

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

Autumn

2015



Blackrock College

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Dear Parents

Why do we do what we do? We all know the what (we do) and how (we do it) but what about the why of a spiritan school, of Blackrock? It is an important question. To answer it, we must have a clear vision, looking back as well as forward, an understanding of what we stand for, our culture, our tradition.

We are grateful to the congregation for the launch of their new publication – **‘Education for Transformation through Gospel Values’**. The book is the product of extensive research, a prodigious consultative process with Rockwell, St. Mary’s, St. Michael’s and Templeogue as well as Blackrock. It gives us all a timely opportunity to reflect on the Spiritan vision for education. It confirms that each College has a strong Spiritan identity and a desire for that to continue into the future.

This identity offers personal and faith development, high educational standards, a global vision, commitment to service and an option for the poor, openness to the spirit and a strong sense of community. These are our core values.

In the foreword, **Spiritan Provincial Fr. Marc Whelan** (Class of 1980) explains: **“In a world that is constantly blessed by God but where life can be fraught by fragmentation and despair, we pray that God’s spirit will constantly guide us on our life journey, confident in the future and attentive to the stirrings of God’s spirit within us”**.

As we started the school year, we urged the boys to develop a sense of belonging. Belonging means taking part, active engagement. Belonging means being available to one another, be it at the Rugby 10s or Swimming Gala, Musical or Debates, Choir or Orchestra, in the Classroom, the Chapel, Study Hall or Learning Centre.

Belonging means being an encourager of others.

Our **Bullying and Mental Health Awareness Days** heighten sensitivity to each other’s needs, encourage support and offer coping mechanisms for times of difficulty. The ‘why’ of what we do sets the context.

I return to **Fr. Marc: “That the spirit is present and enlivens each moment and every part of the school day”**.

In Blackrock we are still inspired by our Founder Père Leman. Some 155 years later we wish to open your sons’ hearts and minds to the Holy Spirit who continues to light fires of character, courage, confidence, curiosity and Christian conscience in our young men today.

This has been evident in the dignity, respect and purposefulness of the boys at the **Sacrament of Reconciliation, Pastoral Placements, at Lourdes, on the Soup Runs, at 5th, 6th and Boarder Retreats, 2nd and 6th Year Family Masses, at our Whole School Assembly**.

Belonging is the “added value” in our school rule **‘Be There’**. Belonging is a considered presence. **“The unexamined life is not worth living” (Socrates)**. We urge each boy to consider his relationship at home, with the school, with his peers and most importantly that vital understanding and appreciation of self, attentive to the stirrings of God’s spirit within us.

I thank our **Spiritan Community, my Colleagues, the Parents’ Council and Year Committees** whose leadership and example inspire and embolden the boys.

Yours sincerely

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal



Second Year



This Second Year group, the class of 2020, has begun its career in the College comfortably and carefully. The weekly **Application Cards** show the level of assuredness that these boys have brought to their new learning environment. The cards, which parents and guardians receive each Monday, are good guides to work being done and are also great opportunities for parents to compliment their sons on their organisation and efforts during the previous week. We have, at the moment, more than half of all cards submitted achieving the Principal's List and we hope that figure will increase in the next half term.

The new **House Captains**, chosen at the end of First Year, received their badges from the College Spiritual Director Fr Cormac O'Brolchain CSSp and the Principal Mr Alan MacGinty at an Investiture Ceremony in the Chapel. The Captains are: Duff House, Josh Baker, Jeff Kenny & Jack Moriarty; DeValera, Cian Colville, John Huggard & Luke O'Brien; Ebenrecht, Tom Grennell, Charlie O'Carroll & Jamie Sood; Leman, Tom Gavigan, Ben Melly Murphy & Thomas Pickford; McQuaid, Ronan Cowhey, Gavin Hoey & Colm Roche; Shanahan, Tom Dooley, Michael Lowey & Jamie Yarr. All the boys will remain in their allocated House for the duration of their time in Blackrock College and will elect new Captains from their House at the end of each academic year.

Our **Whole School Assembly** took place on the Feast Day of our founder Claude Poullart Des Places. Fr O'Brolchain presented the Libermann Cup to the Best Overall House for 2014-15, McQuaid House. **Bullying Awareness Day** was held this half term, the whole school engaging in discussion around images and information displayed on posters and TV screens throughout the College. A debate was held in the Learning Centre, with John Huggard and Tom Dooley from 2nd Year stepping up against TY, 5th & 6th Year students. The first of our two Environment Awareness Weeks took place with the Green Schools Committee leading the campaign to achieve the school's fourth Green Flag. **Literacy Day** was held in October with

the focus on Write & Speak in Full Sentences.

The first of the **House Competitions** has started with 64 students in 2nd Year signing up for the Table Tennis competition. The second competition, in Chess, has begun with numbers limited to 32 entrants, and the third contributing event to our on-going House Scoreboard in 2nd Year took place this half term, the College Swimming Gala. This was held on 15th October with a strong representation from 2nd Year boys. The start of the next half term in November will see the next few contests, a House Cross Country competition and the Inter-House Rugby Blitz.

This group of boys has taken to our wide range **Extra-curricular** opportunities with enthusiasm, with rugby of course being the most popular. Two excellent 2nd Year Rugby competitions, one 10's and the other 7's, took place in September, the first being won by Duff House beating DeValera in the final. Duff House also won the 7's competition beating Leman in the final. Joseph Tierney and Gerard Downey were each Player of the Tournament in their respective competitions. In other sports, good numbers are also turning out for table tennis and rowing. Boys are also involved in cross country, orchestra and swimming, Codorodo and Art club, cricket and debating. We encourage all boys to take part in at least one of these or the many other activities available to them.

Harry Moraghan, Cian Brennan and Andrew Kennedy deserve a mention for their performance in the U16 Basketball Ireland School Cup, as well as Aidan Quigley and Blackrock boys in other years who were members of the Woodbrook U20 Gold Team that won the Wicklow Cup. The **College Sailing Regatta** took place at the end of September with Tom Dooley being a member of the overall winning team. Morgan Lyttle and Charlie Cullen also represented the College in the Inter-schools Sailing Team Event in Sutton earlier that month. The Cross Country season opened with a promising start at Clonliffe with our Junior Team of Adam Harvey, Liam Blackburn, Eoin O'Farrell, Conor

Bowler Adam Nealon, MJ Poser and Leo Wyer giving a great performance. Our school's Model United Nations Society attended its opening session in Terenure College, including 2nd Year boys Aidan Cavanagh, Tom Dooley, John Huggard, Mark Landers and Michael O'Daly.

Each of the boys has met with the 2nd Year **Counsellor** Mr Donal Brennan, both in groups and individually. The Boarders' Family Mass was celebrated on 13th September, led by Fr Myles Healy CSSp and the **Second Year Family Mass** took place on Sunday 18th October, appropriately Mission Sunday, with a huge turnout of parents, guardians and family members. The Mass was celebrated by Fr. O'Brolchain CSSp, and we thank him and Mr Tom Ryan, Mr Sean Goan and Ms Patrice O'Connor, Ms Una O'Kane, Br Joe Cannon CSSp, members of the Spiritan community, the Religion teachers, and most importantly the boys themselves who made this such a memorable liturgy in the quality of their music and singing, reading and prayers.

There was a very good turnout for the Orientation Evening for Second Year parents on Tuesday 8th September, and also for the first of three **Seminars for Parents** on Wednesday 23rd September in the College Lecture Hall. Orla Callan and Martin Murphy from Learning 4 Learning gave an interactive, enjoyable and challenging presentation to parents on the theme of the learning process. These seminars will continue in February and March with topics to be decided by the Second Year Parents Committee, which is chaired this year by Ms Rachel Curran, Ms Siofra Harrington being Secretary.

