

# BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



## October 2017

Dear Parents,

At the 2nd Year Family Mass on Mission Sunday (22nd October), chief celebrant Father Marc Whelan (Class of 1980), Provincial of the Spiritan Congregation in Ireland, defined Mission as a **“journey of discovery”**. **“This discovery is as much about who we are ourselves, our own identity, as reaching out to others”**. He went on to say, **“the mission of Jesus is simple, yet challenging, how to love and forgive”**. This is our College mission to lead your sons, our boys, on this journey of self discovery, in which curiosity supplants disinterest, resourcefulness surpasses helplessness and hope overcomes cynicism.

At our Whole School Assembly, I said that ‘presence’ is ‘Being There’ – willingly – with heart, mind and soul eager to be an influence for good. It is about a spirit, a willingness to connect, to embrace and share in our common identity. This adds value to those around us, helping us all **to love and forgive**.

In this mission, we encourage your son to step out of his comfort zone, to recognise his talents and to share them despite setbacks and disappointments. On a daily basis, in the formal settings of the Classroom, Chapel, Lecture Hall and Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre, the boys are reminded that respect, integrity, shared responsibility, gratitude and faithfulness are at the heart of all that we do. This message has been further reinforced on our recent Anti-Bullying and Mental Health Days, at our Retreats and Family Masses, during our week for the Sacrament of Reconciliation and on our Environment Awareness Week, at our Literacy Day and Maths Week. Our Blackrock Community is further fortified by ‘Presence’ at the Swimming Gala and Rugby 10s, in the Arts, Games and Pastoral Programmes fostering understanding, empathy and confidence.

Powerful interactions also occur between the boys themselves in the corridors, refectory and assembly areas, on touchlines and in changing rooms, at Thursday Tunes, the MUN and at rehearsals for ‘Les Miserables’. Do we show respect and care for one another? Respect and care are necessary if we are to reach out beyond the school gates to the needy of our city and to the Developing World.

Blackrock is an energetic and exciting place; so many contribute to this not least our Board of Management. As our current Board ends its 3 year term in office, I thank our Parental nominees Susan Cleary and Garry McMahon; Trustee nominees Fr. Richard Olin and Tony Connolly for their stellar service. I particularly wish to acknowledge John Murphy who has chaired the Board since its inception 12 years ago. His ‘presence’ and deep understanding of secondary education will be missed as will his good judgement and sense of perspective.

We welcome our new Board – Chairman Damien Kennedy, Trustee nominees Elizabeth Boland and Siobhan O’Connell, Parental nominees Brian O’Sullivan and Pamela Hughes who join Paul Gardiner, Maria Ni Choncheanainn and Ed O’Farrell who continue. We wish them well.

Finally, I thank our Spiritan Community, Staff, Parents and College Union all of whom share the journey of self-discovery, **“to love and forgive”**.

**ALAN MacGINTY**  
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) David Duffy (House Tens Second Year)
- b) Fr. Paddy Moran CSSp at the Whole School Assembly.
- c) Oisín Reid (5th Year) at Thursday Tunes



## Second Year



Our new Second Year group, the class of 2022, has begun its time in the College with great enthusiasm and commitment. The term began with about one third of the boys achieving the Principal's List on the weekly **Application Cards**. This grew steadily and by the end of October over two thirds of the boys are on the Principal's List. Well done boys. These cards are an essential part of each boy's life in Blackrock. They are brought home each Monday by every boy and provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to congratulate good learning practice by the boys. They also offer an important opportunity to review if application needs to be improved.

Each boy also records on his card which **extra-curricular activities** he is involved in. These activities include rugby, table tennis, cross-country, squash, tennis, swimming, basketball, badminton, water polo, rowing, debating, MUN, Willow Wheelers, public speaking, chess, Science Club, Art Club, rowing, swimming, squash, badminton, orchestra, choir, athletics, basketball, coder-doj, cricket and tennis. We have excellent participation from our current 2nd Year group and we encourage each and every boy to participate in some sport or activity after class.

The **House Captains** for the year, chosen at the end of First Year, were commissioned in the College Chapel on 26th September by Fr Paddy Moran CSSp. The Captains are Colm Cowhey and James McCarthy for De Valera House; Michael English and Matthew Kane for Duff; Robert McNabb and Stephen Wong for Ebenrecht; Patrick Curley and Marcus Noble for Leman; Andrew Harvey and Hugo Martin for McQuaid; and Sam Cahill and Adam Allahbachani for Shanahan. These representatives play an important role in raising the student voice in the College and in developing the link between the school authorities and the student body. We congratulate these boys on their new responsibilities and wish them well in their service.

The new House Captains began their tenure in office by helping to organise the **House Competitions**. So far they have arranged the Inter-House Rugby 10s Competition which was a great success. Shanahan House were the winners of the A League and Leman House won the B League. The ever popular Swimming Gala was won by Leman House in 2nd Year and well done to Patrick Curley who won the 50m open swim and also to Ben Bracken who was runner up.



Andrew Harvey, Sean Patterson and Conor Hayes  
(House Tens Competitions)

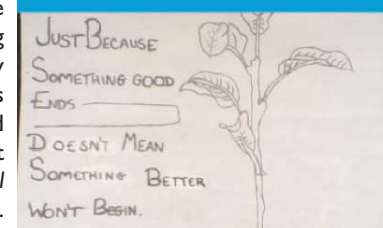
The school focuses on specific topics or issues on certain days during the academic year. So far this term we have had *Environment Awareness Activities*, which, for Second Year, involved the Second Year students being taken on guided nature walks by Fifth Year Green School committee members. There were also four workshops with *Dale Treadwell (Naturally Wild)*. In addition, Second Year Science classes participated in workshops which combined indoor presentations with outdoor activities and covered a variety of themes including pollination, tree recognition, tree planting and bee hotels.

We had our first *Anti-Bullying Day* of the academic year in mid September and *Mental Health Awareness Day* took place in mid-October, with Ms Niamh McDonagh from the Health Promotion unit in *St John of God* giving an excellent presentation to all Second Years. Four Second Year boys, Sam Cahill, Andrew Harvey, Colm Cowhey and Marcus Noble are making a superb contribution to our Well-Being Committee and they recently attended the *Zeminar* Conference in the RDS.

On 3rd October as part of *Literacy Day* the whole school dropped everything to read and many of the 2nd Years had the opportunity to hear author Dave Rudden speak about what inspires him to write. We

congratulate our 2nd Years, Michael White, Robert McNabb & Luca Haugh, who, as members of the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre Committee, gave generously of their time to help organise this day. In addition, two of our Second Years won prizes for their excellent entries to the *Beautiful Words-Beautiful Pictures* competition. Very well done to Conor Alken and David MacHale.

David MacHale



Prize Winner in  
Beautiful Word –Beautiful Pictures

The **Family Mass** took place on 22nd October with a terrific turn-out of boys, parents and family members. A large number of the boys provided different types of service for the liturgy, in reading, processing, in singing or through music. The theme was Mission, appropriate for Mission Sunday and for the history of the College. Our **celebrant Fr. Marc Whelan** recalled Blackrock's great tradition of reaching out and reminded us, in this modern age, to 'tweet others as we would like to be tweeted'. Our thanks go to the organisers Mr Frank Hurl, the Music teachers, the Religion teachers and especially the boys for contributing to a special celebration. Also during the first half term, each of the boys has had a meeting with the **Counsellor** for the year Mr Donal Brennan. This provides an opportunity to look at their school life from a reflective perspective.



Colm Fagan with his parents at the Family Mass.

We held a number of events for parents of 2nd Year during this first half term. A large group of parents attended the Orientation Evening on 5th September. There was a great turn-out also for the first of three parents' seminars, held on 20th September. The topic was Study Skills, and was given by members of the group *Learning 4 Learning*. The talk was very well received and we are grateful to the Second Year **Parents' Committee** for organising this and future events.



