



December 2018

A Message from the Principal

Welcome to the December Edition of St Mary's Newsletter. This online edition can be accessed through our Website and our School App. This newsletter, which is packed with reports and supporting photographs should give you an overview of what has been happening in St Mary's since the term began with our Schola Choir being privileged to sing at the Pope's Mass in the Phoenix Park on 26th August and culminated with the Christmas Festivities which got underway with our annual *Carols by Candlelight* in the beautiful Holy Faith Convent Chapel on Thursday 6th December 2018.

It has indeed been an action packed term incorporating among its highlights the Spanish trip to Seville, participation in the *Soroptimist International* annual public speaking competition, multi-lingual debating through French, German and Spanish, themed weeks including Science, Stand Up and Maths, rich and enriching creative engagement through Art and continued sporting achievements as the school has been proudly represented this term in Gaelic Football, Tag Rugby, Basketball, Camogie, Volleyball, Hockey and Soccer .

As a whole school community we are committed to an environmentally friendly stance as we continue to promote our waste management programme and strive towards our fifth green flag for biodiversity while also embracing the Global Goals for Sustainable Development through our involvement with the *Get Up and Goals Programme*.

Our TY students have once again been afforded the opportunity to develop their multi-media and Smart skills as part of the DCU UniTY Programme and their work will be showcased at the annual DCU UniTY Awards which will take place in the Helix in May 2019. We are delighted also that all TY students are participating once again in the President's Award (Gaisce), a self development programme encouraging young people to find passion, get active and make a difference in their communities.

With extra-curricular activities thriving due to the selfless commitment of teachers in their own time, it is always inspiring to witness the high standards of teaching and learning that continue to be the hallmark of the academic life of St Mary's.

Our first years have settled in well supported by the genuine warmth of the St Mary's welcome. They are embracing the Junior Cycle specifications in English, Science,

**St Mary's
Secondary School**

Mission Statement

St Mary's follows the Holy Faith philosophy of creating an inclusive school community whose central purpose is the religious, moral, intellectual, human, social and physical-recreational education of the student. The education programme of the school is directed to the growth of the whole person. It aims to form integrated and self-reliant Christian people who are eager to build a better world.

Business, Irish, Modern European Languages, Visual Art, Maths, History, Geography, Music, PE and CSPE alongside our own modular Wellbeing Programme. The goal for wellbeing is human flourishing which rests on five pillars that we have incorporated into our programme which teaches knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will hopefully sustain them throughout their lives.

It is my earnest wish that each member of the school community feels equally cherished, sustained and included as we move forward together. With sincere thanks to you all for your continued support and wishing you health and happiness in 2019.

Bernadette Bourke, Dec 2018

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Modern Foreign Languages Department

TY Spanish Cinema Trip & Garden of Remembrance

On Monday 26th of November, over 50 TY students went to see the moving Spanish film “El Olivo” at the Lighthouse cinema. Students met Spanish teachers Ms Gallagher & Mr Grace as well as honorary Spanish teacher for the day, Ms Donegan, at the Spire. From there, we made our way across to the Lighthouse cinema in Smithfield for a 10am showing of “El Olivo”. Students made sure to avail of the excellent “popcorn and a drink for a fiver” deal on offer in the cinema. After enjoying the movie students enjoyed some lunch in the Smithfield area before reconvening for the second part of our day.

Students made their way to the Garden of Remembrance to get a better idea of how many people had fought for Ireland throughout various wars. Students enjoyed a walk around the beautifully laid out garden before making their way home. A great day was enjoyed by all!
Mr Grace.



Spanish Debating

Four 5th year Spanish students partook in the Spanish debating competition. Zoe Salvador, Rose Roy, Catriona Comerford and Denisa Milhute represented St Mary's against Mount Anville in Rosemont School.

The topic was 'Technology makes us stupid'. The girls presented articulate and clear arguments and were narrowly defeated by the opposing team.



Spanish Trip To Seville



Spanish School Trip to Seville

On the 16th of October, 39 students headed off to Seville with Ms Higgins, Ms O'Rourke, Ms O'Keeffe, Mrs Hughes and Ms Aird. The trip was a great success and was completely action packed. Some of the activities included: La Isla Magica Theme Park, A flamenco show, La Plaza de España, a tapas restaurant, the Hard Rock Café, the Cathedral and of course some shopping. The sun shone for our four days there and everyone was sad when it was time to come home!

Ms Higgins

German Department

German Language Assistant

We are delighted to welcome our German Language Assistant - Frau Amelie Betz from Augsburg, Germany to St Mary's until March 2019. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to see German as a living language. Students will have an invaluable opportunity to improve their fluency, as well as gain a better understanding of the way of life and customs of German speaking countries. Wir freuen uns darüber! Ms S McManus



German Christmas Baking

On Monday 3rd December, the TY German class put on their aprons to bake a delicious mixture of Weihnachtsplätzchen - traditional German Christmas cookies. Frau Betz shared some of her favourite recipes from Augsburg, which have been handed down through her family for generations. From cinnamon bites to hazelnut Christmas trees, the girls really whipped up a storm!



German Debating

Well done to the 5th year German Debating Team, who narrowly lost their debate against Co-laiste Pobail Setanta on Tuesday, November 27th. This is a national debating competition, organised by the German Teachers Association (GDI) annually. The motion of the debate was that mobile phones are necessary in class. St Mary's was opposing this motion. All members of the team – Ana Berzoi (Team Captain), Erica Carrie, Laura Berry and Sarah Bateson – were praised for their well-formed arguments, clear diction and pronunciation. Well done to the girls for their hard work in preparation!

Ms S McManus and Frau A Betz.



French Department

St Mary's Senior French Debating Team

Members:

Alex Rosus
Mazzy Hollerich
Eira Tabaniag
Eva Murray

The St Mary's French Debating team competed in the Alliance Française Debating Competition this year. The first round of the Competition took place in Alliance Française in Dublin on Tuesday, 23rd October.



Merci à Monsieur McGill pour votre soutien !

St Mary's was competing against Alexandra College, opposing the motion that "School Holidays are too long". The girl's performance was excellent which led them to victory on the night, winning the debate and going through to the second round of the competition!

The hard work continued as the team began to prepare for the second debate. The St Mary's Team was tasked with the proposing motion: 'Reality TV Destroys our Values'. On Monday, the 26th November, again in the Alliance Française, the team were narrowly defeated by Loreto College, The Green. The students' performances on the night were outstanding. We are very proud of the achievement, hard work and dedication from the team and we look forward to continuing working with them next term.

Ms O'Callaghan and Ms Shanahan



SPHE Department

SPHE and Wellbeing in St Mary's

Stand Up Week November 12th – 16th

The school community celebrated *Stand Up Week* from November 12th – 16th. *Stand Up Week* is an event where we ask students to stand up against homophobic and transphobic bullying. All the students made a personal bracelet of the colours of the pride flag in SPHE or Religion class. On Friday the 16th we raised awareness by allowing students to wear pride face paint or a hair accessory. Students were given the opportunity to donate €1 to raise money for *Belong To*, a charity that supports LGBTI+ youth. Eighty five euro was raised and will be donated to the *Belong To* organisation on behalf of the school community.

