



St. Columba's College, Stranorlar, Co. Donegal.

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Board of Management

A meeting of the Board of Management of St. Columba's College took place on Wednesday 7th October 2026 at 6pm.

Present at the Meeting: Mr P J McGowan (Chairperson), Ms Jennifer Kelly (Secretary),
Mr Joey O'Leary (Trustee), Mr Shane McGinty (Teacher),
Ms Lucinda Gorman (Teacher), Ms Bernie McIntyre (Parent),
Mr Conor Malone (Trustee), Ms Dairenn Lavery (Trustee),
Ms Lynn Gallagher (Recording Secretary).

Apologies were received from: Ms Georgina O'Brien (Trustee)

1. Prayer

The Meeting opened with a prayer.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the 20th August 2026 were read and approved. Proposed by Ms Bernie McIntyre and Seconded by Mr Joey O'Leary.

The Minutes of the Special Meeting, 23rd September 2026 were read and approved. Proposed by Ms Bernie McIntyre and Seconded by Mr Joey O'Leary.

3. Matters Arising

None

4. Correspondence

Included in the Board pack were information notes/circulars.

- 4.1 Ms Kelly read through a number of circular letters included in the handout and informed the Board accordingly.
- 4.2 Leave requests were set out by the Principal in the correspondence.
Applications sought for:

Parental Leave	6
Parents Leave	4
Maternity Leave	5
Wedding Leave	1

Ms. Kelly approved a number of personal day requests on behalf of the Board.

The Board approved. Proposed by Ms Bernie McIntyre, Seconded by Mr Shane McGinty.

- 4.3 Industrial Action: The Principal informed the Board regarding the notice from Forsa 29.9.26
JMB 30.9.26
TUI 6.10.26
Regarding strike action for the proposed dates 14/10/26 and 21/10/26. Presently Industrial Action internally re communication and non use of Croke Park hours is being adhered to.
The Principal will keep staff and parents informed.

PJ Mc Gowan (Chairperson) invited the Board to provide any comments. All Board members confirmed that they were satisfied with the above.

5 Finance

Mr Joey O'Leary informed the Board that a Finance Meeting was held prior to the Board Meeting. Ms Lynn Gallagher prepared the CEIST Report for August 2026 and September 2026. No issues with the report. All income and expenditure was clearly detailed.

6 Presentation by Steve McGlinchey on SEN WEAR software programme

The Principal introduced Steve, who is an SNA in the school.

Steve informed the Board he has developed a communication app called **SENwear**, which provides an efficient platform for SNAs to record and update information relating to individual pupils. The app is particularly useful for monitoring and recording important information such as a child's health, e.g where a child has Diabetes, their blood sugar levels can be recorded and monitored throughout the day and colleagues can easily retrieve this information on the app. The app allows SNAs, Deputy Principals, teachers to efficiently monitor and access information relating to attendance, health, academic progress and behaviour.

Steve showed the Board a short demonstration video of the app.

Steve informed the Board that the app was trialled for one week here at St Columba's College towards the end of school year 2025/2026, and the feedback from the SNAs and Deputy Principals and teachers was very positive. At present, each SNA maintains a journal and uses a laptop, however the app provides a more efficient system for recording and sharing relevant information.

A discussion took place regarding data storage and consent in relation to the use of the app.

The Board agreed that a longer trial could be rolled out within the school.

The Principal agreed and said going forward there would be clear communication with parents and the GDPR Policy would be reviewed prior to the trial being rolled out.

The Board were satisfied with the above.

7 Ratification of Assistant Principal/Senior Cycle Redevelopment Co-ordinator Appointment and formation of panel.

Interviews were held in Jackson's Hotel on Monday 5th October 2026.

The Interview panel consisted of: Ms Jennifer Kelly (Principal St Columba's College), Mr Jimmy Keogh (Independent Chair) and Ms Rosaleen Grant (Board Nominee)

Ms. Kelly read the letter to the BoM informing them that the successful candidate was Kieran McGlinchey.

The Board ratified the appointment. Proposed by Joey O'Leary, Seconded by Lucinda O'Gorman.

