



School Newsletter

St Paul's Secondary School, Greenhills

Merry Christmas from all in St Paul's



Principal's Message

Dear Parent(s) / Guardian(s),

I hope you will enjoy reading our Christmas newsletter. It will give you a sense of some of the events which have taken place since our mid-term newsletter in October.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you, and all of our students, for the support and co-operation we have experienced since we re-opened St Paul's at the end of August. Many people thought that schools would not remain open, but thankfully, due to the efforts of everyone in the school community, we have arrived at this day, still open.

On behalf of Ms O'Shea, the staff and myself, I wish each family a happy and restful Christmas. We think especially of those who have experienced bereavement or serious illness this term. Our thoughts and prayers are with you at this difficult time for you.

I ask you to please read Dr Tony Holohan's letter to parents which we emailed to you last week, in particular in relation to travel outside of Ireland during the Christmas period. We are all looking forward to rest and relaxation with our families and will return ready to face 2021.

Best wishes,

Geraldine Troy (Principal)

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NEW PARTNERSHIP

We are delighted to announce that St. Paul's has been accepted into the 'Business in the Community' Programme.

Read more overleaf.

BUSINESS IN THE COMMUNITY

We are delighted in St Paul's to have been accepted into the Business in the Community programme this year. This programme will support us in identifying a link with a company, that will support students in our school on an ongoing basis. We are in the initial planning stages of this programme, but we are very excited about the opportunities it will bring to the students of St Paul's.

The Company will introduce students to the world of work, and help students to develop key skills that are valued in the workplace, such as Communication and Presentation skills. As the partnership develops, we look forward to increased interaction between St Paul's and the company, such as Mentoring. We look forward to bringing you more news in the near future in relation to our Business Partner.

JIGSAW GRADUATION

On Thursday 3rd December, we were delighted that our four 5th Year Jigsaw Peer Mentors, had a Zoom Graduation at 1pm. Staff from Jigsaw, teachers from St Paul's, KCC and TCS, peer mentors and their parents were in attendance. Last year Cameron Killoran, Precious Edeaghe, Katelyn Somers and Abby Coughlan all trained as Peer Mentors with Jigsaw. We partnered up with students from Kingswood Community College and Tallaght Community School, so all twelve students undertook the training together.

Following the training the students then delivered a presentation on Positive Mental Health to the Junior Cycle students. Our four students were so dedicated and committed throughout the year. The impact of their talk to the Junior Cycle students was really profound. They could definitely connect with the students, and their message of looking after your mental health, was received loud and clear. This was a fantastic, worthwhile project to be involved with. The girls learned so much from it, but gained so much from it as well. We are extremely proud of Cameron, Precious, Katelyn and Abby.



TYs are “On Point” after their Image Consultancy and Styling Course

This term in St. Paul’s our transition year students completed a new elective module in Image Consultancy and Styling. Ms. Farrell hosted the module and students received a certificate of completion after they completed the course.



The students learned about the different styles and cuts to suit different body types while still keeping their individual style alive. The girls also learned about how high-end designers create seasonal trends and how they are brought to the high street for all consumers to enjoy and wear.

The students looked at who controls the colour palette for each fashion season and the colours that suit them by taking a colour analysis test. They now know if they have a cool, warm or neutral colour base by looking at the colour of their skin, eyes and hair.

Along with colour the students looked at accessories, the general rules when wearing them, how to use accessories to change up or to control the focus of an outfit.



In addition the students looked at the idea of capsule wardrobes, how to create them and how to get as many different outfits from a smaller amount of pieces.

Along with styling the students look at the importance of skin care; the importance of it and how to follow a good skin care routine.

The students enjoyed the module and are now more aware of what is going on in the shops they love to buy from.

CHINESE CLUB – UPDATE FROM MR O'REILLY

Early November saw the establishment of the first-of-its-kind Chinese club. It is fantastic to see the numbers of interest from students across all year groups. Every Monday afternoon during lunch, students across all year groups meet in a socially distant environment to practice speaking Chinese, doing arts and crafts, learning songs, and practicing calligraphy. Some third and fifth-year members offer their own testimonials:

‘It is a difficult language to learn, but once you grasp it, it feels like a massive accomplishment’.

