

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



October 2018

Dear Parents,

We marked the Feast Day (2nd October) of the co-founder of the Spiritan Congregation, Claude Poullart des Places, by a Whole School Assembly in the Sports Hall. It is important to bring our boys together. It strengthens community, reaffirms values, gives witness to our shared identity. It provides an occasion when our younger boys can sit with our 6th Years and see how they interpret and live the College mission. Role models are important; it is hard to be what you cannot see.

At the Assembly, **Peter Murphy** (6th Year) urged us not to underestimate how you **“affect the people around you, both positively and negatively”**. Peter reflected on his experience on Pastoral Placement (P.P.), in Transition Year, at the Royal Hospital Donnybrook where many of the elderly patients suffer from dementia or Alzheimers **“it is quite a grim place”**. Like many Transition Year boys who engage in the P.P. programme Peter discovered that **“he got much more from his service there than the help he gave”**. It is in giving that we receive.

Harry Hughes (6th Year) spoke about his retreat with 13 fellow 6th Years at Mount St. Joseph Abbey Roscrea and the impact it had upon him. He said that he learnt the importance of paying a compliment to another, to show appreciation for those around you. He challenged us: **“which three words would you want people to use to describe you? Live by them”**.

Powerful stuff. This is peer ministry at its finest. This is what we want from our boys, for our boys.

There are many within our student body who give so much be it at the Student Council, on the Green Schools or Student Wellbeing Committees, as House Captains, as Ministers of the Eucharist (18 have been commissioned this year) or as choristers, musicians, performers in the Arts or Sport. We ask them at the same time to share and acknowledge talent, to look for the good in others, to act with decency, integrity and propriety and to take time through their everyday gestures and actions to give more than they receive.

Encourage your sons to **reach – reach in** to themselves; build their faith, their spirit, so that they see God in all that they do; **reach out** to others; be that supreme encourager that Harry and Peter urge each one of us to be.

The recent visit of Fr. John Wambu, Principal of the Holy Ghost Mission School Machakos, to Blackrock reminded us of the difference we can make. Over the last eight years 6th Years, post Leaving Certificate, alongside their parents have built a school which now provides secondary education for those who previously would have had none. This is the **Fearless and Bold of Blackrock** in action. **Fearlessness** is taking that first step when you don't know where it may lead you. This is at the heart of missionary service. So many Spiritans **boldly** took that step in God's name. We must continue this tradition. Our boys, your sons, should see in the person of John Wambu, the difference we can make. The challenge is to encourage each boy to go beyond the usual, the expected. The Soup Run, SUAS and the St. Vincent de Paul are other examples of our faith in action.

We urge your son to find different ways, indeed to find new ways, to tackle social and environmental issues; to be proactive in the service of others, spurred on by Faith. This is **‘Fides et Robur’**.

Blackrock is a vibrant community; the pace and energy of Blackrock never abates. There is so much worthwhile activity - the Mental Health Awareness and Anti-bullying Days; the House Tens and Swimming Gala; Thursday Tunes and Literacy Day; Science and Art clubs; Family Masses and Retreats; Games and Debates, Rowing, Cycling and Running, the M.U.N. and E.Y.P. and of course the classroom activity that drives our curriculum.

It happens because of the extraordinary role models within the school. I thank the Spiritan community and our Support Staff who do phenomenal unseen work; our parents who give selflessly, many on committees; my teaching colleagues who share generously their expertise and of course the boys who are at the heart of all that we do.

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal

Photos from L to R :

- a) Tom Dwan (6th Year) at the Whole School Assembly
- b) Fionn Dougan (Fourth Year) at the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta
- c) Alex Cowdrey (3rd Year) Rock V St. Michael's



Second Year



Our new Second Years, the class of 2023, have begun their time in the College with great enthusiasm and are making excellent progress. The term began with approximately one third of the boys achieving the Principal's List on the weekly **Application Cards**. This improved steadily and by the end of October two thirds of the boys achieved a place on the Principal's List. Well done boys. These cards are an essential part of each boy's life in Blackrock. They are brought home every Monday by all boys and provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to affirm good practice and offer direction where needed.

Each boy also records on his card which **extra-curricular activities** he is involved in. These activities include rugby, table tennis, cross-country, squash, tennis, swimming, basketball, water polo, rowing, debating, MUN, Willow Wheelers, public speaking, chess, Science club, Art club, orchestra, choir, Jazz band, athletics and coder-dojo. We have excellent participation from our Second Years and we encourage each and every boy to participate in some sport or activity after class. Some of the activities and achievements of the term so far are summarised below.



Matthew Gadalloff and Ethan Leon-Ryan at the Whole School Assembly

In **Cross Country** we congratulate Jack Mc Glone on his bronze medal position in the Dublin Schools' Cross Country Championships. Over 200 boys took part in the race held in the Phoenix Park. Our team of Jack McGlone, Finn O'Neill, Ruairi Mc Intosh and Daniel Bennett collected the team event silver medal for their combined placings – a fantastic achievement.

In **Table Tennis**, Second Years competed in the Leinster Junior Classification Tournament and well done to Maitiú Heckmann who came second in the U15 category, and third in the U18 category.

In **Sailing**, we congratulate Oisín Tiernan, Niall Somers, Oscar Dougan and Diarmuid Monahan who were on the winning team in the Sailing Regatta in September.

Our Second Years are well represented in **Junior Debating** and **MUN**. A group of Second Years formed part of the Blackrock College MUN delegation in Terenure College at the end of September. In **Debating**, Ben Kieran-Glennon, Frazer McGinn, Daniel Keely and Alec Linklater all participated in the MACE Debates in Loreto St Stephen's Green with Ben Kieran-Glennon awarded the 9th overall best speaker out of 111 speakers competing in the debate. Well done boys.



(L-R) Conor Hughes, Ben Kieran-Glennon, Frazer McGinn & Conor Casey debating at UCD

The **House Captains** for the year, chosen at the end of First Year, were commissioned in the College Chapel in September. The Captains are Conor Ennis and Eoghan Walsh for De Valera House; Thomas Brigg and Jack McGlone for Duff; Jack Burke and James O Sullivan for Ebenrecht; Eric Brandt and Louis Dignam for Leman; Ethan Leon-Ryan and Jamie Rogan for McQuaid; and Olliver Coffey and David Doyle for Shanahan. These representatives play an important role in raising the student voice in the College. We congratulate these boys on their new responsibilities and wish them well in their service.

The new House Captains began their tenure in office with very efficient organisation of the **Rugby 10s in September** and congratulations to Andrew Quinn and his Duff squad on winning the House 10s 'A' Division, beating McQuaid, led by Padraig Hogan, in the Final. In the B Division, Leman, captained by Oisín Bohan, beat Shanahan, captained by Roman Sierra, in the final. Well done to all of our players on their great 'House spirit' and terrific participation.



Jack Tuite in action against CBC Monkstown

In the recent **Swimming** Gala congratulations go to the winning Shanahan House. Well done to Finn O'Neill who won the 50 metre open event and to James O Sullivan who came second. Congratulations also to Finn O'Neill who won the Junior Championship race in a new record time. Well done to all of our participating swimmers.



Oliver Coffey



Willoughby Woods

At our first **Anti-bullying Day** of the academic year, John Dwyer from stopcyberbullying.ie spoke to all Second Years and delivered some powerful messages about thinking before posting anything online. On **Mental Health Awareness Day** Joan Cafolla from the ISPCC gave an excellent presentation to all Second Years.



Thomas Eggers supported by Sam Lynam and Padraig Hogan.

For **Literacy Day** many of the Second years had the opportunity to hear author Dave Rudden speak about the power of words. We thank all those involved in the coordination of these days and especially Second Year students involved in the College Wellbeing Committee for their contribution.

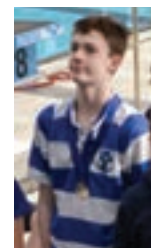
The **Family Mass** took place on 21st October with a great turn-out of boys, parents and family members. A large number of the boys provided different types of service for the liturgy, in reading, processing, in singing or through music. The theme was Mission, appropriate for Mission Sunday and for the history of the College. Our celebrant Fr Brendan Carr asked us to reflect on what our mission in life is and to remember that the Christian message is not about being important but about serving others. Sincere thanks to the organisers Mr Flor Madden, the Music teachers, the Religion teachers and especially the boys for contributing to such a wonderful celebration of community. Also during the first half term, each of the boys has had a meeting with the **Counsellor** for the year Mr Donal Brennan. This provides an opportunity to look at their school life from a reflective perspective.

We held a number of events for **Second Year parents** during this first half term. A large group of parents attended the Orientation Evening on 4th September. There was a great turn-out also for the first of three parents' seminars, held on 19th September. The topic was study skills, and was given by members of the group *Learning 4 Learning*. The talk was very well received and we are grateful to the Second Year **Parents' Committee** for organising this and future events.

