

# BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER 2016

Dear Parents,

What defines our College Community?

It is a challenging question, one that has been given much thought as we prepared the way for our new strategic plan "**Building on Tradition, 2016-21**". (Available from Reception if you do not have a copy already). What is the Blackrock of my and my son's experience? When and where is Blackrock at its best?

Blackrock at its best? – There are so many manifestations of this. The Second Year Family Mass, on Mission Sunday, 23rd October was one such occasion. The College Chapel was packed to the gills in celebration of who we are. **'Everyone is a Missionary'** proclaimed the leaflet as Fr O'Brolchain, in his own inimitable style, told the assembled that **"we are all sons and daughters of God"** he urged all of us **"to be loving people"**. Of course, he added **"it is not easy, but then what, that is worthwhile, is?"** The spirit in the Chapel that Sunday morning defines us. If only we could bottle it and drink from it when we are confused or disappointed or frustrated with our lot. It was also apparent in the Pool Arena at the Swimming Gala the previous Thursday. Two hundred students, staff members and parents enjoyed Inter-House rivalry as well as competitive swimming. **Wow – What an atmosphere!**

It is evident in the newly established **'Thursday Tunes'**, an occasion each Thursday Lunchtime for staff and students to sing along, to play or listen to music, to be part of a community, to celebrate and appreciate the talents around us. Regularly there have been up to two hundred students and teachers present in the Learning Centre. **Brilliant!**

The defining spirit of Blackrock is found wherever we gather in community to support and embrace one another. The **6th Years** experienced this on their three-day retreats at the end of September as they connected with each other in a special way, in a spiritual environment in fourteen different centres across the country. Equally our **5th Years** had the opportunity to step away for their day in October and to consider their own self-worth, to see themselves and their peers in a new light. These are priceless opportunities to remind our boys that their self-worth is not contingent on external factors such as social approval, success or attractiveness.

Authentic self-esteem stems from an appreciation of our talents and qualities, our opportunities and contribution. Our **Mental Health Awareness and Anti-Bullying Days** this term were other occasions when an acceptance of self and respect for others was top of the Agenda. Our House system provides a setting for sharing, for belonging. Often the biggest temptation for our boys is to settle for too little, to not engage, to not step out of their comfort zone, to not share themselves with others.

In November, will your son go the College Play – **The Crucible**? Will he support his Year Group's **St Vincent de Paul effort**? How connected is he to Blackrock? Was he aware of our Literacy Day and Environment Awareness Week? Were you? Encourage him to share himself through our **Science and Art Clubs, the Games Programme, Debating and M.U.N, the Arts, the Pastoral Programme and through Social Outreach**.

What defines us? – Blackrock is a Spiritan school, a community that is faithful and creative guided by the Holy Spirit, who gives us the strength and insight to appreciate the goodness in each person which we witness in the bits and pieces of everyday life. We want your sons, our boys, to thrive not just survive and to do so with a passion and compassion that impels them to give service in society and to see this service as a gift rather than a burden. We are not perfectionists; education is about risk-taking. Our boys should not fear failure or setback but see it as a critical part of learning.

As we 'Build on Tradition', we are reminded that improvement is not just a matter of change; it is also an adherence to and a deeper understanding of tried and trusted Christian values, values that have been the heart and soul of Blackrock across the generations. May we continue to be so defined.

For this living tradition, I thank our Spiritan Community, my colleagues, our Parents' Council and Year Committees, our students, particularly our 6th Years, our College Union and of course you our Parents, all of whom make Blackrock the place it is.

**ALAN MacGINTY**  
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Ms Mary McMahon with Leaving Certs on Retreat in Kiltegan
- b) Art Club - Aerial Perspective Clock Tower
- c) Whole School Assembly September 2016



# Second Year



Our new Second Year group, the class of 2021, has begun its time in the College with enthusiasm and competence. The term began with about one third of the boys achieving the Principal's List on the weekly **Application Cards**. This had grown by October to well over half of the boys on the Principal's List; well done. These cards are a vital part of each boy's life in Blackrock, giving an opportunity for parents and teachers to congratulate good learning practice by the boys and also an opportunity to give some direction where application needs to be improved.

The cards also record which of the many **extra-curricular** activities available in Second Year that each boy 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. The College Sailing Regatta for example was held this half-term with at least one Second Year boy on each of the five teams. Jack Hall was over-all runner-up and Nathan Van Steenberg finished in third place. The Inter-house Rugby Tens Competition and the Swimming Gala also took place this term. Every boy should avail of these wonderful extra-curricular opportunities and be involved in some sport or activity in school after class.

The **House Captains** for the year, chosen at the end of First Year, were commissioned in the College Chapel on 27th September by our Spiritual Director Fr Cormac O'Brolchain CSSp. The Captains are: David Clarke & Tom Henderson for DeValera House; Hugo Mangan & Michael Moloney for Duff; Colm Kelly & Matthew McCarthy for Ebenrecht; Scott Graham & Sean Probert for Leman; Sam Burke-Kennedy & Sam Loscher for McQuaid; and Conor Bleakley & Charlie Mullin for Shanahan. These representatives play an important role in the links between the school authorities and the student body, and we congratulate these boys for their service. The new Captains began their tenure in office by arranging the first of the **House Competitions**. So far they have arranged the Table Tennis Competition, which is progressing really well, the final of which will be played in front of an enthusiastic crowd in early November. The House Chess Competition has also started and the Cross-country Competition will be held after the mid-term as well.



Nick Marsh, Maxie Cosgrave and Michael O' Sullivan Rugby House Tens

The school focuses on certain 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 counting bugs in a jar. There was *Mental Health Awareness Day*, with Mr Donal Scanlan from *Mental Health First Aid* giving an excellent presentation to Second Year, along with information stands from *St John of God's, Teenline, Jigsaw, Gamble Aware, Dublin Counsellors, Teen Between and Forgive*. A Student Well-Being Committee was established this year, with twelve boys from Second Year applying in writing for the one representative post from this year-group. To acknowledge this great interest, the twelve boys were brought to the *Zeminar* conference in the RDS.



Boys who attended the Zeminar Conference

The **Family Mass** took place on 23rd October with a great 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 **Spiritual Director** Fr Cormac O'Brolchain CSSp introduced each of his Spiritan confreres who were present, sharing each of their histories and service on the Missions. Our thanks also go to the organisers Mr Tom Ryan, 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, an opportunity to look at their school life from a reflective perspective.

We held a number of events for parents of 2nd Year during these first few months. A large group of parents were present for the Orientation Evening on 6th September. There was a great turn-out also for the first of three parents' seminars, held on 21st September. The topic was study skills, and was given by a number of speakers from 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.

To end, 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, Michael Lucey, Alex Bolger, Conor Slattery, Zach Boyle and Mark O'Brien have each been so acknowledged and we congratulate them on their success.

