

# Our Lady's School Newsletter



## Dear Parents & Guardians,

As Christmas draws closer students and staff are all looking forward to the Carol Ceremony on Friday prepared by the P5s. This is one of the highlights of the year. The OLS community join together to celebrate the gift of giving that is in us all and we celebrate the Joy to the World that is Christmas. Students, staff, past staff, representatives of the Parents' Council, the Board of Management and the Sisters gather together to partake in the celebration written by the students. It is truly a time to be proud of the student voice and how reflective and caring our students are.

We are encouraged to appreciate all we have been given and all that we can do for others. We will thank those who tirelessly knit for the month of November for the homeless, those who gave to the coin collection, those who brought gifts to the crib and to those who will run or walk the Goal Mile on St Stephen's Day. We truly celebrate the constant giving by our community in OLS.

As I sit here writing this after school I can hear screams of laughter from the astroturf pitch as the traditional 'Hockey Hoots and Toots' takes place. The school is a vibrant community where wellbeing and feeling connected to the school go hand in hand with academic excellence. Our renovated Lecture Theatre combines the scarf of our school on the walls, the skirt on the seats and the crest on the walls, reminding us all of our proud connection to values of our school.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Years were awarded their Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement on Tuesday. The Other Areas of Learning identified by each student reflects the importance of the holistic development of each student. The extensive extracurricular programme in the school offers the students a large selection of activities to choose from. Please encourage your daughter to get involved in at least one area.

Our 6<sup>th</sup> Years continue to work with their academic mentors to realise their potential and to effectively combine productive study with rest and wellbeing. Our 6<sup>th</sup> Years found attending the parent-teacher meeting with their parents to be a valuable exercise allowing them to take greater ownership of their learning.

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**Creating the Library Christmas Tree!**



**The Le Chéile Council 2-19-20**



**The Nuns' Feast Day**



## Principal's Address Continued

*Continued from p. 1*

Each classroom now has 5 chrome books to assist student digital access and promote CBA research.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Year Active Flag class is positively leading out many new initiatives. The final round of the whole school Tug of War saw a very determined staff take on the winners of the student body. After serious exertions the bout was declared a draw. The Active Flag class are now progressing to learn how to fence with 10 students getting trained to coach other students.

We are all looking forward to the upcoming TY musical 'Sister Act' taking place in January. Tickets are on sale so book now!

Thank you to those who have given generously to our Sports Facilities Fund raiser. The school will be doing more fund raising in the new year so your assistance will be very much appreciated.

Thanks to all the community for your continued support of the staff and the many causes that we raise funds for over the year.

Finally I wish you, your families and the extended community a restful and happy Christmas.

Marguerite Gorby | Principal



Staff v Student Tug of War



Fencing Workshop



## Christmas Charity

The now traditional November Knitathon started again in early November. This is where we encourage the whole school community to give a bit of time from their busy lives to think about and do something practical for the homeless. We gathered in the GPA (Thursday and Friday lunchtimes) to knit hats and scarves. We then parcelled these up to be distributed amongst clients of the Peter McVerry Trust.

Peter McVerry tells a really moving story about a homeless guy telling him the worst part of being homeless is feeling invisible and that nobody cares about you. The aim of our Knitathon is to show that we do care - that we care enough to take the time and effort to make a gift for someone. It won't solve the problem of homelessness but the hope is our gift might bring a little brightness into an individual's life this Christmas.

The winter woollies were also accompanied by nearly €900 from our Copper Collection for the Peter McVerry Trust. The Gifts to the Crib this year were distributed to St Vincent de Paul, Focus Ireland, Peter McVerry Trust and the Women's Refuge. Thanks to all for their generosity of spirit in sharing with those less fortunate at Christmas time.

**Our Christmas Charity Drive is not over yet... please join us in Terenure College on St. Stephen's Day in the morning for the Goal Mile... we'll remind you on the app!**



Elves at work...



Trying on for size...



Ready for collection...



## Science Week

Science Week was jam packed with Science-y thrills, ranging from SHOCKING-ly good experiments, to documentaries, quizzes, bath bomb making and a Junior Clothes Swap. The clothes swap was to encourage students to reduce their consumption of 'fast fashion'- clothes that are only worn a couple of times and then dumped to landfill. Students from 1st to 3rd Year were invited to bring in any unwanted items of clothing for each of which they received a ticket, which they could redeem for other pieces on a one-for-one basis!



