



Our Lady's School



HOUSE SYSTEM

Get to know our house system a little better and see how our students can win house points throughout the year. (Page 7)



OUR LADY'S SCHOOL

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

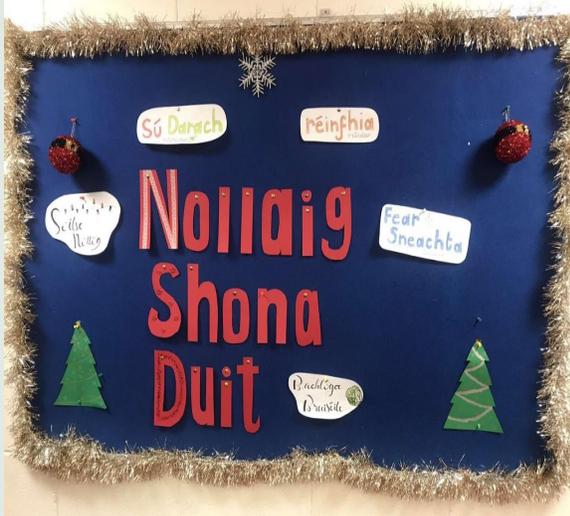


THIS TERM'S TOP STORIES

From awards, class activities, extracurricular activities, to TY events, and more, we want to tell you about everything we've been up to this term!

GRMA DAY

A time when the school took a pause and acknowledged all the hard work done by staff in reopening the school. (Page 32)



Disclaimer:

Please note that some of the images included in this newsletter were taken prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic. Any photos taken this academic year follow our Covid-19 protocols, such as mask-wearing and maintaining social distance.



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We are delighted to be about to celebrate the Christmas festivities after a challenging term for all of the OLS community.

To say that 2020 is a year of disruption and change is to understate the obvious. Our daily lives, from our home lives, managing our health, and working from home, to simple social rituals like dinner with friends, underwent rapid change. Changes that normally would take years have happened over months and, in some cases, weeks and even days.

Likewise changes in education that used to take place over years and decades are now taking place in weeks or days. We have never confronted change of this magnitude or at this pace before.

When we reflect on the rapid changes in education since last March I marvel at how well everyone has adapted to the constant new demands placed upon them. Staff have answered the call and found new ways to engage students despite masks and limited movement in the classrooms. Students have continued to respond to all the new challenges they face and positive solutions are found everywhere to issues. Though we have all been challenged we also realise that good has also emerged during these times.

The true value of education has been crystallised for our students as they realise the importance of education when it was temporarily delivered remotely. Resilience is defined as the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties and this is being built rapidly out of necessity in the whole community.

Our community have realised that we can be flexible, we can adapt and we can respond very effectively when asked. Never before has team OLS had to work together so productively to ensure that education continues as normally as possible. The students have also stepped up and bring solution after solution to me to help improve conditions for the students throughout the school. We have come so far out of necessity and we have all learned so much and recognise the powerful role education plays in the lives of our students and in society.

There continues to be a sense of calm and purpose throughout the school. Extracurricular activities continue under Covid regulations like hockey, Digital Champions, gardening and BT Young Scientist. Our student committees grow from strength to strength including the Student Council, Le Chéile, Coiste Gaeilge, Green Schools' Committee, Digital Champions to name a few. Many new initiatives also abound from the Amber Flag, the new Junior House committee, to the roof garden and all of this in a world of restrictions and lockdowns.

We have launched a refreshed House system responding to Covid protocols introducing a new Inter house competition that awards points for many aspects of school life including attendance and merits. Our values for our 5 Houses have been defined as Compassion, Courage, Community, Conscience and Courage. Our houses are each taking one value and focusing on promoting it throughout the school and society.

In times of strife and challenge we need to focus on the positives and look around us to see what is working well for us and in OLS we are lucky because there is so much to recognise.

We have exemplary students, a supportive parent body, a collaborative and positive staff who help put the interests of the students first time and time again, a staff and management team who work exceptionally hard, a Parents' Council and a Board of Management who freely lend their expertise. We are truly blessed. We are all in this journey together, working for the best interests of our students.

So as we near the end of 2020 I wish that each and every member of our community reflects on the good that they can take from 2020 and bring that forward with them to 2021.

My heartfelt thanks to you for your invaluable support and I wish you and your families a healthy and happy Christmas.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading 'Marguerite Gorby', written over a horizontal line.

Marguerite Gorby

STUDENT UPDATES



A Message from your Head Girls and Sports Captain...



“Hi guys, it’s us again! We just wanted to say a big well done to everyone at the end of a marathon term. Everyone has adapted so well and the usual Christmas spirit can really be seen throughout the school. The crib, the GPA lights and the house trees really create a festive spirit in school. Although it hasn’t been exactly the same as other years, everyone has worked hard to make this year special. A huge well done to everyone for their involvement in all of the charity and inter-house events so far. The Knitathon, Coin Collection, Pieta House fundraiser and Gifts to the crib, as well as the Active Flag class’s walkway and the pod Olympics, have all been met with such enthusiasm despite the circumstances and we’re so grateful for all of the effort everyone has made. We hope that our collective

contribution to the charities will make a big difference to those less fortunate than us.

Finally, we want to wish all of the staff and students a Merry Christmas. We hope that everyone stays safe and well over the holidays. We look forward to seeing you all in 2021!”

