



Our Lady's School



CHRISTMAS AT OLS

See what we got up to in the lead up to Christmas (Page 10)



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!

TY UPDATES

Check out what TY's have been up to this term (Page 15)



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,

Dear Parents/ Guardians

As we approach another Christmas living with the reality of Covid it is time to sit back and reflect on how well the community of OLS have done to continually adapt to the constantly changing world that we now live in. Even storm Barra did not cause us as much disruption as it once would have done as both students and staff are now so used to accessing Google classroom for work and feedback. The new November assessment window gave our students a real focus and we are busy implementing our intervention programme following our academic tracking of student results.

The CLASS programme is up and running and students have engaged very positively with all the elements of it. From personal trainers to Irish Leaving Certificate revision classes there are many elements that students can engage with if they feel that they have missed out on any curriculum areas. The academic catch up classes for TY will start after Christmas.

The Nun's Feast Day was another lovely celebration for the whole community and the Sisters really enjoyed sharing the ceremony remotely with the students.

We are delighted to finally have our new astro turf pitch in place and it was unofficially launched with a hockey match played between our Junior and Senior teams last Tuesday. The pitch will be officially opened in the new year by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, Catherine Martin. T.D.

The new Le Chéile Education Centre also has been unofficially opened and we warmly welcome the Le Chéile family to the grounds of OLS.

The 12 Gifts of Christmas Raffle is our current focus and I would like to thank the parent and staff bodies for their generous gifts and for purchasing raffle tickets. We hope to put the funds raised towards the replacement of the projectors in each classroom.

Each of us have our own personal traditions at Christmas and here in OLS we are no different. The arrival of the Crib beautifully crafted by Mr Walsh marks the start of the festivities. The traditional coin collection for the Peter McVerry Trust following on from the November Knitathon reminds us all of the level of homelessness in our community. The Gifts to the Crib and the Christmas Carol celebrations are firm fixtures in the OLS Christmas calendar and we all make a conscious effort to think about others and to value the warm sense of community that we have.

Our student leadership team is also contributing to the OLS Christmas spirit with announcements every day leading up to Christmas highlighting the 5 values for our houses, Compassion, Courage, Community, Conscience and Courage. Each and every one of us have had to access these values during these challenging times and at every turn in OLS we encourage our students to think of how they can help others.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for their hard work, positivity and enthusiasm throughout the year.

I would also like to thank you for your support and cooperation throughout the term.

Best wishes to you and your families for a happy and festive Christmas and for a happy New Year.

Marguerite Gorby

Principal



Marguerite Gorby



STUDENT UPDATES



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

On Friday 19th of November, we celebrated our Nuns Feast Day. This is our annual celebration of the founding of Father Louis LaFosse's order of the Religious of Christian Education. We all gathered together, virtually, to celebrate our theme for this year, 'Sisters are different flowers from the same garden.' This was to celebrate the fact that in our school we are all celebrated for our unique differences but also all working together on our goal of happiness and success. We had many students taking part in our celebration with readings, songs and prayers. We were also lucky to get videos from our aim charas who wished us a happy feast day. Unfortunately they could not join us in person but we all felt the joy of the day virtually as they joined in on the ceremony. This was then followed by our first ever House Spirit Day.

This year we celebrated House slightly differently to before. Instead of individual House masses, we had one big House Celebration Day. This new idea was approached with great enthusiasm and spirit by all our students and it was a wonderful day appreciating House and the prominent role it has played in our school over a number of years.

Christmas time especially in Our Lady's is a time where we always try to think of Charity - one of our 5 C's. We partake in



lots of charity events including the Knitathon, the Coin Collection and Gifts to the Crib. It is great to see the community of OLS come together to help those in need.

We've had a very busy but successful start to the year and hope to continue this after Christmas. A huge well done to everyone in the November exams but in the meantime, a big Happy Christmas and hope you enjoy the Christmas break!

-Julie Vaughan & Sara Devoy P6

Sports News

On the 5th November, we were delighted to see our new hockey pitch arrive. The new pitch is almost ready for play, with the final adjustments being made. It will be waiting for everyone to play on once we get back from the holidays!!

The ASF class ran an enthusiastic dodgeball tournament for the whole school. It was a very competitive tournament with the teachers coming out on top, winning 4 games out of 6, losing to the C1's and L6's. This tournament was a great success thanks to the ASF class and all PE teachers.

After Christmas, we are hopefully back to competitive Interhouse sports on the beautiful new hockey pitch. We have had a great term of sports and I can't wait for the New Year!

-Orla O'Toole 6L



First Year Reflections

We asked one of our First Year students to reflect on their time in OLS so far. Here's what they shared:

My Second Term:

Starting in Our Lady's has been the most amazing thing that has happened to me in a while.

