

Blackrock College Newsletter



Special points of interest:

- Boarding School
- Pastoral Care Programme
- Guidance and Counselling
- Science Department
- Green Schools

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Summer 2015

Dear Parents

U.S. Ambassador Kevin O'Malley visited Blackrock in early May to launch our environmental magazine *Greenwatch*. He was thanked by **Hugh O'Carroll-Macri** for "taking time out of his busy schedule to join us". His reply was – "**You are my schedule**".

As we review another academic year, I ask of our boys *What was your schedule? – Who did you prioritise? – What did you find time to do?*

A school year is incredibly busy, runs at a frenetic pace, which may cause us to forget the important as we address what appears urgent – that essay for tomorrow, or that test. This can take over, often because of a lack of planning, organisation – the essay may have been given a week before!

There are many different experiences at Blackrock, all of which add value. The meaning that underpins our schedule is our vision of a Christian community which reaches out to those in need and that includes everybody.

The needy are everywhere. Some may be homeless or refugees in our city, others we may encounter in **Machakos, Kolkata or Lourdes**; some again, may be in our classrooms.

Pope St. John XXIII urged us "**not to walk through time without leaving worthy evidence of your passage**". The message is to make your mark. The key to this is an active life lived beyond the self, through supportive relationships in the context of an affirming faith and cultural tradition. Volunteerism is key as we exhort the boys to share themselves, to act, to contribute without an expectation of return. This is how we strengthen our community, build bonds of friendship. Friendship is about presence, about being there, about showing up. It is a responsibility, a commitment to service, given easily, willingly.

There was so much to be present at this term – in the classroom, at the Junior Musical, Summer Concert, Sports and Family Day, Graduation and Prize Days, in the Soccer Leagues, 100-Mile Cycle, Athletics, Tennis and Table Tennis, Cricket, Golf, Rowing, Hurling (our 1st Trophy in 80 years!), Water Polo and Swimming, Karl Ashe and Paul Stanley Memorial Competitions, Masterchef, Camino, Retreats, Pastoral Placements and Soup Run, the inaugural meetings of the Coderdojo and Film Clubs, Gold Medal Debates, and Information Evenings for parents – yes – **all in this term!!**

Team Blackrock has made this possible. I thank you, and on your behalf, the **Parents' Council and Year Committees** whose interest, energy and drive make a significant difference. I particularly thank **Dermot Kelly**, who steps down at the end of his two-year term as Chairman of the Parents' Council. He has been tremendous.

I thank our **Spiritan Community and my colleagues across the spectrum** of service at Blackrock for their prayers, integrity, coherence, good judgement, patience and perseverance.

Finally, I thank you for sending your son(s) to Blackrock. May the 'Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful' of Blackrock be with you and your family through the Summer months.

God bless.

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Second Year



In the final term, many Second Year boys were involved in the production of **Parent Teacher Meeting**, on stage, in the orchestra or the crew. It was a fantastic event of which the boys can be justly proud. The **House Competitions** concluded in this term, with the Soccer League, Debating and Sports Day being the final contributing events. The **Barry Shield Perpetual Trophy** was awarded, after ten contributing activities, to the overall winning House. Second Year boys also performed well recently in Public Speaking, the Orchestra, Rowing, Water Polo, Chess, Athletics, Squash, Tennis, and with the Willow Wheelers, and especially Hurling and Table Tennis.



The Gold Medal for Debating this year in Second Year was won by Niall Meagher with Drummond McGinn winning the *Bro Thaddeus Judge Medal* for Religious Education, each of these medals being presented at **Prize-Giving**. The Academic Excellence Awards for Second Year went to Ben White, Harry Redmond and Tadhg Egan for the best aggregate of the Christmas and Easter examinations. Also, six students who academically and in the life of the College demonstrated an excellent contribution received Honours List Awards: in Second Year they were Shane Bresnan, Tom Dwan, James Gibney, Harry Keyes, Conor Murphy and Peter Murphy. The same award for the Halls of Residence in 2nd Year went to Diarmuid Foley. After a vote amongst the boys in 2nd Year, the Student Leadership Award was presented to Tom Handrick.



Book Prizes in individual subjects were awarded to Thomas McCormack, Tadhg Egan, Tim Holland, Sean Lardner, Ben White, Andrew Daly, Cianan Quinn, William Spain, Adam O'Sullivan, Harry Redmond, Ethan R. Murray, Oisín Ellison, Conor Mahon, Gavin Jones, Alex Carroll, John Corless and Sam O'Carroll. A Special Award, for an activity judged by an

external norm, was conferred on Gavin Jones for achieving *1st Wesley Inter Schools Music Festival- Classical Guitar U15*.

The term concluded with the most enjoyable **Summer Concert**, and with a Morning of Reflection for each House, which was very well received. This has been a noteworthy start in the senior school for this year group and each student should reflect with satisfaction on their application and involvement in Second Year. A deserved summer holiday awaits the boys, until they return to some significant academic and sporting challenges in Third Year.



Third Year



Well done to all the House Captains on getting such a good turnout of boys on Sports and Family Day and congratulations to the winning House, De Valera. In the Soccer Leagues Leman overcame McQuaid in a great "A" Final. McQuaid won out in an equally competitive affair in the "B" final against Ebenrecht. In Cricket Jack Stapleton captained the Junior team to wins over St. Mary's and St. Columba's. Stephen Ryan was on the winning Water Polo team in the O'Brien Cup, and Josh Warren and Peter Walsh were members of the swimming team that came second in Harrow. The Rowers continue to make great headway and Mark Grogan and James Kós were members of the winning Junior Hurling Team, with James scoring all 6 goals in the final. In tennis both Gary Galvin and James Tarrant got opportunities to play with the senior team and also, along with other boys, represented the College in Junior Tennis. In Table Tennis Joseph Nelson, Barry O'Keefe, Shaun Towlson and Harry Donnelly were members of the highly successful Junior Team at the All-Irelands, and in Athletics Conor Halpin and Liam Turner qualified for the All-Irelands. In debating Oisín Ryan and Stephen Ryan battled it out for the gold medal with Oisín edging it, and finally a tremendous Summer Concert included many Third Years participating in the Orchestra and Corless Choir. Finally, Robert Kent was named cyclist of the year at the Willow Wheelers prize night.