- Grace Duffy, Anna Boyle, & Amber Finnegan



First Year Reflections

My Second Term:

“So far, I have enjoyed the second term of First Year in OLS very much. Even though it's the second term I have still continued to make new friends. Despite the Covid-19 protocols that must be followed there is always something going on that you can get involved in. The whole school participated in The Gifts to the Crib this December by purchasing a gift for someone less fortunate. The First Years bought for children aged 1-5. Many of the First Years also got involved in The Kovember Knitathon in which they knitted hats and scarves for the homeless. The school is going to give these to the Peter McVerry Trust this Christmas. As well as this many First Years took part in selling raffle tickets to raise funds for a new hockey pitch for our school and of course there's a prize for the student who sold the most tickets! I've been welcomed so well by all the students and staff at OLS and I'm really looking forward to the rest of the year.”

- Aisling Bracken P1.

“During the second term I have now settled and I am enjoying First Year immensely. The teachers have helped to make the tests seem easy and non stressful. The students and staff have been coming up with fun things to do, even with all the Covid-19 protocols. There was an inter house competition where everybody walked laps around the school to earn points for their house. We are in the middle of a coin collection, giving all the money to charity. So far each house has collected a large amount of coins. First years created their own christmas decorations using recycled materials to put on one of the christmas trees. We all worked hard on them and they turned out really good. Friday December 11th was #GRMA day, to say thank you to everyone who participated in the running of schools keeping them a safe environment during covid. In conclusion it has been a joyful term and I cannot wait for the rest of the year. Merry Christmas!”

- Heather Perry P1





HOUSE SYSTEM

House System

We have rooted our House system in the following values:

Courage, Compassion, Community, Charity, Conscience.

We feel that these values represent the House system which is so unique to Our Lady's school. We hope that our house system offers a sense of belonging, an opportunity to make new friends and to come together as a school to make a positive contribution. We encourage everyone in our school community to get involved in all of our House initiatives and events throughout the school year. We have been running a number of charity events this term including the KNovember Knitathon, Interhouse Coin Collection in aid of Peter McVerry and House Colour Day on the 22nd of December in aid of Pieta House.

This year along with our house mentors (teachers), our house captains and 6th Year council, we have a Junior house committee. Members from each of the classes in the junior end of the school recently received a golden ticket and were invited to attend their first meeting. They will deliver house messages back to their classes and encourage everyone to get involved in our house initiatives.

There's been a lot of talk about house points around the school. This year we are awarding house points throughout the year for different events such as our active challenge, reading week, maths week, and house initiatives, as well our monthly house focus. At the end of the year the winning house will be awarded with

the interhouse cup. It's shaping up to be a close race so make sure to pick up points at every opportunity. We also will be awarding the inter house sports cup to the winners of our interhouse sports competitions.

St Brigid's house are currently in the lead, with St. Colmcille's and St. Muireann's houses picking up points for their recent victories in our Christmas Tree Decorating competition and our Stepping into Christmas Walkway Challenge. Every point counts!!



THIS TERM'S TOP STORIES



Rachel Li- Texaco Children's Art Competition

Congratulations to Rachel Li in fourth year for her well deserved Certificate of Commendation for her work submitted to the 66th Texaco Children's Art Competition. We caught up with Rachel to hear more about her accomplishment.

“For the 66th Texaco Art competition, I painted a picture of my dog Milo. I used



acrylic paints to produce this painting and it took me around a week to finish. I'm extremely interested in art as I think it's entertaining to experiment using different mediums and it also builds my creativity skills. I didn't expect to get an award as there is a large number of people that enter this competition but I was very delighted to achieve a commendation award for my painting.”

-Rachel Li B4



Mr. Farrelly's 4th Year Agriculture Science

The Ag Science Department is delighted to announce that two groups from TY entered the highly precious Certified Irish Angus Competition. The competition has a proud tradition here in OLS as back in 2015 the school was crowned champions after beating off competition from over thousands of applicants. Selected groups will be invited to Croke Park in the new year to pitch their idea to industry judges.

Both groups are looking at increasing the awareness of the breed through Education. Congratulations to Group A, lead by Beatice Rath who was accompanied by Caoilinn Dunne, Sian Conlon and Maria MacMahon who made it to the next stage of the competition. Commiserations to Group B who was composed of Maria Carvill, Erin Murray, Hajar Tajuddin and was led by Eimear Joyce who were unlucky in their application but were highly commended by the judging panel.

We want to congratulate both groups on their hard work so far and wish good luck to Group A as they move forward.



12 Gifts of Christmas Raffle

As part of the fundraising for the sports facilities and the replacement of the astroturf pitch, the school launched its inaugural 12 Gifts of Christmas Raffle in early December. Together with our busy team of elves, we hastily put together an amazing array of hampers and prizes all of which were generously donated by the parents of our students and our ever active Parents' Council. From family hampers full of treats and board games, to luxurious food hampers with candy canes in mint condition there is something for everyone. 12 incredible prizes were up for grabs, each ranging from €150- €250 euro. One lucky winner will walk away with the top prize of a Microsoft Surface Go worth €650! Thank you to Microsoft for their generous sponsorship. The draw took place on December 22nd. A big congratulations if you were one of the lucky winners!



