



# **Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel.**

## **Annual Report 2015/2016**



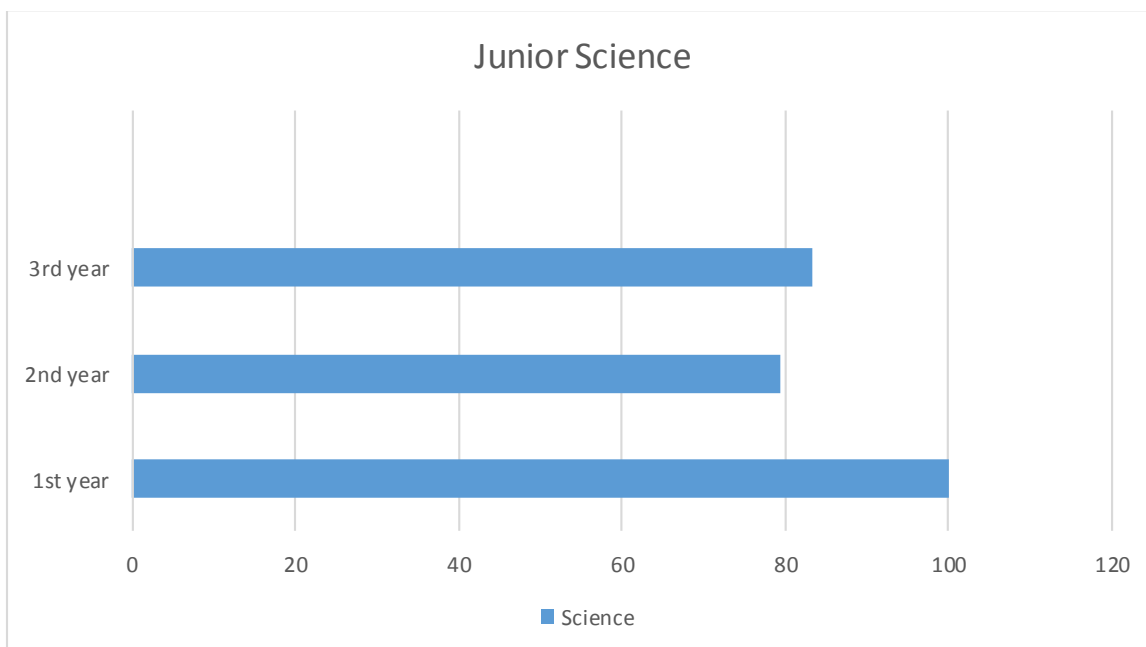
### **Mission Statement:**

**Presentation Secondary School Clonmel is committed to offering our students a holistic Catholic Education in a caring environment conducive to learning and personal development.**

2015/2016 has been another wonderful, exciting, productive year for all members of our Presentation Clonmel school community. It has been my pleasure to return as Principal to the school after a fifteen year secondment. The level of commitment, professionalism and support I experience from my senior management colleague Michael and from the whole teaching and ancillary staff is inspiring. It is immediately obvious that the school is a well-managed cohesive unit driven to support the students reach their personal and academic potential. The focus on teaching and learning is enabled by the caring pastoral care and discipline systems operating in the school. There is among our teaching staff a culture and school spirit where academic achievement, positive behavior and high standards in all aspects of school life are valued, recognised and rewarded. Students and teachers alike have a strong work ethic and for the most part work in a spirit of harmonious cooperation. Students are kind to each other and have a sense of gratitude for the commitment of their teachers. Teachers are professional and considerate in their approach to their students. They are committed to their own professional development and take available opportunities for continuous development and in-service. The ancillary staff; secretarial and caretaking have a strong loyalty to the school and their efforts are visible in the attention to detail in administration and to the care exhibited for the plant and equipment.