As we reach the end of our first half term, we congratulate the Second Years on an excellent start in the College and wish them a well-earned rest over mid-term. We wish to remind you that 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 achievement.



Padraig Hogan who played for Dublin in the Under 14 Inter-County Festival of Hurling in Waterford.



Finn O'Neill won gold in the 400m freestyle in the Leinster Schools' Championships.

Dates for your Diary

College Musical:	Tuesday 20 – Friday 23 November
Irish Christmas Aurals:	Monday 26 November
Mod. Lang. Christmas Aurals:	Tuesday 27 November
Progress Cards:	Friday 30 November

Third Year



It has been a very positive start to the term with a great atmosphere amongst the Third Years. The group is slowly but surely adjusting to the extra demands of Junior Certificate, evidenced by the steady increase in students making the Principal's list week on week. I would encourage parents to review their son's card every Monday and monitor academic progress. I feel with the academic pressures this year it is vital all students have some engagement with the extra-curricular programme to get a chance to socialise and interact with their peers.



Back Row: Craig McDonnell, Odhran O' Connor, Jacques de Patoul & Mark Phelan. Front Row: Sean Patterson, Robert Fitzgerald, David MacHale & Alex English



Back Row: Colm Fagan, Matthew Harvey, Matthew Collins & Kevin Keane. Front Row: Alex Maguire, Sean de Burca & Joel Blancafort

The positive atmosphere was evident with the first main extra-curricular event of the year – the Inter House 10s competition. Third Years were out in great numbers for both the A and B blitz. In the A blitz Leman beat Ebenrecht in a terrific final. Cian Ryan won *Player of the Tournament*. There was some fantastic performance in the B blitz with again Leman captained by David MacHale, emerging victorious, beating Duff in the final. *Player of the Tournament* went to Joel Blancafort.

The U16 basketball team has had a great run so far this season. The team captained by Jimmy Gilligan had two wins from two in the All

Ireland Schools' Cup with victories over Coláiste an Phiarsigh Glanmire and Kilkenny CBS. The team also recorded a win of St Conleth's in the East Leinster League. The junior golf team including Matthew O' Brien was unfortunate not to make it out of their group in the Irish Junior Championship, but represented the school very well against tough opposition.

Congratulations to Hugh O' Connor who participated in the 2018 World Topper Championships. Against 222 sailors from around the world Hugh achieved a fantastic 2nd place overall. We had a number of students involved in the Annual Sailing Regatta. Congratulations to David Duffy who was a member of Team C who won the team event.

In athletics the junior team followed up their silver medal performance in the Phoenix Park, with an impressive display at the Brother Invitational Schools' Cross Country. Another notable performance was Eoin Dunne finishing 16th in the intermediate category.

In public speaking our junior team including James Carroll and Michael White did very well and no doubt gained a lot from their participation in the



Third Years Spectate (JCTV St Michael's)

recent National Mace competition in Belvedere up against 64 teams. They face 111 speakers in the next round held in Loreto on the Green.



JCTV St Michael's

I would like to thank our Student Wellbeing Committee members: Sam Cahill, Andrew Harvey, Matthew Kane and Marcus Noble for all the work they have done in organising our recent Anti-bullying Day and Mental Health Awareness days. The committee was responsible for the school being awarded the Amber Flag for Promoting Mental Health. I was delighted with the students' response to *Phone Free Friday* with 44 students voluntarily handing in their phones on the first Friday. I have recently purchased board games to keep them busy at break time every Friday. Two weeks in it has been great to see students no longer glued to their phones and interacting with each other!

Finally well done to the students who sacrificed study time to attend the College Swimming Gala. There was a terrific buzz in the pool with DeValera winning overall. Jamie Blackburn won the 50m open event in what was a very close race.

A special word of thanks to the Third Year house captains: Eoin Dunne, Conor Reidy, Colm Fagan, Federico Mei, James Boland, Ryan Holmes, Will Fitzgerald, Charlie O' Brien, Andrew McCarthy, Patrick Van Zuydam, Joe Broderick and Michael White. They have been great in their organisation of the house events. They have shown great leadership to the year group and in our regular meetings, have not been afraid to offer feedback and advice to the Dean!



Third Years at the Whole School Assembly

Dates for your Diary

5th November – Progress Cards due home.
11th November – Third Year Family Mass
30th November – Progress Cards
13th December – Regulation Exams begin

Transition Year



Blackrock College Radio

Preparations are well under way for BCR 2018. Our studio managers are already working on the schedule for this year's broadcast and ready for work on our pre-recorded shows once we return from mid-term. Hopefully at the time of reading we may even be ahead of ourselves and have some recording already done! We hope you all will tune in when we go live on Monday 19th – Friday 23rd November. Students have been doing fantastic work to date for the wide variety of shows we will air: from News and Current Affairs, Sports, Language Show, Wellbeing, Mental Health, Guest Schools, amongst many others. We will broadcast on 97.3fm and stream live on the College website.

Junior Certificate Results

Congratulations to all students in Transition Year and their parents on what were very good results across the year group in the Junior Certificate. Transition Year offers the boys a wonderful opportunity to build on these results, apply the lessons learned and put a major effort into exploring the best subject choice for themselves for the Leaving Certificate. 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. The Barista Course has been so popular we require four different groupings to accommodate everyone! I would remind students that if they are unable to attend a particular class they should let Mr O'Neill or Mr Grant know.



Tuesday Tours

On Tuesday 11th of September Transition Years went out on their first tours to Croke Park GAA Museum and Stadium Tour, *The Awesome Walls* climbing centre, Jumpzone and Skillzone. The next set of tours is on Tuesday 6th November.

Lecture Series

In the second week of the term all students attended a workshop with Mr Denis Hevey on leadership and self-motivation. The workshop aims to help students develop resilience and stress management strategies. The feedback from these workshops was, as always, fantastic. There will be a follow up workshop for all students after Christmas. On Thursday 27th November Transition Years received a talk from John Dwyer around the importance of staying safe online and their digital footprint. On Tuesday 9th October we all attended the AXA Road Safety Show. It was a hugely

Transition Year



powerful presentation on Road Safety with representatives from the Gardaí, Ambulance and Fire Service and an A&E doctor addressing the students. On Thursday 11th October as part of Mental Health Awareness Day Transition Years attended a talk by Alan O'Mara who spoke powerfully about his own mental health journey and what the students can do to look after both themselves and each other.



Gaisce

Gaisce is the President's Award that challenges students to conquer new personal skills and to serve in their communities. To date we have had a great number of students giving up their weekends to help in variety of great volunteer projects. As you will read in the charity work section below the spirit of service within this TY group is fantastic and we look forward to continuing to see it flourish over the course of the year!

Matthew 25

To date three groups have been out on their two week Pastoral Placement. It has been great to meet the students on their return for debriefing on a Friday afternoon and see the enthusiasm with which they speak of their experience. Some of the feedback we have received from the Matthew 25 locations has been superb and makes us very proud. The feedback from Mr Madden to date has been excellent and we thank him for his tireless work with the groups so far. The next group are due to go out on 26th November, with preparation classes beginning after mid-term.

Charity Work

The students have already been very busy with charity work. 21 students volunteered to help with the Hospice Collection on the 20th September. The students raised €1,680.78 for Blackrock Hospice - "We're currently undertaking a project to upgrade our patient's rooms here at Blackrock Hospice, so I can't explain enough the difference this amount will make." On Friday 5th and Saturday 6th of October we had over 60 TY students out collecting for Operation Smile and Down Syndrome Ireland. Again they proved to be great ambassadors for the College.

Coding Module

In the modern world, computer literacy, coding and the ability to solve problems using computational thinking are becoming more popular and sought-after skills. To paraphrase Steve Jobs: Everyone should learn how to program a computer as it teaches you how to think. So far this term, two classes of Transition Year students have completed the week-long intensive IT and Coding module with Mr O'Connell. During this week, students learned about the history of Computer Science and created online interactive timelines using JavaScript. They got hands-on experience building computers and developed fluency in Binary, the internal language of computers. During the module, classes learned how to programme mobile applications and had the opportunity to create their own unique applications and demo them on their own Android and Apple smartphones. The classes also experienced programming using real-world coding languages such as Python, HTML, and CSS. Students tracked their learning by setting up an e-portfolio which they updated daily by sharing photographs, links, videos and blog posts. The IT and Coding module is an exciting new addition to our Transition Year programme.