8 Ongoing Plant Development and Maintenance

8.1 Ms Kelly informed the board that tenders have been received for the Mechanical Reserved Specialist and the Electrical Reserved Specialist works. Paolo Baraldini DT lead had informed Ms Kelly that they are waiting on tender analysis/review and reports to complete the Tender Report no. 2 for submission to RRPM. (and copy to St. Columba's College) so it can be forwarded to the DoEY.

8.2 Per Cent for Art Scheme: Every new school project delivered by Major Projects qualifies for the per cent for art grant. It is dealt with separately to the loose furniture and equipment grants. It will be €64,000 in our case. Ms Kelly informed the Board that she has been advised to use this grant when the New Building is operational.

8.3 The Clerk of Works position was advertised in the Donegal Democrat/Donegal News/St. Columba's Social Media and school website on 22/09/26, with a closing date of 8th October. Paolo Baraldini to keep in contact with Ms Kelly.

8.4 Ongoing Maintenance

Following an inspection by Allianz in March, a number of recommendations was forwarded in June 2026. Allianz returned in September 2026 and the repair work to both lifts had been complete. Allianz have approved the work.

8.5 Upgrades in St. Mary's NS

Ms Kelly met with St Mary's Parish Committee regarding the lease of St Mary's National School for a further 2 years and rolling 1 year (x2) if needed. This has been agreed and at the same rent for the duration.

The computer room and boys toilets in St. Mary's have been painted in September.

9 Bi Cinealta Report

9.1 Bullying Issues: Ms Kelly informed the Board of One Bullying issue to report. Bi Cinealta policy and practices applied and has come to a conclusion.

9.2 Meeting with Staff from the School Completion Programme and EWO: Students who struggle with school attendance continue to be supported by the EWO and the School completion programme.

10. Child Protection Issues

None

11. Pastoral and Discipline Issues

11.1 Wednesday Detention: started today Wednesday 7th Oct 2026

11.2 Discipline Issues: 8 suspensions in this term to date.

12. Analysis of Leaving Certificate Results 2026

The Principal informed the Board by first of all thanking Mr John Sweeney Deputy Principal for compiling the Leaving Certificate Results each year. A lot of work goes into this document and it is very much appreciated. The results were early this year and Mr. Sweeney had the presentation ready for subject planning in August 2026.

Ms Kelly read through the Leaving Certificate Results document.

The Board were impressed with all the results and commented a very well done to students and teachers.

13. Policies for ratification/review

Critical Incident Management Policy. The change to this Policy is name changes. The policy was ratified by the Board.

Administration of Medication (for review)

Ms Kelly informed the board that this is a Draft Policy at moment. Ms Kelly asked the Board Members to read through the policy. A decision was made to purchase a small fridge for the Infirmary to store meds that need to be refrigerated. Moving forward all medication will be stored in the infirmary.

Ms Kelly informed the Board that Deputy Principal Ms Georgina White and Ms Lauren McGill (API for Policy Development) have been working together and compiled this draft policy to date. Ms Kelly and Ms White will establish a committee to review the Policy. Ms Georgina White DP has asked if the student care plan could get underway immediately before the Policy is formally Ratified.

The Board were in agreement to start student care plan immediately.

Ms Kelly thanked the Board and communication will start with Parents concerned regarding student care plans.

14. Principal's Report including Teaching and Learning

14.1 - Middle Management and Leadership Team: Interviews for the Senior Cycle Redevelopment post took place on Monday 5th October.

An acting API position will become available as a result of maternity leave commencing in November and will be advertised after October midterm.

14.2 - CBA'S and SLAR Meetings: 3rd Years are currently working on a number of their CBAs. SLAR meetings will follow.

14.3 - Parent Information Evening: Information evenings for each of the year group in September as follows:

LCA Information meeting, 1st Year Information meeting, 2nd & 3rd Year Information meeting, TY Information Meeting, 6th Year Careers Information meeting
5th Year Information Meeting - scheduled for 18th November 2026.

My thanks to all the staff who presented at these meetings.

14.4 - Coursework

6th Year students are in the process of completing coursework in a range of subjects. Project briefs have been issued recently in DCG, LCPE, Engineering, Construction, Art, Ag. Science, Geography, History, LC Computer Science, LCVF and LCA.

AACs are also underway in a number of subjects at the moment.

