

Christmas Newsletter



St Aidan's Comprehensive School,
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DECEMBER 2022

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"In the midst of all this activity, our students have displayed a wonderful sense of compassion and care for those in need."



Message from the Principal

Welcome to St. Aidan's first newsletter of the academic year 2022/2023. We hope that your child has settled into school and by now has an effective work and study regime. The November assessment tests and reports will help students to focus and will enable them and you to review their progress to date. Where a lack of progress is evident, students need to consider with you and their teachers the changes that are necessary to ensure improvement. Supervised study has finally started. It is most helpful to students who find it difficult to do homework and study at home.

Congratulations to the Leaving Certificate whose results were truly excellent. Thanks to their teachers for all their hard work and to you, their parents, for your constant support. As always, the first term has been busy with staff returning and the induction of each year group on the following days. A very special word of thanks to the Year Heads and Tutors who have worked very hard to ensure students settled down quickly to work. The Book Rental scheme, run so efficiently by Ms Healy, Ms Conlon and Mr Fitzgerald has helped students to have all their resources required for class.

Our Senior Prefects and Class Prefects including our Head Boy and Girl, were all appointed and together with the Shop Supervisors, Music Prefects, Class Prefects and Librarians, have been



appointed and together with the Shop Supervisors, Music Prefects, Class Prefects and Librarians, have been making a very valuable contribution to the day-to-day life of St. Aidan's.

Our opening Mass/ Service to mark the commencement of the school year took place on Thursday 22nd / Friday 28th September. The theme of the Service was Gratitude.

As part of our holistic philosophy of education, we continue to offer a wide range of co and extra-curricular activities. These are made possible by the generosity of our teachers who give of their own time to organize activities, train individuals and teams and to the commitment of students. This term students have also been to the Ploughing Championships, Mental Health and Well Being Awareness week, First Aid and Clayotic workshops for TY, and also a TY trip.

Our lunch time clubs are also continuing for our 1st years.

Our students have also participated in a variety of Mental Health/ Well-Being Workshops including 'Be Well' / 'Yes', 'Provoking Thought', Bodywhys to name a few.

Our School Meals Programme is again fully subscribed and our teachers deserve credit for their commitment to the welfare of our students. Our students are participating in Gaelic Football, Soccer, Basketball, Camogie, Hurling, Badminton, Table Tennis, Cross Country and Handball competitions. Meanwhile, our First and Second Years are encouraged to participate in various sporting activities at lunchtime, again with thanks due to Mr Lennon, Ms English/Ms Nolan, Mr Ross, Mr McQuillan, and Ms McDonald, Ms Kiernan, Mr Greenan, Mr Lynch, Ms McPhillips, Mr McKenna and Mr Watters.

Before the mid-term Ms Doherty and Mr Lennon visited our feeder National Schools. Our Open Night took place on Thursday 6th October.

In the midst of all this activity, our students have displayed a wonderful sense of compassion and care for those in need. Students are involved in the annual Shoe Box appeal and are now working on fundraising for the St Vincent de Paul for Christmas.

Our sixth years have Guidance classes and individual appointments with Ms Drury and this should now have them focused on their career/ course choices. It is important that, having decided what it is they want to do, that they now work hard to achieve this, completing all homework assignments and following a plan for revision of all coursework in every subject.

Attendance at school is essential.

Students should be in school all day every day and we would ask that you avoid taking them out of school for appointments if at all possible.

Congratulations to all involved in our musical "The Wedding Singer" - what a wonderful treat, everyone front/back stage and in pre-planning worked together to create a wonderful night's entertainment.

Congratulations and well done to our Junior Cert students, it was a long wait!

Finally, a sincere word of thanks to you, our parents, for your constant support for St. Aidan's. This spirit of co-operation has and will continue to ensure that our students, your children will achieve their full potential while at the same time grow and mature into responsible, well-rounded individuals. If, at any time, you have concerns regarding your child please contact the general office for an appointment with the relevant member of staff.

We wish you and your families a very happy, healthy peaceful and safe Christmas.

Every good wish.

*Principal Ms M Smith
Deputy Principal Mr N McGee*





First Year News

By Breege Doherty, Year Head

As we look forward to the approaching Christmas holidays I would like to take this opportunity to say well done to all the 1st year students on their very successful transition from primary to secondary school.

I wish the first years of 2022/23 every success and happiness as students in St. Aidan's. I hope that they grasp all of the opportunities available to them in terms of achieving the very best they can academically, on stage, on the sports field and in all aspects of school life.

Well done to the students who took part in the Halloween fancy dress and our very successful school musical. Thank you to those who donated to the Christmas shoe box appeal and to our non-uniform charity fundraisers. It was lovely to see such kindness in the year group.

Well done to the very talented first year sports people on their many fantastic performances and successes this term. Congratulations to the following students who were elected class prefects for the year: Lana

Gallagher, Sophia Morris, Philip Lynch, Mickey O Leary, Noelle Fitzpatrick, Grace Floody, Lana Sherlock and Shanna Langan.

Well done to Peter Kusi and Lana Sherlock our student council representatives for the school year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the 5th year Cairde team for organising and hosting a very enjoyable Halloween pizza and treats party at the end of last term. I look forward to their next event/activity!!

A big thank you to the 1st year tutors Ms Ni Bhaoill, Ms Connolly, Ms Mc Philips and Mr Mc Caul for their continuous support and kindness.

Finally, I wish you all a very happy Christmas and New Year!

