

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Christmas 2022

Dear Parents,

The boys are terrific!

They're the heartbeat of Blackrock. They raise us up and are a source of joy and inspiration. Their achievements remind us of the value of what we do in education.

Our musical, *Sweeney Todd*, was performed, sung and choreographed with a skill and passion that mesmerised the audiences. BCR came on air with a technical know-how that supported a range of programming that had something for everyone. Such tremendous teamwork was also evident in our St Vincent de Paul fundraisers: the Christmas Tree Project, the Mince Pie Morning, the TY Soccer Marathon, the 5th Year Cyclothon, the 2nd and 3rd Year Table Quizzes and of course the 6th Year 24-hour Fast with 155 participants. I should also mention the 'military precision' of the delivery of the hampers.

Yes, the boys are terrific!

Such voluntary involvement reminds us that giving without the expectation of return provides fun, friendship and fulfilment that no shop can sell, that social media cannot replicate.

For me, the highlight of our preparation for Christmas is our Carol Service. 1150+ boys and staff (our 1st Years join us) gather together in the Sports Hall. Our 6th Years provide the lead as our Orchestra, Choir, Soloists and Readers set the tone, willingly adopted and appreciated by those present. It was an incredibly powerful occasion, as we opened our hearts and minds to the real meaning of Christmas, putting aside the distraction of commerce. A high point was 'O Holy Night', delivered with perfection and poise by Sean Treacy, Harry Fitzpatrick and Joseph Gibney (all 6th Year).

"Truly He taught us to love one another. His face is love and His Gospel is peace. Chains shall He break for the slave is our brother. And in His name all oppression shall cease".

As we reflect on what is important in our lives, our Carol Service and O Holy Night, remind us that the ultimate source of true, sincere love, joy, hope and peace was born on Christmas Day.

Jesus is our motivation; His life and teachings are our exemplar.

Day by Day, my colleagues and our boys follow the star intuitively as they carry a light not just for the less fortunate in society but also for those who are close to us, who welcome our warmth and fellowship. No gesture is too small.

Finally, I thank my colleagues for keeping the good ship Blackrock afloat and the Board of Management for steering the course. I thank the Parents' Council and Year Committees for their support, the College Community for their prayers and the College Union for their insight.

Thank you Parents, for entrusting your boys to us. Be assured that through the New Year, we will encourage them to care for others at the Leman Concert, the Rock MUN, the cup matches, in the classrooms, on the water and pitches, in the Lecture, Jubilee and Sports Hall and in our wonderful chapel. We believe in them.

The boys are terrific!

May the Joy of Christmas be evident in all our lives not just now but always, in all seasons.

Happy Christmas.

Alan MacGinty



Message from the Deans



As we settle down over Christmas, on the couch with the fire lit and maybe an old movie on the box, we can reflect with satisfaction on an incredibly busy term with many highlights.

It is the wide-ranging array of activities that always amazes. From Science Week and the STEM displays to quizzes and the ever-popular visit from Dave's Jungle and his zoo of reptiles, there has been something to spark the imagination of everyone in the College.

Mental Health Awareness Day reminded us of the importance of looking after our mental health. Each student wearing an orange ribbon for the day, was a powerful visual of our school community's commitment to positive mental health.

The boys continue to be an inspiration in the dedication, endeavour, and energy they bring to their respective projects. The Music and Drama department's production of 'Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street' was particularly impressive. The standard of the show, from the imposing set to the operatic singing, was nothing short of professional. The teamwork, collaboration and joy displayed by the boys and the girls from Mount Anville was clearly evident in the performances over the four nights. The Jubilee Hall on a night in November always reflects Blackrock at its best. Huge congratulations to all involved.

It was also heartening to hear the Transition Year students sounding so confident and accomplished on the airwaves during the week of BCR. In its thirtieth year, it never ceases to impress. Putting together so many hours of radio content in such seamless fashion is nothing short of remarkable.

Yes, it is busy, but the vibrancy of the school community means it is always an enjoyable build up to Christmas. It was great to see so many families in attendance at the 3rd and 4th Year Family Masses. The chapel is a place of communion and community, and the Blackrock community had an opportunity to take stock and reflect on both occasions. The strength of that unity was also on display at our Christmas Carol service. To have the whole College community singing in unison always raises the spirits in the lead up to Christmas.

As Deans we are always energised by the efforts the students put in to support our St Vincent de Paul Christmas appeal. From selling Christmas trees to pedalling in cyclothons, to undertaking a 24 hour fast, to football marathons, handing out hampers to attending quizzes, the boys concern and endeavour for those in need is fantastic to see. As the cost of living continues to bite, St Vincent de Paul is incredibly grateful for the boys' commitment to the cause.

The Christmas break also brings exam results. It is a good opportunity for all students to gauge their progress so far this year but remember that this is just a staging post, not a final destination. It is an opportunity to re-assess, set new targets and to approach the new year with a clear purpose, focus and energy.

We hope the Christmas break provides the students and their families with an opportunity to rest and recharge the batteries. We commend them for all their work this term academically, in the arts, in sport and in the community. We wish you all a very peaceful and happy Christmas.

Mr. T. Ryan (6th Year Dean), Ms C. Dobbyn (5th Year Dean), Mr P. O' Neill (4th Year Dean), Mr O. Brennan (3rd Year Dean), Ms R. Harlowe (2nd Year Dean)

On Thursday 17th November, as part of College Science week events, our **6th Year Senior Debating team** of Jonathan Hoffmann, Frazer McGinn and Ben Kieran-Glennon successfully opposed the motion that 'Science would be a more useful Core Subject than English for the Leaving Cert' in the Teacher v Student debate against Mr Sheil, Mr Maher & Dr Maguire. A great occasion, enjoyed by all

The Christmas break is an ideal time for the boys to reflect - How involved have they been in the **Transition Year** programme? Are they participating in the extracurricular programme? If the answer to these and other similar questions is yes, then I urge students to continue this approach in the New Year. If not, then the New Year offers an ideal opportunity to start fresh and approach TY with renewed enthusiasm and vigour!

It is great to see such large number of **Second Years** participating in **sports and activities** both inside and outside the College. Well done to all participating in MUN, Debating, Dungeons and Dragons, Green Schools, the Wellbeing Committee, Public Speaking, Science Club, Art Club, Chess Club, Choir, Cinema and Book Club and our Music ensembles. If you would like to join in any of these activities in the New Year, we would be delighted to welcome new members.

Message from the Deans Cont'd



I salute the efforts of **Mr O'Farrell's Third Year Religion** class, who each thoughtfully prepared and wrapped Christmas parcels in the annual **Shoe Box Appeal** which were then distributed by Saint Vincent de Paul in the lead up to Christmas

On Tuesday 29th November, Ms. Natasha Drew gave a most informative and comprehensive presentation on the **CAO process** to the **6th Year Parents**. Information presented on this night has been made available online via the parent's section of the College website.

155 **Sixth Year** students completed a **24-Hour Fast** on behalf of the SVP Society between Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd December. 8,300 euro was raised, an outstanding total. First prize in the Raffle, supported by the 6th Year Parent's Committee, went to Arnould Binder. A wonderful 24 hours in the life of the Class of 2023.

Fifth Year students greatly appreciated the Career Seminars provided by the **Career Guidance** Department and the Past Pupils' Union. All are encouraged to continue to submit Career Plans and to explore as many career options as possible.

Congratulations to **Alejandro de Pablo (2nd Year)** who was recently selected to play Water polo in the U14 Irish Squad. He had his first international match with the Irish team in Walsall recently where they finished in second place.



Alejandro de Pablo (2nd Year) with his silver medal in U14s Water polo for the Irish team

We congratulate **Daniel Bennett (Sixth Year)** and the **Senior Soccer Squad** on their progress in the Leinster Senior Cup. A 4-0 victory over St. Gerard's sees the team qualify for the last 16, where Castleknock Community College await. This followed another impressive 4-0 victory, this time over Millfield School in the UK on a day when our Senior 2nd XV under the captaincy of Conor Vaughan also enjoyed a 3-1 victory at the same venue.

The **Dragons' Den Final** took place on the 11th of November .Well done to 'Tee Times for you' (Ben Curran and Killian O'Reilly), Optimise (Sami Bishti, Ben Crowley and Cian O'Connell), 'Stay Dry' (Cillian O'Leary) on reaching the final. Congratulations to the prize-winners: In 3rd place was 'Carroll's Cart Company' (Jeremy Carroll), 2nd place was 'Kxccessories' (Matthew Neary) and 1st place was Edward Wilson and 'We click'. We are most grateful to the dragons who gave up so much time in mentoring our students: Programme chairperson Jim Leyden, Ian McDonald, Alain Barr, Aidan Corless, Orla O'Gorman, Gwen Layden, Tony Connolly and Charlie Gleeson and of course Mr. Fitzsimons and the Business Department for this fantastic initiative.



TYs enjoying the Dragons' Den Final

The launch of the **Fifth Year Auxilium Programme** saw a tremendous effort of selfless giving by the **Class of 2024**. A broad spread of activity from coaching, beach cleans and neighbourhood gardening to sleep outs and of course the Hygiene Kits that have been so gratefully received by those living in Hygiene Poverty. Meaningful reflections demonstrate the personal growth of students. A resounding success, a resounding well done.

We congratulate and thank the **Fifth-Year** members of the **Wellbeing Committee** for their initiative of the very popular Cuppa Club promoting positive peer engagements and the benefits of pausing for a chat! Looking forward to the next one!



End of 6th Year VDP Fast 2022

Message from the Deans Cont'd



We congratulate **Sixth Years** Oliver Coffey (Captain), Michael Colreavy and Harry Whelan (Vice-Captains) on their appointment to these **SCT Leadership** roles. While a defeat to St Michael's in the Noel Turley Trophy game outlined the challenge ahead, an impressive 32-6 victory over Clifton College in Bristol was a most promising response and we wish the SCT squad and coaching team well for their opening Cup match next term.



SCT Squad vs Clifton College Bristol

Great numbers in **3rd Year** are competing in **badminton** this year. Our UI6A team of Callum Dee, Darragh McCarthy, Jamie O'Nualláin and captained by Callum Downes are progressing well in their league. Our understanding UI9 C team including Jack Droney faced tougher opposition, but competed well, whilst our UI6C team of Seif Bari (Captain) James Donohoe, Tom Hayden and Mossy O'Loughlin finished off the season with a home game against De La Salle.

Eight hours, three bikes, 1754km and over €3300 later the **Fifth Years** were delighted with such a highly charged day of good spirit, energy, and drive in aid of such a worthwhile cause. As always, we are so grateful to MCSPORT.IE for their sponsorship of the bikes. A close and fast paced race saw DeValera crowned champions of this year's **Cyclothron** in aid of SVP.