All of the students and teachers have been so nice and welcoming to all of the First Years and I'm so grateful for all the lovely people in this school. I have tried multiple extra curricular activities, eg. basketball, hockey and I've signed up for camogie and gealic football. I have heard that Cooking Club has been a hit and that loads of girls have enjoyed it.

We have just finished our first ever November Exams! Personally, I enjoyed them and thought that they were fine. Beforehand a lot of us were really nervous, but our teachers helped us to prepare and once the time came to sit the exams, we were as ready as we would have ever been. So far Our Lady's has been great and I can't wait to continue my journey in this school.

- Ella Meade C1



THIS TERM'S TOP STORIES



New Pitch Update

The new pitch is finished! Our new pitch was ready for action during the last week of term and we didn't waste a second of it! It was fantastic to see the girls playing and enjoying the new pitch. There was great joy at lunchtime as the Senior hockey players tested out our snazzy new hockey pitch! We are delighted to be able to offer our students such a top of the range facility. Thank you to all who made this possible.



Joy Ralph

Well done to Joy Ralph who traveled to Wales to represent Ireland as a forward for U16 international soccer. The whole school community are very proud of her!



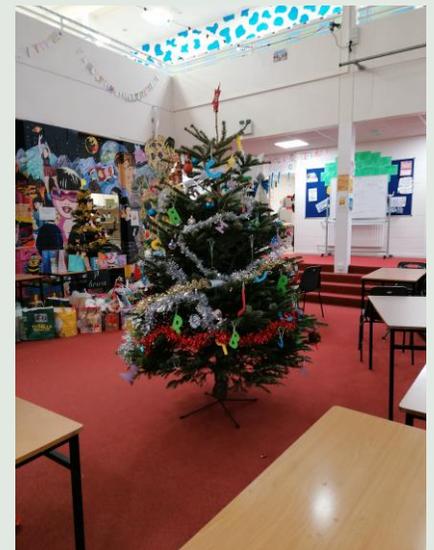
Nun's Feast Day

In November we celebrated the Nun's Feast Day, and the House Celebration. It was a day to remember the origins of our school and how far we have come. This was a day to celebrate the sisterhood here in OLS that is evident every day through our students, our Houses and our school morals. The L5s delivered cards and flowers to the Sisters to show them how much they mean to our whole school community. The Sisters joined us remotely for our celebrations and we sent them over some afternoon tea treats to celebrate this special day!



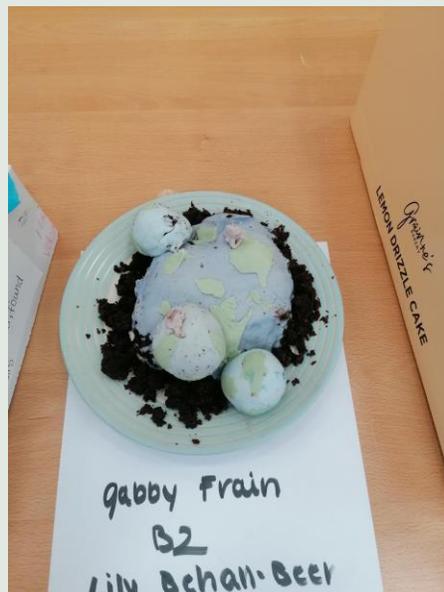
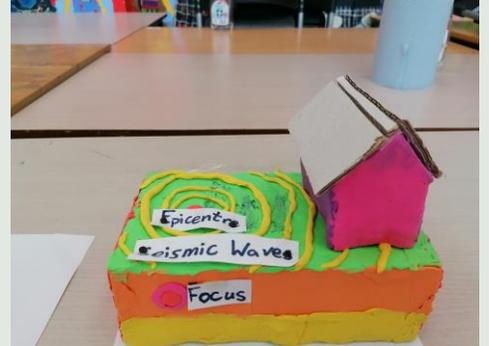
Christmas at OLS

Christmas time in OLS is always an important time of year, where we reflect on the year that has been and look forward to what is to come. It is a time of giving and that can be seen through all the great fundraising we do here in OLS such as the Gifts to the Crib, the Coin Collection, the Knovember Knithathon and the 12 Gifts of Christmas Raffle, none of which would be possible without your endless support. The festive spirit can be seen through our wonderful students who carry with them the values of our school every day. They have decorated the school and made the atmosphere so festive and joyful even if we are still living with certain restrictions. We hope all our students and their families have a great festive period filled with love, friendship and family.



Geography Week

We celebrated geography week this term which ran from November 15th to 19th. There was an array of activities for students to get involved in. Riddles were given out each day over the intercom and a photo competition was also held. The highlight of the week was the 3D Models Competition. As always, there was such a wide variety of student work and collaboration on show. We saw some amazing talent from students with models ranging from earthquakes, volcanoes, the earth's core, a rainforest, a South Pole habitat and Earth cake pops! Well done to everyone who participated! The winners of the competition were In 3rd place: Alice Todd from P1, In 2nd place Laura McCarthy, Lucy Boyle, and Tara Gaffney in L1 and in 1st place Cath Connolly and Kate Mannering in L1.