Dates for your Diary

November – House Rugby Blitz & Cross Country competitions
December 2nd - Year Fundraising for St Vincent de Paul Society
December 14th to 22nd – Christmas Examinations

Third Year



It has been a very encouraging start to what has been a very fast-moving term to date. The numbers on the Principal's List have been very impressive, something which needs to be sustained by those boys regularly on it and emulated where this has not been the case. The weekly checking of Homework Diaries by parents and insistence on receiving Cards play an important part in maintaining standards, where warranted insisting on higher standards and of course affirming so much that is positive in the boys' approach to work. Following the Bullying Awareness Day it was very good to see a number of boys making themselves available to be on the Anti-Bullying Committee. For Mental Health Awareness Day Ian Moloney, See Change Ambassador, shared his experiences with the boys, pointing out that silence leads to more difficulty and that it is ok to talk about how we are feeling. We should learn from our mistakes, indeed better to learn from someone else's, and not to underestimate the importance of listening. The rugby 10's Competition which took place on Saturday September 12th turned out to be a great start to the Inter House Competition with a good number of parents in attendance. DeValera overcame Ebenrecht in the A Final and McQuaid were decisive winners over Shanahan in the B Final. Jack Losher and Andrew Hendrickx were both declared 'Man of the Tournament' after their respective finals. In the Swimming Gala

Leman edged out McQuaid as overall winners on the night. Max Connolly won the Junior Championship Race and the 50m Open and Theo Stephens-Kehoe came second in the 50m open. The vast majority of the boys are involved in a meaningful way in the Extra-curricular Programme. Any parents concerned as to their son's involvement should contact the Dean.

Respecting the dignity of each individual was very much the theme of the Investiture Ceremony for the new House Captains on Tuesday 29th of September. We congratulate the boys who were elected by their peers to fulfil this most important role and wish them well. The Captains are John Corless, James Gibney, Tim D'Arcy, Tom Dwan, Tom Handrick, Gavin Jones, Sean Lardner, Cormac McCabe, Diarmuid Foley, Peter Murphy, Harry Hughes and Harry Redmond. From within this group Tom Dwan and James Gibney have been elected to represent 3rd Year on the Student Council. In addition Scott Henderson is the Second/Third Year Borders' Representative.

There were over one hundred parents in attendance at the conference on Parent-Teenager Relationships given as usual by Noel Canavan. It was a challenging, sometimes entertaining and very thought-provoking presentation that was very well received by those in

attendance. Noel is running a 5-week Parenting Course on our return after the Halloween break for which there are a few more places available. If interested please contact him directly on 086 2228155 or by e-mail at noelcanavanone@gmail.com. The course outline is included with this newsletter.

There was a lot of very positive feedback following the Study Skills workshops facilitated by Mr Mark Smith which over 130 boys attended. Mr Smith will address an Assembly in the lead up to the Christmas exams with a view to reinforcing many of the points made at the workshops.

On Wednesday 9th September, the day of Junior Certificate results, 75 Transition Year Students attended an afternoon of activity including paintballing at the Xtreme.ie Adventure Centre in Balbriggan. This was by far the best turnout for the event since its inception three years ago, so we look forward to the current Third Year group surpassing this number in September next year.

Dates for your Diary

Monday 2nd of November - Progress Cards due home
Sunday November 29th @ 11.00 a.m. - Third Year Family Mass (**The First Sunday of Advent**)
December 14th to 22nd – Christmas Examinations.

Transition Year



Blackrock College Radio

Preparations are well under way for BCR 2015. All groups are now up and running and meeting regularly. Over 170 students are involved in what should be a fantastic week of broadcasting. We hope you will tune in on the week of Monday 16th – Friday 20th of November to the wide variety of shows from news and current affairs, sports, language shows and guest schools. We will broadcast on 97.3fm and also stream live on the College Website.



Junior Certificate Results

Congratulations to all students in Transition Year and their parents on what were fantastic results at all levels in the Junior Certificate. It is hoped that results of appeals will be back from the State Examination Commission on the 2nd week in November.

Evening Courses

There has been a great uptake on evening courses, which will continue after midterm. We hope to offer the same courses again in the new year, depending on demand. Chinese will continue right up until the Easter holidays. Over 135 students have availed of these courses in the first term.

Tuesday Tours

On Tuesday 22nd of September, Transition Years went out on their first tours to Croke Park, the GAA Museum, Footee Golf, Awesome Walls Climbing Center and the Sandyford ski center. The next tour is immediately after midterm on Tuesday 3rd November.

Lecture Series

On Thursday 15th October, as part of Mental Health Awareness Day, there was a talk given by Mr Marc Mulligan about fear and stepping outside of our comfort zones. On Friday 16th October the students attended an inspirational talk by Brother Joe Cannon on missionary work in preparation for Mission Sunday. He spoke to the boys about his experience of missionary work and the calling to go, and highlighted how missionary work can be in our everyday lives. The students also attended the AXA Roadsafe Talk in Dun

Laoghaire. It was a very hard hitting presentation on road safety, with representatives from the Gardaí, Ambulance and Fire service and an A & E doctor addressing the audience.

Gaisce

Gaisce is a President's award that challenges students to conquer new personal goals and to serve in their communities. Over 110 Transition Year students have signed up to achieve this award. We have had a great number of TY students giving up their weekends to help in a variety of volunteer projects such as; training Special Olympic athletes, working with social clubs for those with physical disabilities, playing tag rugby with teenagers with disabilities and volunteering at youth shelters. Long may this great work continue and may the spirit of service continue to thrive in TY.

Pastoral Placement

To date 3 groups have been out on their 2 week Pastoral Placement. It has been great to talk to the students about their experiences. The feedback I have received from Mr Ryan has been excellent. The next group is due to go out on the 23rd of November.

Dragons' Den

In September we launched the 8th annual Dragons' Den Competition. I thank Mr O' Neill and the dragons for organising this exciting enterprise competition. On the 19th of October all students attended an ideas generation workshop given by Mr Joseph Keating from the DLR Enterprise Office.

Extra- curricular

It has been a busy half term for Transition Years. In sailing Ewan McMahon and Patrick Riordan were part of the school team that finished 3rd in the All Ireland Inter- Schools Sailing Event held in Sutton in September. Ewan also won the individual prize. Patrick was then on the winning team in the College Sailing Regatta on the 28th September.

In rowing David Drennan was Cox for the Garda Síochána crew that competed at the British and Irish Police Forces Rowing Regatta on the 25th of September, winning the 4 and 8.

Our golfers have been going from strength to strength with Robert Abernethy part of the Senior Team who were victorious in a recent Leinster Schools Match Play Competition. Eoin Beecham and Liam Dunphy were part of the Woodbrook U20 golf team that won the Wicklow Cup in October.

Conor Halpin and Patrick Fahy represented the school

in the recent Clonliffe Harriers' Brother Schools Cross Country Open and competed strongly.

Congratulations to Mark Grogan and Conor Lacey who were both members of the Kilmacud Crokes Hurling Squad who won the Dublin U15 A championship.

The Blackrock College Model United Nations group had a very successful opening session with Chris O' Flaherty winning one of the Distinguished Delegate Awards. In debating Oisín Ryan was involved in the lunchtime debate for Mental Health Awareness Day. His team successfully opposed the motion put forward.

The Inter House Competitions have proven to be very competitive and well attended. In rugby Shanahan beat Duff in the 10s Inter House Blitz. Harry Angulo won Player of the Tournament. The Swimming Gala saw DeValera emerge victorious.