Congratulations to all our **Second Years** on the quality of their **Scifest projects** which were on display in the College during November. Congratulations especially to **Lochlan Gulliver** who has qualified for the BT Young Scientist Competition with his project 'Self-watering Plant Pot'. We wish Lochlan all the very best.

Our serious athletes will not be subdued by the weather as they continue to train hard. **Third Year** was ably represented by Donnacha Barry, Hugh Barry, Jamie Browne Lynch, Callum Downes, Cillian Staunton and Eddie Totterdell who competed in the **Cross-Country Relay** event held recently in the College.

Our **Model United Nations** team including **Sixth Years** Aaron Murtagh, Gavin Bowen-O'Connor, Frazer McGinn, , Conor Casey, Jamie Starr Bourke and James Lee, travelled to Croyden, London to attend the Royal Russell International MUN conference. Blackrock represented the UAE with Frazer & Conor winning Distinguished Delegates Awards and Aaron returning to Ireland with a Chairing Award.

On Friday 11th November, Mr. Wyer accompanied the **6th Year Art students to the National Gallery** to experience [*Dutch Drawings: highlights from the Rijksmuseum*](#), an exhibition that featured drawings and prints by artists such as Rembrandt and Hendrik Avercamp.

This year was the 30th year of **BCR** and this year's **Transition Year** group have undoubtedly added significantly to its legacy. The boys put in trojan work under the guidance of the many teachers involved in the project to see a varied, interesting and high quality broadcast schedule come to fruition.

We had so many varied guests from Taoiseach Michael Martin to the inspirational Fr. Peter McVerry and many more, all of whom were incredibly gracious with their time. The Studio managers and Tech Team were absolutely top class. From advertising to the newsteam to showcase, noonshow and guests and requests, the quality produced by the boys was something to be extremely proud of.



James Neary, Henry Brown, Jason Marrow, and Jack Luff in the BCR Studio

Message from the Deans Cont'd



On Friday 18th November, Ms Pierce and Ms Harlowe accompanied the **6th Year History students on a day trip to Belfast**. A most insightful and informative day saw the group meet activists involved in conflict resolution in the Houben Centre and undertake a coach tour of Belfast visiting the Peace Walls and Milltown Cemetery.

We were blessed with musical talents of the Third Year Corless Choir who added so much to the liturgy, particularly our Cantors and Jamie Browne Lynch on guitar at the **Third Year Family Mass**. Thank you to all who volunteered on the night: the readers, servers, welcoming committee, and our 6th year Eucharistic Ministers.

A special word of thanks to the members of the staff team (Mr.O'Shea, Ms.Fitzsimons, Ms. Ní Shíocháin, Mr.Brusasca, Mr.Rafferty, Mr.O'Sullivan and Mr.Grant) for coming in for the staff v students matches, winning the first match 4-2 before losing the second dramatically on penalties. Finally I congratulate the boys on their cooperation, good humour and incredible fund raising efforts as we collected €17,009.38 for St Vincent DePaul .

The leadership of members of the **Class of 2023** in word and song at this year's senior **Carol Service** on Tuesday 6th December was most impressive to witness. In particular we thank Sean Treacy, Harry Fitzpatrick & Joseph Gibney for their wonderful rendition of 'O Holy Night' which marked a most joyful end to a very busy but fulfilling term.

We congratulate **Cillian Hainbach** who competes regularly in **Rubik's Cube** tournaments and did very well recently in the Tuam Open, coming 2nd & 3rd in 4 events and winning the main 3 x 3 event (average 9.21 seconds). Congratulations to Cillian who came 7th in this event in the Nationals in Waterford a few weeks ago in the same cube.



Cillian Hainbach, competing in the Tuam Open, a Rubik's Cube Tournament

We commiserate with Maitiu Hackmann and his fellow **Sixth Year** members of the **Senior Basketball team** whose wonderful run in the UI9A Basketball Cup came to an end with a 10 point defeat at the hands of Knockbeg College. This was the Blackrock's first season in the 'A' division for 50 years and to reach the last 8 of this competition was a wonderful achievement.

We are all very proud of **Third Years** Luke Coffey and Olly Woods who were part of the **Kilmacud Crokes** team that won the Division I Cup in November. Fantastic achievement!

Date for your Diary: The 6th Year Parent-Teacher meeting is planned for Thursday 12th January from 4.15pm to 6.45pm.

On the pitches, on the courts, in the pool and on the lakes, on the stages of MUN, RockEd, Public Speaking, Debating and the Musical, in Art Club, Chess Club and the CADLC and in the domains of Environmental Awareness, Wellbeing, Commerce and Economics the **involvement of Fifth Years in College life** is outstanding, welcomed and encouraged.

Congratulations to the **Senior Irish Debaters** including Jack Burke and Oisín Tiernan (**6th Year**) who qualified for the next round of the Gael Linn debating competition. They successfully proposed a motion that 'Britain should abolish the Monarchy'.

Message from the Deans Cont'd



The **TY Soccer Marathon** Coordinators (Leo Fowler, Charlie Harty, Tommy Horkan, Ruairi Houlihan, Seán Waters, Edward Wilson) did a superb job putting the whole tournament and schedule for the day together. It was a fantastic day full of top-quality soccer, FIFA, table tennis and even some karaoke!



TY Students gather to begin the Soccer Marathon



Zac Naughton in the Orange Open in Miami

Tennis: We congratulate **Zac Naughton (2nd Year)** who is competing in the annual **Orange Bowl – the World Championships for junior tennis players in Miami.**

The annual soccer marathon in aid of Saint Vincent De Paul took place on Friday 2nd December with more than 150 **Transition Year** students involved.

As well as students taking part in online **workshops** for Computer Science, **Fifth Years** also represented the College remarkably well at this year's DLR Comhairle na N'Óige and more still look forward to taking part in training to become Safer Internet Day Ambassadors.

The sight of the **Christmas Trees** on sale in the car park is synonymous with the Christmas Season in the College. In the weeks leading up to the Christmas break all of **Transition Year** have developed their sales skills and had no shortage of hard work lugging the trees around!



Ben McElligott, Cillian O'Leary, Ruairi Houlihan, Cian Sheehy, Ross McManus, Rory McNally, Leo McDonagh and Max Rigney selling Christmas Trees in aid of SVP

Well done to Jamie Browne Lynch, Josh Murphy, Brian Carroll and Tom Hayden (**Third Years**) who proposed the motion 'This House Would Have Ireland Join NATO' in round 2 of the **Junior Debating Competition**. Jamie, Josh, Tom and Brian were joined by Conal Byrne and Cillian Staunton in a very successful friendly Mace Competition against Holy Child Killiney held recently in the College. Great work everyone.

The Castle Rugby squad has won its first two league matches against Belvedere College and Castleknock College. We wish Mr Kearney, Mr Mealiffe and the Castle squad well for their remaining group matches in the New Year.

The Soup Run restarted after a three-year absence. Each Wednesday evening from 6-8pm, a group, accompanied by John Carolin from the Legion of Mary, deliver tea, coffee, sandwiches and other items to some of Dublin's homeless. It has been eye opening for us all. More than 160 students have continued their **Gaisce** activities throughout the term. In early November the year group went out on Tuesday Tours to either Jumpzone, Awesome Walls or GoQuest. 70 TY students assisted Willow Junior School with their Science week. Congratulations to the **TY Spirasi Ambassadors** who along with their counterparts from St. Michael's College raised more than €28,346 for Spirasi as part of the Noel Turley cup match in UCD. All of TY attended **workshops with the SOAR Foundation** as part of Mental Health Awareness Day. They have also attended **Global Citizenship Workshops** run by 'Development Perspectives'. A special mention to all the Transition Years involved in the incredible **Sweeney Todd Musical** – what a wonderful week of performances in the Jubilee Hall. Finally, congratulations to the year group on a wonderful set of **Junior Cert Results** received on 23rd November – independent of the results, it is a significant milestone, and they should be hugely proud of the resilience and courage shown over the course of their unique Junior Cycle Journey.

Message from the Deans Cont'd



On Thursday 10th November, the **Class of 2023** marked **Mental Health Awareness Day** by wearing orange clothing to school. Orange is the Colour of the Pieta Wellbeing Flag and in wearing this colour to school, 6th Year students were committing themselves to make Blackrock a school where positive mental health thrives.



Class of 2023 Celebrate Wellbeing Day

TY students delivered **220 hampers** on Saturday morning the 17th December. The trip out to deliver the hampers to the families in Killinarden in West Tallaght is incredibly powerful and I thank all the parents who helped with this project, from the support of the boys participating in the fundraising for the Soccer Marathon to the delivery of the hampers themselves, this simply would not happen without their amazing support.

When the new term commences, **Second Years** will embark on **Auxilium** which is our Programme of Service to others, whereby each boy gives some time in the service of his community. This is our sixth year running *Auxilium*, which aims to help the boys discover something of their own giftedness: the gift of themselves, their time and their talents and, in the process, helps them to understand how their actions impact on the world around them.

The College Musical **Sweeney Todd** received a standing ovation every night and we pay tribute to the 10 **Sixth Years** students who contributed to the success of this production. In particular we highlight the outstanding onstage contributions of Joseph Gibney (Sweeney Todd) and Harry Fitzpatrick (Adolfo Pirelli).

I congratulate **Third Years** Charley Collenette, William Collins, Gerard Egan, Matthew Quinlan, Max Schmitt, and Ted Taylor who were part of our swimming team that travelled to **New York for a gala with Fordham Prep**. A great opportunity for the squad who represented the College with distinction.

In September Tom Boret and Lorcan Golden (**Third Years**) won the RS Feva series at the junior Championship. Lorcan and Tom were presented with the Mitchel Cup at the AIB **Dublin Bay Sailing Club** annual prize giving in November. A marvellous achievement – well done gents!

We congratulate the large **Fifth Year** cast, band and crew member on a wonderful spectacle of such a powerful musical, **Sweeney Todd**. Such brilliant talent, energy, enthusiasm and passion on display echoed shortly after by the joyful **Carol Service**. Both are a fabulous example of the commitment and drive of the Class of 2024, and we look forward to the Leman concert for a further showcasing of talent.

With all the restrictions of the last three years it was wonderful to see a packed chapel for the **TY Family Mass** less than 12 hours after the boys finished the Soccer Marathon. We were delighted to welcome so many grandparents who were remembered in a special way in the mass. Thank you to Mr. Madden and his team for putting it all together; the beautiful Christmas tree behind the altar, the superb singing from the choir, the mass itself, the music, and so much more besides. My thanks also to Fr. Paddy Moran who celebrated the mass.

Choirs: Congratulations to our Seconds Years, **Conor Byrne** and **Michael Kennedy**, who are singing with **Cor Linn** and the **RTE Concert Orchestra** in various Christmas events.