BT Young Scientist Exhibition



We would like to extend our congratulations to two students who have made it through to the final of the BT Young Scientist Exhibition which will take place in January.

Rachel Heather M3, whose project is entitled: Does the geometry and brand of a shuttlecock affect its trajectory?

Emma Killian P3, whose project is entitled: To investigate the use of essential oils as a means of decaying plastic?

Both students will be working very hard on their projects over the next few weeks. Please join us in attending the exhibition virtually between the 12th-16th January <https://btyoungscientist.com> A huge congratulations to all students who participated, the competition is always fierce, we encourage all students to get thinking about their ideas for next year's competition.

LGBTQIA+ Poster

Congratulations to Lily O'Brien in B3 whose winning LGBTQIA+ Poster has been recognised by BeLongTo who organise Stand Up Awareness Week. They, with Lily's permission, will be using the poster on their Website and social media. The poster will be available to schools all over Ireland. So Lily's poster will be not only on our classroom doors, but on classroom doors nationwide. Well done Lily!



Reading Week

This term we celebrated Reading Week during the week of November 1st to 5th. It was a week full of competitions and activities. We had scavenger hunts, Guess the Teacher, baking, bookmark design, room decorating and much much more. Make sure to watch our Reading Week 2021 Video here: <https://youtu.be/kabhJ7jN5Zg>

A recap of all the winners:

The winner of Guess the Teacher was Nevaeh Nicholsan B2

The winner of the bookmark competition was Sadhbh Ní Shúilleabháin B2

The scavenger hunt winners were as follows:

In second place we had Grace Colfer C2, Emily Hanratty C2 and Hannah Brannigan P2

In first place we had Abbie Jackson and Ana Sierra from C1.

The winner for the photo of reading in the most creative way was: Anna Murray and Emily Aasen

Please see the delicious confections created by teachers and students alike.



First Year School Tour

On Friday 12th November the First Years went on a school tour to the Alive Outside Activity Centre in Killruddery Estate - home of the famous 'Hell and Back' course and site of Ireland's Fittest Family! The First Years showed their athletic prowess in a variety of activities including archery, team building challenges and an obstacle course. A fantastic day was had by all!



Transition Year Activities:

What a term our TYs have had, day trips, TY interviews, workshops, exams and baking.

Our Year So Far

The year started with students being put into our new classes to expand our friendships. To help us bond with our new classmates, on the 20th of September the whole year as well as the TY Form Teachers and Year Heads took on the challenge of hiking Ticknock. It was a great day to chat to new people and rekindle friendships with old classmates. Our first of many Development Days took place on the 28th of September. TY 1 got to do a cycle around Phoenix Park, TY 2 did a tour of the churches in Dublin, TY 3 had a Transmission day and TY4 had a CPR training day. On the Development Day the girls learned new skills as well as get a break from the classroom. In September we had one of our many rotations. The choices were Philosophy, Civil Rights, Human Development, Music and Home Economics. Everyone really enjoyed their first rotation and came away with lots of new found knowledge. We also had rotations in Irish and Business as well as a rotation in Mindfulness, Drivers Ed, Politics and Leadership. In October TY classes received a great surprise that we were going on a day out. We went Go-Quest and the Wax Musuem. Here we developed our responsibility and teamwork skills. We enjoyed competing against each other and the teachers as well as learning to be independent around town. Then we set out on our first work experience. Everyone picked up a new skill and gained some new found independence. We enjoyed being in a new work environment. In November we started off the month remembering the people we have lost in our lives by planting bulbs. This represents the growth that we will develop throughout the year and we look forward to seeing the bulbs blossom. Our next Development Day took place on the 26th of November where each class rotated doing different activities. During the month of November the TYs put their baking skills to the test with the Great TY Bakeoff. Many scrumptious cakes were made but the overall winner with her delicious macaroons was Sophie Gorman. Students also got the opportunity to create an app with Microsoft and participate in a physics talk with UCD which they really enjoyed. In December Rachel Vaughan and Ella McCabe are taking part in the webwise workshop where they will learn how to run an effective campaign for Safer Internet Day. They will have the opportunity to brainstorm with other schools. Currently the TYs are busy decorating their Form Teachers doors and the trees that the TY's were allocated. We can't wait for our exam to be over to get into the festive spirit.

-Celine Butler and Ella McCabe TY3

Our fantastic TY Reps have been flat out the past few weeks preparing a little treat for their parents, guardians and their fellow classmates. You may want to make yourself a cup of tea and grab a mince pie. Enjoy a snapshot of their year to date. These superb TY students don't do anything by halves!

https://youtu.be/zWW_56anB8k



TY Christmas Enterprise Fair

The TY Christmas Enterprise Fair took place on Monday the 20th of December. The students have been busy designing and making their own products which were on sale on the day. There was lots of variety and the prices ranged from €1 to €6.



