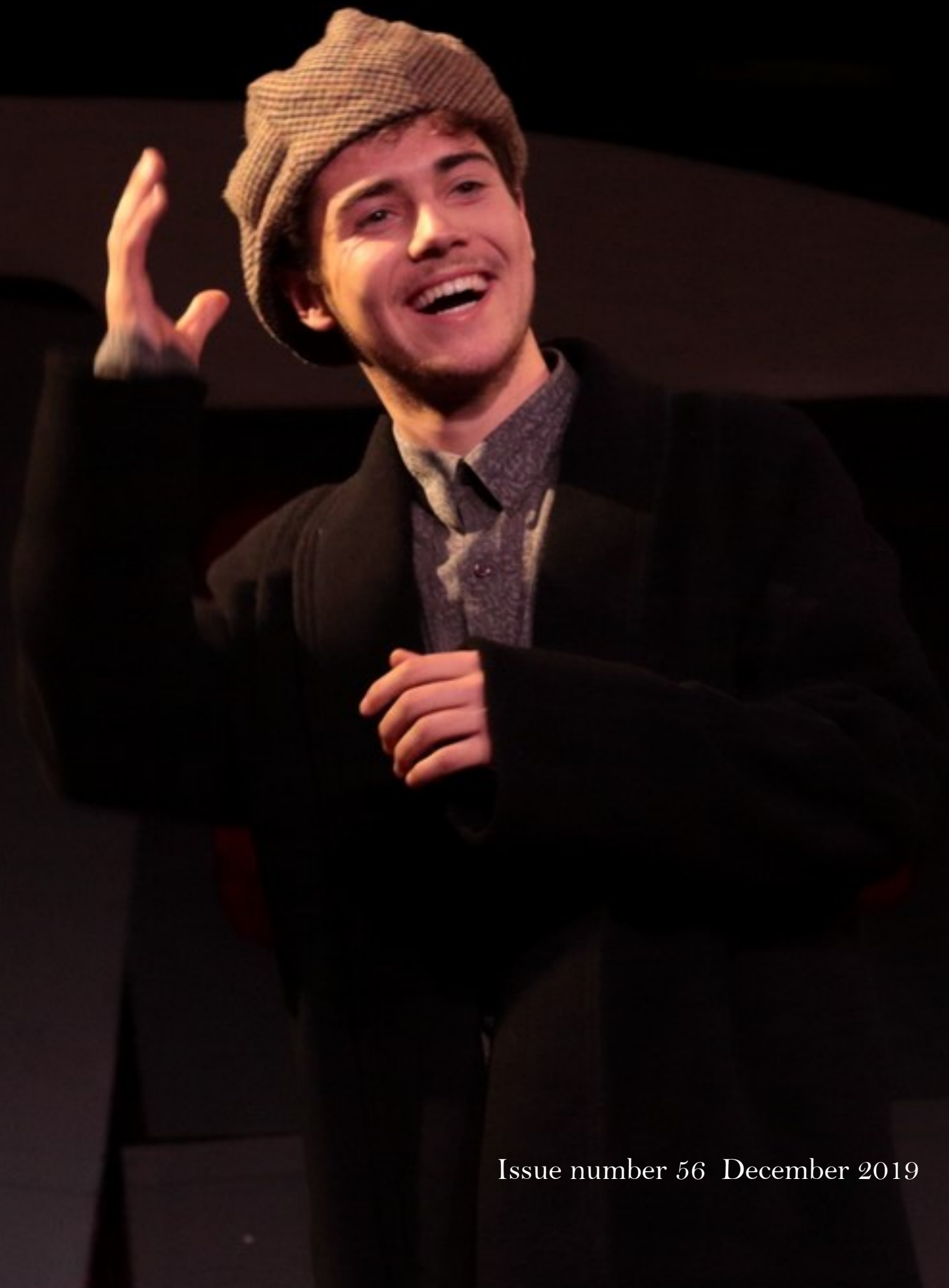


# *Newpark Newsletter*



Issue number 56 December 2019

## The Principal's Word



our curricular and co-curricular domains. I acknowledge and congratulate those involved.

I want to particularly draw attention to our recent 'Stand Up!' week. Homophobia, biphobia and transphobia are present in Newpark, however much we mightn't like to admit it or however pluralist we feel our ethos is. Present sometimes consciously, sometimes unconsciously. All our students, particularly in Junior Cycle, are developing both their identities and their sexual identities. But for our LGBT+ students, the environment for this development can be unfairly challenging and unjust. Along with offensive terms such as 'faggot' and 'dyke' being used surreptitiously on corridors, in changing rooms and in classrooms, think about how many times a day an LGBT+ person in Newpark might hear 'So gay!' as a negative description. A student once described it as feeling like a paper cut



each time. Once off it might not amount to much, but over and over again, day in, day out, it does. Cisgender and heterosexual people simply cannot appreciate how insidious and hurtful this barrage must be. No LGBT+ person in our school should feel like they have to just 'grin and bear' this. Nor should anyone in our community ever feel

shame about their identity. So 'Stand Up!' week is a prompt for all of us in Newpark to be explicit about not liking homophobia during any week, or any day, and to be explicit that as a community, we are not having it. Remember, if everyone chose to come in, no one would have to come out #comein

As you will know, last month we had a Whole School Evaluation: Management, Leadership and Learning (WSE MLL). We engage in internal evaluation – known as school self-evaluation or, SSE – on a continual basis, as we are always seeking to

improve both our practice and the student experience. A WSE MLL is an external evaluation from the Department of Education and Skills which endeavors to support and compliment this ongoing internal evaluation. While we await the draft report, we are pleased that the WSE MLL team affirmed much of our practice in Newpark. They commented on our caring and inclusive environment. On the freedom afforded our students to find themselves and develop their potential. On our wide variety of curriculum and co-curriculum. On our strengths in learning and teaching. On our quality of partnership with students and parents/guardians. On the strength of our governance and the quality of our Board of Management. They also indicated areas for development and in due course we will prioritise and respond to these suggestions as a whole school community. For the moment, I want to sincerely thank all our students for their courtesy and their quality of engagement with the WSE MLL team, our parents and guardians from second year, fifth year and the PTA for completing questionnaires and participating in focus groups and last, but not least, my teaching colleagues, for their ongoing commitment, sincerity and professionalism.

I have become more acquainted with the PTA over the last couple of months; both the people involved and the work that they do. The PTA is an earnest and hardworking group and I want to thank them for their continued support of the school. The Christmas fair was, as ever, a great event. As part of this year's series of PTA talks, Professor Aidan Moran of UCD visited the school in November to present on study skills. This event was well received by the large group of parents, guardians, and students in attendance. Next up for the PTA is Michelle Stowe, who will visit the school in the New Year to talk about Restorative Practices. I encourage parents and guardians to attend this presentation. Firstly, Michelle is very entertaining and delivered a great session to staff last August (google her TEDx talk for a sneak preview!) Secondly, as a school we are endeavoring to be a restorative practices community. We do this because we believe a restorative approach builds positive relationships between people and ultimately helps improve learning and teaching in our classrooms. We also do it because to engage restoratively is to model and teach empathy: catching an important learning moment in itself. Given that parenting and teaching are similar endeavours, I really encourage parents

and guardians to come along and hear Michelle.

It was great news that our co-application with our partners Avoca Hockey for the 2018 Sports Capital grant was successful and that we were recently awarded €138,766. This grant will go towards the planned resurfacing of the hockey pitch which we hope to commence in the summer of 2020. I would like to acknowledge and thank all the supporters of this project, not least among them Minister of State for Higher Education, Mary Mitchell-O'Connor, TD.

We have also recently received confirmation from the Department of Education and Skills that our 2015 Summer Works Scheme application for funding to replace the perimeter fencing at the Rowanbyrn end of the campus has been approved. This amounts to just under €23,000 and I would like to acknowledge Cllr. Mary Hanafin, Mary Mitchell-O'Connor, TD, Richard Boyd-Barrett, TD, and Lola Hynes for their interest and support in this project.

Thanks also to all the parents and guardians who have made a voluntary contribution to the school this year. I am conscious of striking the right balance between encouraging families to contribute but not pressurising families to contribute. The most important thing to acknowledge is that all contributions to the school are greatly valued and appreciated. As outlined in my recent email to parents and guardians, our focus is always to allocate voluntary contribution funds to improving the student experience. Many of the activities outlined in the following pages would not be possible without your generosity. Feedback from you in relation to the new payment method via VSware has been positive. You can contribute by simply clicking on the 'Parents' tab on newparkschool.ie and logging into VSware or by contacting the office for information on the variety of other payment methods available.

We have had three staff members retire this term. Heather Dunne came to work in the school in 1999. She worked for many years as secretary to the then Principal, Derek West, before moving into the front office for the latter part of her career. Heather was always conscientious, honest and sincere in her work. All of us who encountered her knew her winning smile and warm demeanour. Heather particularly lights up when talking about her three daughters, of whom she is rightfully proud, and we wish her well in getting to spend more time now with family, especially her cherished granddaughter.

Brian McCann came to Newpark in 2003 as a teacher of English as a foreign language. He subsequently moved into the AEN department and

worked successfully there for many years, latterly with young people presenting with autism. Brian is an accomplished academic holding a variety of degrees including an MPhil and an MBA. He is currently completing his PhD with the University of Dundee, specializing in the area of autism. He has presented at, and contributed to, many international conferences. Brian is perhaps most renowned in Newpark however as the person who introduced Aikido to our curriculum. He also taught Kendo and there was many a day I did a double take out my window as I saw Brian and his students wielding Kendo sticks at each other in the front yard!



Denise Fennessy came to work in Newpark in 1982. Denise has spent the last 37 years keeping the corridors, classrooms and staffroom of Newpark clean and tidy. For fear of her answer, I wouldn't ask her which one of these areas brought her the greatest challenge. And anyone who knows Denise, knows she wouldn't be shy in telling me! It's hard to nominate exactly why so many of us in Newpark are so fond of Denise. She has been a constant presence of course, but I'd hazard that it's her decency, her integrity and her kindness. Denise is such an institution in Newpark, it's hard to believe she's not just on a break and about to come back sometime soon. I don't think any of us really believe yet that she has retired. Moreover, her retirement marks the end of an era: Denise's sisters, Marguerite and Yvonne, her mother Helen Ennis, and her grandmother, Mrs Gill, have all worked in Newpark in the past. The close of a Newpark dynasty!

On behalf of the whole school community, I wish Heather, Brian, and Denise all the very best in their retirement.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderful people who work in Newpark - our teachers, our office administrators, our SNAs, our nurses, our librarians, our coaches, our caretakers and our cleaners - for all their hard work over the first term. I also especially thank Mark and Andrew.

I wish everyone on campus - in the school, sports centre, music centre and Avoca - a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year. In the curricular languages of the school: Joyeux Noel. Frohe Weihnachten. Schastlivogo Rozhdestva. Meri Kurisumasu. Nollaig Shona.

*By Eoin Norton*



# Hockey All Ireland's



The All Ireland Schoolboys Hockey Tournament is an annual hockey competition where the top 16 school teams in Ireland compete for the Tasmanian Shield. It is regarded as the pinnacle of schoolboy's hockey and in the three days before the Halloween midterm Newpark's Hockey All Ireland's Senior Boys team competed in this prestigious tournament. This year's tournament was held in Dublin and so we had home advantage.

We met in the GPA on Wednesday morning and after getting some new gear (there's nothing like the feeling of fresh kit) we headed to the Food hall in Dundrum for breakfast – or second breakfast in most people's cases – and then on to Wesley College where we had our first game of the tournament. Wesley were our biggest rivals in our group and we knew that we needed a big performance in order to get the result we wanted. After a strong first half we were drawing 0-0 and had definitely rattled the Wesley side who had probably expected an easy win. However, Wesley got into their rhythm and by the last quarter were 3-0 up after some lucky goals. We kept fighting, of course, with Daragh Grogan volleying home our first (and only) goal of the tournament. The match ended 3-1 to Wesley and we left the pitch gutted as we knew that in this competition, a single loss ruins the chances of making it out of the group stages. However, the huge performance everyone had put in gave us confidence going into our remaining two games. And with a recovery 'ice bath' swim in Sandycove, hot chocolate, and an intense Mariokart tournament, we moved on from the loss and just enjoyed ourselves.

We had breakfast as a team the following morning in the Rankin's house (big thanks to Scott and Clare) and then headed to the school for our first game of the day against Friends, a strong Ulster school with some international players. The school came out to watch and support but unfortunately we didn't give them much to cheer for. We lost the game 6-0, an embarrassing result and another loss. We were very disjointed on the pitch and perhaps too comfortable after our previous strong performance, and the Northern side punished us for our mistakes. We were

obviously disappointed but we had to reset for our game later that day against Regent House, another Northern team, but a team we knew we could certainly beat. However, our performance was very similar to the earlier game and we just couldn't connect on the pitch. The difference between the two teams being that they scored 2 goals from their few chances and we didn't score once from ours. The final whistle blew, ending the game, and with it our All Ireland run. It was tough to take 3 losses from 3, but we moved on and being Newparkers, we decided to get the most out of the rest of the tournament by enjoying ourselves as much as possible.

A highlight of the tournament was the dinner that evening where all the lads dressed up smartly in shirts, bow ties and suspenders, putting all the other schools to shame. We were the centre of craic in the room with Eric Kendrick mirroring his speed, skill and determination on the pitch in a very different way off the pitch, showing a competitive Ben Vincent whose boss in front of a large audience. There was also a friendly on the Friday against Sullivan Upper, where you could play whatever position you wanted and it involved some creative celebrations and tactics. After swapping keepers mid game, which led to some rigged goals, the game ended 6-6 and the relaxed approach arguably led to some of our best hockey that week.

Overall, despite the disappointing losses, we had a wonderful experience those 3 days with some unforgettable moments, all with a great bunch of lads. And last but not least, a big thank you to all the supporters and parents, as well as an extra special thanks to Jonny McCormack, Mark Cullen and Mr. Breen for all their hard work and for being with us over the three days.



By Oran O'Sullivan



## Another Perspective

The All-Ireland Schoolboy's Championship is the pinnacle of schools; from the competitive matches against the best 16 schools across Ireland, supporters, the fancy dinner and of course, the famed annual butter eating competition hosted by Newpark at said dinner.

After a disappointing performance in the tournament last year, everyone was eager and motivated to go again this year. Not to mention the tournament was to be hosted in Leinster this year, and two thirds of our matches were in Newpark.

