fast. What I do now I never even thought of when I was at St Ciaran's. Some of the most important decisions I've made have taken me out of my comfort zone. I've also taken some wrong turns. You should try and be ok with being out of your comfort zone... sometimes. Most of the things I do on a day-to-day basis I learned in my 20's and 30's. Even now in my 40's I'm learning to program robots, fly drones and build 3D printers. Be curious about things and learn to enjoy learning new things... that is increasingly important in the modern world (and it keeps things fun!)”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Donna McGroarty (Quinn)

Current job title/role:

Senior Neurology Physiotherapist - Senior Physiotherapist in Monaghan Rehabilitation Unit treating patients with a variety of Neurological conditions including Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone Disease, Parkinson's Disease etc, as well as assessing and treating out-patients with vestibular pathology.

Proprietor of Donna McGroarty Physiotherapy specialising in assessment and treatment of patients with vestibular deficits.

After leaving St Ciaran's Donna took a 'year out' before going to Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh to complete a BSc in Physiotherapy. She took up a staff grade physiotherapist post in the Ulster Hospital, Dundonald before moving to Beaumont Hospital where she was employed for 7 years. Donna moved to her current post in Monaghan / Cavan Physiotherapy Department in 2014 upon moving back home. She established her own private practice in 2018.

Since graduating in 2006 she has completed many post graduate courses and is currently undertaking a Master's Degree in Advanced Physiotherapy Practice in Neurological Rehabilitation through the University of Plymouth.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

I remember being a very small fish in a very big pool! I remember the masses of pupils, but I had come from a great primary school in St Mary's Cabragh, and there was a lot of my St Mary's classmates in 8C so it wasn't that daunting. I remember also being excited to play football for St Ciaran's and at the prospect of being coached by Marty Mc or Pascal Canavan!

St Ciaran's is a brilliant school. The teachers will encourage and challenge you to be the best version of you! So, to any students starting their St Ciaran's journey, take full advantage of this brilliant school, enjoy your journey, and share many, many laughs along the way! My eldest child will be starting St Ciaran's in two years and I am delighted that he will be able to attend the same great institution as I did."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Doreen Barrett

Current job title/role:
Primary School Teacher

After leaving St Ciaran's, Doreen went to St. Mary's University College in Belfast to train as a Primary School Teacher. She had always wanted to be a teacher and with the encouragement of her art teachers, she applied to St Mary's to study art with a focus on early years. After graduating with a BEd in Primary Teaching in 2010, Doreen taught in various schools across Belfast. She was then offered a position as Playgroup Leader in Clogher Valley Playgroup, where she worked for a year before getting married in 2012. Doreen now teaches primary 3&4 in St Patrick's Primary School, Eskra. She thoroughly enjoys teaching and finds it rewarding and fulfilling.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember I was eager to start St Ciaran's, having attended the Open Night and seeing all the different classes and new subjects I would be doing.

On my first day though, I remember feeling very nervous. New school, new uniform, new friends... it was quite daunting for an 11 year old. Arriving at St Ciaran's, it seemed so huge in comparison to my little primary school. I got off the bus with other first year students and we were greeted by some of the older pupils

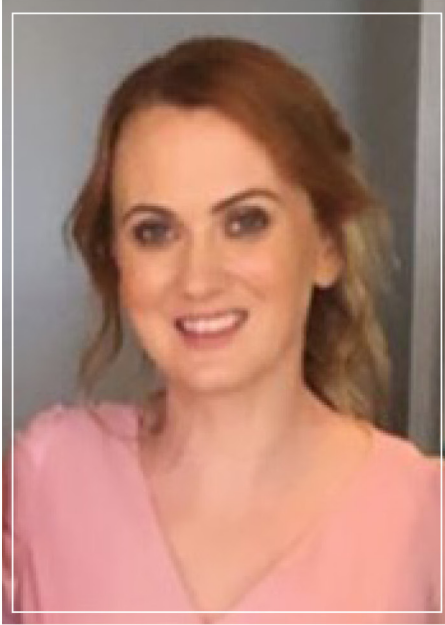
who lead us into the hall. The Principal then was Mr. Clayton. We were directed towards our Form Teachers in classes ranging from C, I, A, R, N and S. My form room was in the Technology Suite and here we were given our timetables.

I was most excited about art, as that was my favourite subject. By the end of my first day, I didn't feel as anxious as I had that morning. We got ourselves ready for home and were directed to our buses. I remember getting onto my bus, wondering why I didn't recognise anyone from that morning. Then as we pulled out of the gates of the school, it suddenly dawned on me... I had got on the wrong bus! A great ending to what was an otherwise enjoyable first day.

You might feel nervous about starting a new school, where everything is so different. It may take you some time to settle into your new surroundings. However, rest assured that you are in good hands with all of the amazing staff who are there to support you. As you make new friends and learn new subjects, your confidence will grow and your journey through St Ciaran's will be one you will remember always. Enjoy every moment."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Eimear McKenna

Current job title/role:
**Business Analyst, specialising in Data,
with KBC Bank Ireland.**

Following completion of her degree in UUI, Eimear began working with a Marketing company in Belfast, in a Management Information reporting and analysis capacity. This introduced her to the role of a Business Analyst, which sounded really interesting and was something Eimear wanted to pursue. She was lucky in that she was given the opportunity to do so with that company.

After a few years being a ‘proper grown-up’, Eimear decided to take a career break to go to Australia and ‘live the dream’. Returning to Ireland 2 years later she lived in Dublin, working full-time as a BA, while completing a Masters in DCU.

Eimear has worked in a number of industries as a BA, including Marketing, Construction & Manufacturing, Financial Services and Healthcare.

Working across so many different fields over the years, Eimear developed an affinity for data-driven projects which has only been reinforced by the increasing reliance on data we see everywhere, and this has led her to where she is today.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I remember being in the Assembly Hall sitting beside my best friend Leona McCaughey, waiting to hear our names called out and praying we’d be in the same class - and then being gutted when we weren’t!

It all worked out well in the end though, because we both made lots of lovely new friends.

Enjoy it! St Ciaran’s is the best school in the world, so make the most of your time there, and enjoy the craic that goes with the learning!”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Eimear Quinn

Current job title/role:
Legal Professional

After leaving St Ciaran's Eimear studied Law at Queen's University for three years. She participated in the Erasmus Programme for one semester, which is a study abroad programme offered by the university. Her placement was at the University of Mannheim in Germany for three months. After graduation, Eimear joined Allen & Overy in Belfast, where she currently works. Her role here entails working on banking transactions and litigation matters.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember having a mixture of feelings -

I was both nervous and excited. Excited to find out who would be in my class and who my teachers were, but also nervous for the same reasons! Thankfully, I had nothing to worry about as my classmates were all very friendly and my teachers were extremely welcoming.

Everyone is in the same boat so try not to be too nervous, and the teachers are really approachable so if you have any problems reach out to them. Also, try and get to know everyone in your class."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Emlyn McGinn

Current job title/role:

Parish Priest of Forkhill (Mullaghbawn)

After completing A-levels at St Ciaran's Emlyn went to Maynooth Seminary where he obtained a BA Honours Degree in History and Sociology, a BD in Theology, and later an MA in School Chaplaincy and Pastoral Care from Mater Dei College in Dublin. Emlyn was ordained a priest in 2005 in his home parish of Errigal Ciaran, before taking up various appointments including Dundalk, Dunleer, Drogheda and Cookstown. He was recently appointed Parish Priest of Forkhill and lives in Mullaghbawn in the south Armagh countryside.