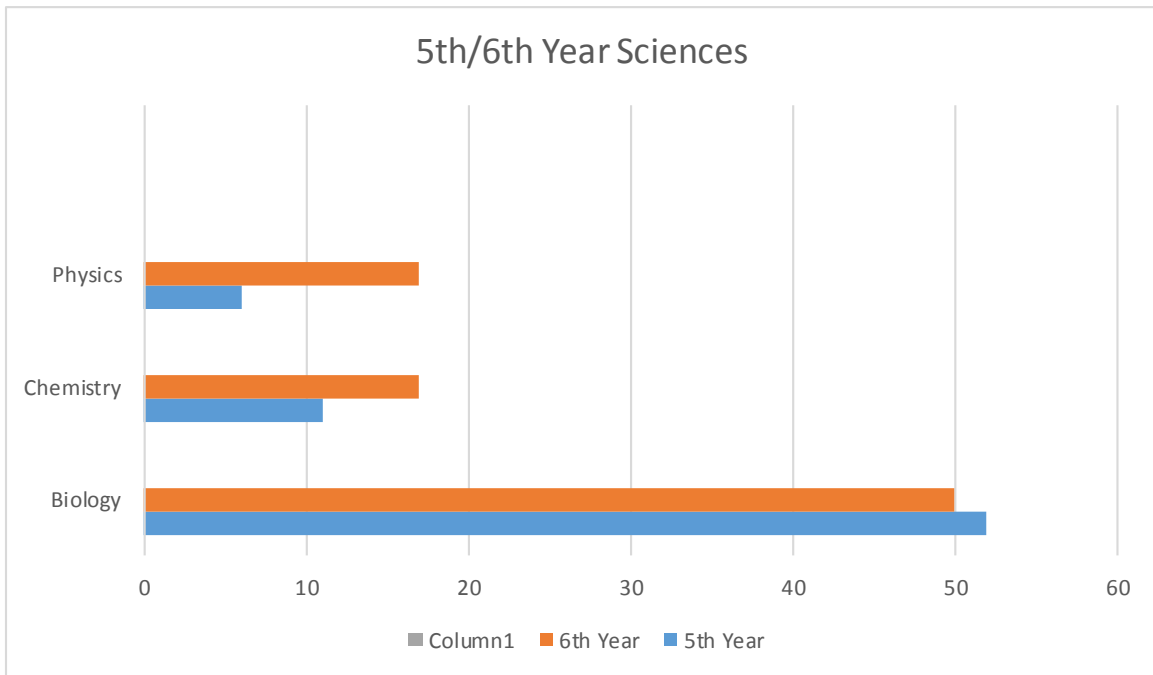
Presentation Clonmel is committed to providing a quality education programme meeting the needs of all our students. Our curriculum provides the full range of courses recognised by the Department of Education and Skills: Junior Certificate, Junior Certificate School Programme, Transition Year Option, traditional Leaving Certificate, Leaving Certificate Vocational

Programme and the Leaving Certificate Applied Programme. Subject syllabi are delivered at General, Foundation, Ordinary and Higher level as appropriate to the abilities of the students. The majority of our classes are mixed ability, students are encouraged to take subjects at the highest possible level for as long as possible. First year students follow the full range of subjects. Subject choices are made for Junior Cycle at the end of First Year. We are a science promoting school, all (100%) first years study science, 79.3% of the current 2<sup>nd</sup> year study Science, 83.3% of current 3<sup>rd</sup> years study Science.



Junior Cycle Science 15/16 percentages

At Senior Cycle level we offer Physics, Chemistry and Biology. The uptake of Biology is quite high and is consistent with other girls' schools. In 5<sup>th</sup> year; 47 students (52%) do Biology, 5 do Physics (6%) and 10 do Chemistry (11%) A very small number of students do Agricultural Science privately. This subject is considered an 'easy' one in which to get a good grade.



As a school we are committed to a quality extra-curricular programme. We stress the importance of involvement by the students in a wide variety of lunchtime and additional sporting and other activities clubs, games, choirs, orchestras and bands. The level of involvement, the extent of the achievements and the uplifting and positive nature of the many dimensions of the extracurricular programme are central aspects of the quality of life in the Pres.