We were soon informed that we would only have to beat Sutton Park to qualify. There was a lot of pressure to win as it all came down to that one match. We held almost all of the possession throughout the match and got the lead from a drag flick in the corner from myself followed by a slot back post from Justin. After giving up a stroke towards the end of the match, Sutton Park were suddenly back in the game. Despite this, the lads defended well and never gave them a chance to equalise. Preparation immediately began, with lots of competition for places.

Our first game was against Wesley, you could almost hear the heartbeats of everyone in the room, we were hyped. It wasn't long before the whole hockey complex in Wesley was packed with supporters and other teams, now was the time to perform. From the first play we were only inches away from a lead as a reverse ball from Eric brushed the post. In the second quarter we took it up a notch and were pressing Wesley hard. Evan Rankin was able to break into the circle with some silky 3-D skills and was unlucky to not get a shot away before he was sandwiched between three defenders. Before we knew it half time was upon us and the match was scoreless. Wesley won the first short corner of the game in the third quarter which I ran down, a second corner was followed by a bottom left flick giving them the lead. This was followed by a goal from Wesley from a loose ball that rolled across the D and another flick. However, youngster Daragh Grogan was able to score a blinder of a consolation goal on a half-volley to finish the game with a well-deserved goal for the team. It was a disappointing first match against a top team. It could have been anyone's game and the match ended 3-1.

After a freezing recovery swim in Sandycove at 8AM we were welcomed back to the Rankin household for the 'Mario Kart' tournament that would decide the two losers for the butter eating competition. Ben Vincent and Eric Kendrick were the losers after some close heats. The next morning, on the Thursday after a team breakfast at Evan's house we were to play our first home match against number one Ulster side Friends. We were eager to perform in front of a home crowd. However in the first few minutes of the second, Ben Marnell stum-

bled off the pitch with a badly pulled quad, losing our centre back was massive, this forced Mark Fahy into centre back, Evan into centre mid and myself into centre forward. The end of this match was disappointing as we didn't do ourselves justice. This was an emotional loss as it ended hopes of making it out of the group, and our tournament over.

The dinner was a welcome step away from the pitch at that point, which we attended in true 'Newpark attire' which is at this point a tradition. After dessert it was time... 'The Annual All-Ireland Dinner Butter Eating competition' hosted by Newpark, which was an exhibition of pure butter devouring mastery from Eric and Ben which came down to the wire with a great audience and ten packets of butter being demolished (for those who are wondering why Ben had no hair after mid-term...well Eric won).

Despite disappointing results, the tournament was a blast for all involved and a truly positive experience with many laughs shared. I would like to thank all my team mates for giving it their all and showing true class and determination. Thank you to Evan and Mark for their leadership. Thank you to all supporters that came to watch, it made the tournament for us! Thank you to the school for supporting us and Mr Breadan for keeping us on track during the week, but most importantly to Jonny, for his passion, effort and time. Finally thank you to Mark Cullen for his help.

By Jay Menelaou

## Junior Boys Hockey



The League has finally started, after a long wait the junior boys had their first match last week drawing with Kings Hospital 2-2. Andrew Paul scored the first goal flicking the ball on the reverse into the top right corner.

The second match was played on Wednesday this week winning 7-0 against Mount Temple. The juniors have a strong team this year with plenty of talented third years making up for the lack of players in TY. Congratulations to Connor Murphy and Oran O'Sullivan for making the Irish squad for U16 and U18. The juniors have a good chance this year at winning their league. They are in second place with 4 points having played 2 matches and are just 2 points behind St Andrews, who have 6 points and played 4 matches.

By Jordan Young-Elliott

## Senior Girls Hockey

Our junior girls enjoyed a ground-breaking season last year, giving us confidence for going into the Senior Premier league having played in the league below (Senior 1) for a very long time. Our coach Anna Richardson knew it was important to get our pre-season training under way early so we could be as prepared as possible for the start of our competitive campaign. We were set a two week running programme by our fitness guru, Simon Moore that got us into tip top shape before we even started training together.

Our first league game was against Newbridge. We drew 0-0 but we were pleased with our performance especially seeing as we were missing Milly and Dara who were both injured at the interpros.

We followed this up with a more frustrating game against Loreto on the Green. We did not start the game well and knew we had to pull our socks up. After half time we came out and completely dominated the whole 2nd half but unfortunately, we were just not able to get the ball in the goal. It finished 0-0 and we were made to rue the number of chances we created in the second half.

Our first win came in the Blackrock derby against reigning Senior Cup holders St Andrew's. Our goal came in the 2nd quarter as Lily Bennett deflected a beautiful cross from Laragh Tierney and it was this goal that gave us the three points. It wasn't all plain sailing though as we had to soak up plenty of Andrews' pressure in the final quarter. Erika made a stunning save off an Andrew's drag flick to seal the win for us.

We won 6-0 against Our Lady's Terenure in the first round of the Senior Cup and this gave us a major boost in confidence as we were struggling to score goals in our first few league matches. We believe the Cup is a competition that we can really aim to do well in this year and hope to make it to the latter stage of the competition.

After four competitive games our defensive record was pristine having not conceded a goal but unfortunately that came to an end in a frustrating 2-0 loss against Loreto Foxrock. We went toe to toe with them the whole game, but they converted two penalty corners to take the three points. The game was extremely competitive and physical, but their penalty corner execution proved to be the difference.

The start of the season has been extremely positive and seeing as the team retained only six players from last year's squad and we have eight players who have moved up from the junior age group it has been somewhat of a development stage for the team but we are excited to see what the rest of the season has to offer.

*By Jess Whelan*

## 1st Year Girls



As new students come to Newpark the hockey season begins. We have thirty-three enthusiastic girls, two of whom are goalies, with lots of promising talent. Since September, Newpark's first year girls have played a series of friendlies against schools such as High School, Wesley College, St. Rafaelas and Loreto on the Green. After winter we will start training for league matches. We are looking forward to our competitive matches to really see what we are made of.

Hopefully, Newpark first years will continue to develop their teamwork skills as they get to know each other more. We train twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays, and are always open to have new people join and try hockey for themselves. Some current team members had never played hockey before, but they have adapted well to the game.

Ms. McCarthy, is the coach of the team. She is a great organiser, she goes to every match and helps to improve our gameplay.

*By Evelyn Lysaght,*

## Junior Girls

This year has not been the most successful for the junior girls. Although we have had lots of success in our friendlies, we are yet to have the same luck in our cup and league matches. However, we have had some absolutely cracking goals from our number one goal scorer aka our goalie Grace Kelly! One thing we have been extremely lucky with this year is our amazing coaches Susie and Oisin. We also have to say a huge thank you to Simon and Ms Carr for giving up their time to put us all through our paces 2-3 times a week in fitness. With all their help, and the amazing commitment and continued enthusiasm of our team we have high hopes for better results in our upcoming matches and for the rest of the year.

*By Fern Marnell and Laragh Tierney*

## Minor Girls Hockey

Hockey this year has been a big change from last year. Not because of the new coaches or trainers or even because of the extra fitness classes. We have become a team, and that has given us a higher standard of playing that we couldn't have reached last year. We performed very well in the league games and came out top in our league! Unfortunately we lost our cup game but we are hoping to improve further next year. From everyone in minor girls hockey we would like to say thank you to our trainers; Abbie Whelan, Maud O'Connor and Erika Gallagher, Simon and Ms. Carr, who did fitness with us and most of all Polly.

*By Nakai Mudiwa*

## Rugby France Trip

The juniors have had a very eventful start to the season in rugby. We began the season with a win at home. Unfortunately after this we lost a few close games against teams we could have beaten. However despite some confusion and miscommunication we did enough to make it to the Father Godfrey Cup. I'm sure we can perform well in this competition after our recent good trainings provided by our coaches Mr Cole, Rafe Garland and David Murphy.



Other than the matches we have played we have also gone on a trip to Soustons in France. It has been the highlight of my school year so far and I hope the other lads feel the same. Just before the Halloween midterm break we went on the trip. We had a few training sessions in France, one of which involved an interesting tip match of shirts vs skins, and we improved our shape as a team. We played one match, against a strong French team, which we unfortunately lost due to a bad start. I feel we learned a lot from that match and all of our players got to play which was good for the team.

However we did much more than just play a match in France. We also went on a high wires course and we went bodyboarding. The high wires course was a really good challenge and everyone enjoyed it. The bodyboarding was great fun as the waves were really big and other than the match, it was my favourite part of the trip. I think that both the second and third years can agree that this trip brought us all closer together and improved us as a team.

On the last day we had time to watch the

World Cup semi final between New Zealand and England. Unfortunately England won which only slightly brought down the mood. After that we had some pizza, before heading to the airport to go home. It was a really good trip and I hope many more years get a chance to go.

I would like to thank our coaches who were mentioned above for training us twice a week, all the supporters who have come to watch our matches and the team for being such a great bunch of lads. Finally I would like to thank Mr Adams for organising so many great matches and the France trip that we all enjoyed so much.

*By Emmet Hodkinson*

## Senior Rugby

We've had a pretty good start to our season so far. We have won all of our league games, with a particularly enjoyable win against Temple Carrig which came down to the wire. The team are in through to the semi-final of the league next week. The Vinnie Murray Cup is coming up and we're hoping to win and get through to the 'Senior Cup'. Thanks to our coaches Mr. Lennon and Luis Faria for their hard work this season.

*By Harry O'Sullivan and Sean Armie*

## Junior Rugby

This season is going alright so far. We have played two games, a friendly and a league match. We won our friendly but lost our league match narrowly. The final score was 10-19 to Temple Carrig. Everyone on the team fought hard but unfortunately they came up trumps. We train twice a week and everyone works really hard. Hopefully this pays off in our coming games. Thank you to Mr Cole and Rafe Garland for their coaching this season.

*By Andrew Bagrin*

## 1st Year Rugby

First Year rugby players have been training on Mondays and Thursdays. There is usually a match on Wednesday, sometimes a blitz on Fridays. Since it is getting dark earlier, they are no longer able to play on the grass out front and they have been training on the basketball courts. Recently the team have had some great wins, in particular one against St. Andrews, with some close losses against De La Sale. Good luck to the First Year Rugby Team and thank to their coach Ms Farrell

*By Luke Conaghan*



## First Year Boys

There have been a great number of 1st year boys coming along to training. In the sessions they have been working on building basic skills, as well as doing drills and playing matches. Players are already seeing great improvements week on week. The trainings are on Tuesdays from 5-6pm and the league fixtures will start after the Christmas break. All 1st years are welcome and should speak to Mr. Doyle about joining or come along to a training any Tuesday.

*By Mr Doyle*

## First Year Girls

First Year Girls' basketball has kicked off with a tremendous start. We have a solid team and they are fine tuning their skills before their season kicks off after Christmas. As always, we would welcome any students who would like to join the team and get involved- it is never too late!!

*By Ms Morrissey*

## Second Year Boys:



The 2nd year boys are an incredibly hard-working and committed group of players. We have also gained some new additions for the season ahead! The boys have really built on their passing system

and are sinking shots. They are currently working on a zone defence and making excellent progress in powering to the basket. As our league isn't kicking off till after Christmas, the boys are using this time to prepare for the competition. Assistant coach Malachy Jambrina (TY) has been a valued help in setting warmups, drills and refereeing games during our Thursday sessions. This lot show great potential moving forward.

*By Ms Delaney*

## U16 Boys:



The Cadet season started very early this year and this team came prepared! It kicked off with a trip to the National Basketball Arena in Tallaght that saw us unsuccessful against Wesley College. Com-

petition would be tougher in this pool, but this team dug in. They competed well in the East League against teams like Stratford and Colaiste Craobh Ahainn, which Dash thought was a very country school - it

wasn't. Jack got into a fight with a cement wall that day, but we 'HEADED' home with the win. It left us in a playoff situation against North Wicklow Educate Together. On a wet day down in Greystones we came out on top and it left us facing Firhouse in the quarter final stages. We travelled the 20-minute journey in fabulous style. Only the best for these guys! Unfortunately, we came up against a strong side and even though we threatened the basket in the final quarter, we had to take our loss home on our lovely, lovely bus.

As this league ended, we found ourselves hosting a Skibbereen team in the National Subway Cup. 8 big, tall athletes from West Cork and a very amicable coach boasted about how polite and competitive the Newpark squad were. They went back to Cork with the win, but we went back to class with an appreciation and respect for a very skilled side.

We now find ourselves starting the South Dublin Basketball League. We defeated St Conleth's in the first round and are confident going forward. This team are witty, supportive and have a superb attitude to the game and to each other. Hup Newpark!!!

*By Ms Delaney*

## U16 Girls:

The U16 girls' basketball team have been training hard throughout the school year. They have placed well in the Basketball Ireland League but unfortunately did not progress to the quarter finals. This is not for a lack of dedication and skill and the girls should be proud of all their achievements and progression to date. They have competed against Mount Anville and Sancta Maria. While unlucky at the final whistle, the team have developed some fantastic skills and hold their own against all their opponents.

The South Dublin League has commenced with great excitement and the girls' commitment to training has paid some fantastic dividends.

All the teammates should be commended for their commitment to the team throughout the course of this year and they project a level of maturity balancing an exam year with an array of many extra-curricular sports too.

*By Ms Morrissey*



## Second Year Girls



The 2nd year girls have been refining their defensive and offensive skills since the season started. As they do not commence their league till after Christmas, it gives them ample opportunity to strengthen as a team.

They are an extremely upbeat group and have shown great commitment to their improvement. The girls are eager and have a great competitive streak! We have been lucky to welcome some new players this year also. At present the girls have been introducing a zone defence and assistant coach Malachy Jambrina (TY) has been putting them through their paces with wall sits! Looking forward to our games and the continued singing of 'No Scrubs'...

*By Ms Delaney*

## Under 19 Boys

The U19s have had a much-improved season on last year with a big increase in numbers. They have been training hard on Fridays from 4-5pm, with a great atmosphere in each session. The season got off to a strong start with convincing wins over Clonkeen, Stratford and St. David's. There has also been learning experiences in the form of nail-biting losses to Wesley and Colaiste Craobh Abhann. They have progressed to the quarter finals of the plate and are just starting the fixtures in the South Dublin Basketball League. We always welcome new members to the squad, anybody interested in playing this year or next should come see Mr. Doyle or come along to a training any Friday.



*By Mr Doyle*

## A word from the Captain of the Senior Squad

In basketball this year we have a lot more players than we did last year which is great to see. Since the

start of the year the team has worked well together and we understand each other's strengths and weaknesses. Not all matches have gone the way we want them to, but some have. The most important thing is that we have fun playing as a team.