As it was also *Science Week*, we ran cross-curricular activities to inform and support both events. Two science classes ran a revision exercise where students recalled an interesting science fact and recorded it on a coloured heart. All the hearts were then arranged by the student *Stand Up Week* committee in the colour order of the pride flag to create science pride bunting. The TY students on the *Stand Up* committee created complimentary nutritious fruit cups inspired by the pride colours; they went down a treat! There was a poster that supported this activity which listed all the nutritional components in each of the fruits used.

A huge thank you to all the students who took part and supported the activities, not forgetting their student *Stand Up Committee* for organising all the decorations and events which made the week such a success.

Ella Corcoran (TY *Stand Up Week* student committee member)

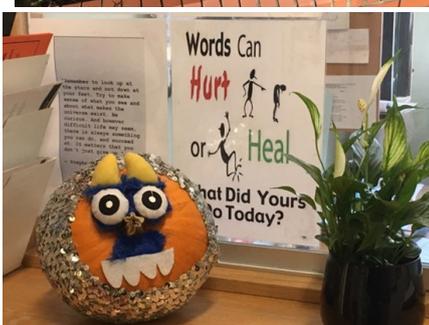


'Flying with pride'

Rainbow spotted over our pride flag in the winter sky above St Mary's. Photo courtesy of C Tierney (St Mary's school caretaker).

First and second year students have the opportunity to develop a variety of techniques and skills to boost their wellbeing each week on a modular basis. Relaxation, creativity, self-management and teamwork exercises are all part of their modules.

Our positive pumpkin competition took place again this year as part of a whole school Wellbeing and the Amber Team initiative. The cheerful pumpkins provided a seasonal lift to our spirits as the nights and mornings drew in. Congratulations to all the students and staff for their wonderful creations!



CSPE Department

First Year CSPE

Classes 1 Celandine and 1 Daisy have been very busy in CSPE class! Both classes have received pen pals from an elementary school in Wisconsin, USA. Students sent off their first set of letters in late October and included fun facts about themselves and their school along with different topics they have studied in CSPE this year including Active Citizenship, Needs and Wants and Human Rights. The letters have arrived in Wisconsin and students are eagerly awaiting the return of their letters in the New Year. Ms Caffrey .

Ms Conkey's first year CSPE class, Bluebell, have just completed their Christmas oral presentations!

Thus far in CSPE Bluebell have learned about Human Rights, Needs and Wants, The Paralympics, Special Olympics, Education and Homelessness. So much learning in such a short time! But this all gave the students of Bluebell the opportunity to choose their presentation topic from a varied list.

The students chose a topic, created an action poster and presented their findings to the class. The posters were vibrant pieces of political artwork, highlighting, amongst other things, the importance of Human Rights, Education and the Homeless in Ireland. Some students presented on 'Needs and Wants' for citizens in a developed country versus the 'Needs and Wants' of a citizen in a developing country.



Other students delivered passionate speeches on the Homeless in Ireland or the importance of Education for both the individual and the nation.

All in all Bluebell excelled in practicing their oratory prowess and can finish this term with the knowledge that they are quickly becoming responsible and active citizens.



3rd year CSPE update

Our third year Civic, Social and Political Education student's are now busy at work preparing for the last ever State Exam in CSPE. CSPE has always been a very active learning experience for students, with a large component of their Junior Cycle grade achieved through continuous work on an Action Project.

Classes are challenged to work together to achieve a common goal, organise themselves to share the work as a team to make a difference to an area they feel strongly about over the course of their studies. This year the girls have focused on raising funds and awareness for very worthwhile non-profit organisations in aid of the homeless, animal welfare, suicide prevention and age action.

Though the State Exam will no longer be a feature, students will still actively engage in worthwhile action projects to try and make a difference to the world they live in. To this end, our first years have already "taken action" by arranging a collection of non-perishable baby food, formula and sanitary products for homeless families with small children this Christmas.

Ms Donegan.



Politics & Society Department

On Monday 15th of October, the 5th and 6th year Politics and Society students visited Irish Aid and Dáil Éireann as part of a trip to learn more about our government and how we as a country can help other countries in need.

The classes were split into two groups, one visiting The Dáil first and the other visiting Irish Aid first. In Irish Aid, we had a talk from a woman named Caoimhe, who told us about the Sustainable Development Goals, and how we could help other countries. We also participated in a role-playing workshop, in which we learned about poverty and how the quality of living can be a gamble in places like Malawi. It showed the unpredictability of life in countries that are not as wealthy and involved us having to decide whether to think for ourselves or try to benefit everyone as a community.

In Dáil Éireann, we were permitted to visit committee rooms. In there, we were told about how TDs and Ministers would give answers to reporters, and the “3/9/27” rule of giving an answer that is vague, but informative enough that it does not encourage follow-up questions. We then practiced these by creating three points, nine seconds per point, and twenty-seven words to discuss the current budget.

As the final part of the visit to The Dáil, we put what we had been discussing in class to use and debated the motion that “The Voting Age Should Be Reduced From 18 To 16”. One group’s results were extremely close as the ratio of people who agreed with the motion compared to the people against the motion was 13:11.

All in all, it was an extremely enjoyable and informative day, and we would like to thank the teachers involved for organising such a great trip.

Ceri Doyle, 5th year



Politics & Society Department

5th Year Politics and Society Christmas Project

Well done to 5th year Politics students on completing their Action Reports on 'The Use of Palm Oil', which will be 10% towards their exam. As a class, students voted on choosing a topic related to the Politics course and designed an action plan around that issue. After viewing the moving Greenpeace Palm Oil Cartoon that Iceland had hoped to release as part of their Christmas campaign, (but was banned by advertisers as 'being too political'), students chose this as their topic with the aim of highlighting the use of palm oil across the school community.

The girls decided to divide themselves into groups, one group wrote, edited and created a 5 minute documentary on the use of palm oil, another group designed posters to raise awareness and a final group designed a survey on survey monkey to gather data on how well informed the school community is on this issue. Students then led a workshop with 1 Celandine and 1 Dandelion CSPE and Geography classes where they informed students, asked first years to complete the survey and carried out a question and answer session.



5th and 6th year Politics and Society students visited Dáil Éireann

Green Schools

The following students were appointed roles on the 2018/19 Green Schools Committee

Travel: Sandra Shallot
Biodiversity: Anne Fabian
Water: Eve McGrath Tully
Energy: Sofia Balog
Recycling: Suzie Russell
Head of Green Schools: Kate McManus



This year in *Green Schools* we are going for our Biodiversity flag. To get this flag we have done a lot of different things. For example, in gardening club we have been planting lots of different bulbs in our biodiversity bed, the rest of the Sensory Garden and also in the Holy Faith Convent's new Biodiversity Meadow.

We also held 'Hedwigs Hallowe'en Bake Sale' to fundraise money to sponsor a barn owl box. Thanks to the great involvement of class 2 Sepia who baked and ran the sale we raised 200 euro. We had hoped to have one on our school grounds but the area is not suitable for them. However, through Bird Watch Ireland we will sponsor a box in an area where they are supporting Barn Owls.