## Dates for your Diary

November 22nd-25th: School Musical  
December 14th: Christmas Exams begin

# Third Year



It has been a very good start to the year which as we all know culminates in the Junior Certificate Examination next June. The Card system enables the College to communicate home on a weekly basis and it is encouraging that there has been so many excellent cards. However some of these cards do not always end up being seen by parents which is a great pity. Please remember that Monday night is the night your son should present his card at home. When a card is stamped requesting its return with a Parent's signature, Wednesday at check-in is the deadline for same. Also parents support in monitoring the Homework Diary at weekends would be much appreciated in addition to ensuring a minimum of two and a half hours revision is done on top of homework. With the work commitment involved in Third Year we strongly recommend that boys leave their phones downstairs at night and in this way enhance the prospect of getting a good night's sleep. 130 boys attended the Study Skills workshop, many thanks to Mr Mark Smyth who was the facilitator. He will speak to the whole year group prior to the Christmas Exams in order to reinforce the key points.

The Bullying Awareness Day took the form of a PowerPoint presentation during the Religious Education class followed by a discussion. For Mental Health Awareness Day Imelda McHugh, an addiction services councillor, gave a talk to the whole year group which was very well received. She likened achieving mental wellness to becoming physically fit, as both have to be worked on. Some of the tips she gave were to connect face to face with others; move away from TV, the computer and phone; be a joiner and get moving. Manage your stress by developing an awareness of the here and now. Let diet support your brain. Finding happiness through giving and invest in one's own self-care.



Charles Cullen preparing to let go of the drone (Art Club Activities)

Very large numbers are involved in the extra-curricular programme and many boys have represented the College to date. A bigger uptake in swimming, water-polo and the Corless Choir (**which has its rehearsal every Monday at 12:45 p.m.**) would be great to see. Cricket training is available in the Sports Hall every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. In the Inter-House Competition the Rugby 10's ended with DeValera overcoming Leman in the "A" final and Leman reversing the result against DeValera in the "B" final. Jack Byrne and Gerard Downey won the respective Player of the Tournament awards. In the Swimming Gala

Ebenrecht were comfortable winners with McQuaid in second place. In the 50m Open Liam Heylin was first with David Cosgrave in second place. As we go to print the Cross-country competition is about to take place and the Table-tennis and Chess competitions are currently up and running. **Any parents concerned as to their son's involvement should contact the Dean.**

Noel Canavan's annual talk on Parent-Teenager relationships attracted a fine crowd and the feedback from parents confirms the very worthwhile nature of the evening. It is his intention to once again run a five week Parenting Course starting on Tuesday November the 8th. If interested please contact him directly on 0862228155 or by email at noelcanavanone@gmail.com. The course outline is included with this newsletter.

We would like to wish the House Captains well in their important role in the coming months. The Investiture Ceremony took place on Tuesday 27th of September. The captains are Cian Colville, John Huggard, Josh Baker, Jeff Kenny, Shane Murray, Jamie Sood, Tom Gavigan, Liam Heylin, Gavin Hoey, Eoin Sreenan, Tom Dooley, Michael O'Daly. From this group Tom Dooley and John Huggard have been elected to represent Third Year on the Student Council. In addition Liam Finn is the Second/Third Year Borders' Representative and Will Boyle is the Green Schools' Representative.



Kathryn Cummins and Larry Birdthistle on the occasion of Larry's retirement

After 19 years of dedicated service Larry Birdthistle retired from the College earlier in October. The best interest of the boys was always Larry's priority and for this we are indebted to him. He was most appreciative of the send-off he received from the boys. We wish him many years of happiness in retirement.

## Dates for your Diary

Monday 7th November - Progress Card due home  
Tuesday 8th November - ROAR cans due for return  
Sunday 13th November - Third Year Family Mass 11 a.m.  
Wednesday December 14th - Regulation Exams begin



# Transition Year



## Blackrock College Radio

At the time of writing preparations are well under way for BCR 2016. The studio is now up and running and has started its first recordings. Over 160 students are involved in what should be a fantastic week of broadcasting. We hope you all will tune in when we go live on Monday 21st – Friday 25th November. The station will air a variety of shows: News and Current Affairs, Sports, Language Shows and Guest Schools. We will broadcast on 97.3fm and stream live on the college website.



Harry Hughes, Sean Fleming, Sean Hannon and Studio Managers Rhys Rowlands and Adam O'Sullivan in the BCR Studio

## 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 all very proud! 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. I 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 22nd September Transition Years went out on their first tours to Croke Park GAA museum, Footee golf, The Awesome Walls Climbing Centre and Jumpzone. The next set of tours is on Tuesday 8th November.

## Lecture Series

In the first week of the term all students attended a workshop with Mr Denis Hevey on self-leadership and talent development. The feedback from these workshops was fantastic. There will be a follow up workshop for all students after Christmas. On Tuesday 11th 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 13th October, as part of Mental Health Awareness Day, Transition Years attended a talk by Mr Niall Muldoon, the Ombudsman for children. He spoke about his job while also highlighting the importance of looking after our mental health.

## 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. 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

To date 3 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 Ryan has been excellent. The next group are due to go out on 28th November, with preparation classes beginning after mid-term.



Captain Ross O'Reilly and the Leman Team

## Charity Work

The students have already been very busy with charity work. 28 students volunteered to help with the Hospice Collection on the 15th September. The students raised €2760 for Blackrock Hospice. On Friday 7th October students took part in a collection for the charity *Operation Smile* which overall raised €6600. Next up we will be bag packing in Dunnes Stores Cornellscourt for Blackrock Alzheimer's Society on Friday 11th November.

## Extra-curricular

It has been a very busy term for Transition Years. There was an excellent turn out for the House Tens Competition on the 10th September. Spectators on the side line were witness to some fantastic rugby played in a great spirit. Leman emerged victorious in the final with Matthew Flynn awarded Player of the Tournament.

Transition Years turned out in great numbers for the College Swimming Gala on Thursday 20th October. Shanahan were victorious on the night closely followed by McQuaid. Max Connolly won the 50 m open race

The U-16 hurling team had a great win in their first game beating Tempelogue 7-11 to 6-6. As we go to print the team is preparing to face Clonkeen College before midterm. Cathal French was a member of the junior golf team who finished 5th in the recent Irish Schools Championship, alas only the top 4 qualified for the next round.

Transition Year has been involved in both senior and junior basketball teams who have notched up some impressive results in recent weeks. Gonzalo Araluce, Robert Kelly and Sean Lardner must be mentioned for their impressive performances!

Transition Year is also well represented in the College's Model United Nations Society and they recently attended the Terenure College Conference. Shore Oluborode and Andrew Ryan won individual Distinguished Delegate Awards. Next up, the MUN Society travel to London for a conference in Croydon.