After mid-term our matches started for the South Dublin League and we started out with a win against Teresians, the score was 43-31. We are looking forward to playing against Loreto

*By Ángel Glynn*

## Under 19 Girls



The senior squad have had a busy start this term. The girls played four matches in the basketball Ireland league. We had a mixed report when it comes to results. Newpark had great wins over Sion Hill and Sancta Maria but were unlucky against St Andrews and Rosemont.

*By Ms Costello*

## Basketball Season 2019 = 2020

Each year the numbers participating in Newpark Basketball has grown at a steady pace. This year we have eight age categories competing in The South Dublin Basketball League and Basketball Ireland league. The U16 and U19 competitions run from September to January/February. The first- and second-year leagues run from January to April. Training sessions started in early September.

Training times and their coaches are listed below:

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
4 - 5	First Year Girls Ms Morrissey	Senior Girls Ms Costello	1.0 - 2.00 pm U16 Boys Ms Delaney	Second Year Boys Ms Delaney	Senior Boys Mr Doyle
5 - 6	U16 Girls Ms Morrissey	1st Year Boys Mr Doyle	2.00 - 4.00 Matches	Second Year Girls Ms Delaney	-

Huge thank you to all the staff involved in coaching basketball this year: Siobhan Costello, Eavan Delaney, Alex Doyle and Laura Morrissey. Without their time, dedication and commitment basketball wouldn't happen in Newpark.

Support is really appreciated at games. Where possible it would be great to have another adult present at away games. Please come along and support us.



## Cross Country



On Thursday the 21st of November seventeen students from Newpark went to the Phoenix Park to participate in a cross country event. Seven first years ran in the girls' 1100m race, eight first years did the boys' 1100m race, with two third years in the boys' 2000m race. Two of our students came away with medals. Mia Chadwick won a bronze medal in the girls' 1100m and Eric Schutte won a silver medal in the boys' 1100m. Hugh Kelly and Oscar Comerford also placed 2nd and 3rd respectively in the boys' 2000m.



The contestants from Newpark set out at twenty past nine excited for the races. Half the thrill was the feverish chatter before them, the hyper journey and the first daunting glimpse of the track. The track is a lap of a field in Phoenix Park. Up close it was much bigger than what we thought it would be.

At twenty-five past eleven the first year girls lined up, jostling for space as the horn sounded and we were off. The strategy it seemed for that sort of distance was to pace yourself and then pull ahead at the last minute. Mia, as previously mentioned, got third place earning a bronze medal however some of the Newpark contestants were not far behind. For some this was their first cross country event. It was very pleasing when the race was finished, it was a fantastic day out there was an ecstatic group of students heading back to school that day. Thank you to Ms Delaney for bringing us.

*By Sarah Glanville and  
Silvia Ciulli Cummins*



1st Year Boys Hockey

## Horsing Around



Newpark students attended an inter-school horse riding competition at Killossery. Amelia Bolger placed 3rd and Lucie Smith placed 4th in their respective competitions. Well done girls!

Competitors:

Ally Murphy, riding Hyway Lady

Amelia Bolger, riding Cloondancer

Elsie Barry, riding Ringwood Cupid

Lucie Smith, riding Ruby's Girl

*By Georgia O'Rourke*

## TY Sports Committee

The TY Sports Committee has a number of different roles. So far, we have organised tournaments for the 1st years, in both unihoc, basketball and football.

This helps maintain mental and physical wellbeing which is important in a new school environment. The games also teach first years how to





work together, it helps them in making new friends and it can also help develop an interest in a new sport.

We have also been collecting the results of the swim a mile challenge and will reward students that reach certain goals with vouchers for the lunch box.

We received the money to fund these prizes after meetings with Mr. Norton in which he allocated prize money for the whole year.

*By Louis Perrem and Mia Flood*

## 1st Year Swimming Gala



The first years took part in a swimming gala at the start of the year which was organised by the LCA class. It consisted of relays, front crawl, back crawl and breaststroke. A lot of people who weren't participating went along to watch. The event was highly enjoyable both from a contestants and bystanders point of view. I'm sure that the next swimming gala will be enjoyed just as much. The next scheduled gala is against other schools so there will be a lot of competitive spirit amongst the next contestants.

*By Sarah Glanville*



*Photos by Caitlin Gemmell*

## TY Touch Rugby



As a part of TY Leisure and Recreation, Ms Ring organised for students to do a module in Touch Rugby.

Touch rugby is derived from 15 a-side rugby, except players do not tackle each other, but instead touch their opponents using their hands on any part of the body, clothing, or the ball.



TYs were joined by Billy Ngawini who has represented Ireland in both touch and tag rugby, as well as representing Italy in 15 a-side. Though as we

discovered, and as his name might suggest—Billy hails from New Zealand.

Billy put TY's through their paces for four weeks. Not only did they learn new skills but they also increased their fitness. Touch rugby involves a lot of running...like a lot!

Thanks to Billy for coaching us and Ms Ring for organising!

## 2040

On November 13th we went to the Irish Film Institute (IFI) for a special screening of 2040, a documentary about how we can have a healthy, sustainable future. It was a very positive movie which tried to show what our future would look like if we used all of the sustainable things we have access to today on a more global scale. Some examples are solar power grids and seaweed farming, both very sustainable ideas. The IFI treated us very nicely and the seats were really comfortable, but the best part of that trip has to be going to Off Beat Donuts afterwards.

*By Eva O'Donnell*

## Green Flag for Water



Newpark received our third Green Flag – this one for Water

Just as the summer exams commenced in May An Taisce invited

us to The Helix to the Green Flag Ceremony Awards. Ms Grant attended along with Lauren Moore, Sean Kelly and Dan Hatter.

An Taisce were so impressed with our work that they invited Newpark students to come and present at the Green Flag for Water training seminars for schools commencing their work on this flag. Tom McGovern, James Berney and Lauren Moore were praised for their presentation and helpful advice to others at the forum.

On Friday, 22nd November, we raised our 3rd green flag, our flag for water conservation. It was a great feeling to see it being raised, all the hard work of the green school committee and the form group 3LRG finally coming to fruition.

It has been a long process, after some technical difficulties with the water tanks, but the An Taisce officer, Dean Eaton, was incredibly impressed with everything we had done!

We are now hard at work at our next flag, the travel flag. We have already completed a walkability audit to map out the walking routes to the school. We will be starting new initiatives to encourage sustainable travel and conducting surveys to find out how we can improve. We encourage you to think about your own journey to school, are there any greener alternatives you could use? Remember, save the turtles!

*By Eva O'Donnell*

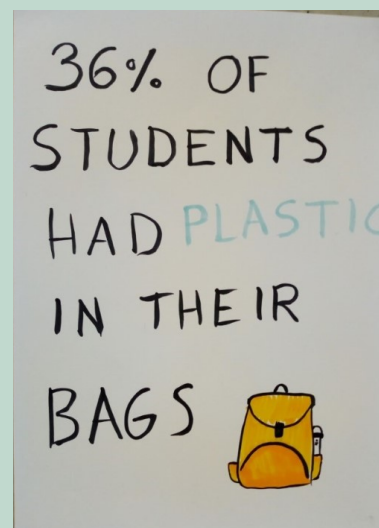
## Water Flag



James, Tom and I went to the Royal Marine Hotel in Dun Laoghaire to make a presentation to other schools around Dublin. Our presentation how we got our water flag, which was useful for the schools who attended. Our form did our Junior Certificate CSPE project on it and were quite involved in getting the water flag. In the presentation we included tips and helpful ways that we conserved water in our school and a little guessing game that involved all the students that were there watching. It was a very fun day and we were glad to help educate other schools around the area on how to get their green schools water flags.

*By Lauren Moore*

## Plastic Usage in Newpark



For our CBA project, we decided to do a survey to see how many people had single-use plastic in their bag, in our plastic-free school. We started by making survey sheets with the questions, do you have 0 pieces of single-use plastic in your bag, do you have 1-2 pieces in your bag, and do you have 3 or more pieces in your bag?

*By Neal Dowling, Calisto MacManus, Sulieman Shah, John Lamagna, Rachel O'Sullivan, Maeve Cooper, Grace Patterson and Lily Mangan.*



## Climate Award Ambassador



Kim Achari receives her Climate Ambassador award for Outstanding Achievement from An Taisce's Environmental Education Unit's Director Dr. Michael John O'Mahony at the National Awards Ceremony at the Morrison Hotel on 27th November 2019.

The Climate Ambassador programme is open to second level students as well as other members of the community. The application deadline is late November each year. I highly recommend the programme; you get back even more than you give, and of course I will support you in your climate actions. I want to thank everyone who helped me attain this award – you know who you are!

*By Kim Achari*

## Walkability Audit for the Travel Green Flag



There are two crucial actions that need to take place at the beginning of the two year process for attaining the travel flag, the first being a whole school survey about how everyone travels to school, which is underway, and the second a walkability audit.

On November 15th four travel officers from Green Schools An Taisce came to Newpark to meet the committee and assist in our audit. We were really lucky because we had our own local travel officer, Allison, her colleague who works in town planning, another who is specifically working to improve the

programme for secondary schools, and a trainee. Between them their expertise was second to none.

We had four different questionnaires on clipboards to help us analyse how safe and accessible walking from Newpark to Seapoint is. As we walked down and back Allison educated us about all the road-markings and rules already in place to help encourage walking and cycling to school. They explained how our campus is really well set up but that there is definitely room for improvement out the front and en route to the station. And they are going to help us address these needs with Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.

They advised us to highlight the following needs to the council:

- Seapoint Road needs a formal pedestrian crossing (zebra, yellow box, etc) near Temple Park Ave (currently too many students just run across the road here).
- Continue bike lane the whole way along Newtownpark Avenue.
- Put an amber man on the pelican crossing so the students have more time to cross without yellow flashing lights for cars; and shift the traffic light sequence in favour of pedestrians, because if students have to wait too long they get fed up waiting and put lives in danger.
- Provide 'school' signage around the lead up to the school gates, in the form of signs and road-painting, similar to what is in front of Guradian Angels.
- Cut back the overhanging bushes (which at times are so low to dodge them pedestrians need to step onto the curb or road).
- Mount convex mirrors on the sharp corner on the one-way narrow street (Temple Crescent) to help students and cars see around the corner.

Allison's colleague, Trevor Keppel who is the Infrastructural Officer (and was a town planner in previous life) made a cool video of the walk. We are the first school to ever get such a video made. It shows the audit and our observations around improving safety for Newpark cyclists and pedestrians. Overall the whole exercise was very informative and worthwhile.



## Climate Strike



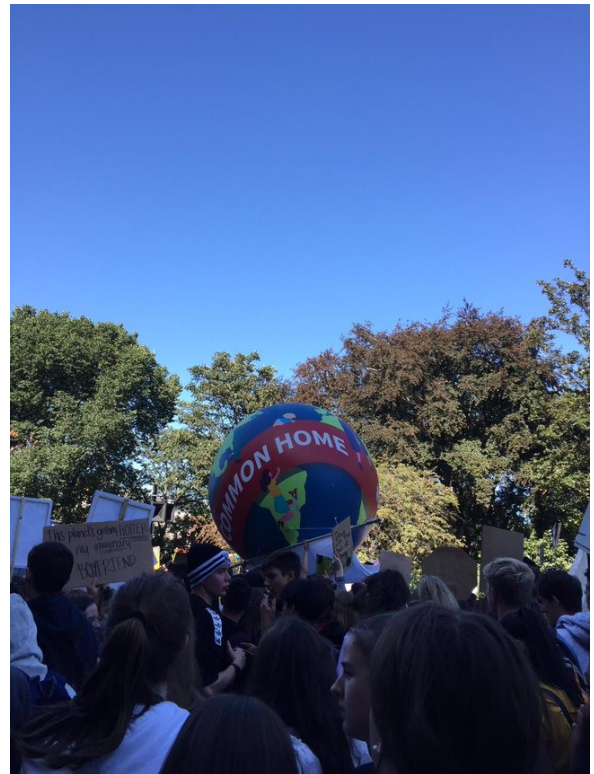
You would think that we're tired of going to strikes, and we are in some ways – it's tiring making arrangements to get into town, fit in making posters around homework and shouting at the top of our lungs for a better future. It's tiring to have to protest because the generation before us failed to make the difference that's needed. But going to strikes, thinking of slogans, painting your face blue and green and looking around to see thousands of students supporting the same cause makes it worth it. As we march through the streets, there is a feeling of hope and togetherness that leaves you smiling long afterwards, and almost makes you forget the terrible reason you are there — almost.

As we arrived in town, we began to realize the sheer multitude of students there. We later found out that there was over 10,000 people and it sure felt like it. Posters everywhere, chants, and bright faces. It made us happy to see so many young people protesting for their future. Whether it was to try and make a differ-



ence or just to skip school, in the midst of it all, you could tell all these people cared, and were frustrated by

the governments lack of action. There were a dozen speakers, young and old, making their messages heard through speeches, poetry, fundraising and music. They rallied us all, if only for a few, moments, under a united



cause – our future. One such speaker told us to set an alarm for 1.49, eleven minutes before the end of the march, representing the eleven years we have left, until the damage we have caused the planet become irreversible. It was a frightening wake up call to the reality of our situation.

The social impact of the worldwide climate strike has made a difference. More of our powerful leaders are starting to listen in. The effects of this is that more schools are starting to ban plastic, but unfortunately that itself is not enough. We need the whole world to reduce plastic usage, and luckily climate strikes are telling people about this.

In conclusion, climate change is not some far-off problem anymore, it is happening right here, right now and we need to tackle it. It is everyone's responsibility to make sure that awareness is spread throughout the world. The marches have played a huge role in this and are promoting ways in which we can make a difference. We can use reusable water bottles, do car-pools, cycle instead of drive, recycle properly, opt to not buy single use plastic, turn of the tap in good time, the light switch etc. The future is in our hands. Small changes do make a difference.

*By Nakai Mudiwa, Eva O'Donnell,  
Mea Gigon and Georgia O'Rourke*

## Mental Health



As students, we often don't even notice the daily strain that accumulates within us. We have a lot of things that can weigh us

down, whether personal or academic. The endless due dates and the constant stream of information during the school week can often overwhelm us. Developing healthy habits is critical, as it allows us to maintain the right mindset to get through the school days.

It can seem daunting and almost impossible to achieve a healthy lifestyle, sleeping enough, eating well and balancing hobbies and study. Luckily, you don't have to figure everything out alone. Newpark has a range of facilities and a whole body of students and staff to support and help you.