Inter House Christmas Tree Decorating Competition

Our first ever inter house Christmas tree decorating competition took place this term. Members of our 6th year council and Junior House Committee joined forces to decorate the trees in their house colours. The Cs were crowned winners on the day. Our students left their gifts to the crib under their house trees.



KNovember Knithathon



Our KNovember knithathon is an annual charity event in Our Lady's where staff, students and the wider community knit scarves, hats, gloves and other items to be donated to the Peter McVerry fund. These knitted wares will then be donated to homeless members of our community



along with a message of christmas wishes from everybody in OLS along with some sweets to add to the festive cheer. This year due to the restrictions we could not do our big packaging session altogether in the GPA. All items will be collected on the 14th of December and the final numbers of items will be posted on the app. They will be quarantined



prior to being collected by the representatives from the Peter McVerry Trust. Well done to all our fabulous knitters who have worked so hard. The photo to the right is the group of sixth year students who organised the event this year. Front row Nessa Cassidy (B6), second row Isabelle Halligan (P6) right and Grace Duffy (B6) left.



Back row Auveen O'Neill (C6) left, Danielle Harford (P6) and Amber Finnegan (P6).



StandUp Awareness Week

From the 16th-20th November 2020, OLS celebrated StandUp Awareness Week. This is a national celebratory week that tells LGBTI+ students all around Ireland that we are supportive of them and that they are so welcomed here in OLS.

The week was a roaring success, we had words of the day, over 60 posters displayed around the school, daily announcements, among many other things. The point of this week was to encourage our LGBTI+ staff and students to feel safe here in OLS and to encourage non-members of the community to become better allies. The allies were out in force and we had feedback from some members to say the support meant the world to them.



On Friday, we had the big event of #ComeIn. This event was all about Pride. We created a human pride flag in OLS by assigning each year group a colour of the pride flag. The staff and students made

huge efforts to outwardly show that OLS is a place where everyone is free to be themselves, which was incredible to see. We had a competition in each year for ‘best hair’, a school-wide competition for ‘best decorated mask’ (we really hope we won’t have to have a covid-competition again next year) and ‘best dressed teacher’.

Overall, the week was a huge success and we can’t wait to see how much bigger and better it becomes next year. The aim of this week was to raise awareness but remember, we should all make efforts to keep OLS feeling safe and we should continue to celebrate everyone everyday. #ComeIn so nobody has to come out!



Transition Year Activities:

Our TYs have had a busy term between their TY interviews, Hikes, Zooms with different organisations on different topics, exams, their 1st Development Day and finishing off with a virtual reality workshop.

Hike

For our Hikes we ventured out in 2 groups on the 18th and 25th of November. We walked the Fairy Castle loop in Ticknock. C4 and P4 were first, followed by B4 and L4. Group 2 was just pipped at the post with group 1 finishing the 5.5km hike 3.5mins faster.



“It was a dark and rainy November morning, spirits were low as there were worries that the hike would not proceed. The weather cleared up as the morning went on and 60 enthusiastic TY’s piled onto two buses, albeit socially distanced. The bus was filled with cheery chatter and everyone eagerly awaited the arrival to the mountain. We separated out into socially distanced pairs and started our journey up the mountain.

We were accompanied by four energetic teachers: Ms.Phillips, Ms.Nolan, Ms.Durkin and Ms.Phelan.

The hike up the mountain was steep but we persevered and were fuelled by the high spirits of our friends and classmates. When we reached the top of the mountain it was incredibly windy. Some people were nearly knocked over and one TY was spotted falling off some rocks into a hole (recovered safely!).



The views and scenery on the top of the mountain were breathtaking. The walk down was much more enjoyable than the ascent and our legs were grateful for the break. It was a great opportunity to talk and catch up with friends as well as the occasional sing-

along much to the delight of the teachers. We arrived down the mountain out of breath and hair flying everywhere due to the wind. The bus ride home was considerably subdued compared to the ride up as we were all wrecked from our hike. It was a fantastic afternoon and we were all happy to get out in the fresh air for our first big trip of the year. We all slept well that night after a long day of walking and chatting.”

-TY Journalism Class





St. James Call

“On Monday November 30th, some of the TY students and members of the St. James Dementia Project Group were fortunate enough to take part in a zoom call with Dr. David Robinson. He talked about the history of St. James hospital and told students all about the area around the hospital and the area it is responsible for. He explained how Covid-19 had impacted people who are patients or in contact with the hospital. He also went into great detail about a project the hospital undertook a few years ago. The project created a website of all medical and recreational facilities in the area around St. James hospital. The aim of this project was so people, particularly the elderly could research and find out about the facilities near them from one website. The project was a massive success and has lots of users across Dublin. The talk was very interesting and Dr. Robinson gave the students an insight into life in St. James hospital.”

-TY Journalism Class

WebSummit Talks

“On December 1st and 2nd, the TY students took part in WebSummit 2020. WebSummit is an annual technology conference held in Lisbon and Portugal, it is considered the largest tech event in the world. The conference's topics center on internet technology, emerging technologies, and venture capitalism. Speakers included a mix of CEOs, subject-matter experts, celebrities, and politicians, such as Stephen Hawking, Elon Musk, Al Gore, and U.N Secretary-General António Guterres. Speakers range from Fortune 500 companies to start-ups, with attendees representing all levels and sectors of the global high technology industry. The talks were engaging and gave students an insight into a range of businesses and technology.”