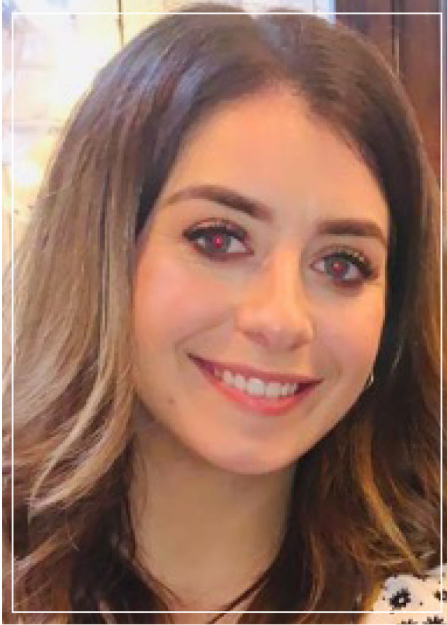
Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“It was a little overwhelming! Having attended a small primary school it appeared big, busy, and overcrowded. Of course, that was before the new school building project was undertaken and completed.

It may feel a bit daunting at first, but I assure you will come to love it. I've no doubt you will make friends and memories for life!”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Emma McBride

Current job title/role:

Speech and Language Therapist in the Western Trust working with children and young people with communication and swallowing difficulties associated with a physical and/or learning disability.

Emma studied Speech and Language Therapy in UJJ and graduated after 3 years. After graduation she worked as a classroom assistant in St Mary's Primary School Aughnacloy for just over a year before getting her first speech and language therapist post in the Southern Trust where she worked in the paediatric community team for a year and a half. Emma then moved to a permanent position in the Western Trust in 2017. She is currently based in Omagh Hospital and Primary Care Complex and a special school setting.

Memories and advice for students

transferring this year:

"I remember feeling excited but nervous, and I was wearing a blazer that was five times too big for me! I was lucky as I knew some pupils in my class (8C) from primary school and from football, so it helped to have familiar faces, but it was exciting to

meet so many new friends. My main worry was about getting lost as I moved from a small primary school to this huge building. There was also a feeling of relief when we met our amazing form teacher, Miss Sherry. There is no need to worry. I am so grateful for the school experience I had at St Ciaran's. Everyone is kind and helpful and wants you to do your best. Get to know everyone in your class, join groups and try new things, take part in as much as you can - choir, sport, festivals. If there is something you are interested in, give it a go. Your school years pass by in a blink so enjoy yourself, have a laugh, work hard, and listen to the advice. When you look back, you will realise how lucky you were."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Emma McCarren

Current job title/role:
**Project Manager at AbCellera
Biologics (Vancouver, Canada)**

Emma graduated in 2014 with a Master's in Mechanical Engineering from Queen's University Belfast. This included a year's placement at Mercedes Formula 1. After University she moved to England to work firstly for Aston Martin as a graduate engineer, and then for Jaguar LandRover as a Lead Program Planner. In 2017 Emma completely pivoted in her career and moved to Vancouver, Canada to work in the biotechnology industry as a Project Manager in STEMCELL Technologies. Her current role is with AbCellera Biologics where she leads projects focused on infectious disease therapeutic antibody treatments (including treatments for COVID-19).

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“On my first day I was terrified and excited; I felt very small in my oversized uniform and was scared I would have no friends, but I had plenty of opportunities to get to know

my classmates (who were all super friendly) and some of them are still my best friends to this day! I remember getting very excited to see my timetable and was delighted to find I had PE on a Friday afternoon!

St Ciaran's provides great opportunities to do so many different things (sport, music, drama etc.). The diversity of the activities I experienced at school has helped me endlessly. I'd really recommend taking part in whatever you can, it's a great way to make new friends and learn lots of skills that will stay with you forever. It might seem daunting at first, but the years will go in quickly, so enjoy it. Keep an open mind and know that wherever you end up in life, St Ciaran's will help you get there.”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Emma Sherry

Current job title/role:
Hair & Makeup Artist for film & TV

Emma went to UJ to study Occupational Therapy for a year, but it wasn't for her. She then did a few different media makeup, prosthetics & wig courses both in Belfast & London, before starting as a trainee on a large production filming in Belfast.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I just remember being terrified of how much bigger everything was- it was a very different story to primary school, where I had 9 people in my class! It was also very exciting of course (once I got over the initial fear!) and I loved going to different classes every hour, I felt very grown up.

Enjoy every minute and try to have fun, you might not think it now but your time there will fly!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Enda McGarrity

Current job title/role:
Trainee Solicitor

After leaving St Ciaran's Enda completed his undergraduate law degree in Queen's University. Shortly after graduating in 2018 he joined PA Duffy & Company solicitors in Dungannon, working as a paralegal. He also completed a 6-week legal internship in South Africa during this period where he gained valuable experience in human rights law.

In 2019 he was enrolled in the Institute of Professional Legal Studies and is due to fully qualify as a Solicitor in the summer of 2021. He continues to work in PA Duffy & Company where he deals predominantly with medical negligence and human rights cases.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My first day in St Ciaran's was as a 4th year student, having just moved from another school. I remember being

anxious about being in a completely different environment and not knowing many people. I also remember thinking I would have difficulty making friends as most of the other students had a three-year head start on me! Thankfully, I was welcomed with open arms and developed friendships in my first week in St Ciaran's that are still going strong today.

Just embrace opportunities and keep an open mind. One of the best things about St Ciaran's is that you're more than just a number. The teachers and students have created a great sense of community in the school and that lasts long beyond your time as a student.”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Eoghan McGirr

Current job title/role:
**Veterinary Surgeon at St Clair
Veterinary Group, Kirkcaldy, Scotland**

Eoghan left St Ciaran's in June 2011 after finishing his A-Levels and went on to study Veterinary Medicine and Surgery at the University of Glasgow in September of the same year. He spent five enjoyable years in Glasgow, making it a natural second home, and graduated in July 2016. Eoghan always planned to return home and he came back and worked in Northern Ireland for three years. However, 'Bonnie' Scotland came beckoning again, and he moved back there in June 2019. Eoghan's focus is on small animal veterinary and he is currently studying for a post-graduate certificate in small animal surgery, planning to specialise in orthopaedics in the future.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“Having my mother teach at St Ciaran's, I remember making sure that I was not seen getting out of the car with her on my first day! As we didn't have mobile phones I couldn't quickly text my friends to see if they were in yet, so I had to take the brave first few steps of walking into the junior cloakroom by myself, frantically looking around for a familiar face. Thankfully, even if they weren't familiar faces, they were friendly faces. I think this is one of St Ciaran's best characteristics, setting it above the rest; the pupils and staff care for one another, and there will always be someone there to help you.

This will, for most of you, be the first big change in your lives. Take each day as it comes, try not to worry. Look out for one another and be kind to one another. But most of all, enjoy it... (and do your homework!)”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Fiona Teague (Shevlin)

Current job title/role:

Head of Health and Social Wellbeing with the Public Health Agency

A key role is to improve health and wellbeing of communities and population level and address the widening gap of health inequalities that exist locally. This means working with Government Strategy, developing commissioning priorities and ensuring tangible delivery and real action in communities that need it most. Developing partnerships and networks across Health and Social Care (HSC), Government Departments, Councils, Community and Voluntary Organisations and other agencies is essential in this role. An example of a Government Strategy Fiona leads on is the Protect Life 2 – NI Suicide Prevention Strategy (launched Sept 19). Her role in this is to work with the Departments in Government, partner organisations, communities and importantly those who have experienced suicide to ensure the strategy objectives become real actions and are implemented.