"I wish the first years of 2022/23 every success and happiness as students in St. Aidan's. I hope that they grasp all of the opportunities available to them in terms of achieving the very best they can academically, on stage, on the sports field and in all aspects of school life."



First Year Prefects and Deputy Prefects being presented with their badges.





Art Department News

By Hannah Murray, Art Teacher

Musical Set

At the start of the school year many TY students were involved in designing and creating the posters, tickets and musical set. This took so much hard work over a number of weeks. We went through many tubes of paint and paintbrushes but it all came together so well. A huge amount of effort and dedication was put to this work. Big, big thanks to every student involved.

Cootehill Christmas Markets

Over 29 TY students volunteered to help out with the Cootehill Christmas Extravaganza that was run by Cootehill Chamber on 19th and 20th November. Students were involved in setting up, dressing up in costumes, running kids' activities and managing the school Arts and Crafts Stall. Many students throughout all year groups created handmade Christmas cards and clay decorations for the stall. A massive thank you to all students involved from start to finish. The weekend was a huge success with thanks to our fabulous volunteers!



TY students painting the set for "The Wedding Singer"



TY students from St Aidan's at the Christmas Market in Cootehill.



Selling Christmas Cards at the Christmas Craft Fayre



Mickey and Minnie Mouse helping out the St Aidan's Team.





Second Year News

By Jackie Sweeney, Year Head

Well done to all of you on a fantastic term of work and achievement since September and at this stage you all have your November Assessments complete so well done to you all. To those of who were involved in the musical, a huge well done and congratulations to you on such an outstanding performance!

Congratulations to our class prefects Rang Enda: Annie Beth Foster and Rian Crosson, Rang Emmet: Chloe Conaty and Finn Sherlock, Rang Erin: Jack Vogan and Kacey Murphy and Rang Eimear: Reece Martin and Eadaoin Morris.

It is great to see so many extra - curricular activities taking place and well done to all our second years involved in all the sporting activities on offer in St. Aidan's. Just a wee reminder to have a happy balance by ensuring that if you are partaking in these activities to make sure you catch up on classwork and homework please. Once again this year you have shown your generosity in taking part in the shoe box appeal, well done on this very much appreciated act of kindness. Huge thank you to your tutors Mr Mayne, Ms Dolan, Ms B Kiernan and Ms C Kieran for all their hard work and support this term.

Just to remind you all that if you ever feel a little overwhelmed at times, please speak to myself, your tutors, Ms Drury or Mr McQuillan. Please reach out for support no matter how big or small the issue may seem. Watch out for each other and let us know if you or your friend needs a little helping hand or a listening ear.

Wishing you and your families a very happy and safe Christmas and a wonderful 2023.

6km Fun Run/Walk

By Adrian Farrell

St Aidan's are hosting a 6k fun run/walk on Friday 27th of January. We are encouraging all students to participate in the event.

There will be medals for all finishers and prizes for the top 3 boys and girls in the junior and senior category.

In order to participate, students will be required to raise a minimum of €5 sponsorship. Sponsorship cards will be distributed to students through their tutor and will they be numbered so that the tutor will know what student is responsible for each card.

All sponsorship cards must be returned to your tutor. Any lost cards will be subject to a €5 replacement fee.

All monies raised from the event will go towards subsidising bus fees for school trips.

Sponsorship cards will be distributed after the Christmas break.

"It is great to see so many extra - curricular activities taking place and well done to all our second years involved in all the sporting activities on offer in St. Aidan's"



Second Year Prefects and Deputies.



First and Second students at Comhairle na nÓg.





St. Aidan's Comprehensive whisks the town of Cootehill off its feet with The Wedding Singer

By Brona Joyce, Fifth Year

This year St. Aidan's chose to put on the musical "The Wedding Singer". It took to the stage on the 25th of October and ran for three nights. Everyone involved started rehearsing on the 19th of August and worked exceptionally hard right up until the show.

The rehearsals were for 7 hours a day during the end of the summer holidays and the whole cast worked to learn the dances off by heart so that no one was worried about forgetting the dances. The dances were drilled into us every day and in the short amount of time things were already pulling together.

Once back in school we rehearsed every Tuesday; learning new dances and the main cast got to rehearse different scenes and work on developing their characters.

The show was a huge commitment as not only did we have to rehearse every Tuesday, but we also stayed back after school every Friday for at least 2 hours to practice songs and make sure everything sounded amazing.

In the lead up to the show the main cast were out of almost every class perfecting solo songs and adding action behind dialogue.

The week before the show our director came in to run the entire show so that the cast and the stage crew had an idea of the length and the running time.

On Monday, of the week of the show, it was time for our first performance. All the primary schools in the area came to watch us and they were our first audience. We were all extremely nervous, but our performance improved every night.

Overall, this musical was a confidence-building amazing experience which helped everyone no matter what year make new friends and gain new memories in this school. I think the musical "The Wedding Singer" will be one to remember.



Dancers in "The Wedding Singer."



99 Red Balloons



End of Act 1



Finale of "The Wedding Singer"





Third Year News

By Siobhan Maguire, Year Head

As the Christmas season draws near I would like to compliment you on your work over the term. It has been busy with November Assessments, and I hope all students put in the necessary study required to ensure you reached your full potential in these exams. After Christmas you will be busy with CBAs, projects and practicals so it is important that everybody is following a study plan to ensure you reach your targets in all subjects.