Conor Byrne practicing with the RTE Concert Orchestra.

Message from the Deans Cont'd



The traditional **TY Mince Pie Morning** went ahead on Saturday 10th December in the car park beside the Christmas Trees. Dublin Barista School led by past pupil James McCormack (Class of 1999) were as generous as ever with their time, resources and of course guidance to our TY Baristas who served up delicious coffee and hot chocolate. Our TY Home Economics classes, Cookery Module and Cookery evening class also had top notch mince pies for everyone to enjoy. We thank everyone for their support as a wonderful €800.38 was raised.

My thanks also to Ms. Marren for her work with her Home Economics and Cookery Module classes making such delicious mince pies and Niamh Connolly with the Cookery evening class.



TY Students assisting at the Mince Pie Morning in aid of SVP

We congratulate the **Second Years** for their superb fundraising efforts in aid of this year's **Saint Vincent de Paul Christmas Appeal**. It was great to see so many of them enjoying the **Table Quiz** in the Jubilee Hall this week and well done to the winning Team **'Thailand'** (Daniel Burns, Hugo Cullen, Sam Lynch, Daniel McCarthy and Christian Murphy), from Ebenrecht House who achieved 57 points and to the runners up, who scored 50 points with a depleted team of only two members; **'Portugal'** (Harry Clancy and Adrian Ho) from de Valera House. Most importantly, sincere thanks to all who contributed so generously, raising a total of €4278 for this very worthwhile cause.

We hope many families will join us in celebration and prayer at the **Fifth Year Family Mass** on Saturday 28th January. Wishing you all a happy and healthy Christmas break as we look forward to 2023 with high hopes of continued good humour, commitment, and excellence.

Congratulations to the **Senior Irish Debaters** including Jack Burke and Oisín Tiernan (**6th Year**) who qualified for the next round of the Gael Linn debating competition. They successfully proposed a motion that 'Britain should abolish the Monarchy'.

Dates for the TY Diary

January (various dates) – Part two of the Leadership Course.

Sunday 22nd January – Leman Concert

23-28 January – Catholic Schools' Week

30th January - 03rd February – Wellbeing Week

Friday 3rd February – TY Corporate Duck Race

Monday 6th – 10th February – Work Experience

Second Years at the VDP Table Quiz



T O Donovan, L O Riagáin, H. Higgins, C. Kane



J Clarke, C Hall, C Manning, B Ryan, J Smyth



C Manning, L Waldron, E Rowlands, A Xourafas



A. Beatty, J C de la Cuesta, D. Rogan, C. Mahony, T. Dunne, J L Elias

Message from the Deans Cont'd



R. Mellon, H. Sood, S. Simons, N. Joyce, H. Foley



C Hickey, K Roche, J Sheeran, H Bourke, S Maxwell



A Quinn, B Moore, C McDonagh, P. Ryan, G Eggers



J Norris, D Noonan, C Burke, A Clancy, H. Rapy



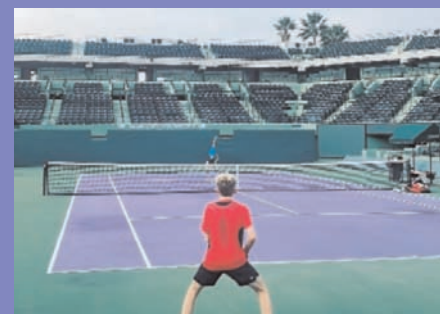
M Madden, D. Murray, O. Hammersley, T. Murray, O. Tuthill



H Forde, E Groarke, D Ennis



Michael Kennedy (2nd Year)with Cor Linn



Zac Naughton who is competing in the Orange Bowl in Miami



JCTV St Mary's



Third Years at the Carol Service



Ben O' Halloran and his family at the TY Family Mass



Cillian Hall, James Smyth, Paddy Scally, Luke Coffey, Cian Manning



Cormac Devlin TD, Patrick Brennan, and Dylan O'Connor (TY)



TY at Dragons' Den Final



Harry McCabe, Jack Angulo and Matthew Govan – Fifth Year SVP fundraiser



TY Students enjoying their Midnight pizza!



Harry Keyes, Shane O'Connor, Sam McLoughlin, Gordon O'Hara – Fifth Year SVP Clyclothon



Patrick Moore – Fifth Year Cyclothon



Fifth Year SVP Cyclothon



Fifth Year SVP Cyclothon

Message from the Deans Cont'd



Sam Merren – Fifth Year SVP Cyclothon



Jack Sheridan, Christian Fitzgibbon.
Cathal Geraghty – Fifth Year



Donie Grehan, Tom McGrath and
Christopher McInerney – Fifth Year
SVP Cyclothon



Conor Sheridan, Derry Moloney, Malachy
McLoughlin, Gavin Donohoe – Fifth Year



Ernie O'Brien, Lenny Kuzmin, James
Clancy – Fifth Year



Aron Moore Fifth Year – Christmas
Jumper Day



James Kilroy and Shane
Maher signing off on their
six week Auxilium
Programme – Fifth Year



Fifth Year Hygiene Kit donations as part of their Auxilium
Programme



Fifth Years ready for the Carol Service



Charlie Adams and Cian
McAdam ending their
Auxilium Community
Service Programme – Fifth
Year



Fifth Years embarking on six
weeks of Community Service
through their Auxilium
Programme



Conor Lambe, Phillip O'Neill, Jack O'Neill
– Fifth Year



Sebastian Buch Andersen,
Matthew Sorensen & Jonathon
Hoffman putting up the Class of
2023 Christmas Tree



SCT (Dark Blue) v Clifton
College Bristol



Food Glorious Food! 6th Year End
of Fast Meal 2022



Ms Crimmins helping Seb,
Jonathan and Matthew with the
6th Year Christmas Tree



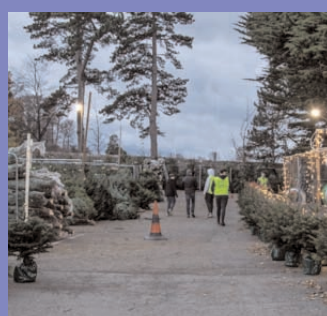
Jack Larkin & Ms Crimmins



Ms Crimmins, Daniel Kenny & Mr
Grumley Traynor



Ryan Keogh & Mr Tom
Ryan (Dean of Sixth Year)



TY Selling Christmas Trees for VDP



6th Year Fast 2022 - Waiting for Food!

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2022



JCTV Oakham



101 year old Hugh O'Neill from Mount Merrion with John Pembrey, Harry Fenelon, Rob Murphy and Tom Yaxley (TY) who are offering IT Skills assistance to the residents of Mount Merrion and Glashule as part of a TY project .



The Blessing of the Boats Ceremony



Blackrock College Rowers on the Liffey



Blackrock College Rowers



Blackrock College Rowers fundraise for the RNLI



Fifth Years at Career Talks



Career Talk Contributors with Ms. N. Drew and Mr.A. MacGinty



Fifth Years at Career Talks



Blackrock College Swim Team at Fordham Preparatory School New York



Blackrock V RBAI



John Pierce and Lughán O Riagáin (Second Year) Blackrock V RBAI

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2022



The Carol Service



Sean Treacy, Harry Fitzpatrick & Joseph Gibney (Sixth Year) , Mr.A.MacGinty (Principal) and Ms.Y.Markey (Deputy Principal) at the Carol Service



The Choir at the Carol Service



Members of the Third Year Choir at the Carol Service



Members of the Orchestra at the Carol Service



Fifth Years at the Carol Service



Edward Wilson (TY) winner of this year's Dragons' Den Competition Jim Leyden (Chairperson of Dragons' Den) and John O'Doherty (President of the PPU).



Matthew Neary (2nd place) in this year's Dragons' Den Competition with Jim Leyden (Chairperson of Dragons' Den) and John O'Doherty (President of the PPU).



Jeremy Carroll ,3rd Place in the Dragons' Den Final 2022 with Jim Leyden (Chairperson of Dragons' Den) and John O'Doherty (President of the PPU).



Dragons and Dragons Den Finalists with Mr J. Fitzsimmons (Head of Business)



Cael McCloskey (Third Year)
J2nds v St Mary's

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2022



J2nds v St Mary's



Jack Mulsow (Third Year) J2nds v St Mary's



Cian Murphy , Conor Barrett , Harold Weir and Donnacha Barry J3rds v St Mary's



James Browne (Third Year) JCTV St Mary's



Conor White (Third Year) JCTV St Mary's



JCTV St Mary's



Luke Coffey, Matthew Wyse, and Gavin Patrick McGrath(Third Years) JCTV St Mary's



James O'Sullivan S2nds V St Michael's



Charlie Woodcock(Fifth Year) , Louis Duignan (Sixth Year) and Brian O'Flaherty (Fifth Year) S2nds V St Michael's



Brian O' Flaherty (Fifth Year) S2nds V St Michael's



S2nds V St Michael's



Nicholas Cronnelly (Fifth Year) S2nds V St Michael's



Daniel Bennett (Captain) Senior Soccer Team V St Gerard's Bray



Brian Walsh (TY), Mark Walsh (Fifth Year) and Johnny O' Sullivan (TY) SCTV St Michael's



Tom McAleese , Bernard White, Luke Coffey and Conal Power JCTV St Mary's



SCTV St Michael's

Snapshot of 2nd Half Term 2022



SCTV St Michael's



Daniel Cheung (Fifth Year)
Senior Soccer Team V St Gerard's Bray



Louis Kennefick (Sixth Year)
Senior Soccer Team V St Gerard's Bray



Shanahan 6th Year Christmas Jumpers



De Valera 6th Year Christmas Jumpers



Duff 6th Year Christmas Jumpers



Ebenrecht 6th Year Christmas Jumpers



Leman 6th Year Christmas Jumpers

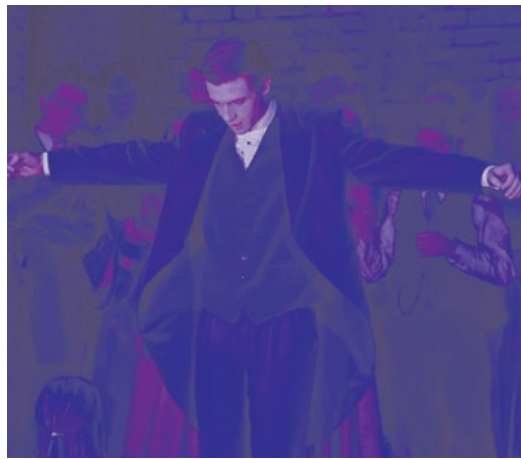


McQuaid 6th Year Christmas Jumpers

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street



Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street



Guidance and Counselling



CAO – The 6th Year CAO talk for parents went extremely well. It was great to see so many parents stay afterwards for tea and a chat.