93-95 Belfast Institute F&H Ed. –
HND Leisure Studies

95-96 Brunel University –
BA Hons in Sport and
Leisure Management

96-98 Omagh District Council
Sports Development
Dept.- Sports Officer

98-00 Lived and Worked in New
York (various jobs)

00-01 Cookstown District
Council – EU Project Officer

01-04 Strabane District Council –
Sports Development Officer

04-12 Derry Healthy Cities –
Project Manager for Foyle
Health at Work (2004-09);
Director (2009-2012)

2012 Public Health Agency –
Health Improvement
Officer. Fiona worked
in various roles within
the Agency until securing
her current post in
November 2020.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I remember standing in the assembly hall, waiting nervously for my name to be called to see what class I was going to be in. Then the feeling of relief and delight when I was finally called and realised that I was in the same class as some of my besties from Aughadarragh! Starting St Ciaran’s is your first real independent journey. You haven’t even met your best friend yet! The next few years will fly by, enjoy them! If something is annoying you or making you sad, talk to someone, I promise it will help. Listen to those who are there to help you. Learn to use all the new skills you are discovering and most importantly laugh often! Also, if you get the chance to take part in a school musical, grab it with both hands!”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Fr Peter McAnenley

Current job title/role:
**Administrator of St Patrick's
Cathedral Parish, Armagh**

"I left St Ciaran's High School in June 1988 and spent a short period of time with St Patrick's Missionary Society, Kiltegan, Co Wicklow. I went to St Patrick's College, Maynooth in September 1989 and studied Philosophy at first before studying Theology. In the final year leading up to my Ordination, I undertook a Diploma Programme in Pastoral Theology. I was ordained a priest in June 1995 and in that first year I did the Higher Diploma in Education in St Patrick's College, Maynooth. During the year I assisted at weekends in St Patrick's Parish, Dundalk.

At the end of that year, I was appointed Diocesan Adviser in Religious Education to the Primary Schools in the Archdiocese of Armagh and during those six years I lived in a rural parish on the outskirts of the Cathedral City. I was then appointed Curate to the Parish of Kilmore, Co Armagh, in addition to working as Diocesan Secretary in the Diocesan Office for one year.

I then took up an appointment as Curate in the Parish of Dungannon, and I was based there for eight years before being appointed Parish Priest of Eglishe in September 2011. After 14 months in the Parish, I was appointed Administrator of St Patrick's Cathedral Parish and it's in that Parish that I have been ministering for the last number of years."

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"It's so long ago I can barely remember my first day! I do recall a great sense of excitement at travelling to school for the first time by bus, and also being very excited at going to a new school of learning. I remember being amazed at the size of the place, the long corridors, endless classrooms and so many staff and pupils...such a contrast to my time in Primary School.

I have wonderful memories of my years in the school and I hope and pray that your years there will be truly blessed. I hope that you too will be able to look back in the years to come and be able to give thanks for all that you have learned, the opportunities you have been given and the many wonderful friends you have made. Be open to the new adventure that you're now beginning and embrace every new opportunity that comes your way. Enjoy making new friends and enjoy the whole experience and this new time in your life.

Give of your all and do your best as you work to achieve your goals and strive each day to become the person God wants you to be! Always be aware that at every moment of every day, God is with you and as you begin this new chapter in your life. I hope and pray that your time in St Ciaran's will prepare you well for your future lives and help equip you to face the challenges that you may encounter in the future."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Frank McNelis

Current job title/role:
Director of Greenhill Kitchens

Frank left school when he was 16 and did a three-year joinery apprenticeship. He then went to America for a year, and on his return he started Greenhill Kitchens at the age of 21.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“It’s very important to make the best of your opportunities to learn. The more you engage, the easier it will be to get the job you want, or to start your own business. Education is extremely important. However, in some ways I feel that hard work, drive and determination are even more important qualities, and they can compensate for what one may lack academically. If you are struggling to achieve top grades, all is not lost.

Know that many successful business people who struggled at school now have much smarter people than themselves working for them. I wish you all every success in your transition to St Ciaran’s and in your life ahead.”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Grainne McAnenly

Current job title/role:
Teacher

After leaving St Ciaran's in 2014 Grainne decided to take a gap year before completing a BA Hons in Liberal Arts with Physical Education at St Mary's College. She spent three years in Belfast enjoying all the opportunities sport offered, winning All-Ireland College medals in both Gaelic Football and Netball. Grainne was part of the first ever Gaelic Football Coaching placement programme offered by St Mary's in conjunction with Ulster GAA and the Canadian GAA. This was a wonderful opportunity to coach children throughout Toronto over a seven week period.

This experience cemented Grainne's ambition to teach, so she moved to Liverpool and completed a PGCE in Primary Education, specialising in Art and Design. She is currently employed as a substitute teacher.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"My first day at St Ciaran's was both a scary and exciting experience. The building was enormous compared to the small primary school I had just left! I was scared and excited to see who was going to be in my class and what teachers I was going to have. I remember starting the day in the assembly hall where we met our new form teacher, Mr Kelly, who was the drama teacher at the time. Early on he made our whole class feel relaxed and comfortable through different activities that helped us get to know each other.

Enjoy every moment of it, take part in every activity available. These are opportunities to make new friends and create great memories. All the teachers and support staff are there to help you grow and develop as individuals."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Helen McKenna

Current job title/role:
Senior Environmental Health Officer

Helen completed a Bsc Honours Degree in Environmental Health. She later worked in private industry as a Health, Safety and Environmental Officer. Like so many other young people, Helen emigrated to Australia where she worked for the City of Sydney Council as Senior EHO. She has recently returned to Ireland and currently works as EHO within the HSE in the Republic of Ireland.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My first memory of school was my black blazer. Mum bought it the previous summer, and I was so small going into first year that my blazer was miles too big! I hated wearing

it, so I used to throw it over my arm a lot, needless to say when I was spotted by an eagle-eyed teacher I had to put it on again! That actual blazer lasted all of my 7 years.

Do your best, have fun, be nice to everyone. Most importantly, do some volunteer work before you decide on your career path. 18 is very young to decide what you want to do with your life. It’s never too late to retrain, and it is something I would still consider.”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Jarlath McGeary

Current job title/role:
**Vice President, Aladdin Client Services
at BlackRock, London**

Jarlath left St Ciaran's in 2010 with A Levels in Maths, Physics and History and he went on to study Actuarial Science at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh. After graduating he took a year out to travel around Europe for a while. He also attempted to run a marathon, and tried his hand at several jobs including gardening, airport bartending and he even worked for a bookie!