Blackrock Hospice Collection Team

Other Activities

A large number of students applied to get involved in the Willow Park 5th Form Musical with the group selected scheduled to begin work after midterm. We have had a number of students taking part in the St. Vincent's University Hospital 'So you want to be a Doctor' programme and we have more students taking part in the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown STEM Camp on Thursday afternoons. The parents' website team has been busy producing content for the parents' section of the website. Ten TY students volunteered at the Willow Park Duel in the Pool event on the 17th October and twenty more volunteers have signed up to assist Willow Park STEM Week taking place the week beginning 12th November. The volunteer rate of this year's TY group is to be commended. It is



Winners of House 10s Leman Team :
Back Row: Niall Brophy, Peter McDermott,
Scott Barron, Oscar O'Brien
Front Row: David Hale, Christian Thoms,
James Culhane, Alex Simpson.

a fantastic problem to be consistently oversubscribed.

Extra-Curricular

Transition Years for the first time won the Karl Ashe Gaelic Football trophy on Friday 7th September against the 6th Year day boys. It was a super game played in a fantastic spirit and a fitting tribute. There was an excellent turn out for both the House 10s Competition on the 8th September and the swimming gala on the 18th October. Spectators on the side line were witness to some fantastic rugby played in a great spirit. Leman, captained by James Culhane emerged victorious in the final with James Donohue awarded player of the tournament.



TY Team, Winners of the Karl Ashe Trophy

Well done to Conor Bleakley, Matthew Keeley, John O'Toole Cawley and Mark O'Brien who were interviewed by members of the **Dun Laoghaire Rotary Club** as part of their youth leadership competition. The students were each interviewed for 20 minutes which in itself can be very challenging. The feedback from the interviewers was fantastic; "...the standard was exceptionally high and they are a credit to the school." Well done to Conor who was selected to go forward to the next round – we wish him well.

Swimming Gala

Congratulations to Ethan Murtagh and Adam O'Reilly who came 1st and 2nd respectively in the Principal's race. Ethan narrowly missed out on setting a new record time but both performed fantastically – well done to them both.

Transition Year students have been involved in both **Senior and Junior Basketball** teams who have had a very good start to the season. We have a very talented TY Group with Fergal Keane, Pablo Villarroja, Nico Col and Todd Blacklaw all putting in impressive performances at both U-19 and U-16 levels! In golf Alex Bolger has been flying the flag for TY in the Senior Golf Team in the Leinster Championships.

Transition Year is also well represented in the **College's Model United Nations Society** as they attended the Terenure College Conference with Joey Haughton,

Conor Slattery, Matthew Keeley and Michael Lucey all representing TY. Congratulations to Michael Lucey and Matthew Keeley who both achieved Distinguished Delegates Awards.



Jeff Larkin (House 10s)

We have 12 students in the cast for the Rathdown School Musical production of 'Sister Act' which will take place on January 30th and 31st. 15 students are involved in the Cluny Musical *Footloose* which, as you read, will have taken place just before the midterm. I'm sure at that point we will have been treated to a top class show!

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



TY students at the Whole School Assembly

Dates for your Diary

6th November – Transition Year Tours
19th – 23rd November – Blackrock College Radio
30th November – St Vincent De Paul Soccer marathon
6th December – 4th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
9th December – TY Family Mass
13th December – Christmas Exams
15th December – Hamper Delivery for Saint Vincent De Paul

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

It has been a very busy half-term and in addition to focussing on academic progress, the students have been notably and enthusiastically involved in a number of activities and some of these are summarised here.

Career Guidance

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

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 economist and author Mr David Williams (Class of 1983), Principal Mr Alan MacGinty, Ms Natasha Drew, Head of the Career Guidance and Counselling Department and a number of past pupils addressed many aspects of future educational and career opportunities as well as the supportive role of parents in their sons' career choices.

Day of Reflection

On Tuesday 9th October students were very welcoming of the opportunity to pause and reflect. They travelled to four different retreat centres availing of the time away from the daily routine to reflect in a meaningful and spiritual way. The day was deemed by the students to be exceptionally worthwhile and rewarding and we thank Mr Flor Madden, the RE Department and the House Captains for their successful co-ordination of the day.



Fifth Year Retreat Day Selfie! Tom O'Connor with the retreat leader at the Dominican Priory, Tallaght.

Commissioning of House Captains

On Tuesday 2nd October, all students attended a ceremony in the College Chapel where their twelve House Captains were commissioned by Fr. Paddy Moran CSSp. The Captains are commended for their efficient organisation of the Rugby 10s in September and the Swimming Gala and we wish them well with their future leadership duties.



Fifth Year House Captains

Bullying Awareness and Mental Health Awareness

On Anti-bullying 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 and encouraged students to seek help when needed.

Mental Health Awareness Day this term reinforced the message that it is *ok not to feel ok* and Students were addressed by past pupil Con Sheehan (Class of 2010) who shared his own experience of facing his anxieties and fears and encouraged students to realise that knowing how to look after their mental health daily is as important as looking after their physical health. We congratulate and thank those students involved in the College Wellbeing Committee for their contribution to these days.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Fifth Year students have been very engaged and active in all areas of the Games' Programme and Extra-Curricular activities. This is to be commended and encouraged as it provides great balance for academic work as well as providing opportunities to further develop vital social, communication and team-work skills. Rehearsals for the College Musical are in full swing and training is ongoing in all sports including

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

Choir / Orchestra / Music

Fifth Year members of both the Leman and Liberman choirs, together with members of the orchestra, led their peers excellently at House Captain commissioning and the Whole School Assembly. Their poise and presence contributed wonderfully to the overall sense of community created by the Assembly. Auditions for the Leman Concert 2019 are in full swing and we wish all Fifth Years well and the best of luck for this highly coveted stage event.



Art Club

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

Model UN/Debating

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

Fifth Year was well represented in the Blackrock College MUN delegation in Terenure College at the end of September. The conference was filled with much debate and discussion. The delegates are looking forward to their next conference in Rathdown and hosting their own in the coming months.

Cross Country

The senior cross country team has good Fifth Year membership. The season's opening race was the Clonliffe Harrier Brother Schools' Cross Country Open and the senior team was happy with their start in this highly competitive race. We wish them continued success.

Golf

A number of outings and trials so far this year have led to success for the Fifth Years who have qualified for the All Ireland U18 competition and finished leading qualifiers in the Irish Schools' Senior Championship. We wish them well as they look forward to the Quarter Final Match Play in Lucan Golf Club.

We congratulate Robert Galligan who has been selected for the National GUI U18 panel and wish him well.

Basketball

Victories against St. Conleth's and St. Andrew's have set the senior basketball squad up well for this season's Cup and League campaigns. We wish them well.

House Rugby

The House Rugby teams have had an excellent start to the season with training match victories against Belvedere and Roscrea just some of the highlights so far. Fifth Year members of the SCT have also has a strong start to their season with victories over Newington, Sydney and Campbell College, Belfast and all are hopeful and well prepared for the upcoming Methody festival. All Fifth Year players have been training hard and are looking forward to the rest of the season.



Year Rugby 10s Tournament Winners – DeValera

The Inter-House Rugby 10s tournament on a blustery, Saturday in September was a great occasion and was enjoyed by all. DeValera beat Leman by one score in the final and Matthew Cullen received the *Player of the Tournament* award.

Fifth Year Cont'd



Senior Soccer

The Fifth Year members of the senior soccer squad were delighted with their FAIS Leinster Cup first round win against MacDara's, Templeogue. We wish them the best of luck as the League and Cup continue and for their upcoming tour to St. Bede's in Manchester.



Fifth Year House Rugby 10s Tournament

Swimming Gala

Thursday 18th October witnessed high numbers of Fifth Years turn out for The College Swimming Gala. We thank the House Captains for their help with the organisation and congratulate all involved.

Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy

Early in the term Fifth Years were valiant in their efforts to win the Karl Ashe Memorial Trophy. Their spirit and skill were commendable and all were gracious in defeat. A competition that was more than a fitting tribute to Karl Ashe.

Green Schools

Blackrock College now boasts four Green Flags for recycling, energy, water and biodiversity. We commend the strong contingent of Fifth Years involved in the Green Schools' Committee for their relentless efforts in promoting responsible, proactive behaviours throughout the College and wish them luck as they lead the campaign of awareness around single-use plastics.

Archie Ryan

Congratulations to Archie Ryan who represented Ireland at the ICI World Cycling Championships in Innsbruck, Austria. To cap off a great competitive year, Archie has delightfully secured place riding with Zappi Racing for the coming year.

Charles Cullen

Charles Cullen has had a busy term sailing, competing and performing extremely well in the Junior Helman's Competition, the National Laser 4.7 competition and the National Adults WASP competition. Charles is now National Champion at U18 and second only to his coach in the adult category. We commend him for this fabulous achievement and wish him continued success.



Fifth Year students celebrating European Day of Languages 26th September 2018

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

Dates for your Diary

Career Plan Submission Date:	Friday 09 November
College Musical:	Tuesday 20 – Friday 23 November
Irish Christmas Aurals:	Monday 26 November
Mod. Lang. Christmas Aurals:	Tuesday 27 November
Progress Cards:	Friday 30 November

The Arts



Art

On Wednesday the 26th of September members of the College Art Club visited the National Gallery of Ireland to view the Roderic O'Conor exhibition. The Art Club meets each Wednesday and is open to all students.



