



Blackrock College Bulletin

Bulletin No.15 2024 - 2025

Deans' Report

The final term saw a flurry of activity and events. Now the dust has settled, it is appropriate to reflect on all that has happened.

The **Class of 2025** graduated in a mature and joyful manner. As ever, they led the way by taking full part in **Sports and Family Day**, soccer leagues and their graduation ceremony. The Sixth-Year boys have been in reflective mode, taking time to talk to their teachers and classmates during the final term and all this while managing their studies for June .

In a break from tradition Academic **Prize Day** was held on a Friday evening this year. Ms. Markey delivered the Principal's address and the boys were awarded their hard-earned prizes. **Valedictorian Harrison Carr** and **President of the Union, Karl O'Neil**, both then delivered their speeches. All three speakers congratulated Mr Frank O' Sullivan and Ms Cathy Kelleher on their retirement .

Sports and Family Day was another memorable community event with boys competing in their houses in wide ranging events from track and field to rowing and basketball. James Power (Class of 2005) was our guest for the day. He was awarded **Past Pupil Sports Star of the Year** for his years driving Cuala to success. James presented Sami Bishti (6th Year) with the current Sports Star of the Year award for his achievements in **Rugby and Athletics**.

The **Class of 2026** have been ever present at the final term events and we look forward to their continued development in Sixth Year. The Fifth Year students have been showing their reflective nature by writing up their **Auxilium booklets**. This process facilitated personal reflection on their growth from an academic, extra-curricular and social perspective.

Our Transition Year students have enjoyed an action-packed final term with groups travelling to **Santiago, Aran Islands** and the **Hill of Tara**. On site they have taken part in **Music, Art and Drama week, Financial Literacy** modules and a number of talks on physical and mental health. Their end of year portfolio interviews gave the boys an opportunity to reflect on all the opportunities they embraced. All these fun activities lie tantalisingly close for our Third Years who are preparing for their **Junior Cycle exams**. We wish them well.

The Second-Year boys have been embracing the "be caring" and "be grateful" values by taking part in their volunteering programme. Well done to Philip Kavanagh on winning the second year **Auxilium prize**. The Second Years travelled to Ballyfermot for their **Days of Reflection** giving them time and space to reflect on their experience in their first year in the College. Well done to De Valera for Winning the 2nd Yr **Summer Soccer Competition League A** this term in a hard-fought final against the Runner Ups, Duff.

Finally, we would like to wish the boys and their families a **happy and healthy summer**, and we look forward to their return in August.

Transition Year MasterChef Competition

The Transition Year MasterChef 2025 competition reached an exciting finale with eight talented finalists showcasing their culinary skills last week.

Each student brought creativity, flair, and impressive technique to the kitchen, making the judging process both challenging and rewarding.

Renowned chef Graham Neville was this year's judge, offering expert feedback and ultimately **selecting Adrian Ho as the overall winner**. Adrian impressed with his innovative flavours, presentation, and composure under pressure.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Ms. Marren for her invaluable support and dedication to the event and guiding the students throughout the competition. This competition proved a memorable and enriching experience for all involved. Congratulations to all participants on their outstanding efforts!



Snapshot of the Transition Year MasterChef Competition



Elephant in the Room

Throughout the year, the Art Department has been working with TY students to complete a fantastic project as part of Brent Pope's Organisation, Elephant in the Room. The project has been adopted by various other schools, businesses, communities, and other organizations with the goal of promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.

TY students began work in late January by drafting ideas, colour schemes, and discussing what the elephant's mission can mean for those in our school. The final design includes elements of our school's ethos and culture as well as historical architecture.



Students then brought these ideas to life, from initial ideas to the final painting of the elephant, all of whom can feel immensely proud of the final piece, which will remain on display in the school for years to come. Among them were students Jude Joyce, Adrian Ho, Mark Sukhodolov, Illia Ishchenko, Andrew Clancy, Finlay Joyce, Ben Carroll, Harry Forde, and Matthew Geraghty, whom we wish to thank for their time and contributions from design idea to drawing design and final painting of the elephant.

Swimming: Blackrock Home Gala



Blackrock hosted the final swimming gala of the season, finishing up with a duel in the pool against (friendly!) rivals. The two schools went to head-to-head in sprints in the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior categories for a winner to be chosen. While Terenure were strong in the Intermediate races, Blackrock dominated the Junior and Senior events, with Willow Park swimmers Josh O'Rourke and Jack McNamara pulling in gold medals, as well as 2nd year Sam Ramke winning the butterfly and freestyle events. In the seniors, 5th Years Will Collins, Gerard Egan, and Charley Collenette outpaced the freestyle, breaststroke, and butterfly events respectively. Both schools put in fiercely competitive relays, and at the end of the day, Blackrock was the overall winner in 12 of 18 events!

