

BLACKROCK COLLEGE NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2023

What a nine weeks we have experienced in the College - a new Senior Leadership Team, new Deans, new staff members, new students, new boarders, new parents, a new Board, a new Chaplain that we share with our sister school of St. Michael's College and yet within that season of change much has remained the same. For although personnel may change, what we do and the values we hold true while doing it provide solid ground on which to move forward as a community.



*A determined Andrew McConn Walsh
(Fifth Year) at the House Tens : Brown Versus de Valera*

At the opening assemblies of the school year, we challenged the boys to action our values on a daily basis, in their daily lives. What does it look like if we are trying to "Be Caring, Be There, Be Truthful, Be Grateful and Be Respectful"? For any community the values that we espouse to live by have to be real and evident in our daily interactions. Our values are pointless if all they do is adorn the walls of the College or the pages of the Student Journal. By living these values we help to create a nurturing, safe and supportive environment for all within our community.

Our boys have been busy this half-term - House 10s, Family Masses, Retreats, Study Skills workshops, Sailing Regatta, Higher Options, Anti-Bullying Day, Environmental Awareness Week, Literacy Day, Maths Week, Debating and Model United Nations have helped them to re-engage and re-connect with each other and the College after the summer break in addition to the regular weekly extra-curricular activities available to them. None of the activities listed could happen without the dedication and commitment of our incredible staff, who work tirelessly for the boys.

At our recent Whole School Assembly, held on the Feast day of Claude Poullart des Places, the message to all was one of caring. That being caring is the very essence of an evolved brain. Our natural instinct is to react with fear and judgement to that which is different. In order to counter that natural instinct we have to fight against our deepest neural pathways in order to create new ones, new ones based on welcoming that which is different. It is our differences that add colour to our community, that add vibrancy to life and that help us to accept all that we meet. The ability not to judge and to love is at the core of Christian communities. And again we challenged the boys to create a caring community based on kindness and love

In today's society, this message of kindness and caring is particularly pertinent. Maya Angelou's words give us pause for thought in terms of how we interact with each other, ***"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."***

Finally, on a more personal note, I would like to thank everyone within the Blackrock Community for their support on my appointment. It is an honour and a privilege to be the principal of this great school and I look forward to stewarding the College into the next chapter of its history.

Have a lovely half-term break with family and friends.

Yvonne Markey

Yvonne Markey
Principal

Message from the Deans....



A new term, a new year full of possibility, opportunity and endeavour. Students have embraced their fresh start whole heartedly and have made great strides. Classrooms are a hive of active and engaged learning and cooperation. Weekly cards affirm high levels of application and effort, whilst the two Progress Weeks this half-term served to highlight the rich academic focus throughout the school. The Cards are an excellent measure of how the students are managing and organising their time and activities. It is strongly recommended that parents view their son's card on a weekly basis to both affirm good practice and offer direction where needed.

The campus is also a hive of activity outside the classrooms as students are notably and enthusiastically involved in a large selection of games and extra-curricular activities. This is to be commended and encouraged as it provides great balance for academic work as well as providing opportunities to commit to build routine and to further develop vital social, communication and team-work skills.

The College thrives on community and as always, there was a huge sense of pride this half-term to see the student body come together for the Whole School Assembly, Swimming Gala and Rugby 10s Tournaments. Across the year groups students were further connected through *Odd Sock Day* recognising our individual uniqueness as part of Anti-Bullying Day, through *Jersey Day*, fundraising much appreciated funds for the Irish Motor Disease Association and through a collective commitment to being part of the Green Schools' new waste management initiative which encourages us all to be part of the solution to the many environmental challenges we face. Year Groups have also had valuable opportunities to pause and reflect in a meaningful and spiritual way over the past weeks. The Commissioning of House Captains, on and off-campus Retreats, Family Masses and Eucharistic Adoration have allowed students to take time for self-reflection and to examine their personal faith journeys.

As we reach the end of our first half-term, our best wishes and hopes are with all students as we commend them for their positive and committed attitudes since the beginning of the year. We acknowledge their much-appreciated level of cooperation. We are thankful for the support and appreciation of the parent body represented so conscientiously and adeptly by the various Year Group Parents' Committees whose commitment behind the scenes is much lauded.

We wish all students a restful mid-term break and encourage them to keep their academic focus, extra-curricular engagement, and high levels of cooperation throughout the year ahead.

*Mr J. Fitzsimmons (Dean of Second Year), Mr O. Brennan (Dean of Third Year),
Dr J. Brunswick (Dean of Transition Year), Ms C. Dobbyn (Dean of Fifth Year) and
Mr P. O'Neill (Dean of Sixth Year)*

Fifth Year Talents on Display

On the pitches, on the courts, in the pool and on the lakes of Blessington, 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.

A group of **TY students** are already busy rehearsing every Wednesday for the **Rathdown Musical** in March 2024 which will be 'The Wiz'. Congratulations to all involved and to those involved in the Crew for our own Senior Musical 'Footloose'. Auditions for **Cluny TY Musical 'High School Musical'** are scheduled for the last day before Midterm.

The **Senior Science Quiz** took place on October 10th, and we congratulate **Sixth Years** Simon Considine who placed 1st and Diarmaid Byrne in 2nd place.

Message from the Deans....



The **Second-Year** rugby season has got off to a solid start. The A's have had a win over Campbell and a loss to St. Michael's. The B's have defeated St. Gerard's and come up short against St. Michael's. The C's remain undefeated and managed a great comeback victory against St. Michael's. The D's bounced back last week with a great win over Castleknock.



U14 Players Jack Porter, Cormac Finn, and Thomas Doyle after their win against Castleknock.

In other extra-curricular news Cormac Morris (Sixth Year) has captained the Senior Basketball Team to an excellent start to the year qualifying for the East-Leinster Quarter Finals of the League and for the All-Ireland quarter finals of the Schools Cup. Congratulations to Daniel Cheung (6th Year) and the Senior Soccer squad on late 3-2 victory over St. Kevins in the opening round of the Leinster Senior Cup. Congratulations to the SCT on an excellent 50-22 win in Sedburgh, and to the Senior 2nds who won 28-26. Well done to all!

Fifth Year Parents' Career Seminar organised by the PPU and the Career Guidance welcomed number of past pupils who addressed many aspects of future educational and career opportunities as well as the supportive role of parents in their sons' career choices.

Ms. Drew continues to provide invaluable support to all 6th Year students on the career front. On Wednesday 20th September **the Class of 2024 attended the Higher Options Conference in the RDS** and since then, Ms. Drew has co-ordinated our HPAT programme and the early UCAS Application deadlines and has presented an introduction to the CAO Process to each of the RE classes.

Thanks to our first **Guest Speaker** of the year John O'Shea (formerly of Goal) for speaking so passionately to the **TY students** about Social Entrepreneurship.



Gavin McNabb, Philip Guinan, Jack Murphy, Gordon O'Hara and Harry Pierce in Lourdes

Led by Ms Crimmins, five members of the **Class of 2024** participated in the Dublin Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes. Philip Guinan, Harry Pierce, Gavin McNabb, Jack Murphy and Gordon O'Hara spent a busy but hugely rewarding time assisting pilgrims.

Great work from the **Third-Year** group at their attendance and engagement with the study skills workshops. No doubt they all gained from the workshops and took away ideas on how they can improve in their studies. The challenge now is to put it into practise!

Message from the Deans....



Environmental Awareness Week took place from the 25th – 29th September. **The Second Years** took on litter patrol duties with great diligence. Each house took a turn in cleaning the recreation area. This inter-house rivalry and a pride in their space have promoted a new level of cleanliness in the **Second-Year** group. The houses will now be taking over post-break clean up on a weekly basis.



Ronan Fahey, nominee for the Swim Ireland Open Water Swimmer of the Year

Sixty-five **6th Years** took part in the **Swimming Gala** on October 10th. Eamon Bradley won the 6th Year Open 50m race and congratulations to Ronan Fahey on his victory in the Principal's Trophy. Browne and Duff were joint winning 6th Year Houses.

Fifth Year students welcomed the opportunity to pause and reflect during the **recent retreat sessions**. The occasion to leave campus and spend some relaxing time away from their studies was exceptionally worthwhile and rewarding.

Congratulations to **Sixth Year** Ronan Fahey who competed for Ireland in the European Open Water Championships in Corfu in late September and on his nomination for **Irish Open Water Swimmer of the Year** by Swim Ireland.

The **Third-Year class retreats** provided the year group a welcome opportunity to take a break from class in what has been a busy start to the year. A chance to take stock and reflect away from the academics.