This year alone we had the great pleasure in greeting success at All Ireland and regional level in areas such as Third level Academic scholarships, Young Scientist competition, Junk Kouture, Enterprise Awards, Doodle for Google, Sci-Fest, Athletics, Spikeball and Basketball.

The extent and diversity of the extracurricular programme are directly related to the idealism and generosity of the staff of the school, coupled with the commitment and talent of the students supported by the flexibility and enthusiasm of parents. We are especially delighted that a number of senior students are committed this year to leading clubs in Art and in Drama. The students who led these clubs have now gone on to further study in these areas at third level.

The commitment to training and continuous practice merits mention whether it be in the Music

room or the Sports' field. Results often do not come the first year of trying but the endeavour more that rewards the participants in the form of lifelong friendships coupled with a sense of fun and comradery.

In a similar way the involvement of students in the Student Council provides students in all year groups with a forum in which they can contribute to enhancing the quality of life in school. Each class in the school has an opportunity to elect a class representative to the Council. The Student Council meets on a weekly basis and ideas are discussed and agreed at a formal meeting with Ms Murphy. In addition to being a channel of communication between students and management, the Student Council assists with events such as the Awards for Excellence, annual Open Night and Positivity Week and also arranges fundraisers for a particular charities. The Council is invited to express it views on a range of topics current in school life and as Principal I meet with the President and Vice President regularly to hear the considered view of Council. This aspect of school life was considered sufficiently important that it merited part of a Post of Responsibility in our school

The role of the Parents' Council in the life of Presentation Clonmel is a perfect example of the spirit of partnership which is required in these challenging times. The Parents' Council meets approximately six times a year and a range of educational issues at school and national level are discussed. Their advice and financial support and assistance is invaluable at a time when all school budgets have experienced drastic cutbacks. Undoubtedly the single greatest achievement is the consolidation of the Anne Butler<sup>1</sup> Memorial Bursary Fund. The fund continues to assist, students who apply, with a small grant as they start their third level education. I thank and

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<sup>1</sup> Anne Butler deceased was a respected Business and Economics teacher. Anne's family endowed the award at the time of her death, the Parents Assoc now continue to support it.

compliment all the parents involved in the Parents' Council and I extend a particular word of thanks to the Chairperson Mrs. Majella Hogan, the Secretary Mrs. Anne Marie McGrath and the Treasurer Mrs. Helen Ruth for their leadership and dedication to the Council which is central to the success of our School. Ms Hogan concluded her term of office this year with the graduation of her youngest daughter from the school.

Under the Articles of Management for Catholic Secondary schools, the ultimate and overall responsibility for managing the many diverse aspects of life in our school rests with the Board of Management. The Board of Management is responsible for the management of the curriculum, the policies and procedures, budgets and financial matters, staffing allocations, building and maintenance issues and a range of other issues which arise during the course of the year. The members of the Board of Management, both individually and collectively, have the challenge of leading, managing and ensuring the quality of the educational provision for the entire school community.

❖ **Priority Areas and Action taken in 2015/2016**

**School Development Planning**

**Priority Areas for School Planning**

Over the years, the following policies have been ratified by the Board of Management. Some of them have been reviewed over the period as well.

Policy			Future plans
	Year	Review	
S.S.E	2013/14	14/15	Ongoing
TL21	2013	Completed	Ongoing for 2 years
Literacy & Numeracy	2013		
Ty Policy	2012	2015	
Posts Review	2015		Completed Ratified by Board 15/16
Curriculum Review/Timetable	2011	May 2013	Ongoing
Work Experience	2010	2013	
Religion Education	2009	2014	Completed ratified by Board 15/16
Guidance	2008	Annually	
SPHE	2008	Annually	
Dignity at work	2008		
Mobile Phone	2004	2008 & 2010	
Pastoral Care	2007	Annually	
Admissions	2005	2007 & 09	Annually by BOM
Anti-Bullying	2005	2014	
Internet Usage	2004	2013	Ongoing
Code of Behaviour	2003	2005/07/09	Audit ratified by BOM in 2010
Substance Misuse	2002	2004 & 06	Review in 11/12
Data Protection	2015	Review commenced	To complete 16/17
E Vetting			To complete 16/17
Sick leave policy			To complete 16/17