Congratulations to our prefects and deputy prefects Rang Muireann - Ellie Smith, Ruby Gallagher. Rang Meabh - River Mc Caul, Tanya Benson. Rang Maitiu Joseph Coughlan, Grainne Smith, Manus -Nora Connell and Daniel Linden.

Well done on the numerous sporting activities third years have been involved in, and, in particular congratulations to the Under 19s for their victory in the Regional Basketball final against Inver College recently.

It was great to see so many third years stepping out of their comfort zone and taking to the stage for the Musical. Well done on an excellent performance. You should be very proud of yourselves.

Ms Drury organised a number of very worthwhile talks for 3rd years on 'Be Well' and 'Bodywhys' recently discussing body image and eating disorders.

Once again we thank you for your generosity in support of the Christmas Shoe Box appeal and St Vincent de Paul collections.

Your tutors have been a huge support to you over this term and a big thank you to Ms Kilkenny, Ms Donohue, Ms Noone and Mr Fitzsimons.

Wishing you and you families a season full of joy and happiness.

Show jumping

By Aishling Donohoe

This year saw the formation of a show jumping club in St.Aidan's. We have two teams and also individuals competing in the inter-schools show-jumping competition at Mullaghmore Equestrian Centre in Monaghan. Both teams have secured 1st and 2nd places so far with 3 more competitions to attend before the final in April. Individually, some students have placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in different classes. Each day out has been a great success and students have rallied round each other, supporting their school mates. A thank you must be extended to parents for attending each day, bringing and minding horses and cheering on their young riders. Looking forward to our next competitions in the new year.

"After Christmas you will be busy with CBAs, projects and practicals so it is important that everybody is following a study plan to ensure you reach your targets in all subjects."



Third Year Prefects and Deputy Prefects



St Aidan's Showjumping Teams



1st and 2nd Team Prizewinners





St Aidan's Comprehensive - Safe Routes to School Update (December 2022)

What is Safe Routes to School?

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme launched in March 2021 and was open to all schools in Ireland to apply for active travel funding and delivery. It is designed to facilitate students to walk and cycle to school by:

- Providing “front of school” treatments which will enhance access to school grounds
- Accelerating the delivery of walking, scooting and cycling infrastructure on key access routes to schools
- Expanding the amount of bike parking available at schools

We applied to the programme and are one of the schools that were selected to be in Round 1.

What is the plan for our school?

Cavan County Council are aiming to provide improved walking and cycling routes along R190 and R191 in our local area so please support these plans. These will include new pedestrian crossings at key points along these routes and junction improvements. Encouraging the use of all park and stride locations throughout Cootehill and along Station Road R190 will help to reduce traffic around the school by parking away from it and allowing students to walk the shorter distance to / from school. Also creates a healthier environment for all.

Creating a student-centred entrance with direct access to the recently installed Cycle Parking on the school grounds so students and staff can safely enter / exit the school away from vehicles. School Bus Parking within the school grounds only to accommodate all buses with no engine idling.

Cavan County Council is proposing to develop a School Zone at the front of school on the Bailieborough Road R191, as part of the SRTS programme. By reducing traffic congestion at the front of school and providing more space for walking and cycling, the School Zone will make it safer for children and their families to get to school.

Results of Parents Survey

In March 2022, the school sent out the STRS parent survey to families to get feedback on road safety around the school.

The survey had a 20% response rate.

81.5% of parents surveyed agreed that road safety is a problem around the school

98.7% of parents would support works at the front of school that improve student safety, putting pedestrians and cyclists first.

46.2% of parents surveyed want fewer cars at the school gate.



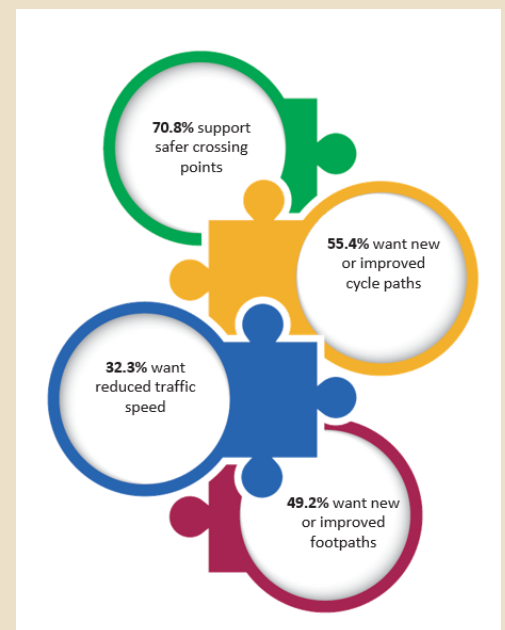
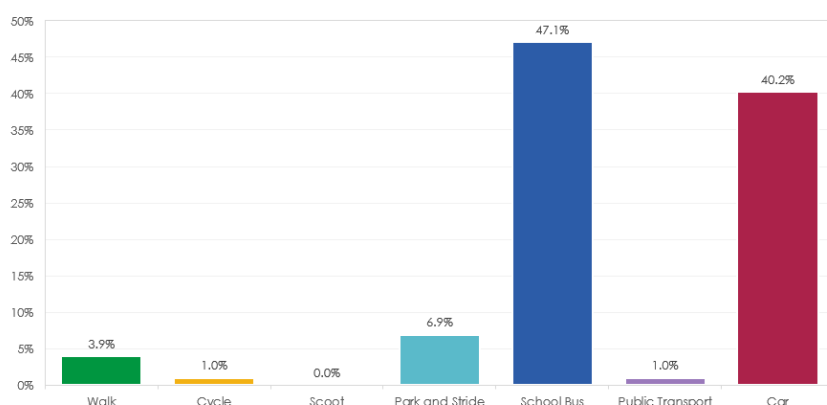
Safe Routes to School is an initiative of the Department of Transport and supported by the Department of Education.