FRAMED 2018



AN EXHIBITION OF RECENT WORK BY SIXTH YEAR



Alex O' Meara (3rd Year)

The 2018/19 student exhibition series started with FRAMED, a selection of new work by Sixth Years. This display of vibrant creativity continues in the 6th Year Rec Area.

Second and Third Year artists displayed their work on Literacy Day in the CADLC. Their work both embraced and reflected the theme of *The Power of Words*.

From the 8th to the 12th of October an exhibition of student photography was



held in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. This work formed part of the college entry to the 2019 Mental Health Ireland Photography Competition.

A number of Transition Year art students visited the Willow Park art room to show and discuss their recently returned Junior Cert projects with the First Years.

Music

**"Over my head, I hear music
in the air..."**



An outstanding oil painting by Ruairi Moore (6th Year)

The Music and Drama programme got off to a flying start this term, and as always, the schedule of events is jam-packed. The 6th Year Family Mass took place on the 23rd of September, and was a truly uplifting and reflective celebration. The liturgy was ably supported and enhanced with music from the 6th Year Choir and Instrumental Ensemble. The Whole School Assembly followed on from this on

The Arts Cont'd



the 2nd of October, where the Leman Choir and College Orchestra led the congregation in song, concluding with a spirited rendition of the College Anthem, *Go Ye Afar*. Most recently, the 2nd Year Choir and Instrumentalists sang and played beautifully on the joyous occasion of their Family Mass.



Mathew Kane and Colum Corless (3rd Year) playing at the Whole School Assembly

Every Thursday, a selection of students and staff members gather together in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre for *Thursday Tunes*. This weekly event is in an 'open-mic' format, where all are encouraged to both perform and listen to others. A special 'sing-along' version of *Thursday Tunes* took place during Mental Health Awareness Week. The hearty participation of the audience in numbers such as *Lean on Me* and *Don't Worry, Be Happy*, caused music to quite literally fill the air of the College. Once again, the power of music to reach out to all was affirmed, irrespective of genre of technical capability. We were delighted to be joined by the Willow Park Singers for this Thursday Tunes, who came up to sing in the College and join in for their first time.



Thursday Tunes in the CADLC: Thursday 6th September – Oisín Reid (6th Year)

Intense rehearsals for *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat* are well underway, and it promises to be an all-singing, all-dancing musical extravaganza. We look forward, with great anticipation, to the opening night on the 19th November. Tickets will be on sale after the mid-term break.



Thursday Tunes in the CADLC: Thursday 11th November – Mental Health Awareness Day.

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

Junior Debating, Senior Debating and Model United Nations

On Saturday 28th of September, James Carroll and Alec Linklater, and Ben Kieran-Glennon and Michael White competed in the Belvedere MACE Competition. No Blackrock team made it to the final, but it was a valuable learning experience for all involved.

Conor Casey and Conor Hughes, and Ben Kieran-Glennon and Frazer McGinn competed in the UCD Prepared Debate, on Thursday 27th September.

Three teams (James Carroll & Alec Linklater, Daniel Keely & Frazer McGinn, and Ben Kieran-Glennon & Michael White) competed in the Loreto MACE Competition, held on Saturday 13th October. Ben Kieran-Glennon was in the top ten speakers in the event.

The next event is the UCD Prepared Debate on Thursday 18th October. Conor Casey and Conor Hughes, and Frazer McGinn & Ben Kieran-Glennon will participate.

Blackrock College Junior Debating meets at lunch on Mondays, in classroom 2.8, and new members are very welcome.

The Leinster Debating Championships are well underway and the **Senior Debating** society has entered four teams to compete in Trinity College.

Mark McGrane and John Huggard (5th Year) advanced to the second round of the competition along with Dylan Hutchinson and Niall Meagher (6th Year). All represented the College, debating the motion, 'That this house would cut government funding for the Arts.'

Our other two teams comprising Drummond McGinn and Tom Dooley; Michael Ryan and Max McKenna have also advanced to the second round. Well done.

The Terenure **Model United Nations** conference is always a great start to the MUN calendar. Every year new members and old members experience the unique style of debate and discussion that comes part and parcel with Model United Nations. And this year was no different. We had three delegations this time around, Croatia, the United Kingdom and Uruguay, evidence of the swelling of popularity that MUN has had in the Blackrock College student body in recent years. The delegates of these countries spent Friday evening and Saturday debating wide-ranging, topical issues from Peacekeeping Reform to the Question of South Sudan. The students of Blackrock College did an excellent job of maintaining high standards of debate, especially given that many were in quite an alien environment and stepping out of their comfort zones. Two delegates, Michael Lucey and Matthew Keeley both in Transition Year, achieved Distinguished Delegate awards in recognition for the efforts they made in committee. The school also had Mark McGrane, Tom Dooley and Oliver Bosworth from 5th Year representing it as chairs in SOCHUM, Security Council and Ecology and Environment respectively. With all the new members having now experienced a full MUN conference it is safe to predict a very fruitful year of MUN.

Literacy Day

Events to mark Literacy Day began on Friday 28th September with a visit from author Dave Rudden for all of our 2nd Years. Dave has been a regular for us here in Blackrock and never fails to deliver a captivating and hilarious talk to our students. 2nd Year student Henry Igbinomwanhia was the lucky recipient of a copy of Dave's first book 'Knights of the Borrowed Dark' for asking the most interesting question – If you could get rid of two of your books, which ones would they be?



Paul Howard talking to Transition Years

Transition Years were treated to a reading from Ross O' Carroll-Kelly author Paul Howard, where he combined some Ross stories with snippets of his upcoming book 'Dancing with the Tsars'. He answered a series of questions from students and staff and was both an entertaining and engaging speaker.

Ms Kelleher introduced us to Table Topics, where each person participating talked for up to two minutes on a given subject. Mr MacGinty started the session off by extolling the merits of sea swimming over swimming in a pool. Thank you to all of our brave students and staff for taking part! The next Table Topics Session will take place on Thursday November 8th at 12.50 in the CADLC. All welcome.



Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2018



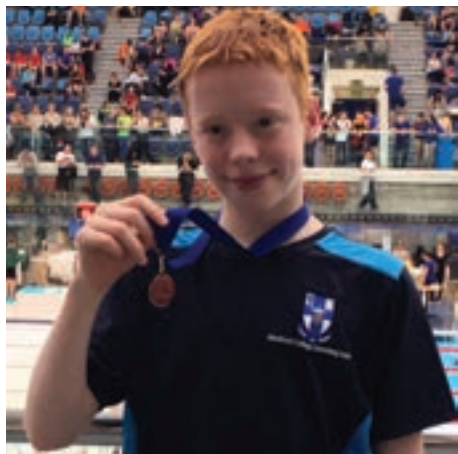
Some of our Rowers at Blessington Lakes



Tim Darcy (6th Year) and Jude O' Reilly (4th Year) - Belvedere V SCT



Sean Dempsey, Oscar O' Brien and Alex Simpson (4th Yr.) and Mark Foster (5th Yr.) - House Rugby (Blackrock V Belvedere)



Ronan Fahey (2nd Year) came 3rd in 100m Breaststroke at the Leinster Gala Swim



Mr T. Ryan and Mr Vanstone at the House 10s Rugby Blitz



Will Fitzgerald, Charlie O' Brien and Cian O' Brien (3rd Year) - JCTV Gonzaga



John Kirby (6th Year) and Scott Barron (4th Year) -SCTV Belvedere



Andrew Russell, Cian Murphy and Mike Hayes (6th Year) House 10s Rugby Blitz



Conor Stephens (2nd Year) Rugby Blitz



Matthew Wood and Liam Heylin (5th Year) - Belvedere V SCT



Freddie Noonan (4th Yr.) and Luke Lee (6th Yr.) playing in the Orchestra at the Whole School Assembly



Peter Murphy (6th Year) playing the Oboe in the Orchestra at the Whole School Assembly

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2018



Alex Crowley (2nd Year) at the Sailing Regatta



Second Year team (Duff House) winners of the House 10s Rugby Blitz



Colm Hogan (5th Yr.) Niall Somers (2nd Yr.),
Alex Finlay (3rd Yr.) Conor Stephens (2nd Yr.)
David Duffy (3rd Yr.) Finn Sheehan (4th Yr.)