## **Priority for the School**

### **School Planning Steering Committee 2014/15.**

<b>Key Areas for Planning</b>	<b>Future plans</b>
SSE	<b>ongoing</b>
Literacy & Numeracy	<b>ongoing</b>
Curriculum Audit	<b>Completed.</b>
Posts of Responsibilities	<b>Completed 2016</b>
TL21	<b>A two year project now completed</b>
Work Experience Policy	<b>Completed</b>
Programmes for JSCP/TY	<b>Completed</b>
Literacy & Numeracy	<b>Ongoing</b>
Teachers Handbook	<b>Revised &amp; updated</b>
Homework Policy	<b>As per code</b>
Resource/Learning Support /Special Needs	<b>Reviewing/ Committee stage</b>
Health & Safety Policy	<b>Reviewed Annually</b>
I.T	<b>Survey completed</b>
LCA & Ty Programme	<b>Completed/BOM</b>
Awards	<b>Reviewing / Committee stage</b>
School Timetable	<b>Completed. New IT package.</b>
NEPS Praise Project	<b>Phase 1 completed 2016</b>
Children First	<b>Whole school Training Completed. August 16</b>
School Profile	<b>2016/17</b>
Curriculum Review	<b>2016/17</b>

### **Special Needs Education**

Our allocation regards SEN students continues to be reduced due to government cut-backs. Our SNA allocation is 2.5.

### **Traveller Education**

One of our students completed her Junior Certificate in 2016 and two graduated from Leaving Cert Applied in 2016, one with merit.



## **New Students**

Our open door policy continued to welcome new students. All first years with their parents have individual meetings with the Senior Management in June, followed by an induction programme with the Sixth year Leadership team on their first day in school. A meeting for new parents was held at the end of September to assist with completion of this phase of the Transition programme. We continue to welcome students whose families have migrated to Ireland from both inside and outside the EU. Girls from a number of Faith backgrounds are welcomed in this group. A small number of girls join us for a year or less on English language improvement courses. In 15/16 these girls were from Italy, France, Germany and Spain. A small number of **newcomer** girls join us each year, they are mostly from the EU countries, in particular from Eastern Europe. Their families come here to work.

## **Disadvantaged Students**

Despite reduced grants from the DES, we continue the Junior & Senior Book Rental Scheme, breakfast & lunch club and offer free counselling services for our disadvantaged students. If the need arises we offer places in our evening study at a reduced or no cost to a number of students. Also, we continue to work in partnership with Barnados and Clonmel Youth Diversion Project and Tusla.

## **Faith Development**

### RE Provision

All classes are timetabled for three periods for RE. All Religious Education teachers are fully qualified to teach the subject, two are Mater Dei graduates, three are graduates of St. Patrick's College, Thurles. Religion is not taught as an exam subject but aspects of the examination syllabus are used as the basis for class programmes.

### Observance of the Liturgical Year

School liturgies were held to mark each of the church seasons. St. Mary's Parish is most supportive in allowing us to use St Mary's Church for these celebrations. The year of Mercy was celebrated in May with a Reconciliation Service in St. Mary's Church, 11 priests from local parishes lent their services to this liturgy. Presentation Day was marked by ensuring that all classes knew the story of Venerable Nano Nagle and by a short liturgy. Staff are encouraged to celebrate the feast day also in general classes.

Culture of prayer and sacramental life in the school. The Prayer room, a beautiful dedicated space, is constantly in use by the RE department. Ashes were distributed on Ash Wednesday.

### Retreats for students

6<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year students participated in retreats facilitated by the Mustard Seed team. 5<sup>th</sup> Years trained in peer ministry and facilitated a retreat for 1<sup>st</sup> Years and TY students participated in a retreat with the boys from the CBS High School. This was facilitated by the RE teachers from both schools as part of a co-operative RE programme which is run each year.