In 2015 Jarlath joined BlackRock in Edinburgh on their graduate programme becoming a finance & technology analyst in the Aladdin Client Services team. He moved up the ranks at BlackRock, holding a few different roles after the graduate programme, including a few years as an Aladdin Implementations project manager where he got to travel quite a bit for work to places like Paris, Brussels and New York. Most recently he has been appointed as manager within the Aladdin Client Services team in London. Jarlath is delighted to work in this role as this is the team he first joined at BlackRock, and it is personally satisfying to be able to lend his experience to new analysts starting their own careers.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I'm not sure I remember my first day exactly, but I do remember spending plenty of cold mornings out in Miss O'Kane's mobile (she became Mrs Murphy after our first year, but Miss O'Kane stuck for the 7 years I was there!). Everything was much bigger than in primary school, the classrooms, the corridors, the canteen; and the sports hall felt like a stadium! Tyrone won the All-Ireland a few weeks after we started, and we had a massive party in the sports hall afterwards - the teachers from Armagh got plenty of stick that day!

Enjoy it all! Make sure to work hard in every class and try and find a little part of every subject that you like, as you never know what you will end up liking best, or how it may influence your future. Also, don't be worried if things aren't going to plan - there are many ways to achieve your goals, you just have to find the one that suits you best!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Justin Halligan

Current job title/role:
**Territory Sales Manager Ireland for
Cardiac Rhythm Management Division**

After completing a Clinical Physiology degree, specialising in Cardiology in Jordanstown, Justin worked as a clinical physiologist in Cork University Hospital, Drogheda Hospital and St Vincent's Hospital, Dublin. This experience gave him enough exposure to obtain a role in industry as this was ultimately where he saw his career progressing to. After a couple of years, he left St Vincent's - and a permanent post - and took a maternity post with Boston Scientific (an international medical devices company) in the role of Field Clinical Specialist in cardiac rhythm management. His career in the private sector had begun, and he was immediately sent to the UK for six months, covering an area from Merseyside to Glasgow, working in some of the busiest hospital theatres and with

some of the greatest cardiac surgeons in the world. Justin is currently based in Dublin, working for the sales division of Boston Scientific, where he has responsibility for the Irish territory, managing multiple hospital accounts and a multi-million-euro annual turnover.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I was very nervous as I didn't know anyone and found myself overwhelmed by the sheer size of the school.

It can be a big place, but as you grow so too will you grow into it. It took me a while, but I eventually settled and made some fantastic friends.”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Justina Mulgrew

Current job title/role:
**Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist
(CBT Therapist)**

After leaving St Ciaran's Justina graduated with BSc Hons Communication with Counselling from the University of Ulster. She took a year out before completing a two-year Postgraduate Diploma in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy. She found that CBT job opportunities in Northern Ireland were very limited in the mental health sector, and still are, which is hugely alarming. She worked as a deputy service manager for Positive Futures, supporting people with learning disabilities, those with acquired brain injury and people on the autistic spectrum. This was a very rewarding role. Focussing on a career as a full time CBT Therapist, Justina relocated to England and now works for Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS as a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, where she treats patients with common mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety disorders including social anxiety, PTSD, OCD, phobias, panic and low self-esteem. She is currently working towards accreditation with the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BABCP). "My career is very fulfilling. Being able to see my clients reach their treatment goals in therapy is very rewarding."

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember my first day being really exciting but also scary, which is of course very normal to feel. I remember walking along the corridors to my form class for the first time and feeling so tiny in this big school. I also remember having lots of opportunities to get to know my form class and having lots more friends by the end of the day.

Just enjoy every minute of it, your school years honestly go like a flash. Always remember that it takes time to adjust and everything new is always scary at first. I would also say to just be yourself and follow what you are interested in - St Ciaran's has so much to offer and there are always so many opportunities to get involved in different things. Don't let opportunities pass you by, you are surrounded by teachers who want to the best for you, so keep working hard and you will get there. My experience at St Ciaran's has enabled me to achieve my goals and for that I am truly thankful."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Kathryn McNelis

Current job title/role:
Regional Procurement Buyer

On leaving St Ciaran's Kathryn took a year out to gain work experience and figure out what she wanted to do. It was during this year that she decided she wanted to study a somewhat versatile degree to keep her options open. The following year, 2008, Kathryn began her undergraduate studies in Business and Law in Liverpool. After graduating in 2011, and not quite ready to enter the real world of work, Kathryn moved to Australia on a working holiday visa. Here she worked in many jobs to fund her travelling expenses.

A short time after returning home she joined Irish food manufacturing company, Kerry Group, where she still works today. Her starting role was operations based, in Supply Chain Planning. Based at Kerry's Omagh manufacturing plant, her role was to manage the supply of raw materials and packaging for the production of finished goods. Many of these finished goods you will have heard of, and possibly enjoyed, for example McDonald's McFlurries, Frappes, Milkshakes and Frozen Lemonades.

In 2016 Kathryn transferred to Denmark, where she worked in a similar capacity within Supply Chain. 2018 saw another move to Kerry's ICT project deployment team, where she worked as a SAP Supply Chain Business Analyst. The project involved the design, development, and implementation of SAP software system across all Kerry sites worldwide. Her first deployment in this role was to South America, where she worked on Kerry sites in Mexico, Brazil and Costa Rica to implement SAP. On successful implementation of the South America sites, the project moved to North America. Her next deployment saw her working in Vancouver, Toronto, Seattle and California to implement SAP at Kerry locations there.

In March 2020 Kathryn moved to a commercial role as a Regional Buyer for Kerry Europe & Russia. Within this role she is responsible for the spend and manage procurement strategies for a number of Indirect Materials and Services

categories, including Transport & Logistics, Courier and Lab Services.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember it well. My first day at St Ciaran's was also my first time getting a bus to school, so I remember feeling nervous about where I would sit and who I could sit beside. Luckily when I got on, all the first years sat together at the front of the bus, so I quickly found my place!

My next memory is the first year welcome assembly. I couldn't believe how many of us there were! It was there that we were assigned our class and form teacher. My form teacher was Mrs Kathleen Connolly who taught Home Economics at the time. When assembly was over we headed off as a class to Mrs Connolly's room. We got our timetables and I recall thinking I was never going to find my way round the school as it was so big! This was never really an issue though; I made some great new friends that day and we quickly found our way. 'Your school days are the best days of your life!' I heard this many times when I was at school, and probably didn't believe it at the time, but looking back, they truly are.

It's daunting moving from Primary School to Secondary School, so it's completely normal to feel afraid and nervous, however the minute you arrive at St Ciaran's you will feel part of a family. St Ciaran's is a brilliant school, with brilliant teachers, students, facilities and most of all it's full of opportunity. I would say keep your options open, don't just pick the subjects you find easy. Challenge yourself early, as those challenges will stand to you when you take the next steps after secondary school.

Also, enjoy every minute of it! Soon you will be 'adulging' and wishing you were back there!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Kevin Corley

Current job title/role:
Retired Company Director of Farrans Construction, Dunmurry, Belfast

Kevin left St Ciaran's after completing his 'O' Levels in 1975. He worked for Northern Ireland Water for a few years, during which time he studied via day release and gained ONC and HNC qualifications in Civil Engineering. In 1979 Kevin enrolled in the University of Ulster, and graduated in 1983 with a BSc Honours Civil Engineering.

After graduating, Kevin worked as Site Engineer on various housing development, water and sewerage pipeline installations, and road construction projects for civil engineering contractors, including Walls Construction and Lagan Construction. He was also self-employed for a time.

In 1989 he commenced working for Farrans Construction as a Civil Engineering Site Agent, working mainly on Harbour development projects in Belfast. Kevin obtained his Civil Engineering Chartered Status with Engineers Ireland in 1992.

He took up a position as Contracts Manager for Farrans in 1998, where he managed a

team of Site Agents and Engineers on multiple contracts in Ireland and the South of England.