**Guidance Councillors:** If it is something you think you would like to discuss, personal or career wise make sure to make an appointment with one of the schools two Guidance Counsellors.

**Meditation Room:** If the stress is getting to you, the meditation room is a perfect place to ground yourself. Located in the red brick building it serves as a great place if you need a quiet moment to yourself.

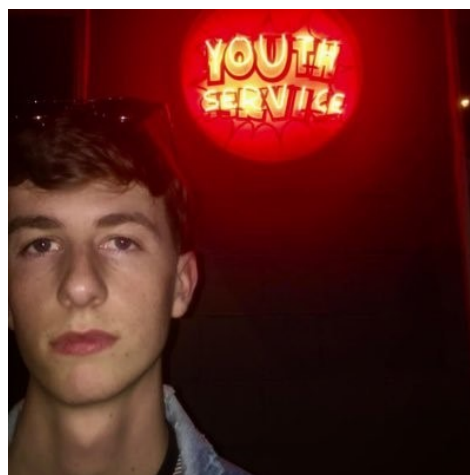
**The Nurse:** Our mental state has an effect on how we feel physically. Stomach aches and headaches can quickly develop if you are stressed. If you begin feeling unwell don't ignore it or try to push yourself through the day, consider visiting the nurse's office in the red brick building.

**Extra-Curricular Activities:** I can't recommend enough joining a club or society within or outside the school. Getting involved with something can be integral to shaping you during the school years. Having a community to which you feel you belong to can help reassure you and ease the stress. Make sure school is not the only thing you have going on during the week, it is not the be all and end all!

Finally, and most importantly of all, remember that as important as school is, it should never come at the expense of your health or happiness.

*By Liza Kurevleva*

## Live at Lunchtime: Ruán Ó Conluain



This is a new initiative by the Guidance Department. This is where we bring past pupils to talk to current students about their chosen course of study/career and to offer

advice and suggestions to their younger selves. This got off to a roaring success on Friday last, 22nd of November with a talk from Ruán Ó Conluain a past pupil in 2016.

*The Guidance Department.*

### Live at Lunch: Medicine Talk

Last Friday 22nd November, we had the privilege of listening to a past student, Ruán Ó Conluain, who came in to talk to some of the students about studying Medicine. Twenty students turned up for this talk. His advice was extremely helpful. He gave us lots of insight into the entry requirements for medicine in college and in particular, the role of the HPAT. He gave his opinion on studying Medicine.

Ruán's talk put a lot of worried minds at ease as he shared his experience of the Leaving Certificate and entry into college. He told us what is expected of students in the course and went into the course content, which included work experience in a hospital. He is currently working in St. James's hospital. He emphasized that socializing with older students and getting their advice was also important as a young medical student.

Regarding the HPAT, Ruán told us that there is a balance to be struck between your leaving Cert results and your HPAT result. I, myself want to do nursing and although I won't need the HPAT for this, Ruán's talk encouraged me to keep my options open and not just concentrate on one college. There are so many and there is lots of help if I look for it and work hard!

The other students and I are very grateful that Ruán took the time out of his day to come in and talk to us.

*By Maeve-Aoife Byrne*



## Ted Exposed



I had gotten the email from one of my teachers Ms Ahern who had given me an opportunity to be able to do this amazing event.

In preparation for speaking in front of people, we had to practice speaking on a random topic in front of the group. This was a clever technique as it made all of the speakers step up their game

and it pushed us out of our comfort zone.

We repeated this a lot and had a few meet ups for conducting 'inner research' to try to get the story we were going to speak about. This also helped us to sound and look more professional by learning hand gestures and movements.

This continued to build all of our confidence and when it came to the day of the event it was an amazing feeling to be standing in front of 150 people. I couldn't really see everyone as the lighting was very bright, I could only really see the front row, which was a relief.

It was electric. The moment I stood ready to go on stage, about to begin my speech, I thought about everyone who worked with on this with me. It was quite a journey and I thought to myself "Wow! Look at how far I've come!" From the moment my name was called to come out on stage, to the moment it finished, was completely amazing. It's so silent, scary and dark, I felt like I was looking into a black hole, it was exhilarating.

After TedEx I got a \$6000 scholarship opportunity to go to Singapore for the Classrooms Without Walls entrepreneurship emersion program run by the one and only Dr Ai Addyson-Zhang. A girl named Lottie who was working for TedEx, showed me a video about the entrepreneurship emersion program and said that I should register for the program. It was tricky and I didn't get help, I got this opportunity because I stepped out of my comfort zone. Soon after I got a message notifying me that I got the scholarship!

A big thanks to Ms Ahern for giving the opportunity for the TEDx.

*By Denis O'Connor*

## Welcome to my Ted Talk



When Sue Adams asked me if I was interested in getting involved with TEDx back in May, I was initially hesitant. This was for various reasons, but mainly due to the fact that I was going to be in sixth year and would probably be stretched fairly thin in terms of workload. However, once I really thought about it and had a good conversation with my parents, I came to my senses and realised it was far too good an opportunity to pass up. So I gleefully accepted the offer, sent in my application pitch and the rest is history.

For me, coming up with the idea was the easy part. I knew what topic I wanted to talk about and how I wanted to deliver it, but it was that middle part; the bit between my idea generation and the final piece that I found to be the most challenging. Gender stereotyping is a broad and complex topic and I could easily give a two hour lecture that would barely skim the surface of the issue. Instead, I had to whittle down my content into a nine minute speech, give it a personal flair and most importantly, create something that was engaging for the audience to watch. It was a long and tedious process and I thought more than once about throwing in the towel. I'm quite indecisive by nature and I can sometimes demonstrate OCD tendencies when it comes to producing anything substantial, so the mix of these two personality traits resulted in a prolonged production and decision-making process.

All was well and good in the end though and when the big day rolled around I felt fairly confident in my own capabilities. There's honestly nothing better than that fuzzy, rhythmic beating of adrenaline as you prepare to perform something on stage to an audience of people – be it acting in a play, singing, dancing, or giving a speech. Such a feeling was palpable in the dressing rooms in the hour preceding the start of the conference. It was also absolutely lashing, which I feared to be some real-life embodiment of pathetic fallacy for what was yet to come.

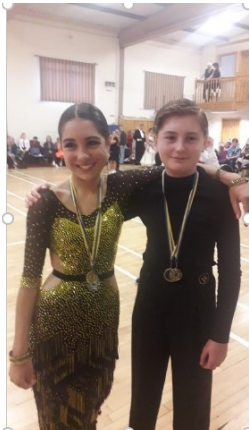
It went smooth sailing though and I was delighted with how my talk turned out. Coming off that stage, knowing that weeks of stress had finally paid off and I could now let my frazzled nerves recuperate, was an inexplicable feeling of euphoria that left me on cloud



nine for many days after. All the speakers who participated did themselves proud and the three women who organised it – Janie, Lottie and Sue – went above and beyond with everything that they did. They were the driving force behind it all and without who none of which would be possible. It was an incredible experience and not to sound too clichéd, but for those of you who do believe that you have an idea worth sharing for next year's event, I would seriously encourage you to get in contact with Sue in the coming months.

*By Nathan Moore*

## Dance Craft



My name is Finn O'Brien and I am in first year. Last year I joined a dance school called DANCE CRAFT which operates from Guardian Angels Pastoral centre, on a recommendation from one of the senior Newpark boys. In the last year I have learned lots of Ballroom and Latin dances like the Tango and Jive. For the last six months I have been partnered with a girl named Abbie. Together we have competed nationally and internationally.

We have achieved 1st, 2nd and 3rd place in these competitions. It's great fun, there is a great gang of guys and girls in the class and it's more physically challenging than my other sporting activities. We are going for Gold in the DSI Jubilee Championships on the 24th of November.

*By Finn O'Brien*

## From Newpark to the High Court



Former Newpark student Niamh Hyland SC has been appointed by the President to the High Court. She was appointed to the High Court after the elevation of five judges to the Court of Appeals.

Niamh started at Newpark in 1979 and until fifth year she didn't know what she wanted to be. It was during the October midterm break that she did a work placement with her cousin who was a solicitor in Cork. She says when she was sitting in the back of the court listening and watching was when she decided she wanted to be a barrister. So she worked hard from then on and got into Trinity College Dublin. After

Trinity she went to Magdalen College Oxford and the King's Inn – a law school in Dublin.

She thanked Ms. Coughlan, her English teacher, Mr Holloway, Mr. Burke and Mr. Rossiter and said "I think the two biggest gifts Newpark gave me were the abilities to think independently and to question what I was told and the ability to mix with people from all walks of life."

*By Sylvia Ciulli*

## Jiu-Jitsu



Second year student Henry Ferguson recently competed in the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation European Kids Jiu-Jitsu championships. The competition took place in Gormans-town, Meath. Henry placed 2nd in his weight category. Well done Henry!

## Mounted Gardaí



Newpark students were amazed one break to leave the gym and find horses with mounted Gardaí in the yard. There was no riot, instead there was a number of students who were being encouraged to find out more about the work of the Gardaí.

Thank you to Margaret O'Connor and the team of SNAs who organised a fantastic visit from the Garda Síochána in October. One of the classes in the Red Brick have formed links with the local Gardaí as part of their community participation programme. Previous visits have included talks on safety especially around use of the internet. More recently they arrived on horseback to illustrate how useful horses are in crowd control. We are looking forward to the next visit when they will demonstrate their riot gear and talk about the safest way to travel on public transport.

*By Ms D. Cooper*

## Visual Promotion Article



Visual Arts Club is a fantastic after school activity for anyone with an interest in all things art. The club does everything from painting to pottery, lino printing to drawing, and everything in between. Why not come along to check us out, Wednesday in T15 from 12:45 to 1:45.

*By Hannah McNally*

## Creative Writing Club



Creative writing club now takes place every Monday at lunchtime in M6. It's open to all years and experience levels, from those who've never written anything for fun outside of school to the most dedicated and prolific writers. Creative writing club is a place, time and space to write, share work, improve and create in a supportive environment. We provide plenty of prompts, writing tips and feedback at each session. Feel free to pop in next Monday and check it out.

## Anime Club



If you thought Newpark might've been struggling with the lack of clubs, think again as just a few weeks after school started, Anime Club

was founded. Now, the obvious question that can be asked is what is Anime Club? And honestly, I don't think I could give you a half-decent answer, but I can try. Anime Club is a club open to all students which takes place in one of the top floor art rooms every Thursday during lunch time. Members (free membership) watch and discuss all things relating to Anime. Now, if you look up the definition of Anime on the internet, what might come up is, "a style of Japanese film and television animation, typically aimed at adults as well as children." As we are the age between children and adults, anime is perfect for us.

I took the time to interview the proclaimed "CEO" of Anime Club, Paul van der Linde of 5th year, on what this is all about.

### Why did you start Anime Club?

There was a high interest in it, and Anime isn't explored in Western Culture enough.

### How did you go about starting the club?

I scouted out potential numbers to get an idea of them and then found a teacher who would provide a room for the club.

### What do you do in Anime Club?

We watch an episode of an Anime on one week, and then the week next we discuss the Anime we watched and anything else relating to Anime, followed then by watching another Anime the next week and so on and so forth.

### How do you think the first few weeks have gone?

It started with difficulty. It was criticized by some, but even though the club is small in numbers, it is like a family and all are welcome as long as they are respectful and responsible.

### What does the future hold for Anime Club?

Maybe organizing a Christmas Anime Party, a Manga month, a trip to Japan, Japanese lessons and maybe a Japanese culture day.

*By Slobodan Teodorovic*



## Religion Trip to Glendalough



On Tuesday 19th November some 2nd Year Pupils went on a Religion Trip to Glendalough to find out what Christians do on pilgrimage to Glendalough.

We started our trip by getting a bus from school to Glendalough. When we arrived we then made our way around the site of the Monastic Village learning the history of the key landmarks of Glendalough – the Round Tower, the Cathedral, the Priest's House, Celtic Crosses and St Kevin's Church.



We then had lunch and after lunch break we walked the Miner's Road to the old miner's village where we stopped to take in the beauty of our surroundings. Then we made our way back to the bus to return to school. Even though the weather let us down at some parts of the day, overall it was a good day.

*By Emily Kelly*

## Christian Union Weekend Away 2019

The first weekend in November 44 pupils and 6 staff attended the Annual Newpark/St Andrew's CU Weekend Away in the beautiful surroundings of Ovoca Manor – just outside the village of Avoca in Co. Wicklow.



We arrived on Friday evening and left on Sunday morning after an action packed weekend with "speed talking", football in the hall, talks by Jono and small group discussion, outdoor pursuits, games, craft and jewellery making, bonfire night and the talent show.

Our guest speaker was past pupil Jonathan Byford who spoke about Jeremiah, Daniel and Peter and encouraged us to value our identity, our friends and God's constant care.



The food was absolutely delicious and was all prepared and cooked by Ms Doherty and her husband Mr Faull. Her famous sticky toffee pudding is amazing. Ms Rowan kindly joined us even though she is on leave.

We all had a terrific time and the pupils got on brilliantly all weekend even going to bed at respectable times!

Here's to next year!

*By Ms Harris*



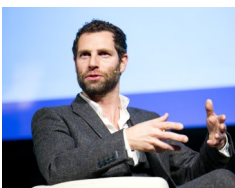
## Science Week



Science week took place in the month of November. In Newpark there was a number of activities to contribute to science week. There was a "magic show" which consisted of a number of experiments. One of these experiments was where the students picked up methane bubbles and they were then lit on fire. It was perfectly safe as the students dampened their hands before the experiment to prevent any burns. Another day the activity was the Van der Graaff, the thing which makes your hair stand on end. This was a great success as the pupils loved to give static shocks to one another.

*By Sarah Glanville*

## Perception Talk



On Tuesday 12th November, 6th year received a talk for Science Week, on 'Perception' by Jonathan McCrea who hosts a show on Newstalk called 'Future Proof'.

When I first heard that the talk was on perception, I wasn't entirely sure what was in store for us as it's a very broad topic. Thankfully the talk was very

interesting, based on how we perceive sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Jonathan commenced the talk with a shock tactic saying that none of these things exist and it's just our human brains putting a meaning on them. Almost everyone was intrigued from the start.

The most interesting part of the talk was when we each put a tiny piece of paper on our tongues and most people were found grimacing with the bitterness. Interestingly, I tasted absolutely nothing. I was never fully aware that everyone perceives taste in a completely different way.