Climate and Nature Summit

We were delighted that TY students had the wonderful opportunity of engaging in the Climate and Nature Summit remotely this term. This summit coincided with The COP26 summit which brought world leaders “together to accelerate action towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change”. The Climate & Nature Summit allowed our TY’s to put sustainability at the heart of their education. This summit included empowering virtual sessions that encourage stimulating climate and nature conversations.



Barista Course

A number of our TY students participated in an Introductory Barista Course led by Dublin Barista School. This workshop equipped students with a new skill to help secure part-time or summer employment. The course delved into the world of coffee farming, coffee roasting, coffee brewing and the coffee industry in Ireland. Each student then had the opportunity to make their own coffee, topping it off with a love heart design.



Spring Bulbs

TYs had the opportunity this term to plant their spring bulbs. November is remembrance month, and during our bulb planting Ms. Redmond, our school Chaplain, took a few moments with the students to remember those who have passed away both this year and years gone by. The bulbs students have sewn have become a symbol of their Transition Year experience and students' growth as a class.

Run in The Dark

As darkness fell on Thursday evening, and the 'Beaver Moon' shone bright, a number of our TY students participated in 'Run in The Dark' in aid of the Mark Pollock Trust. After a number of laps of the school Ms. Hallissey and Ms. Phelan together with TY students and Senior Hockey players trotted into Bushy Park. Students brightened up the park dressed like flashing Christmas Trees as they ran or walked their 5km. It was fantastic to see so many students be a part of this social and charitable initiative across seven continents, aiming to cure paralysis in their lifetime.



Bake Off

The much anticipated Bake Off Final took place in November. Nineteen of our TYs battled it out in the inaugural OLS Great TY Bake Off to be crowned Baking Champion. Anticipation grew amongst the judges and our TY's did not disappoint. With points being awarded under five different categories competition was fierce. Students' creativity was flowing with House Cakes, Cookie Monsters, Christmas trees, Snowmen and Owls all making appearances. After a show stopping performance by all, Sophie Gorman was crowned Great TY Bake Off Champion for 2021.



Development Day

This week saw all our TY's engage in their second Development Day. TY1s had a first class day as they completed their certified First Aid course. TY2s took to the airways as they experienced the amazing mobile recording studio brought right to the OLS doorstep. They benefitted from professional industry training, honed their presentation skills and enjoyed recording their own radio segments in the high spec studio. TY3s were brought back in time and experienced the multitude of attractions our city has to offer. From looking up great grandparents in a 1950's telephone directory to appreciating a first edition James Joyce's



'Ulysses' and blowing an air raid siren, students got a sense of what life was like in Dublin from World War 1 right through the 1916 Rising to present day Dublin filled with music from U2. After this little visit, they trotted down Grafton Street struggling to avoid the black Friday sales! Their next stop was the State Apartments at Dublin Castle. They visited St. Patrick's Hall which has not only hosted American Presidents including Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan and John F. Kennedy, but also Queen Elizabeth II during her State visit back in 2011. The day wasn't

complete without a further historical journey through EPIC, the Irish Emigration Museum. Finally TY4s explored many of the historic churches that Dublin city has to offer, while also engaging in a voyage of stillness, inward reflection and prayer.



Creative Workshops

TY Christmas spirits is still in full flow. Hoping to deck the halls with baubles and snowmen, our TY elves were busy in a creative workshop in December. It was fantastic to see our newly formed TY classes still represent their Houses, B, C, L and P in their activities.





Hockey

It's been a busy hockey term at OLS. Three Senior, three Junior and four Minor teams have been training twice a week and playing both Leinster league and friendly matches on Saturdays. We have two groups of enthusiastic and committed First Year players who have also been out training weekly and who will be involved in regular Saturday action soon.

The excitement of our new pitch is keeping us all going as we adapt to training in the Sports Hall, around the grounds and in Bushy Park. Hopefully we will be back on it in time for some training and matches this term and of course the famous Christmas Hoots n Toots!



Camogie

It has been a hectic term for Camogie. Both our Junior and Senior Camogie teams have progressed to the latter stages of the Shield competitions after some hard fought group games. The Juniors have a tough match against Mount Anville, while the Seniors are awaiting their semi final opponents patiently. As reigning champions in both competitions, we hope to do our best to retain our crowns and bring back the trophies!



