

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



October 2020

Dear Parents,

'Experience is not what happens to us, It is what we do with what happens to us'. Aldous Huxley

The theme for the 2nd Year Family Mass on Mission Sunday, 18th October, was **'together we can do more'**. Mr Madden in his prelude used the language of the pandemic to encourage us to play our part in building morale. **Contact-tracing** is a call to be an influence for good in our community, as we look to raise the **R-rate**, the reproduction of our values, to a new high. Fr Cormac's challenge to us, to **Reach Out** with **Care** and **Kindness** is essential to this.

Our values guide us in good times and bad. On a very basic level, our **'Be There'** value is about being in school, daily coming together for shared experiences which, previously, we may have taken for granted. Not now.

Overwhelmingly, the boys are glad to be back. They have presented with enthusiasm and energy, with a resolve to keep going. I salute our student body and its leadership group. The Student Council and House Captains, members of the Student Wellbeing, Covid, CADLC, Green Schools, Development Education and Debating committees have shown a steely determination and unity of purpose to make the best of **'what happens to us'**. They have collectively and individually embraced the challenge and responded magnificently.

I believe that this pandemic has given our boys a deeper understanding of who we are and what we stand for. Former President Fr. Kilbride used to say **'if you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything'**. What we stand for has been particularly evident over the last eight weeks.

We have seen it in our 'streamed' Masses for the families of 6th Year, 2nd Year and the Boarders.

It has been evident in the way our young men embraced their retreats. A phenomenal 170+ 6th Years gathered, in small groups, in the College on Sunday, 20th September to build relationships, deepen friendships and comprehend the Spiritan experience.

Our 3rd Year Retreat reminded the boys that **'Each is unique, Each is special, and Each is loved'**. Our 5th Year Retreat, **'Be not Afraid'**, informed the boys on the importance of stepping away a while, taking some time for personal reflection, for meditation and prayer.

What we stand for was also evident during our Environmental Awareness Week, on our Anti-bullying and Mental Health Awareness days, during our week for the Sacrament of Reconciliation at the start of term and at the recent Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament.

Each of these occasions has provided the time and space for that vital understanding and appreciation of self and to be attentive to the stirring of God within us. This spirit enlivens each moment of our school day. It is what makes Blackrock the place it is.

Extra-Curricular involvement is essential to the wellbeing of the boys.

I am delighted to report that our Debating societies have had a resurgence of interest; that the Public-speaking, Art, Science and the new TY Cookery Club have provided occasions for fellowship and the sharing of interests and that our expansive sports programme has continued apace.

Rock-Ed (Blackrock TEDx) in many ways epitomised the determination of staff, parents, and students to keep going, as students (and one past) spoke with an eloquence and a verve that captivated the 29 privileged to be in attendance.

And so, with optimism we look forward.

We welcome our new Board of Management. We thank Paul Gardiner (Trustee nominee for ten years), Pamela Hughes (Parent nominee for three years), Maria Ni Choncheanainn and Ed O'Farrell (both Teacher nominees for six years) all of whom step away, for their stellar service to the College and Congregation. We are delighted that Chairman Damien Kennedy, fellow Trustee nominees Elizabeth Boland and Siobhan O'Connell, and Parent nominee Brian O'Sullivan will continue and that they are joined by Catherine Abrahamian (Trustee nominee), Liz McDermott (Parent nominee), Jennifer Brunswick and Pdraig Costello (both Teacher nominees). We wish them all well in their important work.

We look forward to a modified BCR, a Musical that in fact will be a movie, our Remembrance Mass which will be streamed by webcam, our Carol Service, St Vincent de Paul appeal and the Christmas exams.

Blackrock will continue to be a busy and productive place thanks to our emboldened and empathic staff. Their commitment to your sons has been inspirational. Their positivity, professionalism, dedication and generosity of spirit, a lot of which remains unseen to you the parents or even to the boys, has made a massive difference to our daily routine both inside and outside the classroom. When you add to this, the prayerful presence of our Spiritan Community, the support of our Parents' Council and Year Committees and the wise counsel and loyalty of our Union, you can be confident that we will make the most of these different times.

Enjoy the mid-term break.
God Bless

ALAN MacGINTY
Principal



Blackrock Rowing Club training in Dun Laoghaire Harbour

Second Year



Our new Second Years, the class of 2025, have begun their time in the College with great enthusiasm and we commend them on their good humour and cooperation. The boys are making great progress in their weekly **Application Cards** with increasing numbers achieving a place on the Principal's List over the past few weeks. These cards record, on a weekly basis, the effort made in class and homework and they are an essential part of each boy's life in Blackrock. They are available to view on **EduLink** every Monday and provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to affirm good practice by the boys, as well as a chance to review if application needs attention.



Despite the changed reality this term, there is great participation among Second Years in the extra-curricular programme. A list of activities is available to the boys on MS Teams and the Notice Boards are updated regularly. We encourage every boy to participate in some sport or activity after class. Regrettably we had to postpone the Second Year Inter-House Rugby 10's Competition, but the Second Year House Captains were keen to get **House Competitions** up and running and in a very impressive display of resilience, they organised a **Tennis Ladder**, which concludes this Friday. Prizes will be awarded, based on matches played and effort.



Declan Cadden
(JCTV King's Hospital)

The **House Captains** for the year, chosen at the end of First Year, were commissioned in August during their leadership training. The Captains are **Michael Breslin and Jeremy Carroll** for De Valera House; **Mark Goss-Keogh and George McGilton** for Duff; **Michael Carolan and Ben McElligott** for Ebenrecht; **Patrick Clancy and Edward Wilson** for Leman; **Aryn Kelly and Darragh O'Neill** for McQuaid; and **Zack-Egan Ruane and Will O'Sullivan** for Shanahan. These boys play a key leadership role in the College and in enhancing links between school management and the student body. We thank them for their excellent work so far this term and wish them well in the months ahead.

Despite restrictions, this has been an eventful term. The boys had an opportunity to receive the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** early in September and were brought on Nature Walks, during **Environment Awareness Week**. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our **Second Year Green Schools** members Philip Duffy, Zack Egan-Ruane, Darragh O'Neill, Alex Parsons and Edward Wilson. In

addition to Leman and Choir auditions we have also had Literacy Week, Maths Week, Anti-Bullying Day and Wellbeing Day.

You will read about these elsewhere in the Newsletter but here we wish to highlight the contribution of our Second-Year members, **Henry Brown** and **Mark Goss-Keogh** to the **Wellbeing Committee**.

The **Family Mass** took place via webcam on Saturday 18th October with large numbers tuning in to participate remotely. Our **celebrant, Fr Tom Nash**, reminded us of the joy we bring to the world around us when we embrace a missionary spirit. It is great to see so many of the boys bring this spirit to the College each day.