All **TY students** attended a full day long **Leadership Course** led by Mr Denis Heavey in September. Students are applying to attend the Rotary Youth Leadership Development Competition and to participate in the Dublin Session of the European Youth Parliament

Fifth Year students have been encouraged to set **SMART** short-term goals for academic progress and personal development. Reminded that *a goal without a plan is just a wish*, the daily use of the College Student Journal and a consistent approach is essential in assisting students to maximise their potential.

TY BCR preparations are well underway; show teams are meeting, interviews have already been recorded and advertising and publicity are in full flow.



BCR 2023 First Interviewee, Hugo Zijlstra from Microsoft being Interviewed by Charley Collett and Kieran Lennon.

Message from the Deans....



On Saturday 16th September, the **Second Years** competed in the **Inter-House rugby** competition. There was some fantastic skills and courage on display. Leman House won the double by securing victory in both the A & B competition. Congratulations to Harry Malone and Arthur Glavin who won the A & B player of the tournament respectively.



The Second Years compete in the Inter-house Cross Country Race

Huge thanks to the Career Guidance Department and the Past Pupils Union for organising **Career Talks for Fifth Years** providing a forum for students to hear about the daily activities in various career areas from industry professionals.

Congratulations to **Third Year Duff House** who won the House 10s competition beating DeValera in the final. Some thrilling rugby on display and a great turnout from the year.

Congratulations to **6th Year rugby players**

Donnacha McGuire, Conor O'Shaugnessy, Charlie Molony, Derry Moloney and Brian O Flaherty (U18s); Jack Angulo, Niall Smyth and Tommy Butler (U19s) who represented Leinster in the Interprovincial Series at the start of this academic term.

DATES FOR YOUR SIXTH YEAR DIARY

November 7th: (7.30pm)	CAO Talk for 6th Year Parents
November 14th:	6th Year Careers Fair
November 21st – 24th:	Footloose (College Musical)
November 27th:	6th Yr Irish Christmas Aurals
November 28th: Christmas Aurals	6th Yr Modern Language
November 29th:	Mass of Remembrance (7.30pm)
Nov 30th – 1st Dec:	6th Year 24-Hour VDP Fast
December 14th:	6th Year Regulation Exams begin
December 22nd:	End of Christmas Term

Extracurricular Activities

TYs are participating, enjoying and thriving in all sports and in clubs and societies all around the College. TY Social Soccer League Teams have been selected and players are eager to play if only the weather would improve!

TY students are thriving in their **Matthew 25 Pastoral Placements** and **Gaisce Community Service. Modules and Evening Courses** are ongoing. The ever-popular **Tuck Shop** is up and running thanks to our managing directors and team of assistants.

Message from the Deans....



In August, our new **Second Year** boys walked across the pitches from Willow Park to start their journey in the College. Induction was a busy day that involved the 6th and 5th Year House Captains giving the boys a guided tour of the College. After presentations from the Principal and the Dean, the boys took part in an end of day quiz. The boys have adapted very well to the College campus, figuring out what's the best time to go to the pop-up canteen and working on their table tennis skills.

Well done to DeValera on their victory in the **Third Year swimming gala**, narrowly beating Ebenrecht. DeValera won the hotly contested inter house relay with Browne coming in 2nd.

FIFTH YEAR DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mental Health Awareness Day	Thursday 09 November
Career Talks for Students (2)	Saturday 18th November
College Musical:	Footloose Tuesday 21 – -Friday 24th November
Irish Christmas Aurals:	Monday 28 November
Mod. Lang. Christmas Aurals:	Tuesday 28 November
Progress Cards:	Friday 01 December



Some of the 3rd Years on Jersey Day

Congratulations to **Fifth Year Browne House** on their **Swimming Gala** victory.

Be it in the classroom, on the radio station, on the pitches or being of service in the C community, we urge TYs to 'Opt in', pushing themselves out of their comfort zone! **Remember this year in TY ; 'Respect, Engage, Challenge and Enjoy!'**

Beginning with an incredibly well attended **6th Year Family Mass** on Saturday 23rd September, the 6th Year Retreat Programme took place between Sunday 24th and Tuesday 26th of September at eight different venues around Ireland. We welcomed celebrant Fr Kellan Scott OP back to the College and Fr.Paddy Moran delivered a wonderful homily reminding the boys that the Leaving Cert is "a measure of their work, not of their worth". We thank Mr Flor Madden for his organisation of the 6th Year Retreats.

There was a fantastic response from **3rd Years to Jersey Day** fundraiser. Quite an eclectic mix of jerseys from Kenya to Kerry and Mexico to Mayo and some old school premier league jerseys on show!

We thank Ms.Crimmins and Mr.Madden for their training of and work with the following **6th Year** students who will serve the College community as **Ministers of the Eucharist** in the year ahead: Philip Guinan, Oisín Daly, Mark Dempsey, Jack McSherry, Greg Murphy, Joseph Hackett, Nicholas Cronnelly, Gordon O'Hara, Donnacha McGuire and Aran O'Flaherty.



Some of the 3rd Years on Jersey Day

Message from the Deans....



Fifth Year House Captains

A stellar group of twelve young men leading and organising their peers with growing confidence. All have committed to confirming the College's position as a LIFT school and will complete their facilitator training over the coming weeks.



Fifth Year House Captain Commissioning

There was a great atmosphere and quality of rugby for the **6th Year Inter-House 10s** Rugby Tournament. Shanahan, captained by Harry Dixon, defended their title. Browne were runners-up and Harry McCabe was named Player of the Tournament.

DATES FOR THE THIRD YEAR DIARY

3rd Year Family Mass **Saturday 11th November**

Irish Christmas Aurals **Monday 27th November**

Modern Language Christmas Aurals **Tuesday 28th November**

Progress Cards **Friday 1st December**

TY House Events

Congratulations to Ebenrecht on their rugby 10s victory with Gavin Patrick McGrath named *Player of the Tournament*. Congratulations to Leman on winning the Swimming Gala and to Ebrenecht for the highest participation and donations on Jersey Day in aid of IMNDA.

The **6th Year Parents' Committee** for 2023/24 chaired by Catherine Walsh has had a busy start to the year. Having already organised a very well received 6th Year Study Skills morning with 120 students in attendance, this committee are already in the planning stage for the Graduation lunch next May and the Machakos Trip to Kenya in July.

The **Second-Year** houses took to the water on Tuesday 10th October. The Open Second Year 50 metre race was the main event. James Kelly pipped James Cahill in a very exciting finish.

Appointments are made for **Fifth Year** students for **Career Guidance and Counselling**. Students are encouraged to request appointments as often as required.



Fifth Year Rugby 10s Winners – DeValera.

There has been an excellent uptake in the extra-curricular programme. **Mr. Grant's Second Year Gaelic football team** look set to progress from their group after a big win over Coláiste Life, Lucan and a narrow defeat to Scoil Cathriona, Glasnevin.

The **Third-Year** junior cross-country team have not been held back by the inclement weather and have competed in two meets, in Santry and Marley Park

Message from the Deans....



Under the joint management of Mark Dempsey and Alex Kenny, at the time of writing the **6th Year** Dayboy Team were set for a final in the **Karl Ashe GAA Tournament**, a most important memorial event in the school calendar, versus the Boarders on Friday 20th October on the Front Lawn.



6th Year Ag Science Class at the National Ploughing Championships

The **Second-Year Family Mass** took place on Saturday 14th October. There was a strong turn out from the boys and their families. Fr. Augustine preached about love for one another in our community. He finished with a prayer for the Irish rugby team against New Zealand. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be.

Congratulations to **Fifth Years DeValera** House on their Rugby 10s victory with Ben Crowley named player of the tournament.

On Monday 2nd October, to mark the Feast Day of Claude Poullart Des Places, we had our first **Whole School Assembly** of the Year. Aran O'Flaherty and Gavin McNabb spoke brilliantly as they shared their experiences on retreat and in Lourdes respectively and the **the 6th Year** House Representatives were commissioned .

Our **Third Year** debating teams have been very busy in the Junior Schools debating competitions in UCD along with a MACE debate in Clonkeen College. Good to see Third Year representation at the recent Terenure Model United Nations.

Ms Corcoran's Transition Year History class on a trip to EPIC Irish Emigration Museum



TY Tours and Class Trips

The first TY Tour was a whole school event back to the ever popular Hell and Back. Ms Corcoran took her TY History class for a trip to the EPIC Museum in town and Ms Byrne brought her English class and the Digital Learning Champions to UCD for a Cybersecurity Raise the Flag Event .



Transition Year Hell and Back Tour

Message from the Deans....



The brains trust of the Under 14 C&D rugby squad in post-match discussion: Tom O'Riordan, Mr. Maher, Mr. O'Hegarty.



Fifth Year Jersey Day!