Jack McGlone and his family at the
Second Year Family Mass



Zach Quirke and Ruben Maloney (3rd Year) - JCT V
Gonzaga



Jack O'Connell and Andrew Quinn accepting the
Winning Cup from Ms Harlowe (Dean of 2nd Year)
at the Rugby House 10s



Andrew McSweeney, Conor Slattery, Michael Lucey, Matthew Keeley,
Joey Houghton (4th Year) at Terenure MUN Conference



Ethan Murtagh (4th Year) winner of the
President's Trophy at the Swimming Gala



The Commissioning of the 6th Year House Captains at the Whole School
Assembly



On Your MarksBlackrock College Swimming Gala.

Archives Update



I have been working with a writer and photographer (Joseph McBrinn and Jozef Voda) over the past few months as they put together a biography of extremely talented Irish stained glass artist Evie Hone (1894-1955).



Evie Hone by Hilda van Stockum.

Blackrock College has a striking number and variety of stained glass pieces throughout the school from different artists, studios and time periods, from the beautiful rose window above the organ from Clarke studios, to the stunning Pentecost triptych in the Castle oratory by Hone herself. This is one of 6 windows or sets throughout the college commissioned from Hone.

We began to email back and forth to confirm which pieces by Hone were in the College, when they were created, and their subject or content. Fr. Sean Farragher's thorough college histories and written notes by him and Caroline Mullan were of great use to me, as much of the history of the stained glass at Blackrock was not familiar to me.



Middle window of Pentecost three-light window in Castle Oratory

A set of three bottle glass windows (at the rear of the chapel), a window featuring the crests of the missionary bishops who were Blackrock alumni (in the foyer of the chapel), the lunette window depicting Pere Leman dedicating the College to Our Lady and the Divine child, and the College Crest window at the south end of the main hall all date from 1937, when they were commissioned by school President Fr. John Charles McQuaid.

The three Pentecost windows (one pictured) in the Castle Oratory was commissioned from Hone by the College Union in 1941 to commemorate Dr.

McQuaid's appointment as Archbishop of Dublin.

Finally, we have an abstract stained glass window, a memorial by Evie Hone to her colleague Mainie Jellett. This is situated in the Staff Dining Hall. This piece had actually been moved during a demolition at the Spiritan Provincialate Kimmage in the 1990s. This piece was brought to Blackrock



Pentecost window cartoon, now on display in student dining hall.

and installed at the time, with an extra foot of stained glass made to imitate Hone's technique. This was to fit it into the existing window in the dining hall. This piece is exceptionally beautiful and unusual when viewed next to Hone's more traditional glasswork in her other pieces.

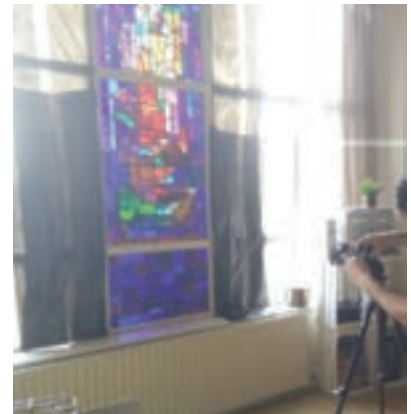
Blackrock College was of special interest to McBrinn because we are fortunate to have acquired the very rare "cartoon" (an initial sketch of the windows at full size, indicating colours and design) of the Pentecost windows, which is displayed in the Student Dining Hall.

Another precious piece is the initial small sketch of the same windows, which can be seen framed in St. Patrick's Corridor. These pieces are invaluable and extremely rare, as they give us a look into the artistic process of Hone.



Pentecost window initial sketch, now on display in St. Patrick's Corridor.

Voda spent many hours with me professionally photographing the windows for the project. Stained glass is very tricky to photograph well, and we ran into some unique problems with the light exposure, especially with the Mainie Jellett piece. We eventually resorted to blacking out the surrounding windows with black bin bags! Huge thanks to all Sodexo catering team for allowing us to get this photo for the book.



Both writer and photographer were extremely grateful to Blackrock College for allowing them to study these many wonderful pieces. I am looking forward to reading the book about Evie Hone, as she led an interesting but very difficult life, tragically orphaned as a teenager, and suffering for years with health problems. A wonderful short film about Hone's life and artistic technique can be found on the IFI Player: <https://ifiplayer.ie/hallowed-fire-the-art-of-evie-hone/>



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

6th Year Retreats

The 6th Year Retreat Programme took place between Sunday 23th and Tuesday 25th of September. It began on the Sunday morning when a very large attendance joined in the celebration of a Mass for Families of Sixth Year students led by Fr. Paddy Moran. The weather was kind for this year's retreat and the positive feedback provided by the students and the retreat directors showed clearly the benefit of taking time out, in small groups, for prayer, reflection and discussion at the start of a very busy year for the Class of 2019.

Many thanks to Mr. Flor Madden for his organisation of the 6th Year Retreats, one of the highlights of the final year in Blackrock for students. Many thanks also to the members of the teaching staff who agreed to accompany the students for these days away.

During the Family Mass, David Gallagher, Harry Hughes, Joe Thornton, Ross O'Reilly, Cian Murphy & Stephen Dunne were commissioned as Ministers of the Eucharist for the academic year. These were joined by Ronan McGoldrick, Liam Fitter, Diarmuid Foley and Cianan Quinn who were commissioned at the Boarders' Mass on Saturday 22nd September and by Ben White, Conor O'Neill, Drummond McGinn and Dylan Hutchinson who were commissioned during the 2nd Year Family Mass on Mission Sunday October 21st. We thank Ms McGlynn and Ms Crimmins our College chaplains, for their preparation of the boys and the students for undertaking this important ministry of service within the College community.

Lourdes

Five members of the Class of 2019 participated in the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes between the 7th and 12th of September. Diarmuid Foley, David Gallagher, James Gibney, Robert Kelly and Mark O'Donoghue accompanied by Mr Garry Sullivan spent a busy but most rewarding few days in the company of VIPs (Very Important Pilgrims) who needed special assistance. We thank them for undertaking this ministry and for being such fine ambassadors for the College during their time away.

Careers

Since the start of term, all 6th Years have received the results of the Centigrade Test undertaken in 5th Year and have received a copy of the CAO handbook for 2019 from Ms. Drew. On Wednesday 12th September the full year group attended the Higher Options Conference at the RDS and there was general agreement that this was a worthwhile experience. A number of students have also signed up to attend a HPAT Preparation Course which started in the College on Saturday 29th September and will continue after mid-term. Career talks looking at the options of study in UCD and the United States have already been offered to the Class of 2019 and talks from other third level colleges in Ireland will follow after mid-term.



Joe Thornton and his parents at the Sixth Year Family Mass



Joe Thornton, Harry Hughes, David Gallagher, Ross O'Reilly, Cian Murphy, Stephen Dunne



Mr Garry Sullivan, David Gallagher, Diarmuid Foley, Mark O'Donoghue, Robert Kelly, James Gibney, Fr. Damian Farnan

Whole School Assembly

On Tuesday 2nd October, the Class of 2019 demonstrated excellent leadership in reading, singing, music and participation as Fr. Cormac O'Brolchain and Mr MacGinty led the whole school community in officially marking the start of the school year. During this assembly, Fr. Cormac commissioned the Sixth Year House Representatives. The twelve students elected to represent 6th Year for 2018/2019 are Liam Fitter & James Gibney (DeValera); Tim D'Arcy & Tom Dwan (Duff); Gavin Jones & Shore Oluborode (Ebenrecht); Donal McKeon & Ross O'Reilly (Leman); Diarmuid Foley & Peter Murphy (McQuaid); Greg Doyle & Harry Keyes (Shanahan) and the Libermann Cup for the Best Overall House for 2017/2018 was awarded to Liam and James on behalf of DeValera House. All present were also addressed by Harry Hughes who spoke of his retreat experience in Roscrea and by Peter Murphy spoke of the impact that the Matthew 25 Programme in TY has had on the way he engages with people.

House Events

In this half-term there have been two major inter-House events. We congratulate the House Representatives on their work in getting such high numbers to participate in both the 6th Year Rugby 10s and the Swimming Gala. In a wonderful House 10s Rugby Final, Shanahan captained by Luke Mion defeated DeValera in extra-time while DeValera House gained some consolation by winning the Swimming Gala on Thursday 18th October.



Shanahan (captained by Luke Mion) - 6th Year House 10s Winners 2018

Karl Ashe GAA Tournament

Having defeated the Castle Boarders in the semi-final, and despite a strong second half comeback, the 6th Year Dayboys were beaten by a most impressive Transition Dayboy team by 5-10 to 2-09 in a very competitive Karl Ashe GAA final on the Front Lawn on Friday 17th September. We congratulate TY on their first victory in this completion and many thanks to Donal McKeon and Michael Callaghan for organising the 6th Year teams.