It is operated by the Green-Schools Programme in partnership with the National Transport Authority and local authorities

Click here for more information:

<https://greenschoolsireland.org/saferoutestoschool/>

How students usually travel to school (shown as percentages)



96.9% of parents surveyed would support works that improve the walking and cycling routes to our school
11.8% of students surveyed live within a 15-minute walk of the school



Transition Year News

By Deirdre Marren, TY Co-ordinator and Year Head

On September 1st we welcomed our biggest ever group back after the summer break. There are 100 students in the programme this year, which has meant the welcome addition of a 4th tutor group. Welcome also to our tutors Ms. Brady, Ms. Murray, Mr. McKenna and Ms. Treanor. We congratulate the TY Prefects and Deputy Prefects who were elected by their classmates in each group and wish them well in carrying out their duties this year. They are: TY1 Ava Kelly and Brandon Dempsey, TY2 Laura McCaul and Rian Geraghty, TY3 Lauren Moynagh and Sophie Kenny and TY4 Eleanor Feerick and Jake Clifton. It has been a super busy start to the year. The first few days were all about settling back into school life and there were induction days involving Sports Day/icebreaker activities/pizza which hopefully assisted students in getting to know new classmates and bonding. Throughout September all students took part in "Yes" and "Provoking Thought" workshops. On September 21st we headed off in 2 big buses to the Ploughing Championships in Laois - it was a fun day out for all, and one where our international students really learned a lot about the farming culture!

There was a huge fundraising effort for the LA519 Big Breakfast, and the students are to be highly commended for their work on this. Indeed, TY students often lend a hand in the day to day running of the school - from assisting in the canteen at breaks, to completing a day of "desk duty" in the lobby assisting the office staff, to tea-making and serving at parent-teacher meetings, to Open Night tour guides - the list goes on... There has been so much positive feedback from staff about the assistance given in these areas - a big thanks to the students who really demonstrate positive attitude, willingness to help and ability to do a job well.

Alongside all this activity, TY students had a full day Lego Brickx workshop in October with Kathy Lambkin - some weird and wonderful creations resulted! Some students applied and were accepted for Garda work placements or Open Days, some others are completing extra work experience modules too.

Just before breaking for the midterm holidays - TY students (in their fabulous Fancy Dress) had a morning of Pumpkin Carving - hopefully this was great fun!

In the background (at first) the work for the musical "The Wedding Singer" continued. As the term went on, it became a bigger part of the school day for lots of our TY students and it was incredible to see how many of them got 100% into the whole thing, be it on or off stage. Many, many people and roles are needed to stage an event like this. It was a terrific show and an experience that will live with them for many years ahead. A huge "well done" to each one of you, and to Ms. Maguire and all the staff who helped make it happen.

Blocks 1 and 2 have now come to an end; assessments have been carried out and Block 2 is underway and will run until mid-December.



TY Induction

"There are 100 students in the programme this year, which has meant the welcome addition of a 4th tutor group."



Lego Brickx Workshop





We were delighted to be able to offer 5 new modules this year - Photography, Driver Education, Life Skills, LIFT programme and Sustainability. This means that over the course of the year, all students sample 20 subjects or modules which should assist them hugely in making wise subject choices for Senior Cycle.

The annual trip to Causey Farm took place on November 10th and it was great fun - breadmaking, bonding with the farm animals, squeezing through tiny tunnels and finally bog jumping!

Jackie Fox came and spoke to the whole year group and connected powerfully with them on the topic of bullying, online harassment and her journey following her daughter's suicide to the implementation of what is known as "Coco's Law".

TY students were eager and delighted to assist in helping Cootehill Chamber run the Xmas markets very recently. Next up are a "Clayotic" workshop, SVP speakers and a Garda visit. Work experience was from 12-16 December, and brought TY students to the Christmas break.

It has been a positive start to the year and I really hope TY students are enjoying and continue to enjoy the remainder of their TY experience.



Tys stuck in the mud at Causey Farm



TY Clayotic Workshop



Jackie Fox speaking to our TYs about Coco's Law.



Tys still can't stop the beat in TY Music class.





Fifth Year News

By Georgina Meehan, Year Head

I would like to extend a special welcome to our international students on joining the year group this year. Congratulations to the following students who have been elected as class and deputy prefects for this academic school year: Jake Whyte, Naomi Gibson for B1, Emma Carroll and Joshua Moore for B2, Ruby Moran and James Tully for B3 and Rebecca Mc Cann and Brian Mc Cauley in B4.

As the term ends, I would like to complement all of you for your continuous hard work and co-operation during the term. I encourage each one of you to continue to work at every subject, follow the guidance of your subject teachers, focus on on-going revision, and engage positively in study. Remember the support services in school are available to help you all get the best from your years in St. Aidan's.

Congratulations to you all on all your extracurricular achievements and in particular in our school musical. You all have done yourselves and the school very proud.

Sincere thanks to your tutors Ms. Mc Donald, Ms. Coss, Mr. Watters and Ms. Nolan for their tremendous help and continuous support throughout this term.