Following consultation with the House Captains and their enthusiastic response, it was decided to offer boys the opportunity to spend the afternoon of the Junior Cert results day at the Extreme.ie Adventure Centre in Balbriggan. Departure time from the College will be **2.00 pm** which leaves time for boys to have lunch locally with their parents. We expect the group to be back in the College by 6.55pm. The cost is €35 per boy and for those not yet signed-up the money can be left at Reception, in an envelope marked Extreme.ie, by **Friday September 4th**.

Trip to China

The annual trip to Beijing in China took place over the Easter holidays with 23 transition years accompanied by Mr. Herlihy, Mr. Sullivan and Ms. Dobbyn. It was the culmination of their studies of the Chinese language and culture, with classes running from September every Thursday evening. Over the course of the visit the students attended class in a school there, whilst immersing themselves in the culture of the country with visits to Tiananmen Square, the Forbidden Palace and the Great Wall. It was an action packed trip.

We would like to acknowledge the academic endeavour that was evident throughout the year and congratulate all those who were awarded prizes on Prize Day.

Subject Prizes :

Eunan Linders, John Keenan, Matthew Dillon, Neil Holohan, Luke Demichel, Harry Kearns, Cormac Madden, David McCarthy, Callum Ryan, Art Lynch, Ryan O'Farrell, Tom Gibson, Stephen Ryan, Patrick Hassett, Charlie Costello, Conor Little and Conor Williams.

Academic Excellence : Neil Holohan, Harry Kearns and Art Lynch.

Honours List : Josh Dixon, Patrick Hassett, Ben Heapes, Shane McDonagh, Stephen Ryan and Jack Stapleton. **Hall of Residence :** John Walsh.

Student Leadership : Liam Turner. Gold Medal Debate : Oisín Ryan.

Religious Education : Conor Fitzpatrick.

Special Awards :

Oisín Ryan – Gold Medal – Vocab Express International French Competition.
Conor Williams – 1st Navan Music Festival – Piano Solo.

**Junior Certificate Results are due out on Wednesday
September 9th @ 12.00 Noon**



Camino de Santiago de Compostela

On Saturday the 2nd of May 20 TY's departed for Northern Spain on Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. The group was lead by Mr. McMahon, Ms. Nolan, Mr. O' Neill and again we were very fortunate to have Fr. Marc Whelan as the groups Chaplain. Following in the footsteps of thousands of pilgrims before them, the group took the *Camino Francés* starting in Triacastela and covering over 130km in 6 days walking. Although the weather was not great for the first few days, the sun eventually came out and they arrived into Santiago on Friday 8th in great spirits. I thank my colleagues

Transition Year Cont'd



TY students on the Camino

who accompanied the boys and Mr. Ryan for his organization of the pilgrimage.

The Parent Teacher Meeting

The Junior Musical written and directed by Mr. Savage preformed for four nights to a packed Pavilion Theatre. The show, in collaboration with Loreto Abbey Dalkey received rave reviews from the audience. Mr. Savage, Ms. O' Kane, Mr. Grumley Traynor and Ms. Smith

had a very talented cast and band to work with, with superb acting, singing, dancing and comic timing on display. The staff and cast were of course ably supported by a crew who worked tirelessly behind the scenes and produced an amazing set. It was a fantastic show.

Strictly Come Dancing

Of course all the artistic talent in TY was not just confined to the Pavilion Theatre in the last week of April. Fifty-five transition years took to the floor for *Strictly Come Dancing* in Mount Anville in aid of The Alzheimer Society of Ireland and MS Ireland. The show performed on two nights, showcased (much to my amazement!) the incredible dancing skills of transition year. From Jazz to Salsa and Charleston to Jive, it was great entertainment. I commend all those who got involved. Particular tanks must go to Principal Ms. Bourden, Deputy Principal Ms. Clear and TY Coordinator Ms. McWilliams for unearthing and unleashing such dancing talent!

M.A.D. Week

Music Art and Drama week 5th - 8th May kicked off with a hilarious magic show performed by Mr. Jack Wise. The week provided the students to take part in a number of different workshops including: Samba drumming, song school, animation and hip hop dancing. The week also included a trip to the cinema to see *Whiplash*, the fabulous summer concert and finished off with, what I hope will become an annual event, the parent v student debate. I thank the parents' team of Dermot Horan, Tara Buckley, Lorcan Murphy and Stephen Doyle for giving up their time, hopefully made that bit easier as they emerged victorious. The week overall gives the students the opportunity not only to showcase, but explore the artistic abilities. It would not be possible without the organization of Ms. O' Kane, Mr. Grumley Traynor and Ms. O' Connor assisted this year by a very organised MAD week committee.

Dragons Den

On Friday the 17th of April the entrepreneurs of TY had their start up projects and businesses scrutinized by Blackrock College's dragons in the final of the Transition Year Dragons Den competition. There were four finalists who were shortlisted, in what was to be the culmination of business development, which began, in the first term. All were highly commended for the quality of their presentations. MJL Ireland set up by Marcus Ryan, Luke McCormack and Jack Crowley won with their business plan for 3-D printing of customized phone covers. I thank Mr. Copeland for his leadership and organization of this terrific ty project.

Green Watch

U.S. Ambassador Kevin O' Malley launched the Green Watch magazine for 2015 on Wednesday 6th of May. The launch was MC'd by Angel Aramayo and Carlos Ituino. The

editor of the magazine Hugh O' Carroll Macri also addressed those gathered. It is an excellent read with some very interesting articles. I commend the class Geography 41 and of course Mr. Campbell for the all the work put into this great publication. Organised by Jack Caffrey the class went to Leinster House on Wednesday 21st to have their photo taken with our Taoiseach Enda Kenny.

Master Chef

Congratulations to Robin Demery who won this year's Master Chef Competition. His prepared for the main – Chicken Korma Curry and for desert Lemon Possets with Almond Florentines. An exceptional standard this year saw 13 finalists take part on Friday 22nd May. They had emerged from three very challenging heats run during the month of May. The standard in the final was exceptional with dishes such as Jack Stacey's Sea Bass and Lentil Salsa, Conor Byrne's Lemon & Lime Meringue roulade and Alex Furlong's Thai Prawn with Ginger Noodles whetting the appetite of all present. We are very grateful to our judges Mr. Toolan and Ms. Smith and in particular Mr. Derry Clarke. The feedback the students received for their culinary skills was exceptional. A huge thank you must go to Ms. Marren and Ms. Murphy for their organization of this wonderful competition.