Isaac Moss singing at the Second Year Family Mass



Second Year House Captains



Patrick Cody Leopardsstoun



James Neary playing Hurling for his Club

Dates for your Diary

- 24 November Modern Language Christmas Aurals
- 14 December Christmas Exams begin

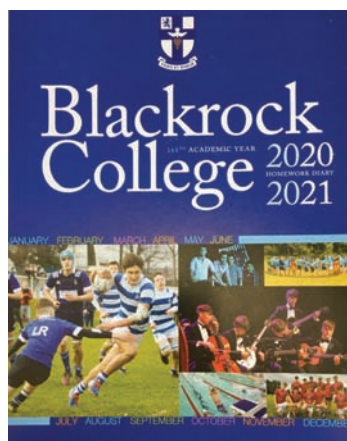
Third Year



It was great to get back and it is a credit to the Third-Year group that our return has gone so smoothly. Well done to the year on their adherence to the COVID regulations; their effort has ensured the school is a safe environment. Following the extended time away from school it has been an intense 8 weeks that have flown by. I have no doubt the Third Years will welcome this break as an opportunity to recharge the batteries.

While it has been a solid start to the year, the group must continue to work hard. A concerted effort is required for the year ahead. Focusing on organisation can make such a difference alongside a focus on their daily routine. This includes having the correct books, copies, uniform, PE kit and always keeping their Homework Diary up to date. Organisation is a skill that needs to be developed and constantly worked on.

While the break is welcome, midterm should also be a time for reflection. While I stress to the students this is a yearlong process as we build towards June, the group has now had two progress reports which will give an indicator as to which areas need more attention and focus. I



encourage students to look back on the eight weeks and ask – what subjects are going well? where can I improve? what can I do to improve? The weekly application cards also give a good indication of the student's progress. Available every Monday on the EduLink app it is a valuable opportunity to affirm a positive work ethic. The cards have been very solid so far this term with over 100 students making Principal's List every week.



James Clancy, Cian Dennehy, Charlie Woodcock
House 10's

Participation in the extra-curricular programme has been excellent, with all sports continuing despite the restrictions. It is never too late to sign up for a sport or to have a go at something different. There is an extensive list to choose from. Third Years should be looking to try something new and challenge themselves. In a year where there will be a lot of focus on study and exams having an outlet in extra-curricular takes on a greater importance.

Despite the restrictions several events have continued for the boys: the inter-house 10's competition, a week of reconciliation services, Anti-bullying day, Literacy Day, Environmental Awareness Week,

Third Year Cont'd



Days of Reflection and RockEd. More details on these events can be found elsewhere in the newsletter. I commend the students on their engagement and participation; it has been excellent. I wish them all a great midterm and hope they return refreshed and motivated; Christmas exams may seem like a long time away but it with fly in!



James Neary playing Hurling for his Club

Dates for your Diary

Sunday 8th November – Third Year Family Mass
Monday 23rd November – Irish Christmas Aural
Tuesday 24th November – Modern Language Christmas Aural
Friday 27th November – Progress Cards
Monday 14th December – Christmas Exams

Transition Year



Weekly Cards

The boys' weekly cards have been consistently strong and I thank them for that. They are available to view for parents and boys each Monday on EduLink and offer a great chance for teachers and parents to acknowledge a job well done by the boys and to identify areas of improvement where required.



Blackrock College Radio

Preparations are well under way for BCR 2020. Our studio managers have done fantastic work on this year's broadcast schedule ; they are ahead of schedule with many telephone interviews already having already taken place .We hope you will all tune in when we go live on Monday 16th – Friday 20th November. Students have been doing fantastic work to date for the wide variety of shows from news and current affairs, sports, language show, wellbeing, mental health, guest schools, amongst many others. Our broadcast frequency will be communicated after midterm and you can also tune in on the College website.

Evening Courses

There has been a record 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 run right up to the Easter Holidays. The Barista Course has been so popular that we require five different groupings to accommodate everyone! Students who are unable to attend a particular class should contact Mr O'Neill or Mr Grant.



Tuesday Tours

On Tuesday 15th and Tuesday 22nd of September Transition Years went out on their first tours to Jumpzone, Inflatazone, Footee Golf, and Epic Ireland Interactive Museum and a very enjoyable morning was had by all.



Guest Speakers

In the second week of terms TY Students attended a workshop with Mr. Denis Hevey on Leadership and Self-Motivation. This workshop aims to help students develop resilience and stress management strategies. The feedback from the students was hugely positive. This term TY students 'attended' several virtual talks for the first time as part of the Young Saint Vincent De Paul Programme. Topics included the Origins and Work of SVP, Poverty, and the Cost of Living with four more to come after midterm.



Gaisce

Gaisce is the President's Award that challenges students to conquer new personal skills and to serve in their communities. This year is the first group of TY students where all 200+ TY students will participate in the programme to compete the Bronze Award. It has been fantastic to see the amount of wonderful activities students are engaged in in the community .

Matthew 25

To date three groups have participated in the Matthew 25 Module where they have explored caring for people in the field of disability. My thanks to Mr. Madden for facilitating such a powerful and impactful module.

Other Activities

In the second week back all TY Students completed their Careers Aptitude Test (CAT). Modules in RSE, Guidance and Mental Health, Cookery, Social Studies, Arts and Crafts, Drama, Film Studies, Mindfulness and Nutrition are ongoing. Approximately 100 students have been involved in various Community Service opportunities in Willow Park as part of their Gaisce programme. Students have signed up for a virtual open day in St. James' Hospital, Public Speaking, auditions for the Senior Musical, Leman Auditions, Cookery Club on Thursday evenings, Concern TY Academy, Secret Street Tours amongst many other activities.

Extra-Curricular

Rather than focusing on the various restrictions which exist in an extra-curricular context, I would instead like to praise the TY students for their excellent levels of engagement across the board. I personally have more TY's doing Basketball than ever before, a TY Soccer Development Squad has been set up and there are plenty more examples besides. There was a wonderful turn out in TY at the House 10's in September and at the Karl Ashe Semi-final which you can read about elsewhere in the newsletter.



Joey Kennedy House 10's



House 10's



Max Aschenbrenner House 10's Rugby Blitz

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

Dates for your Diary

3rd November – Transition Year Tours
16th – 20th November – Blackrock College Radio
27TH November – St Vincent De Paul Soccer Marathon
3rd December – 4th Year Parent Teacher Meeting
6th December – TY Family Mass
12th December – Hamper Delivery for Saint Vincent De Paul
14th December – Christmas Exams

Fifth Year



Donning face coverings and armed with hand sanitizers and anti-bacterial wipes Fifth Year students, the Class of 2022, have embraced their fresh start in the Senior Cycle whole heartedly and have made great strides. Weekly cards are indicating excellent application for the majority, whilst the two Progress Weeks this half-term have served to highlight the academic drive and focus of the students. 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. Cards are available every Monday for students and parents via the Documents section of the EduLink One App.



Colm Fagan, Mark McCabe, Michael White, George Francis (Mc.), Sean O'Connor (Clockwise)

Since the beginning of the year, students have been meeting with the Career Guidance Counsellor and many have since sought advice on subject levels and choice as well as advice in relation to study skills and time management. Students are encouraged to explore Qualifax.ie and CareersPortal.ie and submit a Career Plan to Mr. O'Nualláin by 6th November 2020. It is hoped, Covid19 restrictions permitting, that students will avail of a number Career Talks coordinated by the Career Guidance Department and the Past Pupils' Union in the coming weeks. These talks provide a forum for students to hear about the daily activities in various career areas and offers them the opportunity to ask questions of industry professionals.