The PowerPoint presentation has been uploaded to the parents' section of the school website. All 6th Year students attended a similar CAO talk in person during school and each was given a hard copy of the CAO handbook.

With the CAO application deadline approaching on February 1st, any student who is unsure of the CAO or College options should complete the interest assessment that was sent out on Teams and contact MS. Drew. All students will apply online at www.cao.ie where they can avail of a reduced application fee of €30 if they apply before January 20th, 2023. The regular fee of €45 applies to applications made between January 20th and February 1st, 2023.

DARE applicants are advised to get these applications underway as soon as possible. Students can find out more regarding the DARE scheme on www.cao.ie/DARE.

NUI: All exemption forms must have the students CAO number listed. Students with Irish and/or 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 to them. Students who already have exemptions will have to contact the relevant bodies (NUI/TCD) to add their CAO numbers to their file if not already done.

Students with state exemptions must fill in a NUI form and post to the NUI in Merrion Sq. The address is on the top of the form and downloadable from <http://www.nui.ie/college/docs/exemption.pdf>. This must be filled in and sent to NUI with your CAO number, supporting documents and relevant signatures.

Trinity College have their own waiver form available from <https://www.tcd.ie/study/assets/PDF/tcd-language-waiver-application-form.pdf>. This must be filled in and sent to TCD with supporting documents, your CAO number and relevant signatures.

Any student considering making a UCD Ad Astra Scholarship (Elite Athlete/Performing Arts) should do so by January 31st; applications can now be made online via the UCD website. There is a 6th Year "Teams" page called "Scholarships"

with relevant information uploaded there. Contact Ms. Drew.

HPAT - Students applying for entry to Medicine in 2023 need to register for CAO to receive their CAO number so they can register for the HPAT-Ireland examination. HPAT-Ireland registration will close in January. HPAT-Ireland 2023 results are released in late June. Our 6th Year students have been participating in a HPAT preparation course on Saturday mornings with Mr. Robert Gallagher (Presently studying Medicine) in the Collegerested students are welcome to join.

RCSI always hold their open day in January during the holidays. Please create a reminder for the 4th January 2023. Any student wishing to attend must register online via the RCSI website.

UCAS – Approximately 20 students from 6th Year have begun their UCAS applications for a range of universities in the UK. The numbers applying has grown this year. The deadline is fast approaching, students need to be aware of this as the UCAS application is quite detailed. The deadline is the 25th January 2023. Any 6th Year considering making a UCAS application should indicate this to Ms Drew as soon as possible.

Students are required to submit a completed referent template form (available from Ms. Drew) along with CV to Ms. Drew. The requests must be submitted before Christmas if they are to be returned before the deadline.

ALL UCAS applicants should have filled in the reference template before the Christmas break.

CAREER FAIR

We look forward to the 6th Year Career Fair on January 24th, 2023. All 6th Years and their parents will be invited to this evening event.

The Guidance Department would like to wish all students and their families a pleasant, restful and safe Christmas.



FI Paddock Club



The FI Paddock club runs at lunchtime on Mondays in the DLC. We watch race highlights of each race weekend and on alternative weeks we have A range of activities such as, Topic talks by the students, Poster designs or Quizzes

If you would like to join this fun group, come to the CADLC on Mondays at lunchtime! 1.15pm. If you have any queries, please contact Ms. Drew at ndrew@blackrockcollege.com. Meetings will resume in January 2023. Happy Christmas!



Update from the two Blackrock College TY Teams

Team Vulcan Racing

Edward Wilson – Team Principal (Manager)
Henry Brown – Vice-Principal, Graphic designer, Social media
Cheng Zheng – Design Engineer
Alex Parson – Manufacturing Engineer
Finlay Threadgold-Ball – Finance and Sponsorship
Ben McElligott – Engineering and Finance assistance

The team continues to prepare their 5 Page Plan submission. They have worked hard on **Community Outreach**, speaking to 2nd and 3rd Year Assemblies regarding FI in Schools and visiting Mount Anville to promote FI in Schools to their STEM Committee. They have secured some funding thanks to the generosity of sponsors; Active Security Solutions, Wriggle, Dunnes Stores and SimScale – The team is working on refining and testing their car design and cannot wait to reveal their design which will hopefully secure the team a place in the Regional Finals in February/March.

You can follow Team Vulcan's journey on ;

Instagram: [@vulcanracingofficial](https://www.instagram.com/vulcanracingofficial)

TikTok: [@vulcanracingofficial](https://www.tiktok.com/@vulcanracingofficial)

Twitter: [@vulcanrac1ng](https://twitter.com/vulcanrac1ng)

Email us if you have any business or support related enquiries.

Email: vulcanracingf1irl@gmail.com

Team Orbit Racing

Darragh O'Neill - Team Principal (Manager)

Conor Blackburn - Manufacturing Engineer

Oliver Lee - Design Engineer

Fiachra Coakley - Social Media & Marketing Director

Philip Duffy - Finance Director,

Jack Drumm - Resource & Logistics Director

The team has started a STEM (Science, Technology and Engineering and Maths) initiative with our primary school Willow Park Junior School, created a 6-session based competition that would develop the students' "soft skills": Communication, Team Work, Leadership and Critical Thinking. During these sessions, the boys have been working on building model Formula-One cars which will then be raced down a 20m tracked powered by a CO2 Launching System. The final race and presentation will be on Friday the 9th of December.

The team has made contact with companies which promote Science, Technology and Engineering and Companies that promote STEM education in primary schools. Thanks to Vector Motors, Seaspray Financial, Boca Bearings and Bizquipp and Simscale for their generous sponsorship.

You can follow Team Orbit Racing's journey on:

LinkedIn: [Racing-Orbit](https://www.linkedin.com/company/racing-orbit)

Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, TikTok: [@Racing_Orbit](https://www.instagram.com/racing_orbit)

For any queries email us at info@orbitracing.ie

To read our newsletter you can visit our website orbitracing.ie/newsletter/halloween.pdf



The Arts



Darragh Bowler (Fifth Year)



Conor Casey (Sixth Year) Art Club



Matthew Burke Kennedy



Oscar Egan (Fifth Year)



Dixon Chongo (Art Club)



Max McGurk (Sixth Year)



BLACKROCK COLLEGE C.S.Sp. MUSIC & DRAMA

The return of all 'normal' music and drama events was warmly welcomed this term. The Third- and Fourth-Year Family Masses took place on November 12th and December 3rd respectively. The relevant choirs and instrumentalists performed at their Masses and both year groups really added to the liturgy and were very well represented – well done to all involved. The Mass of Remembrance took place on November 30th with Simon Morgan as cantor, accompanied by Ainle O'Shea on Flute and Killian Grumley Traynor on organ. This important Mass was very well attended and it was a nice occasion in remembrance of those in the extended College Community who have passed away.

Stephen Sondheim's masterpiece *Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, ran for 4 nights in the Jubilee Hall – November 22nd to 25th. In collaboration with Mount Anville, a team of over 80 students and staff worked on this show – be it as cast, crew, orchestra, or production – this was a big team effort. A big thank you to all who attended the show and supported it. We had great audiences and the show was very well received – bravo tutti!

Leading us into the Christmas season, the whole school Carol Service took place on December 6th. All students from First- to Sixth-Year attended in the Sports Hall and it was a joyous occasion where we all sang together, accompanied by the College Orchestra. Special credit must go to Patrick Hayden (Fifth Year) and the Senior Leadership Team for their playing of the sleigh bells for the final song, *Merry Christmas Everyone*. A special mention must also go to Seán Treacy, Harry Fitzpatrick and Joseph Gibney who were our wonderful Sixth-Year soloists for *O Holy Night*. Following on from this, the Adult Choir sang superbly at the Past Parents' Carol Service which took place in the College Chapel on December 11th. Thanks to Simon Orrock who accompanied them on organ.



Members of the Choir at the Carol Service



The Leman Festival Concert is making its return to the National Concert Hall on Monday, 23rd January 2023 and tickets will go on sale in the new year – details to follow. All in the music and drama department are excited for what we call the season of 'Lemanuary'. We hope to see you there. In the meantime, we wish you a very merry and musical Christmas and a happy new year!

Junior Debating Blackrock College and Holy Child Killiney mini-MACE Debates

On Tuesday September 20th, five students: Daniel Burns (2nd Year) Brian Carroll, Rossa Clonan, Jamie Browne-Lynch and Tom Hayden (all 3rd Year) competed in the Holy Child Debating Competition.

In the next round of this debate, Blackrock College hosted HCK on Thursday November 10th.

Motion:

There is a button. If this button is pressed, a species of aliens takes over the world.

They will be benevolent dictators; however, the needs of every person are met.

This House Would Press The Button.



Daniel Burns, Eoin Fitzpatrick, Michael Kennedy (All 2nd Year) Cillian Staunton, Josh Murphy, Conal Byrne, Jamie Browne-Lynch, Tom Hayden, Brian Carroll (All 3rd Year)

Daniel Burns was named best speaker and Josh Murphy and Conal Byrne won best teams.

Judging panel: Michael White (Class of 2022), Frazer McGinn, Ben Kieran-Glenon, Jamie Starr-Bourke and Aaron Murtagh (Class of 2023).



Junior Debaters: Jamie Brown-Lynch and Rossa Clonan (both 3rd Year), Daniel Burns (2nd Year), Tom Hayden and Brian Carroll (both 3rd Year)



HCK V Blackrock College Junior Debaters September 2022

The Arts Cont'd



Next up, we had the Junior versus Senior Debate on September 27th, with the Junior and Senior Debating Teams coming face to face in the CADLC.

The Junior Debaters proposed the motion:

'This House Believes That Reality TV Represents Everything That Is Wretched About Ireland Today.'

Junior Debaters: Daniel Burns, Matthew Leamy, John McCallig (all 2nd Year students) and Rossa Clonan and Brian Carroll (both 3rd Year students).

Senior Debaters: Ishaan Pandey (TY), Frazer McGinn, ben Kieran-Glennon, Jamie Starr-Bourke and Aaron Murtagh (all 6th Year students)

The judges, Mr. Sheil and Ms. Pierce, awarded the Senior Team with first prize, and Matthew Leamy (2nd Year) and Ben Kieran-Glennon (6th Year) as best speakers in the debate.



Senior Debaters: Frazer McGinn (6th Year), Ishaan Pandey (TY), Jamie Starr-Bourke, Aaron Murtagh and Ben Kieran-Glennon (all 6th Year)



Junior Debaters: Brian Carroll and Rossa Clonan (both 3rd Year), John McCallig, Matthew Leamy and Daniel Burns (all 2nd Year)



Rounds 1 & 2 of the Junior Schools' Debating Competition, hosted by the UCD Law Society and the UCD Literary and Historical Society, have taken place in UCD.