Well done to James Gibney, Drummond McGinn and Andrew Ryan who were interviewed (along with 5th Years) 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 Drummond who was selected to go forward to the next round – we wish him well.



Mr. Owen Brennan, Drummond McGinn with Helen and Fred Duffy of the Dun Laoghaire Rotary Club

Finally I wish the 9 students involved in the Cluny Musical *Hairspray* 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 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

- 8th November – Transition Year Tours
- 11th November – Bag Packing for Blackrock Alzheimer's Society
- 21st – 25th November – Blackrock College Radio
- 2nd December – St Vincent De Paul Soccer marathon
- 4th December – 4th Year Family Mass
- 8th December – 4th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
- 14th December – Christmas Exams
- 17th December – Hamper Delivery for Saint Vincent De Paul

# 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 affirm good application, whilst the two Progress Cards this half-term have highlighted 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 focusing 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 welcome. Over the course of the two evenings Professor Brian MacCraith of DCU, Peter Cosgrove of CPL Recruitment and The Future of Work Institute, Mr. Alan MacGinty Principal, Ms. Carleen McGee, then 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 11th October students welcomed 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 Retreats

## Commissioning of House Captains

On Friday 9th 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 Niall Brady, Matthew Curran, Josh Dixon, Harry Donnelly, Neil Houlihan, Art Lynch, Liam McMahon, Hugh O'Leary, Barry O'Sullivan, Josh Slevin, Liam Turner, and Curtis Winkelmann. 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 and the retreats so far this year and we wish them well with their future duties.

## 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 13th 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 John Lonergan who shared his own experience of dealing with bullying throughout his career as Governor of Kilmainham Jail.

## 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, rugby, and touch rugby, to name a few.

## Choir / Orchestra

Fifth Year members of both the Leman and Liberman choirs, together with members of the orchestra, led their peers excellently at 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 and debating vigorously weekly, 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.

MUN in the Blackrock College School Calendar got off to a flying start this year as 15 of our delegates (including three Fifth Years: Ben Heapes, Christopher O'Flaherty, and Simon Huggard) and chairs descended upon Terenure College to a newly extended 2 day conference in Terenure College. The standard of the conference may have taken a few delegates aback but the results speak for themselves. I would also like to congratulate Christopher O'Flaherty on winning a Distinguished Delegate Award. All three students are travelling to London on the 22nd of October to compete in Royal Russell's International Competition. This is Royal Russell's 35th Annual Conference and takes place between Saturday 22nd and Tuesday 26th of October. The next competition at home will be in Rathdown at the end of November.

## Sport

Growing in popularity, the **senior cross country** team has considerable Fifth Year membership. The group have had one race so far-the Brother Invitational Cross Country Race in Santry on Wednesday October 5th. Individually all the boys performed very well but sadly we missed out on any team medals. This race is always a high standard as you have top-individuals from all over the country travelling to race. Its great way for the boys to realise what work needs to be done in order to progress beyond Leinsters in March. We look forward to the next event.

Weekly training and matches have highlighted the commitment of Fifth Year students to **basketball** whose attendance is such high numbers is very encouraging. With a mixed start to the season the team are still making sure to continue their hard work, with victories over St Columba's and St Michael's to date. We wish them well as the All Ireland Cup continues.

A number of outings and trials this year has led to success for the Fifth Years involved in the Woodbrook Junior **golf** team that recently won the Wicklow Cup in Greystones. We congratulate Liam Dunphy (Captain), Gary Galvin, and Eoin Beecham on their involvement. We also congratulate Robert Abernathy who was part of the College's winning team in the Leinster Schools Senior Match Play. We wish him the best of luck in the Irish Schools Senior Match Play.

The House **rugby** teams have had a great start to the season so far, with a large number of boys turning out to play for the House 2nd to House 5th teams. It is great to see such a high number of boys involved. Fifth Year members of the SCT have also had a strong start to their season with victory over Terenure just one of this year's early highlights. All House and SCT players have been training hard and are looking forward to the rest of the season.

The Inter-House Rugby 10s tournament on a gloriously sunny Saturday in September was a great occasion and was enjoyed by all. McQuaid beat DeVelara in the final and Daniel Foley (DeVelara) received the Best Player of the Tournament Award. Thanks to the players, referees, coaches, and parents for their help and support on the day.

Navigating increasing wind force, Robert Kent led Team Bravo to victory in the annual **Sailing Regatta**. 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. The day was a great success.

A special mention must be given to Ewan McMahon, who won a silver medal at the Laser Radial Youth Worlds during the summer and has been invited to sail in Cascais, Lisbon, as a result.

The Fifth Year members of the **senior soccer** squad were bitterly disappointed to be knocked out of the Senior Cup in what was a fantastic game against Colaiste Eanna. They continue to train and compete in the League and the Leinster Shield, as well as the annual challenge against St Bede's, Manchester. Many participate in the College's social soccer which is open to all on a Friday evening. We wish them the best of luck.

The U-16 **hurling** team had a great start to the league with an impressive victory over Tempelogue. We congratulate Captain Mark Grogan and James Kós on their involvement and wish them the best with the rest of the season.

Thursday 20th October witnessed high numbers of Fifth Years turn out for **Swimming Gala** events. We congratulate all involved in the events and organisation, and thank them for a great evening. Congratulations to DeValera who won the House events with 68 points. Also, congratulations to Patrick Fahy who won the 50m Open race, and to Josh Warren who came 2nd. Thank you to all those who lent a hand and organised it for a fantastic night.

**Table tennis** is going from strength to strength this year, with training carried out every day after school. Joey Nelson of Fifth Year is currently ranked #5 Junior in Ireland.

## Gaisce

Over 80 Fifth Year students 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.

## Thursday Tunes

Thursday Tunes has been up and running since the beginning of the school year and is going from strength to strength. It offers the school community an opportunity to play music together for the enjoyment of students and staff members alike. A big thank you to its organisers and to those who continue to play every Thursday lunchtime. I hope the Fifth Year boys who both play and attend continue to do so.

## Karl Ashe

The Karl Ashe Trophy was won by the Castle Dayboys this year, but a special mention should go to the Fifth Year boys who competed in the semi-final. It is a well organised competition and was enjoyed by all who played in Fifth Year.

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.

### Dates for your Diary

22nd - 25th November - Senior Musical  
6th December - Carol Service  
Wednesday 14th December - Regulation Exams begin  
Thursday 22nd December - End of Term



# The Arts



## "The Halls are Alive with the Sound of Music"

The Music & Drama Department got off to a flying start this term with our weekly gathering for 'Thursday Tunes' in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. Intense rehearsals for 'The Crucible' are well underway, Orchestra and Choir are in full swing, and the Jazz and Trad bands are warming up to have their first performance of the year before the mid-term break! With over seventy boys participating in a variety of instrumental classes throughout the day, music abounds in the hallowed halls of Blackrock College.