In a recent *Green Schools* committee meeting we made seed bombs. These are made up of clay, compost and native Irish wildflower seeds. The mixture is moistened and held together by moulding them with your hands. These are drying slowly and in spring we will have fun with our seed dispersal around the Sensory Garden.

Kate McManus (Head of Green Schools)



Green Schools Trip to Bí Urban

Green Schools Biodiversity Trip to Bí Urban

On the 26th of September the Green Schools committee of St Mary's visited Bí Urban in Stonybattery, Dublin.

Bí Urban is a store that believes that we should take care of our planet and its resources. It believes in renewable resources and smart ways to reuse materials, which they actually use in their very own range of organic products, from cosmetics to eco-friendly razors.

It was a great learning experience, with Kaethe Burt-O'Dea, the founder of the store, as our teacher. We learned about bees and their influence and the impact that they have on our world and how important it is to take care of them (we were also very lucky as we got to taste test some wonderful Irish honeys).

We learned that all of us can do our part to help the bees. By planting pollinator friendly flowers in our gardens all year round we are supporting our bees and we receive the fruit of their labour so to speak.

A big thank you to Mrs O'Keeffe and Mrs Cunningham for bringing us to Bí Urban and for Kaethe for teaching us so much.

Sofia Balog 3rd year



Science Department

This term has been another busy one for the Science Department.

Space Week

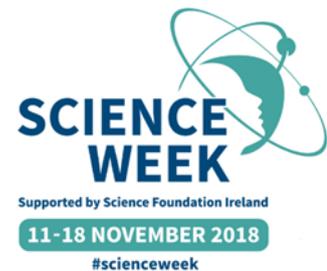
In October DCU hosted senior science students for Space Week, Ireland's newest national STEM week, in parallel with World Space Week. Dr Niall Smith from CIT Blackrock Observatory engaged the students in a talk on future careers in Space Exploration, while Matt Taylor, Project Scientist, spoke about his work on the Rosetta Mission's Philae Lander – the first spacecraft to land on a comet.



Science Week

The highlight for all budding Scientists is the Annual Science Week Celebrations which were held this year from the 11th to the 18th of November.

Second year Science students along with their teachers Ms Fitzgerald and Ms Coleman visited DCU Science Week. Here they enjoyed learning about the science of Harry Potter and the mystical world of sorcery, magic and illusion with Jon Chase, Science communicator and professional science rapper!



Science Department

Meeting a NASA Astronaut

Physics students along with some second year students got to step into the shoes of a real NASA astronaut when they attended the inspiring 'Lift Off to the International Space Station' talk with their teachers Ms Byrnes and Ms Browne.



Visit to National Botanic Gardens

Students from second, fifth and Transition Year along with Ms Browne, Mr O'Reilly and Ms Coleman also got the opportunity for a guided tour of the National Botanical Gardens learning about the killer, clever and chemotherapeutic plants inhabiting the gardens.



Science Club

Curious chemists, biologists and physicists enjoyed the weekly Science Club with Ms Browne, Ms Fitzgerald, Ms O'Keeffe and Ms Byrnes. Experimenting with fun experiments and learning new skills. They got a chance to have a closer look at some real-life eye specimens with a spooky eye dissection!

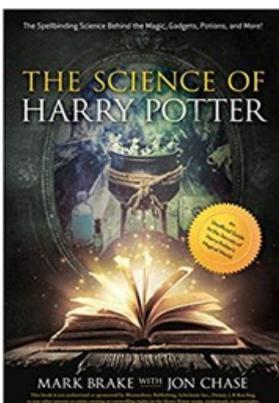


BT Young Scientist

Again this year a large number of students at St Mary's got involved in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition with ten projects entered into the competition. Isla Vista from 1 Bluebell was successful with her project *An Investigation into Effective Stress Coping Mechanisms and Strategies in Adolescents*. Isla is busy carrying out her research study with the help of her teachers Ms Mulvey and Ms Coleman and a large number of willing volunteers from St Mary's who are participating in her study. Best of luck to Isla when she will represent St Mary's at the BT Young Scientist Exhibition in the RDS this January.

The teachers of the Science Department have been busy collaborating with DCU on a project entitled *Unconscious Bias: Improving Gender Balance in Ireland*. The project aims to improve young women's perceptions of STEM careers and is using the framework of the new Junior Cycle Science to implement strategies to encourage gender balance in the world of science.

After a busy year we look forward to great start to 2019 for our Junior Science students when they complete their Classroom Based Assessments in the New Year.



An Coiste Gaelbhrtach, The Green School's Committee & The Art Club

All three groups joined forces to make ceramic signs as *Gaeilge* for the plants in our sensory garden. The students enjoyed researching the plant names as *Gaeilge* and made an as *Gaeilge* ceramic sign for each plant.

This great cross-curricular activity was enjoyed by all. Well done girls!

Bhailigh an trí ghrúpa le chéile chun comharthaí ceirmeacha a dhéanamh do na plandaí inár ngairdín na gcéadfaí. Bhain na daltaí an-sult as an méid taighde a rinne siad. Rinne siad comhartha ceirmeach do gach planda. Thaitin an imeacht seo go mór le gach duine. Maith sibh a chailíní!



Ms Salmon & Ms Cunningham



Senior Cycle Public Speaking News!

Soroptimist International is a global organisation which inspires action and creates opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls around the world. One of the ways they provide a global voice for women is by holding annual public speaking competition for girls.

To prepare the participants representing our school, Ms Doyle invited Noel Rock TD, a highly experienced public speaker, to host a workshop at the beginning of the year. In the workshop students learnt different skills, techniques and valuable information which they could apply to their speeches when preparing for the competition.



In the days before the competition, after thorough research and numerous drafts, Alannah McDonald and I performed our speeches in front of teachers and class groups, where we received feedback that truly helped us on the highly anticipated day.

On the day of the competition, twenty three girls from schools all around Dublin presented their speeches on one of several topics: human rights, health, environment, democracy, friendship and volunteering, education or empowerment of women. I chose to discuss education and offered alternative solutions to improve our quality of education, no matter what background one may have - "If we fail to notice the pitfalls in our education system, formal education will continue to be seen as anything but life itself. We need a form of education that doesn't stunt our growth and innovation but rather nurtures it."

I was extremely nervous as I stood before the podium and the audience. It was unlike anything I had done before but I love a challenge. Passion outweighed fear and we delivered our speeches to the best of our abilities.

Although none of the entries from our school made it to the next round, the confidence and empowerment felt as your voice is heard is indescribable. This opportunity taught me valuable life skills and confidence which was reward enough (although the Newbridge Silverware jewellery did not go a miss). I would encourage students to step outside their comfort zone as it teaches you skills that are as paramount as the ones you learn in the classroom.

"If you don't challenge yourself, you will never realise what you can become."

Fiona Conway.

**Junior Public Speaking Club!**

Junior Public Speaking Club will commence in the new year for any first or second year students interested. Students will meet on a weekly basis to take part in discussions on a variety of topics (e.g social media, health and teenage years), to practice speech writing and presentation skills.