Finally, as Christmas draws near, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all and your families a very happy and safe Christmas and good health and happiness in 2023 and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Stay safe and best wishes.



Fifth Year visit to Combilift

“As the term ends, I would like to complement all of you for your continuous hard work and co-operation during the term.”

Senior Boy's Gaelic Football

By Owen Lennon, PE Teacher

Well done to our senior boys' football team who had a great win over Larcy College in their second group game. Our lads were down by 6 points at half time playing against a stiff breeze. However, they really turned on the style the second half and ran out winners on a scoreline of 3:10 to 2:07. We now play Ballyjamesduff in our last group game and a win will hopefully take us through to the Ulster quarter finals.



Senior Boys' Gaelic Football Team





Ladies' Football News

By Kerry Nolan, PE Teacher

U16 football

The U16 girls' football team had a great season and were unfortunate to not make it to the Ulster campaign. We got off to a flying start with a fantastic win against Breifne College on a score line of 10.8 to 1.2. Next up was a home game against Colaiste Dun an Rí. The girls fought hard throughout the game and showed great determination, this game was action-packed with some superb goal finishes. But unfortunately, a few last-minute goals gave the Kingscourt side the win on a score line of 8.11 to 6.8. We then made the journey to Clones to play Largy college who were tipped to top the group stage. This was the game of the season for our girls who played outstandingly well in every position of the pitch. With some fantastic individual performances, the girls got over the line and won on a score line of 5.8 to 2.12. After this win it left the girls an opportunity to finish in the top two in the group and progress to Ulster. They took this as motivation in their final game and came out victorious against Ballybay on a 3.9 to 1.8 score line. With the tough competition in the group stages, it left ourselves, Largy and Kingscourt on the same points at the top. The girls had to play a playoff against Kingscourt to progress on to the next round. After a rocky start to the game, the girls were creeping back into contention but fell short at the final whistle to lose by only two points after a serious cracker of a game. Well done to all the girls involved in this squad and to our Captain Philippa Hughes and Vice-Captain Ruby Moran.



U16 Girl's Football

U20 football

Our U20 footballers had their blitz with the local school teams in October. It was a great day for everyone involved and we had girls from 3rd year to 6th year on the squad. It was then on to the knockout stages where we travelled to face St. Patrick's Downpatrick. The girls came out on top after a fantastic team performance and got to progress on to the quarter final stages. The quarter final was played away again, this time facing the Ballyshannon side of Colaiste Cholmcille where the girls came out on top with a scoreline of 9.7 to 3.7. The girls now look forward to their Ulster semi-final which will take place after Christmas against St. Louise's. Well done to all the girls on this squad including some of our U16 girls who made the step up to play with the older girls. Our U20 team is captained by Molly Smith and our vice-captain is Sophie Daly.



Girls' U20 Football





LCA News

By Bernie Hanna, LCA Co-ordinator

As we draw closer to 2023, LCA students are busy preparing for task deadlines, interviews and work experience. The students of A5 have a number of tasks to complete this year. The students will each complete a portfolio and will be interviewed early next year by a visiting examiner. I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the LCA students the very best as they focus on their studies and prepare for their November Assessments. I encourage each one of you to try your very best and success will be yours!

Work experience as an integral part of the LCA curriculum. The students will participate in the work experience programme on the 21st November for a two-week block. This will be a great opportunity for students to explore an area of work which interests them and perhaps gain experience for their future careers. We would sincerely like to thank all local employers who continue to support our school and students.

Finally, on behalf of your tutor Mr. Ross, I wish you every success in the year ahead.



Congratulations to the LCA 2 students who received their results for session 1 and 2. The students achieved outstanding results across all subjects and celebrated their success with a scrumptious breakfast roll. A massive thanks must go to the LCA teachers for all their hard work and well done again to the students. Keep up the great work!

U16 and U19 Basketball News

By Kerry Nolan, PE Teacher

Our U16 girls had an unfortunate start to the season as they were knocked out on the first round. The girls fought very hard throughout the game and were beaten by the team who went on to win the Northeast region final. A lot more to come from these girls next year. Well done to all the girls on this squad which was captained by Muireann Daly.

Our u19s had a fantastic season of basketball this year. They started off the group stages against a very impressive Inver College side. The girls displayed excellent teamwork and got over the line to win 22-16, they were elated after this hard-fought win. They kept this winning momentum going as they went on to play The Collegiate, Monaghan in the second round of the group stages. The girls played outstandingly and came out on top on a score line of 24-9. This meant that the girls could progress on to the quarter final stages. They played Ballymakenny college and with some fantastic individual performances alongside their unfailing teamwork the girls came out victorious on a score line of 23-39. It was onwards and upwards for the team as they progressed to the semi-final which would entail a journey to Ardee to play Ardee Community School. It was a cracker of a game but our girls were not letting go their winning streak and they could see the final finally in sight when they won 29-16. It was back to where it all started for the final as we were due to play Inver College for the second time. Only 3 baskets separated the teams on the first occasion, however this time around the girls were unstoppable. An outstanding team performance left them regional champions on a score line of 33-12. Well done to all the girls involved in this squad, captained by Kaitlin Hughes and vice captained by Arianna Tommasi. The girls look forward to the Leinster cup semi-final which will be played after Christmas.