Sport

As we go to print our inter relay team including Alan Francis, Michael Nolan and Patrick Patterson continue to train hard for the upcoming All Ireland Athletics championship on the 30th May - I wish them well.

Our swimming team including Robbie Condon, Cian de Burca, Sean Desmond, Charlie Lawless, Ronan Mullen and Mark O' Connor were second overall in the annual Gala in Harrow school in the UK.

In table tennis another fantastic season drew to a close as the team including Stephen Campbell, Charlie Fitzgerald and Louis Murphy retained the All Ireland trophy. Also Charlie was winner of the school championship.

Finally Luke Powderly was winner of the annual Fr. Fullen TY golf outing which took place in Roundwood Golf course on Monday 18th.

Days of Reflection

On Tuesday and Thursday 19th and 21st of May had the opportunity for reflection and meditation at the end of a very busy year. The venue was the Dominican Retreat Centre in Tallaght. The opportunity to look back on Transition Year and take stock prior to their end of year interviews was broadly welcomed by the students and the feedback was very positive.

Portfolio Assessments

There is always a flurry of activity in the closing weeks as the students prepare for their end of year portfolio interviews. I congratulate all those who successfully completed their interviews and despite the nerves got through it unscathed! It is a great opportunity for the students to show case all they got up to over the course of the year. The teachers doing the interviews were very impressed with the students ability to reflect on and speak about their personal transition year experience. Transition Certificates will be posted out early in the summer.

Conclusion

I would like to thank my colleagues in Transition Year: Peter Smyth, Conor McMahon, Garry Sullivan and Tom Ryan who have worked tirelessly to run a very busy TY programme. I am also very grateful for all the work of the Transition Year Parents Committee chaired by Dermot Horan. Their support has been invaluable.

Have a great summer!



The final term has been one of continued commitment and focus with high levels of effort and performance evident both in and out of the classrooms. Academic Prize Giving has highlighted the determination of the year group to reach the academic potential and we congratulate all those awarded prizes.

Sports and Family Day

A truly fantastic day was had by all at this year's Sports and Family Day. As expected, Fifth Years and their families attended in high numbers to enjoy fine weather, a joyful ambiance and of course to witness the high calibre and at times intense competition as the Houses aimed for first place. Shanahan emerged a victors overall but the day was won by all who participated enthusiastically in the many events. Well done to all involved and a special word of acknowledgement to Brian Masterson who was one of

four students shortlisted for the Sports Star of the Year Award 2014-2015 for his exceptional achievements in Athletics over the past year.

Career Guidance - Centigrade Testing

We are grateful to Ms. Carleen McGee in the Careers Department for her administration of Centigrade Tests for all Fifth years this term. The results of these tests and the accompanying insights into future career options will be available for students on their return from the summer break.

Ambassador Visits

Remarkably, some Fifth year students had the opportunity to meet two ambassadors to Ireland in one week this term! The first, US Ambassador Mr. Kevin O'Malley, visited

Fifth Year Cont'd



the school to officially launch this year's Greenwatch Magazine. In his address to a number of students he encouraged them to travel, visit his country, see the world and thereby broaden and open their minds to many different perspectives. The second, Kenyan Ambassador, Mr. Richard Openbe was a special guest on Sports and Family Day and thanked all for their contribution to fundraising for the Machakos project

Green Schools

We congratulate the Fifth year members of the Green Schools Committee, Bernard O'Sullivan, James Huggard and Stephen Rooney helping to secure the College's third Green Flag for Water Conservation. Their work has been thorough, committed and relentless all year and we wish them further success as they continue raise awareness.

Willow Wheelers

We commend the efforts and commitment of the 5th year Willow Wheelers this year who not only travelled to Tanzania to witness the work done as a result of their fundraising endeavours but also for their participation in the annual 100 mile cycle fundraiser for Spiritan Projects in South America, South-East Asia and Africa. Well done to Wheelers Declan O'Sullivan, Tom Cunnane, Shaun Condon, Martin Conlon and Kevin Murphy.

Music and Drama

The musical talents of the Fifth Year students were again on display at this year's lively Junior Musical *The Parent-Teacher Meeting*. The musical contribution of Ben Jordan and Miles Lumsden were greatly enjoyed by all at the weeklong production in Dun Laoghaire's Pavillion. Many Fifth Year members of the College Choirs, Trod. Group and Orchestra also performed wonderfully at the Summer Concert with Shane O'Connell's solo piano performance standing out as a particular highlight.



Scene from *The Parent-Teacher Meeting* during M.A.D. week

Debating and MUN Gold Medal

Stephen Rooney and Marcus O'Faoláin continue their Model UN success. At the recent St. Andrew's College International MUN, they won both Outstanding Delegation and Delegate Awards.

The end of the school year presented the occasion for the much coveted Fifth Year Gold Medal for Debating. In a lively debate a number of students confidently, eloquently and passionately debated the motion that *"this house would impose higher taxes on the rich in order to create a more equal society."* We congratulate Stephen Rooney who was the deserving winner of the award and Jordan McDonald who was placed a very close second.

Swimming

The Fifth year members of the swim team, Sean Hassett, David Hardiman, Matthew Long and Declan O'Sullivan enjoyed a whistle stop yet excellent tour to Harrow to participate in the Gala and were delighted to finish second. Their success was further compounded at the first Irish Senior Schools Relay Championships in early May where they finished 3rd in both the Senior Medley Relay and the Senior Freestyle Relay.

Golf

Fifth year golfers Glenn Fry, Conor Cowhey, Rory Murphy, Joe McAleese, Niall Godfrey and Mark O'Brien enthusiastically volunteered at the Jill Donnelly Golf Classic held in Elm Park recently in aid of St. Michael's House. Their contribution to the day was much appreciated by the organisation with their enthusiasm and cooperation complimented. Meanwhile Rory Murphy and Jordan McDonald were delighted to be two of the 120 students nationally who took part in the Ireland Boys Faldo Series in Lough Erne Golf Resort in late April and we congratulate Rory who finished in 27th place.