-TY Journalism Class

TY Enterprise Fair

“On Tuesday the 8th and Thursday the 10th of December, the TY Enterprise Fair took place. The two TY Enterprise classes had been working for months on their own mini companies and they got the opportunity to sell some of their goods to first and second years. Some of the groups had already made Instagrams and had gotten lots of pre orders and sales, but this was their big



opportunity to sell their products.

Businesses ranged from

handmade necklaces, hot chocolate bombs and masks to earrings, candy canes, hand sanitizers and sweet sleighs. The fair was a massive success, with first and second years leaving satisfied with their buys and TYs happy with the profits that they had made.”

-TY Journalism Class



Chritsmas Fair

“The TY enterprise classes set up their small businesses they created for the Christmas fair on the 8th and 10th of December in Joey’s hall. Everyone was looking forward to it because the advertising throughout the week before really set some high expectations. At the end of lunch we stood behind the tables we’d decorated with tinsel and lights, wearing our Santa hants with a bit of ‘All I want for Christmas’ playing in the background when we



welcomed our first class. A one way system was in place to ensure both social distancing and to help them see all the products on display. It was very busy, with lots of tables selling out and orders piling up as there were

some great gift ideas on sale there. The Christmas spirit of OLS was definitely present and everyone seemed like they really enjoyed it. Overall it was a great success and both the TYs and the students were incredibly happy with their purchases!! On behalf of the enterprise classes, thank you all for supporting our businesses :)”



-Anna Portada O Driscoll C4



EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Hockey

“From the minute we came back to school, we were all eager to get stuck back into hockey, whether it be training or matches we were all excited to be part of one of the school's hockey teams once again. By the end of September, hockey was back in full swing with each pod of students training on their allocated days after school and the first years who had training at lunchtimes. TY hockey is Friday evenings after school. As well as improving our skills, we have lots of fun too, by doing many new drills and games. We also started an allocated fitness period at the start of training, when we do sprints, running and other exercises to get our fitness up. Friday hockey is something no-one wants to miss and is really something we all look forward to every week. We all can't wait to be able to play with other year groups and start playing matches again!



Some 4th year hockey players were also lucky enough to get the chance to help out coaching the 1st year students at lunchtimes. We are helping them with drills and giving them different tips on how to become

better players. It is really a great opportunity for us to help out younger students and encourage them to get involved in hockey, which is a big aspect of OLS life. It also helps us develop new skills such as leadership, which will no doubt help us in the future. Not only do we enjoy coaching the 1st years, we feel it also helps them develop their relationship with older students in the school, as it gives them a friendly face to say hello to on the corridors, something they all have missed out on as a result of COVID-19. We hope to continue coaching the 1st years as we are all really enjoying the experience!”

-By Caoilin Dunne B4 and Heidi Eggen L4.

Green Schools

“This year has been hard for everyone, but in green schools we try to respect our planet. Plastic is being used now more than ever before. In the green schools committee we encourage everyone to wear reusable



masks. Our theme this year, waste, is very relevant today. We have gathered information on waste within the school. Presentations have been given by members to our classes on disposing waste properly. We have updated our notice board regularly to keep the students informed. Our aim this year is to raise awareness and encourage our fellow students and teachers to manage and minimise their waste. Green Schools always welcomes new members, and fresh ideas and suggestions.”

- Saffron Ralph L5 and Katherine Hesse B5

Maths Club

Maths Club will open its doors in January welcoming all first year students in to participate. Maths club will be run by some dedicated TY students who will support the first year maths student’s every Friday during lunchtime. The club plays a vital role for the first years learning, giving them the opportunity to ask questions about work that they have been doing in class. Not only that but the TY students will also be looking to challenge the first years with some fun maths puzzles. We are looking forward to being up and running in 2021



Library

The Library has been in full swing this term. A new schedule has been made and there are activities on every lunch time, including mindfulness coloring. The junior and senior book clubs are up and running, and we look forward to having some time over the Christmas break to read something new and bring new suggestion back to the book club.



Our student librarians have been chosen, in total we have 8 students. This year we have Teagan Brock, Aisling Hannan, Ingrid Marron, Rebecca Harper, Blinne Martin, Eimear Boylan, Aoife McEvoy and Heather O'Reilly. They have their work cut out for them this year. They were put straight to work and their first task was decorating the library for Christmas! We took a different approach this year to our tree of knowledge but we think it turned out great!



As part of Stand Up Awareness week in OLS the library had a display showcasing a selection of the inclusive books on offer!

This year's reading week was a great success. Each house competed to read the most amount of books. In 5th place we had P House who read 56 books, in 4th place we had C House who read 76 books, in 3rd place B House read 78 books, in 2nd place L House read 90 books. Finally, in 1st place, was M House, our smallest house read the most books per person in their house by reading 37 books and received the house points. That's a total of 337

books! Well done to all those who participated and made it such a fantastic week.

We have seen a massive increase in reading throughout this term and the library has become a hub of activity. We can't wait and see what's in store next for the library!



To keep update on all library activities, make sure to keep an eye on our website.

<https://ourladyslibrary.wordpress.com/>

Club Gaeilge

“We are delighted with our new seanfhocail notice board. These are carved seanfhocail written in the old Irish script. It’s a lovely representation of our Irish heritage.