Cooking Club

Cooking club has been a great success this term with First Years to Transition Years cooking up some very tasty treats in the kitchens. We have been very lucky to have the Transition Year students with us in the kitchens each week to help us achieve tasty results. A massive thank you to them for all their help. So far this year we have baked Gooey Chocolate Brownies, American Style Cookies, Lemon Drizzle Cake, Muffins and Victoria Sponge. Some of the teachers even got involved! After the Christmas break the sign-up will be opened again for any student who did not get a chance to take part this term. We cannot wait for the appetising smells from the kitchens in January!

Library

This term has been a very busy one here in the Library! We have set up a Chess Club which takes place every Tuesday at lunch, all years are welcome. In the new year we are hoping to organise a mini tournament. Our Junior and Senior Book Clubs have been in full swing and we have been reading everything from historical fiction to books surrounding inclusivity. We meet every second Thursday. We look forward to having some time over the Christmas break to read something new and bring new suggestions back to the book club.



Reading week was a massive success this year. Every Class got involved and it was a fantastic week of competitions and events. This year we took part in the MS Readathon and raised well needed funds for a worthy cause, thank you to all who took part and to all who donated.

The library has been a hub of activity this term! At lunchtimes in December we decorated mini gingerbread houses and had Christmas puzzles and colouring sheets for mindfulness colouring. It was great to see so many students get in touch with their creative side. The student librarians were hard at work this term labeling books, checking books in and out, shelving and decorating the library for Christmas!

We can't wait to 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/>



Active School Flag

The Active school flag is organised by a group of 4th year students, whose aim is to promote health and wellbeing by encouraging all students to be active, inside and outside of school. As we all know being active has many benefits both physically and mentally as well as allowing us to form new friendships.

As a class we agreed on core values that would bring us together as a group and help us to achieve our goals. The core values we decided on are:

- To work as a team.
- To be approachable within the school.
- To be motivational towards students and staff.



Here is an overview of the work we have carried out over the past few months.

In September we started the year by carrying out a whole school survey which allowed us to access data that will help us to find ways which the school community would enjoy getting active. We also learned more about the active school flag and what our individual and class roles would be.

During October we outlined our core values as individuals and groups and we discussed roles and responsibilities for everyone in the class. Some of the group roles are; the media group, the liason group, the walkway group, the design group and the research group. Throughout the month we organised the ASF notice board, erected new signs on our school walkway, made regular announcements promoting activities in OLS as well as updating our app and Twitter accounts.

November was a very busy month. After analysing the survey results from staff and students we organised our first whole school event which was a dodgeball tournament. All classes took part in their weekly PE



class, the winning team then played another winning team before playing the teachers in the final. We extremely enjoyed organising the event and it went brilliantly with the teachers winning 4 - 2. We will continue to analyse our survey results and we will have a full action plan after Christmas



The Coiste Gaeilge

This term our Coiste Gaeilge has been working hard to incorporate a little bit of Irish into all aspects of school life. We have had so much fun working as a team to come up with new and exciting events. We are aiming high with a few big surprises in store for the new year!