Finally there are a number of students involved in the St Joseph of Cluny Musical *Fame*. I wish them well.

I would encourage all Transition Years to avail of the wide range of Extra-curricular opportunities on offer in the school.

Charity Work

The Transition Year students have already been busy with charity work. 28 students were involved in street collections for the Blackrock Hospice raising over €2050 in one morning. On the 6th of October another group of Transition Years assisted the Operation Smile Collection. Both groups were highly commendable for their attitude and effort.

Dates for your Diary

3rd November – Transition Year Tours.
16-20th November – Blackrock College Radio.
27th/28th – 24hr Soccer Marathon.
3rd December – Transition Year Parent Teacher Meeting.
19th December – Hamper Delivery for SVP.

Fifth Year



5th Year students have embraced their fresh start to their two year programme in the Senior Cycle whole heartedly and have made great strides. Weekly cards are affirming good application, whilst the two Progress Weeks this half-term have served to highlight the academic focus of the year. The cards are an excellent measure of how the students are managing and organising their time and activities. It is strongly recommended that parents view their son's card on a weekly basis to both affirm good practice and offer direction where needed.

It has been a very busy half-term and in addition to focussing on academic progress, the students have been notably and enthusiastically involved in a number of

activities and these are summarised here.

Career Guidance

Since the beginning of the year, all students have met with and continue to meet their Career Guidance Counsellor and many have since sought advice on subject levels and choices as well as advice in relation to study.

The high turnout at the 5th Year Parents' Career Seminars organised by the Career Guidance Department was very welcomed. Over the course of the two evenings Professor Andrew Deeks (UCD), Mr. Alan MacGinty (Principal), Ms. Carleen McGee (Head of the Career Guidance and Counselling Department)

and a number of past pupils addressed many aspects of future educational and career opportunities as well as the supportive role of parents in their sons' career choices.

Day of Reflection

On Tuesday 13th October students were very welcoming of the opportunity to pause and reflect. They travelled to four different retreat centres around Dublin and Wicklow availing of the time away from the daily routine to reflect in a meaningful and spiritual way. The day was deemed by the students to be very worthwhile and rewarding and we thank Mr. Tom Ryan, the RE Department and the House Captains for their successful co-ordination of the day.

Fifth Year Cont'd



Commissioning of House Captains

On Tuesday 29 September, all students attended a ceremony in the College Chapel where their twelve House Captains were commissioned by Fr. O'Brolcháin. Those elected to represent the year group are Bill Madigan, James Kelly, Andrew Murphy, Chris Wong, Alan Francis, Robert Young, Robert Somers, Patrick Patterson, Mark Nealon, Matthew Barry, Peter O'Reilly and Chris Aylward. The Captains are commended for their efficient organisation of the Rugby 10's in September and the Swimming Gala as well as their assistance of Second Year House Captains so far this year and we wish them well with their future duties.

World Youth Day / Mission Awareness

Fifth Year students have been invited by The Spiritan Congregation of Ireland and members of the RE Department to join a Spiritan Student Pilgrimage to celebrate World Youth Day in Krakow, Poland next July. All students attended an information meeting on this and can contact Mr O'Reilly and Ms McMahon for further details.

As part of Mission Awareness Month, Fifth year students were addressed by Brother Joe Cannon. This inspiring address highlighted for students the work of the Spiritans across the globe in the developing world and encouraged students to engage with missionary work in their daily lives.



Bullying Awareness and Mental Health Awareness

On Bullying Awareness Day students were reminded of the lasting damage that bullying can cause to the victim and the bully and were encouraged to report any instance of bullying behaviour in order to help us to take care of our overall well-being. The theme of the day reminded all that all our words and actions have consequences and advised all to think carefully before speaking and acting.

Mental Health Awareness Day on 15th October reinforced the message that *it is ok not to feel ok* and encouraged students to seek help when needed. A number of mental health organisations visited the College and distributed contact details and guidance leaflets to students. Students were addressed by Mark Mulligan from *Outside the Comfort Zone* who shared his own experience of facing his fears and encouraged students to realise that change is inevitable and should therefore be embraced.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Fifth Year students have been very engaged and active in all areas of the Games Programme and Extra-Curricular activities. This is to be commended and encouraged as it provides great balance for academic work as well as providing opportunities to further develop vital social, communication and team-work skills. Rehearsals for the College Musical are in full swing and training is ongoing in all sports including badminton, tennis, table tennis, rowing, swimming, water polo and touch rugby. Some of the activities and achievements of the term so far are summarised below.

Choir / Orchestra

Fifth Year members of both the Leman and Liberman choirs, together with members of the orchestra, led their peers excellently at House Captain commissioning and the Whole School Assembly. Their poise and presence contributed wonderfully to the overall sense of community created by the Assembly.

Model UN/Debating

Eager to develop their public speaking skills, Fifth Years are playing an integral part in the Senior Debating Society. Meeting weekly and debating vigorously the debaters are thoroughly enjoying their experiences. They have also contributed excellently to lunch time debates in the College promoting Anti-Bullying Awareness, Mental Health Awareness, Green Schools and Literacy.

Fifth Year was well represented in the Blackrock College MUN delegation in Terenure College at the end of September. The day was filled with much debate and discussion and notably Mark Heavey received a Distinguished Delegate Certificate. The delegates are looking forward to their next conference in Rathdown next month.

Cross Country

Growing in popularity, the Senior Cross Country Team has considerable Fifth Year membership. The season's opening race was the Clonliffe Harriers' Brother Schools Cross Country Open and the senior team secured fifth place in a very competitive contest. We wish them continued success.

Basketball

Weekly training and matches have highlighted the commitment of Fifth Year students to basketball where attendance in such high numbers is very encouraging. With a strong start to the season the team is still recovering from their great comeback against CBS Thurles, turning a 21-6 score line around to secure a narrow victory. We wish them well as the All Ireland Cup continues.

Golf

A number of outings and trials this year have led to success for the Fifth Years involved in the Woodbrook U20 Golf Team that won the Wicklow Cup in Greystones. We congratulate Tom Dowdall and Marcus Ryan. We also congratulate Patrick Somers and James Cronin who were part of the College's winning team in the Leinster Schools Senior Match Play.

House Rugby

The House Rugby teams have had an excellent start to the season with victories against Kilkenny, Clongowes, Wesley and CUS just some of the highlights so far. Fifth Year members of the SCT have also had a strong start to their season with victories over Kilkenny, Terenure, CBS, Campbell College Belfast and Mauritz Hansen, South Africa just some of this year's early highlights. All House players have been training hard and are looking forward to the rest of the season.

The Inter-House Rugby 10's tournament on a gloriously sunny Saturday in September was a great occasion and was enjoyed by all. DeValera beat Duff in the final and Matthew Campbell (Duff) received the best player of the tournament award.

Sailing Regatta

Seven Fifth Year students led teams in this year's Regatta. Navigating increasing wind force, Conor Byrne led his team to victory in the annual sailing event. His team, made up of students from Fourth, Third and Second Year, were winners of the stylish Team Racing L'Afrique Trophy which is proudly on display in the College. We also congratulate Mark O'Connor who won the Individual "Brouder" Trophy at the Regatta and subsequently finished 3rd place in the Inter-Schools Team Sailing Event held in Sutton in less than favourable conditions.

Senior Soccer

The Fifth Year members of the Senior Soccer Squad were bitterly disappointed to be knocked out of the Senior Cup recently following their encouraging draw with Sligo Rovers U18. They continue to train and compete in the League and many participate in the College's Social Soccer which is open to all on a Friday evening. We wish them the best of luck.