Girl's U19 Regional Basketball Champions





Sixth Year News

By Bernie Hanna, Year Head

Welcome back to all our sixth-year students and a special warm welcome to Mailys Treutens, Anouk Eggert and Weronika Fischi on joining the year group. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the tutor groups A1, A2, A3 and A5 and the tutors Ms. Lynch, Ms. Vogan, Mr. Lennon and Mr. Ross well in this academic year.

The first term has been busy for the year group, beginning with a memorable trip to London. A group of 49 students and four teachers embarked on the two-day adventure. We began with a guided tour of the great London sights of Big Ben, Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square and Buckingham Palace. Our curious minds were further enhanced with a visit to the impressive Science Museum and the breath-taking Natural History Museum. The students also got to see the spectacular sights of London from the capsule of the London Eye. We then boarded the London Eye Cruise to explore the sights of London that could not be experienced on foot. The students then got to experience historical events recreated in a comedic gallows humour style in the London Dungeons. Here, they travelled back in time to brave the Great Fire of London, stand in the dock in front of a ruthless 18th century judge and enter the dark realm of the medieval torture chamber! Following this epic trip, strong bonds were forged, and fond memories were made. On behalf of Ms. Scanlon, Ms. Vogan, Mr. Ross and myself, I would like to thank you all for your courtesy, kindness and good humour during the trip. You were an absolute credit to yourself, your families and to St. Aidan's.

Sixth year students within St. Aidan's demonstrate leadership within the student body by undertaking the role of Senior Prefect, Class Prefect and Bus Prefect. Prefects play a vital part in the running of St. Aidan's by assisting and supporting both staff and students. I would like to congratulate the following sixth year students who were appointed to Senior Prefects -Sarah Boylan (Head Girl), Philip Elliott (Head Boy), Róisín Hammond, Emma McCabe, Saoirse McGlynn, Sophie Murphy, Caolán Roberts and Niamh Shanley.

Congratulations to the following students who were elected Class Prefects and Deputy Prefects for this academic year: A1 -Hannah Mooney, Ben Fitzpatrick, A2 -Mark Gaffney, Emily Hill, A3 - Laura Fox, Lavinia McGill and A5 - Kayley Kennefick Moran, Lee O Leary. I wish you every success in your roles and believe you will all be excellent leaders for this academic year. Well done!

I wish you all well in the coming year. I encourage you to prepare well for the Leaving Certificate Examinations. Strive to reach the targets set and act on the guidance and advice of your subject teachers.

As you move towards your Christmas exams there may be times when you feel anxious and overwhelmed, please use the support systems that are there for you. Your tutors and I are there to help as are other staff members.

I would like to wish each and every one of you, success and happiness in the coming year.



Sixth Years outside Houses of Parliament

"The first term has been busy for the year group, beginning with a memorable trip to London. The students also got to see the spectacular sights of London from the capsule of the London Eye."



On the London Eye





Guidance News

By Vivien Drury, Guidance Counsellor

University Talks

The following Universities have attended St Aidan's and given presentations to 5th and 6th years students: UCD, DCU, NCI, DKIT, NUI Maynooth.

UCAS Application

Applications for UCAS have now been completed with a record of applications for Queen's University and Ulster University. Best of luck to all our applicants.

YES Programme

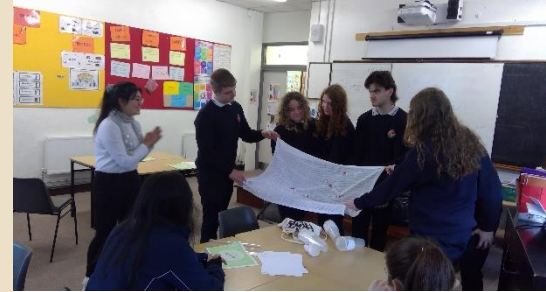
App students will be applying for CAO before 20th December. Students are advised to put in an application before Christmas to avail of the cheaper rate of €30.

Students can add courses free of charge until 1st February and then again from May to July 1st. So best to apply early.

Official application date is 1st February, cost €45.

Information on the UCAS, CAO, HEAR, DARE etc will be available on video presentation on TEAMS so parents can see the process. Any questions in relation to them, contact Guidance Counsellor:

viviendrury@staidans.ie



5th Year Students with Manting Mu



Past Pupil Manting Mu talking to students about College Life

Careers Week at St. Aidan's

TY and 5th year students had a special guest speaker, past pupil Manting Mu, who is currently studying a PhD in Computational Chemistry in Trinity College Dublin. Manting gave a presentation to all TY and 5th year students about her journey from St. Aidan's to Trinity and provided them with an insight into college life and advice in secondary school to get you there. A fantastic talk. She also provided a workshop for 5th year Chemistry, Physics and some Biology students on 24 November.

Competition time for Juniors on Teacher Bingo to find out about different areas of study, colleges etc; but by associating it with their teachers' learning.

Seniors are currently entering a Career Investigation competition so best of luck to all students.



Teacher Bingo Winners

Health and Wellbeing

Provoking Thought - A Mental Health Awareness Programme for students (1.5hrs). Deliver by Joanne McCauley from the Donegal Youth Services was rolled out to 1st, 2nd 3rd and TY. Each year group focused on a particular topic that was unique to that group like Bullying, Exam Stress, Body Image and Self-Esteem. Every student enjoyed the workshop and gained valuable coping techniques.





Be Well

This 90-minute activity session aims at supporting young people to gain knowledge and skills to identify and address anxiety in their lives. This was run and delivered to Senior Cycle students as part of wellbeing. It was delivered by Youth Work Ireland

YES Programme

This is a 3-hour programme delivered over 3 weeks to Senior students in the school as part of the wellbeing.