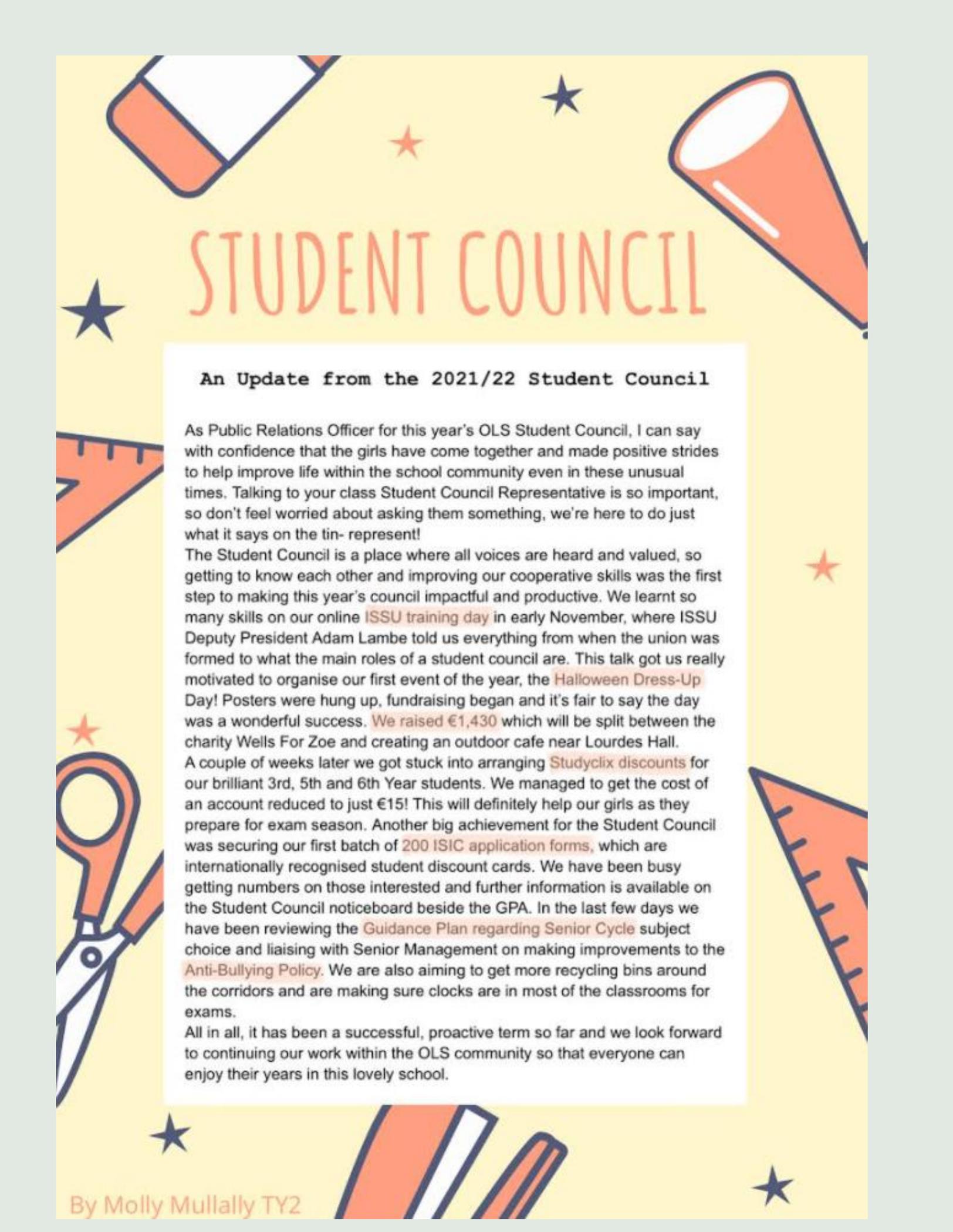
In November we held our first meeting between the Fifth year members of the Coiste and the First year Gaeilge representatives. Hopefully they have enjoyed meeting with the rest of the group. They have been assigned a few small roles which will help us to promote our upcoming events and activities by spreading the word and encouraging their year group to participate as Gaeilge.

Secondly we managed to include some Irish in the announcements that were heard on the intercom throughout Stand Up Awareness week. As well as that our Coiste notice boards, which can be seen in and above the GPA, are still covered with recipes, memes and notices as Geilge.

We have made so many exciting plans for after Christmas too. We are really looking forward to Lá Labhartha Gaeilge which will take place on the 10th of January. The Coiste will host a series of fun activities that will run through Irish and all will be welcome. There will be stickers, charades, kahoot quizzes and so much more. Be sure to use your cúpla focail on this day!

All the best from the Coiste Gaeilge 2021/22





STUDENT COUNCIL

An Update from the 2021/22 Student Council

As Public Relations Officer for this year's OLS Student Council, I can say with confidence that the girls have come together and made positive strides to help improve life within the school community even in these unusual times. Talking to your class Student Council Representative is so important, so don't feel worried about asking them something, we're here to do just what it says on the tin- represent!

The Student Council is a place where all voices are heard and valued, so getting to know each other and improving our cooperative skills was the first step to making this year's council impactful and productive. We learnt so many skills on our online [ISSU training day](#) in early November, where ISSU Deputy President Adam Lambe told us everything from when the union was formed to what the main roles of a student council are. This talk got us really motivated to organise our first event of the year, the [Halloween Dress-Up Day](#)! Posters were hung up, fundraising began and it's fair to say the day was a wonderful success. [We raised €1,430](#) which will be split between the charity Wells For Zoe and creating an outdoor cafe near Lourdes Hall.

A couple of weeks later we got stuck into arranging [Studyclix discounts](#) for our brilliant 3rd, 5th and 6th Year students. We managed to get the cost of an account reduced to just €15! This will definitely help our girls as they prepare for exam season. Another big achievement for the Student Council was securing our first batch of [200 ISIC application forms](#), which are internationally recognised student discount cards. We have been busy getting numbers on those interested and further information is available on the Student Council noticeboard beside the GPA. In the last few days we have been reviewing the [Guidance Plan regarding Senior Cycle](#) subject choice and liaising with Senior Management on making improvements to the [Anti-Bullying Policy](#). We are also aiming to get more recycling bins around the corridors and are making sure clocks are in most of the classrooms for exams.

All in all, it has been a successful, proactive term so far and we look forward to continuing our work within the OLS community so that everyone can enjoy their years in this lovely school.

Lighthouse

Lighthouse is a community that is held very dearly here in OLS. The tradition was launched a couple of years back, with the goal being to guide the younger students through their second year of school, (which from experience is undoubtedly a step up in terms of the work pile!) As 5th Year mentors, we try our best to accommodate any worries or queries a student may have, as well as giving our best advice. We are of course aware of the stress that can arise during 2nd Year which is filled with CBAs and Junior Cert prep, and as a support group who has endured all this before, we hope to make our lighthouse girls' school lives that bit easier to manage!