Swimming Gala

Thursday 16th October witnessed high numbers of Fifth Years turn out for Swimming Gala events. We congratulate all involved and in particular congratulate Sean Desmond who won the closely contested Principal's race.

Polo Crosse / Cricket

Extremely bad weather caused Cillian Boland's last Polo Crosse tournament of the season to be called off on the second day. Nevertheless the National's tournament was thoroughly enjoyable and Cillian and his team were in 3rd position after two games of round robin. We congratulate Shane Keane who was part of the winning YMCA team in the Leinster U17 cricket final early in the term.

CSO Maths Competition

Chris Aylward, Oisín McEnroe and Kevin O'Donnell were delighted this month to be invited to the Department of Education to receive their 2nd place prize in the CSO All Ireland Maths Competition 2015. Following a survey, the students uncovered some very interesting statistics on under-age drinking habits that they presented in an impressive poster format. Well done to all three students.



Mr Padraig Costello Padraig with Oisín McEnroe, Chris Aylward and Kevin O'Donnell

Gaisce

At assembly fifty three Fifth Year students (with others still pending) were awarded their Bronze Medal Gaisce Awards. This is an excellent achievement for the students who have shown their ability to commit whilst developing their personal, inter-personal and organisational skills.

As we reach the end of our first half-term, our best wishes and hopes are with all Fifth Year students as we commend them for their positive and committed attitudes since the beginning of the year. We wish them a restful mid-term break and encourage them to keep their academic focus throughout the year ahead.



Fifth Year Gaisce Bronze Medal Winners

Dates for your Diary

Tues 17th November to Fri 20th November - Senior Musical
December 14th to 22nd - Christmas Examinations.

The Arts



Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre

All 2nd years have had their induction session in the Creative Arts & Digital Learning Centre, where they receive a talk about the many services and resources that we have to offer, including book borrowing, our DVD collection, our tablet service and our study/meeting room facilities. They also got to explore what's available and had the time to read newspapers, play board games and take a look at our Blackrock College Annual Collection from the 1930s to present



Induction Session in the CADLC for Second Years

Tuesday 6th October was **Literacy Day**. The Learning Centre was delighted to welcome artist and writer Gerry Hunt. Gerry is one of Ireland's most successful graphic novelists. Third and Fourth Year English students and some Sixth Year Art students enjoyed a wonderful insight into Gerry's life and work. Despite not even having the opportunity to do art classes in school, Gerry's lifelong passion has been drawing and in particular comics. After 25 years working as an architect, Gerry became a full time graphic artist. At first he published his own comics, stories that he created himself. Before long he found a publisher (O'Brien Press) and since then his books have been based on Irish historical political events including the 1913 Lockout and the Rising of 1916. A number of his graphic novels are available in The Learning Centre.



Gerry Hunt



Second Year students enjoy some quiet time reading in the CADLC on Literacy Day

What about Joe and Grace?

A Blackrock College Musical in association with Mount Anville Rehearsals for Blackrock College's latest musical production are at an advanced stage. Written by Brian Savage and directed by Toirleac O'Brien this new musical, inspired by the events of the 1916 Rising, tells the tragic love story of Joseph Plunkett and Grace Gifford.

The show runs from Tuesday 17th November- Friday 20th November 2015 and promises to be an entertaining spectacle for all the family.

Not to be missed!



'The Cast of 'What about Joe and Grace'

Senior Debating

Our senior debaters have been busy this term. Stephen Rooney was elected Chairman of the society and he has been organising events within and outside school. The highlight of the term, so far, was the well-attended lunchtime debate held in the Digital and Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre at which the pupils (controversially!) defeated a strong team drawn from the staff. Jordan McDonald, Ben Jordan and Donal O'Cribin spoke in favour of censorship being used to curb politically incorrect material. Mr Byrne and Mr Morris each opposed the motion using their own brand of humour. The best speech was an impassioned defence of freedom of expression by Mr T O'Brien. Such events help sweeten the long autumnal term.



David Fenn (Sixth Year) debating in the CADLC

Meanwhile our students have been busy competing in the prestigious Leinster Schools Competition organised by Trinity and UCD. Scott Donohue and John Heavey have advanced as a team, while Mark Heavey and Stephen Ryan secured places in the Second Round as individuals.

The Halls are Alive with the Sound of Music

The Music Department got off to a flying start this term with over fifty boys participating in a variety of instrumental classes throughout the day. One will not only note, but also hear that the hallowed halls of Blackrock College are rarely without the resounding airs of their efforts.



The Choir performing at the Whole School Assembly

The Orchestra, Jazz and Choir members are settling in to routine and working hard on music that they hope to bring to the stage in the National Concert Hall in the New Year. It promises to be *one to remember* so don't forget to book early!

The Whole School Assembly for both Orchestra and Choir was the first official performance this term, and we in the Music Department are very proud of the boys' musical talents and commitment in making this occasion a wonderful success.

Moreover, the Sixth Year Family Mass was a true testament to this spirit of giving and commitment. The Sixth Year instrumentalists together with the Sixth Year Choir participated to create a very prayerful and uplifting liturgy.

The Music Department is excited about the year ahead and looks forward to seeing you all at the next performance.

Autumn Studies



Joseph Tierney (Second Year)



Michael Gadaloff (Second Year)



Ciaran Drohan (Second Year)



Peter Spellman (Second Year)

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2015



Belfast History Trip ,Visit to Stormont ,October 2015



Blackrock College Heritage Trail
(Environmental Awareness Week)



Jordi Murphy ,Luke Fitzgerald,Andrea Fitzgerald and Ian Madigan



Rory Berkery with his parents at the Leaving Cert Family Mass



Leaving Cert Retreat Bandon



Mental Health Awareness Day



The Boarders' Retreat



Leaving Cert Rostrevor Retreat



Leo Wyer,Will Ryan and Hugo O' Reilly (Drop Everything and Read) on Literacy Day October 6th 2015



Leaving Certs in Lourdes

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2015



Rock Studios Visit to RHA Gallery



David Malony and his family at the Second Year Family Mass



Rock Versus Campbells



James O'Connor (5th Year) at the Sailing Regatta



Rugby 10's



SCT V SA



Tommy O'Brien (6th Year) at the Swimming Gala



Sean Desmond (5th Yr.) winner of The Principal's Trophy and Matthew Long winner of the Sixth Year 50m open.

News from the Past



Paul Dunne (class of 2011) was a member of the **British and Irish Walker Cup Team** that defeated the USA at Royal Lythan and St Anne's Golf Club on September 13th, 2015.

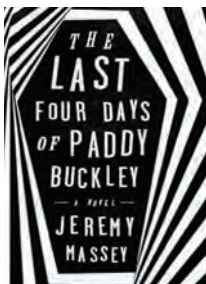


Paul Dunne

Luke Fitzgerald (2006), **Ian Madigan** (2007) and **Jordi Murphy** (2009) were called up to play in the Irish Squad for the 2015 Rugby World Cup tournament. The three were not only named in the Irish Squad for the World Cup, but each played and scored in the Quarter Final defeat to Argentina.

Connacht have announced the signing of USA out-half **Alan MacGinty Junior** (2008) for the 2015/16 season. MacGinty started three of the Eagles' Rugby World Cup fixtures, scoring 25 points in three games against Samoa, Scotland and Japan.

The Last Four Days of Paddy Buckley by **Jeremy Massey** (2003) 'a dark and unexpected novel about a Dublin undertaker who finds himself on the wrong side of the Irish mob' was published by Riverhead Books earlier this year..