Team A: Josh Murphy and Jamie Browne Lynch (3rd Year)

Team B: Thomas Murray and Daniel Burns (2nd Year)

Team C: Brian Carroll and Tom Hayden (3rd Year)

Team D: Matthew Leamy and Michael Kennedy (2nd Year)

In the New Year, the Junior Debaters will compete in the Junior Schools National MACE on Saturday, **January 28th in University College Dublin**, which is supported by the Literary and Historical Society. This is Ireland's premier junior debating competition and the only National event for those students in their Junior Cycle of secondary school. We are also excited to announce that this will also be the qualifying event for the International Competition for Young Debaters which will be held in Cambridge University in May 2023.



UCD Debaters: Michael Kennedy, Matthew Leamy, Daniel Burns and Thomas Murray (all 2nd Year)

Senior English Debating

It has been another busy term for the Senior English Debating Society. On 25th October, we welcomed students from Holy Child Killiney to take part in a friendly. All the speakers presented very interesting and well-researched speeches on the motion that 'This House Would Ban Embedded Journalism'. Well done to Jonathan Hoffman and Ben Kieran-Glennon (both 6th Year), who were awarded first place in the debate. Congratulations, also, to Kate Fan from HCK, who was awarded Best Speaker. We thoroughly enjoyed debating with HCK and look forward to more collaborations with them in the future.

This term also saw the return of the Teacher vs Student debate. As it was scheduled to take place during Science Week, we collaborated with the Science Department and chose the motion that Science would be a More Useful Core Subject than English for the Leaving Cert. The teacher team, comprised of Mr Sheil, Mr Maher and Dr Maguire proposed the motion, while the student team, Jonathan Hoffman, Frazer McGinn and Ben Kieran-Glennon (all 6th Year), opposed. Both sides presented compelling cases, but it was the students who pipped the teachers to the post on this occasion. All speakers spoke excellently, with the adjudicators awarding the prize for Best Speaker to Mr Maher. Thank you to Ms Wyse, Head of Science, for contributing prizes, and to Ms Buckley who was on the adjudicating panel.

The Transition Years have been busy competing in the League Phase of the Concern Debates. The most recent debate of the league took place in the last week of November, against Holy Family Community School. The motion, which we proposed, stated that climate activists should give up eating meat. It was an interesting debate, well-contended by both sides. We look forward to our continued participation in the competition after Christmas.



Mr J. Sheil in full flight

As Christmas approaches, as always, we commend all members for their commitment to the debating programme and we look forward to the various debating events 2023 will bring.



L-R: Ms K. Buckley, Mr J. Sheil, Dr L. Maguire, Frazer McGinn, Jonathan Hoffman, Ben Kieran-Glennon (all 6th Year) and Pearse Woods (Debate Coach).



Frazer McGinn (6th Year) speaking at the Teacher vs Student Debate



Blackrock College

Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre

International Men's Day - Be Respectful

To promote the new maxim 'Be Respectful', Ms Pierce's and Mr Halpin's history classes prepared projects on Unsung Heroes that they have respect for and displayed them in the exhibition area in the library for International Men's Day. Student displayed a wide variety of men, who made a difference to the world. Examples include Maurice Hileman who created 40 different vaccines and saved millions of lives and Valery Legasov who lead the containment of the Chernobyl disaster and saved hundreds and thousands of lives.



Green Schools and Sustainable Development Goals Book Reviews

Students are invited to submit book reviews and earn points for their house. Bonus points can be earned if students can connect a theme in the book to a Sustainable Development Goal, e.g. the distinction between the districts and the capital city could be linked to SDG 10, inequality. Students can choose any genre of book from non-fiction, to sci-fi and fantasy.

BCR

Well done to Fionn Whelan who interviewed Author Jane Mitchell for the library show on Blackrock College Radio. Jane's books include stories of human struggles such as *Chalkline*, *A Dangerous Crossing* and *Run for your Life*.

Book Themes

Each month, the CADLC committee promote different book themes in the library. The committee choose a book to promote on the front window, where different key moments are put on the display. Books of the same genre are displayed around the library. In October it was the shining/horror theme and in November it was 1984/ dystopian-



1984 Book display

The Arts Cont'd



futuristic. For the shining key moments/themes in the book were *Here's Johnny*, *The Axe*, *All Work and no Play makes Jack a Dull Boy* and *The Twins*. 1984 showed *Big Brother is Watching you*, some quotes, 2 minutes of *Hate Scene*, *Room 101* and *Ingsoc Labels*. So far the displays have had a positive effect with several students requesting to borrow 1984 and *The Shining*.

PE Mindset Class

Mr Vanstone's 5th Year PE class were invited to read a book or listen to a podcast of a successful person and choose points that could help them adapt their mindset to improve their sport or everyday life. Students presented their findings to their class and spoke about things such as motivation, fear, resilience, and self-belief. Students picked men and women in many areas such as sports, military, and business.

Science Week

To celebrate science week an "ology" exhibition and women in science posters were displayed in the library. The kahoot quiz was based on fun science facts that were on display on St. Patrick's corridor. Ms A. Dillon gave TY and some 2nd Year classes a class on how to identify conspiracy theories.

Cuppa Club

The first cuppa club was launched by the Wellbeing committee in the library on 10th November for Mental Health Awareness Day and the second took place on Thursday 8th December for senior students only. Students were invited to come and enjoy hot chocolate and cupcakes and have a chat. Both days were a huge success with approximately 120-150 students attending. A big thank you to members of the Wellbeing and CADLC committee who helped on the day.



Some 5th Years enjoying Cuppa Club

Staff Book Club

We've had three staff book clubs so far. The first book was *Small Things like These* by Claire Keegan and we also read *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus and *Sea of Tranquility* by Emily St. John Mandel. Both book clubs involved some great discussion and we are looking forward to our next book club in January where we will be discussing *We don't know Ourselves* by Fintan O'Toole.



Green Schools

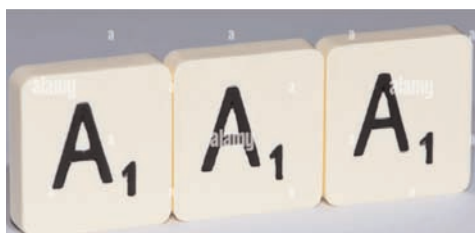


It has been a productive few weeks for the Green Schools' Committee since the Halloween mid-term break. We have successfully launched an Instagram account, prepared content for our own page on the Blackrock College website along with setting out an in-detail plan of the new litter and waste management

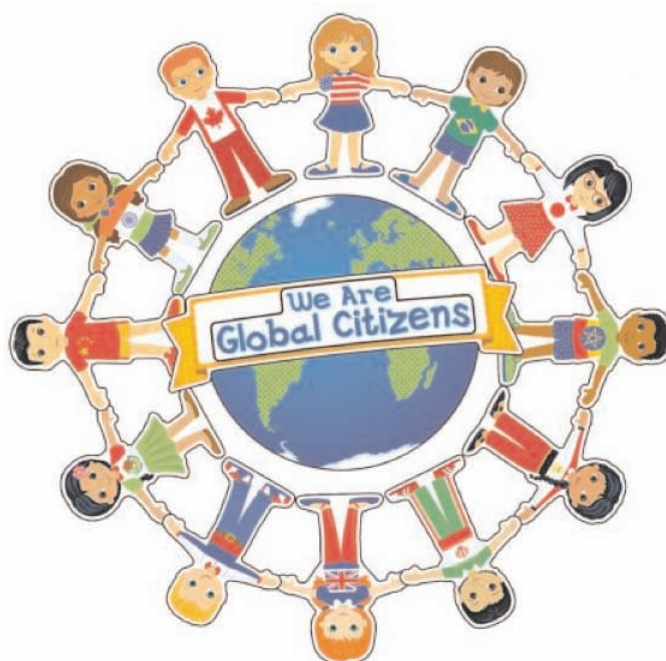
system to be introduced around the Blackrock College campus.

In early November we launched the Green Schools' Committee **Instagram account**. We have gained over 40 followers in our first month along with reaching out to nearly 200 people through posts and stories. We believe having an Instagram account is the next step in promoting a sustainable way of living for everyone in the Blackrock community especially the student body.

We also will be launching our own **page** on the **Blackrock College website**. This will further show Blackrock College's commitment to becoming as sustainable as it can be. Having a presence on all digital platforms is vital to reaching out to the whole Blackrock College community. On such platforms we hope to highlight our **Triple A** approach of spreading **Awareness** of what we are doing as a committee and of the ways we can all live a more sustainable life, to help everyone **Appreciate** our fantastic biodiverse campus along with encouraging individual **Action** in our everyday lives.



As part of the Green Schools' Committee's pursuit of the Global Citizenship Litter and Waste Flag we identified that the school's litter and waste management system must be changed. The current system is unclear and it is difficult for staff and students to use the bins properly. The Green Schools' Committee held a meeting with Maintenance and Facilities and as a result a lot of change will be implemented in the school to help drive a change about how we all dispose of our waste in school. **Bins in public and recreational areas of the school will be changed**, with compost bins being introduced into the recreational rooms. This will allow students to put the biodegradable canteen boxes where they belong. This is a massive change across the school. In order to raise awareness and educate the staff and students of the new changes and to encourage new habits, the committee will be working on **education programme** to introduce such changes.



Pastoral Care Programme



As 2022 draws to a close, we have much to be grateful for as a School Community and as a Community of Faith over the past 12 months. This half term has been a busy time for all as we prepared for exams and Christmas. Taking time out of our busy lives is important for our wellbeing, especially for both our spiritual and emotional wellbeing – being as well as we can be is important for each of us and for all those around us – we all support each other ... together we are a School Community and a Community of Faith.



Jeremy Carroll and his family at the TY Family Mass

Fr Paddy Moran CSSp was Chief Celebrant at the Transition Year Family Mass on the evening of Sat 3rd December. In Fr Paddy's homily, he asked each of us "Who will you become?", a challenge to each of us, but also an opportunity for each of us to stop and reflect on our journey and plan our route forward. Advent, our time of preparation for Christmas, is a good time for each of us to ask "Who will you become?". Fr Brendan Carr CSSp was Chief Celebrant at the 3rd Year Family Mass in early November and his message to all of us was one of encouragement; be encouraged by the message of Love in the Gospels just as Francis Libermann, Spiritan Co-Founder told us that "you are a child of God".

November is a time when we remember our loved ones who have gone to their heavenly home. Traditionally on the last Wednesday evening in November each year we gather to celebrate Mass for "those whom we love and lose that are no longer where they were before, they are now wherever we are". Our Chief Celebrant was Fr Myles Healy CSSp and he reminded the grieving congregation that faith and love bind us eternally. May all who have died Rest in Peace.