*By Sam Cooney*

## A Moment For Science



During Science Week this year we had a guest speaker in from Newstalk radio, discussing Perception and how we all have a different interpretation of the changes in energy (that which we call life) that happen around us, and how we have to try and understand the way others see the world, now more than ever.

Throughout the week there was a Junior Science and Senior Cycle Quiz, as well as a magic show and a truly shocking Van Der Graaf Generator demo in M14. Thanks to all those who got involved.

*By Mr.Ludgate*

## Irish Scholarship Competition



Ba mhaith linn comhghairdeas a ghabháil leis na dáлтаí a ghlac páirt sa chomórtas don scoláireacht Ghaeilge i



mbliana. Bhíomar an-tógtha le hardchaighdeán na ndaltaí, an iarracht a rinneadh leis na haistí, agus sna hagallaimh. Bhí sé thar a bheith deacair buaiteoirí a roghnú agus molaimid sibh go léir.

We'd like to congratulate all the students who took part in the Irish scholarship competition this year. We were very impressed with the high standard of all the students, the effort they made with their essays, and in their interviews, which made it difficult to choose the winners.

Sa phictiúr thuas tá buatóirí na scoláireachtaí 2020:

Hayleigh Bowles 2MOD, Zoe Gilmore 2MOD, Nóinín Cooling 1LRG, Sibéal Keaney 1AL

Ms. Ní Laoighre

## Club Gaeilge



I mbliana thosaíomar Club Gaeilge sa scoil. Buailimid le chéile gach Luan ag am lóin in G3. Is seans iontach é seo chun Gaeilge a labhairt taobh amuigh den seomra ranga. Tá fáilte roimh gach duine agus is cuma linn faoi do leibhéal Gaeilge. Labhraímid

Gaeilge, imrímid cluichí trí Ghaeilge agus coinnímid an teanga beo sa scoil. Bhíonn an-chraic agus spraoi againn. Táimid ag súil le tú a fheiceáil ... beidh fáilte mhór romhat!

This year we started an Irish Club in school. We meet every Monday at lunchtime in G3. It's a great chance to speak Irish outside of class. Everyone is welcome, no matter what your level of Irish is. We speak Irish, play games through Irish and it's a great way of keeping the language alive in school. We have great craic and fun. We hope to see you there, everyone is welcome!

By Bláithín Keaney

## Every School Day Counts



Tulsa organised a school attendance campaign to run for the month of November to stress the importance of attending school every day. Newpark ran a poster competition as part of this campaign and the winner was this design by Maeve Cooper 2SCN.

By Ms Harris

## 1st Year Techno Expo



## Newpark Tesa Award

The School Entrepreneurial Award (TESA) was presented to Newpark Comprehensive School on 10th October in Microsoft Ireland. This award was given in recognition of Newpark's commitment to the development of entrepreneurship in education. This is Newpark's first time entering for this award and it qualified in third place. TESA is a venture between Junior Achievements Ireland (JAI), The Department of Education and Microsoft Ireland. According to Eurostat, 6 million low qualified jobs will potentially disappear by 2025. At the same time, 15 million jobs requiring high educational attainment will be created. Facing an uncertain job future TESA seeks to promote through education responsibility, entrepreneurship and innovation. Early stage entrepreneurship education has proven to provide opportunities for students to think positively and to make things happen. It also fosters qualities such as self-confidence in young people to achieve their goals and to use their talents to create a better society. At the event, we also learned about design thinking and useful technologies to support innovation.

*By Ms. Ahern*

## Maths Week

This year for maths week, a series of maths questions were asked. It was organised by the Maths Department a.k.a. the maths teachers. Each day there was a new question and students had an opportunity to get the answer and win a prize.

**Day One:** The cost of a three-course lunch was €28. The main course cost twice as much as the dessert, and the dessert costs twice as much as the starter. How much did the main course cost? Ans: €16

**Day Two:** The mean of three numbers is 17. The mean of two of these numbers is 25. What is the third number? Ans: 1

**Day Three:** Water lilies double in area every 24 hours. There is one water lily in the middle of a lake. If it takes 40 days for the lake to be completely covered in water lilies, how many days does it take to cover half the lake? Ans: 39 days

**Day Four:** On arriving at a party, the six guests all say 'Hello' to each other once.

On leaving the party the six guests all shake hands with each other once.

How many handshakes is that in total, and how many 'hello's'? Ans: 15 handshakes and 30 hello's.

*By Evelyn Lysaght*

## Kiss the Cook

### Erasmus Project, Italy 2019

On Sunday 3rd November we met at Dublin airport at 5.30 in the morning, a very early start! When we arrived in Milan airport we had lots of free time to explore the city and do some shopping. Our first thought on the city was that it seemed like a great place with lots of things to do. Unfortunately it rained the whole day so we spent most of the time inside. After a few hours in Milan we got a train to Cremona, the town where we were met by our host families. When we arrived we all got such a warm welcome from everybody. Then we went to our host family's house and got settled in.

The next morning we went to classes with our students. It was really interesting to see how different the classes were run compared to Ireland. We then got a bus to the town of Verona. Verona is a very old and historic town dating back to 550BC. It was a key base for the Roman Empire, it also has a grand amphitheatre which we visited. It was absolutely stunning. Romeo and Juliet was set in Verona and we got to go on



the balcony. It was such a beautiful town and we all really enjoyed it.

On Tuesday we went into Milan central where we had a walking tour of the city. We visited many landmarks and learned a massive amount about the city. We had a few hours of free time to shop and have food. We then got the bus back to Cremona and went back to our host families. On Wednesday we visited Civico 81, a working place for people who have mental and physical problems, where we did a workshop on inclusivity and sustainability. Lunch was provided and produced by the people who worked there. Later that day we got a guided tour of the town of Cremona. We learned all about the history of the town and we also visited many landmarks as well. We also climbed the second biggest bell tower in Europe which has 502 steps and was built in 1309! We then went to dinner in a really nice pizzeria.





Our full last day was Thursday. We visited Clarabella Care Farm, which helps people who are having problems integrating into society through daily activities to help them. We had a guided tour of the farm. It was a very interesting concept which we hadn't heard about before. We then got a boat to the island of Montisola. Unfortunately, we didn't have time to see much of the island, but it was stunning! We then arrived back at Cremona and we went home to our host families. On Friday we had to say our goodbyes. It was so sad to be leaving as we all had such a great week. After we left the school we had some free time to do some shopping. It was such a great week and the food was absolutely amazing!

*By Lucy Geoghan*



## Newpark Chess – Knockout Performance at the Leinster League



When Rocky fought Apollo Creed, it was self-belief and hard work that saw the underdog triumph; and so it was when the Newpark chess team competed in the first leg of the Leinster Chess League.

Facing the might of schools like Gonzaga and St Andrews College, with their professional coaches, snazzy blazers and illustrious chess history, Newpark was very much the south paw of this meeting. Coming into the competition, Newpark was rated 6th out of 16 schools, our chances of qualifying for the next leg seemed slim.

However, the innate chess brilliance of Finn Vella-Murphy, Constantine Iordanov, Luke Thornton, Max Schmidt and Simeon Sanders allowed us to box clever, easily dispatching Patrician Secondary School and Gonzaga Team B in the first two rounds.



Much must be credited to our new coach Vjekoslav (Hector) Novak who has given so much confidence and chess insight to the team. Every Monday he has voluntarily given an hour's coaching gratis, renewing the team's vigour. It was this perhaps that saw Newpark put up a gritty fight against top seed Gonzaga Team A. Although, Gonzaga won this encounter, its vulnerabilities were on show and ready to be exploited in our next meeting. The fourth round saw Newpark triumph over Benildus College.

Although Newpark placed 2nd in this first leg of the League, the team showed itself to have the kind of spirit and perseverance needed to win at the next stage. We must remember that in the first movie, Rocky just proved himself to be a contender; it was in the second film that he won the belt!

*By Hugh Holmes*



## 2nd Year Epic tour



On a rather rainy week in mid-October, the entire 2nd Year group were given to opportunity to visit EPIC (The Irish Emigration Museum), based in the impressive CHQ Building at Custom

House Quay. The experience is designed in an interactive way, allowing the visitor to learn about what it means to be Irish and how Ireland's people have impacted on the areas of science, politics, the arts and even crime, the world over.

Each form group was led by a guide through the labyrinthine exhibit, allowing our students to understand Ireland's place on the world stage. We learned about the various waves of emigration that have hit the



country, the famous names who have promoted our little island from Wilde to JFK to Katie Taylor and of the tragic stories of family separation that has often plagued our history through the years, as a consequence of having to leave home. Students could engage in some interactive exhibits and marvel at some of the stunning installations.

Overall, it was an interesting museum but one that is probably aimed more at those tourists visiting Ireland, with a heavy emphasis on the Irish-American connections, so often celebrated.

A big thanks to all the students for their superb behaviour and to the teaching/SNA/Support staff who participated in this week-long event.

*By Mr Twamley*

## Lounge at Lunch



Lounge at Lunchtime has been an activity that has happened regularly throughout my time at Newpark. As a student who did not study Music for Junior Cycle it

was always something that I wanted to partake in. A huge part of its importance is the fact that in the music world and even for Leaving Cert, performance is a vital part of the subject and these concerts are an excellent opportunity to practice this aspect of music.

The Lounge at Lunchtime concerts are just as enjoyable for the audience as it is for the performers. Not only is it a luxury to have live music as a soundtrack while you eat your sandwiches, it can also spark your interest in the subject, and the music students get to show off what they have been working hard on rehearsing.



So far this year, we have had performances from 6th Year, 5th Year and 3rd Year Music students. Each concert has contained a different style and

selection of music, but have all been very enjoyable and great fun to be a part of, both as a performer and an audience member.

My first performance in Lounge was initially nerve-wrecking, but the second you're out there you realise the audience is just a group of friends and familiar faces who are a very receiving audience, and you realise there wasn't anything to be worried about.

I think the concept of the Lounge at Lunchtime is a really successful and enjoyable experience. It is something that will hopefully be a part of the Newpark school experience for years to come!

*By Lucy West*



## The LCA trip to Ireland's Eye



The day began like this: we had all to meet up at the destination point which was located beside The Bloody Stream Bar, which was also outside

the front entrance to the Howth Dart station.

When we all had arrived in front of the entrance to the station, we began to walk over to the pier which was where the boat that was going to take us from Howth harbour to Ireland's Eye was waiting. On our way over we got a lot of water thrown at us from every angle of the boat but finally we had arrived at our destination.

It had been a struggle to get the boat into shore as the stairs we were supposed to use to get on the island was flooded, so we climbed and when we had gotten onto Ireland's Eye we began to climb to the very top of the mountain that lay right in front of us. We all knew it would take some strength to get to the top, but we made it.

When we had arrived at the top of the mountain, we all looked out at the ocean, amazed at the different shades of colour. We heard the sound of engines as planes flew overhead, of birds singing and seagulls screaming. This was truly an amazing sight to behold, the sun shone brightly overhead and we were very happy to be here.

This next bit of the trip was a little harder, as we walked through thorns and bushes and we all got small cuts. We met up with the students who had gone the opposite way, we found a little break area which was in an old church and it was very cool.

As we made our way back to the boat we stopped at a beach for a little bit and threw some stones at the windy ocean waves. The boat wasn't in when we were finished, so we waited. We saw some seals and they would keep on coming and going and coming back again to us. The boat finally arrived back into shore and it was time to say goodbye to this amazing day and island we had been on.

*By Denis O'Connor*

## Student Council

As the student council, we have gathered monthly to discuss different topics involving the school. We have put a great effort into identifying the needs of the students and the school community. One of the main topics we have discussed is the student attitude toward the school and respecting the school. Another area of discussion was about Christmas. The student council are putting together some fundraisers for the days leading up to the holidays, which we have appropriately named "The 5 Days Of Christmas." We are in the process of arranging five fun activities, to raise money, throughout the final week before the Christmas holidays. We encourage all students in Newpark to get involved and join in the fun.

*By Oliver Gordon*

## Sandcastle Competition



On September 29th Newpark Staff and families spent a creative day sand sculpting on Brittas Bay. The sun shone down on what was an amazing

autumnal day at the beach. Mr. Murray, a veteran sand sculptor, had given us great guidelines on how to build masterpieces. Armed with ideas and great helpers, we set about building and creating. The day was spent digging, chatting, helping and learning from others. Many types of castles and fortresses were created over the course of the day.

Of course, a day at the beach would not be the same without the proverbial sandwiches and flask of tea! A great day was had by all and we look forward to the next one!

## Newpark Orchestra

The Newpark Orchestra this year is run by Ms O Keffe on Tuesday mornings, from 7:40-8:30AM. It is for all years and instruments. Some of the songs we have been playing include Back Pocket by Vulfpeck and also some Christmas songs for the upcoming concert. It is a really enjoyable experience and I am definitely doing it next year!

*By Amélie Ryan Griffin*

## Engineering Trip



Over the course of the week before the Halloween mid-term break, myself and 3 other members of this year's Engineering class (alongside Mr. O'Neill and Mr. Connell) ventured out of the school workshop and into a new European project that we are extremely proud to be a part of.

The Magical Moving Machine for Europe, or better called '3M4EU', is a collaborative Engineering and STEM based project that involves working with other schools within the European Union, under the Erasmus+ EU Education Programme. The eventual goal of this particular project is to present a contraption that shows a variety of movements within that system. The meaning of a 'magical moving machine' to our own Irish group was open to interpretation!

To launch the project to the member schools in Germany, Slovenia, Italy, Portugal and Croatia, the first meeting took place in Bad Kreuznach in Germany; about an hour away from the major population hubs of Frankfurt and Mainz along the Rhine River. And there was certainly some pressure leading up to that first encounter because believe it or not, Newpark are assigned as the project coordinator for this 2 year-long endeavour! It was bound to be an exciting trip for all involved.

The town itself, I would say, could be pictured as a blend of Killiney, Sandymount and Dundrum in terms of how busy and beautiful it is...considering that it is deep within the German countryside. It's full of interesting landmarks such as the numerous 'salinas' (reed bed structures that were used to collect salt from underground deposits of the old seabed the town sits on) and the Alte Nahebrücke, one of the last bridges in the world to have houses on it (yes, actual houses that are sadly, currently vacant.) It's safe to say that we enjoyed Bad Kreuznach, having eaten in many restaurants, walked many kilometres during our guided walk and passing through the aforementioned landmarks and picturesque scenery!