Tommy Hanrahan, Hugh Cooney, Cian Obrien, Alex Hughes, Henry Kelly, Colm Cowhey, Enjoying A French Cafe Breakfast in 57French

In October, students were very welcoming of the opportunity to pause and reflect. Visited by a number of retreat centres and availing of the time away from the daily routine, students were given space and time to reflect in a meaningful and spiritual way. The day, further enhanced by Mental Health Awareness Day, was deemed by the students to be exceptionally worthwhile and inspiring and we thank Mr. Flor Madden and the House Captains for their successful co-ordination of the day. Students were encouraged to *Be Not Afraid* and to also take comfort in the fact that it is *ok not to be ok*. It is hoped



Fifth Years Bringing A Bit of French Culture to Class. Bon Appetit!

that the new Wellbeing Report Tool available via MS Teams, working alongside the year Counselling service, will assist the students in sharing any concerns they have about their own wellbeing or that of their peers.



Duff Players at the Rugby 10's



Ebenrecht Players at the Rugby 10's



Winners Leman at The Rugby 10's



Leman at The Rugby 10's



McQuaid at The Rugby 10's



Player of The Tournament Charlie O'Brien Rugby 10's



Shanahan at the Rugby 10's



DeValera at The Rugby 10's



Fifth Years Celebrate The Rugby 10's

At assemblies, this half-term students have been encouraged to set SMART short-term goals for academic progress and personal development. Reminded that a *goal without a plan is just a wish*, the daily use of the College Homework Diary and a consistent approach is essential in assisting students to maximise their potential. Engagement with the Extra-Curricular Programme is strongly encouraged. The

Fifth Year Cont'd



peripheral benefits of extra-curricular involvement including the development of time-management, interpersonal and teamwork skills have been highlighted together with the more obvious joy and fulfilment that such social interaction can bring. Fifth Years are most definitely showcasing their talents and so far this year we have witnessed tremendous examples of passion, commitment and diversity through events such as the Rugby 10's Tournament, the Karl Ashe semi-final and the outstanding RockEd evening.



Remarkable attendance at all restricted sports training as well as at Public Speaking, MUN, and Debating, and indeed the large numbers auditioning for cast and crew of this year's Senior Musical movie and the Leman concert suggest that Fifth Years have much to offer and to look forward to.

The Fifth-Year House Captains with their Covid19 Remembrance candle for Hope. David MacHale, Conn O'Byrne, Patrick Van Zuydam, Ben Casey, Mark McCabe, Alex Yarr, Mark Phelan, Davitt Gilvarry, Freddie Mullin, John McDermott and Federico Mei

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, particularly in such challenging and uncertain times. We urge them to remember and to hope as our Covid19 remembrance candle burns daily. 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 06 November
Career Talks:	November, Saturday TBC
Irish Christmas Aurals:	Monday 23 November
Mod. Lang. Christmas Aurals:	Tuesday 24 November
Progress Cards:	Friday 27 November

Sixth Year



On Monday 31st August, the Class of 2021 returned to Blackrock after an absence of five and a half months to begin the final lap of their journey through the College, and what a different lap this has been so far! While it may be tempting for people to lament on what has not happened over this half-term, we want to take this opportunity to highlight and celebrate what our 6th Year students have achieved together over the last eight weeks.

On the **Academic** front, there is no doubt that even at this early stage of the year, Leaving Certificate 2021 is to the forefront of our young men's minds and it is very encouraging to note that the positive and focused engagement with classroom material evident on the 6th Year corridor has also been reflected in a very strong set of Application cards this half term. The September progress cards also confirmed that over 90% of the year group have made a very promising start to this academic year. For those who may be struggling, our Head of Careers, Ms Drew and our 6th Year Chaplain, Ms Crimmins have been on hand to lend support, advice and guidance.

Despite the challenges posed by Level 2 and 3 restrictions, 6th Year has been a busy place and this half-term the **Group Activities** organised have been well received by all with a very high level of participation among the 6th Year boys noted. On the sporting front there was the excellent House 10's Rugby Tournament won by Leman House captained by James Culhane. This was followed by the joy of victory for the Castle Dayboys and the pain of defeat for the Castle Boarders in their respective Karl Ashe GAA semi-finals. Over 170 boys attended the Sunday afternoon Retreat on September 20th and the colour Orange (or Amber!) was certainly to the fore on the 6th Year corridor during Mental Health Awareness Day on October 13th. While there will be further updates on these events elsewhere in the newsletter, we do wish to acknowledge the most impressive leadership shown by our 6th Year House Captains; Alex Kelly & Rory McGuire (DeValera), Adam Power & Conor Slattery (Duff), Oscar Bourke Mullane & Sam Bruton (Ebenrecht), Naoise Golden & Daniel Welch (Leman), John Cawley & Alex Cronnelly (McQuaid) and Rory Durand & Charlie Mullin (Shanahan) in the planning and running of each of these events. Many thanks too to Mark



Leman 6th Year House 10's Winners



6th Year House 10's Runners Up

O'Brien for flying the flag on behalf of the Class of 2021 with his exploration of the Olympic Spirit ideal at the recent RockEd event



De Valera 6th Year House 10's



Duff 6th Year House 10's

Under the leadership of Dee Kelly (Chair) and Helen Keeley (Secretary) the 6th Year **Parents' Committee** has had a most productive start to the year. On Saturday 29th August, an Effective Study & Exam Technique Course was organised to assist the 6th Year students refocus and reorganise for the year ahead. This committee will meet throughout the year with Covid contingency planning identified as a key item for attention alongside the Machakos Project in Kenya and Graduation Day next May.



McQuaid 6th Year House 10's



Shanahan 6th Year House 10's

Finally, on the **Careers'** front, the UCAS applications have been completed and Ms Drew has outlined the CAO process to each of the 6th Year RE classes. The CAO application process will open in November and an information event is planned for 6th Year parents to coincide with this. Further details will follow after mid-term. As notified, the Higher Options gathering of 3rd level colleges is taking place online this year and hopefully those who book tickets will find this event to be of insight and value. If the coronavirus pandemic has taught us anything it is that now, more than ever, we need talented young people to engage creatively with the worlds of Science, Medicine, Business, Politics and Education to help us deal with every challenge posed to the quality of human life on earth

Sixth Year Cont'd



and to help us rebuild an economy that will take cognisance of the wellbeing of both people and the environment. It is our hope that the Class of 2021 will consider course and career options that will be both personally fulfilling and of benefit to the whole of society in the years to come.



Class of 2021 Mental Health Awareness Day

With every good wish to all.
Enjoy this well-earned mid-term break!