Session One - Sexual Identity and Healthy Relationships

Session Two - Communicating Consent

Session Three - Wider Influences and Decision Making

Mental Health Ambassador

5th year students provide information and support on notice boards for both junior and senior students. Topics change monthly. So far they have had Friendship Month and organised workshops on friendship bracelets. How to cope with anxiety and stress during the November. They provided techniques to cope over the intercom in the morning and provided a quiet space at lunchtime. They have also organised awareness on Body Image. 3rd years have had a talk from Bodywhys about supports for those who struggle with body image and eating.

Amber Flag.

Congratulations to last year's Mental Health Ambassadors that achieve the Amber Flag for their awareness and support concerning Mental Health

Safe PASS

Senior Students have participated in the Safe Pass to give them the necessary qualification to work on a building site. Cathal Bannon provides the training yearly. Thank you Cathal.

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and may the new year bring hope and blessings to you all



Last Year's Mental Health Ambassadors with the Amber Flag





Camoige News

By Emma Carroll, Fifth Year

This year was another exciting year of Camogie for St. Aidan's Junior and Senior team. For the Juniors it all began on the 26th of September with a blitz on the 3G in Cavan. The teams who participated in the blitz were Bailieborough, St. Mogue's and Breifne Collage. We had a good day over in Cavan as we won 2 out of the 3 games. The girls were brilliant, and we came out victorious against St. Mogue's and Breifne. Unfortunately, the girls lost to a very strong Bailieborough team.

On Wednesday 23rd November St. Aidan's Senior Camogie team got their 2022 campaign off to a good start when we participated in a blitz on the 3G in Cavan. The teams participating were Castleblayney, Bailieborough, and Breifne Collage. In our first game the girls started off with a strong win to Our Lady's of Castleblayney. The second game was against Bailieborough, a close battle until the end, unfortunately, Bailieborough came out victorious. The Final game was against Breifne College where the girls were overcome by a strong side. After the blitz we got through to an Ulster quarter final.

We were playing in an Ulster quarter final against St Dominic's Belfast in Sherry's Field Armagh. We played a competitive and intense opening half. Unfortunately, things took a turn for the worse and St Dominic's gradually pulled away to overcome this hard-working, determined St. Aidan's side. It just was not to be.

Well done to all the girls for participating and we look forward to another successful year in St. Aidan's next year.



Senior Camoige Team



Junior Camoige Team

Senior Boys' Basketball

By Owen Lennon, PE Teacher

Well done to our senior boys' basketball team who had 3 great wins against Largy College, Beechill College and Dundalk Grammar School. Unfortunately, we didn't qualify for the semi-finals, bowing out because of our score difference.



Boys' U19's Basketball Team





Tutor Group Christmas Doors



TY2



Rang Meabh



Rang Fergal



Rang Emmet



Rang Erin



Room 20



Rang Enda



TY1



Rang Eimear



Rang Maitiu



TY 4



TY 3



B1



B3



A5



A2



First Year Art



Rang Fiadh



Looking After Yourself at Christmas

By Vivien Drury, Guidance Counsellor

1. Take care of yourself. Eat right, get enough sleep and exercise. Control your alcohol consumption and limit your indulgence in high fat or sugary foods which leads to low mood and anxiety.
2. Recognise signs of stress and use relaxation techniques when you begin to get irritated or upset; such taking a few deep breaths, going for a walk or taking a break.
3. Have realistic expectations of family and friends. Just because it is Christmas, does not mean the attitudes or behaviours of relatives and friends will change. Accept this and plan how you will respond to help keep the Christmas spirit.
4. Make time for yourself. This time does not need to cost anything and can include going for a walk or reading a book. Schedule time for yourself during the busy Christmas period.
5. Study or not to study??? We all need a break so plan now the days you are taking off: the usual Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, St Stephen's Day the day after (as you will probably be going out) New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Study then on the days you have not booked off, but work at your best time. If you need to sleep till 12 then do and study after that. But do a few hours every day. This will help to reduce stress and anxiety when you have a plan. Dedicate a subject /topic you wish to do on that day. You'll feel great once you have it done.
6. If you experience persistent low mood or anxiety, consider professional help. There is a wealth of experience and expertise available to deal with mental health difficulties.

Getting to much for you?

Online counselling and supports:

www.turn2me.ie

www.mymind.ie

www.jigsaw.ie (excellent website)

www.shine.ie

www.alone.ie

www.bodywhys.ie

www.mentalhealthireland.ie

Phone, email and text supports:

Alone 0818 222 024

Samaritans 116 123

Pieta house 1800 247 247 or text help 51444

Childline 1800 66 66 66 text 50101

AWARE supportmail@aware.ie

LOOK AFTER YOURSELF
THIS CHRISTMAS





Christmas Card Competition Winners 2022

Well done to all entries. Well done and congratulations to all winners this year.