Lucas Menacho, Eamonn Evans, Fifth Year Boarders, Jersey Day



Under 14 C Rugby team after their win against St. Michael's.



U14 C Kicker, Dylan McKeown sends over the winning penalty against St. Michael's.



Third Year Shanahan House 10s



Third Year Ebenrecht House 10s



DeValera House 10s



Third Year Browne House 10s



Leman House 10s



Third Year Duff House 10s

Message from the Deans....



Fifth Years enjoying Odd Sock Day!



Fifth and Sixth Year exploring Third Level opportunities in the USA



Fifth Year Odd Socks!



Fifth Year Duff, Rugby 10s



Transition Year Rugby 10s Runners Up Shanahan



Fifth Year Leman, Rugby 10s



Fifth Year Ebenrecht, Rugby 10s



Fifth- and Sixth-Year Choir and Orchestra at the Whole School Assembly.



Fifth Years Jack Luff, Darragh O'Neill and Isaac Moss engaging with the LIFT Leadership programme



Transition Year Rugby 10s



Fifth Years attending an Emily Dickinson play in the Jubilee Hall.



Transition Year Rugby 10s Winners Ebenecht



Fifth Years enjoying Jersey Day in aid of IMNDA

Message from the Deans....



Fifth Year Shanahan, Rugby 10s



Rees Dowling, Adam Dungan, Conor McKechnie, Fifth Year, Jersey Day



Fifth Year Browne, Rugby 10s



Fifth Years Darragh O'Neill, Marcus Cullen and Harrison Carr serving at the Whole School Assembly



Transition Year Hell and Back Tour



Fifth Years Brian and Karl Kilbride and Cian O'Donoghue on Jersey Day.



Mr Grant and Transition Years Andrew Lowey, Rian O'Connell, Daniel Cunningham on Jersey Day



Mr Toolin and Transition Years James Barron, Christian Comerford, Cian McDonagh, Ted Taylor, Tom Mcleese, Gearoid Nutley, Daniel Moore on Jersey Day



Ms Byrne's TY class in UCD for a Cyber Security Capture the Flag Even. Adam Kennedy, Elliot Brophy, Jack Droney, Cian McDonagh Mathew Dempsey, Gearoid Nutley, Conor Bradbury, Morgan Clancy, Lorcan Golden, Andrew Lowey, James Barron, and Owen Flowers

Message from the Deans....



Transition Year Hell and Back Tour



Blackrock College Digital Champions Owen Flowers, Adam Kennedy, and Mark Conolly in UCD for a Cyber Security Capture the Flag Event



Transition Year House Captain Commissioning Fr. Paddy Moran, Dr Brunswick(TY Dean), TY House Captains, Ms Markey (Principal) and Mr Madden(Head of Pastoral)



Transition Year Hell and Back Tour



Mr Murphy and Transition Years, Jersey Day



Nicholas Cronnelly (6th Year) House 10s



Fred Cheatle being tackled by Shane O'Connor with Ronan O'Brien ready to assist!



*6th Year Group
Photo House 10s*

Message from the Deans....



Shanahan celebrating the winning of House 10s!



6th Years on Jersey Day



TY Tuck Shop open for Business!



6th Year Retreats Cootehill



TY Students Weekly Assistance in Stradbroke Rugby Club



6th Year Retreats Ballintubber



6th Year Retreats Wicklow



6th Year Retreats Wicklow



6th Year Retreats Balbriggan



6th Year Retreats Balbriggan



Aran O'Flaherty, Luke O'Sullivan, Greg Quinn and Patrick Hayden (Sixth Years) at Royal Russell MUN in London

Cross Country

Well done to the Cross-Country team on their performance in the Clonliffe Harriers/Brother Schools event on October 4th. James Foot (Third Year) finished an impressive 2nd in his 3000m intermediate race while Ronan Clifford. (Second Year) finished 7th in his 2000m Junior race.

Junior 2000m	Intermediate 3000m	
Ronan Clifford	James Foot	William Hegarty
Darragh Bailey	Callum Downes	James Kelly
William Kelly	Eoin Fitzpatrick	Spencer Jordan
Jamie Simpson	Andrew Clancy	Calum Burke
Jake McNulty	Tate Tomkin-Beddy	



James Kelly (L) Spencer Jordan (R)
(Second Year)



Eoin Fitzpatrick (Third Year)



Ronan Clifford and Darragh Bailey
(Second Year)



Callum Downes (Fourth Year)

SCT Rugby

The return to school for senior rugby is always a busy and exciting time with lots of new players vying for places in the side and others returning from interprovincial tournaments. Well done to all our students who played for Leinster and Connacht this August and represented the College with distinction.

Back in school, the squad has started the new season well with wins over Newbridge, Castleknock, Campbell, Terenure and Sedbergh (UK). The seconds have matched this achievement with wins of their own against Campbell, Terenure and Sedbergh also. Defeat for both sides to Gonzaga before that run of victories, however, keeps everyone's feet firmly on the ground as they work hard right up to midterm and into the demanding schedule that awaits the far side.



SCT and Senior 2nds after two victories in Sedbergh

JCT Rugby

The Junior squad have had a good start to the season, with tough encounters against Gonzaga, Campbell College and St. Michael's. Competition for places is fierce as always, but the squad have gelled well and are training hard.

The big highlight of the first term was being invited to partake in the Millfield Tournament in the UK. With six of the best schools' sides across the UK and Ireland, it was always going to be a wonderful opportunity to learn about ourselves as a group. The boys represented the College wonderfully well and played some great rugby. Although disappointed not to win the competition, on reflection it was the wonderful opportunity and occasion we had hoped it would be and we are far better for the experience moving forward as a group.

Before a well-deserved break for midterm, we have matches with Pres Cork and RBAI here in the College. We wish the squad the best of luck with those and their continued preparations.



JCT squad pictured with AJ MacGinty
(class of 2009) after Bristol Bears first
league match of the season.

Badminton

The badminton season began on a promising note, with a total of 40 enthusiastic members actively participating in competitive play. The commitment and energy displayed by our players are indicative of a successful and exciting year ahead for our badminton teams. Four teams have been entered in the U19 Dublin Schools Competition. This competition offers our players the chance to compete against teams from over 20 schools in the region, providing a platform for skill development and valuable experience. In addition to the U19 games, the U16 competition is scheduled to commence after the mid-term. The anticipation among our young players and coaching staff (Michael Paran & Robert Byrne) is palpable and we look forward to witnessing our teams' progress and achievements throughout the season. We wish all our members the best of luck.



Back left to right: Aidan Ho (Third Year), Scott Zhu (Second Year), Gary Kingston (Second Year), Marc Hooper (Third Year), Dan Hayden (Second Year), Adrian Ho (Third Year), Cian O'Flannagáin (Third Year).

Front left to right: Shao Yiyang (Third Year), Martin Penamaria (Transition Year), Javier Elizalde (Third Year), Alonso Lopez-Reina (Transition Year), Davide Canettoli (Transition Year).



U19 boys: Left to right: Jack Droney (Transition Year), Conor Wall (Fifth Year) and Braydon Chau (Fifth Year)



U16 Training Mark Connolly (Transition Year) and Aidan Ho (Third Year)



U19: Will Probert (Sixth Year) playing in his double game with Oisín Daly (Sixth Year)



U19: Conor McFarland (Fifth Year) in his double game with Jaward Imran (Fifth Year)



U19 Division 4 Team: Troy Connelan (Sixth Year), Will Probert (Sixth Year), Oisín Daly (Sixth Year) and Darragh McCarthy (Transition Year)



Back left to right: Oscar Deally (Sixth Year), Darragh McCarthy (Transition Year), Scott Downes (Sixth Year), Will Probert (Sixth Year), Oisín Daly (Sixth Year), Troy Connelan (Sixth Year), Callum Dee (Transition Year) and Callum Downes (Transition Year).

Front left to right: Braydon Chau (Fifth Year), Conor Wall (Fifth Year), Conor McFarland (Fifth Year), Jack Droney (Transition Year), Jaward Imran (Fifth Year) and Ms. Ní Shiocháin

Basketball U16

The U16 Basketball team has had a challenging run in the A-league this year. They faced many strong and competitive teams over the last two months. The opening match against Pres Bray (63-38) was tough as they faced a continuous full-court press throughout the game. The team worked hard in the face of difficult competition, losing to both Oatlands (52-34) and Coláiste Eoin (47-17). Their final game against St. Andrew's (38-32), who were top of the pool, was their best display of teamwork in the league yet. Despite the last match in the league ending in a loss, the team showed great improvement in defense and offense. While the games were a challenge, the team stepped up each time and played with intensity and determination. They will have the opportunity to continue this commitment in matches after the midterm break.