An interesting sight to see would be the presence a large manufacturing firm in this area, such as KHS, a manufacturer of systems that fills your Coke bottles and Guinness' kegs for pubs. It's amazing to not only see the tidy and clean facilities around, but also demonstrated the craftsmanship and meticulous processes of its workers that gives Germany its reputation for reliable and high quality products around the world.

And if the sights of the rather quaint town weren't enough for everyone in the trip, Thursday saw us exploring the fabulous Rhine Valley around the Rhine. As ever, it didn't disappoint, despite the early morning fog limiting the views! From cable cars and chair lifts that literally go through people's back gardens, to a visit to the medieval Rheinstein Castle, and another food trip with the sloping valley as your backdrop; this and our final climb through the incredibly scenic Rotenfels on Friday was an appropriate conclusion to our 'working week'.

So, in between all of the travel and touring, did we get anything on the project done? Well, of course we did! There was a wide variety of ideas being put forward by both students and teachers and over the course of the week, our minds simply wouldn't stop thinking about what the end result would be in 2 years' time.

In fact, for us who were native speakers of English in the project, we actually found it hard to communicate to the others because of the faster pace and our wider knowledge of the language, and we needed to adapt and change the way we spoke in order for them to understand us and have a common understanding of our ideas to our working groups.

Looking back to this first meeting, it was a success for many reasons, but an important achievement would be the establishment of a common ground of friendship and comradery amongst the group. We mingled with various people who share common interests with us, hearing funny stories and sharing facts about life within their own countries. In an era where the EU is facing plenty of criticism and challenges within the institution, we believe that this initiative is promoting the 'European Spirit' and show that with unity, we can achieve things we couldn't imagine to be possible.

Watch this space over the next few editions of the Newsletter as we outline the outcomes of the following trips and the overall result of this wonderful project.

*By Slobodan Teodorovic and Shawn Lorenzo*



## Monna the Smart Bench in Dun Laoghaire



On Wednesday the 25th of September our TY Mini-Company class went to Dun Laoghaire to see 'Monna the smart bench'.

This is the only bench of its kind in Ireland and is powered by solar panels. Monna has many functionalities. It is a bench which has a canopy over it. The canopy has a solar panel powered light in it, it can recharge your phone while you are sitting down, you can park your bicycle in the attached bike rack, you can repair your bicycle with the smart bicycle tool-kit which is hidden in Monna accessible by a sensor which detects your parked bicycle. It can also recharge your battery-operated bicycle while you rest on the bench. Monna is a practical demonstration of a combination of crashing and smart technology. We all thoroughly enjoyed seeing the bench.

*By Lucy Roe*

## Microsoft Dreamspace Experience



On November 15, the 5th Year Engineering class had an unexpected opportunity to visit the relatively new head office of Microsoft Ireland in Leopardstown to attend the DreamSpace experience. Usually speaking, schools have to wait on a 2 year waiting list to attend, however due to circumstances we received the invitation in very short notice (as in the day before!)

DreamSpace is an educational initiative by Microsoft to teach students of all ages the world of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). For us

senior students it was also a way to discover the life of working with one of the largest tech companies in the industry today.

The theme of the main office (appropriately named One Microsoft Place) was an island; and so the interior designs are based from several features of the island of Ireland. For example the entrance lobby was designed to look like the entrance to car ferries used between Ireland and the UK and the primary hub. There was also a Digital Lake, containing an array of LED screens that can be programmed to show anything (during the visit, it was showing a line of dolphins to show the aquatic side of the Lake). We were in awe of just how spacious and open the complex was.

We were surprised with some of the facts that the DreamSpace staff shared to the group. For example, the Dublin office alone has employees from 75 countries and this office embraces and celebrates this diversity in many ways such as offering dishes from that particular country in the canteen every week to make them feel at home. This office also has plenty of things that we think aren't seen in any other places of work, such as the fact that they use their ID's as a contactless payment method in place of cash, employees are encouraged to move around by placing its elevators in hidden doors and heavily subsidising the cost of the myriad of services on offer for employees.

Another interesting point to hear was that Microsoft, and potentially other IT groups in Ireland, are in the market for more engineers in hardware and software development. Given we are an Engineering class, it appears it shouldn't be that hard to pursue in a career this field in the future.

During the remainder of the session, we participated in learning the fundamentals of coding, through the use of block coding and the company's MicroBit microcontroller. In addition, we were also tasked with group activity where we had to create a course for a marble, so that it landed on a particular piece of paper. The competition was decided by whose course was the longest.

Overall, the group enjoyed the activities on offer and had a fantastic time. Many thanks once again to Microsoft for this fantastic opportunity and we look forward for more opportunities in the future!

*By Slobodan Teodorovic*

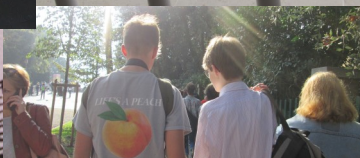
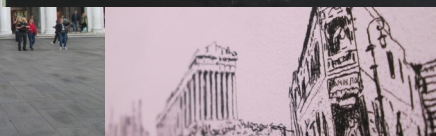




**Allora! Venezia**  
A group of 5th and 6th years along with Mr.Kirwan, Ms.Johnston and Mr.Byrne travelled to Venice at the end of October to go and see the Venice Biennale, (the largest and oldest art exhibition in the world) as well as some of the most important Renaissance sites in the world.









## Newpark Students Stand Up!



Stand Up! Awareness Week is a time for second-level schools in Ireland to join together and take a stand against homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. This week is an opportunity for schools to look at how they can make them safe and supportive places for LGBTI+ students.



This year, Stand Up! Week took place from November 11th-15th. The LGBT+ group (allies\* always welcome!) meets each week on Thursday at lunchtime in M4 and they came together to paint, plan and produce some great ideas to help to celebrate and show support for Newpark's LGBT+ members. Mr. O'Neill (Metalwork) "rainbowed" the Newpark sign out front, we hoisted two rainbow flags, one outside the school and one just inside the main entrance; the community as a whole showed their support by wearing a specific colour of the rainbow on the non-uniform day on Friday 15th (Newpark staff looked great in green!). It is a testament to students and staff alike that they symbolically showed their support in this way, especially in a world that has changed considerably over the last few years.

One in five young LGBT+ people face bully-

ing, and 70% of young LGBT+ students feel unsafe at school (BeLonG To website). In reality, every week should be Stand Up! Week where we literally stand up to anyone who thinks it is ok to discriminate against someone else or be nasty to someone because of their sexual orientation, race, colour, gender...the list goes on. The Newpark community has traditionally been a place where exploration of self-identity and individuality, for staff and students alike, has always been fostered, embraced and respected and long may this continue!

\*Ally/allies – A person/people who work for equality, especially if they are not a member of a group facing inequality.

*By Ms.Keating*

## Turning Anxiety into Art



On November 7th myself and Bruno as leaders of the LGBT+ group in school had the pleasure and honour of interviewing Anziety; a Dublin based drag artist who rose to fame last year. We spoke about school life for LGBT+ students, today's drag, Ben del a Crème herself, moustaches and a collection of other things.

### What was your school experience?

I grew up in Balbriggan. Have you heard of Balbriggan? It's like North County Dublin, it's like Swords. So, I grew up there in a community college called Balbriggan Community College. It looked nothing like this I have to say, so well done. Yeah, I grew up in Balbriggan. I myself was pretty lucky in school, in terms of like, being queer or like, I- I didn't come out in school. I didn't come out till after I was eighteen. No, I was always the popular kid, I always had friends around me, the gay with a bunch of girls, the stereotype. But yeah, I can't really say anything negative.

### That's so refreshing

I know yeah, lucky for me I do understand that a lot people don't have it that way it's not everyone's case. I got the odd f-word but other than that I didn't have anything.

### Was there any particular group or anyone in particular who made you feel accepted in school?

There was this one girl, her name was Hayley, she was





in the year above me and she lived five doors up from me. She actually doesn't know this, but she was someone I always felt safe around. She was always so good and was in the same group as the boys who would say anything, and she would be the one say stop and grow up and stand up for me always.

### **Why the name Anziety?**

Oh my god it's a funny story; I was asked this for an interview last week and I'd actually never been asked before, and I had forgot, so I asked my friends "Why is that my name?" And my friend Jack, who actually gave the name, said "Because you wouldn't shut up in our group chat, you were freaked". I had anxiety because I had to pick a name before I debuted on stage, and he was like "Well that's your name" and that just stuck! Now, I use it as a metaphor for empowerment and overcoming my own anxiety with doing drag and stuff like today with what you're doing and that you're doing it for a reason. My name is Anziety because I have anxiety. Essentially.

### **The Newpark alum "Faux Joli" is often seen by your side, anything to say about your sis?**

Amazing, she actually started doing drag a week before

me on the George stage literally a week before me. We both started around Pride so we're both Pride queens. She did the George the week before on witchy Wednesday and I did the week after. And then I met her the week after that and ever since we've been the best of friends. She part of my night sis. We do every show together. She is my drag sis, till the end, we're going places.

### **How does it feel to be an Irish queen with the Drag Race UK dynamic?**

Yeah, I don't know, its an interesting time, I don't think they'll just limit the show to just British queens when there are so many amazing Irish queens who will be going for it as well. I'd really love to see a European drag race in the future just because Ru (Paul) will take her check wherever it'll lie and it would be far more inclusive and a better statement to make than all these isolated drag races country to country. But sure if Ru is still around more and more seasons will be turned out.



**What are your thoughts on Drag culture becoming more and more mainstream?**

I'm honestly here for it because obviously it's awareness and it's putting it out there and on the map and giving other people opportunities to do drag and I feel just like everyone in their life should at least just try drag once because it is just so empowering, and so amazing it does change people's lives. It changed my life, as it is even today, I'm only here with you guys because of drag because of me wanting to do drag. But there is an aspect of it that I don't like it being mainstream because it is like punk rock and it is like underground and like filth and I do often see it being appropriated rather than appreciated. But no I'm definitely here for it and shows like RuPaul's drag race can definitely elevate your career to like the next level and you can travel the world. Yes and no - that's my answer.

**What was your job before drag?**

So I only actually just left my job 2 months ago to like focus on doing drag and yeah it was pretty scary. I waited, I was a waiter – turned tables for 8 years – and I just got to a point where I just couldn't do it anymore, it was actually just making me so upset. It was giving me anxiety because I couldn't book the gigs I wanted to do, it was basically stopping me from saying yes to gigs and I just wanted that freedom to say yes to anything and everything that involves drag because it's

just what I want to do. That's all just how I want it to be. I may be poor, but I can say yes; it's scary, but, all for the art at the end of the day!

**Why did you decide to keep your moustache when doing drag?**

People have always said this like "Would you shave it off?" and I'm just like no it's just my thing and I like how I look out of drag with it as well, ya know? If I didn't I'd just look like one of you, I look so much younger without it it's ridiculous people ask me for an ID and all when I'm out trying to buy drink or cigarettes or anything and I'm just like "Oh God". And like no one else was doing it and people would say "Are you doing this just to stand out?" and like I'm not, I'm doing this because of me, it's me and my drag and I like how I look as a boy with a moustache.

**What are you thoughts on Mr Kirwan's Moustache?**

He grew it himself! I like anyone with a moustache who can really grow it, I'm here for it!

**Your drag doesn't conform to gender stereotypes, are there any key ideas behind that?**

It's the type of grá that I'm drawn to personally, it's the kind of drag that excites me. And no shade, there obviously is other amazing queens out there with different styles, but my type of drag is just that east London-punk-grit. Like I'm more into like that aspect of drag, personally, but I do still love all types of drag. All drag is valid.

We'd really like to thank Anziety again for graciously doing the interview and Mr Kirwan for organizing it and his extraordinary patience. We hope this can bring a message of hope, alliance and strength to the LGBT+ community in Newpark.

*By Rhiannon O'Leary-Murray and Bruno Ciulli*





# Agony Aunt

1st years ask the 6th years the burning questions

**Q. 'Why is school so tiring? Even when I go to bed early, I'm still tired! How do I stop this?'**

A. The best thing I can recommend you is having something that motivates you to wake up every morning, whether that is seeing a good friend in school or setting a personal goal to achieve. That way going into school will be less of a chore and therefore less tiring.

**Q. 'How do I make my school bag lighter?'**

A. Go to your locker every two classes and ask your teachers which books you will need for the next day. It may be obvious but don't carry anything in your bag you won't need for the next classes. Take care of your back!

**Q. 'Who is reading these questions? Why are the stairs blue? How many stairs are there?'**

A. A couple of us prefects have handpicked and answered these questions! The colours of the stairs are made to match the colour scheme of the school. In total we have 3 stair cases making 12 stairs if you break them up at every turn.

**Q. 'Does homework get any easier?'**

A. If you put in that little bit of extra time and keep up a good work ethic throughout the year homework definitely gets easier. It might feel like a lot but remember to take it one subject at a time and take breaks. If you feel you are getting an amount of homework that is overwhelming, make sure to chat to us prefects about it!

**Q. 'Why is the school so against plastic?'**

A. This is a common misunderstanding. The school is so against single use plastic such as water bottles and food wrapping because it is harmful for the environment, not plastic in general. I could write a lot more about this but for time's sake I would recommend getting involved with the Green Schools Committee or asking a representative to find out about this in more detail!

**Q. 'Is Woodwork a good option?'**

A. If you are looking for something that involves some tough but rewarding handiwork yet still allows a lot of room for creativity and experimentation, Woodwork is definitely for you. I took it during the Junior Cycle and really enjoyed it!

**Q. 'Why is the school so colourful?'**

A. Whether intentional or not our lockers and school being so colourful helps make the students feel more comfortable. The colours of the lockers, green, pink, purple and grey are all known to have varying degrees of a peaceful and calming effect.

**Q. 'How many steps on the stairs are in the school?'**

A. 1,346 steps, all the prefects went out and counted them. (Not really, but if you find out do tell us as a fun fact we can tell everyone about Newpark!)

**Q. 'What should you do if you've lost something?'**

A. If you've lost something you can either go to the front office or to lost property, depending on what you've lost. (E.g. If you've lost your phone or money they tend to be brought to the front office. If it's books or your uniform, they would be brought to lost property).

**Q. 'How can you best organise your locker?'**

A. Some people find it easiest to have folders for each subject. It's also handy to put a hardback on top of your books, which can act as a shelf.

**Q. 'When are students allowed in the gym?'**

A. At 16 years of age you can get a membership, or during PE in 5th and 6th year.

**Q. 'How late do you have to be to sign into the library?'**

A. Very embarrassingly I actually didn't know about this myself until I was in 5th year! If you come in after registration at 8:50am then you would be going to the library.