Matthew McCarthy & Adam Power 6th Year



Alex Cronnelly, Aaron Lysaght Walsh & Alex O'Keeffe 6th Year



Shane Redehan (Wellbeing Chair) & Oscar Bourke Mullaney (Student Council Chair)



A younger Mark O'Brien (6th Year) carries the Olympic Torch in Rio 2016

Dates for your Diary

November 10th:	CAO Talk for 6th Year Parents
November 23rd:	6th Yr. Irish Christmas Aural
November 24th:	6th Yr. Modern Language Christmas Aural
November 25th:	Mass of Remembrance (7.30pm)
November 26th/27th:	6th Year 24-Hour VDP Fast
December 7th:	6th Year Anticipated Exams begin
December 14th:	6th Year Regulation Exams begin
December 22nd:	End of Christmas Term

The Arts



CREATIVE ARTS AND DIGITAL LEARNING CENTRE

Thanks to its large space, The Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre continues to be a vibrant and interactive space. Many clubs and committee meetings take place here such as Green Schools, Student Council, Debating, Dev Ed and Model United Nations. A new Dungeons and Dragons Club has been set up by Daire Casey (2nd Year) under the very helpful guidance of Dr Jenifer Brunswick. Students are still welcome to use this space at lunch and after school where they can borrow a book, read quietly, play a board game, and do some research/homework.

Promoting Reading for Pleasure

Rock Reads App

Ms A. Dillon developed a Rock Reads App, that allows students to share recommended books. To date 164 books have been added to the App which offers a fantastic variety of sports biographies, memoirs, spy, murder mystery, drama, non-fiction and more. Everyone should find a book on this app to suit their reading taste. Students can access the App by downloading [Microsoft Power Apps](#), signing in with their school account, clicking "allow" to access MS SharePoint and selecting all apps. A student can add a book by clicking + and completing the form.



DeFigure 1 Rockreads App



Figure 2 Add a book on Rockreads App

Home Language Books

To promote diversity, a selection of books is available in the library for students whose first language is not English or Irish. There are books in French, German, Spanish, Hungarian, Czech, Dutch, Swedish, Russian, Arabic, Georgian and Chinese. Students can now read *Harry Potter* in German,



Eragon in Russian, *Sherlock Holmes* in Arabic and *The Hunger Games* in Chinese

Cyber Break Day (Friday 16th October 5pm – Saturday 16th 5pm)

To promote a healthy lifestyle balance, students were encouraged to limit their use of mobile phones and other devices for essential purposes only for 24 hours and instead engage in other activities such as reading, sport, art, or music. This meant no social media and no games for 24 hours. Too much time spent on screens can have negative impacts on a person's focus, mental health, and wellbeing. So, it is important to take a Cyber break occasionally and try a more healthy activity like reading a good book. Well done to all the students who took part!



Literacy Day

This year, we celebrated Literacy Day in a more virtual way.

Author Visits

Dave Rudden, author of *Knights of the Borrowed Dark* gave a very entertaining and engaging virtual talk to 2nd years. All classes remained in their rooms and connected via MS Teams. The chat function was chock a block with students sharing what stories they liked or didn't like, what makes a good ending and lots more.



Denise Deegan gave an interesting virtual Screen Writing workshop to Fifth Year students. She referenced some great movies like *Saving Private Ryan* and showed some sample pages from her new feature script "Tough Old Broad". Hopefully, this workshop will inspire some budding future screen writers.



Prison Break Competition

Last year, as part of Literacy Day, students had to solve a murder mystery where Mr Niall Byrne, History teacher, was found guilty of murdering Sherlock Holmes. This year students were given the task of helping Mr MacGinty break Mr Byrne out of prison. It was all done digitally, via MS One Note, where students had to solve a literacy or numeracy clue in one section to move to the next. 141 students took part in the competition. Well done to PJ Tehan (2nd

The Arts Cont'd



Year), Conor McCarron (2nd Year), Mark McClean (2nd Year) and Nico Coll (6th Year) who each won a ?20 One4All voucher.

Library Committee

The CADLC committee has been set up. Members are **2nd Year:** Fionn Whelan and Darragh O'Neill; **3rd Year:** Patrick Hayden, **4th Year:** Frazier McGinn and Jamie Starr Bourke and **5th Year:** Sam Cahill and John Duffy. Meetings are also attended by School Principal, Mr A. MacGinty, Deputy Principal, Ms Yvonne Markey, Development Officer, Mr J. O'Shea and Librarian, Ms A. Dillon. The committee meets every Wednesday B at 8am in the Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre. Student members have made a valuable contribution to the CADLC by assisting with various activities such as Literacy Day and Cyber Break day.

Senior Debating

Debating has really hit the ground running so far this term. The year began with an increased presence of Fifth Years, as well as a very strong turnout from Transition Years and Sixth Year students. We have already had two house debates this year. Our first MACE-style debate featured the motion 'This house believes it is unethical to have children'. After a hotly contested first debate of the year, the opposition team, which comprised of Joey Haughton, Stephen Corr (both Sixth Year), and Michael White (Fifth Year), prevailed. Our first prepared debate of the year featured the motion: 'This house would introduce mandatory social media checks by potential employers', and the proposition team made up of Michael Lucey, Ciaran McCann (both Sixth Year), George Francis, Luke Brophy (both Fifth Year), were victorious.

There is plenty more to look forward to this year from the Senior English Debating Society. The *Leinster Schools' Debating Competition* will continue this year, albeit in a virtual format. The school has entered numerous teams this year. We very much look forward to taking part in the competition and building upon the success of previous years.

Additionally, Transition Years debaters will take part in the *Concern Schools' Debating Competition* which will also take place on a digital platform. Inter-house and inter-school debates are also in the pipeline, which is an exciting development and increases the presence of debating within the College community.

Overall, this is shaping up to be an exciting year for the Senior Debating Society, and we look forward to seeing how the year progresses.

Junior Debating

Junior debating has grown from strength to strength and we are delighted to have over 20 attendees every Monday at lunchtime. This term we have entered two teams into The UCD Debates: Carl Ferdinand Hattendorf and Shane Hamilton alongside Darragh O'Neill and Ishaan Pandey. Ishaan Pandey received an award for being the best 1st Year speaker at The Leinster Finals in the Clonkeen College MACE back from 29th February 2020. Five students have qualified to compete in the Nationals: Ben Kieran-Glennon, Luca Kenny, Patrick Hayden, AJ Adoghe and Gregory Quinn. Due to Covid restrictions, the finals were postponed until now. Each student who qualified has submitted their written speeches to the judges and we eagerly await the results. We welcome all newcomers to junior debating at lunchtimes every Monday.

While this has been a very different term, it has sparked huge creativity, and this is certainly witnessed within the Music and Drama Department. After multiple risk assessments, sanitisations, and lots of planning, all our various ensembles and activities have been moulded to fit our new normal.



Ishaan Pandey (2nd Year) receiving his award for best 1st Year speaker at the Leinster Finals in Clonkeen College, February 29th 2020

done to our student leaders for their wonderful music which greatly enhanced the Masses.

Our choirs are all up and running. Fully masked, at a great distance and exploring new spaces to rehearse, we're all just delighted to hear and make some music again – whatever it takes! Our orchestra has divided up into four ensembles: Strings, Wind, Brass and Guitar. The Jazz Band and Ceoltóirí Carraige have also returned and while there is a lot of adapting to the new conditions and spacing, it's great to be back!