If interested, students will have the opportunity to enter the annual public speaking competition hosted by the **Irish Federation of University Women*. The aim of the competition is to give junior cycle students the opportunity to make their public speaking debut in a relaxed and encouraging atmosphere and to give these students an opportunity to meet their peers from a broad range of social and cultural backgrounds.

Students are not obliged to enter the competition and are more than welcome to come and sit in on some interesting discussions each week.

(*The IrFUW is a member of GWI (Graduate Women International). The GWI is an organisation run by and for women, for women's rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality education and training up to the highest levels.)

Ms Doyle



Oral Presentations

Ms Conkey's first year English group, Bluebell are currently undertaking their first oral presentation in English. Each student has been diligently working their way through a 'Reading Log' which encourages students to read novels during their spare time. Some students are even on their fifth novel! Such literary eagerness! Bluebell's final lessons in the run up to the Christmas exams are going to be dedicated to these amazing presentations. Students choose a favourite poem or novel, create a poster based on their choice and deliver a three minute talk. The students choose what they want to discuss in relation to their poem or novel and we the audience sit back and relax as the speaker envelopes us in the world of their chosen topic.



Breakfast Club 2018-19

This year we have seen an increase in numbers joining us for breakfast club each morning and who could blame them?! It runs from 8am each morning in St Mary's kitchen and offers students a variety of fruits from bananas to melon and apples to pineapples, an abundance of savoury choices for example scones and crackers and sweet treats like yogurts and chocolate rice cakes.

It runs each morning Monday to Friday and from time to time our language teachers love to run themed mornings for all students to practise their language skills while sampling local cuisine. It is a wonderful way to start the morning and meet new people.

Come and join us for a bite to eat and a chat!

Christmas Bottle Christmas Tree

Ms Watts, helped by Green Schools head of Travel Sandra Shallot, head of Energy Sofia Balog and by Jemma Draper, Anna Farrell, Leah Flanagan, Sarah Hanlon, Megan Reid, Megan Reynolds, Katie McDonnell and Amy Alcock, Ms Martin, Ms McGonagle, Ms O'Keefe, Mr Montague, Mr McGill, Ms Boran and Ms Salmon have built a Christmas tree made from plastic bottles. It is made from about 750 plastic bottles - a similar amount to that given out by the breakfast club every week! Well done to those involved for making this beautiful work of art and for [raising](#) awareness of amount



Maths Department

As always, the students of St Mary's have had a busy few months calculating, measuring and solving in and out of their Maths lessons! Maths Week took place from Monday 15th of October until Friday 19th October.

Both the TY's and 2nd Years competed in the 'Marshmallow Challenge' where teams of 4 attempted to build the tallest free standing structure with limited resources and time. There is no 'I' in team really shone through during this and from the challenge the students realised how important geometrical properties were in construction. The tallest structure was from a 2nd Year team standing at a towering height of 72cm!!

1st years enjoyed navigating through the Botanic Gardens for the 1st Year Maths Trail. It was a beautiful day where nature and maths were linked like never before!

5th Years watched 'Hidden Figures' which they thoroughly enjoyed. Maths, intelligence, feminism and glamour all rolled into one spectacular movie.

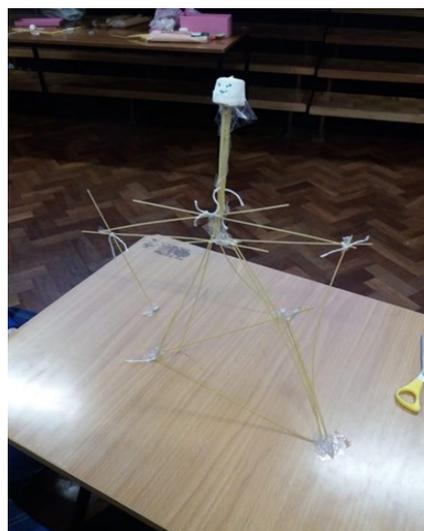
3rd and 6th Years enjoyed a break from exam questions and had a fun class either partaking in a Maths Bingo Bonanza or the likes. We also encouraged all students to enter Irelands Maths Eyes 2018 Competition.

Many of the first years were busy in the Botanic Gardens not only doing the trail but also using their 'Maths Eyes' to photograph anything mathematical they could see.

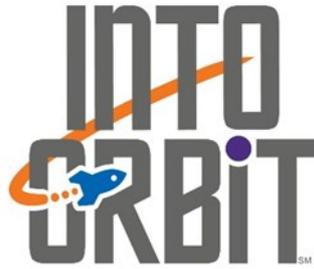
Shortlisted winners will be announced on Thursday 21st February at 5pm.

Poster competition:

There was the annual 'Infinity Poster' competition where students had the opportunity to merge their creative artistic skills with the concept of infinity. There was a huge entry for the unique "Infinite Poster" competition. There were so many amazing entries but the winning poster was a space theme.



Maths Department



Lego Competition

TY class Kiev were the lucky group chosen to compete in this year's First Lego League competition. This competition gives students the opportunity to discover Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics in a fun, engaging and hands on way. The students had an introduction to the Lego and a very successful training day when they attended a robotics workshop in St Pat's, DCU on Friday 28th of September.

With this year's theme being "Into Orbit", the students have to complete a project based on problems faced by astronauts during their time spent in space, and find possible solutions to solve these problems. The students will be creating a poster and preparing a presentation to deliver on the day of the competition. They will also be competing in the Robot Games – this involves building a Lego robot and then programming the robot to move and complete certain tasks. The girls have really enjoyed preparing for this aspect of the competition as they have certainly learned an amazing new skill - programming!



Music Department

DCU Access Awards

The Annual DCU Access Achievement Awards took place in the Mahony Hall in the Helix DCU on Tuesday 10th December. Entertainment was provided by students from the participating schools and four of our 6th year students, Lauren Russell, Claire Mulcahy, Rebecca Kelly and Kelise Penrose were privileged to be chosen to perform at this prestigious event. Lauren sang *Half The World Away* and Claire, Rebecca and Kelise sang *The Power of Love*. They were excellent and sang with such confidence and passion. They also joined the other students who performed at the end to sing a Christmas Medley.



Schola Choir chosen to sing for Papal Mass - Aug 2018

The Schola Choir was honoured to be chosen to sing at the Papal mass in August 2018. The choir was practicing hard over the summer and it all paid off. The girls were part of a very historic day and we are very proud of their great achievement..



Music Department

Carols by Candlelight 2018 and Annual School Carol Service in Convent Chapel

On December 6th the Convent Chapel was the beautiful setting for 'Carols by Candlelight'. The School Choir and the Schola Choir performed a night of Christmas Carols and festive music for parents, staff, Holy Faith Sisters and members of the local community. This was the fourth year of "Carols by Candlelight" and it has quickly become an evening not to be missed in the lead up to Christmas. The Ember team members were collecting donations for the Peter McVerry Trust on the night and the money raised came to €600. The Parents Association served mince pies, tea and coffee afterwards in the Choir Hall.

Mr Coll and Ms O'Rourke.