This year's winners are:

1st Year: Lana Gallagher, Fatima Noreen, Sophia Morris, Gabriele Valentaviciute, Martyna Piprek & Letisha Farrelly

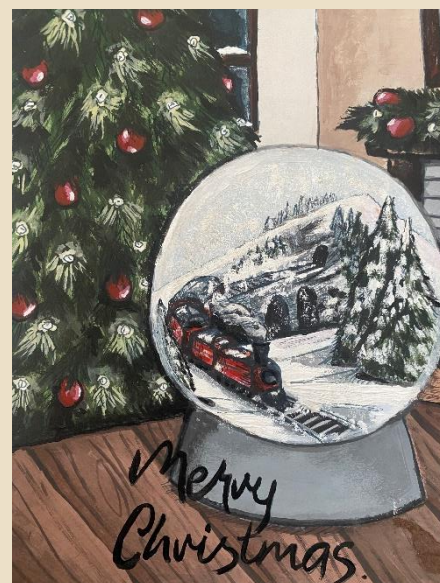
2nd Year: Jack Vogan, Mia Geraghty, Danielle Morris & Annie Foster

3rd Year: Katelynn O'Sullivan, SarahJane Moore & Adriana Matusevic

TY: Lily Foster

6th Year: Emma McCabe, Megan Whelan & Sarah Boylan

The overall winner of the competition is Jack Vogan 2nd Year - congratulations.



Sarah Boylan



Annie Foster



HAPPY CHRISTMAS!!

Overall Winner Jack Vogan



Danielle Morris



Danielle Morris



Lily Foster



Emma McCabe



Katelynn O'Sullivan



Gabriele Valentaviciute



Martyna Piprek



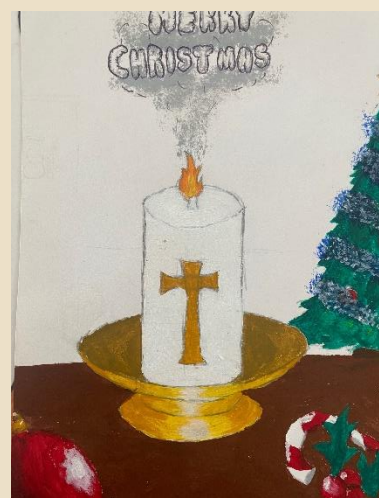
Lana Gallagher



Megan Whelan



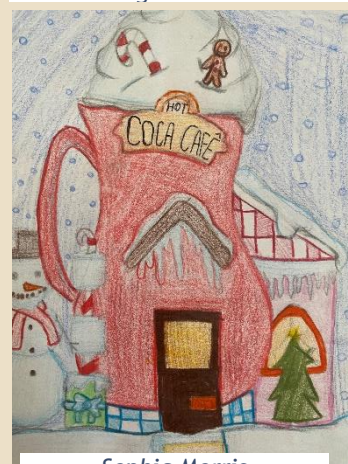
Fatima Noreen



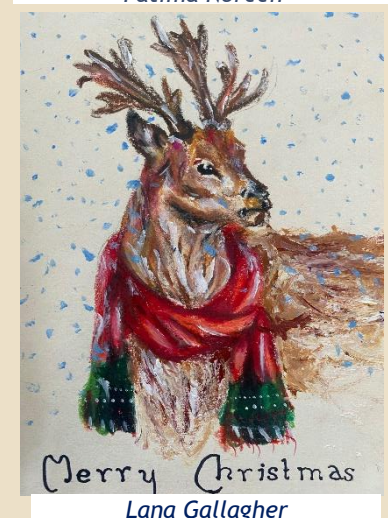
Gabriele Valentaviciute



SarahJane Moore



Sophia Morris



Lana Gallagher



Letisha Farrelly





Soccer News

By David Watters, English and History Teacher

U17 Boys Soccer

The boys opened their campaign with a hard fought 3-3 draw with OLSS Blaney. They led for much of the match but were pegged back late on. They were then given a walkover by Beech Hill. This left them second in their group and a tie with Patrician High School in the League Semi Final. Unfortunately, they fell to a 5-2 defeat having been all square at half time. They now go into round three of the Ulster Cup.

U17 Girls Soccer

The girls began their season with a very difficult game against The Louis, Monaghan. They were right in the mix until the very end and were unlucky to lose 7-5. A comfortable victory followed against OLSS, Blaney. They now have the difficult task of travelling to Carndonagh in the New Year for the Ulster Quarter Final.

U19 Boys Soccer

The season began with a good victory over OLSS Blaney, followed by another solid performance against Beech Hill. This saw the lads top their group and set up a showdown against St. Pat's Cavan. It turned out to be an absorbing game, which ebbed and flowed and eventually saw both teams enter extra time. The boys summoned a huge effort and a beautiful cross by Oisin Brady was controlled by the irrepressible Liam McCauley and hammered home with his right foot. St. Pat's threw everything at the boys to the final whistle. When it arrived, there were joyous celebrations. The lads have now qualified for the Cavan/Monaghan League final and the Ulster Quarter Final against Royal and Prior, Raphoe. Theses game will be played in the New Year.



U16 Boys Soccer Team



U17 Girls Soccer Team



U19 Boys Soccer Team





Éire

By Eabha Slowey, Transition Year

All that we fought for
Has changed throughout the years;
We seem to have forgotten
Why we shed our blood and tears.

The tongue of this green isle
Is losing its place here,
We take it for granted now
While it used to be spoken in fear.

The wind whips through the cliffs
We know only on a screen,
The hidden gems on this island,
The treasures that have to be seen.

The monuments alongside the road,
The jail tours are a bore,
We forget the people who were held here;
It was us they were fighting for.

This island is our rock
And where ever you may roam,
Cherish the culture and land for its beauty
And it's our hearts that makes the home.



THANKS
FOR FOLLOWING



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FB: Saint Aidan's Comprehensive
Insta:staidanscomprehensive

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Adriana Matusevic