NOEL TURLEY MEMORIAL TROPHY

The third annual Noel Turley Memorial Trophy match, between our SCT and their St Michael's counterparts, took place at the UCD Bowl on Saturday 12th November. The event marked the culmination of a collaborative effort between TY boys from both schools who worked alongside each other in raising funds for Spirasi, which helps those afflicted by acts of torture overseas. The total sum raised by the boys was €28,346.

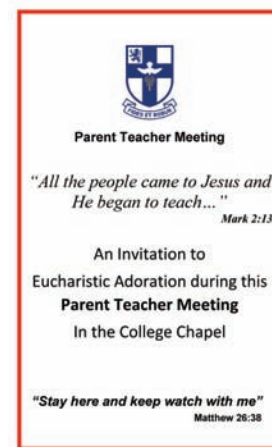
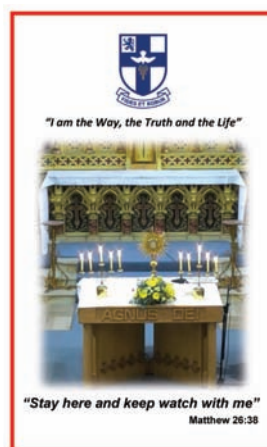
Peace and happiness to all for Christmas and 2023.



Jack McGlone (Sixth Year) reading at the Carol Service



Ollie Coffey (Sixth Year) reading at the Carol Service



Dungeons and Dragons Club



The members of the Dungeons and Dragons club have been very creative of late. Since Mid Term some members have been trialing a new RPG (Role Playing game) called Warhammer, while others have spent many hours happily painting their Warhammer miniatures! Map making is an essential part of RPGs and Daire Casey (TY) prepared a magnificent specimen for use in future Westmarch campaigns. This prompted John Ding and Sam Kyrychenko (2nd Years) into action. They have not only been learning map making skills (Mr. Campbell would be very happy to hear!) but they are working on their own personal project. The Halloween party was another innovative venture. DM Daire Casey led the entire club with 16 players in a novel, interactive and dramatic role playing session (with a lot of characters ending up on the floor!) It is fantastic to see the imagination of our students in full flow. Well done to all involved!



Members of Mr O'Briens Group and their Miniatures Sam McCann, John Ding, Sean Mullane, James O'Brien, Cian O'Flanagan and Sam Kyrychenko (all 2nd Years)



Halloween Party Mayhem with Patrick Hayden (5th Yr), DM Daire Casey (TY), Ian Duane and Luc O'hAonghusa (both 3rd Yr)



Fionn Whelan (TY), Ian Duane and Mark Aherne (3rd Yr) at work painting Miniatures.



John Ding and Sam Kyrychenko (2nd Years) busy creating maps.



Map designed by Daire Casey (TY) for future Westmarches campaigns and Selected Painted Miniatures



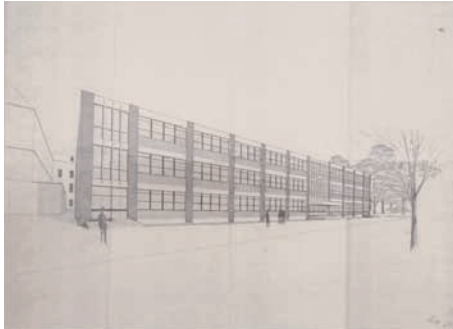
Halloween Party Super Session with the entire club involved, from 2nd to 5th Year.

Archives Update



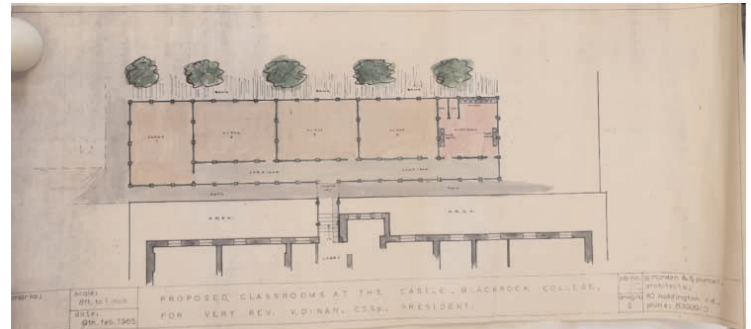
During the summer, the College invested in new archival shelving, enclosures (boxes, folders, tissue paper and transparent envelopes for photographs) and plan chests. The latter are designed to hold large folio-sized folders and can store large documents such as maps, architectural drawings, and large photographs in a flat and accessible way. This development has facilitated the cataloguing of the substantial collection of architectural drawings in the archives.

While there are a small number of plans from the 1870s with amateur sketches of building projects for the early 'French College', the body of architectural drawings dates to the early 20th century. They range from the new entrance gateway, lodge, and railings in 1903-1904 (by P.H. McCarthy Architect and Engineer) to the new wing / St Paul's classrooms, laboratories and offices opened in 2007 (Jim Coady and Associates Architects). The collection



is comprehensive and includes many iterations of the design process of several 20th century projects proposed and realised: classrooms extension (1920s), electrical installation (1935), new tennis courts (1946), alterations to the Chapel and Castle (1960s), new wing (1973), new swimming pool (1974), and new squash courts (1988), to name a few. In many instances, the architectural plans have survived in good condition and, as these images show, resplendent in their colour and detail.

As ever, to view these or other records in the Archive, please get in touch: archives@blackrockcollege.com, Tel: 01 2752197



Wellbeing



The Student Wellbeing Committee has had a highly successful period from November to December. Mental Health Awareness Day was a great success this year, with activities ranging from SOAR workshops to guided meditation. Each class watched a video and went through a PowerPoint that gave the boys tips on how to stay stress free and relaxed. Every student from Second to Fifth year wore an orange ribbon on their school uniform in recognition of the special day. To mark the day many 6th Years wore an orange article of clothing and wore orange wristbands. Clothing such as orange high-vis tops and orange scarfs could be seen around the Sixth-Year rec area.



The Wellbeing Committee's first ever Cuppa Club took place during lunch time in the library. Everyone was invited to come in and sit down with their friends for a chat in

a relaxing environment. There was free hot chocolate and delicious cupcakes for anyone who dropped by.

The Wellbeing Committee hosted a special Cuppa Club for 5th and 6th Years, to help relieve them of stress from their exams. The library was full of students and teachers together, chatting and having a laugh with Christmas songs playing in the background.

The Wellbeing Committee has started preparations for Wellbeing Week, which begins on January 30th. There are many things in store for Blackrock this year; it is going to be the most fulfilling and entertaining Wellbeing Week ever seen by the school.



Remember the Wellbeing Anonymous Tool is always there for you – on your Year Teams of the links section of EduLink. Have a safe and happy Christmas break!

Global Citizenship



The Global Citizenship (GCC) team have had an extremely busy few weeks. We saw the beginning of 'The Sustainable Development Goal Challenge' run by Development Perspectives. All TY students have been signed up for this challenge and have completed the first of two workshops that they will take part in this year. This workshop prepares the students for an action project that they will carry out throughout their time in Fourth Year. Teachers across the TY social justice program have also completed the first of 3 training days with Development Perspectives. The students have enjoyed the workshops and are looking forward to the remaining two.

As mentioned in our previous newsletter entry, the GCC team have decided to complete a project on direct provision. To begin this project, students created a display based on their research in the designated display in the Digital Learning Centre. Students identified the companies that profit from direct provision or that are linked to direct provision and called for an embargo on these companies. The overall aim of this project will be to host a live discussion panel event in March where representatives of the many perspectives of direct provision will voice their story. This event will be hosted by students on the committee.

The students kicked off their collaboration project with the Holy Ghost School in Kenya through having a zoom call and interview with the students. This interview was aired on Blackrock College Radio during the BRC week. The interview focused on the similarities and differences that exist in the lives of teenagers in Ireland and Kenya.

Going forward, the students in both Ireland and Kenya will identify a social problem that exists in both societies. They will then work together to create an action project between the two schools and trace the result throughout the year.



Science Week ran from Monday 14th until Friday the 18th of November. Along St. Patrick's Corridor there was a display of posters including STEM, 'SciFlix' (Science documentaries and movies which are available on Netflix), Chemistry of Covid and Nobel prizes. A new addition to St. Patrick's Corridor this year was 'Science Fun Facts' that were used for questions in this year's Kahoot Friday Quiz in CADLC. We had a display of 'Women in Science' and the top ten 'Ology' posters in the CADLC. There were also posters of celebrities, sports stars and actors stating their Science Degree and where they graduated from. These were displayed on the Senior Science and Junior Science corridors. The rest of the 'Ologies' was displayed on the Senior Science corridor. Along Junior Science corridor we also displayed 'Career in Chemistry' posters, made by TY Chemistry.



Each TY Biology class took part in an Escape Room. This involved teams of two or three students where they had to work together and solve six science puzzles rooms and crack the code. This activity lasted the 60-minute lesson. The fastest team to complete were deemed the winners. This provided the class with great fun, competitiveness, and enthusiasm.



Dónal Robson (5th Year)
Demonstrating Elephants' Toothpaste



Niall Smyth and Diarmaid Byrne (5th Year)
Demonstrating Magic Beakers

On Tuesday 15th, 5th Year Chemistry students performed a 'Chemistry Magic Show' for 2nd Year students. Well done to the fifth-year chemistry students who created such a fun, exciting learning environment for the 2nd Years.



Niall Smyth and Diarmaid Byrne
(5th Year) Demonstrating Magic
Beakers

Two teams took part in the regional final of the ISTA Science Quiz on November 17th in TBSI. The internal Senior Science Quiz to pick the teams took place back in October. **Team A:** Patrick Keane, Gavin Bowen-O'Connor and Max Mullen. **Team B:** Aaron Murtagh, John Glynn and Matthew Cullen. Ms. Groves met with the students each Tuesday or Thursday lunchtime for the following four weeks, shared revision questions, science in the news and examples of quizzes etc. There were 60 schools taking part in the Dublin regional. The same quiz took place in twelve other venues. The top 7 teams from Dublin got through to the final.



Teacher V's Student Debate 2022

Team A placed in the 20's and Team B placed joint 9th, missing out to qualify by only two points. Well done to both teams.

On Thursday 17th we hosted the *Teachers Science Quiz* in the staff room. This was a lively, competitive social event for all staff.

On Thursday 17th the Science Department was invited to be part of the Teacher V Student debate. The topic was



Jane Farrar, Professor
of Genetics in TCD
and Head of Genetics
and Microbiology.

Science related and Ms. Buckley was an adjudicator. Congratulations to the student team who won the debate and to Mr. Maher for best speaker. It was great to have this opportunity of a cross curricular link with the English department.