Shanahan (Winners) & DeValera (Runners-Up) - 6th Year 10s 2018



6th Year Dayboys Karl Ashe Squad

Promoting Positive Mental Health

Since 13th September a new flag has been flying by the front lawn. This is the Amber Flag promoting positive mental health that our Student Wellbeing Committee, led by Shore Oluborode and Ben W Brown earned for the College. On Thursday 11th October, this flag flew from the Clock Tower as part of the whole school focus on Mental Health Awareness Day. On this day, the 6th Year group was addressed by David Corkery, capped 27 times for Ireland, voted Irish player of the Rugby World Cup in 1995 and who had to retire due to injury at 27 years of age. In a very open and challenging presentation David spoke of his life journey, of his Dad's untimely death and how a phone call from a relative stranger changed his life. A very powerful and well received speaker to support this year's theme that 'It's OK not to feel OK'.

Academic Activities

Since the start of the academic year all 6th Year Geography students have undertaken the Field Trip that forms the central part of their Leaving Certificate project. The English Department arranged for all HL English students to attend a performance of Macbeth at the Mill Theatre, Dundrum and the Agricultural Science class undertook their second field work investigation on a tillage farm. The Senior Science quiz took

Sixth Year Cont'd



place on October 4th with Sam O'Carroll emerging as the overall winner. There will be three 6th Year Science Quiz teams entered in the year's All Ireland qualifying series. Finally as we move towards mid-term, both the Irish and Modern Language departments have been organising the first set of practice Orals for all. These orals provide a wonderful opportunity for 6th Year students and the feedback provided by examiners is most valuable.

Extra-Curricular Activities

There is a high level of 6th Year participation in the extra-curricular programme of the College with enthusiastic involvement throughout the Games, Music and Debating Programmes, while preparations for this year's senior musical, 'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' have been gathering pace.

The Senior Soccer Team, captained by Peter Quinlan, has moved confidently through two fixtures in the Leinster Senior Cup and will play Colaiste Eanna away in the next round. We wish the squad continued success.

The SCT has made an encouraging start to the season and on October 18th travelled to Belfast to participate in the Methody Rugby Festival. This was a most enjoyable and valuable learning experience for the squad with victory over the hosts in the semi-final being the high point. Unfortunately this was followed by defeat in the final to St. Michael's, a pointer to the challenges that lie ahead in 2019.

Our Senior Basketball (captained by Robert Brusasca), while narrowly defeated by St. Paul's Monasterevin in Round 2 of the All-Ireland U19 Cup have made a promising start to their Leinster campaign. In Golf, our Senior Team (captained by Cathal French) were the leading qualifiers in the Irish Schools' Senior Matchplay Championships, while in senior Debating, Dylan Hutchinson, Michael Ryan, Niall Meagher, Max McKenna and Drummond McGinn have all made it through to the second round of the Leinster Debating Championships.

Other achievements of note since our return at the end of August include... Andy Lyons who captained Bohemians to victory in the U19 FAI Cup Final and was a member of the Ireland U19 squad that topped its qualifying group for the European championships with victory over the Netherlands. Ed Brennan and David Fitzgibbon who have been selected for the IRFU U19 squad. JJ Garth who played for the Ireland 'A' Cricket Team against Bangladesh. Ben Murphy who won MVP at the Junior Touch Rugby European Championships. Peter Murphy who was placed 2nd in Leinster and 4th in Ireland in Schools Combined Athletics and Conor McAleer and Oisín Reid who were members of the Greystones GC U18 squad who won the Leinster Clubs Medal and competed in the All Ireland Final in Tramore. Congratulations to all.

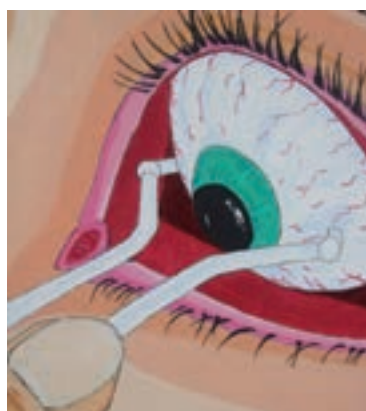
A Selection of 6th Year Art Work



Cameron Carton



Jun Park



Theo Stephens-Kehoe

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

Ms Natasha Drew will give a talk on the CAO Application process to the 6th Year Parents on Tuesday November 6th at 7.30pm in the Lecture Hall. It is hoped that as many parents as possible will be able to attend this most informative and helpful evening.

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

Green Schools



Plastic Free Blackrock College

SAY NO TO SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

The Green Schools' committee has had a very eventful and productive start to the school year.

The committee has been selected and we have already hosted several workshops focusing on plastic consumption and pollution. The events were facilitated by Ms. Sue Adams.

The committee has also taken part in a beach clean-up with Willow Park First Year and Junior Schools and our goal this year is to receive the 'Global Citizenship Marine Flag' which is mainly focusing on achieving a *Plastic Free Blackrock*. We are very much looking forward to achieving the status of a plastic free school by the end of next year.

Hopefully this can be achieved through close cooperation between students, staff and parents throughout the school community.

We must always remember, the Earth does not belong to us: we belong to the Earth.



Green Flag Ceremony with House Captains from 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th Years



TY Students at the Plastic Free Workshop



Robert McNabb and Tom O'Connor
Cross Campus Beach Clean-up



Cross Campus Green Schools Group Beach Clean-up

Parent Seminars

The year began with the 5th Year Parents' Career Seminars, held over two evenings in September. The first event was chaired by Mr John Rogan (Class of 1989), President of Blackrock College Union. The Guest Speakers on the evening were Mr David McWilliams (Class of 1983), economist, author and broadcaster, who presented "Career Opportunities in the Current Economic Climate" and the school Principal Mr Alan MacGinty who presented "The Educational Objectives of Blackrock College". The seminar was a wonderful success, with a great number of parents in attendance. A copy of Mr MacGinty's presentation is available for downloading in the parents' section of the school website. The second career seminar "Equipping our Students with Skills for the Future Workplace" was hosted by the Blackrock College Union and chaired by past pupil and Blackrock Union Committee member Declan O'Sullivan (Class of 1985). Three past pupils, Robert Connolly (Class of 1999), Robert Dee (Class of 1992) and James McElroy (Class of 2009), detailed their own individual career path to date and addressed the key skills required for their career areas in the present day. A highly enjoyable and informative evening.



Mr John Rogan, (Class Of 1989) President of Blackrock College Union, Principal Mr Alan MacGinty and Guest Speaker Mr David McWilliams, Economist, Author & Broadcaster

CAO

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



Students who register for the CAO between 5th November and 20th January will pay a reduced fee of €30. The regular fee of €45 applies to applications made between 20th of January and the 1st of February.

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

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

Documentation relating to DARE / SUSI is available on the school website in the 'Guidance Counselling Section' under the heading of 'Downloads'. Any queries please contact Ms Ryan, Ms Drew or Mr F. Hurl.

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

We have a number of students applying to UCAS this year to a variety of colleges including Cambridge and Oxford. These students will sit Cambridge entrance tests here at Blackrock over the Mid Term break. We also have a select few applying to Europe and the USA. Students considering this areas need to begin their research early. There is a lot of preparation involved.

Any student with a strong interest in Biblical Studies and/or Geology can sit a separate exam in TCD at Easter for TCD entry. Exam results can be used for points' purposes in TCD.

N. B. CAO opens 6th November

College Talks

November is the start of the College/University open days. Students have been encouraged to attend the numerous upcoming open days to add to the information they received from the September's visit to the Higher Options in the RDS. Talks are being held on European study by EUNICAS, UCD, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin City University & IADT.

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



Our HPAT preparation course is presently running on Saturday mornings for 6th Years. Any student considering SATs must register a month in advance for the assessment at www.collegeboard.org. Please see Ms Drew if you have registration difficulties. Have a peaceful Midterm Break.

Pastoral Care Programme



Retreats

A central part of the Pastoral Programme in Blackrock is to give the students an opportunity to reflect. Our 6th Years went on a 3-day retreat from Sun 23rd to Tues 25th September to fourteen different locations across the four provinces. On Tues 9th of October, the 5th Years had their "Day of Reflection" in four Retreat Centres in Dublin. At the Whole School Assembly on the Feast of Claude Poullart Des Places, co-founder of the Holy Ghost Congregation, Harry Hughes (6th Year) delivered the following reflection...

"One of the group exercises we did that stuck with me was where our retreat leader handed out a series of adjectives to us, adjectives typically used to describe a heroic or inspiring person, adjectives like "brave, caring, kind" and so on. Our task was to match these adjectives with people in our group that we felt matched them, so that everyone was matched with 3. Once that was done we went through everyone in the group individually and discussed what adjectives that had been matched with and so on."



Mass celebrated on one 6th Year Retreat

Now I know at first this might sound like a pointless exercise, a waste of time, but I can tell you now that could not be farther from the truth, because this exercise did a brilliant job at fixing the one problem we suffer from as humans, our unbelievable fear to compliment each other. We all seem to suffer from this idea that it is wrong or out of order to compliment someone just for the sake of it, like it is an unwritten social sin. But just because you don't hear enough of it, I want all of you to know that each and everyone one of you is appreciated so much more than you could ever know; your friends, family, teachers, everyone, all think so highly of you, they just might not say it enough."