‘It opens opportunities to learning new languages and making new friends.’

‘Chinese club is fascinating and broadens my knowledge of culture and language. I found a new way to connect with people through the Chinese language and I enjoy learning it’.



As part of a three-week rotation, Transition Year students were introduced to Chinese language and culture. Students were immersed in the language through music and writing. Transition Years enjoyed making conversations, practicing the 4 tones, and drawing parallels between Irish and Chinese cultures.

The latest cohort of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year students completed their introduction to Chinese language and culture. In keeping with the Junior Cycle Wellbeing Specification, students displayed resilience and creativity by designing an ‘Advent Calendar of Facts’ – each door of December unlocking a new fact on China. As a reward for finishing their course, students created Christmas cards in Chinese, which is said to be the highlight of their Chinese language journey.

Looking ahead into 2021, students will prepare for the much-anticipated Chinese New Year festival, due to take place in late February. Students in all classes will use this week to showcase their knowledge of all things Chinese, music, dance, and sport. Led by the Chinese club, it is a week not to be missed. It is much fitting that we wish all students and staff a 圣诞快乐 Shèndàn Kuàilè (Merry Christmas) and a very happy and prosperous New Year.



PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

The AGM of the Parents' Association was held on Thursday 19th November. At this meeting members of the Parents' Association were appointed to executive roles within the Parents' Association.



We would like to congratulate Denise Ferns on her appointment as Chairperson. We are delighted that our previous Chairperson, Barbara Hayden, will assume the role of Assistant Chairperson. We also congratulate Tanya Wallace who has taken on the role of Secretary. We thank Catherine O'Hanlon for continuing her role as treasurer. We wish them all well in their new roles. Having an active and vibrant Parents' Association is a priority in St Paul's. We wish them well in the year ahead.

Fundraising opportunities this year have been curtailed due to Covid 19 restrictions; however the Parents' Association are holding a Christmas Raffle. This is due to take place on Monday 21st December. The prizes collected are truly amazing, so we thank all the local businesses who have supported the Parents' Association in this endeavour.

Representatives from the Parents' Association were able to review our new Wellbeing Policy, before it was ratified by the Board of Management this term. This is a central role of the Parents' Association, as this is how the Parent voice is truly engaged in our policy making. We thank those parents involved for their participation.

After the AGM, we held a parent talk for an hour on Zoom. This was delivered by Shane Martin, Psychologist, on the topic of supporting our children through anxious times. His talk was uplifting, entertaining and very real. He spoke from the experience of being a parent, and of being a Psychologist. He encouraged us to be patient with our children to connect with them and to make home always be a safe haven for them. He encouraged us to praise our children's efforts, rather than results. He encouraged kindness, as kind people are always happy.