Music Department

Carols by Candlelight 2018 and Annual School Carol Service in Convent Chapel



Religion Department

The Beginning of the School Year Mass 2018

Our Beginning of the School Year Mass took place in Our Lady of Victories Church this year on Wednesday 3rd October. The theme chosen was the theme for the Pope's Year of the Family : "The Joy of Love; Please, Thank You, Sorry" It was celebrated by Fr Richard, who did a great job of communicating the message to the students and engaging them in the spiritual aspect of the Mass. Mr Coll introduced the theme and explained it to the congregation as the Holy Faith Symbol and pictures of the theme were brought to the altar by the students. Emily Mc Elroy, Head Girl and Chloe Halpin Deputy Head Girl did the readings. After the Homily a member of each year group read out the Prayers of the Faithful. At the Offertory Procession a member of each First Year Class brought up a picture of each of the flowers they are called after, while the qualities and characteristics of each flower were read out and applied to the classes. Ms O'Donnell and Ms Devaney brought the bread and wine to the altar. Then, just before Holy Communion, some senior students approached the altar to be blessed as Ministers of the Eucharist by Fr Richard. This was a great opportunity for them and they proceeded to give out Holy Communion to the congregation. After this, the Commissioning of the Prefects took place. The prayer was led by Emily and Chloe who guided their fellow prefects as they undertook their important role in front of the entire school community. After the Communion Reflection was read by Karen Loma, Ms Bourke spoke to the whole school community about our hopes for the year ahead. Then Fr Richard said the closing prayer, and the choir brought everything to a close with great music and singing.

It was a very memorable, spiritual occasion and was one of the few times when we can gather together and celebrate as a whole school community in such a lovely location.

L.Bohan.



Religion Department

TY Retreat to Knock

Thirty of our TY students went on Retreat in Knock Co. Mayo. They really enjoyed the experience and got to visit the places where Pope Francis had been when he visited the Shrine. The retreat was an overnight stay with a stopover and tour of the new Longford Cathedral on the way home.



November Remembrance Tree

During November we have our annual remembrance service and this year we had a remembrance tree. Staff and students wrote the names of their loves ones who have passed on the leaves. The tree was put in the main reception area for the month of November.



Art Department

TY Architecture and the Sensory Garden

The Irish Architects in Schools Initiative led by Evelyn D'arcy and senior DIT students from The School of Architecture mentored our TY students to create a unique pavilion for the sensory garden. The project examined the need for students to have an outdoor space that they could use during break times and that could be developed into an outdoor learning space or teachers and students. A wonderful group of German carpenters helped to realise the design and travelled from Germany to create the structure in situ.



Art Department

Creative Engagement 2018

3rd years model a selection of the amazing masks they created for their second year Creative Engagement project.



Art Club Report

We have done a lot of great work over the term in art club, ranging from water marbling, through sculpting, to various themed crafts for Halloween and Christmas. There is always a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the club thanks to our members, and there is always someone available to help out or have a chat. It is the perfect place to pursue your creativity, but also to meet new like-minded people.

6th Year Art Trip to the National Gallery of Ireland

On October 24th sixth year students viewed the art work of Roderic O'Connor at The Moderns exhibition in the National Gallery of Ireland. This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to observe and analyse the work of both an Irish artist as well as a that of post impressionists such as Van Gogh and Cezanne. Later, students had the opportunity to respond to this exhibition through expressive painting and essay writing.



Art Department

5th year

Fifth year art students have had two art trips this term. In September they visited 'Sculpture in Context 2018', at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin. They used this experience to inform both their art history and appreciation studies and their practical art work, creating sculpture designs and 3D maquettes.

On October 4th they also visited 14 Henrietta St, the Chester Beatty Library and did a tour of public sculpture in Georgian Dublin. We were privileged to be the first secondary school to have a tour of Henrietta Street. Our guide was super and really captured the students' attention with the history of the house and the lives of the many people who called it home.



Get Up & Go Goals

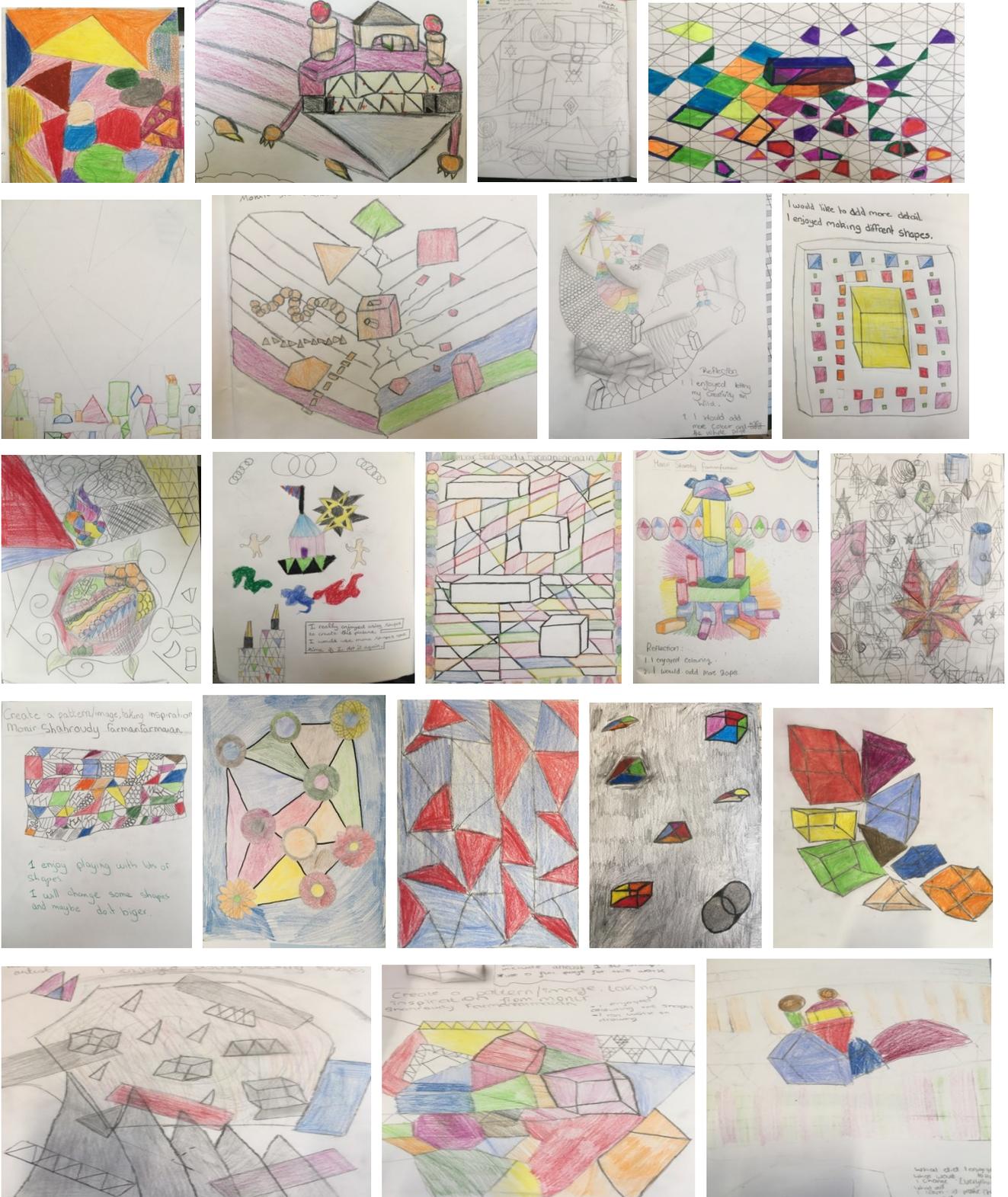
At the moment 5th year art classes are developing a craft project in response to the level of plastic pollution in our oceans as part of St Mary's 'Get up and Goals!'