1st Year Science



Clothes Swap



## Sci-fest @ OLS

1<sup>st</sup> Year students showed off their scientific knowledge in the fifth SciFest@OLS. We would like to congratulate all the girls that entered who should be very proud of themselves for doing such an excellent job at impressing all the judges.

The following prizes were presented:

**Best Communicators:** Anna Weber, Alexandra Quirke and Emma Killian

**Irish Forestry Award:** Nikishi Polgolla, Ingrid Marron and Emer Delaney

**Allergen Innovator Award:** Alannah Brandon, Nell Raftery and Sarah Glennon

There were three **highly commended prizes** which went to:

Maria Hennelly, Niki Nguyen and Rachel Heather

Saoirse Larkin, Sarah Flynn Carroll and Aoife Swift and

Valentina Dowling, Caoimhe Mooney and Caolinn O’Gorman

The **Runner Up** prize went to:

Hannah Looby, Amelia Duff and Angelina Petrasevski

**1st prize** went to Olivia Dunne and Catherine Todd for their project “Extracting DNA”. The girls will go on to represent the school at the regional final at Tallaght IT in May.



5th Year Biology students hard at work!



Scifest@OLS: Olivia Dunne and Catherine Todd

## Reading Week 2019

This is an annual highlight on the OLS calendar. This is when we take time to give reading the attention and precious time it deserves! We love reading because it stretches the mind, tickles the imagination and is downright entertaining!

Our One School, One Book, *Into the Grey* by Celine Kiernan, is a winner of the CBI (Children's Books Ireland) Children's Choice Award. We were very lucky to persuade Celine to drop in and talk us through some of the themes of the book and her own writing career, something she has been highly successful at, despite the challenges having dyslexia threw her along the way.

Reading Week involved DEAR (Drop Everything And Read), Celine's visit, library book tasting, scavenger hunts, the Big Book Bake Off and a revealing, all-warts-uncovered staff display whereby teachers wrote reflections on what scares them most, while students teamed up to write group ghost stories... Needless to say, Hallowe'en was our sub-theme!

Before Reading Week even kicked off, we had a Student Council fundraiser whereby we all dressed up as a character from our favourite story. As well as having great fun, the Student Council raised funds to put towards projects they are completing on behalf of the student body.

### National Well Read Award 2019-22

We're unwavering in our belief that reading is an invaluable gift, skill and habit for our students so we are constantly working to promote and celebrate reading and its worth to the school community. In recognition of this, we received, to our delight and pride, our second National Well Read Award!



A quiet reading moment in the library!



Celine Kiernan in action

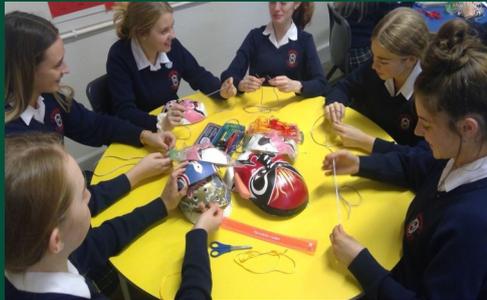


A scavenger hunt in the library





Microsoft



TY Chinese



HUGG Bag Pack

## TY News!

### Dreamspace

Over the last 3 weeks, all TY students (and Arnold the mascot) had the opportunity to visit Microsoft Headquarters for the DreamSpace workshop. After receiving a tour of the state of the art facility, we entered the DreamSpace workshop for coding and engineering exercises. Using the program 'Microbit' we could configure a series of LEDs to light up in patterns and compose a short music piece. We were then tasked with creating a marble run using only common stationary items. We all found it to be a highly enjoyable day!

### TY Chinese

Our TY students who are studying Chinese had their second Chinese Workshop with Ms. Guiting on Thursday 7th November. Ms Guiting introduced the students to the history of Chinese knots and showed us how to make a simple knot. While the knots look simple they were difficult to master but we had a great time learning this skill. We are all looking forward to our next workshop!

### HUGG Bag Pack

We had 15 students who helped out in Dunnes in Cornelscourt. A grand total of €1944.71 was raised that day. Well done to all involved, a super sum for Down Syndrome Ireland.

### TY Rugby

Our TYs have taken up rugby and have a team running in Terenure College RFC!