Basketball U 19

Captain Cormac Morris (Sixth Year) and his squad have enjoyed an excellent start to the U19A Basketball season. Victories have come against Pres Bray, Coláiste Eoin and Oatlands in the league, while we have dispatched OLSS Castleblaney and St Mel's Longford in the National Cup to reach the Quarter-Finals. Next up is Malahide CS in both competitions with fixtures due to take place after mid-term.

Blackrock College Rowing Club

Blackrock College Rowing Club gym was renovated during the summer term. A generous donation to the club, provided the necessary finances for an additional 20 new erg machines to be added to the gym equipment. This much-needed expansion has enabled our various rowing groups to train simultaneously.

The Club is very grateful for the continued support from all club members and their families.

Dates for the Dary

Irish Indoor Rowing Championships 25th November 2023

Blessing of the Boats 10th December 2023



Blackrock J 2nds Vs Campbell

Harry McCabe and Harry O'Doherty (Sixth Year) S 2nds V Gonzaga



Marcus Cullen (Fifth Year) S 2nds V Gonzaga



Sailing



ABOVE: Blackrock College Sailing Regatta

ABOVE RIGHT: Dylan McKeown (Second Year), John Healy (Third Year), Ben Keane (TY), Dan Moran (Third Year), Louis Glavin (Fifth Year), at the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta.

RIGHT: Harrison O' Rourke (2nd Year), Cian Cooper and Dermott O' Driscoll (TY), Louis Kelly (Fifth Year) at the Blackrock College Sailing Regatta.



Basketball



U19 Basketball Team



U19 A League Playoff Match Versus Malahide CC



Peter Lee (3rd Year) scores a free throw



U19 Basketball Team



Aaron O'Halloran (5th Year) scores a free throw

Snapshot of First Half Term....



Our U19 Division 5 players.
Isaac Moss (Fifth Year), Sergii Ishchenko (Fifth Year), Davide Canettoli (Transition Year) and Michael Leahy (Fifth Year)



TJs participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Fifth Years Declan Cadden participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Conor McDonagh and Thomas Murray (Third Year) participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Third Years participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Jack Luff, Andrew McCarthy (Fifth Year) s participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Sixth Years participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Fifth Years participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Third Year Duff House participating in September Rugby 10s Competitions



Dylan Woods, Sam Kane and James Byrne (Second Years) Blackrock V St Gerard's



Dylan Woods(Second Year) House Tens



James Byrne (Second Year) House Tens



Patick Collins (Sixth Year) Blackrock V Clonkeen



Alex Doorly and Ben Crowley (Fifth Year) Blackrock V Temple Carraig



Tom Curtin, Robert Murphy (Fifth Year) Tom Keaveny (TY) and Will O'Sullivan (Fifth Year) Blackrock V Temple Carraig

Snapshot of First Half Term....



Ben Crowley (Fifth Year) Blackrock V Temple Carraig



Blackrock V Temple Carraig



J 2nds Vs Campbell



Ariston Xourfas (Third Year) J 2nds Vs Campbell



Louis Waldron , Jack Leahy Donnacha Walsh (Third Year) and Luke O' Connell (2nd Year) Blackrock J 2nds Vs Campbell



Harry Phelan and Cian O'Connell (Fifth Year)



Ruiari Houlihan , (Fifth Year) Daniel Begly (Fifth Year) , and Harry O'Doherty(Sixth Year) S 2nds V Gonzaga



House Captain Badges awarded at the Commissioning of the House Captains at the Whole School Assembly



Members of Leman House and Brown House at the second Year House 10s Rugby



Victorious and Delighted ... Leman House at the second Year House 10s Rugby with Mr J. Fitzsimmons (Dean of Second Year)



Second Year Brown House at the Rugby House Tens Tournament



Second Year De Valera House at the Rugby House Tens Tournament



Paul Hartnett (Second Year) accepting the trophy for Leman from Mr J. Fitzsimmons (Dean of Second Year) winners of the House Tens



Ms Y Markey (Principal) and Ronna Fahey (Sixth Year) winner of the Principal's trophy at the Swimming Gala



Ms Y Markey (Principal) and Eamon Bradley winner of the Sixth Year Open 50 metres at the Swimming Gala

Snapshot of First Half Term....



Brian Walsh (5th Year) at the Swimming Gala



Second Year Ebenrecht House at the Rugby House Tens Tournament



Orchestra, Students and Ms S. Nolan (Deputy Principal), Ms R. Harlowe (Deputy Principal), Father O' Brolchain (Spiritual Director), Ms Y. Markey (Principal), Father Paddy Moran (Sacramental Chaplain) and Mr T. Ryan (Deputy Principal) at the Whole School Assembly.



Gavin McNabb (Sixth Year) speaking about his trip to Lourdes at the Whole School Assembly



John Donnelly and Daniel Ennis (Third Year) J2nds V Blackrock



Second Year Leman House at the Rugby House Tens Tournament



Father Paddy Moran (Sacramental Chaplain) at the Whole School Assembly



Philip Guinan (Chairman of the Student Council) Ms S. Nolan (Deputy Principal), Ms R. Harlowe (Deputy Principal and Father O' Brolchain (Spiritual Director)



Ben Carey (Third Year) J 3rds Blackrock V Pres Cork



JCT V Pres Cork



Cian McCarron, Hugo Cullen and Paddy Scally (Third Year) JCT V Pres Bray



Ollie Coveney, Daniel Rogan, Jack Leahy and Harry Forde (Third Year) J2nds V Pres Cork



Ollie Coveney and Ariston Xourafas (Third Years) J2nds V Pres Cork



Second Year Shanahan House at the Rugby House Tens Tournament

Celebrating the Triumphs of the Longest Term

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Well-Wishers,
As we approach the end of the longest term of the year, it's a pleasure to reflect on the vibrant energy and remarkable accomplishments witnessed here at the Castle. With October 27th marking the culmination of this eventful term, we cannot help but marvel at the incredible journey our boys have undertaken over the past several weeks.

In the realm of sports and academia alike, our young gentlemen have exemplified the values of the Castle and the College, making us immensely proud. The recent Swimming Gala showcased their prowess in the water, while the Model United Nations revealed their eloquence and critical thinking skills on a global stage. Furthermore, the collective spirit of the entire school was palpable during our memorable Whole School Assembly, reinforcing the sense of unity and camaraderie that lies at the core of our community.

On the sporting front, our rugby teams embarked on exhilarating trips to Sedbergh and Millfield, leaving an indelible mark with their spirited performances. Through their dedication, they have not only displayed their athletic prowess but have also embodied the spirit of sportsmanship and teamwork that defines the ethos of our institution.

We would be remiss not to mention the recent Boarders Retreat that took place on the 17th of October. Our boys embarked on a challenging yet invigorating hike up the mountains, an experience that fostered resilience, team bonding, and a deeper appreciation for the great outdoors. The success of this retreat stands as a testament to the perseverance and adventurous spirit of our boarders.

As we prepare for the term break, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the dedicated faculty, staff, and of course, to you, the parents, and guardians, for your unwavering support in our endeavour to nurture these young minds.

Wishing you all a restful and rejuvenating midterm break, filled with warmth and joy.
God bless,
Mr Tiernan Mealiffe
Director of Boarding



(Mark Walsh, Eamon Bradley, Jimmy Yingzan Ding, Conor O'Shaughnessy, Hubie McCarthy, Patrick Collins, Charlie Harvey and Rick Shin)



(JJ Finlay, Eamonn Evans, Conor McKechnie, Lucas Menacho, Declan Cadden, Arthur Smykovskiy, Connor Nel, Oscar du Hergouet, Grigori Korobov and Aleksandr Khutiev)



Castle Boarders representing the College in Sedbergh. (Mark Walsh, Aiden Vetjens, Albert Linders, Michael O'Sullivan, Mr. Mealiffe, Niall Smyth, Conor O'Shaughnessy, Connor Nel, Donie Grehan and Hubie McCarthy)



Castle boarders start out on the journey up Djouce.



Castle Boarders make it to the top of the mountain.