Family Masses:

There have been three Family Masses so far this academic year. The Boarders' Family Mass took place on Sunday 9th of September with boarders from several countries leading the Prayers of the Faithful in their home tongue. On Sunday 23rd September, the 6th Year Family Mass took place where parents joined with the students, staff and Community to pray for the success of their 3-day retreats. The theme of this mass was "Fun, Faith, Future and Friendship". On Mission Sunday, Fr Brendan Carr CSSP led the 2nd Year students and their families in celebrating the Eucharist together – the theme of the mass was "Christian Families are Missionary Families".



Max Ryan, Diarmuid Foley, Peter Coyle, Scott Henderson and Ross O' Reilly at the 6th Year Family Mass



Josh O' Neill with his Dad (2nd Yr. Family Mass)



Ted Power with his Mum (2nd Yr. Family Mass)

Pilgrimage to Lourdes:

The Annual 6th Year Pilgrimage to Lourdes took place beside the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage in early September. A group of five 6th Years was accompanied by Mr Sullivan and Fr Farnham. Thirty past and present students attended an annual reunion dinner this year in Lourdes.

Week of Reconciliation Services:

Soon after returning to school in September, we had a Week of Reconciliation Services when each class is given the opportunity to avail of the Sacrament of Reconciliation in the College Chapel. A number of visiting priests from the Diocese as well as priests from Kimmage Manor attend on a daily basis. Each Service is led by a Class Teacher. This year's theme was "A New Start – a Fresh Beginning".

Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist:

A total of sixteen 6th Years have been commissioned as Ministers of the Eucharist during September and October. We thank them for their good example to their peers and the service they give to the wider school community. Fr Paddy Moran paid tribute to the boys for their faith commitment as a sign of the Holy Spirit being alive in our school.

Matthew 25 Programme:

Over sixty Transition Years have taken part in the Matthew 25 Programme since the start of term. The students take part in a two week placement in one of thirteen different centres. Here follows a selection of the unsolicited emails which have been received...

"I'm emailing to say that the current Blackrock students are just outstanding. I was walking

over to St Oliver's today and I observed their positive interaction and manner towards ladies who are blind and some have dementia. They are so natural and interact so nicely with the residents it's a credit to both the boys and yourselves. They set an example to others who see them. The residents are really benefitting from their presence."

St Mary's Centre for Visually Impaired

"I just wanted to let you know that it was a pleasure to have your students with us for the past two weeks. They were exemplary and really contributed to the work experience in their classes. We enjoyed having them and wish them the very best in the remainder of Transition Year." Marino School

"Under the close supervision of the Nurse-in-Charge, the boys are excellent. She tells me they are exploratory, mannerly, and always willing to help. Blackrock Boys are always welcome here." Sr. Bernadette



Wellbeing

Our Student Wellbeing Committee has 18 members at present. Each year group is represented and each year group posts the minutes from each meeting on the noticeboard in their respective rec areas, for transparency and suggestions.

Since the beginning of the school year, two very important themed days have taken place in the school. Anti-bullying Day was held on the 27th of September and was coordinated by Ms Drew and the Student Wellbeing Committee. There were two guest speakers in to talk to the boys. Mr John Dwyer from www.stopcyberbullying.ie spoke to 2nd Years and 4th Years while Maria Garvey from The National Anti-bullying resource centre at DCU spoke to 3rd Years and 5th Years.

Posters were displayed and a presentation played on the TV screens around the school. The Thursday Tunes also represented the day. Overall the Anti-bullying Day was very well received. The anti-bullying report tool is available on the school website in the activities section, students can post anonymously if they have a concern. Students "DO NOT" have to log their name or email if they do not wish to do so.



On October 11th we had our Mental Health Awareness Day, coordinated by Ms Drew and the Student Well-being Committee. Our Amber Flag was moved to the top of the Clock Tower to represent the day. It flew proudly in the wind.

Each year group received a talk from a range of guests on mental health. Con Sheehan (Class of 2010) spoke of his time in Blackrock and the anxiety he has about public speaking, how it affected every facet of his life and of how he practiced small tasks to regain control through mindfulness. David Corkery spoke about overcoming failure reminding us that "if you always do what you always did you will always get what you always got."



Joan Cofolla from ISPCC spoke about how the ISPCC works and engages children not just for serious problems but also for chats, and building trust and a safe place to chat.

Alan O Mara from realtalks.ie spoke about how his problems snowballed, explained the process and his feeling on engaging with counselling. He said he had divulged how he felt to his friends who to his surprise were not shocked and he discovered that some had engaged in counselling themselves.

There were posters and presentations on the TV screens around the school. Thursday Tunes had a sing along with approximately 100 students present at lunch time. It was great success and the posters around the building had a great impact. We are looking onwards the next awareness day and how we can make the impact even greater. Anyone wishing to submit suggestions to the committee can do that by contacting any of the committee members in their year group or by sending an email to ndrew@blackrockcollege.com.

The first term has been a busy one! All of the 2nd Year students are presently preparing their Scifest projects for the competition, which will be held in the College on Tuesday November 20th. There are three categories in the competition: Life Science, Physical, and Technological and the winners of each of these sections will go forward to the regional final next April. We wish all the 2nd Years the best of luck in the forthcoming competition.

Blackrock College has been awarded the SciFest STEM schools certificate for its ongoing participation in the SciFest annual competition.

The Senior Science Quiz took place on Thursday the 4th of October. There was a huge turnout for the competition, with Sam O' Carroll emerging as the overall winner.



Ms. Kelly (Head of Science) presents the cup to Sam O'Carroll

Three teams of three students will represent Blackrock College in the Dublin heat of the national competition on the November 15th, in both Trinity College and UCD. We wish the teams the best of luck.

Presently we are waiting to hear which of the 9 projects submitted to the BT Young Scientist competition have been selected to take part in the 2019 competition. Our fingers are all firmly crossed!!

During Space Week (October 4th to 10th), Ray Ward organised for 30 of the 4th Year students to attend a day on "The Importance of Space" in UCD, with the focus on careers in space. A number of Science teachers also attended a teachers' conference at the Observatory in Birr Castle, for a full day of events. The Science Club continues apace and all 2nd and 3rd Year students are welcome to attend. It takes place in the Senior Chemistry Lab every Monday from 4pm to 5pm.

Sport

Athletics

Training for the athletics season is well underway with many athletes across 2nd to 5th Year training two evenings per week. Sessions take place Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5.45pm to 7pm. This accommodates students taking part in other extra-curricular activities. Training sessions are focused on the throwing events (Shot Putt, Discus, Hammer and Javelin) and anyone is welcome to come along and try an event. Congratulations to Peter Murphy who had a great performance in the Irish Schools Combined Event Championships in Athlone IT. Peter placed 4th with some encouraging performances for this stage of the season.



Peter Murphy (6th Year) in action at Athlone

Basketball

Under-19:

It has been a strong start to the season for Blackrock. In the All-Ireland Schools' Cup Blackrock defeated Pres DLS Bagnelstown in the first round on a scoreline of 63-33 with Seán Lardner scoring an outstanding 24 points. In the Basketball Ireland East-Leinster League the first game was against St. Conleth's. Though Blackrock won the game 54-41 it was a game that showed plenty of areas for improvement. Blackrock made some of those improvements in the next game away to St. Andrew's. This local derby has always been dominated by St. Andrew's who are an excellent well drilled side with many years of experience playing 'A' division basketball. In a tense, tight back and forth game Blackrock eventually came through on a scoreline of 53-49 with Roberto Brusasca (Captain) leading by example with 22 points. Next up is the last 16 of the Schools' Cup away to St. Paul's Monasterevin where we aim to secure a place in the All-Ireland Quarter final.

Under-16:

The U16s have had an excellent start to the season with an away win against Coláiste an Phiarsaigh Glanmire in the first round of the All-Ireland Schools' Cup by a margin of 37-14. Blackrock then turned their focus to the East-Leinster League. Blackrock defeated St. Conleth's 57-21 in their first game and then defeated St. Andrew's 59-22 in the next game. It is a great start to the season but no more than that. Jimmy Gilligan (Captain) and his squad have a busy time coming up before and after midterm as we aim to secure a quarter final place in both the All-Ireland Schools' Cup and the East-Leinster League.

Cross Country

Congratulations to Jack Mc Glone (2nd Year) on his bronze medal position in the Dublin Schools' Cross Country Championships. Over 200 boys took part in the race held in the Phoenix Park. Our team of Jack McGlone, Finn O'Neill, Ruairi Mc Intosh and Daniel Bennett (all 2nd Year) collected the team event silver medal for their combined placings – a fantastic achievement. Many thanks to Mr Mc Glynn and Eddie Mc Donagh for their organisation of the squad.