Philip Lane (1987) was appointed governor of the Central Bank of Ireland on Thursday, 22nd October 2015.



Dr Martin Shine (1963) now residing in Sudbury, Toronto Canada has been presented with a Donor Champion Award by Trillium Gift of Life Network (TGLN), Ontario's organ and tissue donation and transplant agency. Dr Shine was honoured for his years of promoting organ and tissue donation at Health Services North/Horizon Santé Nord (HSN). Dr Shine is an anaesthetist and has served as the Medical Lead for organ and tissue donation at HSN.

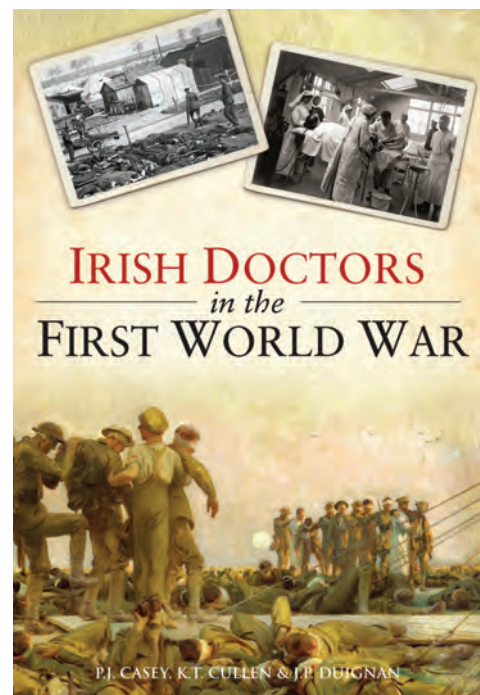
To read more :

<http://www.sudburylivingmagazine.com/2015/04/15/dr-shine-honoured-for-his-commitment-to-organ-donations.html>



Dr Martin Shine

Dr Joe Duignan (1964) has co-authored (with P.J. Casey and K.T. Cullen) a book, *Irish Doctors in the First World War*, recently published by Merrion Press. Joe practised as a general surgeon at St Michael's Hospital in Dun Laoghaire and St Vincent's University Hospital and now teaches medical students at both hospitals since his retirement, lecturing on surgery and the influence of war on surgery. Joe is a retired surgeon and former Council Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. He has lectured on the nature and treatment of wounds and diseases of past military campaigns from the Crimea to World War Two, and on the medical advances during this period.



In this Week Fifty Years Ago – October-November 1965

Half-term consisted of a weekend plus the 1st November Feast of All Saints, the liturgy being in English for the first time due to Vatican II changes.

Mechanical diggers were preparing for the foundations of the part of the College that now houses the woodwork room etc.

There were the usual winter games – Rugby, Gaelic and Table Tennis. **Soccer, still not officially recognised by the College for Inter-School competitions, was played under the name Castledawson.** Basketball was becoming popular, netball had just arrived and the Swimming team were training in the chilly waters of Blackrock Baths. There was a Scout Troop, a Camera Club, Debating, and a selection of societies. Rehearsals were taking place for *The Student Prince*, boys in the female roles. The College Choir sang live on a radio Broadcast Mass. All boarders attended daily Mass – optional for 6th Years – and had a shower once a week and a film on Sundays. There were 60 boys to a dormitory.



Dormitory 1960s

The Sixth Years had their own establishment in the Castle where they had a Smoke Room, a film, Billiards, Snooker and dancing lessons. Their October 1965 Career Guidance lecture was on Marketing and Salesmanship. Many students of that era did not go to University and these lectures had an emphasis on business, accountancy, the Army and, to a large extent, the priesthood.



Paddy 'Jonah' Moynihan (1964) in his room in the Castle

Priests and those studying for the priesthood (Prefects) wearing black soutanes made up the majority of staff members. The number of lay teachers was growing fast although the only two women were part-time teachers of Elocution and Music. There were five nuns in charge of The Infirmary and traditional housekeeping duties and teenage boys were employed in the kitchen and refectory.

The Class of 2016 have settled in well and have had a very good start to the year. We've hit the ground running and it's been a very busy half term so far, some of the highlights are summarised below.

Sixth Year Retreats and Family Mass

Fr Larry Behan, PP (Bray), was the Chief Celebrant at the Sixth Year Family Mass on Sunday 27th of September. Fr Behan reminded those present of the negative impact modern society can have not only on our own lives but also on the lives of others. He spoke of the core Christian values and encouraged us to support each other in times of need.

Following the Mass, the Sixth Years departed to 15 different retreat centres in 11 different counties scattered throughout Ireland. The feedback received from students on their return was extremely positive. It is also worth mentioning the favourable feedback from our retreat hosts on the impeccable behaviour and participation of our students while on retreat, we thank all the students for this. A huge thank you to all staff members who accompanied the boys on their retreats and a special mention to Mr Tom Ryan on the organisation of the Family Mass and Retreats.



Hugh Caslin and his Parents at Family Mass



Leaving Cert Retreat

Ministers of the Eucharist

Seven Sixth Years were commissioned as Special Ministers of the Eucharist this term, Michael Launders, Shane Marmion and Colm O'Flaherty were commissioned during the Boarders' Family Mass while Declan Kelly, David Sharpe, Odhran Linders and Aidan Murphy were commissioned during the Sixth year Family Mass. We congratulate the boys on this very special leadership role.

Lourdes Trip

From Monday 7th until Friday 11th of September six of our Sixths Years travelled as helpers on the Dublin Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. We congratulate David Hardiman, Conor Gallagher, Tim Maguire, Jordan McDonald, Ross O'Toole and Rory Patterson on what was a thoroughly worthwhile experience. Jordan and David captivated the school during the Whole School

Assembly, on Friday 2nd October, as they gave an account and recalled their experience of Lourdes.

House Commissioning

On September 4th Fr O'Brolchain commissioned the House Captains in the College Chapel. The twelve students elected by their peers are, Jack Gardiner and Richard Mouatt (DeValera), Jack Ringrose and Andrew Westman (Duff), Gavin Mullin and Sean Hassett (Ebenrecht), Tommy O'Brien and James Huggard (Leman), Stephen Kilgallen and Rory Patterson (McQuaid), Tim Maguire and James Trueick (Shanahan). Additionally we congratulate Tim Maguire on being elected Chair of the Student Council, we wish him well.

House Competitions

The Rugby Tens, the first House Competition of the year, was held on Saturday 12th of September. In what was a keenly contested competition, Duff managed to overcome Ebenrecht, 21-19, in the final. Brian Grogan, (Ebenrecht), was in scintillating form all day and was named Player of the Tournament.

The Swimming Gala took place on Thursday 15th of September in the College pool. As usual there was a full turnout from sixth years and the evening was a huge success. Matthew Long won the sixth year 50m open, narrowly missing out on a new record. In the Principal's Race Matthew Long and Sean Hassett eagerly contested the event, however Sean Desmond (Fifth year) managed to pull away in the last 25m. I'd like to thank the house captains for organising the teams and Mr Vanstone for his organisation of the event.

The Inter- House Pool competition is underway with the preliminary rounds and first round ties to be played before midterm. Chess and Tennis are other events that are in the pipeline and will commence shortly.

Mental Health Awareness Day

We were very fortunate to have Donal Scanlan (Mental Health First Aid Ireland) address the students on Thursday 15th October. His address centred on our wellness, what we can do to help each other and the importance of our own wellness.