Boarders enjoying some well-earned food after their hike up Djouce mountain. (Adam Dungan, Lucas Menacho, Eamonn Evans, Oscar du Hergouet, Patrick Collins, Charlie Harvey, Eamon Bradley, Rick Shin, Conor O'Shaughnessy, Mark Walsh, Hubie McCarthy, Connor Nel, Arthur Smykovskiy, Sergii Ishchenko)



Boarders Outing to the Cinema. (Jimmy Yingzan Ding, Mirko Sancho, Iker Lopez Pinella, Joseph Meenan, Carlos Rodenas, Javier Rosa Perez, Jamie Barrios Perez, Gonzalo Gil, Jack Newton, Fernando Donoso, Marcos Diez, Garry Kingston, Nikolay Moskalenko, Lem Khutiev and Nikita Biryukov)



Castle Birthday Boys (Carlos Rodenas, Patrick Collins, Declan Cadden, Scott Zhu)



Boarders Karl Ashe Team 2023/24 (Sergii Ishchenko, Patrick Collins, Hubie McCarthy, Donie Grehan, Kieran Byrne, Niall Smyth, Conor O'Shaughnessy, Hugh Foley, JJ Finlay, Aran O'Flaherty, Alex Aschenbrenner, Lennie Kuzmin, Albert Lindner, Alonso Lopez-Reina, Daniel McDermott, Oscar Hackett, Luca Casolari, Connor McKechnie and Eduardo Hauptmeier Lopez).

Snapshot Of Jersey Day



On Jersey Day, Friday 13th October, all staff and students were encouraged to wear a jersey of their choosing and in doing so to donate €2 to Irish Motor Neuron Disease Association. The day was an overwhelming success and the College raised €1,860 for a most deserving cause. Well done to all!



Snapshot Of Jersey Day



Literacy Day 2023

Student Illustrations Reflecting The Work Of Poet Robert Frost

Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening

Robert Frost 1874 – 1963

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.



Fionn O' Donoghue (Sixth Year)



Illustration. Dylan Drumm



Sami Bushti (5th Year)



Fintan Ballard (Fifth Year)



Oscar Egan (Sixth Year)



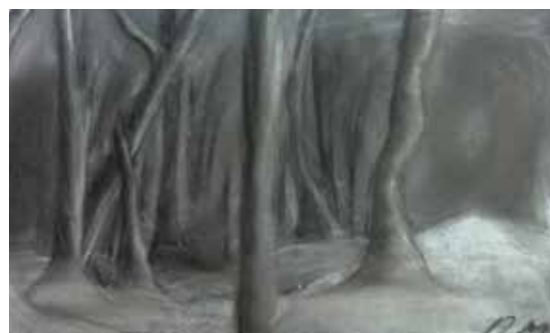
Johnny O' Sullivan (Fifth Year)



Alex Parsons (Fifth Year)



Jack Luff (Fifth Year)



Oscar Mannion (Sixth Year)



Harry Cunningham (Second Year) reading poetry with Tony Curtis, visiting poet on Literacy Day



Jack O'Neil (Second Year) reading poetry with Tony Curtis, visiting poet on Literacy Day



Arthur Glavin (Second Year) reading poetry with Tony Curtis, visiting poet on Literacy Day



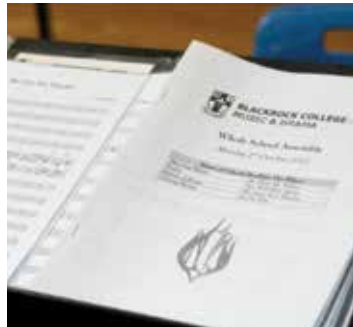
Archie Quinn and Joshua Murphy (Second Year) reading poetry with Tony Curtis, visiting poet on Literacy Day



BLACKROCK COLLEGE C.S.Sp. MUSIC & DRAMA



Choir and Orchestra under the baton of Mr Killian Grumley Traynor at the Whole School Assembly



the Sixth Year Choir singing energetically before heading out on their retreats. The passing of the vocal baton was next with the Second Year Choir and instrumentalists joined by some Sixth Year singers at their Mass on October 14th. Finally, the First Year Family Mass took place in the Willow Park Gym on October 15th. This was a joyous occasion where our youngest musicians and singers performed for the first time as Secondary School students. We are excited to hear lots more from them over the coming years.

On October 2nd, we celebrated the feast day of Claude Poullart des Places with the Whole School Assembly in the Des Places Sports Hall. The Libermann Choir and College Orchestra ably supported this liturgy. If any students would like to join either the College Orchestra or any of our choirs or music ensembles, please contact Mr. Traynor and he will point you in the right direction.

Looking to the next half-term, we are excited for *Footloose* the Musical, the Leman Festival Concert Auditions, BCR, the Fourth Year Family Mass and the Carol Service. Lots to look forward to!



Blackrock College Creative Arts and Digital Learning Centre

Every academic year seems to get faster and this one is no exception. Auditions for *Footloose*, this year's Senior Musical, took place at the start of term and ever since, our cast, crew, band, production and creative teams have all been busy working together preparing for the show. *Footloose* will be staged in the **Jubilee Hall** from **November 21st to 24th** and tickets will be available from reception after the midterm. They are €20 for adults and €10 for students. Here is a taster of what to expect:

When Ren and his mother move from Chicago to a small farming town, he is prepared for the inevitable adjustment period at his new high school. But he's not prepared for the rigorous local edicts, including a ban on dancing instituted by the local preacher, who is determined to exercise control over the town's youth. When the reverend's rebellious daughter sets her sights on Ren, her roughneck boyfriend tries to sabotage Ren's reputation, with many of the locals eager to believe the worst about the new kid. The heartfelt story that emerges pins a father longing for the son he lost against a young man aching for the father who walked out on him. To the rockin' rhythm of its Oscar and Tony-nominated Top 40 score, augmented with dynamic new songs, Footloose celebrates the wisdom of listening to young people while guiding them with a warm heart and open mind.

The Sixth, Second- and First-Year Family Masses have all taken place. We started in the College Chapel on September 23rd with



Darragh Bowler (Sixth Year) Art Club



It has been a vibrant start to the year in the library with lots of activities taking place. DnD club, F1 Paddock club and Cinema club have all kicked off to a good start and we have a new coding and robotics club run by Mr O'Connell. All the committees meet on a weekly basis and Green Schools hosted their first Climate Café where students were treated to hot chocolate.

LITERACY DAY

Lots of activities happened for Literacy Day which took place on Thursday 5th October. The literacy theme this year was "Ode to Poetry".

Authors' Visits

Poet Tony Curtis visited all of second years and gave a lively demonstration on poetry. Well done to the students who volunteered to read poetry aloud. Tony sang a beautiful rendition of Robert Frost's poem, "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening".

Poet, Colm Keegan gave a very engaging poetry workshop in the library with some third-year classes. Colm got the boys to collectively write a poem about Ireland.

THE CASE OF THE BROKEN BICYCLE LAMP

Ms Harlowe and the Green schools committee have promised to leave "no stone unturned" after the shocking revelation that someone had broken the front lamp on Ms Markey's electric bicycle. Ms Markey organised a press conference after discovering the theft when she left work at 6pm yesterday evening. "I was just trying to lead by example" she told reporters. Ms Nolan has offered "a reward where any student who finds the culprit can enter a draw to win a one-off €50 voucher" Ms Harlowe was overheard complaining to Mr Ryan about all the praise Ms Markey was getting from using her electric bike instead of a car. "Green schools have done lots for the environment too" she said.



Tony Curtis with 2nd Year students on Literacy Day



Colm Keegan with 3rd Year students on Literacy Day

The theme for this year's competition revolved around someone breaking the front lamp of Ms Markey's electric bicycle. Students had to solve various clues including an acrostic poem to find the answer. 80 students in total took part and congratulations to Fionn Whelan, 5th Year who was the lucky winner.

Visual Literacy

To support Literacy Day Art Club students displayed an exhibition on visual literacy where students made interpretations of Robert Frost's poem, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. Congratulations to Johnny O'Sullivan, 5th Year and David Drumm, 6th Year who won the Literacy Day competition and were presented with the prize by Tony Curtis.



Tony Curtis presenting Johnny O'Sullivan, 5th Year and David Drumm, 6th Year with Literacy Day Competition prize.

Complete the Poem

Verses of If by Ruyard Kipling were dotted around the school. Students were invited to fill in the missing words to get a treat.

If you can make one _____ of all your winnings
And _____ it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and _____ again at your beginnings
And never _____ a word about your loss;

Complete the verse and get a treat
Just email title of poem, with completed lines to:
adillon@blackrockcollege.com or pop down to the library

Library Classes

Ms A Dillon gave library induction classes to all of 2nd Years and the following classes during Term 1.

Research classes

- TY Home Economics project on Sustainability.
- TY History project on the Irish Famine.
- TY History project on the Arab Israeli conflict.
- 6th Year LC project on Economics.
- 3rd Year CSPE class on how to identify reliable information relating to the current Palestine-Israeli conflict.