Ruben Moloney recently travelled to Spain with his football team, St Josephs, to play in the Madrid Cup, an U14 Football tournament.



Matthew Collins (2nd Year) pictured with Pat Kenny. He helped to raise €160k for Diabetes.

To conclude, if any Second Year boy has an accomplishment outside of school, in sports, drama, music, an academic pursuit or some community service, please let the school know so that we can celebrate this and encourage similar ambition amongst all the boys. So far this term, Ruben Moloney and Matthew Collins deserve to be acknowledged and we congratulate them on their achievement.

### Dates for your Diary

School Musical	21 – 24 November
Irish Christmas Aurals	27 November
Modern Language Christmas Aurals	28 November
Christmas Exams begin on Thursday	14 December



# Third Year



One senses a realisation among the boys that the first half of the term has passed at great speed and for some the reality that better use could have been made of the opportunity for academic advancement since our return. For boys who have not fully extended themselves we would urge them to aim to be on the Credit List or better still the Principal's List for **Application Cards** in the run up to the Christmas Exams. For those who feel their efforts have not been fully rewarded we would urge perseverance and those who have been performing at their optimal, more of the same. Irrespective of what is on our son's card, we as parents should make it a priority to see the card every Monday. In total 137 Boys attended the Study Skills Workshops facilitated by Mr Mark Smith. He also spoke to the Year Group in preparation for their Halloween Progress Cards.

Joseph Neary



Innocent

Young

Small

Harmless

Happy

Bond

Future Friendship

Childhood

Brotherhood

Family

The **Bullying Awareness Day** theme that 'all our words and actions have consequences' was a very timely reminder to the boys of their ongoing responsibility, including not being bystanders and to report bullying. **Mental Health Awareness Day** was marked in Third Year by a talk from a past pupil, Con Sheehan, who shared with the boys a very difficult time in his life when his confidence was shattered and how opening up to his Dad about his feelings was a major step in dealing with the challenges he was facing at the time. The clear message is that 'it's ok not to feel ok'. Con's clear desire to empower young people to deal with the challenges they face was truly inspiring.

The **UI6 Basketball Team**, captained by Fergal Keane, began their League with a victory over Marian College before a narrow defeat to Coláiste Eoin. We wish continued success to Alex Bolger and Thomas Harte, members of the **Junior Golf Team**, after qualifying for the next round of the Irish Schools Stroke-play Championship. We commend all who have embraced the extra-curricular programme and we are pleased to see the addition of a **Free Swim** every Wednesday and the commencement of

## Blackrock College Radio

Preparations are well under way for BCR 2017. Our Studio Managers are already working on the schedule for this year's broadcast and ready for work on our pre-recorded shows once we return from mid term. We hope you will all tune in when we go live on Monday 20th – Friday 24th November. Students have been doing fantastic work to date for the wide variety of shows we will air: from News and Current Affairs, Sports, Language Show and Guest Schools. We will broadcast on 97.3FM and stream live on the College website.



Patrick Scully



"The tiny seed knew that in order to grow, it needed to be dropped in dirt, covered with darkness, and struggle to reach the light."

- Sandra Kring

**Coder Dojo** every Tuesday in the CADLC at 4p.m. A reminder that the Choir practises each Tuesday at 1 p.m. in the Choir/Orchestra Room – new members are always welcome! **Science Club** meets on Mondays at 4 p.m. in the Senior Chemistry Lab. In the Inter-house competitions, Leman captained by Sam Loscher, beat De Valera in the 'A' 10s Competition and in the 'B' Competition Duff, captained by Alex Bolger, overcame De Valera. In the **Swimming Gala** the overall House winners were De Valera with Leman in second place. In the Junior Championship Adam O'Reilly was first with Ciaran Conway winning silver.

**Literacy Day** on October the 3rd marked the launch of the Rock Student Book Club and at 12.15 on the day the whole school dropped everything to read for 15 minutes. We congratulate Donal De Buitléir, Patrick Scully and Joseph Neary who were recipients of prizes for Literacy Day activities.

We would like to offer our support to the newly elected **House Captains** whose Investiture Ceremony took place on Tuesday 26th of September. The Captains are Alex Kelly, Michael Nealon, Alex Bolger, Michael Moloney, Oscar Bourke Mullaney, Robert Kenny, Niall Brophy, Scott Graham, Sam Loscher, Harry Whelan, Conor Bleakley and Charlie Mullin. Within the group, Scott Graham and Charlie Mullin represent Third Year at Student Council. In addition Harry Whelan is the 2nd/3rd Year Borders representative.

## Dates for your Diary

Monday 6th November – Progress Card due home/  
Roar Cans due for return  
Sunday 12th November at 11 a.m. – Third Year Family Mass  
Thursday 14th December – Regulation Exams begin



## Junior Certificate Results

Congratulations to all students in Transition Year and their parents on what were fantastic results across the board in the Junior Certificate. We are very proud! It is important that Transition Year students see the year as an opportunity to build on these hard earned results. It is hoped that results of the appeals will be back from the State Examination Commission mid 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 subject to demand. Chinese classes will continue right up to the Easter Holidays. A new class on offer this year is the Barista Course – which is proving very

# Transition Year Cont'd



popular! We will be offering this again on a different evening to ensure as many students as possible get to complete it. I would remind students that if they are unable to attend a particular class they should let Mr Brennan or Mr O' Neill know.

## Tuesday Tours

On Tuesday 12th of September Transition Years went out on their first tours to Croke Park GAA museum and stadium tour, Footee Golf, The Awesome Walls Climbing Centre and Jumpzone. The next set of tours is on Tuesday 7th November.

## Lecture Series

In the first week of the term all students attended a workshop with Mr Denis Hevey on leadership and self-motivation. The workshop aims to help students develop resilience and stress management strategies. The feedback from these workshops was fantastic. There will be a follow up workshop for all students after Christmas. On Tuesday 3rd of October we all attended the AXA Road Safe Roadshow 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 students. On Thursday 12th October, as part of Mental Health Awareness Day, Transition Years attended a talk by Mr John Lonergan, former governor of Mountjoy prison, who spoke about the importance of looking after our mental health. We can do this by exercising, getting quality sleep, eating a healthy diet and cutting down on screen time!

## Gaisce

Gaisce is the President's Award that challenges students to conquer new personal skills and to serve in their communities. Over 110 Transition Year students have signed up to achieve this award. To date we have had a great number of students giving up their weekends to help in a variety of great volunteer projects. Long may this spirit of service continue in Transition Year.

## Matthew 25

Three groups have been out on their two week Pastoral Placement. It has been great to meet the students on their return for debriefing on a Friday afternoon and watch them share their experiences with their peers. The feedback from Mr Hurl has been excellent. The next group is due to go out on 27th November, with preparation classes beginning after mid term.

## Charity Work

The students have already been very busy with charity work. 30 students volunteered to help with the Hospice Collection on the 14th September. The students raised €2078 for Blackrock Hospice. "Their great support will help us to continue to provide specialist palliative care to patients in our Hospice and in their homes." On Saturday 7th of October we had two groups of students collecting in the city centre and Cornelscourt Shopping Centre for Down Syndrome Ireland. Again they proved to be great ambassadors for the College.



Josh Baker, Tom Guinevan, Luke Reynolds and Mark Hughes taking part in the Hospice Collection.

## Extra-Curricular

It has been a very busy term for Transition Years. There was an excellent turn out for both the House 10s Competition on the 10th September and the Swimming Gala on the 19th October. Spectators on the side line were witness to some fantastic rugby played in a great spirit. Duff, captained by Jeff Kenny, emerged victorious in the final with Freddie Gallagher awarded Player of the Tournament. Again Transition Years turned out in great numbers for the College Swimming Gala. Ebenrecht was victorious on the night closely followed by McQuaid. David Cosgrove won the 50 m open race with Ethan Ballard in second. David also finished second in the Principal's Race.