Sport

The Extra-curricular Sports Programme is well underway. It is great to see so many Sixth Years involved in Badminton, Basketball, Cross Country, Golf, Rowing, Rugby, Soccer, Swimming and Waterpolo. The Soccer Team, captained by Conor Gallagher, were unfortunate to be drawn against current All Ireland Champions, Colaiste Eanna. In a keenly fought encounter, Colaiste Eanna prevailed 2-1. We wish Conor and the rest of the squad all the best in the forthcoming League Campaign.

The Senior Basketball team had a very impressive win over Thurles CBS. Despite losing 21-6 at one stage the team, led by Calum Henry, managed to pull off a great comeback and win 27-26! Well done to those involved. From SCT to Castle Fourths we have huge numbers every week training and playing matches. The SCT have started well and played Mauritz Hansen, Johannesburg, on the front lawn winning 10-0. Well done to Gavin Mullin and James McGowan on being selected to attend the Irish U-19 training camp over the Halloween midterm.

We'd encourage those of you who have yet to take part in the Extra-curricular Programme to get involved.

Debating

Marcus Ó Faoláin, Ben Jordan, Stephen Rooney and Jordan McDonald are currently competing in the Leinster Senior Schools' Debating Competition. The lunch time debates have proved to be a huge success and we thank Ms Kelleher, Ms McGee, Mr Copeland and Mr Sheil for their help in organising these events.

James Cronin, Matthew Long, James Huggard and Marcus O Faoláin competed in the first round of the Leinster French Debating on Wednesday 14th October, beating Presentation Terenure. They successfully opposed the motion **that 'this house would examine PE at Leaving Certificate Level'.** **Well done to all.**

James Huggard, Bernard O'Sullivan and Donal O'Cribin are our Irish debating team and their first outing in the Leinster Schools' Competition will be just before midterm.

Study Skills

Amazing Brains came in and addressed over 100 of our sixth years on Saturday 5th September. It was a very worthwhile programme and hopefully the students took on board some of the advice on offer.

Night Study runs from Monday to Friday; Saturday morning study 09:30am to 12:30pm.

H-PAT classes are up and running – anyone who has not signed up should contact Ms McGee.

Bullying Awareness Day

The focus of this Bullying Awareness Day (September 21st) centred on 'Top Gear' and the sacking of Jeremy Clarkson. It was very interesting to hear the viewpoints of our students in what was a very thought-provoking and current topic. The ramifications of the event and the coverage it gained worldwide generated lively debates and discussions within each group. I'd like to thank Ms McGee for her organisation of the day.

Ways to report Bullying:

Email Address: tacklingbullying@blackrockcollege.com
Or use the Bullying Tool on www.blackrockcollege.com

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 3rd November at 7:30pm - CAO talk for Parents.
Tuesday 17th until Friday 20th October - Senior Musical.
Thursday 26th October - Sixth Year Fast in aid of SVDP.
December 14th - Regulation Exams begin.
Tuesday 22nd December - Term ends .

Halls of Residence



The Halls of Residence opened on Sunday Aug 30th. There are 90 boys in residence from 16 different countries. These boys make an excellent contribution to the social, educational and sporting life of the school.

Their needs are met by a staff of 11. An important new member of staff is Ms Andrea Fitzgerald, Coordinator of Care, who brings experience from her time as nurse and mum of two past boarders Luke (2006) and Aaron (2013).

The daily schedule of the Boarding School is enhanced by sporting, musical and cultural events. Public Speaking,

Boarders Ensemble and music lessons punctuate the week. All of the boys are involved in some College activity. TY students have Film, Documentary and Reading nights to supplement the rich programme in 4th year. At week-ends activities are organised. So far we have had the Bray Head Walk, Guinness Hopstore and, of course, Dundrum Shopping Centre. The Rugby World Cup sparks off intense excitement.

The Boarders' Mass (Sundays @ 10 a.m.) is the focal point of the Community week. The Schola Cantorum, led by Fr. O Brolachain, beautifully enhances the service, organised by Bro. Joe Cannon, our new Chaplain.

This year the boys are organised in 3 Chapters: St. Kevin, St. Laurence O'Toole and St. Oliver Plunkett. These Chapters are designed to enhance links between the older and younger members of our community. One of the first functions of the Chapters has been to assist at Mass. The Boarders' retreat takes place on Fri. Oct 16th.

We hope to have a Boarders' Parents Social evening on Fri Nov 20, which is the Friday of the College Musical. A text will follow.

Pastoral Care Programme



'Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love'.

The **College Pastoral Programme** tries to help our students recognise the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives by offering them opportunities to experience and live this presence through a variety of activities that combine prayer and reflection, worship and loving service. Many of these events are highlighted within the individual year reports but it is worthwhile sharing some student responses from three pastoral events that have taken place since the start of the school year.

1. Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes (7th – 12th September)

'I met with Bridie, a woman in her late 80s, unable to walk, bound to a wheelchair...I asked her who she was travelling with, presuming a daughter or a friend would accompany all pilgrims. "Nobody. The only person I know here is you." I began to realise that this brief chat with her meant a lot, that she was placing all her trust in me. I felt like I had a big responsibility.'

'Although we were giving our time and efforts to all these pilgrims, we got so much more back in return. The feeling of making a difference, the feeling of a person's day being made just a little bit better because of one of us...Each encounter with a pilgrim was a lesson learned, a joke shared or a bond formed'.

'On a number of occasions I found myself without words. Sometimes all you can do for a person is offer your comfort and love because your words simply are meaningless. But that's not to say Lourdes is a depressing place filled with sorrow, no, on the contrary, it is truly a wonderful and happy place.'

'We were reminded at the opening Mass that Lourdes is all about the word JOY, and to realise what true joy means we need look no further than the word itself. **J**esus, **O**thers, **Y**ou. Living your life in that order. Putting Jesus and others before yourself. A very easy thing to do whilst in Lourdes and the reason we experienced so much joy.'

2. 6th Year Retreats (27th – 29th September)

'It was great to meet people of faith who could tell you what their experiences were. It helped to give me time to develop my relationship with God.' (Portarlington)

'The high point for me was Monday evening when

everyone was involved in playing music. There was a strong sense of togetherness and community at this moment.' (Carne)

'The retreat exceeded my expectations as I hadn't realised how much we would be interacting with the residents and how much we would learn from them.' (Cuan Mhuire)

'The meditation on the first night when we looked out over the lights of the city and listened to music was brilliant...the retreat opened my mind to Catholicism in a peaceful and relaxing way.' (Orlagh)

'The retreat was a once in a lifetime experience that I will remember for the rest of my life. It wasn't just the surfing, it gave me an insight into what it means to live God's way and to live it to the full'. (Bandon)

3. TY Pastoral Placement (14th September – 23rd October)

'As a result of my pastoral placement, I appreciate what I have much more. I have learned to help others who are in need and I have developed social skills. I also now see people's ability to do things rather than being completely disabled.' (Carmona Services)

'Pastoral placement had a very positive impact on my faith. I learned to keep hopeful and place my whole trust in God. I was inspired by the clients themselves as they attend Mass there every day and keep their faith despite their circumstances.' (St. Joseph's, Shankill)

'At 10.30, I would take two particular ladies to Mass. After Mass, we would bring them to the small tuck shop or the resource room. I would feed a particular lady at lunch every day and bring others on walks in the afternoon or read newspapers to them.' (St. Mary's Centre for the Blind)

'During my time here, I have realised that I can be quite patient when dealing with younger children. I also learned how to make activities enjoyable for all. Through doing pastoral placement I have learned that every child deserves the best opportunity at life.' (Holy Family NS)

'The centre had a huge impact on me. I found at the start I was a bit stand-offish but after a couple of days I was offering help no problem so I guess you could say it has helped my confidence. It was also great to get an insight into some of the struggles of old people.' (Mary Aikenhead Day Care)

Each statement above reflects the presence of the Holy Spirit, filling the hearts of our students and kindling in them the fire of Jesus' love. At the Whole School Assembly on the Feast of Claude Poullart Des Places (October 2nd) all the members of the College community were given a prayer card that seeks to put into words the kind of Christian community we are trying to create in the school. Our hope is that this prayer will be a reminder for each of us of what we are called to and of what we can become.