Library Elections

The Library Committee are doing great work to promote literacy and the use of the library in the school. Thank you to chairperson Kian Villarta (5th Year), Secretaries: Fionn Whelan and Henry Brown (5th Year), Leo Fowler (5th Year), Zach Egan-Ruane (5th Year), Daniel Spencer (5th Year), Cillian Staunton (TY), Jack Deegan-McGovern (TY), Conall Byrne (TY), Ajay Mullany (TY), Eoin Fitzpatrick (3rd Year), Dan Hayden (2nd Year), Arlo Liddy (2nd Year) and Eamon de Valera (2nd Year) for their outstanding contribution to the library.

Reading Promotion

Reading for pleasure has many benefits including helping students: do better at school, relax, unwind,

improve their vocabulary, and take time out from their devices. The following are some of the activities that have been done to promote reading:

2nd Year Induction: During second year induction students discussed the benefits of reading and were given some reading time.

Great Reads Awards: Students are invited to borrow books that have been shortlisted as part of The Great Reads Awards. The purpose of the Great Reads Award is to promote debut YA authors. Students can rate their book by going to <https://greatreadsaward.com/rate-your-book/>

Mock Election

3rd Year CSPE students took part in a mock election where groups of students had to campaign for an author or book character. Students learnt about the Irish voting system and had to cast their votes using a PR style system.

Treoracha

1. Scriobh an figiúir 1 sa bhosca le hain an chéad iarrthóra is rogha leat, scriobh an figiúir 2 sa bhosca le hain an dara harrthóra is rogha leat, agus mar sin de.
2. Fill an páipéar ionas nach bhfeicfead do vóta. Taispeáin cuil an pháipéir don oifigeach ceannais, agus cuir sa bhosca ballóide 4.

Instructions

1. Write 1 in the box beside the candidate of your choice, write 2 in the box beside the candidate of your second choice and so on.
2. Fold the paper to conceal your vote. Show the back of the paper to the presiding officer and put it in the ballot box.

ANTHONY HOROWITZ Author of Alex Rider Series			<input type="text"/>
ROBERT MUCHAMORE Author of Cherub Series			<input type="text"/>
RICK RIORDAN Author of Percy Jackson			<input type="text"/>
DEREK LANDY Author of Skulduggery Pleasant			<input type="text"/>
DAVE RUDDEN Author of knights of the borrowed dark			<input type="text"/>





Junior Debating

Round 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3 of the Junior Schools Debating Competition, hosted by the UCD Law Society and the UCD Literary and Historical Society, took place in UCD in October.

Blackrock College has five teams competing in this competition:

- Rock A: Thomas Murray & Daniel Burns (both 3rd Year)
- Rock B: Simon Quinn & Tate Tomkin Beddy (both 2nd Year)
- Rock C: Dan Hayden & Daniel Goss (both 2nd Year)
- Rock D: Ross Murphy & Paddy English (both 2nd Year)
- Rock E: Calum Burke & Marc Hooper (both in 3rd Year)

Motions in this competition include:

- This House Will Impose an Environmental Tax on Airlines.
- This House Would ban disposable vapes.
- This House Would Make Voting mandatory.
- This House Would Ban Tik Tok.

Congratulations to Thomas and Daniel who came first in their debate.

In other news, Blackrock College had four teams compete in the Junior Debating MACE in Clonkeen College in September:

- Team A: Matthew Leamy & Calum Burke (both 3rd Year)
- Team B: Marc Hooper and Daniel Burns (both 3rd Year)
- Team C: Thomas Murray (3rd Year) and Tate Tomkin Beddy (2nd Year)
- Team D: Dan Hayden and Daniel Goss (both 2nd Year)
- Team E: Paddy Shanahan (3rd Year) and Paddy English (2nd Year)

Lastly, the Junior Debaters competed against the Seniors in October proposing the motion:

Billionaires Do More Harm Than Good

Matthew Leamy and Daniel Burns (both 3rd Year)

Ross Murphy and Tate Tomkin Beddy (both 2nd Year)

Daniel Burns was awarded best speaker in the Junior v Senior Debate.



Senior English Debating Society

It has been a productive start to the year for the Senior English Debating team.

We congratulate Jamie Browne Lynch (4th Year) who was selected for the Development Team at the National Debate Trials held at the end of September. Debaters from every corner of the country came together to compete for a place on the National Team which will represent Ireland in the World Schools Debating Competition in Belgrade next summer. It is a fantastic achievement for Jamie to have been selected and it is a testament to his hard work and commitment to debating within the College. We also commend Ishaan Pandey (5th Year) and Josh Murphy (4th Year) who also competed at the Trials. The skills and experience gained will be of great benefit to them as they continue to develop as debaters.

The annual Junior vs Senior Debate took place on Tuesday 10th October. Proposing the motion that "Billionaires Do More Harm Than Good" was the Junior Team, with speakers Matthew Leamy, Daniel Burns (both 3rd Year), Ross Murphy and Tate Tomkin Beddy (both 2nd Year). The Senior Team, comprised of Luke Murphy, Harry Sheridan (both 6th Year), Ishaan Pandey (5th Year) and Kieran Lennon (4th Year), opposed the motion. After a very closely contested debate, the Junior Team were crowned the winners. We commend all of the speakers for their excellent preparation and presentation. A special word of congratulations to Daniel Burns who was awarded Best Speaker.

We look forward to the Teacher vs Student Debate, which will take place during Science Week in November, as well as friendlies with our neighbouring schools.



Junior v Senior Debate



Junior MACE in Clonkeen College

MUN

On Saturday the 14th of October, **Aran O'Flaherty, Luke O'Sullivan, Patrick Hayden, Gregory Quinn (6th Years), Henry Brown, Darragh O'Neill and Fionn Whelan (5th Years)** accompanied by Mr. Smyth and Ms. O'Sullivan travelled to Royal Russell School in Croydon, England to take part in their annual Royal Russell International Model United Nations Conference over the following 4 days.

The conference entertained over 650 students from across Ireland, the United Kingdom and around the world debating topics of great global importance such as the issue of the Israel and Palestine Conflict, Deforestation, Regulation of Social Media as well as the territorial sovereignty of Antarctica. Over the 4 days the students engaged in intense and meaningful debate across the various topics in each committee as well as in the General Assembly.

We would like to congratulate **Aran O'Flaherty, Luke O'Sullivan, Patrick Hayden, Gregory Quinn (all 6th Year), Henry Brown, Darragh O'Neill and Fionn Whelan (all 5th Year)** for each receiving a Distinguished Delegate award for their outstanding efforts made in their respective committees.

We would also like to congratulate the delegation as a whole and their ambassador **Aran O'Flaherty (6th Year)** who received a Distinguished Delegation award for their distinguished and outstanding contribution to debate both in committee and in the General Assembly. Blackrock has not received this award for over 9 years, nor had every single member of their delegation receive an individual award (the only delegation in the entire conference to do so as well) and we note the outstanding achievement of this delegation in accomplishing both of these.

We thank Mr. Smyth and Ms. O'Sullivan for

their support of the boys during the conference, and we thank Ms. Fitzsimons for her work in organising the trip and preparing the boys for the conference.

The next event for the Model United Nations society is the Rathdown School Conference taking place in late November.



Congratulations to the Model UN students for winning the top prize at Royal Russell MUN in London. 6th Years Aran O'Flaherty, Patrick Hayden, Greg Quinn, Luke O'Sullivan, and 5th Years Fionn Whelan, Henry Brown and Darragh O'Neill won the Distinguished

The Archives....



In September the Archive, together with photographer and conservator David Cleary, commenced Phase 2 of the conservation of photographs project. This phase is focused on restoring the 128 framed and captioned Senior Cup Team photographs hanging in Our Lady's Corridor, through to the passageway and corridor extension running the length of the building's axis. These are a record of the College's Senior Rugby Team dating to its earliest formation in 1882. They are a valuable historical resource and a source of communal pride. Their preservation and conservation are, therefore, a matter of importance.

In their current state, many of the SCT photographs exhibit damage to the mount and the photographic image. Some of the photographs are at risk of fading beyond recognition, caused by exposure to UV light, while others are threatened by irreparable damage caused by staining and moisture damage. The conservation action involves the sourcing of original photographs or, in their absence, scanning and digitally mending damaged or faded photographs. A digital mount with headings and caption in a uniform style is then produced before then being printed as archival quality giclée artwork prints, resistant to UV damage. The aim is to produce a uniform gallery of team photographs in the best and most stable version possible and to re-hang these as soon as possible. As such, this work is being done on a phased basis with the earliest team photos being tackled now. These before and after photographs are a good illustration of the excellent conservation work being undertaken.

BEFORE AND AFTER:



Green Schools....

The Green Schools Committee started off this year with a new flag, 'Global Citizenship Litter and Waste'. We now have seven flags. The committee is now working on our next flag 'Global Citizenship Energy'.