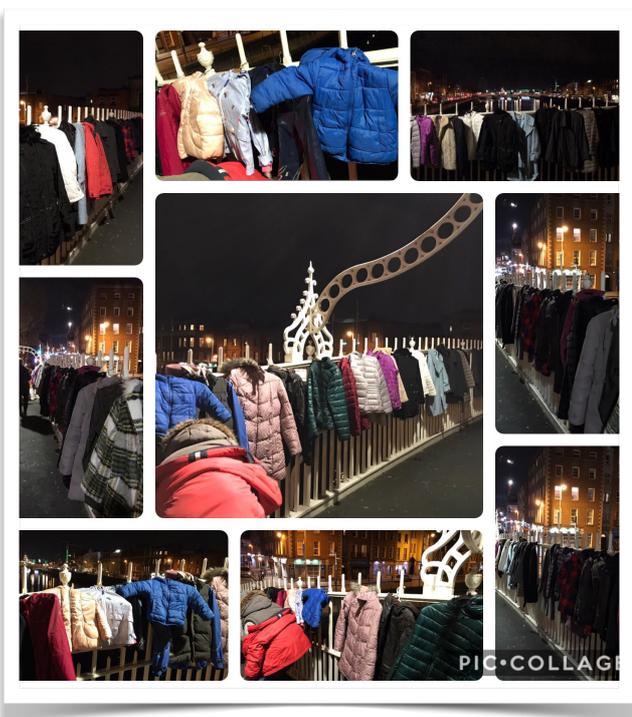


Shane encouraged helping and volunteering; making an effort to help others is richly rewarding for the helper as well as for the receiver. He encouraged us as parents to find our flow. Do something that helps us to find our flow - for example, walking on the beach, listening to music, gardening, ... just lose ourselves in what we love. This demonstrates to our children how to cope with anxiety. We can be an example to our children of how to cope with the stresses that are a reality of life. Shane also mentioned spirituality and faith. It has very positive effects on people, and their approach to life. This talk was very well received by parents and gave us all much food for thought!

The Joy of Giving - St Paul's School Community Supporting Others

As a school community we have spent Advent reflecting on our core values of Care, Inclusion and Respect. This reminded us of our duty of care to those around us and the importance of reaching out to others. Christmas is a time of giving and during the course of Advent, the students have challenged themselves to be giving both at home and in school. They have put energy and enthusiasm into various

charitable events including the 'Warm for Winter' initiative, the Shoebox Appeal, 'Laken and Emily's Baby Bank' appeal, Merchants Quay Ireland and the Dublin 12 Foodbank, Focus Ireland and Crumlin Children's Hospital.



It is often said that in giving we receive, this was very much a reality during Advent in St Paul's where the joy of giving was a palpable feeling throughout. We would like to acknowledge the generosity of all in the St Paul's school community who have been so kind in their support of these appeals.

EVENING STUDY

FINDING IT HARD TO STUDY?
NEED A QUIET ENVIRONMENT WITH NO DISTRACTIONS?
SUPERVISED STUDY WITH SR MARTINA IS FOR YOU!!

MONDAYS, TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS FROM 3:45 TO 5:30PM
COST FROM CHRISTMAS TO MIDTERM IS €50

TRANSITION YEARS REVAMP 'THE QUAD' - #UPCYCLING!

For so many years our Quad, outdoor space, was maintained beautifully by Ms. Gilligan and her team of helpers. However, with all that has gone on, this year it fell into disarray. So, our three TY form classes, Tara, Treasa and Triona set about bringing it back to life. Over a three week period the girls donned suitable attire and worked together tirelessly to make it a place that the whole school community could once again enjoy and indeed be proud of.

In weekly rotations, the girls set about sanding all the picnic tables and bird tables. They added colour to all with a fresh coat of paint, greys, yellows & turquoise. They also planted some beautiful flowers which continue to thrive and planted a variety of bulbs which will hopefully make an appearance in the weeks ahead. The weather wasn't always on our side but the girls didn't let it stop them, each week everyone had a smile on their face. The support and guidance given by the brilliant Mr Shanahan, Peter, our caretaker, must also be acknowledged, the little project wouldn't have been as successful. Well done to all involved!



CAREER GUIDANCE INFORMATION

- We held our CAO presentation to 6th year parents on the 12th November via Zoom. We hope you all found it an informative evening.
- All Transition Year students completed Aptitude Testing in November. The results of these will help them in January to choose their subjects for senior cycle.
- CAO: The majority of 6th year students have now completed their CAO applications. Just a reminder the early closing date is the 20th January for a reduced fee.
- PLC: Post Leaving Certificate course applications are now open in most colleges. It is really important to apply early to these as they are in high demand.

STUDENT LEARNING TEAM TEACHING OTHERS!

The Student Learning Team held their first ever 'Teach Meet' earlier this term. Natalia Moravia ably supported by Aisling Amazuo and Grace Dowling delivered a presentation to their fellow students. The presentation on how to add photos to a word document using Office Lens was since shared with all year groups.



