St. Paul's awarded the Primary School Appreciation Award from Irish Water Safety

St. Paul's was awarded with a very special award last week from Irish Water Safety. We were awarded the "Primary School Appreciation Award" due to the large amount of swimming that takes place in the school. Each year, every child in the school, from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, is given the opportunity to attend a six week swimming course in the Aquatics Centre. Last year, over 600 children went swimming and they all received PAWS Certificates.

Below is an account from the day from the two students who attended the Awards Ceremony.

On the 18th of November Ms. O'Toole, Ms. Ward, Laoise and I went to Dublin Castle to an Awards Presentation by Irish Water Safety. We left the school at quarter past one and arrived at about two o'clock. We left the car in the car park and headed to Dublin Castle. We entered the gates and we were left in awe. There was about 5 or 6 different buildings all very official looking. We approached George's Hall and we were asked if we were attending the presentation. We said we were and walked in. We went up some very creaky stairs and walked into the reception. There we were all given name cards; we went into a room filled with coat racks and hung up our ones. We went back downstairs to a tea room and got tea and biscuits. Laoise and I felt like we were royalty. We walked into the presentation room and sat down. The awards started and it was super exciting. There were cameras and every time one came by we sat a little straighter and our smiles became bigger. There were three major awards given before it was time for us! St. Pauls won 'Primary School of the Year Award' because of the amount of swimming and life-saving courses we do. There was a huge round of applause and I felt so proud for the school!

Written by Eve Drysdale, Sixth Class

Eve and I felt so formal. It was like we won the Olympics. We received a huge applause and were awarded with a plaque and a trophy. As we walked off the stage, everyone was congratulating us. There were awards for 10 years' service, 20 years and 30 years. There were "just in time awards" for normal people who saved people who were in danger in the water. The singer Damien Dempsey received one of these awards for saving two swimmers who were struggling in the water. Damien had just performed when he noticed the two people in the water - he immediately grabbed a sheet from his van and dived into the water. He brought one to shore and the other one managed to get out of the water by himself. After the ceremony ended, we went downstairs to have fizzy drinks and food. We also got to meet The Deputy Garda Commissioner. We took loads of photos. I was so proud to be from St. Paul's. I thought it was a great experience and Eve and I both loved it!

Written by Laoise Murphy, Sixth Class

Here we are with Roger Sweeney (the Chair of Irish Water Safety)