The Green Schools Committee's first Environmental Awareness Week of this academic year was centred around the theme of 'Litter and Waste' and ran from Monday 25th September to Thursday 28th September. With the implementation of our new binning system, we thought that this theme was fitting to further highlight the introduction and importance of cooperation with the new binning system.

Throughout the week various activities and events were held around our theme of litter and waste. We held a House Competition during the week awarding houses points for responsible disposal of waste and ensuring that the classrooms were left nice and tidy as they are little free zones. We think this competition worked well in Junior Years and we hope to run the competition again in the future.

During Environmental Awareness we held our first Climate Café, which was a



Climate Cafe Presentation



great success! It was our final Climate Café that allowed the use of compostable coffee cups. For the next one, no Keep Cup – No hot chocolate! Overall Cian O' Flannagáin (3rd Year) and Edward Wilson (5th Year) presented twice, with the peak number of attendees at one time at 47 and for the first time all the hot chocolate being used up!

The Green Schools Committee also had a stand at Club and Societies Day. It was great to see so many students stopping by to our stand and asking questions about our work. We also recruited some new members and some students who are willing to help up with different events throughout the year.



Wellbeing....



The Student Wellbeing Committee has had an active start to the year. At first we helped set up 'Clubs and Societies Day'. This is a day where clubs, sports and committees in Blackrock have an opportunity to come together in St. Patrick's corridor and show students the broad range of extra-curriculars on offer. The Wellbeing Committee along with other clubs and societies benefit greatly from the new members who join. The stall each club or society has tells the student a bit of what they do, and the student may sign up if he wishes. Anti-Bullying Day took place on the 21st of September and was a great success. On this day hundreds of students wore odd socks to school to celebrate what makes us all unique and completed workshops about the difference between 'Banter and Bullying'. We emphasised the need to intervene and taught students about the bystander effect. Don't just do nothing, take action!

Our focus now turns towards our plans post mid-term break. Mental Health Awareness Day is on Thursday 9th of November and there is a lot planned. 6th Years and staff are encouraged to wear orange while every student will be given

an orange ribbon to pin onto their school uniform at the start of the day. We have more of a focus on Mental Health 'Action' rather than Mental Health 'Awareness' this year. To set out this, there will be guided meditation for every student during 1st period to start their day off positively and again at lunch to bring a mindful atmosphere around the school. We will also be hosting our first Junior Cuppa Club of the year on Thursday and all 2nd and 3rd Year students are welcome for some free cake, hot chocolate and a chat with their friends.

The Wellbeing Committee will also be talking on BCR about the importance of Mental Health and our other plans for a collaborative activity with Sion Hill. Make sure to tune in for that! Remember the Wellbeing Anonymous Tool will always be there for you beside the files section on your years Teams page. Have a safe and spooky mid-term break.



Connect

Make time each day to Connect. Connect with the people around you. With family, friends, colleagues and neighbours. At home, work, school or in your local community. By staying connected and nurturing these relationships we feel happier and more secure, giving us a better sense of purpose.



Global Citizenship....

The Global Citizenship Committee (GCC) has attracted much interest this year due to a very successful Clubs and Societies Day, held in St Patrick's corridor. The new committee has shown great enthusiasm, students have enjoyed collaborating and developing ideas for the year ahead. As a committee, the students have decided to build upon last year's successful investigation into homelessness, the housing crisis and direct provision. Last year students held a Direct Provision Panel with experts in the area, Katie Martin (Development Perspectives), Cllr Maurice Dockrell (Fine Gael), TD Richard

Boyde Barrett (Sinn Féin) and Bulaleni Mfaco (Activist in Ireland through his experience in the Irish refugee system). It was a prime-time style event and the GCC are looking forward to adapting the event this year.

BCR will also see the return of our very successful Kenya Collaboration Project. Team members: John O'Callaghan and Jamie O'Nuallain will interview students from our sister school 'Holy Ghost Machakos'. The focus will be on Sustainable Development Goals. Each school will identify a goal and analyse how each goal is impacting the respective school.

Finally, GCC have decided to open our committee to anyone interested in Journalism. We will be recruiting students to write articles for our website. The GCC will provide students with social justice topics that should be covered, and



all work will be published on the GCC website.

Website link: [Blackrock College GCC \(black-rock-college-gcc.com\)](https://blackrock-college-gcc.com)

Instagram link: [blackrock_gcc_2k21](https://www.instagram.com/blackrock_gcc_2k21)



3rd Year Science: Sustainability and Genetics

Our Third-Year students have been busy learning about sustainability and how important it is especially in today's world. Students researched different sustainable development goals (SDG's) in different countries. Some science students were visited by members of the Green Schools Committee who gave a presentation about sustainability at Blackrock College.



Henry Brown (Fifth Year) and Leo Fowler (Fifth Year) from Green Schools presenting to Third Year students about Sustainability



Mrs Shevlin's class during one of their ecology field studies



Ms. Steele's class making double helix structures from sweets

Science Photography Competition

The theme for this year's Science Photography competition is '**Science All Around Us**'. All students and staff are encouraged to enter. Finalists' photographs will be displayed on the Senior Science Corridor during Science Week November 13th to 17th November. The winners will be announced on Friday 17th November.



Some sustainability projects from Mrs. Shevlin's class



Some examples of sustainability projects from Ms. Wyse's class

Third Year students have also been learning about biodiversity here in Blackrock. We set up night-cameras and carried out field studies investigating abiotic and biotic factors. Other classes were looking at genetics and what makes us all unique. Ms. Steele's class built a double helix DNA structure from sweets.

5th Year Chemistry: Flames Tests

Images captured during 5th Year Chemistry practical 'Flame Tests'. Students identified the metals present in different samples of salts based on the unique colour that they emit.



Senior Science Quiz

The Senior Science Quiz took place on Tuesday 10th October. There were five rounds of ten questions, dingbats, Chemistry, Biology, Physics, and general knowledge.

Congratulations to Simon Considine who placed 1st and Diarmaid Byrne who placed 2nd.

Well done to all who took part. Teams for the Regionals of the Irish Science Teachers Association Science Quiz will be announced soon.

Senior Science Quiz taking place during Science Week on Thursday 17th November.



Diarmuid Byrne (2nd place) and Simon Considine (1st Place) (Sixth Years)

Science Club

Dive into the World of Wonders with Our Science Club!

Prepare to be amazed by the incredible scientific adventures our Science Club members have embarked on this month!

Exploring the Microcosmos: Our young scientists took a close-up look at the mesmerizing world of human cheek cells, uncovering the intricate details of life's building blocks through microscopes. Witnessing the tiny universe within was nothing short of mind-blowing!

Egg Drop Challenge: It was a thrilling contest of innovation and engineering as our students designed contraptions to protect fragile eggs from gravity's wrath. Cheers and gasps filled the air as we saw some incredibly egg-citing solutions!

Elephant's Toothpaste Extravaganza: A spectacular chemical reaction erupted as our members combined the right ingredients to create an explosive frothy foam! The Elephant's Toothpaste experiment left everyone in awe.

Lava Lamps & Balloon Race Cars: Mixing art and science, our club members crafted their very own lava lamps with mesmerizing colour combinations, and then unleashed their engineering skills by creating speedy balloon race cars. It was a carnival of creative scientific marvels!

Don't miss out on future adventures! Join our Science Club on Monday's in JS2 and be part of these amazing discoveries.



Sean Mullane (Third Year) and James O'Brien (Third Year) from Science Club during Clubs and Societies Day



Sean Mullane, James O'Brien and Daniel Burns (Third Years) making lava lamps.



Finn O'Brien (Third Year) using a microscope.



Tate Tomkin Brady (Second Year) demonstrating elephants' toothpaste.

BT Young Scientists

Best of luck to our students who have submitted projects to this year's BT Young Scientist exhibition. We have entered five projects in total and looking forward to hearing if we can showcase our amazing work at the exhibition in January.

CAO

This September we gave the 6th Years an online link to their Interest assessment. The assessment is most helpful for boys who are unsure of the career area they are interested in. I encourage all the boys to complete the assessment. The assessment comprises a specially designed questionnaire where the responses are analysed and matched with all the courses available, and the results compiled into a personalised workbook. The use of an interest test can significantly improve the quality of your son's decision-making and thus reduce the risk of selecting the wrong course. With the opening of the CAO online application on November 6th, all 6th years have received a CAO talk and printed Handbook. Parents will receive the same talk on November 7th 2023.

Students who register for the CAO between 6th November and 20th January 2024 will pay a reduced



fee of €30. The regular fee of €45 applies to applications made between 20th of January and the 1st of February 2024.