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

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

Moreover, the 6th Year Family Mass was a true testament to this spirit of giving and commitment. The 6th Year instrumentalists together with the 6th Year choir participated to create a very prayerful and uplifting liturgy.

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

## Thursday Tunes - Your Invitation to Explore the Arts

'Thursday Tunes' is a weekly gathering that celebrates what the arts mean to us, both as individuals and as members of a rich and varied community. Through many different genres of music and art, we want you, the student body, to express yourselves - to share what has meaning to you and to be an audience to the passions of others.

September 2016 was not just the beginning of a new academic year, it also marked the beginning of this cultural initiative that has grown from a handful of willing participants and spectators to a packed room and a fervour to perform.

We ask you to join us, to have your input, to express yourself - be it through the means of song, drama or a poetry recital. You are the cultural fabric of Blackrock College. You are welcome.



## The Blackrock Swan Music Programme: Making Musical History.

In the most marginalised community of the North East Inner City of Dublin, anti-social behaviour, organised crime and gang warfare are what make the headlines across the country's newspapers. In the same community, every Thursday evening, a group of 30 local teenagers meet in SWAN Youth Service to learn musical instruments, share ideas and write songs together. The focus of the music is to highlight and fight social injustice and address issues both within the local community, as well as in wider society, which they feel need to be challenged.

This year for the first time, seven TY students from Blackrock College are sharing their musical skills, to explore the issue of class and social justice, and to develop friendships with these resilient young people who they otherwise may never have come across in life. Peter Coyle, Tom Dwan, Tadhg Egan, Gavin Jones, Rob Jordan, Thomas McCormack and Ruairi Moore are taking part in this, the first ever cross class youth development programme to be undertaken in the country and we look forward to hearing not only how the programme develops but also the music that is produced.



The Blackrock Swan Music Programme participants  
Ruairi Moore, Tom Dwan, Rob Jordan, Tadhg Egan, Peter Coyle, Gavin Jones

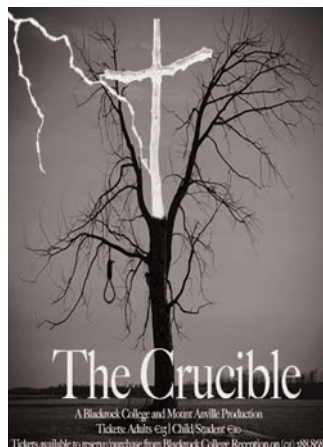
Anyone who would like to donate any unused instruments to this exciting new programme please contact [ecleary@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:ecleary@blackrockcollege.com).

## The Crucible - November 22nd - 25th.

John Proctor has betrayed his wife. Abigail Williams wants him for herself. "The devil is loose in Salem" and "the whole town's talking witchcraft". Loyalties will be tested. Faith will be doubted. Morality will be examined. Authority will be challenged. Witches will be tried. And people will hang.

Over the last four weeks, the cast of 'The Crucible' has taken on one of the biggest theatrical works of the 20th century and they've given it everything they've got. For four nights only the incredible true events surrounding the Salem witch trials of 1692 will be brought back to life in the Jubilee Hall this November.

This is arguably Arthur Miller's most accomplished work and puts the audience "squarely in front of themselves" to engage with



the eternal struggle of what happens when good confronts evil, right opposes wrong and unflinching common morality defies infallible religious authority. In a climate of manic social hysteria, who will accuse another to save themselves? Who will remain silent in the face of injustice? Who will stand up for what is right? And who will die for it? Would you?

Tickets are on sale now at Reception or can be reserved by email at [nkeenan@blackrockcollege.com](mailto:nkeenan@blackrockcollege.com)

## Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre 2nd Year Induction

All Second Year students had their induction session in the Learning Centre over the first two weeks of term. They were introduced to all of the services and made aware of the vast range of resources available to them during the course of their academic year.

All students contributed to a wall called "The last book I read", and we created a window display of the book jackets, which ranged from Robert Muchamore's *Cherub* series to Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Sea*.

## Literacy Day

On Literacy Day, Tuesday October 4th, our Second and Third Years had a talk from Irish author Gerard Siggins about his series of fiction books based on rugby. Ger gave the boys an insight into his research and the daily life of a writer, as well as the process of publishing a book.

Teachers participated in the 'Adopt a Word' project. Over 70 teachers agreed to adopt a word that they pledged to use in the classrooms, in the dining room, wherever they speak. The aim of this Literacy Initiative is to lead by example in encouraging our students to use a wide and varied vocabulary.

We also displayed the Latin Roots project by Ms Henchy's 4th Year Latin Class, as well as providing literacy-based board games for students to play at lunch time. Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Year students enjoyed word based activities such as crosswords and anagram and synonym puzzles in their English classes.



## Table Competition

Following last year's successful 'Design a Cushion' for the Learning Centre, we're asking students to come up with a design for the surface of our three coffee tables. The winners will work with Mr Wyer in the Art Room to bring these designs to life.

## The Art Club

The Art Club meets every Wednesday afternoon from 1.15 to 3. This term's programme includes Portfolio Talks by visiting artists, Art Competitions, techniques of screen printing and Exhibition Curatorship. The aim of the club is to nurture and encourage a better understanding of visual art and to offer an extracurricular opportunity to all students interested in Art.



Art Club -Aerial Perspective Clock Tower

## Senior and Junior Debating

Debating in the college has got off to a flying start this term. Our teams have been impressive in the L&H Schools Competition. This year the senior team is being coached by past pupil Joshua Kieran Glennon, who has been providing boys with his experience and hopefully we will see the fruits of this endeavour in the next rounds.

## Night Out at the Abbey

On September 21st and 22nd 184 Transition Year students attended the Frank McGuinness play "Observe the Sons of Ulster Marching Towards the Somme". The energy of the performances as well as the emotional power of the drama itself, provided for a wonderful evening. Frank McGuinness was present on the first night and very kindly engaged with the boys and signed programmes.

## Photography Exhibition

6th Year Fionn McErlean is exhibiting some of his photography in the Learning Centre from 21st October until 11th November. Fionn's is the inaugural exhibition from Blackrock College's Art Club.