The team have also established a Resource Hub in the library, here students are free to take copies of graphic organisers, revision worksheets and much more. The Student Learning Team have decided to press pause on 'Teach Meets' for the moment (Covid), instead they are busy creating 'Help to' videos on various topics. These will be shared in the weeks and months ahead. The Student Learning Team is also busy preparing to promote Safer Internet Day taking place Nationally on February 9th. A competition will be held in January with the winners from Junior & Senior Cycle to be announced February 9th. Please follow us on twitter @PaulLearning to see what we are up to.

TEACHERS CRAFT @ CHRISTMAS CRAFT CLUB



Room 52 was full of festivities on Tuesday lunchtimes for staff this month with staff invited to join in to create their own personalised Christmas decoration. Ms G.O'Toole helped to facilitate this workshop catering to the range of skills of staff members who wanted to take part whilst listening to Christmas carols and sharing snacks!



Student Council News

Smarties Cookies for Stand Up Week

On Wednesday the 25th of November, Student Council members prepared Smarties Cookies after school with the guidance of Ms. G O'Toole for our sale the following day. This was part of a 'Stand-Up Week!' initiative to create an inclusive school environment. Much to our surprise, Smarties Cookies promptly sold out on Thursday!

We responded to the demand on our products by pulling together and more cookies for Friday's lunch. Teachers and students made donations to the Student Council for a nice midweek/ Friday treat.

Candygrams for Christmas

Last week, the student council ran our annual Candygrams. Candygrams are candy canes that are purchased by the students of St Paul's. Once a student purchases a candy cane, they will tell the student council representative selling the candy canes, who they want to buy for. The candy canes are then delivered, anonymously, to the people that had been chosen. It was 50 cent for 1 candy cane and 5 euro for 12 candy canes. Candygrams were run to spread some joy and Christmas spirit around St. Paul's.

On Tuesday, 8th of December, Thursday, 10th of December and Friday 10th of December, we went around to every class to take orders. We had class lists and asked if anybody wanted to order a candy cane. To take an order, we kept track of a tally for each student that was bought for. Students could buy a candy cane for anyone in any year group.



They also had the option to purchase one for any teacher of their choice.

On the Friday of that week, we counted up all the orders, and organised all the candy canes, ready to sell them. We grouped them together in bundles for each person receiving a candy cane, and arranged them by year group, and had separate bags for each class – so all were delivered in a covid safe manner!



TY CHRISTMAS CRAFTING

The Transition Year students were invited to take part in a wreath-making workshop just in time for the Christmas Season.

They put their upcycling skills to the test to create a wreath from deco mesh, old Christmas decorations and scrabble tiles. The creativity on show was amazing and memories were created during this fun workshop facilitated by Ms. G O'Toole in Room 52.



RANG SÍOFRA COOK UP A STORM

Students in Rang Siofra organised, prepared, and hosted a café-style fast food operation for staff this week. This was completed as part of in-school work experience for students who are completing a Hotel, Catering, and Tourism module as part of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme.

A wide variety of baked goods, soup, and hot and cold beverages were available for staff to choose from. A number of food skills and interpersonal skills were developed as students served the staff as their customers and were able to develop an insight into the working world. Students opted that any profits made from the sales of their goods be donated to Pieta House, a charity dedicated to providing resources to help mental health. Well done ladies!

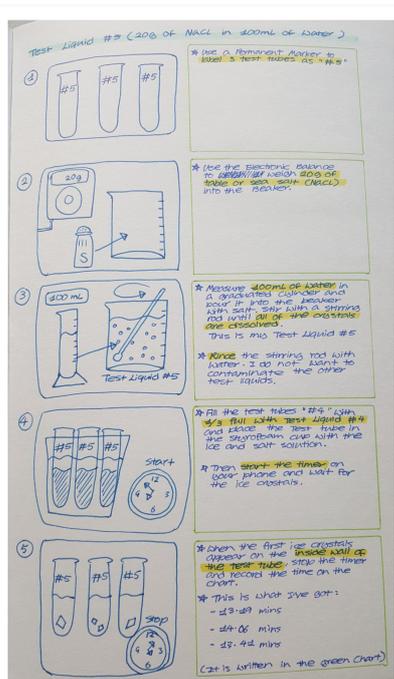


RECYCLED CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

Ms Colleton lead the students and staff to push the boundaries of their imagination to create some upcycled Christmas decorations from items around the home that would otherwise be counted as waste. This sustainable and environmentally friendly initiative was a huge success with students and staff entering their creations to be considered. Congratulations to all.