Some Blackrock swimmers also competed recently in Leinster Age Groups, a provincial level competition that gears up towards the national championships – team member Daire Hannon (2nd Year) pulled in a gold medal in the 1500m freestyle – a huge achievement in his swimming career!

Table Tennis

Blackrock enjoyed another outstanding season across all levels, with every team finishing in medal positions in their respective Leinster divisions.

Senior A and Junior A claimed Leinster Division 1 titles, with Senior B winning Senior Division 2. Junior B were runners-up in Junior Division 1, while Junior 2A, 2B, and 2C won Junior Divisions 2, 3, and 5 respectively. Minor A finished runners-up in Minor Division 1.

These results saw the Senior A, Junior A, and Junior B teams qualify for the All-Ireland playoffs against Castleknock. Senior A, led by Daniel Patterson (5th Year), and Junior A, captained by Rex Montag (3rd Year), secured victories to represent Leinster at the All-Ireland finals on 1st May.

The Seniors reached their 13th final in 14 years, defeating Munster champions Coláiste an Spioraí Naomh 5-1 in the semi-final before falling narrowly to defending champions Grosvenor Grammar 3-5 in the final. The Juniors, competing in their 14th final in 16 years, clinched their third consecutive All-Ireland title with a dominant 5-0 win over Ennis (Munster) and a 5-3 victory over RBAI (Ulster), completing a third straight 'treble' of Leinster and All-Ireland titles.

On 7th May, six Blackrock teams qualified for the Leinster Cup Finals. The Minor A team, captained by Jack Moloney (2nd Year), lost their semi-final 0-4 to Castleknock.

In the junior competition, three Blackrock teams made the semi-finals. Junior A beat Gonzaga 4-0, while Junior 2A defeated Blackrock B 4-1. Junior A then sealed another perfect season with a 4-0 win over 2A in the final, achieving a remarkable third consecutive 'treble-treble'.

The Senior Cup saw Blackrock A and B reach the final after wins over Stepside and Castleknock, respectively. Blackrock A then secured a 4-0 victory to complete their Leinster double.

Individually, a record number of Blackrock players were selected for Leinster squads. Jack O'Connell, Daniel Patterson, Conor Sheehan (all 5th Year), and Conor Walsh (6th Year) made Junior A; Alex Browne (5th Year) and Daniel Ryan (3rd Year) were selected for Junior B; and Rex Montag earned selection for Cadet A.



House Soccer League Round-Up (2nd–6th Year)

Another exciting year of House Soccer has come to a close, with each year group showing fantastic spirit, skill, and sportsmanship throughout the competitions.

6th Year

Leman were crowned champions after a strong campaign, overcoming De Valera in the final. Duff and Browne were the other semi-finalists in an extremely competitive tournament.

5th Year

The final, played on Monday 26th May, saw Leman and Duff go head-to-head in a dramatic match that was decided by penalties. Leman held their nerve to secure victory. Well done to all who took part in this year's league.



4th Year

Shanahan came out on top after a hard-fought win over Duff in the final. De Valera took third place, followed by Browne in fourth. A great showing from all houses.

3rd Year

In the A League, Ebenrecht defeated Duff 4–2 in an entertaining final, with Ronan Clifford bagging a hat-trick.

In the B League, Browne came out on top against Ebenrecht. Both leagues featured excellent football and great commitment.

2nd Year

De Valera took home the title after defeating Duff in the final. Shanahan and Leman reached the semi-finals, rounding out a well-fought competition.

Well done to all players across the years – it has been a fantastic season of soccer

TY Day of Reflection



TY Gaisce Trip Report: Aran Islands and Galway

Last Wednesday, 30 Transition Year students set off on an enriching cultural and active Gaisce adventure, beginning with a train journey from Heuston Station to Galway. Upon arrival, the group travelled to Wildlands Adventure Centre in Moycullen, where they enjoyed lunch, zip-lining, and escape rooms—activities that challenged both body and mind, setting the tone for the memorable experience ahead.

Later that evening, the group caught a ferry from Ros a Mhíl to Inis Mór, the largest of the Aran Islands. The following day was a physically demanding but rewarding one, with over 30 km walked across the island. Highlights included visits to the iconic Wormhole (Poll na bPéist) and the ancient cliff fort of Dún Aonghasa, offering deep insight into the island's natural beauty and rich heritage.

The return ferry provided scenic views of Inis Meáin, Inis Oírr, and the majestic Cliffs of Moher before the group arrived back in Galway City for a well-earned evening meal. A sunrise walk to Blackrock Tower in Salthill was offered the next morning, but only two students participated due to the previous day's exertions.