# Snapshot of 21st half Term 2016



Mr Mark Smyth with Leaving Cert on Retreat in Esker



The Blackrock Swan Music Programme



Carl Delaney, James Moriarty, Sean Maloney and Cian Reilly,  
SCT versus Leinster Youths



Mr Richard Barrett, Mr Cathal Copeland, Mr Dealga McAree, Ms Mary Boissel and Mr Eamon Ryan TD, Green Party Leader who spoke to students about biodiversity during Environmental Awareness Week



Tom Henderson, Michael Nealon, Jude O' Reilly  
Second Year versus Pres Bray



'Adopt a Word' initiative for Literacy Day,  
October 4th 2016



Mr Brian Herlihy (Deputy Principal), Father Cormac O' Brolchain (Spiritual Director) and Mr Alan MacGinty (Principal)  
at the Whole School Assembly



Gerome Doyle, Patrick Patterson, Hugh Kenny and Luke Powderly  
(Karl Ashe Trophy)



Christopher Wong (6th Year) at the Whole School Assembly with the Orchestra and Choir  
under the guidance of Ms Patrice O' Connor



# Snapshot of 1st half Term 2016



Ms Carleen McGee, Mr Brian McCraith (President of DCU) and Mr Brian O'Neill (President of PTU) at a talk for 5th Years



Paul White and Dylan Stafford (House Tens Rugby)



Lukas Thoms, Scott Graham, Robert Kent, Conall Walsh and Peter Walsh winners of the Team Racing L'Afrique Trophy at the College Sailing Regatta



Stephen Dineen, Mark Phelan, Eoin Bleakley and Chris Wong (Final of Karl Ashe Trophy)



Ben Harvey with his mother at the Second Year Family Mass



Sean Desmond (Sixth Year) winner of the Principal's Race with Mr Alan MacGinty



Morgan Devine helps to launch Drone at Art Club



John Duffy and Tom Henderson (House Tens)



Bill Madigan performing at Thursday Tunes in the CADLC



# News from the Past



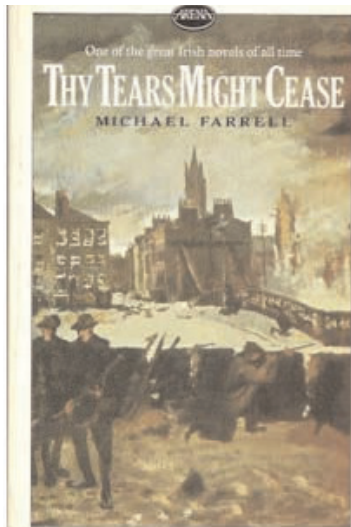
## A hundred Years Ago - 1916

Many students returning to the College in September 1916 had more to discuss than the events of their summer holidays. Sharp divisions were revealed in their attitudes to the events of Easter Week and its aftermath.



Arguments were rife about the rights and wrongs of the actions of the rebels and of the harsh reactions of the British authorities.

Michael Farrell, a student of that time, later wrote in his novel *Thy Tears Might Cease* of a thinly-disguised Blackrock College in which 'halls and classrooms rang with violent arguments' and 'boys with Imperial emblems in their coats blushed and turned away' when they were reviled as murderers. This was two years into World War I and many past students were fighting in the British Army, some having lost their lives. Others were still enlisting. Alumni who had taken part in the Rising were in jail and gaining sympathy.



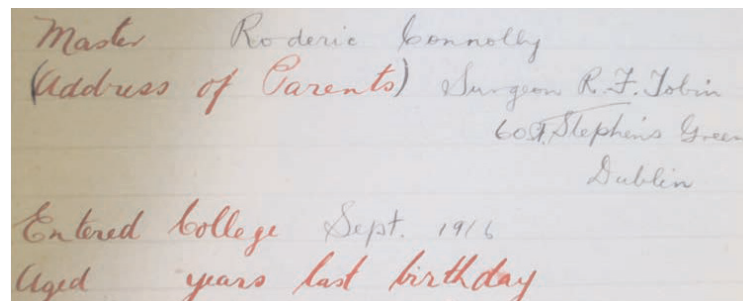
"Trenches" beside the Jubilee Hall

The change of attitude was manifested in the students' games. They had used the heaps of earth remaining from the digging of the foundations of the Jubilee Hall to play trench warfare against the Germans. A striking difference was soon observed – the boys were playing at being the Irish Volunteers against the British.

Among the new students in September 1916 was Roderic Connolly, known as Roddy, the son of the executed James Connolly, one of the leaders of the Rising and, aged fifteen, had acted as his aide-de-camp in the GPO.

After his father's execution, Roddy came as a boarder to Blackrock College, his account being paid by British Army veteran Lt Col Francis Richard Tobin, head surgeon, St Vincent's Hospital, who had lost his only son, 21-year-old Paddy, in Flanders fighting with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He attended to the wounds of James Connolly who greatly impressed him. A strong friendship developed between these two individuals from opposing sides who

discussed poetry and writers and Tobin paid for the education of Roddy, Connolly's only son. Other entrants that September were Belgian refugees Emile Vermeersch, the La Fere brothers, Pierre and Robert, and Anthony de Pooter.



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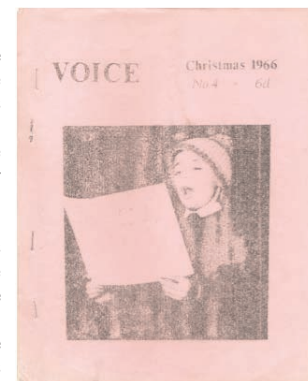
## Fifty Years Ago – 1966

In September 1966 the daily timetable was adjusted to include the new subjects of P.E. (in the Jubilee Hall) and Civics. The choir sang Masses on the radio.



During the term the arts featured in several forms. Students took part in a pageant *Let Erin Remember*, a tribute to Ireland's patriots of different eras with songs such as *Let Erin Remember* and *The Bold Fenian Men*.

The College Musical Society added to the enjoyment of their weekly meetings with the purchase of a new Hi-Fi stereo sound unit. Students won prizes in the Caltex/Texaco Art Competition and members of the Camera Club won prizes in the Junior Photographer of the Year Competition for England, Scotland, Wales & Ireland.



Voice, Christmas 1966

The editors of *Voice* magazine, produced by students and then preparing its fourth number, were delighted to receive the gift of a duplicating machine from the Community. The content included coverage of College events and sports, letters to the Editor, jokes, students' fiction and poetry, small ads and a crossword. 'The Irish Pop Scene' by Michael Murphy, 5th Year, bemoaned the domination of showband music while some 'really good groups' were struggling and he heralded the arrival of folk singing. 'Pop Column' by Denis Smyth, 6th Year, reviewed gigs and recordings, mentioning the new 'psychedelic sound'. No contribution from Bob Geldof, 4th Year, who must have been concentrating on his debating.



Fourth Year English Debate Committee including Bob Geldof (back row)



# Sixth Year



It's been a very busy half term for the 6th Years; 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 encouraged those present to consider 'the realm of their responsibility', and to ask whether their sense of community extends to all society.



Leaving Cert Retreats – Portrush

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.



Robert Sheedy with his parents at Sixth Year Family Mass

## Ministers of the Eucharist

Seven Sixth Years were commissioned as Special Ministers of the Eucharist this term, Ross Deegan, Scott Donohoe, Peter Fitzpatrick, Barry Hudson, Bill Madigan, Mark Nealon and Brian O'Doherty. We congratulate the boys on this very special leadership role.