The appeal results for LC and LCA 2026 were issued on 25/09/26. There were 52 results appealed by LC students and with 8 upgrades. The other 44 results remained the same.

14.5 - Evening Study

Thanks to Ms. Coulter for organising Evening Study and to the teachers who have offered their services to supervise evening study. Evening study block 1 is currently running on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evenings. Uptake has not been good during block 1 with only five students doing study. Ms Kelly informed the Board she has been talking at Assembly regarding the value of evening study especially for 3rd and 6th years. The Principal believes is ex circular activities such as sports training is coinciding. A review of evening study will be carried out by Ms. Coulter engaging students and parents in the process.

14.6 - RACE Applications

The RACE applications for LC students for LC 2027 are being prepared at the moment and submitted to the SEC before the end of November. Many thanks to Ms. Harkin and Ms Holmes and for their work in completing the applications for the state exams.

14.7 - Opening Mass/First Year Mass/Retreats

Thanks to all who were involved in the opening mass of the school year on 22nd September.

The mass for 1st Years was celebrated last night in the school Hall with students, parents and family members attending. Many thanks to the RE department (Ms. Culkin, Mr Flood, Mr Mc Daid and Mr. McCrea) and to Ms E Cooke and Ms. Roache for

organising the choir. Thanks to Fr. John Atoó and Fr. Mc Ateer who celebrated the masses with us.

RE teachers organised a retreat for our Leaving Cert students in Kincasslagh on 1st and 2nd of October facilitated by the Sisters of the Home of the Mother from the Cross. There were over 80 students in attendance which was very positive. Those who attended provided very constructive feedback after their day.

The rosary continues every Monday in the oratory at 1.40pm. It has been attended by staff and a number of students.

14.8 - 3rd Year and 6th Year Parent Teacher

Our 3rd Year Parent Teacher Meeting was due to take place tomorrow 8th November. This meeting will not be held due to the Industrial Action.

The 6th year PTM is scheduled for Monday 16th of November.

14.9 - Midterm Assessments and End of Term Assessments

Midterm assessments for 3rd and 6th Year students will take place from 19th – 23rd of October, before the mid-term break. These assessments will be one hour in duration for 6th & 3rd year students. Results will be issued to parents via VShare on Monday 9th November 2026.

The end of term assessments for 1st, 2nd and 5th Year students take place on from Thursday 3rd December to Wednesday 9th December 2026. The results will be issued before the Christmas holidays on Friday 18th December.

15.1 - Career Guidance

A number of Career Guidance activities has been organised in the first half term. Many thanks to Ms Sproule and Ms McNulty for organising these activities.

Many thanks also to Ms Sproule and Ms McNulty for organising a study skills workshop "Maximise" which will be delivered to third and sixth year students this week by *Inspire Education*

15.2 - Student Council

Election of Student Council members are taking place this week and next with voting taking place at the morning assemblies. Many thanks to Ms. Hayes for her support of the Student's Council.

15.3 - Parents Council

Two meetings of the Parents Council have taken place to discuss policies, fundraising activities, election of a new Parents Council. The Parents Council will assist again this year with the programme for the musical and plan to have a 50-50.

15.4 - Senior Prefects

Many thanks to our Senior Prefects who helped out at the Transfer Programme. The Head Girl and Head Boy were selected by the staff. Congratulations to Orla Ward

and Brian Lyons. Congratulations also to our Deputy Head Girl – Amy Lyttle and Deputy Head Boy – John O’ Donoghue. All students will represent the school and their peers very well throughout the year.

All LC prefects received leadership training with Karen Murphy. The prefects address the 1st Years at their assemblies regarding a range of issues which are significant to 1st Years students. All prefects have also attended Primary School Visits and have been a wonderful inspiration for our incoming 1st years.