**Q. 'Is there a student Rep for each form? If so, what is their role and how are they chosen?'**

A. Yes, every form in every year has 2 representatives. The form votes a student council representative (the rep) and one person who stands in for them if they're out (the deputy). Their job is to go to the meetings and bring up any concerns their class might have and report back to the class on what was talked about in the meetings.

By Liza Kurevleva

## HOCKEY IN SOUTH AFRICA BY Milly Lynch and Jess Whelan



While on tour in South Africa we played a total of 10 matches. We had two full teams made up of mixed ability players with us so everyone played 5

matches. To be given the opportunity to play hockey in South Africa was incredible but initially we didn't know what to expect as we were not sure what the level of hockey would be like. We found our bearings and we won 7 games and lost 3. Our first match was against Pretoria Girls' High School. Our first team had a convincing 4-1 win and our second team ended up playing a way stronger side who happened to be one of the best in Gauteng, the province. It was a really competitive game a Jen Sheeran scored a beauty but unfortunately we lost 2-1. Although we came up short on the score line, we quickly became friends with the girls' from Pretoria while we were on the side line and they taught us some great new chants.



Our second match was against Cornwall Hill College in Centurion. We were really excited to play this game as it was against the girls we were being hosted by. Both of our

teams had a great day out and won 3-1 and 4-1 respectively. Apart from the one game in Pretoria we weren't being tested very much but our coaches, Anna and Lorena got some insider information from the coaches at Pretoria and Cornwall about our upcoming opponents at Parel Vallei. They found out that they are considered to be the best school girl team in South Africa, so we were already excited for that one!

Next, we travelled to Cape Town. Our next opponent was Bergvliet School and here we had another two comprehensive wins with the scores being 3-0 and 6-0. Following that we played Langa Township. Our first game we won 4-0 and our second match was a really exciting encounter as our girls scored in the dying minutes of the game to secure a 2-1 win!

Our concluding games of the tour were against Parel Vallei in Stellenbosch. We were buzzing for this

game because this school had a big reputation and was considered to have the highest standards of hockey in South Africa. The game ended up being very competitive, with us holding them to 0-0 at half time. The second half was a great spectacle. It was 2-2 with about 4 minutes to go and suddenly they scored to make it 3-2. We knew we had to go for it so we threw everyone forward, but the ball was over turned and unfortunately they scored another and the game finished 4-2.

It was such a privilege to represent our school in South Africa. I found it very interesting that we had very little in common with the girls' that we were playing against but one thing that was universal between us all was that we were all there to play hockey which was something quite special.

## Rugby in South Africa by Adam Faulkner



After the school year finished the Senior Boys' rugby team and Senior Girls' hockey team embarked on a trip of a lifetime to South Africa. As a player I was intrigued to

see what rugby was like over there, and if there were any differences to the way we play. We went to South Africa with the aim to build our team and improve as players.

The first match we played was against Cornwall Hill College. The first difference between our team and theirs was the training facilities. They had the luxury of four pitches, a "clubhouse", stands and an electronic points board - a slight change from the Rockies! We started the match well getting some early scores, but soon our lungs were beginning to feel the



burn due to the high altitude. Some were feeling it more than others (Finn Sundermann). Twenty minutes in and we were puffing hard. What we noticed right away about our opposition was their sheer

physicality and size, they were considerably bigger than us and definitely more aggressive. This high aggression and intensity resulted in Eric Lysaght dislocating his shoulder and Sam Turner spraining his ankle, not ideal in the first match. In the second half, despite the injuries, we came back from behind to win 33-28, a great performance from the boys.



When we reached Johannesburg we played our next match. After a morning spent on Robben Island, we lined up against Bergvliet School. This school was more like Newpark, not rich. We ended up beating our opposition 32-7 but we had some struggles. Firstly, the guys we were playing against didn't exactly understand some of the rules, especially the offside line (the referee didn't either!). This disrupted our game plan and made the match very scrappy. We also had Oisin Linnane playing most of the match with a broken hand. We still managed to see them off with a comfortable win.

Our final match was against Parel Valei School. This was another private school with amazing facilities. Going into the match we had a considerable amount of injuries, we had many players playing out of position. However, we played very well against the huge South African side. We got little help from the referee after he started talking in Afrikaans to us. We fought well but unfortunately came up short 19-12.

Playing rugby in South Africa was an incredible experience. We got a sense of how rugby is played on another continent and we got to meet a lot of interesting and sound lads. By the end of the tour we had grown closer as a team and better as players. Playing rugby in South Africa is an experience that I, and all

## ROBBEN ISLAND BY ZINDZI DE BARRA



You may remember an interview in last year's newsletter that Zindzi did with her Grandfather, Raffique Mottiar, a leading campaigner against Apartheid, before she went on the trip to South Africa.

While we were in South Africa, we visited Robben Island: the former prison on an island off Capetown where Nelson Mandela spent most of his 27 years in

prison. We received a tour from a past prisoner, called Siphos.

He told us what it was like being a political prisoner on the island and told us about the things Nelson Mandela had done while he was imprisoned. He outlined the role that the anti-apartheid movements around the world had on the ending of the apartheid regime in South Africa. Ms French then told him that my grandparents had been involved with the anti-apartheid movement in Ireland. He asked to have a photo taken with me, and asked me to thank my grandparents for all that they had done. The experience of meeting him had a great impact on me as it showed me the importance of the work of my grandparents. This visit was a great addition to our trip as it showed us an important part of South Africa's history, as well as a strong link to my family and to Newpark.

## Langa Township and St George's Home for Girls

by Molly Healy

Newpark's trip to South Africa can only be described as a once in a lifetime experience. The group we went



with became my family for two weeks and everyone was so supportive and fun to be around. The amazing things we got to experience were made more memorable by the

company. No matter if you were homesick or a little down, someone would always have your back and make you feel better. From the countless bus journeys, with questionable karaoke talents, to the amazing support on the side of the hockey and rugby pitches, to many entertaining forfeits, safari runs, whale watching and countless buffets, the company really completed the trip for me.

One aspect of the trip that was a real eye opener for me was my visit to St. George's Home For Girls and Langa Township. Before we left for our trip to South Africa, the student council organised a bake sale that proved a great success. With the funds we raised (€1,200) we decided to donate half to St. George's and half to Langa.

I was privileged to be able to visit both the

home for girls and the township, and what I saw really struck a chord with me. Firstly, Mr Byrne, Mr Lennon, Jess and I visited St. George's while the warm up for matches were taking place. We were welcomed by Janet and then proceeded to talk with the founder of the organisation. We were given a brief history of the building and the objectives of the organisation. One thing I loved was how they decided to name the organisation a home as opposed to an orphanage. This instantly gives the place a warm and safe feel for the girls staying there. We even found out that the last group from Newpark that travelled to South Africa in 2006 had visited here and given over a plaque in memory. (Pretty deadly that we found connections in South Africa!). We received a warm welcome from the girls and they thanked us for our donation. We didn't get to spend much time with them as they were in the middle of lessons. There was a great atmosphere of happiness and hope in the home. Despite what these girls had gone through in the past or present, you could really see they were looked after well. We were given a tour of the home where we saw the bedrooms the girls stayed in, the playground, kitchens and their vegetable garden. It really hit me how much we take for granted and how lucky we are, the opportunities that we are given are ones that only the girls could dream of. The girls were some of the happiest people I have ever seen, especially taking into consideration their life circumstances. It was an amazing experience that I will never forget.

In one of our final days in Cape Town, we visited Langa Township where we played their hockey teams. They were two very well contested games and the girls really gave us a run for our money. In our first match the Park won 4-0 and in the second 2-1. One amazing moment that we got to cherish while out at the township was meeting the little kids of the town and playing with them. While the hockey matches were on, they came out to the field and all they wanted was hugs and attention. They were absolutely adorable and loved our company. The boys played rugby and football with the lads, the girls did countless rounds of games such as duck, duck, goose and ring a rosie. Piggyback races were also a hit amongst the kids. They were some of the happiest, most grateful kids I had ever met. This was one thing I really hoped we would all get to experience during the trip and is something that really benefitted us. It's a memory that will stay with us forever. It's moments like these that we will never experience again, they are once in a lifetime opportunities. This was one aspect of the trip that was very important for us and gave us some perspective and made us value our lives.

## South Africa

By Jess Whelan, Ava Paul &



It all started back in 2016 when Mr. Adams and Mr. Lennon first proposed the idea of going on a big trip. It was a nice idea, but we never thought it would happen. Little did we know in June 2019 we would be on our merry way. It took two years of Ms. French's organisational superpowers to get us there and on Wednesday the 29th of May 2019, there were 55 students, 4 teachers, 2 Newpark hockey legends and 1 vice-principal all milling into Burger King in Terminal 2, looking forward to a crazy two weeks.

After over 24 hours of travelling we arrived in Johannesburg, South Africa, where we transferred by bus to the High-Performance Centre in Pretoria. During our three night stay we availed of the state-of-the-art facilities, including a heated swimming pool and beautiful hockey and rugby pitches. Ms. Delaney then put us through our paces in a sunrise Zumba class before meeting the Irish Ambassador for South Africa. For us, the highlight of our stay in Pretoria was the Magaliesburg Canopy Tour (which is really just a fancy name for ziplining through a valley).

Next, we headed to Centurion to stay with our host families from Cornwall Hill College for two nights. During these couple of days, we played rugby and hockey matches against our hosts, visited the Apartheid Museum and celebrated Jess' birthday. This stay was an eye-opening experience, we saw a completely different lifestyle to anything we are familiar with. We stayed in luxurious houses within gated communities that they called 'safety estates'. This is where we started to notice the obvious divide between the social classes in South Africa.

The highlight of most people's trip was our incredible stay in the Mabula Game Lodge. During our



stay here we relaxed by the pool and went on both a sunrise and sunset safari drive where we saw hippos, rhinos, cheetahs, wildebeest, giraffes and of course 4 LIONS. The meals that we had here can only be described as exquisite and I think we all left a few pounds heavier.

The next thing on our agenda was a flight to Capetown which seemed like a completely different country compared to Pretoria. We stayed in a hotel right at the base of Table Mountain which was only a five-minute drive from the waterfront. We took advantage of being by the coast by doing activities like going to see fat seals and cute penguins. We also got the chance to swim in the Indian Ocean on our way to whale watching in Hermanus. Whale watching exceeded all expectations, not only did we see loads of whales, but we also had a great time watching the sunset together (apart from the unfortunate few puking at the back of the boat). Special mention to Ms. French, if whale watching was an Olympic sport, she'd be a gold medallist.

Before we went to our final destination, we visited Langa Township where we played their hockey team. After we went to Sheila's for food and storytelling. The food was something else, possibly the best food we had on the trip. On our final day in South Africa we played our last hockey match before going back to our hotel for our end of tour Braai (South African BBQ). At the Braai there were fun prizes given out and Ms. Delaney and Mr. Byrne provided the evening entertainment with a heart-wrenching rendition of 'The Greatest Love of All'.

As Leon Gallagher once said 'this was a once in a lifetime experience that we will never experience again'. A big thank you to Mr. Lennon, Mr. Adams, Ms. French, Mr. Byrne, Ms. Delaney and the iconic duo, Anna and Lorena for making this trip happen!

We know it's cringe but it really was a life changing experience that we are all extremely grateful for.

## QUOTES FROM THE STUDENTS:

"I think I speak for all of the group when I say that we had the best 2 weeks of our lives in South Africa. Meeting new people from Newpark and outside was a great opportunity to not only represent our school but our countries and our families. The trip had a great effect on me as I am of part African ethnicity and I have never looked into it. But going on this trip has made me really curious to see what my family have done in the

past... After these 2 weeks I don't think my life will ever be the same again."

"We were given the opportunity to grow as individuals and really see how fortunate we are for everything we have back home. Getting the opportunity to make new bonds with new people was also something that I will cherish for many years to come"

"My main highlight of the trip was visiting Langa, a township located in the suburbs of Cape Town. It was a great and very eye opening opportunity to see what life is like for many people living in poverty in South Africa, and it made me realize just how lucky we all are to live where and how we do, and to have been given an opportunity like this to visit such an amazing country with great history and culture."

"I loved how the trip brought so many new people together and created so many new friendships, and made us all so close like a family!"

"Definitely the best experience of my life."

## Boots Appeal



Before we went to South Africa we appealed to the whole Newpark Community to donate good quality second hand rugby or football boots, so that we could bring them out to a soccer club in a disadvantaged part of Capetown, and you responded magnificently! Every student and staff member had two pairs in their

bags on the trip, and when we got to Capetown we met



up with Marlon Manell of Central Football Club to hand them over.

Not long after our return we received an email thanking us:

"The look on every single one of our bundles of joy was just priceless. The team really appreciated the gesture. The boots will surely

carry them to their next step. Not too long ago we won our first football tournament after having to share 15 soccer boots amongst 45 children. We did the best we could with what we had and now we are blessed with your kind donations - we are committed to supporting and developing these youngsters not just in football but also in life."

## A director's view of *By the Bog of Cats*

This play has been a challenge in more than one way. Firstly as my partner in crime, Ms Johnson, has been on career break, but also because the play is totally out of my comfort zone. I have never directed a play set in Ireland and by such a well-known and esteemed Irish playwright as Marina Carr. Doing this play was the students' idea and they have completely stepped up to the plate. Taking the helm in all aspects of the production, the students have produced a fascinating exploration of this play. They have directed it, they have designed it, they have composed the music and it is a brilliant example of student leadership in Newpark. This young cast has handled this play so well, they have shown a maturity beyond their years. They grasped this play and made it their own. They have also performed it with such emotion and intensity.

This play is fascinating. The themes, the characters and the location offer us so many insights into human nature, families and relationships. The adaptation of a Greek tragedy such as *Medea* is not an easy task but Marina Carr does it so naturally. It really captivates and engages audiences and actors. We have been constantly analysing the characters throughout the rehearsal process and constantly changing our minds about them.

I'd like to make special mention of Anna Johnston who has guest starred in various guises and for being a very supportive colleague and friend. The caretaking staff, Bobby and David have been so helpful, as well as John O'Neill, who went on an epic journey into the wilds of Wicklow to find us caravan parts amongst other things, and to Avril Crampton who continues to make magic with the costumes. Thank you also to Dave O'Leary who has worked tirelessly on countless productions on lighting with us. He performs miracles on stage and is a constant support to us in Newpark Drama.