We improved our other notice board with new phrases, memes and photos. We’ve also decorated the notice board at the GPA



with seasonal seanfhocail and now we've updated it

to say “Nollaig Shona Duit”. As well as that, we have stuck up posters around the school with useful phrases that can be used day to day.

On the 19th of October, we spent a Pastoral Care class with the 1st years where we had songs, dancing and games all as Gaeilge! Each class has a class rep who will now get to attend a Coiste meeting every month.



“Lá Labhartha na Gaeilge” took place on Wednesday the 18th of November. On this day the Coiste and other enthusiastic Gaeilgeoirs were wearing t-shirts and headbands to mark the day. Lots of teachers and students got involved



with some teachers even teaching some of the class in Irish. We ran a competition between the 1st year classes to see who would get most involved and the B1s came in 1st place earning their house some valuable points.



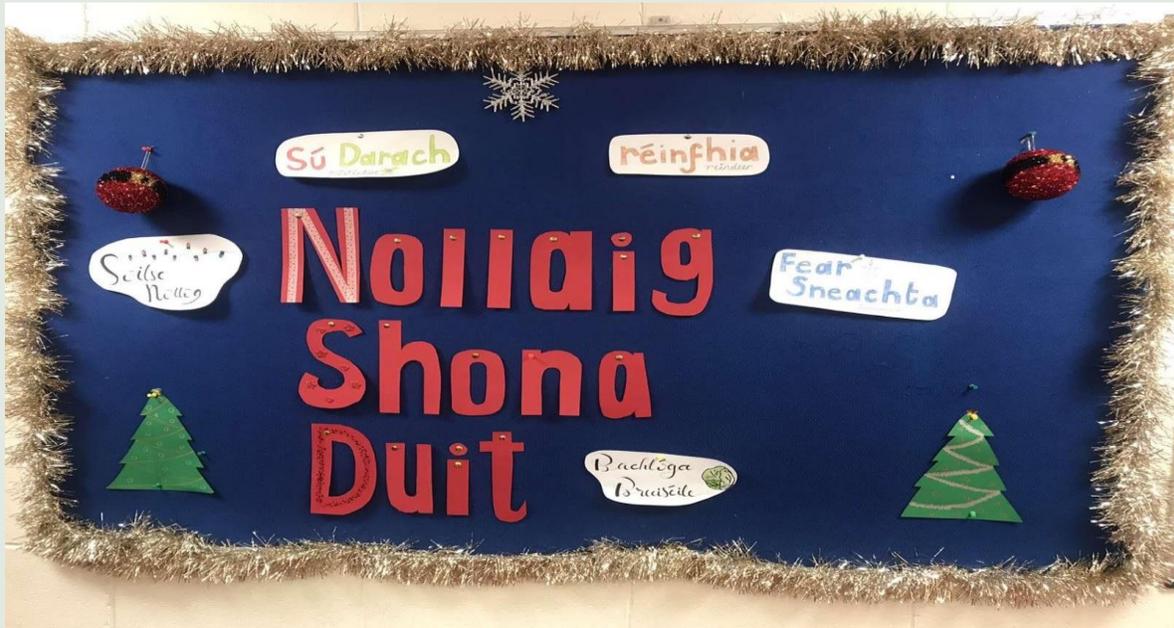
In October, we got the opportunity to meet with a representative, Edel, from Conradh na Gaeilge to discuss the Gaelbhratach. This was very beneficial as we got to share our ideas and what we’ve done so far. She has asked us to team up (remotely) with other schools new to the scheme to share

some of our ideas. Gael Linn would also like to visit with a photographer to use our school as an example in how to promote Irish in schools which is very exciting! She also gave us a replacement Gaelbhratach (flag) which is now proudly on display at the front of the school. Our last flag was damaged in the storms! We decided to hang the smaller version outside and put the bigger flag on display within the school itself.



For Christmas we have decided to spice it up and make a Coiste Christmas music video, featuring all of the members in Coiste, including our 1st year reps. We hope this will make everyone laugh and smile and teach them a little bit of Gaeilge too”

-Julie Vaughan P5



The Amber Flag Committee

“The Amber flag group has had a busy term. Here are some of our activities so far:

We held a photo competition every week for each year group to send in happy/sunny photos (with a rewarding prize!). The winning entries have been posted on the app and on our new notice board.



Grace Brennan L1



Éabha Garry M2



Grace Millington P4



Orla O'Toole L5



Leonie Redmond 6L



Alison Herbert 6L



We added a notice board beside the garden to display positive messages, the winning photos and any advice/helpful services available.

The 5th years have designed a poster to go in every classroom that explains the amber flag initiative and includes some helpful tips and supports available in regards to positive mental health

OUR LADY'S TERENCE | PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

THE AMBER FLAG INITIATIVE



ABOUT THIS INITIATIVE

The Amber Flag Initiative is a student led initiative within the school. It focus on bringing positive mental health and well-being into our school lives. With your help, we can continue to create a welcoming environment within our school!

*YOUR mental health IS A PRIORITY.
YOUR happiness IS AN ESSENTIAL.
YOUR self care IS A NECESSITY.*

6 WELL-BEING INDICATORS



Active



Responsible



Connected



Resilient



Respected



Aware

EXPERIENCES

Everyone experiences situations differently. There is no right or wrong way to feel when trying something new/challenging.