On Friday 20th October all Transition Years took part in an Inter-house Tag Rugby Competition supported by Tag Rugby Ireland. The morning was a great success and thankfully Storm Brian held off!



Students from DeValera and Ebenrecht houses competing in the Inter-house Tag Rugby Competition.

Transition Years have been involved in both Senior and Junior basketball teams who have notched up some impressive results in recent weeks. Nicholas Brusasca must be mentioned for his impressive performances! In golf Ronan Cowhey and Rory Reid have been flying the flag for TY in the Senior Golf Team in the Leinster Championships



Luke Curtis, Freddie Gallagher, Phillip Towns, Sam O'Brien, Michael Leavy, Hugo O'Malley, Jack Moriarty, Jeff Kenny, Adam Dixon, Jack Grant and Max Patton. Winners of the Inter-house 10s Competition.

Again Transition Year is well represented in the College's Model United Nations

society as they attended the Terenure College Conference. John Huggard, Lorcan Patchell and Mark Landers obtained individual Distinguished Delegate Awards.



Tom Dooley, Mark Landers and John Huggard with Mr Joe Quirke and Bridget Aylmer of Dun Laoghaire Rotary Club.

Well done to Tom Dooley, John Huggard and Mark Landers who were interviewed by members of the Dun Laoghaire Rotary Club as part of their Youth Leadership Competition. The students were each interviewed for 20 minutes

which in itself can be very challenging. The feedback from the interviewers was fantastic. They were so impressed by all who participated and could not speak highly enough of the lads. Well done to Mark who was selected to go forward to the next round – we wish him well.

Our BCTV group has been doing some terrific work to date producing a promo for Literacy Day and highlights of the Inter-House 10s Competition and the Whole School Assembly. These videos can be viewed on the College YouTube channel.

Finally I wish the 11 students involved in the Cluny High School Musical all the best in their upcoming shows. I am told rehearsals have been going really well. Can't wait to see the lads on stage!

I would encourage all Transition Years to avail of the wide ranging extra-curricular opportunities on offer Monday – Friday in the school. There really is something for everyone across a wide variety of sports and the arts.

## Dates for your Diary

7th November – Transition Year Tours  
20st – 24th November – Blackrock College Radio  
1st December – St Vincent De Paul Soccer Marathon  
6th December – St Vincent De Paul Envelope Drop (TY volunteers needed!)  
7th December – 4th Year Parent Teacher Meeting  
14th December – Christmas Exams  
16th December – Hamper Delivery for Saint Vincent De Paul



# Fifth Year



5th Year students have whole heartedly embraced a fresh start to their two year programme in the Senior Cycle and have made great strides. Weekly cards are affirming excellent application, whilst the two Progress Weeks this half-term have served to highlight the academic focus of the year. The cards are an invaluable 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 some of these are summarised here.

## Career Guidance

Since the beginning of the year, students have been meeting with their Career Guidance Counsellor and many have since sought advice on subject levels and choices, as well as advice in relation to study and time management. Students are encouraged to explore Qualifax.ie and CareersPortal.ie and submit a Career Plan to Mr. O'Nuallain by 10 November.

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 Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Mr. Alan MacGinty Principal, Ms. Natasha Drew, 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 10th 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 exceptionally worthwhile and rewarding and we thank Mr. Frank Hurl, the RE Department and the House Captains for their successful co-ordination of the day.

## Commissioning of House Captains

On Tuesday 26th September, all students attended a ceremony in the College Chapel where their twelve House Captains were commissioned by Fr. Paddy Moran CSSp. Those elected to represent the year group are James Gibney, Jack Loscher, Tim D'Arcy, Tom Dwan, Gavin Jones, Shore Oluborode, Seán Lardner, Cormac McCabe, Diarmuid Foley, Peter Murphy, Harry Keyes and Andrew Ryan. The Captains are commended for their efficient organisation of the Rugby 10s in September and the Swimming Gala as well as their assistance of Second Year Captains so far this year and we wish them well with their future leadership duties.



Fifth Year Retreats

## 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 us that all our words and actions have consequences and advised us to think carefully before speaking and acting.

Mental Health Awareness Day on 12th October reinforced the message that *it is ok not to feel ok* and encouraged students to seek help when needed. Students were addressed by past pupil Con Sheehan who shared his own experience of facing his anxieties and fears and encouraged students to

realise that knowing how to look after their mental health daily is as important as looking after their physical health.

## 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, basketball, cross-country, tennis, table tennis, rowing, rugby, squash, swimming, water polo and others. Some of the activities and achievements of the term so far are summarised below.

## Choir / Orchestra / Music

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

Auditions for the Leman Concert 2018 are in full swing and we wish all Fifth Years well and the best of luck for this highly coveted stage event.

## Art Club

Fifth Years are well represented at the weekly Art Club exploring areas such as oil painting and calligraphy as well as investigating portfolio demands.

## Model UN/Debating

Eager to develop their public speaking skills, Fifth Years are playing an integral part in the Senior Debating Society. Meeting and debating vigorously weekly, the debaters are thoroughly enjoying their experiences. As well as competing in debates organised by UCD and Maynooth, the debaters have also contributed excellently to lunch time debates in the College promoting Anti-Bullying Awareness and Mental Health Awareness.

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 Drummond McGinn received a Distinguished Delegate Award. The delegates are looking forward to their next conference in Rathdown and hosting their own in the coming months.

## Cross Country

The Senior Cross Country team has good Fifth Year membership. The season's opening race was the Clonliffe Harrier Brother Schools' Cross Country Open and the team secured fourth 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 whose attendance is such high numbers is very encouraging as we enter Division B Cup and League competitions. With a strong start to the season the team is delighted with their recent League victories and we wish them well as they hope to qualify for the East-Leinster quarter final.

## Golf

A number of outings and trials so far this year have led to success for the Fifth Years. We wish them well as they look forward to the upcoming Quarter Final of the Leinster Schools Match Play and the Leinster Schools Four Ball.

## House Rugby

The House Rugby teams have had an excellent start to the season with training match victories against Belvedere and St. Michael's just some of the highlights so far. Fifth Year members of the SCT have also has a strong start to their season with victories over Ballyclare and Campbell College Belfast. Amongst some of this year's early highlights was their victory over

## Fifth Year Cont'd



Palmerston North Boys High School visiting from New Zealand and catching up with these students and hosting them in their homes. All House players have been training hard and are looking forward to the rest of the season.



Matthew Farrell (5th Year) Senior Seconds V Ballyclare

The Inter-house Rugby 10s tournament on a blustery, damp Saturday in September was a great occasion and was enjoyed by all. Leman beat Ebenrecht in the final and David Fitzgibbon (Ebenrecht) received the Player of the Tournament award.

### Senior Soccer

The Fifth Year members of the Senior Soccer Squad were delighted with their early season friendly wins against Marian College and Benildus and again with the FAIS Leinster Cup first round win against Hartstown Community School. We wish them the best of luck as the League continues.

Preparing for the semi-final of the UI9 Cup for Bohemians FC we congratulate Andrew Lyons on his recent selection to play for the Republic of Ireland UI8 International Soccer side.

### Swimming Gala

Well done Blackrock Swimming Team, captained by Max Connolly who welcomed Harrow's exceptional swimmers at the beginning of the term in a thrilling day of swimming events.

Thursday 19th October witnessed high numbers of Fifth Years turn out for The College Swimming Gala. We congratulate all involved and in particular congratulate Max Connolly who won the closely contested Principal's race.

### Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy

Early in the term the 5th Year Dayboys were valiant in their efforts to win the Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy. Captained by Niall Comerford their spirit and skill were exemplary and all were gracious in defeat. A final that was more than a fitting tribute to Karl Ashe.

### Green Schools / Climate Change

Blackrock College now boasts four Green Flags for recycling, energy, water and biodiversity. We commend the strong contingent of Fifth Years involved in the Green Schools' Committee for their relentless efforts in promoting responsible, proactive behaviours throughout the College and wish them luck as they lead us on the pathway to achieving a Green Flag for Marine Biodiversity.