Cycling

Congratulations to Archie Ryan (5th Year) who has been selected to represent Ireland at the ICI World Cycling Championships in Innsbruck, Austria later this month. This is the event that every rider wants to race in with races at elite, under 23, junior level. We wish him well

Golf

It has been a busy start to the year on the golf front, with our senior team in action at the Irish Schools' Stroke play championship on the 25th September. The qualifying event took place in Charlesland Golf Club, where our combined scores came out best on the day. The team comprised Captain Ronan Cowhey (5th Year), Cathal French (6th Year), Robert Galligan (5th Year) and Rory Reid (5th Year). The quarter finals will take place in Lucan on Monday 22nd October. We wish them the best of luck in the next round where 5 players go head to head in a match play format.



Blackrock College Junior Golf Team
Conor Ryan 2nd Year, Captain
Alex Bolger, Matthew O'Brien
and Rory Barry 4th Year.

Also on the senior golf front congratulations go to Conor McAleer and Oisín Reid (6th Year) and Rory Reid (5th Year) who qualified for the All Ireland under 18 competition representing Greystones Golf club. This event will be held in Tramore. We wish them all the very best of luck.

The junior team played in the Irish Junior Championship in Woodbrook Golf Club on Thursday 11th October but unfortunately did not qualify out of their group. We thank Alex Bolger, Rory Barry (both TY), Matthew O'Brien (3rd Year) and sub Conor Ryan (2nd Year) for representing us so well against very strong opposition.

Rugby

Senior Rugby

Once again the first term has been a busy one for the senior rugby squad in the College. Multiple trials and early fixtures have seen the squad trimmed to fifty players from the original eighty who tried out. The newly formed set-up in the school has seen the removal of the previous Castle Seconds side from the top panel, whilst retaining the valuable identity of the House-Castle set-ups below this. We have found that as a result, the competition to remain part of this group has been fierce and the standards in training have been very good; at the same time, the year groups have come together in a really positive manner as one single unit.



SCTV Leinster

Early fixtures have included Leinster Clubs, Pres Bray, Belvedere, Campbell, Terenure, Newington College (from Sydney) and Gonzaga with some promising performances, and defeats alike mixed in.

The big highlight of the first term though was being invited to partake in the Methodist College 150th Year Rugby Festival. With sixteen of the best schools' sides across Ireland, Wales and England involved, it was always going to be a wonderful opportunity to learn about ourselves as a group. The boys represented the College wonderfully well, being ranked first of sixteen after day one's proceedings (victories coming against Campbell, Rockwell and Mount St Mary's) before falling at the final hurdle on day two. An excellent 24-7 against Belvedere was followed up with what

Sport Cont'd



was probably a more impressive effort still against the hosts, Methody, in the semi-final, scoring a last minute winning try (12-8) to reach the final. The demands of getting this far made the final contest difficult but St Michael's, much to their credit, played the better rugby in the game and won deservedly, 24-3. Whilst we were all incredibly disappointed at the time, on reflection it was the wonderful opportunity and occasion we had hoped it would be and we are far better for the experience moving forward as a group. The boys and coaches would like to thank Methodist College for their kind hospitality over the two days and congratulate them making the festival the great success it undoubtedly was.



John Cambell (5th Yr.) SCTV Belvedere



Mark Foster (5th Yr.) SCTV Belvedere



Senior Rugby Squad during the Methody Rugby Festival

Junior Rugby

The junior squad has had a very busy half term and at this stage is progressing nicely in their friendly season fixtures, culminating in impressive wins versus Kilkenny, Pres Bray, Gonzaga, Campbell and Pres Cork. Competition for places is fierce, but the squad has gelled well and is training hard. The team has two big fixtures before mid-term, the first in the United Kingdom against Silhillians on October 20th and this will be followed by a home fixture against Bromsgrove on October 22nd. We wish them well.

Sailing

The 2018 Sailing Regatta took place on Monday 24th September. Conditions were perfect for a great days racing. This year saw 36 boys taking part in the event. Team 'C' Oisín Tiernan, Niall Somers, Oscar Dougan and Diarmuid Monahan (all 2nd Year) and David Duffy (3rd Year) won the team event whilst Charlie Cullen (6th Year) won the individual event. Many thanks to Kenneth Rumbell and his team in the INSS for their organisation of the day and to Richie Mouatt (Class of 2016) for his help on the day



Blackrock College Sailing Regatta

On an individual note congratulations to Hugh O'Connor (3rd Year) who participated in the 2018 World Topper Championships. There were 222 world sailors in his section and he achieved 2nd place overall, a fantastic result

Soccer

The senior soccer team have had a successful start to their season. They started with a 2-0 win against Mac Daras, Templeogue with goals scored by Ross O'Reilly and Mark O'Leary (both 6th Year). In their next Leinster cup game an excellent performance against local rivals, St. Michael's, saw the team win 8-1. The team are looking forward to their trip to St. Bede's on the 9th of November which is the perfect preparation for their next Leinster Cup game against Coláiste Éanna on November 13th.

Swimming

This year's Swimming Gala took place on Thursday 18th October and as always it was well supported with an excellent turnout from the student body.

The Second Year House events were won overall by Shanahan, with the impressive Finn O'Neill taking the individual honours in the 50m Free, ahead of James O'Sullivan. DeValera won the Third Year competition; Jamie Blackburn secured the 50m Free ahead of Patrick Curley.

Transition Year's winning house was Shanahan House; Ethan Murtagh and Adam O'Reilly took the top two positions in the individual race, whilst the Fifth Year House competition was won by Ebenrecht with Liam Heylin winning their 50m Free ahead of Peter Harrington.

Sixth Year deserve special mention for how they led the way on the evening. Fifty-five different swimmers from final year helped create a positive atmosphere and set the tone for the event. DeValera prevailed at the top of the leader board with Max Connolly taking the spoils in the 50m Free, and Max McKenna in second place.

As always, the main two individual events of the night were the Junior Championship and Principal's Trophy races.

The Junior Championship Race was won by Finn O'Neill (2nd Year) in a new record time. Patrick Curley (3rd Year) was runner-up.

The Principal's Trophy race was a high quality event as expected, with the outstanding Ethan Murtagh (TY) beating Adam O'Reilly (TY) once again into second place. Ethan just missed out on a long-standing record in the process.



Swimming Squad at National Aquatic Centre on 21st October

It was an exciting and successful day as the swimmers of Blackrock College competed in the Leinster Schools' Swimming Gala in the National Aquatic Centre in Blanchardstown.

First up was Ronan Fahey (2nd Year) who won a Bronze medal in the 13-14s 100m Breaststroke.

Finn O'Neill (2nd Year) won a Gold medal in the 13-14s 400m Freestyle.

Our 13-14s "A" team of Ronan Fahey (2nd Year) Macdara Cosgrave (1st Year), Michael Curley (1st Year) and Finn O'Neill (2nd Year) won a Silver medal in the 200m Medley Relay

Our 15-16s team of Ciaran Conway (TY), Patrick Curley (3rd Yr.), Adam O'Reilly (TY), and Ben Bracken (3rd Yr.) won a Bronze medal in the 200m Medley Relay.

Our 17-19s "A" team of Max McKenna (6th Yr.), Peter Harrington (5th Yr.), Ethan Murtagh (TY), and Max Connolly (6th Yr.), finished in 4th in the 200m Medley Relay. Our U17-19s Free Style Relay of David Mei (6th Year) Peter Harrington (5th Year), Ethan Murtagh (TY) and Max Connolly (6th Year) won a Bronze medal.

The swimmers represented our school proudly, competing fiercely and respectfully no matter the result. Thanks to coach Carol Walsh and Robbie Condon (Class of 2017) for their guidance of the boys and to Cristina Cattani and the other parents for their support.

Squash

Five Transition Year students took part in a friendly pre league fixture vs. St Fintan's of Sutton on Wednesday 3rd October. The team consisted of Ed Bourke Kennedy, Eoin Whooley, Alex Byrne, David Mockler and Fred Hamilton. It was a fiercely contested match with the final scoring proving too tight to produce a winner; 3-3. Well done to all involved and a special thanks to Ronan Peyton and Eoin Ryan for organising the match.

Rowing

Rowing got off to a great start this year as Blackrock College Rowing Club set up its new home in Blessington Lakes. The club now houses its boats in two containers located on the grounds of Blessington Sailing Club, and the sailing club's facilities are available for the rowers to use.



The Rowing Club hosted a barbeque in Blessington to kick off the year, where all the rowers and parents had a chance to appreciate the facilities and wide expanse of water available in Blessington. The rowers are putting in hard work both in the gym and on the water in preparation for competitions in winter and spring.

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