Table Tennis and Tennis

Laurence Shields and Rory Murphy were the Fifth Year members of the table-tennis squad that took the Senior Title for the fifth year at the All-Ireland Schools Finals. A fantastic achievement.

An all Fifth year Senior Tennis team were disappointed to be beaten by Gonzaga following their victories over Sanford Park and Clongowes this term. We commend them and wish them well for next year.

Rugby

We congratulate Jack Ringrose and his House Squad and thank them all for a thrilling game and great result against the Castle team in the final of the 2nds League Premier Division that was carried over until after Easter. We wish them and all this year's House Rugby players the best for next year.



Castle 2nds v House 2nds Final

Cricket

This year's cricket league has drawn to end for the fifth year students involved. We congratulate them on an impressive start to the season securing victories over Mount Temple College, Wesley College and CUS in the semi-final to reach the final against Coláiste Phádraig where they were ultimately defeated by the better side.

Athletics

Fifth Year representation and participation in this year's Athletics Championships was highly commendable as were the many successful results. A considerable number of students placed in the top three in many events. The Senior Relay team including Tommy O'Brien, Matthew Callaghan and Brian Masterson won their 4 x 100m event and went on to win the same event at the Leinster Schools Track and Field Championships. Luke McCann won the Senior 5000m in the East Leinster's while Brian Masterson continues his remarkable winning run of securing gold in the Senior 200m in Easter Leinster and again in the Senior 400m. We congratulate all for their commitment to athletics and wish them all well as the season draws to a close.

Football

The skilled and determined Fifth year soccer players were disappointed to lose out to Belvedere in the final of this year's Millennium Cup. Nevertheless there is much optimism amongst the team as they look forward to next year's season.

On a day of torrential rain the Fifth year Day Boys lost out to the 6th year Day boys following the defeat of the Fifth year boarders to the 6th year borders in the hotly contested annual Stanley Cup commemorating Paul Stanley (class of 1971)

At the time of going to print the fiercely contested Summer Soccer League is building to the final matches and as always we congratulate the House Captains and all the players for their enthusiasm and positive contribution that makes the League such a great end of term activity.

Thank you to the many members of the Blackrock staff; academic, sports, maintenance house-keeping and others for their contribution to all the events throughout the year in Fifth Year. Thank you to Mr. Donal O'Nualláin and Mr. Myles Ryan for providing such discrete and effective support throughout the year.

As the term and indeed the year draws to a close it is important to thank sincerely the hardworking and committed Parents Committee chaired so efficiently by Mrs. Ursula Grogan for their positive contribution to the smooth running of the year. A special thanks is owing to all Fifth Year parents who helped, through meticulous planning, to make the 6th Year Graduation reception a resounding success enjoyed and much appreciated by all involved.

A huge and heartfelt thank you to the Fifth year House Captains. Their interest in, leadership and support of the year group have been exceptional in many ways with their hard work, motivation and commitment contributing the smooth running of every day routines as well as events such as the Swimming Gala, SVP fundraiser and Sports and Family Day.

Finally and certainly not least of all, the Fifth year group of 2014-2015 deserves a resounding well done and thank you for their efforts both inside and outside the classroom this past year. They have displayed a wealth of enthusiasm and talents and have conducted themselves in a caring and responsible manner deeming them worthy of the title of gentlemen. We wish them a happy and safe summer and wish them every success as they continue their journey to the Leaving Certificate and beyond.



Sixth Year



The year has flown by, the leaving certificate is just around the corner and it has truly been a memorable journey. I'd say a lot of parents remember dropping the boys off on their first day in Willow Park first year, let alone the first day of primary school!

On returning from the Easter break, the sixth years were straight into the thick of things. Language orals, practical exams and numerous coursework deadlines were completed within two weeks of their return, a very busy time for all. Thankfully everything went smoothly!

Parents Conference

The Parents conference was extremely well attended on Tuesday 5th of May. Ms McMahon, our Sixth Year Chaplain, opened the evening with a Ceremony of Light. The focus of the conference was twofold, firstly, a discussion on the arrangements for the remainder of the term and secondly the support structures that are in place for the students in the lead up to the exams.

Gold Medal Debate

The Gold Medal debate was held on Monday 11th May in front of a packed Sixth Year audience. The motion being debated was,

This house believes that this generation has been liberated by the internet.

In what was a lively debate Joshua Kieran-Glennon emerged as the adjudicators choice to be this year's Valedictorian. Many thanks to Mr John Sheil for his organisation of the event and to Mr Niall Byrne, Ms Cathy Kelleher and Shane Kelly (Class of 2013).



Sixth Year Graduation Day

Graduation Day

The Graduation Mass was celebrated on Sunday May 18th. Fr Cormac O'Brolchain, our chief celebrant, gave a wonderful homily and assured the students that they'd always be welcome in Blackrock. A special thanks to all the staff, students, parents and particularly Mr Tom Ryan for their organisation of the Graduation Mass. The celebrations moved into the Quadrangle and into the Dining hall – a huge thank you to the fifth year parents for the reception in the Dining hall. The Graduation Lunch was held in The Pavilion, Leopardstown, with 586 people in attendance. Joshua Kieran-Glennon's valedictorian address was simply brilliant. Thanks to Yvonne Sheedy and the graduation committee for the organisation of the lunch. All in all, it was a wonderful day and fitting celebration for the Class of 2015.



Fiachra Bourke on Graduation Day

Table Tennis

The Senior Table Tennis team appeared in their 6th consecutive All Ireland Senior Final. Captained by Andrew Campbell (6th Year), they took the Senior Title for the fifth year in a row, equalling the all-time record for consecutive wins, with a 5-1 Semi-final win over Ulster Champions Ballyclare HS, followed by a 5-0 score-line, in the Final over Munster Champions CBS The Green. The Squad also consisted of 6th years Stefan Kelly, Conal Molumby, Geoffrey O'Connor and Paul O'Kelly.

Athletics

Congratulations to Cian Crotty on winning the East Leinster 100m and also being part of the winning 4 x 100m relay team which won the Leinster title. We wish Cian and the rest of our Athletes well in the All-Ireland Finals in Tullamore on May 30th.

Cricket

Well done to Harry Lloyd (Captain), Amir Anwar-Hameed and Louis Hoffman who

were part of the Senior Cricket team which lost out narrowly to Coláiste Phádraig, Lucan, in the Leinster Schools B Final.