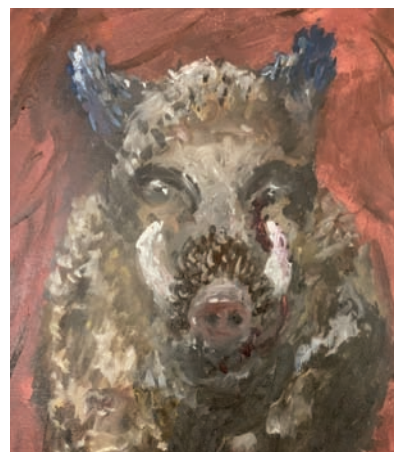


Aerial shot of the Choir rehearsing in the Quadrangle

Blackrock's first Movie Musical has begun rehearsals and lots of production meetings as we look at the different technical requirements to a stage show. We look forward to sharing it with you all!

The Art Club

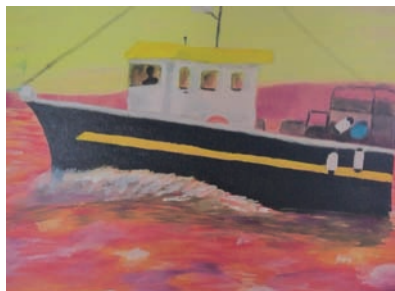
Following our return, the Art Club has been an escape and an oasis for the boys each Wednesday. The following is a selection of their work highlighting the tremendous artistic talent in the College.



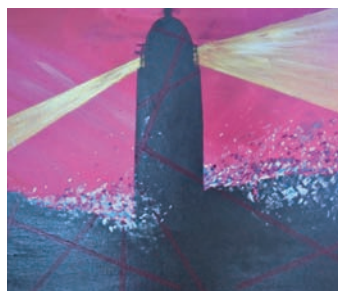
Fionn Graham (Transition Year)



Joey McEntee (Sixth Year)



Kai Murtagh



Harry McLaughlin (Fifth Year)



Inigo Cruise O' Brien (Fifth Year)



Rory O' Gorman (Sixth Year)



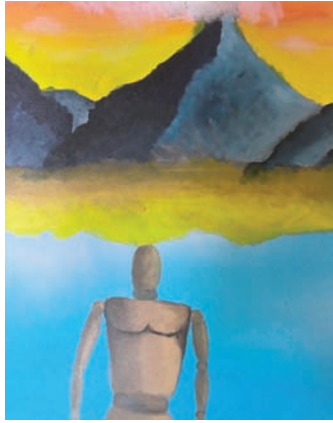
BLACKROCK COLLEGE C.S.Sp.
MUSIC & DRAMA

The Sixth Year Family Mass took place on Saturday, September 19th, and was broadcast from the College Chapel, with Oscar Bourke Mullaney as cantor and Alex Kelly (both Sixth Year) as organist. They were then joined by Isaac Moss (Second Year) for the Second Year Family Mass which was celebrated on Sunday, October 18th. Well

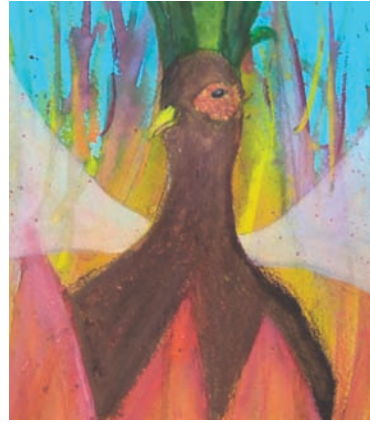
The Arts Cont'd



Charlie Harvey (Third Year)



Matthew Gammell (Fifth Year)



Ciaran Mc Cann (Sixth Year)



John Daly (Sixth Year)

Blackrock College Adapts to Covid September 2020



Mr E. O'Brien in Third Year Irish Class



Keep to the Left !



Ms S. Shevlin in Fifth Year Biology Class



Students Adhere to Guidelines for Social Distancing on Arrival to School



Mr K. Grumley -Traynor leads Choir Practice in the Lecture Hall



Social Distancing at PE Class



Choir Practise in the Quadrangle on a Beautiful September Day



Social Distancing in the Woodwork Room



Ms L. Maguire in the Latin Room

Blackrock College Adapts to Covid September 2020



Mr F. Madden in Third Year Religion Class .



Mr Brennan (Dean of 3rd Year) checking in Third Years who queue adhering to guidelines for social distancing



Early Morning in the Staffroom



Social Distancing in the Study Hall



Third Years working in the Art Room



Mr Boyle and Harry Dixon (Fifth Year) in the Woodwork Room .



Mr O'Connell , One of our superheroes in the IT Department



Mr C. Maher on ' hand sensitization and mask wearing' duty.



Ms C. Pierce in Sixth Year History



Thumbs up from Ken! - Socially Distant Morning Coffee in the Dining Hall



Father Paddy Dundon celebrates Mass in the College Chapel at 8.15 every morning



Visitors welcome to Morning Mass at 8.15 .
Entrance to the Chapel from the Quad

Photos for this feature by Sean Hannon (Class of 2019)

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2020



Max Aschenbrenner and Ian McLaughlin (TY) House 10's Rugby Blitz



Senan McCloskey (Third Year) practicing his speech for RockED and Mr Maher



James Mason TY House 10's Rugby Blitz



House 10's Rugby Blitz Oscar O' Brien , John King, Patrick Keane and Rocco Terrinoni



House 10's Rugby Blitz Eli O'Reilly, Jed O' Malley , Rocco Terrinoni, Oscar O'Brien and Robbie Culliton



Transition Year House 10's Rugby Blitz



Mr T. Ryan (Dean of Sixth Year) and Oscar O' Brien (Leman House team) at House 10's Rugby Blitz



Thomas Quinn (6th Year) House 10's Rugby Blitz



Louis Maguire and Jacob Antonio House 10's Rugby Blitz



Sam Bruton and Lasha Asanidze (Sixth Year) House 10's Rugby Blitz



James Culhane (Sixth Year) House 10's Rugby Blitz



Matthew Doyle House 10's Rugby Blitz

Snapshot of 1st Half Term 2020



Zach Quirke (Fifth Year) , Thomas Quinn and Ben BrownLee (Sixth Year)
SCTV Gonzaga



Tom Henderson (Sixth Year) SCTV Gonzaga



Matthew Doyle , Jack Fitzpatrick and Oisín Carroll (Sixth Year) House 10's Rugby Blitz



Robert O' Reilly and Mark Walsh (Third Year) JCTV King's Hospital



David Clarke (Sixth Year) SCTV Pres Bray



Ethan Laing (Fifth Year) and Fionn Dougan (Sixth Year) SCTV Pres Bray



Fifth Year Rowers at Blackrock College Rowing Training Day
September 2020



Hugh Cooney (5th Year) SCTV Pres Bray



SCTV Pres Bray

Gold Medal Debate – Class of 2020



The Quadrangle in all its glory hosted the Class of 2020 Gold Medal Debate on Monday, 20th July which had been postponed due to Covid restrictions. Deservedly, the sun shone on this unique occasion as eight of the class jostled for the honour of being the Valedictorian for the Class of 2020.