EDUCATION

School can be an especially challenging place to be, as you take on new subjects, experience new things and make new friends. If you're ever feeling anxious or worried about something, there is always a wide range of resources available in our school.

Talk to a teacher, 6th year council member, guidance counsellor or someone you trust.



STRATEGIES FOR POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

- Get outside everyday
- Eat a balanced diet (after all a healthy body is a healthy mind!)
- Keep a diary
- Listen to music
- Get enough sleep!
- Have time to yourself
- Meditate
- Go for a walk!

HOBBIES & INTERESTS

Find a hobby or activity you enjoy. This will help to relieve stress and give you an escape from your school life. Our school offers a variety of extra-curricular activities ranging from sports to academic clubs. Contact reception for more information about what activities you can take part in.



VISIT PIETA HOUSE FOR MORE INFO



@PietaHouse



pieta.house



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We added some Christmas joy to the garden with a mini tree decorated with 1st year's handmade ornaments.

We wish everyone a happy and healthy Christmas and we look forward to 2021”

-Ruth Geraghty B6



School Magazine



This term, students from first, fourth, and sixth year have come together to work on a winter-themed student publication. Comprising short stories, poetry, journalistic pieces and photography; the contributions of the students speak to the times we live in, with mentions of the collective new normal and what we can look forward to in the future strewn throughout. Now in its final editorial phase, you can expect to see Our Lady's student publication before Christmas.

Our Lady's, Our Voice Podcast – Coming Soon!

A group of TYs along with Ms.Cassidy and Ms.Ryan have started up a podcast for students made by students. The podcast will talk about topics such as well-being, health & fitness, as well as current affairs. They have even set up an agony aunt segment called Aunt Jemima, where you can send in any problems or worries you may have. They will be releasing the first episode of their podcast very soon, so keep an eye and ear out for it!



Active School Flag Class

“After we returned from the Halloween holidays the ASF class created a presentation to give to all classes during their PE class. This presentation talked about the positive effects on getting fresh air at lunch and going for our walk around our newly signposted walkway. The week after this, we began to analyse the results from our whole school survey taken at the end of September. We received a lot of interesting information from this survey about our student physical activity levels.



We planned a school event for the competition between the houses to see which house does the biggest amount of active laps around the school. We then created an active walkway Christmas music video called “step into Christmas”, where all the girls in the class were doing exercises and dancing to try and promote the active walkway as a fun activity for all years to keep active. During this week we played Christmas music outside at break and lunchtimes to encourage all



students and teachers to go out and do laps to get points for their houses. The TY ASF class ran a successful walkway week on the week of the 30th of November to the 4th of December. This event inspired a competitive house atmosphere between the different houses. They also prepared a Christmas music video that was shown

to the pastoral care classes to promote the walkway as a fun and enjoyable way to keep active. During this week, 3,008 laps were walked by the students from all houses and teachers, but the M house won with a total of 1068 laps. We had a great response from all teachers and students.



Keep up the walking OLS. Get up and get active!!”

- Ciara Moore and Abbey Kelly L4.

Make Up Artistry



The girls have been busy practicing make up looks, under Ms J. Kelly's guidance, and asking lots of different questions about products and brushes!

It has been a really enjoyable experience to date, and the girls have learned lots of tips and tricks with the different high end and drugstore products.

Hopefully Santa will bring some make up goodies to them and they will continue practising over the break!

Student Council

“The student council has been hard at work this year. We have been trying to make the school as positive as possible during these hard times. Over the last couple of weeks we have made great progress with trying to help the students make school a little bit easier. During the first term we organised a fancy dress Friday which generated over €2,300 but more importantly a much needed boost of school spirit. We also organised a Halloween flash mob and had some guest appearances!

We recently attended the Student Council training which was delivered via zoom by the ISSU. We all found this really helpful.

At the moment we are in the middle of trying to look for an alternative P.E tracksuit bottoms as it was a big issue brought to us by the students.

Each week we discuss issues brought to us by our class groups and discuss possible solutions to the problems. As the year progresses we look forward to talking to the students and get their input on what else they would like in Our Lady's School.”

Ella McCabe

Student Council Secretary

Graduation Class of 2020

Lily Rath (Head Girl, Class of 2020) and Ciara Campbell (Sports Captain, Class of 2020) visited the school on December 21st to place a plaque in the school garden, representing the special place the Leaving Certificate Class of 2020 has in our school history. We would like to say well done to the students who studied to sit one/more Leaving Certificate exams recently. We look forward to welcoming all of this group back to school at some point when restrictions allow it. In the meantime, they have our very best wishes for a 2021 that is happy, healthy and full of the successes they deserve!



Charity Club

“Our Charity group has been very busy this year. We started the year by making speeches to elect our president and vice president of our Charity Club. We then started immediately into our first big task, Gifts to the Crib. Gifts to the Crib is a charity event held annually in our school where all students bring in presents and food to then be delivered to those who need it. We separated into each of our groups including an advertising, a powerpoint group and a group to select the charities for the presents.



We decided on giving our presents to 4 different charities, Saoirse Women’s Refuge Tallaght, Temple street Children’s hospital, Crumlin Children’s Hospital and Saint Vincent De Paul.