Blackrock College Prayer

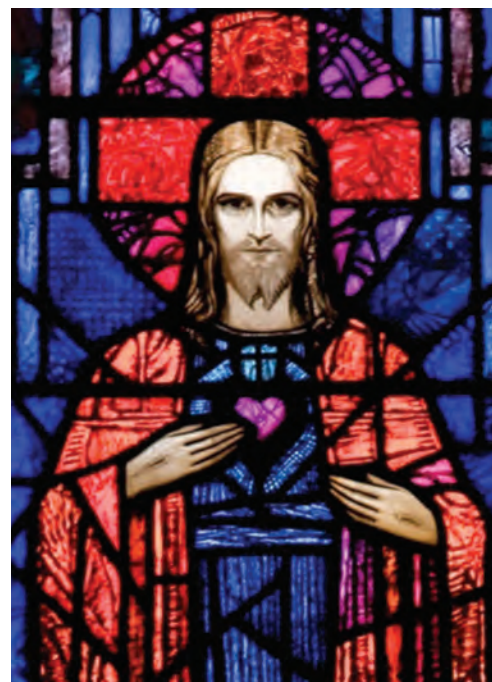
God, creator and Lord of all,
thank you for my life
and the blessings that surround me.
I ask you to make me more aware
of the gift your Holy Spirit
so that today I may;

be there, doing my best

be caring, especially for those most in need
and be truthful at all times.

Help me to have a deep faith in your Son Jesus
and to be strong in my desire to live like him.

The image of Jesus on the card is taken from a very beautiful stained glass window found at the rear of the College Chapel.



Guidance and Counselling



Early in September the 6th year students received their individual Centigrade Profile to assist them explore and research what courses/careers they are interested in and suited too. Results from these profiles, in general, indicate a high correlation between their choice of third level courses and the match chosen by the Centigrade Programme.

On September 16th all sixth year students attended the Higher Options Conference in the RDS. The students found the experience useful and informative with regard to third level colleges and courses in Ireland, Great Britain, other European countries and the US. Students were also able to select a range of career talks to attend over the course of the day.

A number of sixth years have already submitted UCAS applications to study History, Chemistry, Physics, Natural Sciences and Law at Oxford and Cambridge Universities in Great Britain. Where necessary these students took additional admission tests. Their applications are now being processed and these students expect to be called for interview in the near future. The deadline for all other UCAS applications is January 15th 2016.

Leaving Certificate students have recently received a hard copy of the 2016 CAO Handbook. This handbook should be carefully consulted throughout the application process. The majority of students will apply online at www.cao.ie. The application process has been clearly explained to the students and CAO are offering a discounted application fee of €25 to students who apply online by January 20th 2016. In order to assist the 6th year students with their CAO choices a number of Career Talks have been arranged. The Schools of Law and Business from UCD and an Admissions Office from DIT have already addressed the students on the options available at their respective colleges. Further talks in other disciplines will commence after the midterm break.

6th year students interested in studying Medicine next year have commenced a HPAT class in the College on Saturday mornings. These students will need to register to sit the HPAT test when they acquire their CAO number in early

November. Applications to sit the HPAT test can be made online at www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au/ with the deadline being January 20th 2016. Students will then sit the HPAT test itself on February 27th 2016.

On September 14th the first career seminar for parents of Fifth Year took place. Ms Carleen McGee, Head of the Guidance and Counselling Department in the College presented a career pack to parents and chaired the evening. Parents were addressed by Professor Andrew Deeks, President of University College Dublin on the range of opportunities in terms of accessing the third level system available to students and the ever changing career environment which they will enter. Mr Alan MacGinty, College Principal, then spoke about the Educational Objectives of Blackrock College.

The second career seminar for parents of Fifth Year took place on September 21st. This evening was chaired by Mr David Coen, President of the Past Pupils Union. Guest speakers included Mr Gary Leyden, VP of Venture Acceleration at NDRC, Mr David Regan, Accenture, Mr Niall Eyre, Pfizer and Mr David Sherry, Adroll. The focus of the evening was to put an emphasis on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and the range of opportunities that exist in this particular sector. The quality of speakers on both of the seminar evenings was fantastic and it is hoped that parents gained lots of useful information.

All TY students participated in the Eirquest Profile Programmes at the end of August and the results of this programme are currently being communicated to them. Monday September 21st saw students from all year groups and school staff engage with the first Bullying Awareness Day of the school year. The key focus on this Bullying Awareness Day was on the lasting impact that our negative words and actions can have on people and also on the reputation or brand we create for ourselves. On this day, we unequivocally re-affirm to each other that bullying is unacceptable at Blackrock, be it Physical, Verbal, Written or Online. We encourage everyone to commit to the ABC of Bullying prevention: A - Avoid Aggression, B - Be Tolerant and C - Care

for others. All students are urged to become more aware of the vulnerable in our community. If they are a victim of bullying or a witness of bullying; be it from name-calling to isolation, we urge them to have the confidence to TELL ... TELL ... TELL, be it to a Dean, Teacher, Counsellor, Parent, an Adult or a Friend. Each student is entitled to an education free from fear and intimidation and bullying is not tolerated in Blackrock College. A second Bullying Awareness Day will be held in January.

On Thursday, October 15th each year groups engaged with our Mental Health Awareness Day. All students received a talk on Mental Health. Students were addressed by speakers from a range of mental health organisations that included St John of Gods Hospital, See Change and Outside the Comfort Zone. Information stands by the Samaritans, Teen-Between, Pieta House, St John of Gods Hospital and a stand educating about Mindfulness were available to students during lunchtime on the day. There was also a lunchtime debate held on the area of mental health earlier in the week as well as 2nd and 3rd year students engaging with a classroom based lesson. The message imparted on the day was that you don't have to be an expert to talk about mental health and that students and staff alike need to become mindful of their own mental health as well as those around them. There is also a counsellor in every year group.

Coupled with all the activities mentioned above, every student in each year group will be met by the counsellor of the year, individually or in small groups in order to ascertain appropriate engagement with their academic and extra-curricular programmes throughout the year. Appointments are made on a billet basis throughout the year but a student can approach a counsellor for an appointment at any stage.

HPAT test applications test can be made online at www.hpat-ireland.acer.edu.au/

www.transition.ie provides all the information regarding the new LC points and grading bands as well as the new CAO Common Points Scale.



Science News

SENIOR SCIENCE QUIZ

This year's Senior Science Quiz was held during lunchtime on Monday 12th October and the results were as follows:
First Place: Sean Hassett
Second Place: Matthew Long
Third Place: Declan Norton
Runners up in order of merit: James Huggard, Matthew O'Callaghan, Stephen Rooney, Marcus O'Faolain, Shane Conlon, Alex Murphy, Rory Patterson and Stephen Connolly.

Two teams will be chosen to represent the College at the ISTA Schools Science Table Quiz which will be held in TCD

on Thursday 12th November.

Young Scientist Competition 2016

The following students have entered projects:

"An air quality survey of the Dublin area twenty-five years after the smoky coal ban using lichens as bio-indicators."

Harry Kearns (4th year).