SCIENCE WEEK 2020

Science Week is an opportunity for everyone to engage with the science all around us. 2020 marked the 25th year of the SFI Science Week which took place from November 8th to 15th. Although this year we were unable to join the events of Science Week in person, we did however take part through virtual activities.



The theme for Science Week 2020 was “Choosing Our Future”, focusing on how science can improve our lives today and for decades to come. A competition was held for the best Science Project Idea that can help people now and in the future. The aim was to start conversation among students on how science can positively impact our collective futures and help us shape the Ireland we want to live in. Siobhan O’Hanlon, 6th Year and Li Zhou, 3rd Year were the winners of the Science Week competition.

Alongside this competition there was daily posting to year group Microsoft Teams pages of videos, quizzes and fun science facts, encouraging students to get involved and have informed conversations about Science. Topics included Optical Illusions, the Periodic Table, Senescence as well as links to live Science Week talks for students to tune into. Students participated in completing these online quizzes and openly debated the colour of the

infamous 'Green or Grey' Optical Illusion Runner phenomenon. Science Week was hugely successful with students and teachers enjoying informed conversations about our shared ambitions for our future.

TY BUDDY'S GET FIRST YEARS COLLEGE READY!

The Transition Year Buddies have been busy with the 1st years recently. As part of College Awareness Week, they met in groups to talk about their hopes and dreams for the future. Some of the 1st years interviewed their buddy about transition year and the type of things they do and would like to do when they leave school. They played games and did a quiz and they all learned a thing or two about each other!

This week they met up again to do a “Buddy Christmas Kahoot” and have a chat and a few Christmas sweets. It was great fun and a big thank you to all the TY Buddies for all the time and effort they put into making these occasions happen. We look forward to getting together again in 2021 and a big congratulations to all 1st years on completing their 1st term in St. Paul’s!

CHRISTMAS CAROL SERVICE 2020

Christmas 2020 will be very different for everyone and our traditional Celebration of Christmas from the music and religion depts. could not take place due to COVID19 restrictions.



Over the past number of weeks our sixth year music students have rehearsed their Christmas Carols at home and were then recorded individually in the Oratory, which became Mr. Brett's recording studio. Sarah and Hannah also performed a beautiful ballet interpretation to Silent Night.

Representatives from each year group in the school delivered Christmas liturgical readings, also pre-recorded. As an inclusive Secondary school we concluded the Service with a meaningful whole school reflection on the year 2020.

The 2nd yr. music students ended the proceedings with a pre-recorded vocals and percussion of Winter Wonderland with visuals from our whole school community and an energetic dance routine from the PE dept.

Ms Shields and Mr Devlin sincerely thank Mr Brett for his recording expertise and indeed all those who contributed to this production.



ST PAUL'S HAS ITS VERY OWN ELF ON THE SHELF!!!

This December, our school was visited by an Elf on the Shelf known as Elvis who has been up to all kind of mischief to terrorise the staff of St. Paul's. With sprout-filled sweets, cardboard brownies, elfie selfies, and stealing the bell, he is a comic relief for our school community. Elvis promptly sent a list of demands to staff and was happy to return the school bell when he met Ellie Elf. We hope to see Elvis back again next year!





WISHING YOU AND YOURS A VERY
HAPPY, SAFE AND PEACEFUL CHRISTMAS
AND EVERY GOOD WISH FOR 2021
FROM ALL AT ST PAUL'S