John Huggard, in proposing the motion that “this house believes that the class of 2020 is proof that this generation are no snowflakes”, earned the honour after a very competitive debate. All eight speakers – John’s fellow proponents **Luke O’Brien**, **Mark Landers** and **Tom O’Connor** and opposition members **Tom Dooley**, **Jack Tiernan**, **Aidan Canavan** and **Oliver Bosworth** – delivered their arguments with confidence and composure before an appreciative audience of Community, staff and fellow students, all appropriately socially distanced.

The judges, Mr Sheil, Ms Pierce, Ms Kelleher and Stephen Ryan (class of 2018) had a very difficult task; Mr Byrne who was his ebullient best in the chair and Mr Maher, as timekeeper, kept everyone on clock.

Thanks to our Grounds, Household and Maintenance colleagues led by Fintan O’Connor and Alan Sheridan who, as in all our events, made it happen.



Oliver Bosworth, Member of the Opposition Team



Sixth Years from the Class of 2020 enjoy Oliver Bosworth's comments



The Judges, Mr J. Sheil, Ms C. Kelleher, Ms C. Pierce, and Stephen Ryan (class of 2018) and Mr. F. Madden, Mr B. Herlihy (Deputy Principal) and Ms S. Nolan (Deputy Principal)



John Huggard, Valedictorian for the Class of 2020



Students of the Class of 2020 enjoy the Gold Medal Debate



Aidan Canavan, Member of the Opposition Team

Gold Medal Debate – Class of 2020



Jack Tiernan Member of the Opposition Team



Tom O' Connor , member of the Opposition Team



Mark Landers , Member of the Proposition Team



Michael Cagney , David Ennis, and Conor Duddy enjoying the debate and Mr J. Montgomery insuring the smooth running of the Debate on sound



Tom Dooley ,Member of the Opposition Team



Luke O' Brien , Member of the Proposition Team



Mr S. Waters, Mr A. MacGinty (Principal) , Mr J. O' Shea , Ms L. Crimmins and Mr F. Madden



Father Tom Nash enjoying the sunshine and the debate



Father Paddy Dundon enjoying the sunshine and the debate



Tom Grennel, Tom Guinevan , Ruairi Coyne with the microphone and Matthew Cullen .

Archives Update



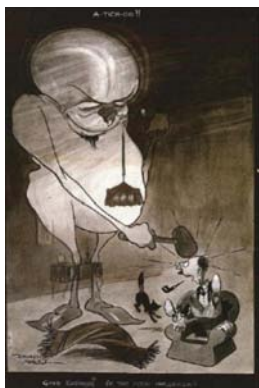
After a very odd summer we are all back at Blackrock College, and the archive is back up and running after a little break.

It has been a strange time to be an archivist, with many of us suddenly 'working from home' away from our physical (and often not yet digitized) collections. The job can already be quite isolating (as many of us work alone), and I was glad to see lots of digital lectures and classes taking place over the summer to replace the networking events that were cancelled.

It has never been clearer how important cataloguing and digitizing is! Having to answer queries remotely really highlights the usefulness of digitized collections and a clear catalogue, and I was very grateful for work done by myself, Caroline, and Fr. Farragher over the years in this area. I am glad to be back in the office with physical access to all of the files and books, as the majority of the collection is not available remotely and won't be for some time.

Since September, I have been attending the UCD Certificate in Archives Management. It is year-long course that covers several modules from the Masters in Archives Management but is specifically designed for those working full-time in an archive. The course focuses on practical projects that you carry out using your own collection, improving the standard of the archive while completing the coursework.

Several sources recommended the course to me, including Margaret Bluett at the Spiritan Heritage and Archives Centre at Kimmage, who was



'Good Evening, I am the new influenza' – an Ernest Noble cartoon, 1919 (Welcome Library, London)



extremely helpful in discussing the suitability of the course for my work at Blackrock.

Due to current restrictions, the course is entirely online – I had hoped to attend UCD and meet my classmates, but this semester will be taking place entirely over Zoom and UCD's online classroom Brightspace.



Virtual Classroom Launch
External Learning Tool
Virtual Classroom launch

This semester's module is covering cataloguing, and I will be using the existing archive collection to complete my practical project. Cataloguing to an international standard is very important, especially looking forward to how archives will be used in the future. The use of digital portal websites (where many different archive collections are searchable in one space) are becoming more popular and widely-used, and first contact with an archive is often established online.

The course will help us take steps to ensure that the collection at Blackrock College will be of use to as many people as possible, for a wide variety of personal and professional research.

Although it's been an odd few months, I'm back to answering past student queries, putting up exhibitions, facilitating research remotely, and sorting through the collection as usual.



1905 photo of construction on the castle, from a recent photo conservation project.

If you have anything you'd like the archives' help with, please feel free to contact on archives@blackrockcollege.com

Science



With Co-Vid our Third Year SciFest students could not go to TU Dublin Grangegorman to participate. Instead, there was an online SciFest@College 2020 Online regional STEM fair. Students had to upload their project report book, a short video describing their project and any additional materials if they wish, e.g. a poster. Blackrock College had 3 group projects participate, all current Third Year.



Diarmaid Byrne and Simon Considine



Patrick Hayden, 3rd Year



Malachy McLoughlin and Amlan Parida

Diarmaid Byrne and Simon Considine won a Chemistry Award for their project "Investigating the effect of concentration on temperature in an exothermic reaction."

Senan McCloskey, Patrick Hayden and Philip O'Neill won an ISTA Award for their project "Is grey water great for plants?"

Malachy McLoughlin and Amlan Parida received Certificates of Outstanding Achievement for participating with their project "Can you memorise music while sleeping?"

Congratulations and well done to all students!

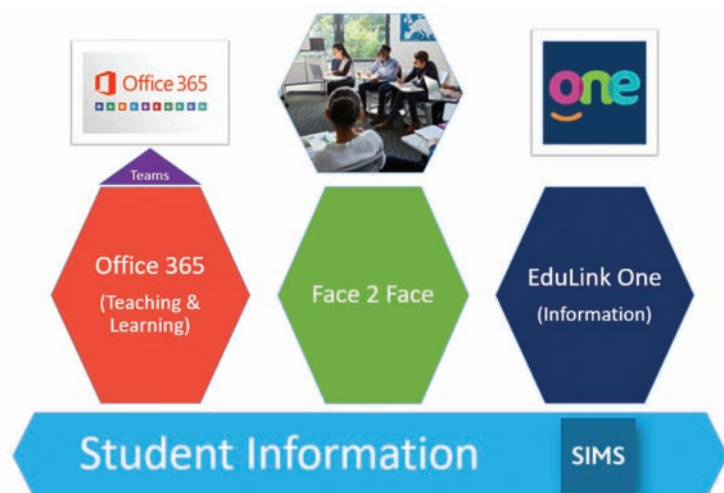
The eLearning/IT team has been working on several initiatives alongside our students, parents and staff. We would like to highlight some to you here. The focus has been streamlining our many systems and keeping communication central to this.