House Football Leagues

Thanks to Mr O'Brien, Mr Murphy and Mr Murray on their organisation of the House Football Leagues. Congratulations to a dominant Shanahan house on winning the competition.

House Competitions

After the results for the Rugby Tens, Swimming Gala, Sports Day, Soccer Leagues and Pool competition were tallied up, it emerged that Shanahan House were the overall winners. Congratulations to Ronan Turner and Jake Warde and the rest of the Shanahan house on this achievement.

Sports Day

Sports Day this year was held on Sunday 10th of May. A huge crowd was on hand to witness the sporting talents of the boys in over 90 events. Mc Quaid house won out in 6th year, closely followed by Shanahan. Cian Crotty ran a hugely impressive 10.85 seconds in the 100m championship race while the 6th year houses of Leman and Duff were so strong they managed to break the tug-o-war rope! We were delighted to welcome Luke Fitzgerald (Class of 2006) who was presented with the Past Pupils Sports Personality Award for 2015 by the President of the Union, Mr Shane Murphy (Class of 1981). Luke, in turn, presented the Sports Personality of The Year Award to Roghan McMahon (6th Year).

Stanley Cup

On Thursday 21st of May the final of the Stanley Cup saw the Castle Dayboys take on the Castle Boarders, an all 6th year final. The game was a very tight affair, nothing between them at half time it took a moment of brilliance from James Fennelly to settle the tie. Congratulations to the Castle Boarders on winning the Stanley Cup.



Richard Grainger receiving the General Excellence Award from Shane Murphy SC, President PPU

Prize Day

Prize Day took place on Saturday 23rd of May, congratulations to all 6th year prize winners and in particular to Richard Grainger (General Excellence Award), Conor Mullen (Top Academic) and Mark O'Neill (Fr Jim Burke Cup for Leadership). We congratulate Joshua Kieran-Glennon on being named Valedictorian for the Class of 2015; his sincere, witty and thought provoking speech captivated the audience during his Prize Day address.

Finally, a particular thank you to Anne McNamara, (Sixth Year Chairperson), and everyone on the Parents committee. The work that they have done throughout the year has been immense, from the St Vincent de Paul Christmas Raffle, Graduation Lunches, Machakos fundraisers, organising talks and many more events, their commitment and organisation have been greatly appreciated by all.

To the Class of 2015 – you have been a remarkable group of students to work without throughout your final year. You have significantly contributed to the Ethos and Life of the College and we as a College were very fortunate to have had students like you! Please drop by sometime and let us know how you are, take care and God bless.





Halls of Residence



The year draws to a close for most boys in the boarding school (exam students aside), the final term has seen lots of activity in the boarding school. Since Easter, a large number of boarders were involved in the annual summer concert in the Jubilee Hall. A nervous and anxious Boarders choir pulled it together to perform very well indeed. A number of students were involved in the school choir also and the orchestra.

On the sports front, boarders were actively involved in the house competitions over the last term, with some bringing home a few medals. Well done to all involved. The culmination of the soccer season was the Paul Stanley Trophy, the Castle Boarders played the Castle Dayboys in a great final game winning 1-0. Well done to all the Castle Boarders involved.

The athletics season kicked off in earnest and a number of boys were involved in the East Leinsters and Leinsters.

Sports and Family day was a great success, and once again the Boarders involvement was very high.

Public speaking exams took place and the feedback from the examiner and Mrs. Kate Canning was that the boys were all fantastic. Well done to the boys and we look forward to seeing the results nearer the end of the summer holidays. The exam year students are now studying very hard for their exams and all in the Castle wish them the best with their upcoming exams and we look forward to reading their results on their release.

It was great to see so many boarders involved in the recent Prize Day celebrations, whilst everyone in the boarding school did not get a prize and some may be disappointed, we would hope that this will help to spur them on to greater things and that their day will come. Well done to all the prize winners.

The Graduation Mass and lunch was a truly wonderful occasion and to have a full turnout of boarders and their parents is testament to the importance of the occasion. Thank you to Mrs Kilmartin who organised all the boarders tables at the lunch. The activities over the past term were varied, Quasar and Bowling, Airsoft to name a few. Thank you to all who helped organise and supervise these outings.

The last event in the Boarding School Calendar is the annual BBQ and this year we will have over 100 in attendance on the 27th May. It is sure to be a wonderful event and we are all looking forward a night of good chat and wonderful food. In conclusion, I would like to thank my Associate Director, Mr O'Brien, all the housemasters especially Mr. Eoin Daly, Mr. Steve Lambe (who is leaving us after dedicated and committed service to the boarding school), Mr. Mark Smyth, Mr. Jeff Neville, Mr. Tim Maupin, Mr. Stephen Brophy and Mr. Mark Roche, our household staff led by Mr. Alan Sheridan, the Maintenance Staff led by Fintan O'Connor, the Medical Team led by the Mrs. Andrea Fitzgerald, our catering team led by Mrs Catherine Scott and Mr. Albert Beattie, our security team led by Mr. Wayne Ryan and all the Management and teachers in Blackrock College.

I would especially like to thank our Spiritan Community who celebrate their Eucharist with us week on week and provide guidance and support to students, staff and parents from time to time.

Pastoral Care Programme



Monday 13th April saw the school community return to Blackrock for the final term. It is amazing how busy and how varied this term is. This richness of life in the College is seen particularly over the final three weekends of the academic year when parents, teachers and students gather to celebrate Sports and Family Day, Graduation and Prize Days. It is also a term that sees the final Pastoral Placements, Retreats and of course the Camino!

Retreats

On a beautiful, bright and sunny Saturday April 18th, Fr. Hyacinth led a group to Glendalough for the annual staff retreat. Here Sr. Margaret from the Hermitage led us on a spiritual and reflective journey around the monastic site founded by St. Kevin. A wonderful morning followed by a relaxed lunch was exactly what was needed to prepare for the rigours of the final term!

2nd Year and TY students also took part in their retreats in these final weeks of the academic year. The second years were facilitated in the College over three Wednesdays, by Mr. Patrick Reynolds, co-ordinator for Youth Evangelisation and Catechesis in Sandford parish. 58 TY students participating in the Gaisce Award undertook their retreat in Craanbridge, Wexford with Mr. John Forrest while the rest of the year group had their days of reflection in the Dominican Retreat House in Tallaght. The feedback from all groups and the retreat leaders was very positive indeed with plenty of material provided for the students of second and fourth year to contemplate on as they head off on their summer break.