Overall, it was a truly rewarding experience, with great weather and lasting memories created over two action-packed days in the West.



A Snapshot of Prize Day



A Snapshot of Prize Day



A Snapshot of Graduation Day



Summer Recommended Reading

Reading a good book might be just the break you'll need this summer. Not sure what to read? Below is a list of books some of our Blackrock College staff are reading or recommending.

Book	Recommended by	Why you should read it
 <p><i>The Lost Bookshop</i> by Evie Woods</p>	Andrea Dillon, College Librarian	Moving, Historical, Magical.
 <p><i>Revolutionary Road</i> by Richard Yates</p>	Chris Kestell, English and French Teacher	Piercing, Intimate, Unsettling.
 <p><i>The Hunting Party</i> by Lucy Foley</p>	Jennifer McGuire English and Religion Teacher	A "who done it" murder mystery set in the highlands of Scotland at a New Years Eve party where old friends are reunited.
 <p><i>The White Ship</i> by Charles Spencer</p>	John Murphy, Accounting Teacher	Historic sibling rivalry on akin to Game of Thrones
 <p><i>Swimmer Among the Stars</i> by Kanishk Tharoor</p>	Tommie Fagan, Physics and Computer Science	Mystic, Curious, Anthology
 <p><i>Permanent Record</i> by Edward Snowden</p>	Attila Nagy / IT Technical Support Technician	Gripping, impactful, extraordinary

Book	Recommended by	Why you should read it
 <p><i>From a Low and Quiet Sea</i> by Donal Ryan</p>	Conor Sommerville, Maths Teacher	Powerful, Emotional, Moving
 <p><i>One day, everyone will have always been against this</i> by Omar El Akkad</p>	Cathal Maher, English Teacher	An essential documentation of the unfolding genocide in Gaza
 <p><i>The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York</i> by Robert A. Caro</p>	Alan Boyle, DCG and Construction Studies Teacher	A powerful biography exposing Robert Moses' rise to unelected power, reshaping New York through infrastructure, while displacing communities and revealing the dark side of urban planning.
 <p><i>Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance</i> by Angela Duckworth</p>	David Murphy, Geography/Business Studies Teacher	Motivational Mindset Help
 <p><i>The Racket</i> by Conor Niland</p>	Frank O'Sullivan, Business, Economics and Geography Teacher	Glimpse into the struggles of pro tennis
 <p><i>Night watch</i> by Terry Pratchett</p>	Niall Toolan, English Teacher	Witty, Metaphorical, Clever
 <p><i>The Heart's Invisible Furies</i> by John Boyne</p>	Chloe Galligan Religious Education, CSPE & History teacher	Outstanding, Deeply moving, Favourite book

Book	Recommended by	Why you should read it
 <p><i>Pedro Parama</i> by Juan Rulfo</p>	Nicolas Castillo Trainor, College Archivist	Haunting and poetic, <i>Pedro Páramo</i> is a ghostly descent into memory and power, laying the spectral groundwork for Latin American magical realism.
 <p><i>Ghost in the Wires</i> by Kevin Mitnick</p>	Attila Nagy / IT Technical Support Technician	Adventures of the World's most wanted hacker
 <p><i>Co-Active Coaching</i> by Henry Kimsey-House et al</p>	Inga Cirule, Accommodations Manager	Transformational, practical, empowering.
 <p><i>The Girl with the Seven Names</i> by Hyeonseo Lee</p>	Cathy Kelleher, Head of English, Maths and English Teacher	Eye-opening, Heartbreaking, Courageous
 <p><i>Unravelling Oliver</i> by Liz Nugent</p>	John Goodwin, SNA	Gripping, Tragic, Psychological Thriller

Blackrock Beekeeping 2025

This season in beekeeping has had its ups and downs. The winter proved to be harsh and only four of our seven hives emerged unaffected by the cold weather.

Undaunted, our beekeeping team of Ms Cathy Kelleher, Mr Niall Ringrose (class of '79) and Niall Toolan got down to the business of preparing for a new season. The excellent weather conditions in the Spring meant that blossom was abundant and our existing hives multiplied rapidly.

By and large, we can say that our four working hives are thriving. We have chosen not to take honey early, to allow the hives room to expand and tackle any adverse conditions that may arise during the Summer. This said it all points to a robust harvest in August/September.

As is always the case, our thanks go to the ground staff and management team for their support in, this, our fifth year of beekeeping on the campus.

Don't Forget – Mark Your Calendars!



Wednesday, June 4th

Public Examinations begin

***We hope you all
have a
fun and happy
summer!***