### Chaplaincy services

Father Billy Meehan of St Mary's Parish, Irishtown, Clonmel is most supportive and does his best to provide a service to the school.

### Ongoing professional development

- I. All staff are encouraged to participate in appropriate professional development for subject areas and in relation to posts of responsibility. Teachers participated in Training in a variety of areas including attendance at in-service for Leaving Cert Applied programmes, Leaving Certificate Art, History teachers association in-service, JCSP in-service, Training the Trainer in Science.
- II. 5 members of staff attended training in effects of loss and bereavement last year.
- III. In-House training: Courses in First Aid including Cardiac first Aid were provided to all interested staff. 16 attended. Courses in use of technology were provided 25 teachers attended. Both of these courses were delivered by staff members.
- IV. SNA's attended training provided by IMPACT and also a week long course in Waterford teachers Centre in June.
- V. The Principal and Deputy Principal attended a number of training event during the year.
- VI. NEPS Praise Project. 10 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers participated in the training, delivery and evaluation of this classroom based approach to Praise and discipline. The Project is in its pilot phase and NEPS hopes that following review it will be rolled out to other schools.
- VII. We had a whole staff in-service on Assessment for Learning
- VIII. Noel Buckley is a member of the Teaching Council.
- IX. Donal Coughlan is Chairperson of Maths NCCA Committee.

### **Pastoral Care**

We have a voluntary Year Head system whose work is to look after the needs of the student.

This role is not part of the discipline system in the school except in so far as the care of the girls herself is involved in any discipline issue. We have a Junior pastoral team: the three Year Head and the Principal and Deputy, our Senior pastoral team comprises two Year Heads, The

Guidance Counsellor and the Special Needs coordinator with the Principal and Deputy Principal.

The junior and senior pastoral care teams met weekly and liaised with Social Services, NEPS, Barnados, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and HSE Substance Misuse Counseling Services, Tusla, NEPS and NCSE where necessary. Significant progress has been made in engaging with other professionals as the CAMHS service now has two teams working in the area and are currently able to provide a reasonably quick service. The school has an excellent working relationship with NEPS in the person of the psychologist assigned to our school.

The non-post holding Year Head system was once again extremely effective. A vacancy arose in this area this year, it was successfully filled following the interview of four excellent candidates.

### **Mental Health**

Positivity Week was successfully held in May. This is run by the Students Council and provides a fun filled information filled week for the school; random acts of kindness, lunch time singalongs, exercise classes and yoga being just some of the week's events.

### **Positive behaviour**

- Weekly assemblies were held for all year groups. As far as possible an effort was made to compliment some aspect of positive student behaviour each week. Awards for perfect and improved school attendance were given both at Christmas and in May.
- TV screens kept the students updated on different school events and was updated regularly by the Principal/Deputy-Principal & Teachers assisted by students

- The annual school awards ceremony was held in Oct '15. This is the public acknowledgement of the positive behaviour and excellent standards achieved by students across a wide range of activities.
- A Principal's Noticeboard displays letters of commendation from members of the public and congratulations from the Board of Management on student achievements
- The use of the new text messaging system to send messages of congratulations to students and their parents
- A Facebook page & Twitter page updates the school community & the public of school developments.

### **Parental Involvement**

As always the Parents' Council had a busy and productive year. Amongst their many activities they organised the purchase of Irish books for the Library, helped with the school show disco, organised the bag pack, a table quiz and a Church Gate collection to raise funds for the Anne Butler Memorial Bursary Fund, The Parents Council organised a speaker for parents for the next AGM in 2016. Parents attended parent teacher meeting and information meeting during the year. The Council met with the Principal monthly.

### **Board of Management**

The Board of Management held nine meetings from September to June. Ms Teresa Leahy resigned from the Board, for personal reasons, early in the year and was replaced by Ms Elaine O'Carroll. Parent nominees resigned from the Board at the end of the academic year.