Pastoral Placement RE48

Monday 20th April saw the start of the final TY Pastoral Placement. This time it was the turn of RE48, the Soup Run class group, to head out to the twelve placements. Once again the feedback from each of the centres was outstanding. It has been such a pleasure visiting the placements over the last few weeks and hearing so many positive comments from Directors and Principals about the contribution that the TY 2014/2015 group have made to life in the day care centres, schools and residential facilities that they visited during the year. Well done and many thanks to all!

Pilgrimage

In recent years, the week of the May Bank Holiday has become 'Camino Week' in Blackrock. Having collected, alongside the PPU Camino group, their pilgrim passports in the Church of St. James in Dublin on Sunday 26th April, our 20 student pilgrims flew to Santiago de Compostela on Saturday May 2nd in the company of Fr. Marc Whelan CSSp, Ms. Nolan, Mr. O'Neill and Mr. McMahon, who was the Group Leader. While weather for the week was mixed, making the six day, 141 km trek from Triacastela to Santiago a 'true' pilgrimage, spirits and camaraderie among the group remained at a very high level. One of the highlights along 'the way' was meeting fellow pilgrim Terry Porter, an NBA star from the 1990s. Many thanks to all of the adults involved for their

care of the students during this week. Already a number of third year students have been asking about Camino 2016!

This term has also seen preparations for the Lourdes Pilgrimage next September continue. Our six 5th Year pilgrims met with the other second level helpers for an information evening in Belvedere College on April 21st and on Friday May 1st, Fr. Paul Thornton of the Dublin Diocese, came to Blackrock to meet with next year's pilgrims in the company of the members of the Class of 2015 who travelled in September 2014. He informed the group that the blessing of hands ceremony for all Diocesan helpers will take place on September 1st.

Graduation 2015

The weather remained fine and the sun made a brief but most welcome appearance as the Class of 2015 gathered in the College with their parents to celebrate Graduation Day on Sunday 17th May. So many groups are involved in Graduation Day that it can truly be described as a Blackrock College event. The gifts and talents of the Spiritan community, the 5th and 6th Year Parent's Associations, the Class of 2015, the linen room, maintenance, grounds, catering, housekeeping, secretarial, academic and administration staff all come together to produce a day and an event that will live long in the memories of all present.



Andrew Ryan receiving
Gold Medal for Religion from
Shane Murphy SC, President PPU

Over 130 students performed a specific ministry during a liturgy that was most uplifting and prayerful. There was a real sense of Eucharistic presence among the community gathered in the Jubilee Hall. One could understand why the Church has identified the Eucharist as the 'source and summit' of all worship. This sense of community, thanksgiving and celebration was then transferred to the gatherings both in the College, with a particular thanks to the 5th Year Parents, and in Leopardstown, with thanks to the 6th Year Committee.

As the Class of 2015 prepare to leave us, we wish them every blessing on their examinations and future careers and hopefully they will always remember Fr. Cormac's parting words; whether you become a bishop or a priest, a multi-millionaire or suffering from addiction and down on your luck, you will always be a valued part of Blackrock College and you will always be welcome back in Blackrock. 'Go Ye Afar...and bring good news of peace.'



Careers and Counselling

All Leaving Cert students have now submitted a CAO application. A number of 6th years have also attended interviews and auditions, sat suitability tests and submitted portfolios for relevant courses like architecture, art and design, photography, music and drama. As well as this some students have applied for scholarships in a range of different third level institutions. CAO will also allow students to use the Change of Mind facility from May 5th until 5.15pm on July 1st. With this facility students can change their course order, add new courses provided they are not restricted courses and remove course choices on their course lists. No further changes can be made after July 1st. It is also important to make sure that those students who have exemptions in Irish and/or a Third Language have all the necessary forms completed and submitted to the relevant Higher Education Institutes. The message to all CAO applicants is to apply for third level courses which are of interest to them and consequently they will be motivated to engage with these courses and find satisfaction and success.

A significant number of 6th year students have also made DARE applications this year and will be notified of the outcome of these applications after the Leaving Certificate in June. As well as this 6th year medicine applicants who have sat the HPAT test will receive their results in after the Leaving Certificate in late June. A number of Leaving Certificate students have firmly accepted offers through the UCAS system in Great Britain. Others await final offers through UCAS.

Open days continue for Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses and a number of students have submitted applications for these courses. There are an ever increasing number of PLC courses, Level 5 and Level 6 FETAC on offer at present. Exciting opportunities are available to students when they do a Level 5/Level 6 FETAC course, which allows them the freedom to progress to Level 7 and Level 8 on the National Qualifications Framework. This progression can take place from one college to another or to a university. If a student receives a level 5/6 FETAC award he can use the result in place of his Leaving Certificate results. It is very important for all students to understand this progression pathway and its implications. Further information is available from the career counsellors in the college.

At this stage in the year 6th year students have completed field studies in Geography,

research documents in History and Religion, notebooks in Home Economics as well as practical exams in Art, Music, Construction Studies and Design and Communication Graphics. These students find it comforting that they have already completed work worth 20-40% of the Leaving Certificate examination in particular subjects.

Many 6th year students have also signed up to avail of UCD library which will be open to Leaving Cert students from Monday, May 18th to Friday, June 19th. Students can use the James Joyce Library for quiet study and to consult resources. Furthermore, UCD library are also offering an added option of 3 hours supervised maths study in conjunction with the UCD Maths Support Centre. The cost for use of the library only is €30 and Library access plus Maths Support is €60.

For further information and to book a place please see https://www.ucd.ie/library/using_the_library/admission/leavingcert/

5th year students have completed the Centigrade Career Interest Inventory. Centigrade is an interest-based questionnaire. It matches a student's interests and abilities with Higher Education courses and institutions in Ireland, the UK and those in Europe offering undergraduate degrees taught in English. Each student will receive a personalised workbook listing relevant Higher Education courses and institutions when they return to school after the summer break. This will encourage them to commence more serious research into third level courses and careers that are available.