The College is delighted to have launched **EduLink One**, an app that is available cross platform (iOS and Android) and that can also be accessed through any web browser at www.edulinkone.com. The school ID is 'blackrock' and all parents and students have their own unique log in details which were sent out in September.

The main purpose for this app is communication. Deans send out notices to parents through EduLink One and if you have the app installed, you will get a notification, provided that you have notifications turned on! These messages are also emailed automatically so you can choose how you wish to receive them. In EduLink One, parents can also access their sons' timetables, results, and application cards.

Office 365, and more specifically *Teams* and *Outlook* (email), is used for communications between students and staff. Office 365 can be seen as a digital version of the traditional blackboard, copybook and textbook, whereas EduLink One is more for information such as timetables and results.

The infographic below illustrates how some of our systems work together.



Wi-Fi Network



In 2019, the College deployed a state-of-the-art Wi-Fi solution across the campus. The deployment followed the 1:1 strategy which is best practice in large buildings with thick walls. A Wi-Fi access point was installed in every learning and teaching space across the campus. This ensures that the increasing demand for bandwidth is met so that both teachers and students can rely on the technology being introduced.

Classroom Connectivity

Subsequent to the Wi-Fi overhaul, projectors were fitted with wireless casting technologies to enable the usage of portable devices in learning and teaching spaces across the College. An Apple TV and Microsoft Wireless Display Adapter was installed allowing for multi-platform wireless screen sharing. Teachers are now able to wirelessly cast from any platform device with the best experience possible.



Uncontested Gigabit Lan



To support increased reliance on the Internet and cloud-based learning platforms, and to enhance Wi-Fi speeds, the College has invested in a dedicated uncontested gigabit fibre broadband line in. This has increased internet speeds across the campus by approximately 400% by replacing the former contested connection.

Microsoft Office 365



Student and teachers are encouraged to use the Microsoft Office 365 suite for communication, collaboration, and learning. Continuous training and support is provided by the eLearning/IT team. With tools like PowerPoint, Teams, OneNote, and OneDrive subject departments can collaborate on schemes of work and students can complete group projects and share content with each other.

Microsoft Surface Pros



The College has invested to provide each teacher with a Microsoft Surface Pro 7 to be used in the classroom and for lesson preparation. These devices have enabled teachers to cast wirelessly to classroom projectors and take advantage of new technologies such as digital inking in apps like OneNote.

Guidance and Counselling

CAO

The 6th years have received their results from the Interest assessment they took in May. This year it was taken online during lockdown. The Centigrade Questionnaire from Cambridge Occupational Analysts has been renamed to "My Uni choices". This year was slightly different as the boys had to fill it in online. 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 an Interest test can significantly improve the quality of your son's decision-making and thus reduce the risk of selecting the wrong course. The CAO online application opens on November 5th. 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.

Guidance and Counselling Cont'd



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.

If you have any concerns relating to DARE please contact Ms Ryan, Ms. Drew or Mr. O. Brennan.

The Trinity Feasibility study is also on the CAO application 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.

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 point's purposes in TCD.

UCAS

Several students are applying to UCAS this year to a variety of colleges including Cambridge and Oxford. These students will sit Cambridge entrance tests here at Blackrock where we have a registered centre, run by Ms. Drew. We also have a select few applying to Europe and the USA. Students considering these areas need to begin their research early. There

is a lot of preparation involved.

CAO opens 5th November 2020

College Talks

November is the start of the College/University virtual open days online this year. Students have been encouraged to attend the Higher Options online event in November. We will host a talk on European study by EUNICAS also in November. We are working with UCD, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin City University & IADT to set up a selection of webinars over the coming months.



HPAT

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.

RockEd 2020



RockEd, Blackrock's own TEDx style event, took place under very different circumstances this year. The boys took to the stage in an almost empty hall, and removing their masks wowed the cameras rather than last year's packed hall.

There were 7 speakers. Senan McCloskey (3rd Year) set a high bar with his faultless delivery on the Art of Origami. Colm Fagan (5th Year) maintained the standard as he shared his experience in Machakos last year. Mark

McCabe (5th Year) soared as he presented on the impact the T.Y. Soup Run had on him as he came face-to-face with Dublin's homeless crisis. Mark O'Brien (6th Year) enthusiastically spoke about the tenacity and drive of Olympians and the Olympic spirit which is a catalyst for peace and equality. Michael White (5th Year) provided a fascinating insight on Dreams. Sean O'Connor's (5th Year) story about working with the elderly, which he did on the T.Y. Matthew 25 programme, was outstanding.

Our final speaker, Tom Tracey (class of 1998) discussed masks, not just in a Covid context, but also from the superhero to the villain, from the compelling to the humdrum. His excellent talk included such gems as, **"The roles we play are the masks we wear"** and **"Mediocrity is an effective mask"**.



Senan McCloskey (Third Year)

The boys delivered impactful, engaging talks. The goal of RockEd is to Challenge, Entertain and Inspire and the speakers and MCs George Francis (T.Y.) and Harry Pierce (3rd Year), delivered with aplomb.

It is not only onstage that the boys shone, Robert McNabb filmed on the night and alongside Alex Brophy will be crafting the footage, extra MC



Speakers and MCs in St. Patrick's Corridor before Rock Ed

commentary and interviews into a video of the evening. David Doyle of TY has composed music for the show.

A wonderful success and a testament to the talents and hard work of the boys involved and the organising committee Keara Hall, Dee Kelly, Dermot Ryan, Rowan Monahan, Tom Tracey, Ms Maguire and Mr Maher.



Speakers gather their thoughts in Our Lady's Corridor

Pastoral Care Programme



At the opening year assemblies at the end of August, a comparison was drawn between the founding months of the College in 1860 and the beginning of this new academic year. Père Leman must have been filled with excitement and the fire of the Holy Spirit as he opened the College to receive the first students. A similar excitement was evident in the College during this August as we prepared to reopen.

Just as we read in St John's Gospel, on the first Pentecost Sunday, the disciples were gathered in fear in a locked room until the Holy Spirit came upon them and said to them to "be not afraid" – our prayer was to the same Spirit to guide us as we reopened our school and for us to "be not afraid".

The opening months of the new school year has been extra-ordinary and very memorable. Our values of "be caring, be there and be truthful" were at the centre of all that was done, but our value to "be grateful" was central. We are so grateful to be back in school after 6 months – working together, learning together, being together – it is great to be back face to face, we will continue to do everything possible to keep open during this pandemic.

It has been a very busy half term. In a change with tradition, the House Captains for each year group were commissioned during their leadership training at the end of August before the school reopened – their leadership, enthusiasm and positivity has been infectious among their year groups.

Due to Covid guidelines and restrictions, it is not currently possible to have large gatherings in the College with parents and guardians. Parents and guardians play the central role in our partnership approach to education and especially within the liturgical life of the College. Early in September, a webcam in the College Chapel was commissioned and since then we have live-streamed morning Mass at 8.15am each school day morning. We have also celebrated Masses for 6th Year and 2nd Year.