We wish Ruairi Moore and his Rock on a Roll climate change initiative well.

We were delighted to welcome Mr Garry Tyrell of An Taisce to the College to promote the movement and are excited about developing ideas around climate change ambassadors who are actively engaged with thinking globally about climate change issues and are proactive locally to make changes.

### Tim D'Arcy

We congratulate Tim D'Arcy for running a full marathon (42KM) from Wicklow to Dublin and raising €10,246 for the Irish Cancer Society.



Cian Dunne with his award

### Award for the use of CSO Data

Congratulations to Fifth Year Cian Dunne who was awarded second place in a National Apps4gaps competition run by the CSO for his App "Population Projections." The aim of the competition was to develop and create applications that provide innovative and fresh ways of exploiting Open Data freely available from data.gov.ie which could benefit society. Well done Cian.



28 Fifth Years receive their Bronze Medal Gaisce Awards

At assembly twenty-eight Fifth Year students (with others still pending) were applauded for being 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 acknowledge their much appreciated level of cooperation. We wish them a restful mid-term break and encourage them to keep their academic focus throughout the year ahead.

### Dates for your Diary

Career Plan Submission Date: Friday 10th November  
College Musical: Tuesday 21st – Friday 24th November  
Irish Christmas Aurals: Monday 27th November  
Mod. Lang. Christmas Aurals: Tuesday 28th November  
Progress Cards: Friday 1st December

## The Arts



### Visual Art

IADT film student Cian Byrne (Class of 2015) visited the Art Club in September. He gave an inspirational talk and showed some of his portfolio work to the group. The club meets every Wednesday afternoon and is open to all.

A painting by John Daly (Third Year) was highly commended in the Texaco Art Competition.

A number of Transition Year Art students brought their recently returned Junior Cert



John Daly (Third Year)

art projects to the Willow Park Art Room. There was wonderful creative interaction between the First Year and Transition Year artists. An acclaimed follow up exhibition was held in the DLC where a selection of the 500 original artworks made by our 49 Junior Cert Art candidates was displayed. Examples of recent Sixth Year printmaking and photography are now on show in The Senior Wing.

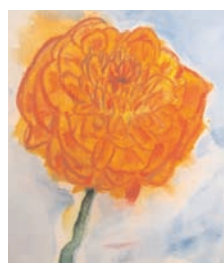
Colour burst open in the CADLC when 50 new paintings created by Second and Third Year students were put on display. The work was a visual response to a song by John Spillane. The exhibition formed part of the energetic events held on Literacy Day. Donal de Buitlear (Third Year) and Conor Alken (Second Year) were awarded book tokens for their outstanding work.



# The Arts Cont'd



Conor Alken (Second Year)



Donal de Buitlear  
(Third Year)



Ben Melly Murphy  
(Transition Year) at  
Art Club in Willow Park



Hugo Morales (Transition Year) at  
The Art Exhibition in the CADLC



Art Club

## Senior Debating

The Senior Debating Society has had a busy first half term. Two of our teams have advanced into the third round of the UCD Schools' Debating Competition - Congratulations to Oisín Ryan, Michael Ryan, Max Mc Kenna, and Tom Dooley. Our third team of Shore Oluborode and Drummond McGinn had its debate cancelled due to Ophelia's untimely visit. This is to be rescheduled.

There have been two lunchtime debates which went very well. We hope to invite teachers to partake in the next one.

Any 4th, 5th, and 6th Year students who would like to come to debating, please feel welcome to come to the CADLC on any Tuesday at 4.00pm.

## The Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre (CADLC) 2nd Year Induction

Each year we run a short induction session for our 2nd Year students who are new to the school.

They learn the rules and regulations of the Learning Centre, how to use all of the services and resources available, and get to know both our Learning Centre and Archive staff.

This year we have set a reading challenge for our 2nd Years, to beat the 292 books borrowed by last years' 2nd Years during the whole academic year, and with 219 books already borrowed half way through term 1 – things are looking very promising indeed.

## Learning Centre Committee

This year we have a Learning Centre Committee with representatives from each year who work on events, initiatives and bring a student voice to the running of the Learning Centre. This year's members are:

**2nd Year:** Robert McNabb, Michael White, and Luca Haugh

**3rd Year:** Thomas Kerr and Michael Lucey

**4th Year:** William Boyle and Mark Landers

**5th Year:** Michael McDonald and Dylan Hutchinson

**6th Year:** Oisín Ryan and Conor Williams

## Book Clubs

Our Staff Book Club was launched on the 2nd October with Viktor Frankl's *Man's Search for Meaning*, and we meet the first Monday of every month in the Learning Centre Meeting Room.

Our student and parent Book Clubs will begin in term 2. If any parents are interested in joining you can email our Learning Centre Manager, Lorraine Marrey at [lmarray@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:lmarray@blackrockcollege.com).

## Literacy Day

The theme of this year's Literacy Day on the 3rd of October was **Rock Reads**. It was a huge success. We had three exhibitions: *A Year of Books*, *Books by Blackrock College Authors* and *Beautiful Pictures – Beautiful Words*. Three authors: Sadhbh Devlin, Dave Rudden, and Sarah Maria Griffin spoke to 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th Years and a Drop Everything And Read (DEAR) initiative took place at 12.15pm on the day, where every student and staff member took out a book and read for the last 15 minutes of class. A huge thank you to our Learning Centre Committee for their assistance with the planning and on the day.



Pictures drawn by Art classes inspired by the  
lyrics of a John Spillane song.



'A Year of Books' exhibition (Books read by staff  
and students in 2016-2017)

## Music & Drama

As usual, the environment of Blackrock College is full of music and drama and we've had a great start to this school year so far, the beginning of which was heralded by the 6th Year Family Mass on Sunday 24th September, where the 6th Year Choir and Ensemble supported the liturgy through song and music in a most competent and reflective manner. The Whole School Assembly followed the Friday after and was a joyous occasion where the whole College Orchestra and Leman Choir had the school singing together, concluding with the rousing old staple, 'Go Ye Afar'. Most recently, the Second Year choir and musicians sang and played beautifully in a packed Chapel on the occasion of the 2nd Year Family Mass.

Every Thursday lunch time, a group of students and staff meet in the Creative Art and Digital Learning Centre for 'Thursday Tunes', an informal forum where all are welcomed and encouraged to both listen and perform. The message of music transcends genre and reaches out to all facets of the human experience and holistic education; we attempt to represent this in our Thursday session. October 12th's event tied in with Mental Health Awareness Day. Group singing is a fantastic way to help promote mental wellbeing, generating positive feelings, self-belief and social support – and it was evident to all present that 'The whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.



Ben Rigney at Thursday Tunes

This year's Senior Musical is 'Les Misérables' and rehearsals are in full swing with our energetic and large cast. This will most definitely be a show not to be missed, taking place in the Jubilee Hall, November 21st – 24th. All talents, characters, interests and whims of our fine student body are represented; from the orchestra to the set design, from the front of house to backstage. This is an experience that couldn't be executed without a team that encompasses such a broad variety of skills.



As always, our many musical groups are rehearsing regularly: The Orchestra, Leman, Libermann and Corless Choirs, Ceoltóirí Carraige, Rockapella, the Boarders' Choir, the Adult Choir, our bands... We look forward to seeing you at our next performances!



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2017



Chris Byrne, Colum Roche, Morgan Lyttle, Peter Sharpe, Harry Cullen, Gerald Boylan, Liam Barry, Thomas Kearns and Luke O' Brien collecting for Blackrock Hospice. TY students raised €2078 for Blackrock Hospice.