From 2004 to 2019 Kevin was Director of Civil Engineering, responsible for all Civil Engineering Construction teams throughout the UK and Ireland, turning over £150m per annum and employing more than 500 people.

He retired as Director in December 2019.

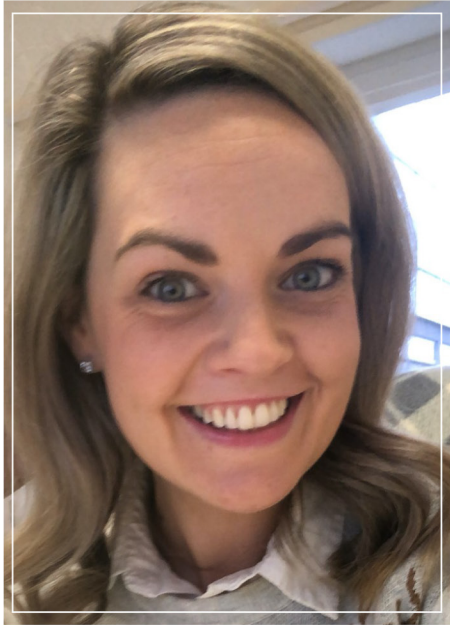
Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"My vivid memory of my first day was the process of class selection. I remember sitting down to the class selection test and then having my name called out for class 1A, I had no idea what that meant. I was totally ill-prepared for the next day when I found out that I would have French class!

Life is a series of short steps and starting a new school is just another one. Achieve as much as you can in learning, but don't forget to enjoy the journey."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Laura McElroy

Current job title/role:
PR Account Manager

Laura's career path was quite varied after leaving St Ciaran's. Not knowing exactly what she wanted to do and studying a course that she had no interest in, she made the decision to leave. "It was the best thing I ever did."

Laura worked full time for four years before making the decision to go back to university, completing a degree in Consumer Studies (now Consumer Management and Food Innovation) at Ulster University. She particularly enjoyed the marketing modules, which led to her current role in Public Relations.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"It feels like a very long time ago, but I remember us all congregating in the assembly hall and being welcomed by Mr Clayton, before being taken to our form class. I remember thinking how big the school was at the time!

Your time at St Ciaran's is a chance for you to discover your interests and the things you like and don't like, which will hopefully guide you towards your career of choice. If you don't know what it is you want to do yet, and even if you don't know in five or seven years, don't fret. It will all work out the way it's meant to. Enjoy it and use the time to grow!

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Lauren McCrory

Current job title/role:

Private Vocal Coach

Musical Director of StageStars

Youth Academy

**SEN Classroom Assistant in Sperrinview
Special School**

**Currently studying a Social Work Degree
with the OU**

Lauren left St Ciaran's after her GCSEs and enrolled in a professional straight acting course in Belfast Metropolitan College, obtaining a BTEC Extended Diploma Level 3 in Performing Arts.

After this she took a gap year and worked with local theatre company B.E.A.M - Bardic Educational Arts and Media, as a Drama Facilitator. This work was mainly education based, and the majority of projects were government funded, giving Lauren great experience in working alongside the Education Authority, the PSNI and Local Area Councils.

Lauren then opted to complete a BA (Hons) Degree in Language and Linguistics at the Ulster University in Jordanstown, but after only just a few short months her performing career began to take off, leaving her with no option but to withdraw from the course.

Focussing on her performing career has led Lauren to prestigious venues such as the Hammersmith Apollo, Her Majesty's theatre in London's West End, SEC Glasgow, The Olympia Dublin and the Grand Opera House and Waterfront Hall in Belfast. As well as this, Lauren has released 3 Singles/Music Videos, won 'Best Female Newcomer' at the Irish Country Music Television Awards, and in 2017 she won TG4's Country Music Competition 'Glórtíre.' Since this Lauren has continued to perform daily. She opened a Vocals School and now has an

enrolment of over 30 pupils, and she is Musical Director for a Youth Theatre in Armagh. Lauren currently works in Sperrinview Special School, Dungannon as a classroom assistant and is completing a Social Work degree through the OU.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"My first few days are vague memories now, but I do remember on my very first day our bus ran late, meaning I was late to the induction assembly where we were assigned to our classes. I didn't know where to go or what to do, so I just stood in whatever line I could find. At that time the classes were spilt into C,I,A,R,N,S - I stood in the 'R' class line for the whole duration of the assembly and it wasn't until class A's register was called out that I realised I was in the wrong spot! I was mortified!

My advice is to enjoy the transition. This year has been especially hard on P7 students and it can be a very daunting experience moving from primary school even in a normal year. You have to remember you are all in the same boat, so count this as a fresh start and allow it to motivate you. You will make new friends and learn new subjects. You will also find out a lot about who you are as a person, so embrace the change. You couldn't be moving to a more warm and welcoming school!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Leo Traynor

Current job title/role:

**Missionary Priest with St Patrick's
Missionary Society, Kiltegan, Co Wicklow**

Leo left St Ciaran's in 1980 to complete a discernment year with St Patrick's. He completed a Philosophy degree in Cork in 1983 and then worked in England with Berkshire Social Services. On his return he studied Theology at Kiltegan. Leo was ordained a missionary priest in Ballygawley in June 1988. He was appointed to serve in Nigeria, West Africa. Leo worked in various parishes and headed up the Justice and Peace commission of one Diocese from 1995 - 2001. He also initiated the development of the Youth Ministry Programme SELL (Sharing Education Learning for Life (www.sharingeducationlearningforlife.org) SELL was established in Nigeria and Ghana from 2001 - 2020. Leo is presently setting another SELL group up in Malawi, Central Africa.

*Memories and advice for students
transferring this year:*

"You're testing my memory seriously here with this question! As the first from

my family to go to St Ciaran's, I felt a bit lost I'd say. I just tagged in behind others and followed from room to room. It was a feeling of being lost and bewildered. I remember thinking the corridors were so big! The school that exists now is different in so many ways to the one I went to.

I've seen St Ciaran's change over many years. You're coming into it at a time of great sensitivity to your wellbeing and needs. So, enter with no fear. Open yourself to all there is to learn. Enjoy making new friends. In fact, just enjoy the whole experience of a new time in your life. Try not to close your mind or heart to anything, look on it as an adventure. You will have great days. I pray these years prepare you well and give you a solid foundation for the days beyond the shelter that secondary school days offers.

Be happy, hopeful, and optimistic.
Leo."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Liam Ward

Current job title/role:
Service Host in Asda, Omagh

Liam left St Ciaran's in 2017 to undertake a degree in Planning, Environment and Development in Queen's University, Belfast. He is currently completing a Master's in City Planning and Design at Queen's University, Belfast.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My first day at St Ciaran's was a major shock to the system, but that was to be expected having come from a small primary school. However, within the first few weeks you will soon understand your new surroundings. The most important point to remember is that everyone in the same boat and you're not on your own.

Your form teacher and buddies have been assigned to help and support you

throughout this transition period, so don't be afraid to ask for help as they will be more than willing to assist you. My best advice is to work hard. Teachers will support you and your hard work will be rewarded.

The people you surround yourself with will influence your experience in St Ciaran's. Making friends may be challenging at the start, but through time you will strengthen connections made with your peers.