15.5 – Curricular Activities

- All TY students travelled to Lisnaskee for their overnight trip and team building activities.
- An enterprise workshop with Karen Murphy took place for TY students.
- Ms. Cowan and Ms. Mc Nulty’s LC Geography class completed their fieldwork trip
- TY students attended a History trip to Derry.
- TY talk on Gambling in the Balor theatre
- TY talk from Young St Vincent de Paul
- The School of Sanctuary Committee have met and are organising a number of activities for Culture Week which will take place the week beginning 16th November.
- All TY groups will travel to Rossnowlagh for Surfing & Beach Activities next week
- Our LC students have engaged in a team building workshop.
- A group of 5th year students will be engaging in the Rotary workshops with Ms Cooke in the coming weeks
- Thanks to Ms White for organising a group of fifth years to act as mentors for our first years.
- Four senior students attended the Gael Linn workshop in Letterkenny in September
- 12 LC students attended the N Zeb Building Day for Construction
- Thanks to Ms. Breslin, Ms Rodgers, Mr. Boyce and Mr McCrea who travelled to Medjugorje for five nights in September. They were accompanied by Fr. Sean Crowley and Fr. Francis Ferry. A wonderful trip was had by all and the staff were so impressed by the students and their engagement on the pilgrimage.
- All fifth years are attending the Road Safety Show in Letterkenny this week.
- 5th and 6th year music students will attend the Michael Coleman School of Music in Gurteen, Co. Sligo this Friday.
- As part of the Frances Browne Festival, Author Sue Diven will visit the College on Friday along with Mr. Dougie Bartlett, founder of the Steinbeck Festival.

15.6 Extra-curricular Activities

A broad range of co-curricular and extra-curricular activities took place since our last meeting in September. Some of the activities included the following:

- The cast of this year’s musical *‘Footloose’* has been very busy rehearsing since the beginning of September for this production which takes to the stage in the Balor Arts Centre from, Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th November 2026. A matinee for primary schools will take place on Monday 9th November. Many thanks to all who are making this production possible.

15.7 Open Day and Open Evening

We will hold our Open Day on Wednesday 21st October. It is suggested that 2nd and TY students will be asked to study from home for the day to facilitate the Open Day. Should the open day on the 21st of October be interrupted by Industrial Action as planned, the Open Day will be rescheduled to 22nd of October. The Open Day Committee will liaise with Primary schools in relation to this change if necessary.

We will hold our Open Evening for parents and 5th and 6th class primary school students on Thursday 5th November.

The documentation and policies for Enrolment will be uploaded to our website next week. Parents are asked to apply for a place in the college for 2027-26 by 23rd November. The Enrolment process will complete by Friday 11th December 2026. We have a maximum of 150 places in 1st Year.

Assessment tests will take over two weekends on 16th and 23rd January 2027.

We have an active prospectus and PR committee in place who have produced a beautiful prospectus, along with invitations to open day and open night.

We have booked a videographer to come in next Thursday 15th October to shoot some footage for a social media drive the week before open night. He is also going to shoot some footage in classrooms which will be used to create teaching and learning videos for the website. These will be a visual support to our prospectus in communicating more effectively about our option subjects. We will also use these as an additional support to parents in assisting their children in choosing subject options.

There are some lovely plans in place for the open night and will maximise the use of social media and the school website in the period leading up to the open night and start of the enrolment process in order to keep parents of incoming 1st years fully informed.

The Board were satisfied with all of the above and commented on the range of activities on going within school.

15. Staff Issues – OLCS Claims

Staff members listed on the Subs list Sept-Oct 2026

16. AOB

The Principal informed the Board regarding an issue of Security within the school. Student entrance and visitor entrance is the one entrance at the moment. The Principal outlined that the entrance nearest the gate could possibly be made into a visitor entrance and the other entrance be for students and staff only. The Principal outlined the urgency of the situation under Health and Safety and Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures, but understands it may take time and funding will need to be sought.

The Board agreed with the urgency of the situation and informed the Principal that funds for this can be taken from the Board of Management Acc. The Board approved for the Principal to seek an Architects advice, with the intention on getting work started soon. The Board outlined that this work is for the protection of the entire school.

The Principal thanked the Board and informed them in the meantime a sign in book will be in practise, any visitors to the school will be met by the Admin Team – a visitor's badge will be given to the visitor, (adhering to child protection policy). The Board are also all in agreement for new signage for front of school as soon as possible.

Proposed by Joey O'Leary, Seconded by Lucinda Gorman

PJ Mc Gowan Chairperson said on behalf of the Board he wanted to express their appreciation to Ms Kelly for all the work she has undertaken since taking up her post as Principal. The Board wished her continued success.

17. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 25th November 2026

6.00pm – St Columba's Meeting Room