Ms Dobbyn (5th Year Dean), Minister Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Mr Eunan O' Carroll (Class of 1984) President of PPU and Ms Drew, Head of Career Guidance and Counselling at 5th Year Parents' Career Seminars



Mr MacGinty presents the Karle Ashe Trophy to joint captains Niall Brady & Matthew Curran (6th Year)



John Kirby (5th Year), Stephen Mulcair (6th Year), Josh Slevin (6th year) Castle Seconds V Ballyclare



Stephen Ryan (6th Year) at the Swimming Gala



The Cast of Les Miserables at Rehearsal



Barry O' Sullivan and Conor O' Sullivan with their parents at the 6th Year Family Mass



Mr Grumley Traynor conducts The Choir and Orchestra at The Whole School Assembly



Mr Ryan (6th Year Dean), Mr Dunne (3rd Year Dean), Mr Herlihy (Vice-Principal) and Ms Dobbyn (5th Year Dean) at the Swimming Gala



Charlie O' Brien, James Flannery, Fergal O' Sullivan, Kevin Jackson and Will Fitzgerald (House 10s Second Years)



Max Connolly (5th Year) winner of the Principal's Cup, with Mr MacGinty, Principal.



# Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2017



Harry Whelan and Cian Moloney (Third Year) JCTV Pres, Bray



Luis Armagune, Sean De Burca, Max Simons and Richard Ainsworth (Second Year) House 10s



6th Year Dayboys (winners of The Karle Ashe Trophy)



Adam McGovern and Niall Brady with their mothers at the Sixth Year Family Mass



George Brady with his mother at the Second Year Family Mass



Charlie Byrne, Hugh Kelly, Rory O'Reilly, Curtis Winkelmann and Kyle Butler at the 6th Year Family Mass



Stephen Mulcair, Loughlann Dougan and Fionn Byrne (House 10s)



Hugo O'Malley (Transition Year) SCTV Gonzaga



Mikel Aizpurura, Jack Deegan, Malcolm Rowe, Neil McNally, Gerard Jones, Stephen Maher, Michael Lowey, Luke Griffin, Ruairi Coyne and Adam Harvey.(Transition Year) Finalists in the Inter-House 10s Competition.



# News from the Past



## This time 100 years ago – 1917

The students returned on 11 September – 137 boarders, 30 scholastics – the 45 day students next day, mostly locals but the convenience of tram travel is shown by some addresses – Rathmines, Rathgar, Harold's Cross.

They were greeted with the good news of the knighthood of a past student, Thomas Yarr, an eminent ophthalmologist and British Forces Surgeon-General, previously doctor to the King of Siam (whose governess had been Anna Leonowens, depicted in the film *Anna and the King of Siam*).



**COLONEL SIR THOMAS YARR.**  
Among the recent honours in connection with the war we observe the Knighthood of Colonel Yarr, Royal Army Medical Corps, son of Mr. Thomas Yarr, J.P., 4 Winton avenue, Rathgar, Dublin. Last year Colonel Yarr was made Commander of the Bath, and subsequently elevated to Commander of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George. He has now been made a Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George. Sir Thomas Yarr is a past student of the French College, Blackrock, from which many distinguished men have emanated, who are now occupying high places in all parts of the world, and in every sphere of life.

Preparations for the exams of the Board of Intermediate Education began – an opportunity to gain valuable scholarships to enable some to continue their education – and training started for what would be another victory for the SCT the following spring in their amazing 1915-1919 series of five wins.



They enjoyed the traditional picnic excursion to Bray on 1st October.

The effects of the 1916 Rising were affecting life in Ireland, as was the carnage abroad. The USA had entered the war earlier in the year and soon after term began, news of the October Revolution in Russia was learned. The previous month had taken its toll on alumni. Dermott Healy of Finglas, Henry Mullins of Ballycastle, Patrick Sweeney of Ahascragh and Nicholas Coghlan of Co Waterford were all killed over ten days in August.

As the term went on more sad news arrived. Twelve year old Thomas Coghlan, one of eight brothers from Waltham Terrace who attended the College, learned that his brother, Joseph, had been killed on 20 September. Tom O'Donnell of Carlow, James D'Alton of Mullingar and Eugene Judge of Claremorris died in October. Louis McKeever and Leonard Butler, both of Killiney, died in November. For over thirty years after their deaths prayers were said in the College for all alumni who had fallen in the War.

## This time 50 years ago - 1967

It is said that the Sixties didn't reach Ireland till the Seventies but there were signs of change in the College in 1967, long hair being the most visible indication that the spirit of rebellion was awakening in students – and providing fodder for the comedy section of *VOICE*, the College student magazine:

**Barber to ----- (You know who): "I'm afraid I've lost my scissors in your hair again"**



Editorial staff, *VOICE*  
D Lang, John McCarthy, M Murphy, P Raftery, P Kelly, E Creedon, B Quinn  
D Donoghue, T Brassil,  
D McGrane, D McSweeney

Early in the September term the Annual recorded "...quite a degree of enthusiasm shown on the occasion of the opening of the Castle Discotheque", an event that was to continue into the flared 1970s as shown below (1975 photo).



A contributor to *VOICE* complained about Radio Eireann, "that silly station to which Auntie listens" comparing it to the offshore pirate stations including Radio Caroline that "plays our TOP 30 every Saturday". According to the "Pops" review section of *VOICE*, *Grannies Intentions* were "the greatest group ever to emerge from Eire".

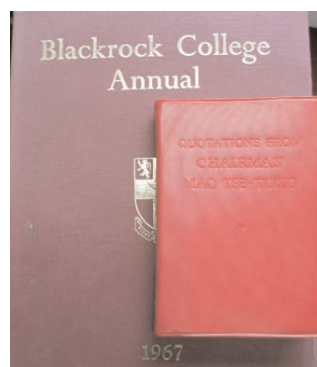
A new school magazine, *107 Years After*, came on the scene in 1967 rivalling *VOICE*. The editors, besides commenting on school life, were anxious to keep the students informed of "sports activities in adjoining girls' schools".



Other reading matter in the revolutionary spirit of the times was Chairman Mao Tse Tung's *Little Red Book*.

Editorial staff of *107 Years After*, P Cronin, J Quirke, K Kieran, J McDonnell, K Ward, D Curtin, D Clifton, D Kane, M Ward, P Murphy, D Mulhall

This 1967 copy in the College archives belonged to a student of that time, possibly supplied by Bob Geldof, then in Fourth Year, who got into trouble for importing copies ("Communist literature") and distributing them among his schoolmates.



On a higher literary level, the new library was built in place of the old handball alley and was opened in November 1967 and dedicated to Our Lady whose statue overhead was presented by the Coen family of Gort, Co Galway, in memory of Bernard Coen who died in October 1958 aged fifteen while a student at the College.



Long-haired students, short-haired prefect in soutane, in the new library, 1967



# Sixth Year



**The 6th Year students have settled in well on the final lap of their journey through Blackrock. It has been a very busy nine weeks and the highlights of this half term are summarised below...**

## 6th Year Retreats

The 6th Year Retreat Programme took place between Sunday 24th and Tuesday 26th of September. It began on the Sunday morning when a very large attendance joined in the celebration of a Mass for Families of Sixth Year students led by Fr. Damian Farnan. That afternoon, the year group dispersed to fifteen different locations covering eleven counties of Ireland. The sun shone brightly for the majority of this year's retreat and the positive feedback provided by the students and the retreat directors showed clearly the benefit of taking time out, in small groups, for prayer, reflection and discussion at the start of a very busy year for the Class of 2018.

Many thanks to Mr Frank Hurl for his organisation of one of the highlights of the final year in Blackrock for 6th Year students. Thanks also to the fifteen members of staff who agreed to accompany the students for these days away.

During the 6th Year Family Mass, Niall Brady, Conor Fitzpatrick, Rory Gallagher, Harry Kearns, Rory O'Reilly, Stephen Ryan and Conor Williams were commissioned as Ministers of the Eucharist for the academic year. These were joined by Karl Butler, Leo Downes, Kelvin Hickey, David McCarthy, Liam McMahon and Tadhg O'Hagan who were commissioned during the 2nd Year Family Mass on Mission Sunday October 22nd. We thank all these students for undertaking this important ministry of service within the College community.