## Other News...



Leaving Cert Art Trip

### Leaving Cert Art Trip

The Leaving Cert art trip took place on Thursday 21st November. Students from Ms Maguire's and Mr Kenny's class visited the National Museum on Kildare St, The Kerlin gallery and the Irish Museum of Modern Art. The trip is an integral part of the History of Art course and is also an invaluable opportunity for students to engage with art first hand. The main focus of the trip was the exhibition Life Above Everything, part of the ongoing Freud Project at IMMA which sees the work of world famous painter Lucian Freud displayed alongside that of Irish artist Jack B. Yeats.



M.U.N.

### Model United Nations— M. U. N.

Congratulations to the students who represented Our Lady's School at the MUN conferences this term. All the girls did a great job and were wonderful ambassadors for the school and their countries!

### MS Readathon

This year M1 took part in the MS Ireland Readathon. During the month of October they read a total of 227 books!! They also successfully managed to raise an impressive €810 for MS Ireland. This is a super amount, they should be very proud of themselves and their fantastic effort. Well done girls.



MS Readathon

### One Good Idea

Well done to Forever Fits (junior team; Hannah Murphy, Isabelle Murphy, Holly Cassidy, Rachel Li, Maura O'Riordan) and The Last Straw (senior team; Róisín O'Neill, Ava Power, Anna Yarr), who have been selected to attend the Dublin Regional Event on the 27th February. They will present their Presentation Pitch and deliver their 1-Minute Film on the Big Screen to a panel of expert judges for the SEAI 'one good idea competition'. Both teams are working hard to create awareness about the links between fast fashion (Forever Fits) and plastic use (The Last Straw) and the links to climate change.



One Good Idea

More news...



6th Year parents come to school to learn about the CAO!



Tech 4 U learners from Age Action enjoy their Christmas party with their TY tutors



5th Year Lighthouse mentors organise a quiz for the 2nd Years



Home Economics Christmas Creativity!



TYs carolling in nursing homes



TYs fencing!



# Chaplain's Corner

We have had a fantastic term and so much has been achieved by our students and staff. Well done to all involved in maintaining the Christian ethos of the school and the implementation of its mission.

## House Masses

The M House celebrated their annual Mass on the 1<sup>st</sup> December with the theme **'Who says my dreams just have to stay dreams?'** M6 chose this quote as we felt it reflected the House Saint, St Muireann. St Muireann was a 6th century mermaid caught by a fisherman in Lough Neagh. She was later brought to St Comhghall where she was baptised and transformed into a woman. Inspired by her transformation, the theme celebrated the aspirations and ambitions M House hold for the years ahead.

The L House Mass took place on 11<sup>th</sup> November with the chosen theme being: **"Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift; that's why it's called the present"**. L House incorporated the characteristics of their patron saint St Laurence in the house mass. St. Laurence inspired people by his commitment to the spiritual life and to prayer. He accepted a position of leadership in his community at an early age and he recognised the call to serve the Lord in a particular way at Glendalough where he opened his heart and his doors to those who were poor. He was a man of peace and he was always positive.

## Retreats

As an integral part of the Religious Education programme offered in Our Lady's School, three retreat days occurred this term. The 6<sup>th</sup> Years had their retreat in-house followed by lunch and bonding in Tallaght! The retreat for B4 and C4 occurred on the Transition Year Development Day. This opportunity to reflect with their own giftedness and God's unconditional love, will be given to L4 and P4 in March. The 5<sup>th</sup> Years visited Ovoca, Wicklow for their retreat day. This retreat offered the students a time to challenge themselves in outdoor activities combined with a time for reflection and discussion during the indoor session. The students found these to be worthwhile days and a great opportunity to focus on their holistic development. A huge 'thank you' to the staff, who accompanied the students to Wicklow, and the teams for facilitating the retreats. Next term we look forward to more retreats starting with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Year retreat on January 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Le Chéile Council:

The council had their induction ceremony as part of the Nuns' Feast Day celebrations and Therese Davey from the Le Cheile Trust was there to help with their induction. The girls volunteered to be part of this faith leadership group. It is student-led and they are committed to maintaining the Christian Ethos of the School. The council planned and delivered lovely assemblies for each year group on the theme of Remembrance. The students meet every Thursday at lunchtime, to discuss how best to develop the community of faith in the school and respond to the challenge to live the Gospel message in acts of service, to those who are vulnerable or lack a voice in society.

## Anam Caras

The Sisters of the community are Anam Caras, meaning Faith Friends, to each year group in the school. Before the Nuns' feast Day celebrations, the L5 girls went over to visit the sisters to ask them questions in preparation for the mass. They spent a while chatting and having a cup of tea. They gained a great insight into what life was like for each of the sisters when they were in Our Lady's.