Most importantly, remember to enjoy the experience and have fun!”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Marion Maguire (Kelly)

Current job title/role:
**Pharmacist manager at
McCoubrey Chemists, Belfast**

After leaving St Ciaran's Marion completed a Master's degree in Pharmacy at Queen's University, Belfast. She did her pre-registration in Bradley's pharmacy, Omagh before qualifying and moving to Southport, England to manage a branch there for a short period. Marion moved back home and spent a few years doing locum pharmacist work all over Northern Ireland. She joined McCoubrey Chemist in a temporary capacity in 2014 and she is now the manager.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember being really excited and really nervous on my first day, as there was no one from my primary school in my class. I was so excited too, as I felt so grown-up and there was so many more subjects and things to do than in primary school.

My advice would be not to worry, enjoy it all. There are so many exciting opportunities. It really all goes by so quickly and you will make friends for life!"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Matty Callaghan

Current job title/role:
**Personal Trainer / Gym Owner
at The Shed Gym, Clogher
Owner of Simply Clean Meals NI**

Matty studied Business Studies at the University of Ulster. During the summer months of those academic years, he continued to study and obtained his Fitness Instructor and Personal Training Qualifications, with a range of other fitness related qualifications as well. After University, he took a year out to travel, before returning home to work at companies including Westland Horticulture and McKenna Precision Engineering. Matty's passion was always for Health and Fitness however, and after working part time in the industry for many years, he decided to become a full time PT in early 2018. After gaining nutritional qualifications in 2020, he was also able to set up Simply Clean Meals NI; a healthy convenient meal prep business.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I remember going to the assembly hall and lining up in alphabetical order with my form class. We were then led up the corridor to Mrs McGirr's room to see our new form room before doing some ice breakers. I remember thinking the building was enormous and the vast number of pupils running about at break time was a brave sight compared to what I was used to at my primary school! St Ciaran's was very welcoming, and I really enjoyed my time there. Enjoy every moment! The teachers and support staff are brilliant and are there to ensure you grow and develop into the best version of yourself. Embrace every challenge, and most importantly have fun! These really are the best days of your life!”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Niamh McGirr

Current job title/role:
Hairstylist

After leaving St Ciaran's Niamh wasn't entirely sure what she wanted to do. She took a year out to try and figure it all out. Niamh ended up going to University, however, it wasn't the right path for her. Whilst she thoroughly enjoyed living the student life, she wasn't enjoying the course. She was always a very hands on, practical person and the life of essay writing or office work just wasn't suited to her. It was then that Niamh decided to follow her real passion, something she had been too scared to do initially. She had been working in the hair industry on a part time basis for a few years at this point, and so she enrolled for a Hairdressing course in South West College. It was the best decision she made. After lots of hard work Niamh couldn't be happier, she is her own boss in her own salon.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

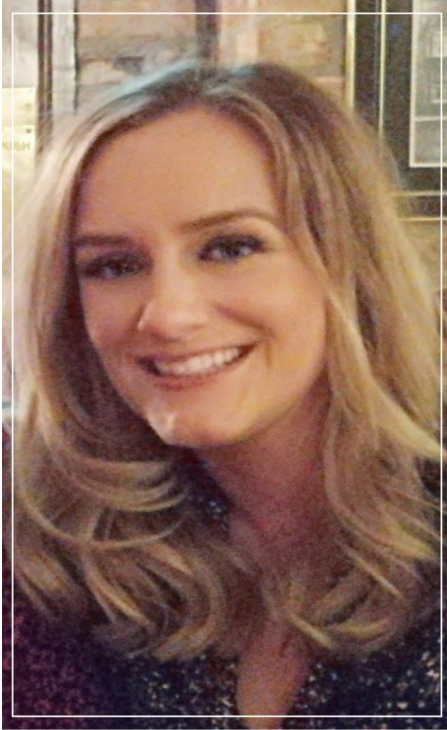
"My first day at St Ciaran's was definitely a nerve wrecking moment, but the excitement outweighed the nerves massively. I was fortunate to be placed into a class with some

of my best primary school friends which left the settling in process a bit easier. However, it didn't take long to make new friends with people in both my class and year group. One of the things I remember on my first day was how big the school seemed in comparison to my primary school, but I was amazed at how quickly I learnt to navigate my way around and adapt to my new surroundings.

My advice is to try and enjoy it all and work as hard as you can. People always say school days are the best days of your life and I know I always rolled my eyes when that was said to me, but I am now in total agreement. Enjoy all the moments when you are surrounded by your friends, learning new things every day, and getting to meet new people. Also, put yourself forward for any opportunities that may come your way, whether in sport, academia or music. Now is the time to grasp all of these things, so when you look back at your time at St Ciaran's it will be full of wonderful memories."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



**Nicola McRory
(O'Brien)**

Current job title/role:
Clinical Specialist Physiotherapist

Nicola left St Ciaran's in 2006, still unsure of her future career path. She completed a three year BSc Hons degree in Psychology at Queen's. Having decided that wasn't the route for her, she went to Liverpool to study Physiotherapy and graduated in 2012 with First Class honours. Nicola worked in a private practice in Belfast for three years before joining the NHS. She is currently employed by the Southern Health and Social Care Trust in a rotational position within the Armagh and Dungannon localities.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“My memories from September 1999 are fairly sketchy! Coming from a small rural primary school, I remember being daunted at the sheer size of my new school and wondering how I would ever navigate my way around it! St Ciaran's is a wonderful school. Lifelong friendships will be made during your time there. Don't worry if you're anxious or nervous about starting, you will soon settle in. Make the most of every opportunity that comes your way. Work hard and play hard!”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Patrick McCann

Current job title/role:
Financial Risk Actuary
(Phoenix Group, Edinburgh)

2008-13: Patrick completed A-Levels in Maths, Biology and Geography at St Ciaran's then went to Heriot Watt University in Edinburgh and completed a BSc. Actuarial Science. During his time at university, he took a year out after 3rd year to work at Prudential near Stirling, Scotland as an Actuarial Placement Student.

2013-15: He started as an Actuarial Graduate at Prudential in September 2013, where he started his professional actuarial exams which are required to become a qualified actuary. He worked in the Financial Reporting team which produces various modelled results for the company accounts.

2015-17: Having always wanted to tick "working in London" off the bucket list, Patrick moved there to work as a trainee actuary at the Government Actuaries Department's social security team, he continued to work through his professional exams which seemed never ending!

2017-present: Patrick moved back to Edinburgh to work at Standard Life where he has now worked in various roles (Mortality Actuarial Student, Proposition Review Actuary and now Financial Risk Actuary). He completed his professional exams and qualified as an actuary at the end of 2018.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"It seems a long time ago (nearly 20 years!) but I remember being in a form class where I didn't know many people apart from those from St. Mary's Ballygawley or who played football with Errigal. I remember just getting to know all the other lads in the class during the day and playing football at lunch. We didn't have astro-turf back then so I probably had fairly grubby trousers after playing football on the grass pitches! Enjoy St. Ciaran's while you are there because it goes past in a flash! And spend more time on the work you find difficult rather than the easy stuff; it will pay dividends for your end result."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Paul Donnelly

Current job title/role:
Managing Director Red Knight 6 Ltd

Paul joined Powerscreen International Ltd working in the spares department. Shortly after, he moved to London to join the sales team. Three years later he moved back to Ireland and took up the role of European Sales Director. This entailed travelling all over Europe, managing dealers and setting up new dealers and sales networks. Paul's next move was to Australia to help grow the sales network and customer base. His final position with Powerscreen was as manager of a dealer company in London.