The members of the Board worked very hard in the best interests of the school with the greatest care being taken in all situations which required decisions that had serious consequences for students, parents and staff. The ethos of the school was always to the forefront of minds when such decisions were being made.

Great care was also exercised in all decisions relating to financial matters. Additional finances for replacement windows was sought and granted for the Senior College building. Work commenced in November 2015, and was concluded in early January 2016.

### **Student Council**

The student council was elected during the month of September. The President and Vice President of the council were elected by the 6<sup>th</sup> Year students at the end of September. The council met fortnightly and discussed many issues of interest to the student body. The student council organised Positivity Week in May in partnership with the Principal. The President and another representative met regularly with the Principal to update her on issues raised by the members.

### **Extra-Curricular activities**

Students engaged in a wide range of extracurricular activities. This involvement would not have been possible without the willingness of teachers to freely give of their own time and expertise to encourage students in these activities thus contributing to the holistic education of our students. Other extra-curricular activities included St. Declan's Way walk, Challenge to Change competition, Science competitions, Young Entrepreneur, Art competitions, Master Chef competition, JCSP Make a Book Exhibition, fundraising for St. Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal. Students also attended a number of drama productions related to their courses as well as college open days.

### **Lunchtime Activities**

Activities covered a range of sports including basketball, GAA, Spikeball, badminton, computer classes at lunch time, senior and junior choir, athletics, were arranged for students during the school day. Senior students offered leadership with lunch time activities in Drama and Art.

### **School Show**

The CBS High School and Presentation Secondary School, Clonmel presented 'Les Miserables' as their annual school show in White Memorial Theatre, Clonmel from Monday-Thursday October. This joint schools project has been running for 39 years. We were treated to another excellent sell out production.

### **Enrolment Challenges**

As always the same challenges that arise every year regarding the early enrolment procedures. Clonmel has 4 schools at second level offering places to girls. We continue to offer an open enrolment policy.