Our advertisement group got busy making posters to inform every one of the dates and the presents their year group had to bring in. We decided to ask 1st years to bring in toys for children aged 1-5, 2nd year to bring in toys for children aged 6-10, 3rd year to bring in stationary, books and bags, 4th years were asked to bring in toys and clothes for teenagers, 5th years were asked to bring in self-care packages and 6th years were asked to bring in food. This meant we had a wide variety of presents for people in need and everyone could receive a present regardless of their age.

As things had to be slightly different this year due to Covid we weren't quite sure how we were going to accomplish the same Christmas cheer as we had in previous years. Luckily our powerpoint group created an amazing presentation for all of the classes to watch before they carried their presents down to the GPA. Fortunately, we have been lucky enough to have Christmas trees decorated for each of our houses this year and so we could place all of our presents underneath them. This really helps spread the Christmas spirit among us.



All students put in an incredible effort this year and we ended up having the most beautiful Christmas scene to look at as we walked past the GPA. It was amazing to have our fellow students put in so much effort and buy all of the presents for our charity groups. It really reminded us to think about what Christmas is really about. It’s not about receiving extravagant expensive presents, but rather sharing love and spirit to those who need it the most.

Planning Ahead 2021

At our last meeting, we started planning our next big event in January which is an event to raise money for Wells for Zoe. Wells for Zoe is an Irish voluntary organisation who work in Malawi. They aim to provide clean, safe drinking water. They help fund education for girls and women in Malawi. They also plant indigenous fruit trees to encourage a self-sustaining lifestyle. As the annual 1st year Fright Night couldn't go ahead we decided to do a fundraiser in school so the 1st years can still raise money for the girls in Malawi. We are currently working on presentations for the girls to understand why we are doing this fundraising, including a Q&A with the owners of the Wells for Zoe organisation.

We are working hard to not let Covid impact our charity events held in school as it is a huge part of the values held in our school life. Our team is full of people trying to make a difference and spread positivity and kindness throughout OLS!"

-Sara Devoy P5

Lighthouse Programme

The Lighthouse Programme is now in its second year in OLS. The 2020 Lighthouse Committee has been up and running since November following a hotly-contested selection programme. The 5th year Lighthouse mentors attended a leadership training workshop last month to prepare them for their role. Each member



will act as a mentor to a group of five 2nd Year students throughout the year, meeting up with them on a weekly basis for a break-time chat, providing a

friendly face, a listening ear and a valuable additional layer in the OLS pastoral care system. The Lighthouse Committee are currently planning a Christmas event to further build the relationships between the second years and fifth years. They will also be liaising with the Amber Flag Committee to promote positive mental health in our school community and fundraise for Pieta House.



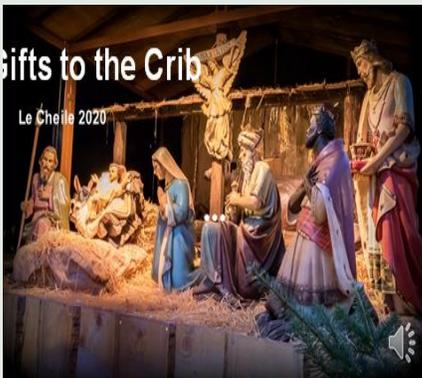
Pictured: The 2020 Lighthouse Committee following their badge presentation ceremony.

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Le Chéile Council: Chaplaincy Group

The Chaplaincy group prepared thoughtful digital ceremonies this term. Their “In November we remember” and “Advent” prayer services were shown in Religion classes to celebrate significant moments in the Christian Calendar. Each week they present prayers and reflections over the school intercom and design the Chaplaincy notice board in reception.



Last week they prepared a meaningful presentation for “Gifts to the Crib” entitled Give like the sun and make the whole world grow. Prayers for those less fortunate than ourselves and people who are lonely or suffering were remembered.



Interfaith and Cultural Group

The Interfaith and Cultural group, consisting of students from 1st- 6th year meet each week. During Advent they created an informative lesson on Christmas traditions around the world for Religion classes. The cultural group is hosting the first Our Lady's Cultural week in January. Final touches are being put in place and we look forward to celebrating the rich cultural diversity in OLS in the New Year. They are also planning events for World Religion Day, Chinese New Year and an Interfaith Celebration. A huge thank you to all the students who give so freely of their time and bring enthusiasm and dedication to all they do.



L House Celebration 2020

During the week of the 13th of November the L House celebrated the Feast Day of their Patron Saint, St. Laurence. L6 with their Religion teacher Ms. Murphy chose the theme, "If there ever comes a day when we can't be together, keep me in your heart, i'll stay there forever". This lovely quote from Winnie the Pooh suited their uplifting prayer service. They celebrated community and friendship evident in their house through spirited music and a video montage.



Saint Lawrence is one of the most beloved saints in the calendar because of the generosity he showed towards those who were

oppressed and suffering in society. His message of compassion inspires the L House to promote the qualities of selflessness and kindness in their house community.

Foundation Feast Day Celebrations

Ms. Donlon and C5 created a beautiful ceremony to celebrate the Feast Day of the Religious of Christian Education. It was disappointing that we couldn't be with our Anam Caras, the sisters of our community, in person but we sent our love and best wishes to them in digital format.

On the Friday of their Feast Day a few of us had the opportunity to visit with the sisters. Despite being a socially distanced gathering, it was wonderful to see them. We presented them with cards made by their Anam Cara classes and a small token of our appreciation. Of course, their generosity knows no bounds and they had dropped off a box of chocolates for all the class groups in the school earlier in the day.