In these months after returning back to school, we have been lucky enough to meet and get to know our lighthouse girls, and with OLS being a school filled with activities and events, we have encouraged all Second Years to get involved in as many as possible: including walking competitions and Maths Week that happened during the month of October, and Reading week in which we saw many Second Years as well as others collecting new books from the library each day!

With November came our exams, and as a little treat, we thought handing out some chocolates as well as preparing a study guide video would hopefully bring some stress relief to the students! In every video, each mentor group gave tips to their class wishing them the best of luck and to remind them not to worry and panic during the week.

Our most recent activity was designing a Lighthouse board for each of the Second Year form classrooms.

Throughout the year, we will be hanging notices about upcoming activities. We are especially looking forward to our Christmas events and hope to make the last few days before the holidays as fun as possible for all the girls! Last Thursday we led a Christmas themed quiz for the Second Years, we also helped them create Christmas cards for local nursing homes.



THE LIGHTHOUSE PROJECT

EMPOWERING STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

The lighthouse is chosen as the symbol for all students elected to positions of responsibility in Schools. It is expected that all are excellent role models for everyone in the school community. The student body look to them (the Lighthouse) for advice and help in times of need. The beam at the top of the Lighthouse is for those in Student Leadership positions to be aware of all of the needs of the students and school community.

Maths Club

This term we worked on helping the First Years prepare for their November exams, (their first set of exams in OLS!) by doing revision sheets on their different topics, and giving out some advice that we have gathered during our time here! We were happy to welcome many new faces that joined us over the term and are always looking to welcome more people. On our last week of Maths Club before the Christmas break we spent a fun lunchtime doing a variety of Christmas themed maths activities. We hope to see everyone back in the new year, but for now, we wish a very Merry Christmas to everyone who joined us over the past few weeks.



Arts and Crafts Club

This term a new Arts and Crafts Club was set up. We meet every Wednesday after school and all students are welcome. This term we made an array of items such as Christmas tree decorations, Thanksgiving garlands and bird feeders! Next term there are loads more creative ideas coming so if you haven't already why not swing by and check it out!



Green Schools

Over the last few weeks, the Sixth Years have been carrying out research on fast fashion. We have been looking at shops that everyone should try and avoid such as Penneys, Shein and Boohoo and finding eco-friendly alternatives. Charity shops such as Oxfam and NCBI have a great selection of clothes for great prices and are a good alternative way to shop!

First Years have been busy making their outfit for the relove fashion competition. The competition asks students to create a sustainable and wearable outfit from second hand clothing. Relove fashions aim is to promote creative solutions to the growing problem of fast fashion. Over the past few weeks, students have been creating mood boards and designing their outfits.

During our Green Schools Week, walking to school was promoted with a competition between classes based on the distance students walked to and from school. The winners were P2, we hope this inspired everyone to get walking!



Photo of 1st year entry to relove competition

The Amber Flag Committee

The Amber Flag Committee had a great start this year. During October green ribbons from “see change” were delivered to each class, along with a motivational quote, to reinforce the inclusive atmosphere we have in Our Lady’s. The ribbons are a reminder of the constant support the school offers and how all of the students are there to help each other.

The Amber Flag Committee also played an integral role in Our Lady’s second annual Stand Up Awareness Week. This week is an opportunity for OLS to take steps to make our school a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQI+ students. The week was a massive success; we had words of the day, posters and flags displayed around the school, daily announcements, among many other things. On the Friday, we had the big event of #ComeIn, we created a human pride flag in OLS by assigning each year group a colour of the pride flag. The Amber Flag picked the best colourful hairstyles in each year group.

In the run up to Christmas we organised a ‘Elf on the Shelf’ competition. With House points up for grabs it got OLS in the festive spirit !

This term, the Amber Flag committee with the help of Ms. Reilly and Ms. Kinsella began creating a Wellbeing Charter for OLS. Every year group had input to create the charter and using the well being indicators created something that supported everyone in our school community. Our aim is to have a document that really reflects our community here in school, and shows an awareness of our needs and rights within that community, and we hope to have it completed for Wellbeing Week 2022.

- Roisin Evoy C5 and Caitlin Evoy P



Digital Champions

This year a group of Second Year students were formed to spread information and educate Second and First years about being safe online. The digital champions informed their class and younger classes about a range of important topics such as, how to be a responsible digital citizen, the permanence of posts and having a positive digital footprint. These presentations guided students on how to deal with and conquer the online world. I feel this is an area that has to be addressed, especially in 2021 as more and more of our lives are impacted by technology. Hopefully the student body of Our Lady's will follow the Digital Champions' advice about being respectful and genuine online and only use technology in a positive manner in the future.