Art Department

1st year Junior Cycle Visual Art

First years have been developing their drawing skills and exploring geometric shapes. They responded to the work of Iranian artist, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian by creating imaginative geometric drawings with pattern and colour.



Art Department

2nd Year Self Portraits.

2nd year art students created personal expressive self portraits inspired by the work of artists such as Frida Kahlo, Pablo Picasso, Sean Keating and Artemisia Gentileschi. We are thrilled with their paintings and we look forward to seeing them exhibited on the first floor gallery space.



Art Department

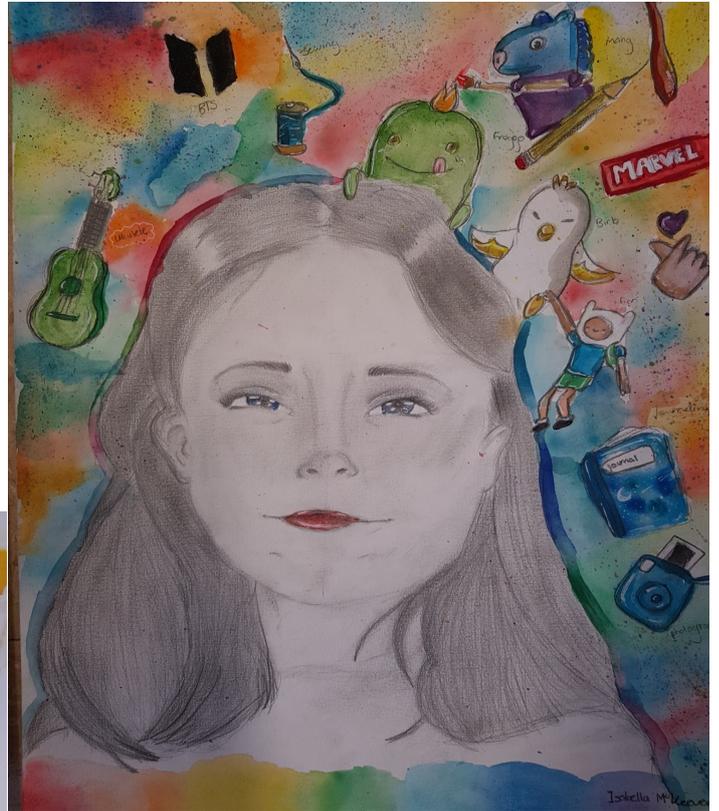
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Art Department

Second Year Self Portraits



Education For Living Programme

5th Year

The 5th year Education for living class have been working on life skills. For example cooking, creative crafts, gardening, health and fitness and most recently they have started the Squashy Couch Programme. They had great fun making porcelain Christmas decorations and most recently a Ginger Bread House.

Education For Living

6th Year

The 6th year class have just completed their TAG Programme, Teens and Guards with Garda Dave and Garda Elaine from Ballymun Garda Station. They finished off the term by going on two trips firstly to Ballymun Garda Station and secondly to the Dublin Circuit Criminal Court.

Many thanks to both Garda Dave and Elaine for all their hard work and support.



The Sensory Garden

St Mary's Biodiversity Plan

We were successful in receiving a Local Agenda 21 grant from Dublin City Council to develop biodiversity in the schools Sensory Garden.

The grant has covered the cost of 5 new water butts to increase our self-sufficiency and ensure that we are using rain water only to water our plants - making them happy and using a free natural resource.



Two teachers and twelve students from the green schools committee took a trip to Bí Urban in Stonyabbatter to learn about the importance of pollinators with a particular focus on bees. It was a sweet trip that included a delicious honey tasting exercise, as well as getting the opportunity to view a sample selection of Nature RX notebooks, part of a nature journaling exercise that they ran over the summer months in conjunction



with DIT Visual Communication students. We were so inspired by this that we have set up our own Nature Journaling group of students and teachers, who meet once a month to discuss what we observed from an hour spent in our local environment. Kaethe Burt O'Dea hopes to visit St Mary's in the new year and attend our nature Journaling meeting



TY students in their birds and biodiversity module have gotten involved in the creation of insect hotels using recycled materials with a compost bed planned for assembly in the new year. A wormery was also constructed and put in place by Mr Montague, Ms O'Keefe and Mr McGill.

A raised wetland bed and pond as well as improvements to our existing pond were other benefits of the grant. While work has begun, this habitat will be fully ready in spring to give frogs and water insects a much welcome new and diverse habitat.

In the meantime, new homes have also been created by the addition of small bird boxes, bat boxes and swift boxes. Introducing homes for these creatures will greatly add to the biodiversity of the school grounds. A wormery was also constructed and put in place by Mr Montague, Ms O'Keefe and Mr McGill.



We are very grateful for the grant and really looking forward to observing the positive effects of these investments into our school grounds and using them as teaching and learning spaces in the months and years to come.

Ms Cunningham

St Mary's Gardening Club

Gardening Club

It has been a lovely term for all those involved in gardening club. Our activities have ranged from weeding to bulb planting, cross-curricular links with the Gaeilge Department to make labels *as gaeilge* for the flower beds as well as the care of biodiversity in the whole Sensory Garden area.

St Mary's teachers got the term off to a great start by weeding without chemicals. The Sensory garden can now proudly claim to be completely chemical free. All gardening activity makes use of natural resources and where possible our own seeds are harvested and some set aside for next year's crops of runner beans and sunflowers.

The last gardening club of 2018 was held on December 6th ahead of the house exams. Students and staff were invited to come and make a Winter warmer bird feeder from our own harvested sunflower seeds and lard. These were hung in the biodiversity bed alongside apples for the birds to feed on over the Christmas season.



Biodiversity Action, 'Winter Warmer Bird Feeders'

Gardening club students making special Christmas decorations with the help of 6th year gardening club mentor Gwen Loriezo for the Sensory Garden.



Business Department

NFTE

NFTE (Network For Teaching Entrepreneurship) is an optional module for our Transition Year students. The students are required to form teams, brainstorm, design a potentially successful product, create and market this product, sell it, and hopefully make a profit at the end of the process! This provides them with the opportunity to develop numerous skills including communication skills, organisational skills, team work skills as well as enhancing their ability to use their own initiative.

On Monday 3rd of December the NFTE students took part in a Christmas Fair in the choir hall. The students put in a lot of work and effort and were well supported by their fellow students, teachers and school management. There were numerous products for sale including beauty products, bags of sweets, hot chocolate, cookies and chocolate muffins! Many groups sold all their stock on the day! It was a fantastic event and plenty of profit was made!