"The Effects Video Games Have On Blood Pressure and Pulse Rate"

David MacCarthy, Barry O'Sullivan and Niall Brady (4th

year)

"What are the ideal place-kicking conditions?"

" Luke O'Brien (2nd year)

"The Problem with Pentaquarks"

John Huggard (2nd year)

"Binomial Distribution"

Tom Dooley (2nd year)



Green Schools

The next two years will be a busy time for the Green Schools Committee with the announcement by An Taisce that the Green Campus Proposal could proceed. This is an exciting opportunity for Blackrock College, Willow Park Junior and First Year schools to work together to achieve the Biodiversity Flag. The Blackrock College and Willow Park campus has great potential to provide a valuable resource for environmental education. It is a great opportunity to coordinate the environmental activities of the three schools. We are fortunate to have extensive school grounds which are intensively used for recreational purposes but underdeveloped as an environmental resource. The Biodiversity Flag will be a wonderful opportunity to unlock this potential and help our school community of more 1500 students make a real and lasting connection with their environment. Being able to appreciate the fascinating natural environment on our doorstep will help our school community to better understand environmental issues and take action to meet the many environmental challenges we all face.

As a first step in unlocking this potential three biodiversity sites has been created. One near Clareville, a second one inside the main gate and a third site beside the house pitch. These will be developed as biodiversity 'hot spots' and will be used as field study sites for the Science Department. During the recent Environmental Awareness Week a variety of activities were undertaken to promote a greater appreciation of the environmental challenges we face as a school community. The College has achieved three green flags, recycling, energy and water conservation and these continue to be issues that we need to address. A number of displays and a debate reminded us of these issues and how we need to change our behaviour so that we conserve our water, reduce our energy consumption and recycle our waste. During the week thought provoking presentations were displayed on the digital notice boards on famous quotes about the environment and poetry about nature.

We wish the three Green Schools Committees well on their biodiversity journey and look forward to working

with An Taisce, Dean Eaton and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

Blackrock College Green Schools Committee.

Green Schools Members 2015-16

Bernard O'Sullivan (Chairperson), James Huggard (Vice Chairperson), Stephen Rooney (6th Year); Conor Bailey (Secretary), Alex Noble (5th Year); Hugo Murray, Karl Conroy, Matthew Dillon, Josh Warren (Transition Year); Drummond McGinn, Michael McDonald; Conor O'Neill; Rhys Rowlands, Michael Ryan (3rd Year); Tom Dooley, Mark Landers, Will Boyle, Michael O'Daly (2nd Year); Mr Copeland (Co-ordinator), Mr Aylward (Parent / Teacher rep), Ms Kelleher (Parent / Teacher rep), Ms Cummins (Housekeeping Dept), Mr O'Connor (Maintenance Dept) and Mr Herlihy (Deputy Principal).

BADMINTON

Badminton coaching has commenced with training being held on Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons on a weekly basis. Students from all year groups are welcome and coaching is available from Niall Reynolds who has represented Ireland in the sport at International level. The U16 and U19 season is about to get under way so students are asked to present themselves at training in order for team selection to take place. The U14 Badminton season will commence in January.

SOCCER

The Senior Soccer team were extremely unlucky in their 1st round cup exit to current All Ireland champions, Coláiste Eanna. Two early goals ruled out for offside really summed up the day. A 2-1 loss on the day but plenty of positives to take out of the performance. The squad now shift their focus to the Metropolitan league. Oatlands, St Johns and Coláiste Éanna await in the group stage.

HOUSE RUGBY The House rugby teams have had an excellent start to the season. The House 2nds and 3rds have been victorious in their matches against CUS, Clongowes, Armagh R.S and Bangor. All House players have been training hard and are looking forward to the rest of the season. Many 5th years participated in the annual Inter House Tens competition on a beautiful sunny Saturday in September. It was a great occasion and was enjoyed by all. DeValera beat Duff (12-7) in the final and Matthew Campbell was Player of the Tournament. A number of Fifth Years have also played on the senior squad and we wish them the very best in the coming season.



Inter House Tens

BASKETBALL

U-19:

It has been an excellent start to the season from the U-19 side with 'Rock' going unbeaten thus far. This year we have a strong balanced squad in all positions with a super balance of 4th, 5th and 6th year boys that will hold us in good stead for the next number of years. The year started with a comprehensive 41-17 victory over St. Michaels in the Basketball Ireland East-Leinster

league. This was followed up with a superb 44-33 victory against a fantastic St. Columbas side. The character and fitness of the team really shone through as the match was a back and forth battle that was delicately poised at 29-29 going into the final quarter. In the All-Ireland Schools cup the character of the side was tested in a different way against CBS Thurles. Trailing by 21-6 at the end of the 2nd Quarter 'Rock' came back bit by bit and kept their nerve to score the winning basket with 40 seconds to go to win 27-26. Calum Henry (Captain) and his squad have put in a huge effort up to this point which will need to be increased further post midterm.

U-16:

The U-16's have had a mixed start to the season but it is a young squad that has showed much talent and promise that gives cause for significant optimism for the rest of the season. In the Basketball Ireland East-Leinster league 'Rock' started superbly winning 30-10 against St. Michaels. In the Basketball Ireland Schools Cup 'Rock' encountered a top class CBS Thurles side who were simply too strong and were deserved victors on a scoreline of 36-6.



GOLF

Congratulations to Jack Small (Capt. 4th Yr.), Robert Galligan (2nd Yr.) and Ronan Cowhey (2nd Yr.), the leading qualifiers in the Irish Schools' Junior Championship in Glen of the Downs Golf Course. The Senior Golf Team, captained by Rory Murphy (6th Yr.) is representing the school very well having won all of their matches so far.

BLACKROCK COLLEGE SWIM TEAM

The College Swim Teams' first competition of the year was the inaugural Inter College Competition between Gonzaga, Harrow and Blackrock. The Blackrock team was:

Junior

Ethan Ballard, Naoise Cautley, Hugo Galera, Davide Mai, Ethan Murtagh, Eoin O'Sullivan, Towns Phillip

Intermediate

Rhys Rowlands, Harry Sharpe, Theo Stephens Kehoe, Peter Walsh, Josh Warren

Senior

Robbie Condon, Cian De Burca, Sean Desmond, David Hardiman, Sean Hassett, Rolf Jaegar, Ian Leavy, Matthew Long, Rónón Mullen, Mark O'Connor, Declan O'Sullivan

Harrow won the competition with 205 points, Blackrock came 2nd with a very credible 181 points and Gonzaga were 3rd with 83 points. We had a total of fourteen 1st places, twenty eight 2nd places and seven 3rd places. I would like to thank the following:



Peter Walsh (4th Year) Inter College Swimming Competition between Gonzaga, Harrow and Blackrock College

- Harrow for travelling to Dublin and competing and winning the competition
- Gonzaga for competing and hopefully they will return.
- The Blackrock swimmers who represented the college so well and pulled out all the stops on the day & David Hardiman for his support as captain during and following the event.
- Paul O'Dea for his support as assistant Coach during the match.
- The parents who attended the competition and supported us with lovely cakes to sustain the swimmers during the day.
- Clodagh who was our Gala Referee and kept everything running smoothly.
- Cristina for the IT support with results for everybody and the programme to run the competition & the marquee.
- Evan & Clare for the wonderful organisation of the event.
- The Maintenance staff for setting up the event.
- The Catering Staff for the lovely lunch.

I hope that this is the 1st of many such competitions.

Carole Walsh

Blackrock Swim Coach October 2015

Photos courtesy Rock Photography

www.rockphotography.ie

Reflection

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can."

George Bernard Shaw