Students in all year groups are now preparing for the final summer exams and counsellors have been assisting them throughout the year developing their organisational skills as well as helping them to devise realistic study plans. Counsellors in all year groups will continue to monitor the academic attainment and extra-curricular involvement of all students in the college.

As a Department we wish our 3rd and 6th year students every good wish in their upcoming examinations and we wish them and their families a happy and healthy summer.



Science News

We celebrated the successful and timely completion of the 200 Junior Cert Science investigation projects on the 24th April.

One Good Idea Report

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland's One Good Idea national final took place in Dublin Castle. Unfortunately our 2nd years, Ben Brown, Cian Dunne and Sean Hannon did not win with their 'E-Receipts' project, but did really well to make it to the final 20 projects. The boys are only more resolved to continue to develop their project and enter into the Young Scientist again in the future.

The boys have received a plaque for making it to the final and also €500 to make the school more environmentally friendly.

Unfortunately all of our contestants at the Institute of Blanchardstown Technology Regional Sci Fest returned empty handed on Wednesday 6th of May. However the boys are determined to develop their projects further and enter Young Scientist in the future.

Here are the boys who participated:

PROJECT

Sail Ireland

Drummond McGinn

Does the position of the sun in the sky affect the amount of energy collected by a solar cell?
Cianan Quinn, Ryan O'Connell

LIFE SCIENCES

Does cold-water swimming affect your cognitive functioning?
Robert Kelly, Ben White

The Power of Colour

William Spain

Green Schools



At a recent ceremony in the Helix the College received its third green flag for water conservation having already secured the recycling and energy conservation flags. The An Taisce Green Schools Programme is recognised internationally as one of the most

successful environmental education initiatives. The aim of the Water Theme is to devise and implement a sustainable water programme and raise awareness of and engagement in related issues.

Congratulations to the Green Schools Committee on securing the water flag which is the culmination of two years' work. The importance of protecting our environment can never be overstated and we all need to be aware of our environmental responsibilities



Greenwatch team with US Ambassador Kevin O'Malley at the launch of the 26th edition of Greenwatch in the Creative Arts and Learning Centre, May 6th 2015

Sport



Tennis

The Junior Division 1 tennis team played four matches. Three of the matches were at home and one was away in Gonzaga. We received 2 points and placed fourth in the league. Gonzaga and St Michaels topped the league. The standard in the Junior 1 League was very high this year and our players gave a number of strong performances.

The Junior Division 2 tennis team had three very competitive games this season against The High School, St. Fintans and Dublin Oak Academy. Though defeated marginally in our first two meetings, a winning result came out after some great rallies against Dublin Oak Academy. The boys have gained great experience playing with some top players and look forward to next season. The team was made up of Conal Regan, Liam Duncan, Harry Redmond, Karl Conroy, Paul O Callaghan, Tom Hardiman, Andrew Ryan, John Fennelly, Gordon Bruns and Arnau Rico – Enrique.

The Senior 2 tennis team had a good season this year against strong opposition. The team included Jack Stokes, Mark Hartnett, Shane Bergin, Andrew Robinson, David O'Farrell, Laurence Shields, Bernard O'Sullivan, Jack Gardiner and Joseph Glynn. The team got off to a winning start against Sandford Park and Clongowes. Blackrock then played Gonzaga College away and suffered a narrow defeat. The last game at home was against CBS Naas where the team suffered a defeat against the eventual winners.

Hurling

The Blackrock U 14 Hurlers won the school's first hurling title in 80 years this May. It was a fantastic achievement by all involved. In the under 14 (c) grade final Blackrock came up against a committed St Kevin's side. Playing against a gale force breeze in the first half, Blackrock got off to a dream start thanks to two quick fire goals from star forward James Kós in the first ten minutes.

From then on Blackrock were always in command. Team captain, Stephen Dunne, Alex Carroll and man of the match Niall Comerford set the tone early on, working tirelessly for every ball. Up front James Kós was on fire, finishing with a personal tally of 6-4. Final score Blackrock College 6-9, St Kevins 0-8.

Team on duty was: Mark Grogan, Scott Henderson, MacDara Fahy, Eoin Ryan, Shane Breslin, Stephen Dunne (0-2), Daniel Kelly, Alex Carroll, Niall Comerford (0-2), Tim Darcy, Dylan Connaughton, Tom Handrick (0-1), Zack Kelly, James Kós (6-4), Ross Barron. Subs: Donal Mc Keon, Luke Mion, Tom Dwan, Ryan Fitzgerald, David Gallagher.



Under 14s Hurling Champions

Athletics

It has been a very successful Athletics season with a number of track and field events taking place after school during the summer term. The culmination of the Athletic season to date has been the Leinster championships held at Santry.

Leinster Championships

Blackrock had a fantastic day out in Santry for the Leinster Schools Track and Field Championships. No doubt the highlight of the day was the Senior team consisting of Cian Crotty (6th year), Brian Masterson (5th), Matt Callaghan (5th) and Tommy O'Brien (5th), comfortably winning the Fr. Murphy Cup (senior 100m relay), the final event of the day. An outstanding achievement.

Special congratulations also to our intermediate relay team consisting of Liam Turner (3rd year), Patrick Patterson (4th year), Alan Francis (4th year), and Michael Nolan (4th year) who came second to a very strong Templeogue College. The Junior Relay team consisting of Ross Barron, Ross O'Reilly, Ben White and Ben Murphy (all 2nd year) came third in that event.

Elsewhere Brian Masterson (5th year) came first in the senior 400m, Tommy O'Brien (5th year) came 2nd in the senior 400m hurdles. Matthew Callaghan (5th year) came 3rd in the Senior Triple Jump and Conor Halpin (3rd year) came 3rd in the intermediate 3000m. Many others boys competed on the day and put in a terrific performance, we congratulate all those involved.

Senior Soccer

The Senior Soccer Team ended the year with a Leinster Champions League semi final defeat to St. Fintans, Sutton. It has been an extremely enjoyable year with the team reaching 2 finals and losing in a Leinster semi final. We congratulate all those involved and look forward to next season.

Table Tennis

A very busy 3rd term for table tennis capped off an incredible year for all the teams. With league titles already secured in various Leinster Divisions term three saw the Leinster Cup Finals and All Ireland Finals.