- Elizabeth McElroy P2

Charity Club

Our Charity Committee had an action packed start to the year. We officially began with speeches to elect our President (Charlotte Jones C5), our VP (Heidi Eggen L5) our Secretary (Róisín Evoy C5) and our photographer (Amy Quirke P2) . We held weekly meetings to discuss and decide what charity events we would run this year.



Our first charity event of the year was our 'Wells for Zoe' fundraiser. Our campaign was the 'Send a girl to school' initiative. Our Lady's has a very strong connection with the charity Wells for Zoe for many years and it is a charity we always try to support. Our hope was for each House or Year group to send one girl to school but in true OLS style, the support was phenomenal and we raised €3,433.85 for the cause. This total means that we can support 23 girls in accessing education in Malawi.

We got straight into our book drive as soon as we got back from mid-term break! As it was Reading Week we organised a book drive for charity where students and teachers were asked to donate second hand books for St Vincent de Paul. There was massive rivalry between the Houses to see who could donate the most books. The C House came out on top earning the coveted House Points.

We were so grateful to get the opportunity to be the first students to visit the Le Chéile Education Centre and meet the CEO of the Le Chéile, Marie-Thérèse Kilmartin and Thérèse Davey, administrative secretary. We were able to use the state of the art meeting room for our meetings and received our badges. We also were invited to appear in the Le Chéile welcome video.

November saw the start of our annual Christmas charity events, commencing with the November Knitathon. This is the perfect opportunity for students and teachers to learn a new skill, knit



something and give back to those less fortunate at Christmas time. Meetings are held every Thursday and Friday lunchtime, and there has been a massive uptake from students with students and the wider OLS community donating dozens of knitted items for homeless people this Christmas. All knitting will go towards the Peter McVerry trust.

December is a very busy month in OLS when it comes to charity events. The coin collection is an event that raises lots of money for the Peter McVerry Trust every year. Students are encouraged to put their loose change in the House containers in reception and all the houses compete to raise the most money for charity, winning House points in the process.

A special festive charity event in OLS is the Gifts to the Crib event, which brings joy to adults and children who may not receive any gifts otherwise. Every group brought in a different gifts including baby toys, toys for girls and boys, clothes for teenagers, care packages and food packages. During the Gifts to the Crib ceremony everyone gathers to donate their gifts and representatives from the charities gratefully accept them.

We have had an incredibly successful year so far and want to take this opportunity to thank the whole school community for their generosity. We hope to continue this success into the New Year, and have many ideas for the rest of the school year!

- Charlotte, Heidi and Roisin Fifth Year



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER



Hi everyone,

I am the new Chaplain, my name is Mrs Redmond. Chaplaincy has been busy here in OLS since I started in November. I have been getting to know both staff and students and have been meeting First Years individually. I took part in the Nun's Feast Day in November which was a very special event. TY had a retreat day where we visited various Dublin churches and took part in meditation and prayer in each one. I have been getting involved with the numerous charitable events including, Gifts to the Crib, the Christmas raffle and the Knitathon for Peter McVerry trust. The Chaplaincy Board has been focusing on Advent with a daily Scripture reading to remind us of the real reason for the season. I am very excited about Chaplaincy in OLS in the new year, we have much to look forward to, including Lenten and Easter preparations and celebrations, continuing to get to know students and staff, and most importantly, keeping our faith traditions and spirituality alive here in OLS. I would like to wish you all a wonderful grace filled Christmas and I look forward to the New Year with hope and peace.

Mrs Redmond

A Big Thank You

We would like to extend our gratitude to all members of the school community who have followed the Covid 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 and Ms. Morrissey for all of their hard work in ensuring that the school is a safe environment for all staff and students during these times.



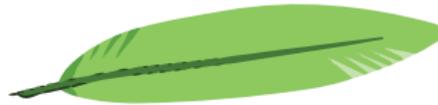
Facts about Christmas

The abbreviation X-mas comes from the Greek letter - Chi - and is the first letter of the word Χριστός meaning Christ.



Traditional colors for this holiday are red, green and gold and they have their meanings - green (eternal life), red (blood of Jesus) and gold (royalty).

The first artificial Christmas tree was made in Germany using colored goose feathers.



First Christmas trees were decorated with apples, white candy canes and pastry shaped like stars, hearts and flowers.



Candy Cane is the most popular Christmas candy - it's shaped like a cane as it symbolizes the shepherds that visited Jesus.



The biggest Christmas present of all times is the Statue of Liberty. The French gave it to the USA in 1886 as a gift!

Santa Claus has many names - Kris Kringle, St. Nicholas, Grandfather Frost, Father Christmas.



Comet, Cupid, Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Doner and Blitzen. The 9th reindeer Rudolph was added later on.