Daniel McDermott
and Cian Murphy who
won our period 5 Quiz

On Friday 18th November Prof. Jane Farrar from Trinity came in and gave a lecture to 6th Year Biology students. Jane is a Prof of Genetics in TCD and Head of Genetics and Microbiology. She has published over one hundred Scientific and internationally renowned papers. Her area of interest is in genetic diseases which causes blindness. The students really enjoyed her talk and were inspired as it was relevant and current to what they are covering on the syllabus now.



Owen Flowers, David Healy, Oisín Maher
and Colm Heylin who won first place in
our period 6 Quiz

On Friday we hosted our 3rd Year Science Quiz. It was great to have it back in the Lecture Hall and to witness to their enthusiasm and competitiveness. Congratulations to Cian Murphy (38C) and Daniel McDermott (38A) who came first from our period 5 quiz and Owen Flowers (37A), Oisín Maher (35), Colm Heylin (37D) and David Healy (37C) who placed first from our period 6 quiz. A big thank you to the following TY's who helped facilitate the quiz on the day: Zach Hally-Doody, Darragh Vaughan, Rory Tracey, Cian Hanley, Nico Perez Rodriguez, Albert Linder, and George McGilton.



6th Year at Dave's Jungle

Dave's Jungle was also a great success – the physical interaction with the animals appeals to all Year groups and some teachers too. It is both an engaging and educational experience for the boys – and we have booked this event again for Science Week 2023.



Phyllis Dave's Iguana



Sixth Years at Dave's Jungle



Figure

All students were invited to enter this year's science photography competition. The theme this year was 'Sustainability'. There were 100 entrants from predominantly 2nd and 3rd year. The entries were reduced down to the top 6 finalists upon which the science teachers voted for the best photo to fit the theme. And the winner was Alex Hyland (3rd Year), and the runner up was John Clark (2nd Year). All of the finalists have now been put forward to the ISTA's national photography competition.



As part of the Junior Cycle, the third-year students have been studying Sustainability. During science week some of the members of the Green Schools committee visited these classes to fill them in on what the committee were doing to implement the sustainable development goals in the College. Edward Wilson and Zach Egan-Ruane did a wonderful job in outlining how the College plans to create a more energy efficient campus, how they are encouraging more sustainable travel, increasing the campus biodiversity and redeveloping Blackrock's waste management system.

Science



This talk really brought the sustainable development goals to the classroom and made them less of an abstract idea. It was another great example of a cross-curricular link during science week.

Thank you to Zach and Edward for preparing and delivering a wonderful presentation and to your committee for all you do on our behalf.

TY Physics worked on making posters of a 'Timeline of Physicists'. These have been displayed along the Senior Science corridor. 74 students also took part in the Physics quiz. Congratulations to Scott Downes (5th Year) who came first.

This month Science Club has been busy carrying out some exciting practicals such as dissecting hearts and kidneys, making crystals and using air cannons. As part of Science Week, some members of the Science Club went to each 2nd Year Science class to promote the club and as a result we have now many more members!



Windmills of Ireland Alex Hyland 3rd Year



Hydration station John Clarke 2nd Year



Edward Wilson and Zach Egan-Ruane (TY) from Green Schools talking to 3rd Year Science students.



Dan Moran, Finn O'Brien, Sean Mullane, Binghong Wang, Ryan Duffy and James O'Brien (Second Years)



Conor Byrne, Sean Mullane and James O'Brien (Second Years) making crystals

Sport



Chess

Chess club took part in a Christmas Chess tournament hosted here in Blackrock College on Tuesday 29th November. We were joined by St.Benildus College, their teacher Mike McAllen and C.U.S accompanied by an old friend Frank Scott, who led the C.U.S group. As there was a large difference in numbers between schools, we decided to play an individual tournament. It was run over two hours. We were very lucky to have our coach Hector as adjudicator who did a superb job and helped as match organiser. Playing an individual tournament allowed each player an opportunity to learn and advance on the chess board. There were some great games with 4 overall leaders. Joint 3rd went to Evan McCourt (6th Year) and by St.Benildus College was the school who scored the highest points overall. A great day was had by all. We look forward to visiting by St.Benildus College and C.U.S in the New Year.



Athletics

Cross Country Relays

The cross-country season returned to Blackrock College on November 9th with the return of the Cross-Country Relays. The event was well-attended and almost 700 students from 35 different schools took part. Students and teachers came from all over Leinster to compete in this competition. Some of the schools included St. Peter's College, Dunboyne and St Patrick's of Navan, Mullingar Community College and De La Salle College, all the way from Dundalk, Co.

Louth. A huge thanks to the grounds staff, and student stewards on the day who helped organise the event.

The relay format consisted of a 1000m, 500m, 500m and 1000m leg, with each runner going for one leg each. Having such a large attendance meant that the level of competition was close to that of Leinster schools' Cross Country. The first home team to run at the event was the Willow Park boys' team that took home a silver medal. They were close to the front for the whole race. Having to fend off a late challenge from St. Peter's of Dunboyne, the Willow team held on for a well-earned silver medal.

In the second-year boy's event, Blackrock medalled again, this time winning bronze. The medalling team consisted of James Foot, Andrew Clancy, Cameron Fallon, and Peter Lee. Eoin Fitzpatrick, Pádraig Matthews, Calum Burke, and Jose Carlos de la Cuesta (Second Years) made up the second Blackrock team who finished 12th in a field of 26.

The 3rd and 4th Year race was for the current Intermediate cross-country team. There were 2 teams in this event. Daniel Norton, Callum Downes, Cillian Staunton and Eddie Totterdell (XXX) making up the first team which came home in 9th, while the second team consisting of Donnacha Barry, Hugh Barry, Jamie Browne-Lynch and Lorcan Lawless (Third Year) finished further back in the competitive field.

In the final race for 5th and 6th Years, students from football and rugby completed the Blackrock Senior Cross-Country team who were not at full strength due to injuries. In a performance that can only be described as punching above one's weight, the team of Lorcan Little, Jed O'Malley, Samuel O'Donovan, David Crowley, and William Connellan finished fourth. Just outside the medals and not far off the pace with 3rd place Clonkeen College's team. Well done to

the 6th Year students who filled-in and represented the school so well in this event on short notice.

Race			
1 st girls	1. Loreto Foxrock	2. St Peter's Dunboyne	3. Mt. Anville
1 st boys	1. St. Pat's Navan	2. Blackrock/Willow	3. St. Peter's Dunboyne
2 nd girls	1. Loreto on the Green	2. St. Andrew's	3. Mt Anville
2 nd boys	1. Gonzaga	2. Sutton Park	3. Blackrock
3 rd / 4 th girls	1. St. Andrew's	2. Muckross	3. Mt. Anville
3 rd / 4 th boys	1. St. Aidan's	2. Coláiste Eoin	3. Oatland's College
5 th / 6 th girls	1. Mount Anville	2. St. Mary's College	3. Loreto Balbriggan
5 th / 6 th boys	1. St. Aidan's	2. Oatland's College	3. Clonkeen College

Badminton

UI9 BOYS

Blackrock College has entered three UI9 boys' teams into the Dublin Schools Badminton League. The UI9A team comprises captain *Scott Downes* (5th Year), *Cheng Zheng* (TY), *Nico Perez Rodrigues* (TY) and *Oscar Deally* (5th Year) began the season with two excellent wins over Wesley College (6-0), and De La Salle (4-2). They drew 3-3 against Sandford College, winning on points and thus Blackrock College secured themselves a place in the quarter- final. These games have been of high intensity, and we wish them the very best of luck.

Both our UI9B and UI9C teams were placed in a very tough division. Although having played very well in all their matches, they have come up against some extremely good opponents. The UI9C team consists of *Conor Wall* (TY) *Jack Droney* (3rd Year) *Dominic Kilbride* (TY) and *Jeward Imran* (TY). They travelled to Baldoyle Badminton Leinster Club for their very first time. Despite great effort against stronger oppositions, their three league games ended in a defeat against a talented St Fintan's side and furthermore lost out against a very competitive Sutton Park and Mount Temple.

A great effort was made by the UI9B team *Finlay Threadgold-Ball*, *Braydon Chau*, *Isaac Moss* and *Captain Conor McFarland* (All TY) in their games. Temple Carrig A, Coláiste Chraobh Abhann A and Belvedere A proved to be stronger sides but the boys played some great badminton, enjoyed every match, and acted like true sportsmen. Both our B and C teams have another two years in the UI9 competition, and we look forward to the next competitive season for these players.

UI6 BOYS

Our A team of *Callum Downes* (Captain), *Jamie O'Nuallain*, *Callum Dee* and *Darragh McCarthy* (all 3rd Years) had great success this season, winning all four games against their opponents. They won 6-0 against De La Salle and St. Benildus. They won 5-1 against Terenure College and Mount Temple. The pairings of *Callum Downes* and *Jamie*, *Callum Dee* and *Darragh* have worked well in unity throughout the league. We hope that we are the top team to come out of this section and go through to the semi-final which will be played in the new year.



UI9 Blackrock College C team at Baldoyle Badminton Leinster Center?
Left to right: *Dominic Kilbride*, *Jack Droney*, *Jawad Imran* and *Conor Wall*

Well done to *Chenlei Wang*, *Jack Casey*, *Mark Connolly* and *David Hopkins* (All 3rd Year) who were successful in the first two league games of the UI6B Division 3. They won 4-2 against St Aidan's and won 6.0 away to Terenure College. These boys put on a fine display of badminton in both singles and in their doubles. They won 6-0 against De La Salle B. Unfortunately, they lost 4-2 against an excellent Wesley College A team. As we await the results of other games, it is hoped that our boys have secured enough on points to be the highest placed second team from the Division 3 group and get to go through to the semi-final.

The UI6 C team, of *Seif Barri*, *Mossy O'Loughlin*, *Lorcan Lawless* (substitute) (all 3rd Years), *Seamus O'Loughlin* (substitute 2nd), *James Donohoe* and *Tom Hayden* (both 3rd Year) enjoyed playing competitively for their first time. Unfortunately, their season came to an end as they were unlucky to lose out on a qualifying spot.

The UI4 league begins in the new year. Furthermore, we have many social players who narrowly missed on a team placing. All players have demonstrated great commitment to weekly training sessions whilst improving greatly in their skill development.

Junior Basketball

After a difficult run in the A league this year, the junior team entered the Plate Competition. The UI6s had a tense semi-final game against an excellent St. Aidan's side that was neck and neck right until the middle of the final quarter. Excellent teamwork and energy meant that 'Rock was able to clinch the win (59-47) and proceed to the final in the Oblate Hall.