Harry Donnelly with his parents at the Family Mass



Mr. Ronan Kearney & Croagh Patrick Retreat Group 2018



Class of 2018 Climbing the Reek

## Lourdes

Five members of the Class of 2018 participated in the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes between the 7th and 12th of September. Rory Gallagher, Harry Kearns, Ross Phelan, Stephen Ryan and Josh Slevin accompanied by Mr Garry Sullivan spent a busy but most rewarding few days in the company of VIPs (Very Important Pilgrims) who needed special assistance. We thank them for undertaking this ministry and for being such fine ambassadors for the College during their time away. It is worth noting that all hope to return (at their own expense) to participate as Past Pupils in the 2018 Pilgrimage.

## Careers

Since the start of term, all 6th Years have received the results of the Centigrade Test undertaken in 5th Year and have received a copy of the CAO handbook for 2018 from Ms. Drew. On Wednesday 13th September the year group attended the Higher Options Conference at the RDS and there was general agreement

that this was a most worthwhile experience. A number of students have signed up to attend a HPAT Preparation Course which started in the College on Saturday 30th September and will continue after mid term. Career talks looking at the options of study in Europe and the United States have been offered to the Class of 2018 and talks looking at specific areas of study in Ireland will follow after mid term.

## Whole School Assembly

On Friday 29th September, the Class of 2018 showed wonderful leadership in reading, singing, music and participation as Fr. Paddy Moran CSSp and Mr MacGinty led the whole school community in officially marking the start of the school year. During this assembly, Fr. Paddy commissioned the Sixth Year House Representatives. The twelve students elected to represent 6th Year for 2017/2018 are Barry O'Sullivan & Liam Turner (DeValera); Matthew Curran & Ross Phelan (Duff); Art Lynch & Curtis Winkelmann (Ebenrecht); Niall Brady & Josh Slevin (Leman); Josh Dixon & Harry Donnelly (McQuaid); Liam McMahon & Neil Holohan (Shanahan) and the Libermann Cup was awarded to Art and Curtis on behalf of Ebenrecht House, the overall winners for the 2016 / 2017 academic year. All present were also addressed by Josh Slevin who reflected on his experience in Lourdes and Louis O'Reilly spoke of the summer rugby tour to New Zealand. A most impressive start to the academic year.

## House Events

In this half-term there have been two major inter-house events. We congratulate the House Representatives on their work in getting such high numbers to participate in both the 6th Year Rugby 10s and the Swimming Gala. Both of these very events were won by McQuaid and congrats to all members of this House.



McQuaid House (Josh Dixon Captain) – Winners 6th Year House Rugby 10s 2017

# Sixth Year Cont'd



## Karl Ashe GAA Tournament

Having narrowly defeated the Castle Boarders in the semi-final, the 6th Year Dayboys overcame the 5th Year Dayboys 4-09 to 4-05 in a very entertaining Karl Ashe GAA final on the Front Lawn on Friday 18th September. Mr MacGinty presented the trophy to joint Captains Matthew Curran and Niall Brady, and medals to both teams at Karl's bench beside the Castle. A great occasion that ensures that Karl Ashe will always be with us.



6th Year Dayboys – Karl Ashe Winners 2017

## Mental Health Awareness

On Thursday 12th October as part of the whole school focus on Mental Health Awareness Day, the 6th Year group were addressed by David Corkery who was capped 27 times for Ireland, voted Irish player of the Rugby World Cup in 1995 and who had to retire due to injury at 27 years of age. In a very open and challenging presentation David spoke of his life journey, of his Dad's untimely death and how a phone call from a relative stranger changed his life. The powerful message David wished to impart to all present for their lives ahead was that 'If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got'.

## Academic Activities

Since the start of the academic year all 6th Year Geography students have undertaken the Field Trip that forms the central part of their Leaving Certificate project. The English Department organised an Author Discussion Panel for a number of the English classes and all HL English students attended a performance of *King Lear* at the Mill Theatre, Dundrum on Monday 23rd October. Niall Brady, Patrick Hassett and Curtis Winkelmann were the Senior Prize Winners of the 'Beautiful Pictures – Beautiful Words' competition run as part of Literacy Day and every 6th Year Physics student participated in the DES pilot project assessing the LC Physics Practical Course at the end of October. Finally as we move towards mid term both the Irish and Modern Language Departments have been organising the first set of practice Orals for all.

## Extra-Curricular Activities

There is a high level of 6th Year participation in the extra-curricular programme of the College with enthusiastic involvement throughout the Games, Music and Public Speaking Programmes, while preparations for this year's senior musical, the much anticipated 'Les Miserables' are gathering pace.

The Senior Soccer Team, with Matthew Curran and Michael O'Keane among the scorers, moved confidently into the second round of the Senior Cup with victory over Hartstown Community School. We wish the squad continued success.

The SCT has made an encouraging start to the season with an excellent victory over Palmerston North Boys High from New Zealand being the highlight. The squad will travel to the UK for a fixture against Wellington College on November 4th and we wish them a safe and successful journey. Our Senior Basketball (captained by Barry O'Sullivan) and Cross-Country Teams have also made promising starts to their competitive campaigns and we wish both squads continued success.

Other achievements of note since our return at the end of August include...Liam Turner, Thomas Clarkson, Tom Maher and Sean Molony being selected for Leinster rugby squads; Patrick Fahy who represented Ireland at

the Junior European Triathlon Championships in Holland and Ewan McMahon who represented Ireland at the Laser Senior European Sailing Championships in Barcelona. Congratulations to all.

**Our best wishes go out to the Sixth Year students and we wish them a happy, peaceful and fulfilling final year in the College**

## Beautiful Pictures – Beautiful Words

Niall Brady



"It is neither wealth nor splendour; but tranquillity and occupation which give you happiness"  
~ Thomas Jefferson

Curtis Winkelmann



"Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."  
~ Ferris Bueller

Patrick Hassett



"Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication."  
~ Leonardo Da Vinci

## A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Ms Natasha Drew will give a talk on the CAO Application process to the 6th Year Parents on **Tuesday November 7th at 7.30pm** in the Lecture Hall. It is hoped that as many parents as possible will be able to attend this most informative and helpful evening. The Sixth Year Parents' Committee also plan to provide information on the planned immersion trip to Kenya in July 2018 on this night.



# Guidance and Counselling



## Parent Seminars

The year began with the 5th Year Parents' Career Seminars, held over two evenings in September. The first event was chaired by Mr. Eunan O Carroll (class of 1984), President of Blackrock College Union. The Guest Speakers on the evening were Mary Mitchell O'Connor, Minister of State for Higher Education at the Department of Education, who presented "Career Opportunities in the Current Economic Climate" and the school Principal Mr. Alan MacGinty who presented "The Educational Objectives of Blackrock College". The seminar was a wonderful success, with a great number of parents in attendance. A copy of Mr MacGinty's presentation and speech are available for downloading in the parents' section of the school website. The second career seminar "Equipping our Student with Skills for the Future Workplace" was hosted by the Blackrock College Union and chaired by past pupil and Blackrock College Union Committee member Declan O'Sullivan. Four past pupils, Brian Nolan, Ross McCormack, Robert Connolly and Kealan O'Toole, detailed their own individual career path to date and addressed the key skills required for their career areas. Their presentations are available for downloading on the parent section of the school website.



Ms N. Drew, Declan O' Sullivan (1985), Brian Nolan (1999), Ross McCormack (2000), Robert Connolly (1999) and Kealan O' Toole (2003)

## Awareness Days

Since the beginning of the school year, two very important themed days took place in the school. Bullying Awareness Day was held on the 21st of September and was coordinated by Ms. Drew and the Student Well-Being Committee. The theme "Bystanders step out of the background" was to encourage others to step in if they see bullying behaviour. There was a 40 minute presentation shown to each class, with interactive discussions on anti-bullying behaviour. There were posters and adverts on the TV screens around the school. The Thursday Tunes also represented the day, with the theme song from Friends. The Debating Society was also involved in the day, with the motion supporting "The Public Shaming of Bullies". Overall the Anti-bullying Awareness Day was very well received. The bullying report tool is available on the school website in the activities section, students can post anonymously if they have a concern. Students do not have to log their name or email if they do not wish to do so. Our second Bullying Awareness Day will be in January 22nd 2018 and we will have guest speakers in to talk to each year group on that date.

