

part-time work with school studies

the job



eight hours a week and only between the hours of 8am and 8pm.

Finally, 16 and 17-year-olds cannot work more than eight hours a day and 40 hours a week, between the hours of 6am and 10pm.

This can be increased to 11pm at the weekend, if the student does not have school the following day.

The minimum hourly wage for someone under 18 is €4.90 but employers in many industries, such as the catering industry, must pay hourly rates which are higher under employment regulation orders.

Paul, (not real name) aged 17, a student at Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig is a case in point. Currently in his Leaving Cert year, Paul is working 15 hours a week to fund his car and social life.

"I need the money because I have to pay for petrol, insurance and tax, plus Friday and Saturday nights out," says Paul.

While Saturdays don't impede on Paul's studies because, "I wouldn't be doing anything else anyhow," he does find Wednesdays from 1.15pm to 6.15pm, difficult. "It's hard. You

come into work from school after a half day, and when you're finished you're tired and don't do any homework," he says.

Paul intends to cut down in his work hours at some stage, but has no definite plans for the immediate future.

On the other hand, William Wright, an 18-year-old Leaving Cert student at Kinsale Community School, could not be accused of funding an extravagant lifestyle.

William works four hours a week at the Seaview Esso service station in Kinsale.

"I'm doing it for pocket money," says William.

"I use it for food, lunches, and I have a bit of cash to go out."

Anna Forde, a 17-year-old Leaving Cert student at Scoil Mhuire, is currently saving the money she earns from her part time job.

"But if I go out at the weekend, I use it," she says.

"And I spend it on everyday things like credit for my phone, the cinema or lunch at the weekend."

Anna works on Friday evenings from 4pm to 7.30pm at a food shop in Rochestown called Cinnamon Cot-

tege. On the other hand, Anna says working during the week is another story altogether.

"Generally in the evenings, you just want to get home and get your homework done," says Anna.

"If you had to go straight to work after school, by the time you'd get home in the evenings you would just want to watch TV."

Aside from satisfying their own needs, students have other motivating factors to work too.

Laoise Connolly, a 17-year-old student at Coláiste na Toirbhirte, Bandon, says her Sunday work at Bandon Leisure Centre saves her parents considerable expense.

"If I didn't have a part-time job I'd be taking loads of money off them," she says.

However, Pat Kinsella lays some blame squarely at the feet of parents, many of whom do not seem to realise part-time jobs impact their children's academic performance.

"Parents, even when they know their children are involved in significant part-time work, still expect them to reach their potential in the Leaving Cert. But that's not possible."

O'Shea on Monday



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Marches, drink, diversity and of course, St Paddy

THERE will be no floats at this Thursday's St Patrick's Day Parade in Cork.

Apparently, all the groups participating will be travelling on foot. So more a march than a parade really.

Which is more the shame that the Orange Order aren't going to be popping down, because they really, really like marching.

But religious divisiveness is not what Patrick's Day is meant to be about; drinking booze is.

Har-Har. No, St Patrick's Day is a day when the 70 million people worldwide who claim to be Irish ("my mom was half-Spanish; my dad was half-cut") celebrate our rich heritage by singing Irish folk songs and wearing traditional dress such as 'Kiss me I'm Irish' T-shirts.

And that's why when I meet foreigners on the day I will plaster on a grin as genuine as any on an American president's face as he accepts a bowl of shamrock and shakes hands with whichever luminary from the Cabinet has been picked out of the hat.

I'll smile at our visitors and say: "Céad Míle Fáilte Romhat" (literally: "We are exaggerating how pleased we are to see you") and sell them tampered four-leafed clover.

Then there's the parade. This special year for Cork will see, among others, a Fire Colour Party, large inflatable Irish girl guides (possibly a misprint), the Cork School of Samba, invisible men, the Irish Filipino Association dancers and the Massachusetts Fire Brigade band — who will be on hand to put out the Filipino dancers if the Fire Colour Party goes awry.

If there were a lot more majorettes and fewer children about, I would probably venture out into paradeland, but I prefer to watch it on TV, because you can turn TV off.

One of the most common sights on the parade on TV up to around ten years ago was when the out-and-about presenter would approach a smiling black man with a child on his shoulders in the crowd.

Presenter: "Where do you come from?"

BMWCOHS: "Galway."

Presenter: "You're from Galway. Bejaysus! Galway?"

It was all slightly racist but it happened every year somehow.

Welcoming foreigners is, though, as I have already said, the most important part of the day.

A very important person was also a foreigner.

Who was Saint Patrick? He was born in Wales. Or Scotland. Or France. Or Las Vegas. Nobody knows. But as a youth he was taken to Ireland and sold into slavery by Niall of the Nine Hostages (or Niall and the Nine

ROBERT O'SHEA
on why we salute the man in green on March 17

Sausages for readers still in senior infants), who was then the ruthless High King of Ireland.

One of the sad things about the decline of the Irish monarchy was the fact that it had great names for kings. In England, all you got were names like George, Edward or Charles. In France it was worse; only a guy named Louis was allowed apply for the job.

But the king of Ireland in 387AD had, apparently, at some stage of his life, been kidnapped and held with eight other people. And he wasn't allowed forget it.

Anyway, Niall — who will be played by Brian Blessed when anyone gets around to making the big-budget motion picture about this cracking story — sold Patrick to a farmer as a pigherd.

The future saint lived with the pigs, ate from their swill and generally got to know them quite well. But this wasn't what Patrick wanted to do for the rest of his life. He had aspirations. He dreamed of becoming the first bishop of Ireland.

It's not surprising that Christianity attracted Patrick, as it was still only 400 years old and was fashionable among young people then. A bit like Presbyterianism today.

One day, deciding it was time to start his training for the priesthood, he left a note for the pigs and headed for France.

There he told Saint Germain that he wanted to become the bishop of Ireland and Germain told him to feck off, but said he would train him to become a priest.

However, he still had a pagan name, so he picked a Christian name that he felt would be for a future bishop of Ireland: Paddy.

When he returned to Ireland he caught the public imagination by getting rid of all the snakes. This is, of course, a myth. He only got rid of around three-quarters of them and to this day it is not advisable to go out after dark in Clare without the necessary snake equipment.

Using the shamrock (which symbolised the holy trinity of the father, the son and the devil) and travelling from town to town on a float, he did convert a significant amount of Irish people and their pigs from Paganism to Christianity though, and every March 17 Irish people all over the world celebrate this by getting very, very drunk.