(L-R: *Jose Carlos*, *Peter Lee*, *Gearóid Nutley*, *Aaron O'Halloran*, *Daniel Cunningham*, *Mateo Navarro*; *Callum Dee*, *Chenlei Wang*, *Cillian Staunton*, *Jack O'Connell*, *Santiago Franza*)

Again the juniors faced a competitive opposition, this time against St. Fintan's. The team illustrated drive and determination to win the final and bring home some silverware. After a tense game, their excellent teamwork and energy paid off with the final buzzer ringing in a score of 49-37.

Captain *Aaron O'Halloran* (4th Year), who scored an amazing 74 points across the two games, and vice-captain *Gearoid Nutley* (3rd Year) can be proud of their and their teammates' achievements over the course of the league. Their efforts and commitments paid off as they lifted the winning Cup to their supporters.

Senior Basketball

As a result of the victory against Adamstown CC in our group we qualified for the playoff round against Coolmine CS. Unfortunately, our captain, *Maitiu Heckmann*, was out injured for this match. The group responded excellently in a tough away fixture to record our highest scoring points total of the season so far. For the first three quarters it was a very tight back and forth game and we led by only 8 points going into the final quarter. However an outstanding 22 point final quarter saw us run out winners against a highly determined Coolmine side on a scoreline of 73-55. This saw us qualify for the East-Leinster quarter final against Pres Bray. Pres Bray are an experienced, established side at the top end



Eric Brandt (6th Year) Blackrock V Knockbeg College



Maitiu Heckmann (Captain, 6th Year) Blackrock V Knockbeg College

of the A division and unfortunately, we lost out on a score line of 51-37. In the All-Ireland Schools cup, our three victories before midterm saw us reach the All-Ireland quarter final. Unfortunately, we fell short against Knockbeg College on a scoreline of 53-43. Maitiu Heckmann (Captain – 6th Year) and his squad can be very proud our first season up in the A division reaching an East-Leinster and All-Ireland quarter final. After Christmas we look forward to a new competition beginning for our senior squad.



Senior Basketball Squad v Knockbeg College

GAA

Dublin Schools' 2nd Year Gaelic Football Quarter Final
Blackrock College 2-12 Coláiste Cois Life 0-8

Congratulations to captain Cian Manning and the 2nd Year football team on their quarter final win in Silverpark on Tuesday. Two goals scored by Jack Sheeran midway through the first half was the main difference between the sides. Evidently, there was great balance in the forwards with all of them getting their name on the scoresheet throughout the game. The defence must be highly commended too especially for their display in the second half, when our opponents dominated possession. Centre back James Smyth and full back Mark O'Meara played crucial roles relieving our goalmouth of any pressure. Goalkeeper Michael Madden also pulled off a string of superb saves as well to keep a clean sheet. The semi-final should be played next week.

JCT

The second term has proven to be a real test of the depth and quality of the Junior Squad. Whilst training intensity has increased exponentially, they have also had to withstand some difficult opponents. Producing some powerful performances in tough conditions, led by their captain, Matthew Wyse (Third Year) , the JCT have defeated Clongowes, Belvedere and St Mary's, and suffered two defeats away to Cresecent and RBAI. Bigger and more important games await both sides after Christmas and the boys are all set for training during the holiday period in anticipation.



JCT V Oakham

Rowing

Blackrock College Rowing Club has had an active few weeks of training. A major development for the Club was their move to a new location on The Docklands. Rowers now launched from St Patrick's Rowing Club on the banks of the Lower Liffey. As each outing is weather dependent, this move to the Lower Liffey offers a much more reliable location to get out onto the water, which is a vital part of the training programme. This location ensures rowers are getting in plenty of frequent training for the upcoming Regatta season. Commitment to the water is



Blackrock College Rowing Club

essential for learning, adapting, getting accustomed, development, building endurance and strength to sustain the rowing stroke over the course of racing.?

Since September, Blackrock College Rowing Club has welcomed a large number of new 2nd Year rowers to the club. Transition Year students have kindly supported the new club members with training sessions in Dun Laoghaire, as part of gaining their community involvement Bronze Gaisce Award.



Sunrise on the Liffey for Blackrock College Rowers who partook in a fundraiser for the RNLI and The Irish Underwater Search and Recovery Unit

The 'All In A Row' Liffey Challenge

On Saturday 3rd December, 30 students from Blackrock College Rowing Club participated in The 'All In A Row' Liffey Challenge which was established by the rowing and boating community in 2016, in an effort to raise much needed funds for local charities for both the RNLI and The Irish Underwater Search and



Blackrock College Rowing Club on the Liffey

Recovery Unit. A generous donation of €500 was made towards these worthy charities on behalf of the club.

This event, an ambitious challenge, took place on Dublin's River Liffey. As the sun rose, boys began to rig their boats at 7am before taking off from the Tom Clarke bridge to Heuston Station Bridge and onto the Grattan Bridge during high tide. A wreath laying ceremony, attended by the Deputy Lord Mayor of Dublin, took place to commemorate all those who have lost their lives through drowning. This charity event was thoroughly enjoyed by all students and hopefully will form as an annual event in the College rowing calendar.

Thank you to Pat Gannon and his team of coaches for supporting the boys for the duration of this event.

Rowing Vehicle

Blackrock College Rowing Club were delighted to receive, courtesy of Spirit Motors a 4x4 Mitsubishi Outlander which will tow our boats to and from Regattas.



Fr Nash blessed the vehicle on Friday, 9th September, before a gathering of our rowers, Coach Laura Gannon, School Liaison Miss Reilly, Parents' Committee chairman Gus Kelly and from Spirit Motors Mr Conall McCourt (class of 1989), MD of the commercial division of OHM and Mr Jim Ryan, Dealer Principal.

"God our father, you have called
us to share in your work of creation.
We ask your blessing upon this vehicle
and upon those who use it".

We thank Fr Nash for his preparation and celebration of such a meaningful liturgy. We are delighted to be associated with Spirit Motors and thank them for their support and encouragement.

The Blessing of the Boats

On Saturday 10th December, a white crisp morning, many rowers, along with family and friends of Blackrock College Rowing Club attended the clubs annual Christmas Gathering and Blessing of the Boats event. Thank you to Harry Pierce, Patrick Cody and Peter O'Connor for their participation in the service by reciting readings and prayers. Pat Gannon, Senior Rowing Coach of the club, shared powerful words of motivation and encouragement with the boys and their Parents.

Coffee and warm Mince Pies were enjoyed by all afterwards, in aid of SVP. Well done to the Transition Year boys with hosting this, Coffee Morning.

Following this, rowers then braved the cold weather conditions on Lower Liffey for a training session.

Thank you kindly to Fr O'Brolchain for facilitating this blessing in a special manner.

SCT

The second term is normally a very busy one for fixtures, but with the late Halloween it has been more 'quality than quantity' this time around. Defeat against St Michael's (19-9) in the annual Noel Turley Cup match in Belfield Bowl and a close 17-14 defeat to a well-drilled Clongowes side sandwiched an outstanding victory in the UK against top-ranked Clifton College (32-6).



Blackrock V RBAI



J2nds V St Mary's



Oisín Daly, Tom McAleese and Bernard White JCT V St Mary's



SCT V St Michael's

More fixtures are yet to be played before Christmas against Belvedere and Leinster Clubs and we wish the leadership team of captain Oliver Coffey, Michael Colreavy and Harry Whelan and their squad the best in those games and in their ongoing preparations over the Christmas period.

Soccer

The senior soccer team travelled over to Bristol with the senior rugby team on a fantastic trip. Both soccer teams took on Millfield School on Friday November 25th. In the 1st XI game goals from Callum Dunne (x2), Louis Kenefick and Eoin Maher (all 6th Year) secured a 4-0 win. In the 2nd XI game goals from Ramon Sierra (6th Year), Peter Walshe and Charlie Clifton (both 6th Year) secured a 3-1 win. Two fantastic performances in England showed the quality that is within this squad and has set the squad up nicely for their Leinster Cup campaign.



Senior Soccer Squad in Millfield



Geordie Lavin (TY)
Senior Soccer V St Gerard's



Charlie Hardy (TY)
Senior Soccer Team V St Gerard's Bray

Metropolitan League:

Unfortunately, our defense of the Metropolitan league came to an end. A loss to Tallaght CS, a draw against Templeogue and a win against St. Benildus wasn't enough to qualify from our section. We wish both Tallaght and Templeogue the best of luck in the upcoming knock-out games.

FAIS Leinster Cup:

Since mid-term we have qualified to the last 16 of the Leinster cup. A fantastic performance against St. Gerards resulted in a 4-0 win. The team are gearing themselves up for a last 16 game against Castleknock Community College.

Swimming

The swim team travelled to New York in October for a competition against Fordham Preparatory School. In addition to a full itinerary of touring New York City the team got a private tour of the New York Athletic Club's City House. The swimmers once again got to see their old friends from Fordham and we look forward to hosting them next year.



Blackrock College Swim Team in New York



Swim Team in New York



Swim Team hosted in New York by
Fordham Preparatory School

Digital Champions



Trip to One Microsoft Place

Friday the 2nd of December was an eventful day for the Digital Champions, as it was when we embarked on a journey to Microsoft's Irish Headquarters. We received our very official looking Guest passes and were stewarded across the ground floor into a very modern looking meeting room. The building itself was the pinnacle of modernity, a fact which strikes you as we walked into the massive atrium area in the centre of the building, with a digital waterfall. You read that right, a digital waterfall.

Anyway, I'm getting ahead of myself. Back to the aforementioned meeting room, we put our bags down and were handed these blue passes to get food from one of the facility's ample restaurants, and that we did. It felt like a small city in there, and we enjoyed a meal in one of the facility's many impressive restaurants. The next hour was spent in said meeting room with Hugh Meenagh, who was our guide for the day, and was incredibly helpful in showing us around, answering questions, and listening to positive comments and grievances about Microsoft's various products and services. We talked about topics from devices in the classroom to recommendations to improve things like OneNote and the Surfaces themselves. It was a fantastic trip, and I was grateful I had the opportunity to go on it.

Patrick Hayden, Digital Champion, Fifth Year

Last Friday, 10 of the Digital Champions went on a trip to the main Microsoft building in Sandford overlooking Leopardstown racecourse.

Whilst there, we got a tour of the building, a tasty lunch and we had a meeting with Hugh Meenagh who listened to some of the feedback we had with Microsoft Programs and gave us some tips with any issues we had.

When we were on the tour, we got to see the layout of the offices, meeting rooms and all the different restaurants. There were even some comfy seating areas where employees can go for a break.

At the end of the day, you were left with the impression that Microsoft is a unique working environment that offers plenty of facilities to employees. As a Transition Year student, it is interesting to visit different offices to get an insight to where I may want to work in the future.

Ben McElligott, Digital Champion, Transition Year



REFLECTION

"I truly believe that if we keep telling the Christmas story, singing the Christmas songs, and living the Christmas spirit, we can bring joy and happiness and peace to this world."

- Norman Vincent Peale