## Lourdes Trip

From Wednesday 7th - Monday 12th September five of our Sixth Years travelled as helpers on the Dublin Diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes. We congratulate Joe MacIntyre, Robert Sheedy, Mark Rolland, Ross McCann and Kyle Murray on what was a thoroughly worthwhile experience. Robert and Ross captivated the school during the Whole School Assembly, on Friday 30th September, as they gave an account and recalled their experience of Lourdes.



Sixth Years in Lourdes

## House Commissioning

On September 30th Fr O'Brolchain commissioned the House Captains during the Whole School Assembly. The twelve students elected by their peers are, James Kelly and Andrew Murphy (DeValera), Mark Nealon and Alan Francis (Duff), Matthew Barry and Robert Young (Ebenrecht), Peter O'Reilly and Robert Somers (Leman), Bill Madigan and Robert Sheedy (McQuaid), Chris Aylward and Chris Wong (Shanahan). Additionally we congratulate James Kelly 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 10th September. Unfortunately things didn't go to plan and the competition was cancelled; those who did attend played out a 7s competition between 4 teams.

The Swimming Gala took place on Thursday 20th of October in the College pool. As usual there was a great turnout from Sixth Years and the evening was a huge success. Rolf Jager won the Sixth Year 50m open while in the Principal's Race Sean Desmond went close to breaking the school record, in a fantastic time of 55.9secs. I'd like to thank Mr Vanstone and Mr Pickering for organising the Swimming Gala. And particularly I'd like to pay tribute to our 6th Year House Captains who led their houses impeccably and ensured a 100% turnout.

The Inter-house Pool Competition is underway with the preliminary rounds and first round ties to be played before Halloween midterm.

## Mental Health Awareness Day

We were very fortunate to have John Lonergan (Former Governor of Mountjoy Prison) address the students on Thursday 13th October. His address centred on bullying and the effect it can have on our mental health – a very worthwhile talk.

## Sport

The extracurricular 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 water polo. The soccer team, captained by Jack Reilly, were unfortunate in losing to Colaiste Eanna in the first round of the Leinster Cup, on a score line of 2-1. We wish Jack and the rest of the squad all the best in the forthcoming League and Shield campaigns.

The senior basketball team had very impressive wins over Newpark (39-19), St Columba's (38-16) and Avondale (52-39). Well done to captain Robert Somers and all those involved.

The SCT have had promising preseason wins against Terenure and Campbell College, while both Castle squads are training away and in the thick of their preseason friendlies. In the Interprovincial U19 competition Patrick Patterson and Stephen McLoughlin represented Leinster, while Richard Fahy represented Ulster.

The senior golf team has qualified for the final of the Leinster Strokeplay Competition. We wish Captain James Cronin and the rest of the team the best of luck in their forthcoming matches. We also congratulate Tom Dowdall and James Cronin who won the Barton Cup with their club, Woodbrook. It's Woodbrook's first success in the competition since 1943.



James Cronin and Tom Dowdall

Congratulations to Matthew Barry and his team on winning the Karl Ashe Trophy, beating the 5th Year Dayboys on a score line of 3-13 to 3-8. The 5th Year Dayboys were unable to cope with the impressive Giuseppe Coyne, his intelligent play and finishing skills led to 2 first half goals. Well done to both teams.

## Debating

As a team Scott Donohoe and John Heavey have qualified for the next round of the UCD/Trinity Senior Schools competition opposing the motion, 'This house would legalise all drugs'. While in the individual competition Mark Heavey went through proposing the motion 'This house supports the formation of a single sovereign EU state'. Congratulations to all involved and also a big thank you to Mr John Sheil and Joshua Kirean-Glennon (Class of 2015).

## MUN

Three 6th Years, Scott Donohoe, John Heavey and Mark Heavey, were Chairs at the Terenure MUN two day Conference held earlier this year. The results were outstanding and we congratulate all involved. Our MUN students are also competing in Croydon on October 22nd, we wish them well.

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

## Study Skills

Super Generation came in and addressed the Sixth Years on Saturday 3rd 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 class are up and running – anyone who has not signed up should contact Mr Menezes.

## Bullying Awareness Day

The focus of this Bullying Awareness Day (September 23rd) was building on 'a Positive School Culture and Climate'. The theme of the day highlighted that 'all our words and actions have consequences'. I'd like to thank, Ms McGee, Mr Menezes and the teachers for their organisation and running of the day.

Ways to report Bullying:  
Email Address:  
bullying@blackrockcollege.com  
Or use the Bullying Tool on  
www.blackrockcollege.com

### Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 8th November at 7:30pm -CAO talk for Parents  
Wednesday 16th November @ 7pm -Course information Evening for Students  
Tuesday 22nd - Friday 25th November -Senior Musical  
Thursday 1st December -Sixth -Year Fast in aid of SVDP  
Tuesday 6th December -Carol Service  
Wednesday 14th December -Regulation Exams begin  
Thursday 22nd December -End of Term



# Pastoral Care Programme



In the period from the opening of the new school year in August to mid-term in October, many Pastoral activities occur. Some of these are major one off events, others are programmes that will continue for the duration of the school year. Some involve prayer and worship, others involve undertaking service among those in need and within the senior year groups, students are offered time out from their busy schedules and the pressure of their studies to reflect on the presence of God in their lives.

## LITURGY

• **Reconciliation Services** – in September, each student is given the opportunity to celebrate Rite 2 of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Services are led by RE teachers and priests from the Spiritan community and neighbouring parishes are on hand to hear confessions. Many boys availed of this wonderful opportunity to start the academic year with a clean slate and to ask for a blessing on the year's work ahead.

• **6th Year Family Mass** – Fr. Larry Behan PP in Bray and leader of the retreat to Cuan Mhuire, led a large gathering of parents and boys in a celebration of the Eucharist on Sunday 25th September to mark the start of the Class of 2017 retreat. In his homily he urged the students to use their time away well and challenged them to consider in our modern society of winners and losers, how far does their love and compassion extend?

• **2nd Year Family Mass** – Mission Sunday (23rd October) was celebrated in the College Chapel in the company of the Second Year students and their parents. In his homily, Fr. Cormac O'Brolchain used the example of St. Paul to demonstrate how students in Blackrock College **Never Give Up!** Students carried banners in procession identifying the 23 countries around the world that Irish Spiritans are currently working in.

• **Eucharistic Ministers** – over the course of the 2nd and 6th Year Family Masses, eight members of the Class of 2017 were commissioned to serve as Eucharist Ministers within the college community. We wish Ross Deegan, Scott Donohoe, Peter Fitzpatrick, Barry Hudson, Bill Madigan, Mark Nealon, Brian O'Doherty and Robert Sheedy well in their ministry for the year ahead. We also thank our chaplains, Mr Goan and Ms McMahon for their preparation and formation of these students.