There have been a few changes to the community house this year. Sister Kathleen and Sister Enda have moved to Maryfield Nursing home to join Sister Elizabeth Byrne. Sister Josephine Shannon (Anam Cara to 1st Years) and Sister Monica Mannion (Anam Cara to 3rd Years) have moved back to Ireland from Farnborough and are living in Bushy Park Estate.



The theme we chose to celebrate the Nuns' Feast Day was "Together forever, never apart maybe in distance, but never at heart."

We see the unity of sisterhood among the sisters of our community. We know that they must really miss visiting their friends in the nursing homes, working with their classes in the community and attending daily mass. We learn by example and the sisters enduring consideration and friendship with one another despite the distance between them is evident.

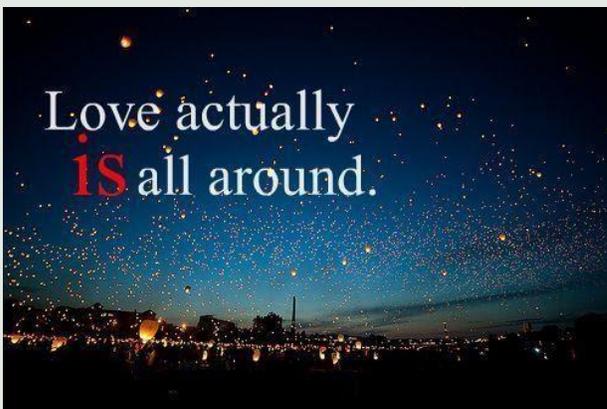
We are so fortunate to have our Anam Cara's living in close proximity to our school and they play an important role in our school life. They are a beacon of light to us by sharing their Faith and experience with all of us. Much like Father Lafosse, they expect nothing in return. They are always there for us, to listen, to educate, and to

simply just be a friend when we need one. We thank you sisters for always keeping us in your prayers and we hope you enjoyed this day of celebration for you and your commitment to our school.



Christmas Ceremony

Ms. Murphy with L5 and P5 created a beautiful religious reflection on the true meaning of Christmas. They chose the theme Love actually IS all around to reveal the actions of charity and compassion that people have shown to others during 2020. Through the medium of music, video and story, they allowed us all the opportunity to reflect on how Christmas is about Faith, hope and love. We celebrated generosity of spirit and time, consideration for others and most of all the ways we show kindness.



The L5 class concluded our festive day with a fun filled Christmas quiz for the whole school community to enjoy.

May we wish one and all a safe and happy Christmas. See you in the New Year.

GRMA DAY



On Friday the 11th of December at 11am we celebrated GRMA day, this was a day where schools across the country stopped and paused so that a big thanks could be given to the whole school community for all the heroic work done to reopen schools. We all took 20 minutes in our classes to watch a video which thanked all school staff for their dedication towards reopening schools. Ms.Gorby sent around chocolates to each student in the school to thank them for being so supportive of all the covid protocols.

We would like to extend our gratitude to all members of the school community who have followed the new rules and protocols so successfully. We know that it isn't easy, but we are so grateful to everyone for maintaining a positive school spirit whilst also staying safe. An extra special thanks to Vincent Walsh, Ms. Morrissey, and Mr. Smyth for all of their hard work in ensuring that the school is a safe environment for all staff and students during such turbulent times. A visit from the DES inspectors confirmed the high standards maintained by all and they extended their congratulations to the whole school community on working together to adapt to Covid-19 restrictions.



Christmas Around the World



Christmas around the World



India



In India, people like to decorate their houses and streets with colourful, folded paper stars.

Christmas around the World



Ireland



In Ireland, people like to light candles in the windows of their homes to act as a guide for Joseph and Mary to travel to their resting place.

Christmas around the World



USA



In the south-west of the USA, people display 'luminarias' or 'farolitos' to celebrate the birth of Jesus. These are small paper lanterns with a candle inside.

Christmas around the World



Brazil



Each Christmas, thousands of people go to see the world's tallest floating Christmas tree on water in Rio de Janeiro. It is 85 metres tall and contains 3.1 million bulbs.

Christmas around the World



Australia



As well as Christmas trees and other decorations, Australians decorate their houses with 'Christmas Bush'. This is an Australian plant with white flowers that turn a deep, shiny red at Christmas time.

Christmas around the World



Guatemala



Most Guatemalans plan and build a nativity scene with their family. The nativity scene is called a 'Nacimiento'.

Christmas around the World



Sweden



In Sweden, the biggest celebrations around Christmas time is St. Lucia's day, on December 13th. A girl is dressed up in a white dress with a red sash around her waist and a crown of candles on her head. The food eaten for breakfast on St. Lucia's day is a saffron bun called 'Lussekat', which means 'Lucia's cat'.

Christmas around the World



Mexico

Just before Christmas, during the 'Festival of Radishes', Mexican farmers carve radishes to make nativity scenes.

Christmas around the World



Italy

Italian children are very lucky because they receive presents twice during the Christmas period. On the 6th of January, they are visited by the Befana, a good, magical old lady which brings sweets and small presents and stuffs them in stockings. If the children have not been good, Befana will bring only coal and garlic.

Christmas around the World



United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, people decorate their homes and towns with Christmas lights. Lots of people also attend Nativity plays and carol services.