These lucky students also had the opportunity to attend a Business Bootcamp competition in Colaiste Eoin on Tuesday 4th of December. The students organised themselves into three large groups and designed posters and created projects based on their new business ideas; “Easy Bags” make up bags, “Detox” facemasks and “Smoothie Snacks”. Some students presented their idea on stage! “Smoothie Snacks” won a prize for the most innovative product! Round two of this competition is in March! These students were a credit to the school and enjoyed the day out!



Business Department

Build a Bank—Transition Years

AIB Build a Bank is a programme that challenges a group of six transition year students to essentially, set up a bank within their school. This is an opportunity to showcase their creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. Students will also get the chance to give back to their school and community and learn new skills that will stand to them for life. Not only will they be introduced to the world of banking and business, but they will also get to bank some great prizes along the way! Best of luck to all the girls who have interviewed with two AIB representatives. You were all excellent.

Build a
Bank

Ms Dowling



History Department

History Society

The St Mary's History Society meets every Monday at lunch time in Room 26 and new members are always welcome. The society allows students to come together to discuss their favourite areas of history. Students can choose a topic individually and then research and present it to the society. There is so much happening in the New Year so feel free to sign up when we come back. The St Mary's History Society would like to wish all students, teachers and families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Enjoy the break.

Mr O'Connell.

The Roman News

For 1 Primrose's CBA they produced a project called the Roman News. They produced newspapers that had articles that would have appeared in a newspaper if the Romans had newspapers. They then presented their newspapers to the rest of the class. The standard was very high. Here is an article showing the standard reached by Ana Rusu and Kate Dragan.

Thermopolium Review

Today's review is about the local Patricians' thermopolium. The thermopolium is known for its amazing roast peacock. I tried it yesterday and it's simply delicious! It's quite expensive so only Patricians can afford it. Other dishes on the menu are baked dormice, eggs with honey and a large variety of vegetables. They also serve wonderful wine.

LCVP Department

LCVP St Mary's Girls are Taking Action!

This term our LCVP students are focusing on making changes. After Christmas there will be a campaign underway to educate our school community on "Period Poverty".

Most women can agree that periods are an annoyance at the best of times. They can leave you feeling fatigued, irritable and sore, which in turn can curtail your productivity and ability to go about your day-to-day life.

But for some women, periods are more than an biological nuisance – they're a financial burden. A quick glance at an online supermarket reveals that brand name sanitary products can cost anything between €2.69 and €4.95 per standard pack.

This adds up, particularly when you take into account the fact that a woman can easily go through more than one pack per month. Forced to make the choice between basic essentials like food and tampons, some women will choose to forego sanitary products and resort to other means.

There's a term for this: 'period poverty'.

Our 6th year students plan on setting up a donation hub where our school community can donate sanitary items to those in need. This will be passed on to "The Homeless Period Dublin" who distribute the products to women in direct provision, women's shelters and homeless women.

Please help us in our efforts to donate to this worthwhile cause. Update to follow in Summer Newsletter.....Watch this space!



PE & Sports Department

It has been another jam packed few months for St Mary's Sports Department. So far this year we have been represented in Gaelic Football, Tag Rugby, Basketball, Camogie, Volleyball, Hockey and Soccer. After school sports has been very successful again this year introducing the new first years to the various sports we offer and helping them get to know each other and the importance of sport in St Mary's.

Gaelic Football:

Our seniors are through to the Leinster quarter final after huge wins over Donabate, Malahide CS and Scoil Cairtriona. The quarter final will be against Scoil Dara after Christmas.

The Junior football team is only getting started but already has one win in the bag against St



After School Sports:

The Cork Team (Class Daisy) won the After School Sports competition this year which again, was another huge success. The girls got to play Gaelic Football, hockey, basketball, benchball and soccer each week and this year it was extremely close in the end with many teams competing for first place.

20x20 Campaign:

St Marys are supporting the 20x20 Campaign for women in sport. It's plan is to get 20% more girls involved in sport and 20% more attendances and media coverage on women in sport by the year 2020. #showyourstripes



PE & Sports Department

Tag Rugby & Leinster Rugby Coaching:

We have been lucky to create a link with Leinster Rugby Coaches Juliet Short and Larissa Muldoon who come in every Thursday to teach 1st years and to coach tag rugby at lunch time to all years.

We entered two teams into the recent Tag Rugby Blitz held in St Mary's RFC with both our teams winning all their games on the day. They impressed everyone with their rugby skills and thoroughly enjoyed the day.



PE & Sports Department

Halloween Fun in PE

Whole School Thriller Dance

The gym was taken over by zombies in the run up to Halloween. For Halloween, the whole school community got into the Scary Mary's theme and participated in a whole school 'Thriller' dance. Everyone got spookily involved in the day!

PE as an Exam Subject

We are delighted to be one of the schools that have introduced PE as an exam subject for the Junior Cycle. Our 2nd years are currently finishing up their CBA's in PE and they were a huge success



PE & Sports Department



Junior Camogie

Following their success last year, the junior camogie team moved up to Group B. Following a narrow defeat to Scoil Chaitríona the team regrouped and put in an excellent display against St Colmcilles.

Despite being defeated by Clane in their last group match the girls have done enough to qualify for the quarter final on December 19th against Coláiste Cois Life.

Senior Camogie

The senior camogie team faced a tough challenge this year, moving up to Group B after last year's success. The first match against St Colmcille's showed the girls the standard they needed to reach to compete in the higher division. A hard fought win against Loreto Stephen's Green left the girls with a chance to qualify for the quarter final if they could overcome Scoil Dara from Kildare.

In their final group match, the team pulled off an amazing 18 point win. Unfortunately the quarter final proved a step too far as the girls lost out in a thrilling game against Maynooth which saw 11 goals scored between the two teams.

Despite the girls being disappointed with how the year ended they played some excellent camogie and represented the school extremely well.

PE Participant of the Month!

St Mary's is delighted to announce that there will be a monthly winner of *Participant of the Month* until the end of the school year. This girl shows huge enthusiasm in PE and tries her hardest, regardless of athletic ability, but sometimes exemplary ability! Look out for next month's winner!



PE & Sports Department

Tennis Club

This year in St Mary's the tennis club has been meeting every Wednesday at lunchtime in the Gym. The club is open to all school members regardless of whether they have played tennis before or not so why not come along and see if tennis could be the sport for you! It is a fun environment where students learn the basics of tennis by rallying and playing games with their school mates. We have had a great turnout in recent weeks and hope to see this continue when we return from the holidays. Our Spring Championships will be starting after the Christmas break so sign up as soon as you can! The St Mary's Tennis Club would like to wish all students, teachers and families a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Enjoy the break.

Mr O'Connell.

Volleyball

This year the Volleyball club have had a busy opening few months.

Both first and second year teams have learnt the skills of spike-ball, a four player fun version of volleyball, and competed in several competitions. Our two second year teams began their campaign with a trip to Loreto Swords competing against the hosts and Santa Sabina. Both of our teams put in a valiant effort but only one team progressed to the second round. Round two was held in Loreto Balbriggan. This tough leg involved Sutton Park, Loreto Balbriggan and Terenure. Again St Mary's performed superbly coming second in the tournament and paving their way to the all-Ireland semi-finals which will be held in January 2019. Our first year team made their debut at Rockford Manor School in Blackrock. Playing four fiercely contested matches they were just piped to the post.