Eucharistic Ministers from the class of 2017

## SERVICE

• **Matthew 25 Programme** – this year the Transition Year Pastoral Placement programme has been titled the 'Matthew 25 Programme' reflecting the instruction to Jesus 'to feed the hungry, to give the thirsty something to drink, to welcome the stranger, to clothe the naked, to take care of the sick and to visit the prisoner'. (Matt 25:35-36) Since September, 68 TY students from three RE classes have completed this programme. After a period of preparation, these students have undertaken 2 weeks of service among residents, service users and students in one of twelve venues located between Donnybrook and Bray. Feedback from each of the venues has been very positive and it is great to note that this TY group of students are maintaining the high standards set by previous groups on placement. A special thanks to Mr Goan and Ms Hegarty for their contribution to this programme.

• **Commissioning of House Representatives** – in September, the 42 students elected by the student body to be House Representatives for the 2016/2017 academic year were commissioned for service in the community by Fr. O'Brolchain. In a new departure this year, the 6th Year House Captains were commissioned during the assembly to mark the start of the school year, in the presence of the whole school community. We wish all our house captains well in their leadership roles for the year ahead.

• **Soup Run** – under the leadership of our 6th Year Chaplain Ms McMahon, the TY Soup Run re-commenced on October 5th. Each Wednesday evening from 6 to 8pm, a group of student from RE45, accompanied by a teacher and Mr John Carlin of the Legion of Mary, walk the streets of Dublin offering tea, coffee, soup, sandwiches, clothing, comfort and conversation to those who are in need. A special word of thanks to Mr Walsh and Ms Marren who have volunteered to accompany our students on this most

worthwhile but also most challenging weekly journey.

• **Lourdes 2016** – Accompanied by Mr Garry Sullivan, Joe MacIntyre, Ross McCann, Kyle Murray, Mark Rolland and Robert Sheedy travelled as student helpers on the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes between 7th and 12th September. In two powerful testimonies during the Whole School Assembly, Ross and Robert outlined on behalf of this year's pilgrims, the impact that the service they undertook in Lourdes had on them.

## RETREATS

• **6th Year Retreats** – From Sunday 25th to Tuesday 27th September the Class of 2017 were located in 15 venues around Ireland, from Portrush in the north to Carne in the south, from Ballintubber Abbey in the west to Mornington on the east coast. The four pillars of this year's retreat were **F**uture, **F**un, **F**riendships and **F**aith and feedback from all around the country suggests that the sixth year students engaged fully with the programmes offered. The following is reflective of the feedback sent to the college by the retreat leaders and venues...

*'I thoroughly enjoyed the few days with the lads. A great bunch and a genuinely caring group of young people...all in all a great credit to Blackrock.'*

*'I would have to say that this was the best group I've worked with so far. They were very engaging and great to be around and fully participated in everything that had been arranged for them.'*

*'They were a lovely group. I think they enjoyed being here with us and in particular they became closer and learned about themselves and their friends. Thank you for sending your students to us and we look forward to welcoming other groups from Blackrock in the future.'*



Leaving Cert Retreats – Ballintubber Abbey

• **5th Year Retreats** – On Tuesday October 10th, our 5th Year students were divided among St. Benildus Pastoral Centre, the Dominican Retreat Centre in Tallaght, Emmaus Retreat Centre in Swords and Avoca Manor in Wicklow for their day of reflection. Responses from RE classes and the 5th Year House Representatives suggest that the year group found the day to be most valuable. In particular, it offered the students a welcome opportunity to take time out and draw breath after a very busy and quite stressful period of adjustment from Transition Year to the Leaving Certificate Cycle.



Fifth Year Retreats

In conclusion, it is only through the extensive participation by teachers in the Pastoral Programme, that all of the above is possible. The RE and Music departments prepare and accompany our students for all weekday and weekend liturgical services. Teachers accompany our students on pilgrimage and on the soup run each Wednesday evening, while others, drawn from a wide range of academic departments, freely give 48 hours away from home in order to accompany our 6th Year students on retreat around Ireland. It is important also to note that while these teachers are away, colleagues cover their classes in the college. Blackrock is extremely blessed to have so many teachers who support with enthusiasm the Spiritan commitment to the holistic education of the head, heart and hands of every student in our care.



# Guidance and Counselling



With the opening of CAO applications on November 4th, the 6th Year students have been busy attending career interviews and independently researching third level courses. The regular fee of €40 applies to applications made between January 20th and February 1st. If any student has a learning disability or a medical condition it is important to tick the appropriate box on the CAO application and if a DARE application is appropriate then students are also advised to get these applications underway as soon as possible. Students can find out more regarding the DARE 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.

Each student has received a CAO handbook following CAO workshops with Mr. Menezes detailing the application process. Students have also been encouraged to attend the numerous upcoming open days to add on the information they received from September's visit to Higher Options in the RDS. Students also received talks from UCD Business School and [unituition.com](http://unituition.com) on choosing the right career paths. Talks from Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology and Dublin City University will also take place over the coming weeks.

A number of students completed their UCAS applications for Cambridge, Oxford and a number of other 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

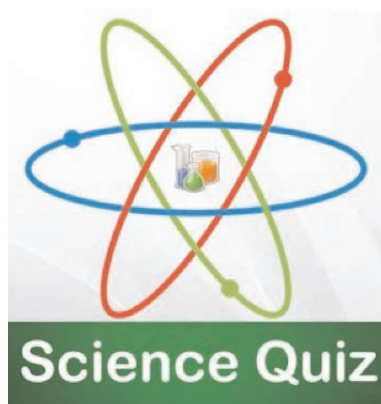
a more lengthy process than the CAO so any student in doubt should consult Mr. Menezes about their application.

On the 16th of November, 6th Years will attend talks and receive individual information from Blackrock Alumni who have attended a range of third level courses. This will be a fantastic opportunity to hear the experiences of former Blackrock College students in an array of colleges.

A HPAT preparation course on Saturday mornings for 6th Years and an introductory programming course for 4th and 5th Years on Tuesday afternoons have both been provided by past pupils of Blackrock College. Both courses have offered both a useful resource and an exciting new outlet to students over the past number of weeks.

Since the beginning of the school year, two very important themed days took place in the school. Bullying Awareness Day was held on the 22nd of September which included a number of talks from outside speakers to each year group. The hope is that this day can set a movement and mind-set of anti-bullying and bullying awareness in Blackrock College. On October 13th Mental Health Awareness Day was held and strongly coordinated by the Student Well Being Committee. Each year group again attended talks from a range of outside agencies with information stands on mental health displayed during break time. Parents also attended a very enjoyable talk on mental health and cyberbullying from Psychoanalytical Psychotherapist Colman Noctor earlier that week. A big thank you to Ms. McGee for organising these two events and speakers alongside the Student Well Being Committee.