The sisters also took part in the knitathon and some of the girls sat with the anam caras and they had the opportunity to knit together. Thank you, Sisters, for making time for all of us and for keeping us, and our families, in your prayers.

## Gifts to the Crib

The annual Gifts to the Crib took place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December. A huge thank you to all the students and staff who brought Gifts on the day. A huge amount of toys, clothes, toiletries and food were brought in and given to St Vincent De Paul, Focus Ireland, Peter McVerry Trust and the Women's refuge. All of the charities were very appreciative of the array of presents they received.



## At OLS, we're Green to the Core!

Yes, it's true! We're not just green on the outside... we have a team of green warriors who are propelling dynamic responses to the environment's needs ...our Green School's Committee.

It's great that there has been so much publicity about Climate Change this year. Now, we have to make sure that we are making those small changes, so that together we make a bigger impact. One of Green School's main aims is to reduce litter and waste in Our Lady's. New bins have been rolled out to get us started!

Green School members Saffron Ralph, Hannah Fowler and Katherine Hesse have been working hard on their ECO-UNESC young environmentalist entry. They have created an insect / bug hotel for Our Lady's school. The aim is to encourage biodiversity in our area and help increase ecosystem productivity in our area.

On Thursday, 28th November, Green Schools had an exciting morning learning about the ecology of Bushy Park and attended a tree planting ceremony. This was an engaging initiative organised by the Department of Heritage, Culture and the Gaeltacht and Dublin City Council.

Students completed an ecological survey of the woodland. They also got to meet Minister Madigan to plant a Sessile Oak in Bushy Park. This was a wonderful opportunity to learn all about the importance of Irish woodland and biodiversity.

**The Last Straw:** A TY project is campaigning to reduce single use plastic within school lunches. We are also trying to introduce alternatives to single use plastics such as metal straws, reusable lunch boxes and water bottles. We are also trying to spread the word about the link between the manufacturing of plastic and climate change fracking must take place to make plastic. This is a process that involves a technique that fractures the rock using pressurised liquids. This process adds to greenhouse gas emissions.





# RTE Youth Parliament on Climate Change



On the 15th of November, I attended the RTE Youth Parliament on climate. I got the opportunity to do so by creating a video on what I have done to help the environment and an essay on what I believe should be done to help stop climate change.

Two months before the parliament was scheduled to proceed, I was told that I was shortlisted and was to take part in a short interview over the phone. Not long after, I received the information that I would be one of the 158 delegates to attend the Dáil and discuss our views on climate change.

Each delegate was put into one of the five groups : environment, economics, education, food and farming & power. I was put in the environment group. Every delegate was asked to write a proposal, which they felt should be introduced to help stop climate change. Everyone voted on which six proposals they viewed to be most ambitious as well as realistic.

On the morning of the event, we met in Buswells Hotel across from Leinster House. At 9am, I made my way to Leinster House. Outside the building we met the Ceann Comhairle as well as the press, many of which interviewed the delegates. The morning session began at 10am. Each group was introduced and explained what their proposals would be about. Not long after, we separated into groups and went to the committee rooms. The six proposals that were put forward were discussed and given feedback. In my groups, the proposals included making ecocide a law, reducing the amount of cattle in Ireland, flooding bogs to make a carbon sink, a plastic tax and making it a law for ten percent of agricultural land to be used for forests. It ended with us voting for the two proposals we viewed to be the best.

Before the final session in the Dáil, we were brought for dinner in the TD restaurant.

After filing into the Dail, the second session started after 2pm. It was incredible listening to the ten proposals put forward. They were all realistic and well needed if Ireland stands a chance against facing climate change.

That evening I attended the reception in RTE, where I met Ryan Tubridy and Marty Morrissey. The day finished with the Late Late show. I was lucky enough to be picked to attend the show, and was very grateful for the opportunity.

The day was an incredible experience. I felt honoured to be sitting among so many amazing climate activists in the Dáil. Although it was a fabulous event, I must state, like many others have, that we should not have been there in the first place. It is an embarrassment to our government that children have had to take their place in the parliament to discuss what to do that can help our generation to live on a healthy planet for the remainder of our lives. That is what is at stake, OUR future. I would hope to believe that the ten proposals given to the government will be put in place soon, however if they are not, we will continue to strike and fight for our right to a future.

By Saffron Ralph L4