In 2015 Paul set up Red Knight 6 Ltd, securing exclusive distributor agreements with a number of international manufacturers. The company now employs 12 people and has sales over £8 million per annum.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I remember getting on the bus and feeling that everything seemed to be so big. When we arrived at school I thought I would never find my way around the building. I had my cousin Adrian Donnelly with me, and he was even more lost than me!

Enjoy your time at St Ciaran's, enjoy the new friends you will meet, they will be your friends for life. You will have strengths and weaknesses, use both to achieve a happy life. Don't worry too much about getting things wrong, that's life. Learn from the mistakes you make and don't make the same mistake again. Work hard, you've lots of time for other pursuits when the work is done!”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Paul O'Donnell

Current job title/role:
**Solicitor Advocate and Senior Associate
at Imran Khan and Partners Solicitors
(London)**

My career path has been a winding one. My first introduction to the legal sector was as a legal costs consultant with a consultancy based in Downpatrick. After a few years I moved to an in-house role in England and relatively quickly became manager of the department. Thereafter, I decided to qualify as a Solicitor and enrolled in the Legal Practice Course ('LPC') at Nottingham Trent University. Throughout my time studying the LPC I worked on my own account as a subcontractor to a legal costs consultancy in the midlands and directly for a few law firms. One of those law firms was Imran Khan and Partners Solicitors ('IKP') and they offered me a training contract during my LPC. I commenced my training contract with IKP immediately when my LPC had concluded and qualified into a junior associate position in their financial crime department. A few years later I accepted an opportunity to work as a financial crime advisor to a global investment bank. After some time, I realised that the corporate world was not best suited to me. I returned to IKP in February 2019 and I have been there since.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"On my first morning, I remember my year being taken into the gym/assembly hall and being organised into classes (C, I, A, R, N, H,

& S - I think!) in rows facing forward. I was delighted to be placed exactly where I wanted to be!

Don't be afraid to make mistakes. You will learn more from your mistakes, particularly if they are big ones, than you ever will from your successes. I slept in and missed part 1 of my English language GCSE. I am a stickler for punctuality and discipline in my work now.

Don't get hung up on your starting position. You have years to prove to yourself, to your contemporaries, and to the teaching staff what you are about. I studied A-level and undergraduate with a person who, in their third year, was moved into a different class. That person, in my opinion, was the brightest in my school year group and their A-level exam results tended to prove that.

Don't let opportunities pass you by and don't undervalue skills you develop, because they might not relate exactly to what it is you want to do in the future. Before I started my first job in the legal sector, I had little or no idea what legal costing was. It turns out that it helped me through the LPC, helped me secure a training contract, and continues to be an invaluable skill that I use every week in my current role.

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Plunkett McGartland

Current job title/role:
Music Teacher/Head Of Year in Holy Trinity College, Cookstown & Freelance Musician

Plunkett left St Ciaran's after his A' Levels in 1996 to study Music at UU Jordanstown, focusing on piano and violin. He became more involved in the local and wider music scene from this point, a 'second occupation' which he still loves being involved in. After travelling for a few years, he completed his PGCE in Music (Secondary) in 2002 and taught in Derry City for a number of years before moving back home to take up a post in Holy Trinity College Cookstown in 2006, and he has been there since!

Alongside his teaching career Plunkett has been fortunate to have worked a lot on TV and on stage with various Irish musicians and singers, most notably Phil Coulter. He has been working with Phil for the past 12-13 years and has travelled quite a bit as part of his ensembles all over the USA, Europe and Central and South America.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"September 1989, sitting in the hall, feeling very anxious! Mr McSorley (fantastic man

and great role model) read out our new class placements and we were brought up to our new Form Teacher's room, which was the Home Economics room where the staffroom now is. Mrs Betty Hackett was our form teacher; a formidable but lovely lady who cared for us like we were her own.

ENJOY every second and grasp every opportunity you get whether your interest lies in Art, Sports/GAA, academia or Music (you have one of the best Music Departments in NI here with Mrs McGirr and Mr McMullan!). I loved my St Ciaran's days. You are surrounded the best people who get the best out of you.

I would also tell all students that talent itself guarantees you NOTHING! That's only your ticket into the game; it's how hard you work at developing that talent that gets you places. It doesn't matter if it's in the Arts/ Music, Gaelic football, academia, whatever; work hard at it and you'll reap the rewards. *To do otherwise is an awful waste of what you have been given.*"

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Sara Mhic An tSaoir (Baugh)

Current job title/role:
Set Designer in Film & TV Industry

I went to film school in Hull, Yorkshire for three years. After University, there was a Universal Film job in Belfast and my brother fortunately knew the art department coordinator, who organised an interview. I got the art department assistant job despite thinking I had completely bombed it! Another life lesson on how we all interpret things differently! I met lots of Irish art dept people on this job, one of whom hired me for his next job. The role really varies from making tea, to helping with foam models, to running off LOTS of graphic prints. I always knew I wanted to do set design and again was very fortunate to have NI screen send me to Pinewood studios to complete a drafting course. After that, I started getting junior drafting roles and worked hard on my drawing skills. The TV and Film industry relies on your portfolio and recommendations from your art directors and production designers. Everyone's journey into the film industry and through it is very different too. I started as a trainee and worked my way through the ranks. I was lucky to be mentored by a lot of wonderful people who helped me become a set designer and kept employing me or recommending me to others.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I was really nervous, excited and scared and felt a little small as the school is so big. I remember I thought I would be in the same class as my good friend and when I wasn't my anxiety escalated. The teachers were very reassuring during assembly. They could probably see the terror on everyone's faces! Once I got into my new class and introduced myself, and people introduced themselves to me, things became easier. I did worry about trying to find all my classrooms on time, but everyone was in the same position, so it was all fine. I do remember enjoying the canteen food too, especially the cookies!

Try to relax and take in the experience as much as you can. You've probably heard it a million times, but the time does go in quickly, so enjoy it. You will have great memories to look back on. Follow your passions and don't be worried if you find yourself on a different path to your peers. This is the time to find out what your interests are so be open to as much stuff as possible. To quote the film Friday Nights Lights "Clear Eyes, Full Hearts, Can't Lose."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Sean McGuire

Current job title/role:
Europe Director, Confederation of British Industry (CBI), Brussels.

After completing a degree in European Business Studies with French, Sean moved to London to become a European Adviser with a trade association. Following a few years in London, he decided to move to Brussels to be at the heart of European action, and joined the CBI as a policy adviser. He was subsequently promoted to the position of Europe Director. As expected, his life has been dominated by Brexit over the past few years.

Sean's main role is representing the interests of business, both large and small, including over 400 companies from Northern Ireland. He ensures that the political and regulatory environment provides the conditions for companies to grow and prosper to the benefit of all, as well as addressing the many societal and geopolitical challenges of today such as inequality, climate change and diversity.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“It is many years since I started St Ciaran’s, but I do remember my name being called out to join 1G1 as it was known then. Our form teacher was Ciaran McCrumlish and it was his first day as well!