## Science Department



### Senior Science Quiz

This year's Senior Science Quiz was held during lunchtime on Tuesday 20th September and the results were as follows:

First Place: Chris Aylward

Second Place: Joseph O'Donnell

Third Place: Mark Heavey

Runners up in order of merit:

James Kelly, Dylan McCarthy, Ross McCann, Mark O'Connor, Peter Fitzpatrick, Shane Keane, Scott Donohoe, John Heavey, Charles Lawless, Mark Dignam, Rob Somers, Stephen Campbell, Michael Gribben and Rob Sheedy.

The top six students will represent the College at the ISTA Schools Science Table Quiz which will be held in TCD on Thursday 17th November.

### Biology Teachers

Four members of the Biology department attended a workshop in UCD on Saturday 15th October which was sponsored by Imagen pharmaceuticals. The workshop was on DNA profiling. In January we will be borrowing equipment from Imagen so that the TY Biology students can do a module on forensic science and compare DNA samples using the DNA profiling techniques to identify the criminal!!

## Sport



### Triathlon

We congratulate Patrick Fahy (5th Year) who came 3rd in the over September in the 16 – 17 year old category. Patrick came 2nd in his final race on September 17th, completing the sprint triathlon of a 750m swim, 20km bike ride and 5km run in 1:08:09, placing him 3rd overall.

### Senior Soccer

The Senior soccer team has trained extremely hard since before the school term started, Jack Reilly (6th Year) captains the side and for a second year running were drawn with Coláiste Éanna in the first round of the Leinster Cup, and unfortunately the game ended in the same result, a 2-1 defeat. The result does not reflect the hard work, commitment and pure passion the boys put into the game not to mention the excellent football played. This does not mean the season is over however. The Senior soccer team have set their sights on the Dublin Metropolitan, The Leinster Shield and The Leinster Champions League.

### Hurling

The U-16 hurling team had a great start to the league after a well-deserved win against Tempelogue College. The team were on top throughout the match, with impressive performances from the captain Mark Grogan (5th Year), James Kos, Niall Comerford, Eoin Ryan, Luke Mion and Alex Carroll (all Transition Year). We look forward to two

more games to play in the section against Clonkeen College and Oatlands College.

### Junior Rugby

The Junior squad have had a good start to the season, with tough encounters against Pres Bray, Campbell College, St. Michael's and Pres Cork. Competition for places is



Junior Rugby Squad on a team run up Ticknock Hill.



# Sport



fierce, but the squad have gelled well and is training hard. The squad have two big fixtures before mid-term, the first in the United Kingdom against Warwick on October 21st and this will be followed by a home fixture against Bromsgrove on October 24th.

## Senior Rugby

The first term for any senior rugby panel is an opportunity to gain valuable fitness, develop core skills, put systems in place and look at players in a match environment with a few friendlies. This term has been no different and the start that has been made by the Senior squad has been very promising, especially in terms of squad cohesion and skill development.

Friendly matches against Leinster Clubs, Kilkenny, Campbell and Terenure have all gone well with victories in each, but the first major test of the season is soon to come with the visit of Kirkham Grammar School from the United Kingdom. Hopefully it will serve as a useful stepping-stone into a very busy and challenging second term of rugby.



David Healy and James Moriarty (Sixth Year) SCT versus Leinster Youth

## U-19 Basketball

The U19 Basketball team have had a strong start to the season winning all three of their games in the league so far. The first game of the season saw Blackrock up against a fast and technically adept Newpark Comprehensive. Blackrock created plenty of opportunities but did not finish them with the efficiency we would like and never really got into a flow offensively. However despite playing below par Blackrock ran out impressive 39-19 winners. Another impressive aspect of the game was there were two 4th Years in the starting five, Seán Lardner and Roberto Brusasca.

The second game was the local derby against St. Michael's. The defensive consistency continued as Blackrock only conceded 11 points in the entire game. The final score was 48-11.

Next up was an away game to St. Columba's. This was a tough encounter with Blackrock grinding out an impressive victory 36-16. Karl Conroy (5th Year) was excellent scoring 11 points, however Tom Dowdall (6th year – Vice Captain) was outstanding in terms of how he ran the game as point guard and equally his shooting which has improved hugely this year.

Rob Somers (6th Year – Captain) and his squad as a result of these three wins have qualified for the East-Leinster quarter final as group winners which will take place after midterm. Next up is the All-Ireland Schools Cup before midterm against Avondale CC.

## U-16 Basketball

The U16 Blackrock side have had a good start to the season and the improvements this squad have made since they started out in 2nd year are clear to be seen. The level of scoring this side is achieving generally as an U16 side is excellent. The season started out in the league with a 34-19 win against Newpark Comprehensive. Gonzalo Araluce and Rob Kelly (both 4th year) and Harry Moraghan (3rd Year – Captain) were standout performers on the day.

The next game was the All-Ireland Schools Cup against Castleknock College, which Blackrock lost 35-18. Though the loss was disappointing Blackrock will have taken and learnt a huge amount from this defeat. The character of the side was evident in the next game in the league away to Templecarrig as Blackrock ran out a hugely impressive 53-31 winning score line. Andrew Kennedy (3rd Year) was outstanding on the fast break, while Colm Kelly and Feargal Keane (both 2nd Year) contributed 4 points each, Gonzalo Araluce (4th Year) was a key scorer on the day with 14 points. Next up is a league match away to Colaiste Raithín.

## Golf

Junior golf is alive and kicking as 36 boys have expressed an interest in playing for the junior team. We are hoping that the boys who were not selected will participate in the golf coaching in Leopardstown Driving Range which will start on Thursday 27th October. The Junior team that was selected for 2016 are Ronan Cowhey 3rd Year, Cathal French 4th Year, James Fleming 3rd Year and Rory Reid 3rd Year.

The junior team competed in the Irish Schools Junior Championship in Bray Golf Club on 13th October but even with two fantastic scores of 35pts and 37 pts, we were unlucky to be placed 5th and therefore did not qualify out of our group as only the top 4 go through.

The senior team consisting of James Cronin 6th Year, Patrick Sommers 6th Year and Robert Abernethy 6th Year were the leading qualifiers in the Irish schools senior championship in Woodbrook Golf Club on 19th September. The next round is being held in Citywest Golf course on 25th October. In the Leinster League where 4 golfers per team take part Blackrock played St. Benelux College on Friday 14th October in Woodbrook Golf club. The team on the day was; Tom Dowdall 6th Year, Jack Small 5th Year, Robert Abernethy 5th Year and Kevin O'Donnell 6th Year. Blackrock won the game convincingly with the next match against Colaiste Eoin on the 26th October.



Junior Golf Team: Cathal French, Rory Reid, Ronan Cowhey, James Fleming.

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

## Reflection

“When you do nothing you feel overwhelmed and powerless. But when you get involved you feel the sense of hope and accomplishment that comes from knowing you are working to make things better.”

**Maya Angelou**