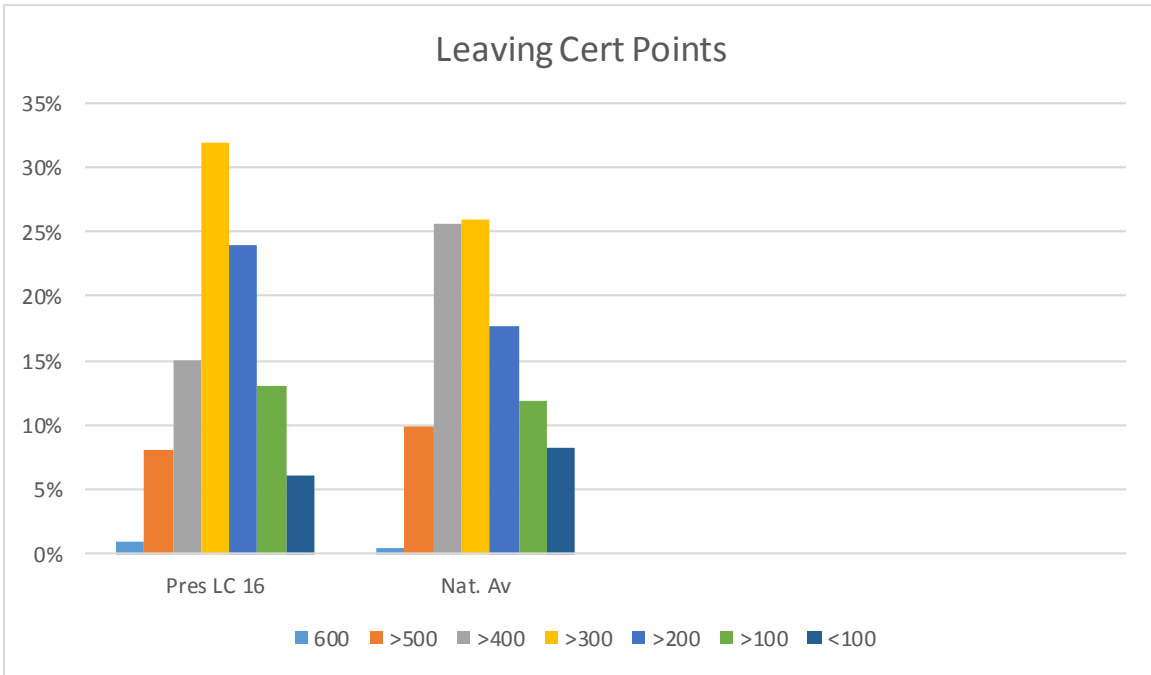
### **Financial Overview**

The finances of the school continue to be challenging, Fund raising is an important aspect of school management. With the support of teachers and students exceptional effort were made to raise additional funds in 15/16.

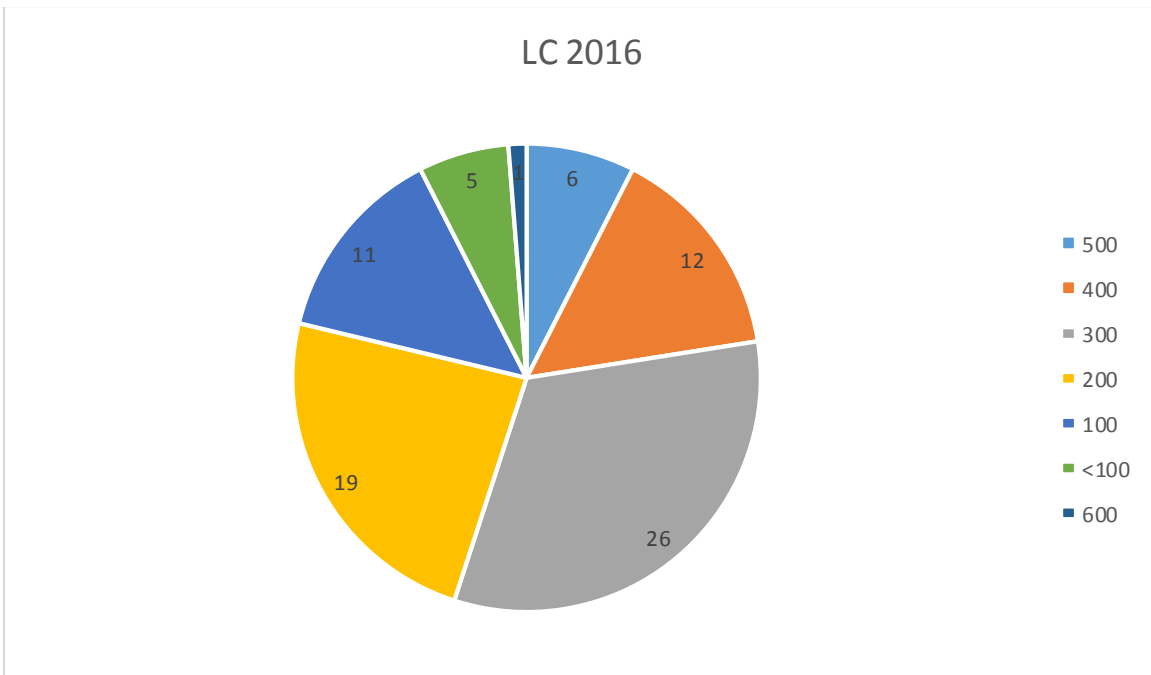
### **Other relevant areas**

#### **Leaving Cert Results 2016.**

80 students sat the traditional Leaving Certificate in June 2016.



19 (24%) of our students received in excess of 400 points.  
 45 (56%) students received in excess of 300 points  
 One students earned 6 A1's.



An analysis of our Junior Certificate results indicated that the students achieved results in line with and exceeding their potential in line with CATe4 testing.



This Annual report once ratified by the Board of Management in November 2016 will be published on our school website. A copy will be available in the staffroom and the school office. Also, a copy will be given to the Chairperson of the Parents Council and the President of the Students Council.

Signed *Ethel Reynolds*  
Ethel Reynolds  
Secretary Board of Management

Date 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2016