On October 12th we had our Mental Health Awareness Day and again it was coordinated by Ms. Drew and the Student Well-Being Committee. Each year group received a talk from a range of guests on mental health. The 2nd years received a talk from Niamh McCullagh, Health Promotion Nurse, St John of God Hospital, Stillorgan which was a very engaging talk with a selection of short animations. 3rd Years & 5th Years received a talk from past pupil Con Sheehan, who spoke of his experience with Mental Health and provided a demonstration of a practical tool to support positive mental health. 4th Years received a talk from Mr. John Lonergan, former Governor of Mountjoy Prison on mental health versus mental illness and 6th Years received a talk from David Corkery on his experience with success in the world of rugby and his mental health. All speakers gave excellent advice and spoke from the same hymn sheet with regard to mental health mindfulness and supplied the students with practical coping tools. There were posters and presentations on the TV screens around the school. Thursday Tunes also represented the day along with the Debating Society, with the motion, "This House Believes that 'Helicopter Parents' do more harm than good." A big thank you to Mr John Sheil for organising both debates. The feedback from the students was highly positive and quite reflective of the day.

## CAO

All 6th Years received the results of their Centigrade Questionnaire from Cambridge Occupational Analysts. It comprises a specially designed questionnaire where the responses are analysed and matched with all the courses available and the results compiled into a personalised workbook. The use of Centigrade can significantly improve the quality of your son's decision making and thus reduce the risk of selecting the wrong course. The CAO online application opens on November 6th. All 6th Years received a CAO talk and are presently attending Career Guidance meetings on a one to one basis with Ms. Drew, along with independently researching third level courses.



Students who register for the CAO between 6th November and 20th January will pay a reduced fee of €30. The regular fee of €45 applies to applications made between 20th of January and the 1st of February.

If any student has a learning disability or a medical condition it is important to tick the appropriate box on the CAO application form. The DARE tick box is for students with disabilities and the HEAR tick box is for students applying through disadvantage. Students can find out more regarding the DARE/HEAR scheme on [www.accesscollege.ie](http://www.accesscollege.ie). Students with Irish and Third Language exemptions must also take necessary action to notify the relevant Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) of their exemption(s) and to submit any supporting documentation the HEIs require. Please refer to the relevant individual HEI websites for further information. Any queries please contact Ms. Ryan or Ms. Drew.

Any student applying for a government grant must tick the SUSI Grant box. There is an "Eligibility Reckoner" on their website at [www.susi.ie](http://www.susi.ie), where you can check if you qualify for a full grant (Fees & Maintenance) or part grant (fees only); it is worth checking, if you are entitled to Fees only, you will not have to pay the registration fees. The SUSI tick box must be ticked if a student is applying for a government grant next summer.

Also on the CAO application is the Trinity Feasibility study for students who are considering History (TR003), Law (TR004) and Ancient and Medieval History and Culture (TR028). Trinity are looking to reward potential alongside academic ability, a key factor which is not always recognised in the current system. There is also a tick box for this option on the CAO. More information on this is available from the Trinity website.

## College Talks

November is the start of the College/University Open Days. Students have been encouraged to attend the numerous upcoming Open Days to add to the information they received from the September's visit to the Higher Options in the RDS. Talks are presently being held on European study by EUNICAS and Notre Dame University in America.



Talks from UCD, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin City University & IADT will also take place over the coming weeks.

A number of students completed their UCAS applications for medical related courses. The next UCAS deadline will be the 15th of January and students are encouraged to work on their personal statements and to obtain a school reference and predicted grades from teachers to support their application. This is a more lengthy process than the CAO so any student in doubt should consult Ms. Drew if they have not already done so.

Our HPAT preparation course is presently running on Saturday mornings for 6th Years. Any student considering SATs must register a month in advance for the assessment at [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org). Please see Ms. Drew if you have registration difficulties. Have a peaceful midterm break.

# Pastoral Care Programme



*Reach Out, Spread the Joy.* This title was chosen by Pope Francis to be the theme for Mission Sunday this year, and how appropriate that our **Second Year Family Mass** fell on that Sunday. The Spiritan Congregation is a missionary one and the Celebrant at the Mass Fr. Marc Whelan, past student of the College and Provincial here in Ireland, recalled Blackrock's great tradition of reaching out. This can be seen in the number of clergy and laity who have left here to work in the developing world, and in the out-reach by our students to help those in need here at home. The **College Pastoral Programme** tries to help our students recognise the face of Our Lord in the lives of those they are asked to serve and assist, and in themselves. Here is an outline of some of those ways we try to facilitate this theme, *Reach Out, Spread the Joy*.



Lourdes Pilgrimage Group

From 5th to 10th September, five of our 6th Year students, Rory Gallagher, Harry Kearns, Ross Phelan, Stephen Ryan and Josh Slevin along with Mr Sullivan and Fr. Damian Farnon, accompanied the **Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes**. Shortly afterwards, at our Whole School Assembly for the start of the Academic Year, they spoke about their experience: *One of our pilgrims was Anne aged ninety. She asked us to take her to the Grotto on the last day of our pilgrimage. While standing in the drizzling rain, Anne in her very quiet voice said something quite touching: she thanked us for looking after her on the pilgrimage and that she was nearing her death. She said she would be meeting Our Lady in the very near future and promised to ask her to take care of us for the rest of our lives.*

At the start of the new school year, each RE class attends the College Chapel where the boys are led in a reflection by their Religion teacher and where they celebrate the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**. A *New Beginning, A Fresh Start* is the theme, God calling us in this Sacrament to make a new beginning, a fresh start in our lives, just like the young man in the gospel story of the Prodigal Son. We are lucky in this school to have a beautiful Chapel for these celebrations and also clergy willing and able to assist the students at the beginning of the new school year.



Croagh Patrick Retreat 25th September

For three days at the end of September, the **6th Year Retreat** took place when boys travelled to fifteen different venues around Ireland, North & South. The theme was *Future, Fun, Friendship & Faith*. Each venue offered a slightly different experience and ultimately a different challenge for the future. The feedback from one student gives a flavour of the retreats: *We all loved the discussions because they were relevant to us and allowed us to express ourselves without pressure.*

On October 10th, the **5th Year Day of Reflection** took place with the students spending the day at one of four venues around Dublin. This offered the students a worthwhile chance to take time out and reflect, adjusting from the opportunities of Transition Year and having to engage with the challenges of the Leaving Cert. curriculum. As one student reported: *The meditation allowed the group to 'tune out' and to relax for a given time. It was well done by the Retreat Leaders and everyone took part in it.*

The **Matthew 25 Programme** began and during this half term, three groups of Transition Year students have gone on their Pastoral Placement. Going to one of fourteen different venues from Donnybrook to Bray, the boys assist others with physical, intellectual, emotional or social disabilities. Their job is to befriend the clients and support the staff, and learn. In the Journal that each student keeps of the Placement, one said: *I have learned that people with an intellectual disability are just as wonderful as people without.* And another: *I met people with disabilities who never feel sorry for themselves or take what they have for granted. This was indeed a learning opportunity for our TY boys.*



Ms. McGlynn, Fr. Damian & Ms. McMahon with some of our new EMHC's

Service can take many forms, and another way our senior students respond is in volunteering to be **Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion**. Trained by our two Chaplains, thirteen were commissioned this half-term to assist our Faith Community at our College Liturgies. We thank them for their service and for the good example they give to the rest of the student body.