Their determination and poise were complimented by an Irish Volleyball scout. Well done to all the Volleyball players and thank you for your dedication.

Ms Coleman.



PE & Sports Department

Hockey

It's Hockey Time...Hurrah!

In September the new first year students took part in a Sports Induction Day. This was a fantastic success and also introduced the new first year students to the many sports and activities that St Mary's has to offer.

The preparation for league matches commenced in September. Great excitement mounted as teams prepared for their first hockey matches. The girls were highly excited at the prospect of getting back into playing matches and as always they took great pride in representing St Mary's in hockey. The teams had a great start to training with high numbers attending. We also have a 'Stick With It' incentive for attendance at training. Students will take part in a monthly lucky dip draw for their attendance at training.

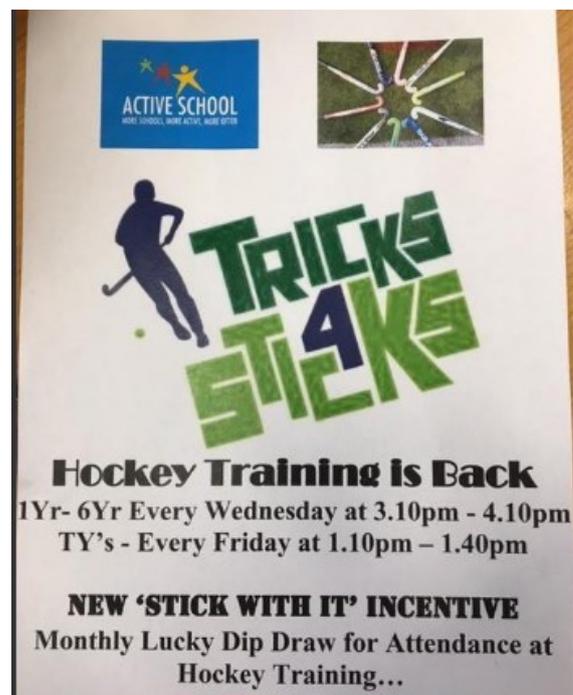
The TY Team (4th Year) train at lunchtime on Fridays. The 5th and 6th year students combined as the senior team. They will take part in early morning training at 8am to fit in with their busy schedules! All teams will commence some warm-up matches in preparation for the Northside League in January. We wish all teams luck in this year's Northside League.

The 1st 2nd and 3rd Year Teams train every Wednesday. The new first year recruits thoroughly enjoy playing hockey and show great potential for the future. The teams show some great skills and they look forward to the Northside League and in preparation will take part in some more friendly matches in 2019.

We are looking forward to the new hockey season this year and new players are always welcome. With such enthusiastic and talented players, we will enjoy playing and representing St Mary's with great spirit and enthusiasm. We highly recommend to everyone to come along and join hockey.

Be Active.....Play Hockey!!

Ms Boran, Ms Bunnett., Ms Cunningham.



Transition Year News

It has been a really busy first term for all TY students. The year started off with a trip to Causy Farm, which really helped the year group bond as they made scones, took part in a ceili and ended the day with a trip to the bog! Other trips that have been highlights so far this year would be

- Howth Hike
- Get to know your City
- Knock
- Galway
- Glasnevin Cemetery
- Dublinia
- Zeminar
- Dundum on Ice
- Movie trips in languages,
- Bohemian Rhapsody and the Grinch

The TYs have also been fantastic in leading and taking part in a number of initiatives such as

- Scary Mary fundraiser event
- Taking flight workshops (the fruits of which we look forward to seeing as part of the Spring production)
- Build a bank
- NFTE – well done to all those who took part in the Christmas craft fair
- Trick or Treat for Temple Street
- Create schools film making workshops
- Global Citizenship, Shout out, SVP workshops

These are just some of the activities that have been taking place along with the fantastic and unique TY modules being taught in school such as Junk Couture, GAA leadership, Cultural studies, Sociology, Self Defense, Creative engagement, Lego Maths etc.. Well done girls for fantastic enthusiasm, creativity and involvement so far! We look forward to what the second term brings.

Ms Griffin . TY Co-ordinator



Guidance & Counselling Department

1st Year

This year, the 1st year students have a weekly Wellbeing class. As part of this the guidance and counselling department created a 'transition to secondary school' module. Students learned about the support structures in place at St Mary's, the layout of the building and becoming familiar with their timetable.

2nd Year

Several 2nd year students participated in a DCU Coding event over midterm. The aim of this was to expose students to coding. This was a great opportunity to learn how to code, develop websites, apps, programs and games. All second years participated in a Self-Care workshop looking at ways to look after one's mental, physical and emotional health.

3rd Year

Cat exams

All 3rd year students sat cognitive abilities tests (CAT). These exams tested four areas; verbal reasoning, numerical ability, non-verbal and spatial awareness.

5th Year



Motivational speakers have been coming in to talk to our 5th / 6th years students including Dr Siobhan McGovern from DCU, Johnny Cooper and Professor Deirdre Butler.

Ufirst

Three 5th year students, Zara Tarr, Alex Fitzgerald and Chanice Dolan have been accepted onto the DCU UFirst programme. The aim of U First is to encourage students to begin preparing for third level. It covers study skills, career investigations as well as providing an opportunity to shadow DCU students.

The CV clinic and IT basic skills club held on Wednesdays at lunch has been a great success with numerous students attending from all years.

Northside Partnership's Further Education Fair was attended by the 5th years. Numerous and varied prizes were won from Art vouchers to UBS keys.



DCU Achievement Awards

Several of our 3rd year students have nominated by their teachers to receive a DCU achievement award this year. The award categories included academic achievement, community spirit, sport, arts and culture and exceptional nomination. The ceremony took in the Helix, DCU on Tuesday 11th December. Many parents and guardians attended on the night in support of the students.



Best wishes

We are very proud of the 6th year class of 2018 and would like to wish them all the very best of luck in their chosen college courses and career paths.

Guidance & Counselling Department

Transition Year News

College Open Days

All transition year students will have attended college open days this term. These days are a great opportunity for students to see a third level college and discover how an open day works. These experiences will help the students get the most out of the open days they will attend in 6th year.



Students have participated in Self-care workshops and have assisted in college awareness week.



Zeminar

All transition year students attended Zeminar in the RDS. This was an education and wellbeing event for young people. The conference featured keynote speakers as well as learning and empowerment workshops.

DCU- LEIS

Some Transition years visited DCU St Pat's campus for two workshops in robotics. Students learned how to build and then programme robots using lego. The workshop facilitator was very impressed with how quickly the students completed the tasks.



Aware Programme

There will be a four week programme run with Transitions years after Christmas.

Shout out

Held numerous workshop for Transitions Years about LGBTQI education.



Thanks!

***Special thanks to all the staff and students
who contributed to this online edition of
our December Newsletter and to Ms Boran
who put it all together.***



*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from
all at St Mary's!*