Blackrock was well represented at the Leinster Cup Finals, with teams in all three age groups, Minor, Junior and Senior. Senior A took the honours in their division beating the Blackrock senior B team and in doing so secured for Blackrock a 7th consecutive Leinster Senior Cup title. Junior A lined up against Presentation Carlow in the Junior Cup final, and were successful with a 4-0 score line. In the Minors, a 4th consecutive Minor Cup title was not to be, as Blackrock A lost out 1-4 to St. Ronans in the final.

The All Irelands took place at the National Basketball Arena in Tallaght. Minor A took the All Ireland title for only the 2nd time ever, overcoming the challenge of Connacht Champions St. Gerald's. Junior A, seeking a 7th final in 8 years came past Munster Champions Kinsale then defeated Connacht Champions St. Louis' in the final. Senior A maintained their incredible record at All Ireland level reaching a 6th consecutive final, and taking their 5th consecutive All Ireland title, this time at the expense of Munster Champions CBS.

We congratulate all players during the season with a special mention going to the following who were awarded player of the year awards: Robert Kelly (Minor player of the year) Evan McCool (Junior player of the year) and Andrew Campbell (senior player of the year). Joseph

Nelson was awarded the overall player of the year prize.

Swimming

The school swimming team have been training well during the year with some impressive results at the Leinster Schools championship in January. This prepared the team well for their yearly swim meet in England on the 25th April against Harrow, Eton and Kings College. Overall the team won 9 Bronze Medals, 17 Silver Medals & 9 Gold to finish in second place to Harrow, a great result as we finished 3rd last year. The swim team was captained by Sean Hassett and consisted of:

Junior – Ethan Ballard, Max Connolly, David Mei and Harry Sharp.

Intermediate – Sean Desmond, Charles Lawless, Ronan Mullen, Mark O'Connor, Theo Stephens Keogh.

Senior – Robbie Condon, Cian De Búrca, David Hardiman, Sean Hassett, Matthew Long, Declan O'Sullivan, Laurence Shields, Peter Walsh, Joshua Warren.

The final event of the swimming season was the Irish Senior Schools Relay Championship which took place on Sunday 10th May at the National Aquatic Centre. A notable achievement at that event was the Senior Medley team finishing in third place, along with the Senior Freestyle team who also finished third. Our Senior swimmers on the day were: Cian De Búrca, David Hardiman, Sean Hassett, Matthew Long, Declan O'Sullivan and Robbie Condon.

Junior Cricket

The junior cricket team's season has come to an end at the group stage this year, but on a very positive note. Jack Stapleton's (3rd Year) side showed great character and resolve to recover from a very tough opening defeat to the outstanding St Andrews side to go on and record a much tighter defeat and two good victories in their remaining three matches. Coming quickly off the back of defeat by St Andrews the Blackrock Juniors put in a much improved display against CUS with CUS running out eventual winners.

The third match against last years champions St Mary's saw a fantastic effort from Blackrock which resulted in a huge upset win for Blackrock. In an outstanding team display Blackrock managed to score 88 runs batting first, with captain Jack Stapleton in excellent form scoring 33. In the field, some excellent fielding, along with consistent bowling from the likes of Conor Austin, Sean Lardner and JJ Garth resulted in St Mary's being bowled out for 75 in an exciting climax to the contest.

The final match against St Columbus saw Blackrock bowling first, the strength in depth of the team came to the fore with seven boys bowling. John Walsh (3rd Year) excelled in particular with 2 wickets for only 3 runs in his three overs. St Columbus was bowled all out for just 38 as a result of a committed bowling and fielding display. In reply, Conor Austin and John Walsh were able to secure the majority of the runs required for another excellent win to finish the season in a really positive manner. Well done to Jack and his team and the character and qualities they have shown during the term.

Senior Cricket

The Senior cricket season recently culminated with a loss in the final of the Leinster Alf O'Connell cricket competition. Blackrock qualified for the semi final with good victories over Mount Temple and Wesley and a very narrow defeat to Wilsons Hospital. In the semi final Blackrock beat a strong CUS side at Bird Avenue to advance to their first final in four seasons. The round robin highlights were a 94 not out from Andrew Mays against Mount Temple and a 5 wicket bag against Wesley for JJ Garth. Joe McAleese and Rory Murphy as the final two batsmen won a tight affair against Wesley which got the team qualification into the semi-final. Some of the batting really progressed during the first three games with Harry Lloyd, Richard Dunne, Louis Hoffman and Conor Dean making valuable contributions.

In the semi-final against CUS Blackrock got off to a strong start with Louis Hoffman hitting a quick-fire 24. Strong contributions in the middle came from Andrew Mays 21 and Harry Lloyd 13. Conor Dean was the top scorer finishing on 36 not out with Shane Keane adding a valuable 21. Blackrock finished on a competitive 136 for 4 wickets. CUS made a strong start to their run chase and looked comfortable until Joe McAleese took a good catch that changed the momentum in the game. Andrew Mays and Shane Keane were the pick of the bowlers taking 3 wickets each. CUS finished their 20 overs 120 for 9, a win to Blackrock by 16 runs.

In the final played at the High School after winning the toss and electing to bat Coláiste Phádraig got off to a good start with the Blackrock bowlers unable to make inroads into their top order. At 86 for 1, Coláiste Phádraig looked set for a big score, however, a dedicated fielding performance and some tight bowling from Shane Keane, Andrew Mays and Rory Murphy saw the opposition only reach 108 for the loss of 8 wickets in their 20 overs. The Blackrock run chase never got moving, some excellent bowling and fielding from Coláiste Phádraig made scoring runs very difficult. Harry Lloyd and Andrew Mays both made good starts and looked dangerous, and Rory Murphy down the order made a solid contribution to the total as well. Wickets kept falling at regular intervals and Blackrock were bowled out for 65 after 15 overs. Although greatly disappointed the team can be pleased with what has been a very successful season. The senior team consisted of – Harry Lloyd (6th year and captain), Amir Anwar and Louis Hoffman (6th year) Andrew Mays, Emmet Burns, Richard Dunne, David Fenn, Joe McAleese, Conor Dean, James Trueick, Rory Murphy (5th year), Ronan Mullen, Shane Keane and James Kelly (4th year) and JJ Garth (2nd year).



Past Pupils' Sports Star Luke Fitzgerald with Roghan McMahon, Sports Person of the Year, 2015