Everything in the Pastoral/Chaplaincy Calendar is happening, revised and adapted to comply with all government guidelines. Retreats for 6th Year, 5th Year and 3rd Year together with the annual Staff Retreat have all been conducted involving visiting retreat masters. Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation Services have been conducted for each year group in small socially distanced groups of just 24 students in the College Chapel.

As we approach the month of November, plans for remembering our

deceased loved ones are at an advanced stage as are our plans for Advent and Christmas together with plans for 3rd Year and Transition Year Family Masses, all to take place within the next few weeks.

Please join us on the College website for morning Mass at 8.15am on any school day morning. Blackrock is very much alive and living within the Joy and Love of the Holy Spirit – we are all invited by name to share this Joy and Love – "be not afraid".



Join us for Morning Mass in the College Chapel any Mon - Fri at 8.15am.
If you have any special intention or anniversary you would like remembered, please email
fmadden@blackrockcollege.com
or phone 01 275 2125. All are welcome to attend this Morning Mass.

Wellbeing



The Wellbeing Committee hit the new academic year running with two of its feature days scheduled for the first term with only two weeks separating them. Anti-bullying Day is an integral wellbeing feature day and occurs at the beginning of the school year, such is the message behind the day: start as we mean to go on. Having reviewed feedback on previous occasions the committee opted for a more discussion-based approach to Antibullying to create a school wide dialogue on the topic. Maths teachers led the discussion in class with prompts to stimulate a class dialogue while QR codes enabled a collective whole school input.

Three days after International Mental Health Awareness Day saw 6th Years and staff donning their orange in solidarity with Blackrock College's Mental Health Awareness Day, the same colour of the Pieta House flag. The flag awarded to us for the 3rd consecutive year, recognises the efforts of schools in creating environments supportive of and endeavouring to foster mental health. On our Mental Health Awareness Day we held two mindfulness sessions, completed the 9 boxes (an initiative drawing attention to



Class of 2021 in Orange!

the things in our lives which can act as a support structure for our mental health) and actively pursued R.O.C.K; reach out with caring and kindness, prompting students to complete random acts of kindness during the day.

On both days, the new Wellbeing Anonymous Tool was highlighted to students. The tool which features as a tab on each year group's Microsoft Teams page enables students to confide on issues they may be facing including Mental Health, bullying or any wellbeing concern with the confidence of complete anonymity. The anonymous tool links directly with Ms Natasha Drew, but it is at the students' discretion to decide if or who they wish to discuss their issue with.



Green Schools



Preparations began early in the term for the new school year with Conor Slattery (6th Year) elected as Chairperson of the Committee. Once the formalities were finished the Committee jumped into action and started preparing for what was

the main event of the term; our first Environmental Awareness Week. The week started off with the Second Year RE classes taking part in Nature Walks across the campus. On Tuesday, the Science Club focussed on climate change for their after-school activities. Tuesday also marked the first paper free Literacy Day in the College. On Wednesday we encouraged students who did not do so already to walk or cycle to school. On Thursday and Friday, the classroom-based activities centred around a short film created by the Green Schools' Committee. The committee approached our local TDs, Cormac Devlin, Jennifer Carroll-McNeill, Richard Boyd-Barrett, Neale Richmond, Josepha Madigan and Oisín Smyth and asked them each to provide a short account of what they see as the key Green priorities in Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown. The Committee, under the direction of Robert McNabb, 5th Year, created an excellent short film which was distributed to all RE classes and several CSPE classes and was used to spark a classroom discussion. This film is available to view on the College Twitter account and we highly recommend it.



As part of our ongoing Travel Flag initiative we sent out a survey to all students on the ways they are travelling to school since the start of the school year. We were very happy to see that a lot more students were walking or cycling since the start of the year and we have started the process of applying for more bike racks in the school.

It has been a busy start to the year for Green School and we are looking forward to continuing throughout the year.

Covid restrictions have not stopped boys taking part in extra-curricular activities. Indoor sports such as basketball have moved outdoors to allow for non-contact training. Cross country has seen record numbers participating. Contact sports such as rugby and soccer have seen their training schedules altered to allow for non-contact training in pods of fifteen. This has not affected the number of boys participating in contact sports in the College. On the Junior 3rds pitch, interhouse tag tournaments are the new norm on Wednesdays. Our rowing club has taken advantage of the fine weather to use their part time base in Dun Laoghaire harbour. The boys can be seen rowing from 7am Saturday and Sunday, right through to 4pm.

House 10's

A great turn out in 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Year for our annual House 10's competition which was played in perfect weather conditions.

In 6th Year Leman (Captain James Culhane), beat Ebenrecht in the final. Ben Brownlee (Ebenrecht) was player of the tournament. De Valera and Shanahan were the defeated semi-finalists. Duff beat McQuaid in the 5th/6th play off.

In 5th Year, Leman (Captain Will Fitzgerald) beat Duff (Captain Michael English) in the final with McQuaid (Captain Patrick Van Zuydam) and DeValera (Captain Patrick McCarthy) semi-finalists Ebenrecht beat (Captain Eoin Power) Shanahan (Captain Davitt Gilvarry) in the 5th/6th place play off.

In 4th Year, McQuaid (Captain Jamie Ahern-O'Connell) stormed to victory over a strong DeValera (Captain Sam O'Donovan) side. Ebenrecht (Captain Eli O'Reilly) and Shanahan Captain (Lorcan Little) were the beaten semi-finalists and Duff (Cameron Holland) edged an end-to-end game against Leman (Captain Jackson Murphy) 20-17 in the wooden spoon final.

In 3rd Year, Shanahan (Captain James Clancy) was victorious getting the better of a resilient McQuaid (Captain Charlie Woodcock) house in the final, having defeated Duff (Captain Aongus Curran) and DeValera (Captain Donnacha McGuire) in the semi-final.

We thank the Deans, referees and coaches: Justin Vanstone, Ben Manion, Jim Donnelly, Steve Lambe, Brian Savage, Brian Grant, Owen Brennan, Niall Mac Dermot, John Creighton, Eoin Daly, Killian Barry and our Games Administrator Mr O'Brien who made it possible.

JCT

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

All the squad were given an opportunity to get game time and play in a friendly match against King's Hospital. In good conditions the JCT overcame a spirited and innovative King's Hospital team, with Blackrock running out eventual winners (45-12)



Brian O' Flaherty (JCTV King's Hospital)



Sport Cont'd



Ruben Maloney (Fifth Year) SCTV Gonzaga

SCTV Gonzaga

Photos courtesy Rock Photography
www.rockphotography.ie

Reflection



hope

If you only carry one thing throughout your entire life, let it be hope. Let it be hope that better things are always ahead. Let it be hope that you can get through even the toughest of times. Let it be hope that you are stronger than any challenge that comes your way. Let it be hope that you are exactly where you are meant to be right now, and that you are on the path to where you are meant to be... Because during these times, hope will be the very thing that carries you through.

- Nikki Banas | *Walk the Earth*