Follow your dreams and remember that being different or wanting to pursue different paths in life is actually a strength and should be encouraged. Academia is important but there are many other soft skills that you will learn at school that will be indispensable in life - team-playing, empathy, resilience, friendship and humour. But most of all, remember to be confident and believe in yourself. Also remember that if you are having problems, talk to someone.”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Seán Murphy

Current job title/role:
Director - MOVE Apparel
Strength & Conditioning Coach –
MOVE Gym

“Where do I start? I dabbled in a few courses in Belfast; I had absolutely no idea what I wanted to do, even up to the age of 23. I always loved fitness, so I decided I wanted to do a job I was passionate about. I opted out of Liberal Arts in St Mary’s College and completed my Personal Training and Strength & Conditioning Certs. I opened my own gym in September 2018. Fast forward to May 2020 - I started MOVE Apparel due to the gym being closed under COVID restrictions. I released a few items of clothing and it completely blew up. I now work full time as Director here in our new offices with 3 full time staff. I will resume Strength & Conditioning training part-time when the gyms reopen.”

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I remember being nervous as I had no idea what to expect. We were in assembly with Mrs McStay and I remember looking around and thinking ‘who is going to be my first friend outside of Galbally?’ I also remember looking at Mr McElkennon at break time and thinking ‘this is who I need to impress to make the football team!’

Cherish every single moment. You really are in the best hands possible. Apply yourself and try your hand at everything - whether that’s in musicals, sporting teams or trips away. Keep your head down and work as hard as you can. You will be in a great place when you leave. I cannot emphasise how special St Ciaran’s is. Don’t let it pass you by.”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Shannon Cunningham (Quinn)

Current job title/role:
**Chartered Accountant and Tax Adviser.
Senior Manager in Ernst and Young,
Belfast**

After leaving St Ciaran's, Shannon went to Dublin City University (DCU) where she studied Accounting and Finance for 3 years. She then spent one year in the University of Ulster Jordanstown where she completed a postgraduate degree in Advanced Accounting.

Shannon joined Ernst and Young in Belfast as a trainee accountant. Ernst and Young sponsored her Chartered Accountancy and Chartered Tax Adviser qualifications.

Following a one year secondment to Ernst & Young's tax team in London she returned to the Belfast tax team.

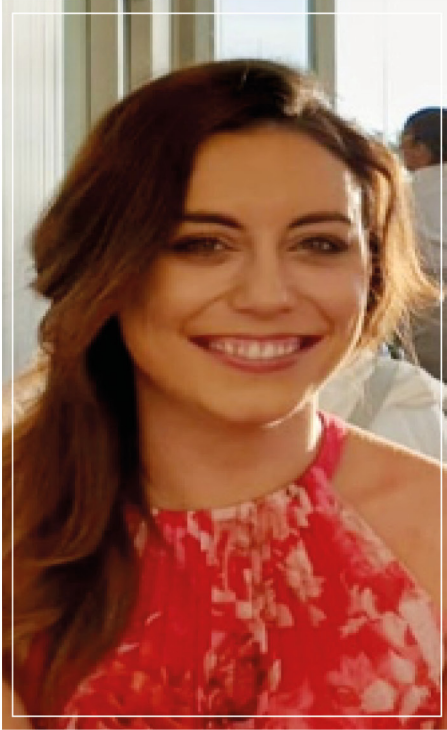
Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember thinking the building was huge and I would never get to know my way around. I also remember meeting my new class and getting to know everyone - I was excited to meet new people and make new friends.

St Ciaran's is an amazing school with great teachers and support staff who are always there to help. St Ciaran's is the only school I considered going to and it was the best decision I made. You will have a brilliant experience here and there is always someone who can help you out if you need it."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Siobhan McCrory

Current job title/role:
Barrister

Siobhan did an undergraduate law degree at NUI Galway, and a Master's in Law at Queen's. She worked for two years in different solicitors' offices to gain experience and then qualified as a barrister in 2013. She practices in a range of areas, mainly based in Belfast.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

"I remember being very excited but also terrified as the school seemed so big and I came from a very small primary school! Luckily, I had met some classmates early that morning, so I was able to find my way around with a bit of help!

Enjoy every second as your time in St. Ciaran's really goes in a flash! Take advantage of every opportunity, as there are so many activities and groups that you can get involved in."

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Stephen McKenna

Current job title/role:
**Finance & Operations Manager
at OHM Engineering Limited**

Steven completed a BA in Business with Computing at the University of Ulster, Coleraine. He then spent some time in Australia working and travelling. On his return, he worked as a trainee Cost Accountant in the Construction Sector with Acheson & Glover. Whilst working there he also completed his Accountancy exams (ACMA) and progressed to the position of Financial Controller. Steven was drawn to the operational side of business and joined OHM Engineering in 2017 to take up the position of Finance & Operations Manager. “This is a much more varied and interesting role and there is something very satisfying about helping to shape a growing business.”

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“I felt a mix of excitement and nervousness. It was a bit of a shock moving from a small county school to a much bigger environment. I have nothing but good memories from St Ciaran’s, great teachers, and a great learning environment.

Do everything to the best of your ability in life, whether that be in school, work or sport. If you do this you will achieve your goals and be successful in whatever you do. Also, don’t forget to enjoy it, St Ciaran’s will give you great opportunities to meet new friends and develop as a young person.”

Choose St Ciaran’s

PastPupil | Profile



Tara-Lea McElduff (McAleer)

Current job title/role:
**Occupational Therapist; owner/director
of kids wellbeing company Pretzel Play**

Tara Lea graduated from UJJ in 2008 as an Occupational Therapist.

After graduation she was employed in a temporary rehabilitation graduate post in WHSCT in Derry. Tara Lea then relocated to Sydney where there was an abundance of working opportunities in this field. She worked in a range of clinical settings with diverse and interesting client groups. She also worked in research at the University of Sydney. On returning home she undertook a specialist role in older people's mental health and dementia. Alongside that she trained as an adult & kids yoga teacher and obtained qualifications in mindfulness. She started her company in 2017 and now offers a range of training and workshops for carers, parents, educators, teachers and health professionals.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

“St Ciaran's seemed so big and there were so many pupils. I also remember being the only girl from my primary school class in my form class and feeling a bit lonely. But it also was very exciting. Embrace it all. St Ciaran's is a lovely country school where you will get to know most of the pupils and make friends for life. I loved my time at St Ciaran's, there was much laughter. I have amazing memories, and made many great friends.”

Choose St Ciaran's

PastPupil | Profile



Thomas McDermott

Current job title/role:
Airline Pilot at Ryanair

On leaving school Thomas completed a degree in Architectural Technology & Management. He then took up a position with Consarc Design Group in Belfast as an Architectural Technologist. Following this he moved to McCarter, McGaw and Hamill Architects, Dungannon. Thomas's next role was as a Design Engineer/Project Manager for Tyrone Fabrication in Ballygawley. Pursuing a lifelong ambition, Thomas attended the L3 Harris UK Integrated Commercial Pilot College and is now an Airline Pilot for Ryanair.

Memories and advice for students transferring this year:

It's been that long ago I can barely recall it! I can vaguely remember walking in and feeling slightly apprehensive and anxious about the

sheer size of the place and the volume of students. There was also the fear of getting lost and meeting new friends and teachers. However, the overall emotion was one of excitement, the excitement of getting started - a new chapter. The rest is a bit of a blur to be honest, but I can remember feeling at ease once we were appointed to our class and I recognised a few familiar faces.

Enjoy it - time goes extremely quickly. Work hard and have no regrets. Never let anyone or anything stand in the way of your goals and dreams.

Dream it, Believe it, Achieve it!!

Choose St Ciaran's