## NOTE

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí  
**JuniorCYCLE**  
for teachers



**Blackrock College will close on Monday 29th January for a whole staff planning and in-service day. This is a requirement by the Department as specified in DES Circular 0015/2017 as part of the continued implementation of the new Junior Cycle. There will be no classes for students on this day, however, night study will go ahead for 3rd, 5th and 6th years.**



# Environmental Awareness Week



**Environmental Awareness Week Sept 18th – 22nd**

**Nature Walks, Environmental Displays, Bee Hotels, Tree Planting and the Green Ninja!**

The week focused on the four Green Flags that the College has been awarded as part of the An Taisce Green Schools Programme. These flags are for recycling, energy, water and most recently biodiversity. We are custodians of the natural world and need to take our responsibilities seriously.

***'This planet is not terra firma. It is a delicate flower and it must be cared for. It's lonely. It's small. It's isolated, and there is no resupply. And we are mistreating it .....This is our home, and this is all we've got.'***

Scott Carpenter, Mercury 7

The week was a busy one with environmental poster displays, Thursday Tunes Green Song, guided Nature Walks, and workshops with Dale Treadwell (Naturally Wild) which covered a variety of themes including pollination, tree



recognition, tree planting and bee hotels. On Friday the Green Schools Programme was enthusiastically supported by a new environmental superhero 'The Green Ninja'. Many thanks to the BCTV group who managed

to capture some rare video footage of this superhero in action! The final activity of the EAW programme was a flag raising ceremony with the House Captains of 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Year.

Many thanks to Dale Treadwell for his fascinating workshops and to the Green Schools Committee, Mr Cathal Copeland, Ms Marie Kelly, Mr Terry O'Reilly, Mr James Fitzsimons and BCTV, 42 Biology and Thursday Tunes for helping to organise the environmental awareness activities. A special thank you to Dean Eaton and DLRCC for their support.



Mr Copeland with the Green Schools Committee

## Sport



### Cross Country

Blackrock College's first race of the year was the Brother Invitational at Santry on Wednesday October 11th. This was a highly competitive race, with schools from all over the country competing. St Malachy's of Belfast and St Aidan's of Whitehall particularly stood out and are teams that we hope to compete against later in the year at the All Ireland level. In both Senior and Intermediate Blackrock came 4th and were narrowly beaten to team medals. This race always acts as a good place to start our season and remind ourselves of the excellent standard waiting for us outside of East Leinster. All athletes performed admirably and know there is a lot more work to do. Our next race is the Blackrock College invitational on November 8th.

### Triathlon

World Triathlon Grand Final - Congratulations to Patrick Fahy (6th Year) on finishing 37th (of 77 competitors) in the 16 – 19 years category at the World Triathlon Grand Final held in Rotterdam on the 17th September.

### Senior Soccer

For the first time in 4 years the Senior Soccer Team have qualified to the 2nd round of the FAIS Leinster Cup. Stand in Captain Peter Quinlan and his team had a tough away fixture against Hartstown Community School. The score line of 5-0 did not reflect the game itself but it did however show the



Patrick Fahy – European Triathlon

potential this side has. We await the winners of Confey College and Maynooth PP in the next round.

In the Metropolitan League we have been drawn against local rivals Marian College and Coláiste Eanna. Marian College knocked the soccer team out in the semi-final stage last year after extra time and Coláiste Eanna have knocked us out of the Cup for the past two years. This group represents a big challenge.

### Junior Rugby

The Junior Rugby Squad have started the season in promising fashion and are progressing nicely in their friendly fixtures. Hard fought wins for the firsts against Pres Bray, Campbell, Pres Cork and Portora RS have been matched by victories for the seconds against Kilkenny, Ballyclare, and St Michael's amongst others. The squad is training hard and is looking forward to their challenge match with Wellington College (England) on November 4th.



Tom Henderson JCTV Pres Bray

### Senior Rugby

After a wonderful tour of New Zealand over the summer break, the Senior Rugby Squad reconvened for training late August and undertook their first set of friendlies of the New Year. Two tight defeats (Leinster Youth and Gonzaga) and a couple of good victories (Kilkenny, Campbell, Terenure) and in particular a high intensity rematch with one of our fantastic hosts over the summer, Palmerston North, have set us up well going into an incredibly challenging set of fixtures after the half term break. The week of the break

# Sport Cont'd



alone will see us travel to Pres Cork and Wellington College, UK. We wish the whole squad well as they continue in their preparation.

## Under 16 Basketball

The numbers for under 16 Basketball Squad at training have been the largest ever, with more than 40 at each session. Over the term these numbers have consistently held up to the extent that now we have had to split the session to accommodate the numbers. On account of the under 19 team winning the All-Ireland last year each team in the school has been promoted a division. This represents a significant jump in levels for all teams, the under 16 panel has met this challenge well. So far we have only played two games in the league this term, one was an exciting 39-37 win over Marian College after overtime and the other was a narrow 31-24 loss to Colaiste Eoin after a back and forth game. There are two games left in the group versus St. Benildus and St. Conleths. After midterm the team will have more matches coming up as the South Dublin Basketball League will be starting and this will provide game time and experience for the wider panel. Captain Feargal Keane (3rd Year) and his squad will have a busy but exciting time after midterm.



David Colgan SCTV Gonzaga



Ross Barron (5th Year) SCTV Terenure

## Under 19 Basketball

The Blackrock Senior Squad have had an outstanding start to the season. This is especially pleasing considering it is our first ever season playing at this level having being promoted after last year's All-Ireland success. In a pre-season friendly Blackrock defeated Castleknock College 41-25. Next came the first round of the cup against St. Conleth's where having built a healthy lead Conleth's fought back before Blackrock eventually



squeezed through on a 44-41 score line. Since then Blackrock have had two games in the league beating Marian College 46-21 and Colaiste Eoin 35-12. Up next for Blackrock is St. Pauls Monasterevin in the last 16 of the All-Ireland Schools Cup.

After that Blackrock have St. Benildus and St. Conleth's in the league where we will be aiming to secure a Quarter Final place in the East-Leinster League. Barry O'Sullivan (6th Year – Captain) and his squad have had an excellent start but realise there is much work and much improvement needed if we are to reach our goals for the year.

## Senior Golf

Congratulations to our senior team who were the leading qualifiers in Delgany Golf Club on 25th September in the qualifying round of the Irish Schools Senior Championship. The team on the day were; Ronan Cowhey, Rory Reid, Robert O'Callaghan and Shane Bresnan. The Senior Team is now through to the quarter finals and will play in Citywest Golf Course on Monday 23rd October v St Aidan's CBS, Whitehall.



Senior golf members (left to right) Ronan Cowhey, Shane Bresnan, Rory Reid, Robert O'Callaghan

The Junior Golf Team played in the Irish Schools Junior Championship leinster qualifying competition on Friday 13th September in Woodbrook golf Club and were the leading qualifiers by four shots. The team for the event was; Rory Reid (Captain), Alex Bulger, Matthew O'Brien and Thomas Harte.

## Swimming

On Sunday 17th September the school Junior, Intermediate and Senior swimming squads took on the might of Harrow. It was a fiercely competitive event which Blackrock lost on points 96-72. We congratulate the swimmers on their efforts and look forward to the upcoming Leinster Schools' Gala.

Junior Swimmers: Ronan Fahy Phillip Breen, Jed O'Malley Tom O'Riordan, Chris Buckley, David MacHale, Ben Bracken and Hugh O'Connor

Intermediate Swimmers: Ethan Ballard Adam O'Reilly, Ciaran Conway Eoin O'Sullivan, David Cosgrave and Phillip Towns.

Senior Swimmers: Max Connolly (Capt.) Rhys Rowlands, Davide Mai, Theo Stephens Keogh and Max McKenna.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography  
[www.rockphotography.ie](http://www.rockphotography.ie)

## Reflection

Chosen by Daniel Cullen (5<sup>th</sup> Year)

"A ship is always safer at shore  
but that's not what it's built for."

Albert Einstein