If any student has additional needs or a medical condition, it is important to tick the appropriate box on the CAO application form. The DARE tick box is for students with additional needs and the HEAR tick box is for students applying through disadvantage. Students can find out more regarding the DARE/HEAR scheme on www.accesscollege.

ie. Students with Irish and Third Language exemptions must also take necessary action to notify the relevant Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) of their exemption(s) and to submit any supporting documentation the HEIs require. Please refer to the relevant individual HEI websites for further information.

**PLEASE ENSURE YOU INFORM
THE NUI OF YOUR CAO
NUMBER. (IMPORTANT!)**

SUSI



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

Any student with a strong interest in TCD and taking Religion or Geography may be interested in the Biblical and/or the Geology exam organised by TCD at Easter. Exam results can be used for point's purposes in TCD.

UCAS

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

HPAT

Classes are being held each Sunday in the College with Robert Gallagher. Any student interested in attending please contact Ms. Drew.



COLLEGE OPEN DAYS

TCD 4/11/23.

UCD 11/11/23.

DCU 18/11/23

IADT 25/11/23

TU Dublin 2/12/23.

RCSI 5/1/24

DIARY DATES 6TH YEAR:

CAO opens 6th November.

CAO parents talk 7th November.

College Career Fair 14th November (6th Years and parents, Evening event 6.30pm).

DIARY DATES 5TH/6TH YEAR:

Career Seminars Saturday 9am 21st October 2023

Career Seminars Saturday 18th November 2023

6th Year Career Fair on 14th November

IADT, UCD, Maynooth University, Aer Lingus, Eunicas - European Colleges, National Flight Centre, DCU, TUD, TCD Trinity, Defence Forces, NCAD, SCFE more will be represented .

We will have a selection of talk running concurrently with the event and we will also have an amazing cohort of recent past pupils, who are currently in these colleges. We look forward to seeing you there.

Career Talks....



LEFT: John O Connell (Director Software Engineering Solutions), Prof. Aoife Ahern(Principal of UCD Engineering). David McLoughlin (Production Metropolitan Films International). Tom Griffin (Director of Stem Consulting Engineering). Paul Falvin,(CEO Triangle). Brian Farrell (CEO Kepak Foods). Conor O Donoghue (Director of Oculous AI Automation for lending. Natasha Drew (Head of Guidance & Counselling). Maurice Tunney (Founder of ASM Ventures) Alison Donnelly (AECON Senior Marine Ecologist) gave so generously of their time to talk to Fifth Years about career choice.

BELOW LEFT: Maurice Tunney (Founder of ASM Ventures) and Ms Caroline Dobbyn (Fifth Year Dean) at Fifth Year Career talks

BELOW MIDDLE: Paul Falvin, (CEO Triangle). Brian Farrell (CEO Kepak Foods) and Natasha Drew (Head of Guidance & Counselling) speaking to Fifth Year students in the CADLC

BELOW RIGHT: Tom Griffin (Director of Stem Consulting Engineering) talking to students at Fifth Year Career Talks



Dungeons and Dragons Club ...



The Blackrock Dungeons and Dragons club is back in full swing this year, with bigger numbers than ever for even bigger adventures! The club has increased in size since again this year, with an influx of a table full of new Second Year players, yet still keeping its spirit of excitement, story-telling, and fun. New starter campaigns, including the professionally made Dragons of Stormwreck Isle, are being run by Third Year DMs Sam Kyrchenko and John Ding, while Second Year DM Daniel Goss has been introducing new players to the world of fantasy role-playing.

Homebrew games are always welcome, with senior tables running cyber-punk style homebrew games with DM Daire Casey, and Transition Year DM Mark Ahearne hosting a classic Dragonlance game fit to break boundaries of in-world exploration. More than ever, the club has had an explosion of new Game Masters, each one with a story to tell, just looking for players to unravel it with, so new members with a knack for creativity and problem-solving are always welcome – dice, characters, and supplies all provided for beginners to advanced players! With a follow-up blitz with Loreto on the Green lined up on October 27th, it'll be all dice rolling heading into Mid-Term - The boys were hosted by Loreto last year and are hoping to make the visit just as enjoyable with a collection of exciting games!



Third Years Matthew Leamy, Sean Mullane, and Calum Burke, with DMs John Ding and Sam Krychenko



DM Daniel Goss leading the Second Years, while Dr Brunswick (Dean of Fourth Year) observes Ms. Markey (Principal) getting a run-down on Dragonlance!

Openness to the Spirit is central to a Spiritan and a Blackrock education, in the words of Claude Poullart des Places, Spiritan Co-founder, "Speak to my heart, O God" – may we all have the grace to listen.

The opening nine weeks of the school year are a busy period, some of the liturgical and pastoral events are...

- 3rd, 5th & 6th Year Retreats (with the 6th Years travelling to Ardbracon, Ballintubber, Balbriggan, Cootehill, Donegal, Knock, Portrush, and Wicklow for a 3-day retreat].
- Commissioning of 66 House Captains.
- Annual Parents Retreat.
- 6th Year pilgrimage to Lourdes with the Dublin Archdiocese.
- Family Masses for 2nd and 6th Year.
- Commissioning of 6th Year Eucharistic Ministers.
- Whole School Assembly in honour of Claude Poullart des Places.
- Eucharistic Adoration with over 400 Staff, Spiritans and Students attending.
- Three Transition Year Classes allocated two-week placements on the Matthew 25 Programme.

The Matthew 25 Programme is for Transition Year Students involving a two-week placement in a variety of care facilities, community & parish schemes, nursing homes, special schools and social enterprises. Here follows a brief reflection by two students that have taken part in Matthew 25 since September.

Setanta School, Greenhills - Daniel Marié

"I really enjoyed my time in Setanta, it was a different experience that I am not used to and I am very happy I went there. The people I met and worked with were so nice and helpful. I accompanied the students out on walks around the park right beside the school as well as many other activities. Being part of the school for the time I was there for was something I never thought I would do and I recommend it to everyone. Going there takes over an hour but it is so worth it, I had a lot of time during breaks with the students so they could get some fresh air and so they could eat their lunch. Before I went there, I thought it was going to be a very challenging experience and out of my comfort zone. But it was the complete opposite and I am grateful to all in Setanta who gave me that opportunity."

Marino School, Bray – Jack Casey

"Embarking on a two-week placement in Marino Special School in Bray proved to be a profoundly transformative experience. I felt welcomed by staff and student alike from the first day. Any previous concerns before the placement were eliminated from when I met the incredible students, who accepted me without hesitation. During my time at the school, I actively engaged with students, providing support and assistance in their daily activities. Throughout the two classes of post primary students, there was a wide range of special needs, while some struggled to read and write others were solving algebraic formulas. But credit to the students and staff who made everyone feel comfortable in this wonderful environment. Collaborating with dedicated teachers and staff, I witnessed the power of inclusive education in growth and development. This two-week placement in Marino Special school was an eye-opening journey that reinforced the importance of empathy, patience, and understanding. Although this experience was about the people I met, I would be wrong to say I didn't get great satisfaction from this work, if an opportunity ever presented itself to return to Marino I gladly would accept. Witnessing the impact of education and support on these remarkable students was a humbling experience that will forever shape my perspective on inclusivity."

MORNING MASS

Join us for Morning Mass in the College Chapel any school day morning at 8.15am.

You are welcome either in person or online. If you have any special intention or anniversary you would like remembered, please email

**fmadden@blackrockcollege.com
or phone 01 – 275 2125.**

All are welcome.

Blackrock College Prayer eBook

Download from Google, search ... "Blackrock College Prayer eBook"

Sacrament of Confirmation

For students wishing to be confirmed in the Third Term, please register before the end of February with

fmadden@blackrockcollege.com

Rock Bees are we 2023 Update

What a year it has been! A very warm winter, a very wet spring, a scorching early summer and then a washout. For our bees, this has presented a tremendous challenge. Progress in Spring was good. Our three hives swiftly became four as a mature queen sought to expand her hive. All signs were very positive for a bumper honey harvest.

Fast forward to June. You would think the hot weather would suit the bees but, because the dry weather stressed many plants, nectar was hard to come by. Then the heavens opened and foraging became close to impossible. Our inspections showed us that the bees were eating into the stocks they had laid aside earlier in the year. This is perfectly natural and shows that the hives are very healthy. When it came to harvesting honey at the end of the season, the bad news was our portion was lower than previous years. The good news



is that all four hives are in rude good health.

A special word of thanks to Phil and the rest of the ground staff who continue to support and help us out. Thanks especially to our mentor and guide Mr Niall Ringrose (class of '79) for his infinite patience. Should you wish to put your hands on some precious Rock honey, there will be some made available as part of the Home Economics Dept coffee morning at the launching of the Christmas Trees. All proceeds go to the SVP.



REFLECTION

Be kind
whenever possible.
It is always possible.

—THE 14TH DALAI LAMA