*By Ms Devis*



*Photos by Nicolas Reuland*





## A Student's Perspective

By the Bog of Cats was the first main school Newpark production I have ever been involved in and was probably my favourite. Through doing it I realised for the first time just how student-led our school really is. From acting to directing, backstage, music, costume and set design, makeup, advertising – all of it was either led by or involved students. I had never read any of Marina Carr's work before and I know that initially a Shakespeare play was going to be put on, however I'm really glad we opted for this production instead (sorry Ms. Devis!). One thing I love about this play is the fact that all of the female characters are so intricate and have so many layers to them. I think that with a lot of Shakespearean plays the female parts can be quite unremarkable and this piece was so refreshing because all of the characters were interesting. That was one thing we as a cast loved about 'By the Bog of Cats', every day we rehearsed we came out with a new opinion on a character and why they acted a certain way.

The cast and crew were all so talented and lovely and we all had so much fun putting it all together. Watching it come alive was amazing and I feel very lucky to have been able to be a part of something like this. Of course, none of it would have been possible without Ms. Devis. She worked tirelessly on this production as she does with everything she puts on in the school and Newpark Drama would not be much without her. A huge thank you to everyone who was involved, it was such a good experience and most importantly my essays on this for the Leaving Cert are going to be incredible.

*By Liadin Murray*

I assisted Ms Devis in directing this production. It has been one of my greatest joys in my six years in Newpark. There's nothing better than being involved in a show; from the people you work with to the lessons you learn. It's all thanks to Ms Devis herself though. She always praises Newpark drama for being so student run but none of it would be possible without her encouraging each and every one of us to take charge of what we're interested in. Doing design and directing this play has been an amazing opportunity. Putting my ideas to the actors and doing my best in aiding them to explore their characters and put it all into a reality has been an amazing experience. It has assured me even more that theatre is where I am at my happiest, which is all that matters really. Anyone at all can get involved in drama. I urge you to do so if you haven't al-

ready, it's never too late. The skills you develop and the lessons you learn set you up for life. All the shows were deadly and all the cast and crew involved should be so proud of themselves!

*By Hannah Novak*



## MUN as Gaeilge

D'fhreastail mé ar MUN i mbliana agus caithfidh mé a rá go ndeachaigh sé i bhfeidhm orm. Is chomhdháil do daltaí dara léibhéal idirnáisúnta é ina pléann siad cúrsaí reatha agus polaitíocht an lae. Don chéad cúpla lá oibríonn na daltaí ar choistí agus iarraidh rúin a chur os comhair an tionóil ghinearálta (gA). Is iad na daltaí atá i gceanna mar chathaoirligh, mar maoir agus bydad déanann siad jab den scoth, agus tá siad smachtúil agus uaireanta tiarnúil.

Bhí dhá fhoireann againn siria agus slovenia. D'éirigh thar barr leo ag déanamh oráidí, agus agus ag cur isteach pointí eolais.

Ní chreidfeá cé chomh galánta agus aoibhneach is atá royal russell. Is scoil phríobháideach, chónaithe mheascaithe í. Tá na háiseanna den chéad scoth, ar nós ach chomh maith le coláiste na trionoide. Tá an scoil ann le 250 bliain agus mothaítear an traidisiún an oidhreacht.. Tá siad thar a bheith brodúil as a náisiún mar tá bratach na breataine ar fud na háite. Níl na táillí saor. Cosnaíonn sé 50 000 míle punt ina aghaidh na bliana. Tagann daltaí ó chian is ó chongar chun bheith ann

Is iad na buntáistí den ócáid seo ná go dtugann sé seans do dhaoine óga seasamh os comhair a gcomhscoilairí ar dud an domhain agus cur ina luí orthu go bhfuio rud éigin fiúnta le rá acu. Tagann misneach agus féin mhuinín orthu agus bíonn orthu abhar a staidéar go mion, rud a chabhraíonn go mór le cúrsaí acadúla.. stair polaitíocht tíreolais, béarla. Buailteann daoine óga le cheile agus cruthaítear cairdeas uaireanta don saol. Léiríonn an chomhdáil gur feidir le scoil chuimsitheach nó pobal scoil bheith gach pioc chomh maith nó níos fearr fiú ná na scoileanna galánta.

This year I was asked to accompany The MUN contingent to The Royal Russell school in Croydon. It was truly uplifting educational experience. One cannot but be impressed by the grounds of this boarding school, as the facilities are truly top class and when you see the Queen is the patron of the school, and yearly fees are quite expensive, you know you are in one of the most elite schools in England.

Huge organisation goes into this event and the administration of the occasion is also top class. Students hail from all over the world to attend this event and some who have experienced it before are really excited about presenting motions, lobbying and debat-

ing in front of big crowds. It really is a training ground for future barristers or politicians. The demands of the experience mean that students must develop skills of research, negotiation, oration and rebuttal. Yes, it does suit the confident, curious, diligent, determined student, but some students told me they were somewhat retiring or shy at first but developed with time.

In preparing for their topic student must know their material minutely and if they haven't done their homework they are found out. Academically the experience enhances knowledge in English History and Politics and what is wonderful is seeing students from all over the world interact passionately about the affairs of the day. As a teacher it heartens you to see how these young people express their ideals and opinions so passionately, in such eloquent manner.

It is also impressive that this event is student centered and student run to the most part. It is the students who Judge monitor and administer the event and this gives an authenticity air to proceedings. However at MUN Boris Johnston types are aplenty, students who can talk freely on any issue but is there substance to the talk.

Our students stood out for their ability to interact with many other groups, their ability to get motions through and the ability to deliver to an open forum.

*By Mr McCarthy*

## MUN for FUN!



Serious, interesting, intense but also immensely funny: those are some of the words that springs to mind when talking about my recent experience in the Security Council of the recent Rathdown Model United Nations. I was a part of the delegation of Germany.



Unlike usual committees where you debate many resolutions and have to get your arguments across in a relatively short amount of time, the Security Council debates an average of 1 or 2 resolutions over the course of the conference (which is nicer than 5 resolutions for the same topic!) We have to look at each and every one of the clauses and debate them accordingly, which I found suits my analytical style of reviewing.

Other peculiarities of the Security Council include the veto powers of the 5 Permanent Members: China, Russia, France, the UK and the US. Everyone in the room were sure that this will be enforced, since one of the main questions stated on the agenda pertains to the alleged mistreatment of Uighur Muslims in China. In essence, any resolution that either accused China, or proposed sanctions if China doesn't comply to halt its activities against them, would get the 'veto treatment' by China and Russia.



Throughout the duration of the conference, heated arguments ensued between the 'P5' as to how to reach a compromise to clauses they have 'veto concerns' with in a process known as 'caucus.' While they settle their differences outside the Committee Room, the Non-Permanents get some entertainment from the remaining 'Chairs' present and the memes and funny videos from YouTube!

As a Non-Permanent Member, you have a sense of wonder as to what happens during a caucus, imagining if they did argue or just sorted issues while sipping their water. The fact that you have immense power if you're a 'P5' also boggles your mind, as I noticed that the majority of the speaking within the Committee is done by the submitter of the resolution and a handful of delegates.

While most people consider the Security Council to be the 'deeper end' of the MUN Committee Ladder for beginners, I recommend it for those who has a

keen eye for detail, looking for a new challenge for experienced delegates or want to engage in a lot of dialogue to push your ideal clause into a resolution. Plus, for most SCs for MUNs, you get to use a long table for writing as opposed to just your lap in normal Committees – very fancy!

*By Shawn Lorenzo*

## ROYAL RUSSELL MUN 2019



It was an early start – 6:40 in Terminal 2. We trickled in, bleary eyed and half asleep, soon to be joined by Wesley College and Rathdown. The flight was short and the train ride even shorter, so we arrived with plenty of time to gather our bearings. We were lucky enough to be representing the Syrian Arab Republic (and Slovakia) which is undoubtedly one of the most controversial and talked-about countries of the 21st century. I was in the Social, Cultural and Humanitarian Committee (SOCHUM) debating the questions of the decriminalisation of homosexuality, child brides, euthanasia and the protection of indigenous peoples. This combination of a traditionally conservative country blended with a committee discussing morally progressive issues was one I had never had to really deal with before. I've always represented a country where I could sugar-coat the truth in some way; but when purely being gay is enough to land you three years in prison and girls can be married off as young as 13 years old – sometimes even younger – I realised that my own liberal viewpoint had to be shelved and I had to fully embrace social conservatism. Which was an, erm, refreshing experience to say the least – it definitely led to a more flamboyant and engaging conference.

It also just happened to be ten days before Britain's scheduled departure date from the EU. Rarely do we ever get to knowingly experience history being made and yet here we were, slap bang in the centre of

the climax of years of talks and political turmoil – not only bearing witness to what we thought was going to be the conclusion of Brexit, but also being able to fully engage and apply ourselves to the whole ‘leave’ process through the debating of its outcome and inevitable consequences in the Special Committee on Brexit.

On the Sunday night we ditched the infamous MUN disco and headed into the London Eye, taking a detour around Westminster to see the protesters that have become synonymous with any news reporting on parliament votes. Now it was ten o’clock on a cold, Sunday evening, so you can only imagine the type of clientele that the Brexit Party had roped in to man their station and spew out their usual vitriol. I am not saying this for the sake of embellishment; but the tension could have been cut with a knife. Be it our Irish accents, the fact it was so late and the streets were so empty, or the fact that I was face-to-face with people who supported an idea that was so at odds with my value system; but my blood pressure was going ninety.



Living in the bubble of South Dublin, we often have the luxury of being able to detach ourselves from the populist ideologies that have resulted in Trump coming to power and Britain’s triggering of Article 50, but when you’re placed in such a situation you cannot help but notice the deepening political divide that is threatening to unravel all sense of public discourse in the likes of Britain and the US. And that’s why MUN is so important. It brings together people with differing political stances and forces them to assume the role of a country with their opposing viewpoint. This allows us to engage with the other side, research the reasoning behind their belief systems and try to find an area of common ground. It’s not necessarily going to alter your own sense of morality, but it will challenge it and at least will equip you with

enough knowledge to engage in a spirited debate, where both sides understand the other party’s point of view, and, while they may not agree with it, they will at least understand its origins and hopefully be able to maintain a level of discord and respect in the proceedings.

Royal Russell always put on a great show though and this year was no different. We were staying on campus for a change of scenery; which meant longer lie-ins, more food for breakfast and the ability to nap in the afternoon – which, trust me, is sometimes well needed. It was great to have three of eight win Distinguished Delegates and I was more than a little sad walking out the school’s gates for the third and final time; waving goodbye to RRSIMUN forever. A huge thank you to Ms. Odongo and Mr. McCarthy for making it possible and sacrificing their weekend to be with us – we really appreciate it and I think I can

*By Nathan Moore*



*Holly Windle*



*Sara Hannigan*



## Poetry Aloud



On the 24th of October, several Newpark students, including myself, travelled to the National Library to take part in the annual Poetry Aloud Competition. However, we had begun practicing weeks before this.

Poetry Aloud is a national competition held every year by Poetry Ireland. It involves learning two poems (one mandatory, one selected from a group of chosen anthologies) then read-

ing them in front of the judges and other participants in the hopes of being chosen for the next round.

The group of Newparkers participating met in Ms. Keating's room, M4, every Tuesday at lunch time. Here we rehearsed the poems we had chosen, received some constructive criticism from Ms. Keating and snacked on our lunch. Ms. Keating supervised the whole thing, providing a room to practice in and crucial advice that really helped. Big thanks to her!

When the date came around, we all made our way into town. There were 7 of us in all: Rhiannon O' Leary, Bruno Ciulli, Alex Lowsley, Juliette O' Flaherty from 5th year, myself (Adam Merabet) from 3rd year, and Martha Bray and Franky Sheridan from first year. Everybody performed incredibly well and really stood out. There were 39 people in our heat. Despite brilliant performances from all the Newpark students, I was the only one to proceed to the semi-finals.

I had to pick another poem to do, which I found much more challenging than the first, effectively stealing Ms. Keating's poetry books. I headed into town to do mostly the same thing as the first time. I was accompanied by Ms. Johnston, sadly Ms. Keating broke her foot. Ms. Johnston provided great company and guidance and I appreciate her coming with me. After saying my poems I waited eagerly for the results. After a painfully long wait, the judges announced that I would be moving on to the finals!

I am very excited to be competing in the finals and really enjoyed the entire experience.

*By Adam Merabet*

## "Poetry Aloud" is definitely allowed!

When the late poet Seamus Heaney won the David Cohen Prize for Lifetime Achievement in Literature, he nominated the 'Poetry Aloud' competition, based in the National Library of Ireland, for the accompanying Clarissa Luard Award, and he remarked,



'I truly believe Poetry Aloud deserves all the support it can get, because it promotes

literature, and, in particular, poetry, widely, intimately and to inestimable effect. But fundamentally, I choose it because it brings poetry into the memory and affections of the young in a way that will make it a lifelong possession and value.'

The 'Poetry Aloud' competition runs each year from October to December in the National Library of Ireland, sponsored by Poetry Ireland. Even though it is a competition, each participant makes the poetry their own; it is wonderful to hear the set poems recited in different accents and dialects and to listen to the poems chosen individually by each candidate.

This year, Newpark's competitors worked really hard to perfect their deliveries and took to the stage in the National Library on Thursday 24th October. We always note the original and enthusiastic interpretations made by Newpark students and this year was no different. Rhiannon O' Leary, Bruno Ciulli, Alex Lowsley and Juliette O' Flaherty of 5th year competed, as well as Adam Merabet of 3rd Year and Franky Sheridan and Martha Bray of 1st Year. Adam Merabet got through to the Semi-Finals which took place on Thursday 21st November and has made it through to the Final on Friday 6th of December! This is a huge achievement and we wish Adam the best of luck on the day!

*By Amy Keating*

## TY Sports Day



TY students participated in a sports day, which pitted form group against each other. Each form was given a different colour to wear on the day which only served to intensify the rivalries. The activities were a mix of physical challenges, for example tug of war, and problem solving, including building an egg parachute.

The eventual winners were 4ED, proving that they are the smartest and strongest form in TY. However, they were very gracious winners and the celebrations by staff and students were very modest.

*By Ms Delaney*

## Harbour Splash



On Friday the 13th of September 4ED went to the Harbour Splash in Dun Laoighaire. We got really lucky with the weather which definitely made the experience much better. We left school early and got public transport there to meet Ms Delaney. When we got there we had to wait nearly 45 minutes for Malcolm because he got lost and couldn't make his way to Dun Laoighaire!

When he finally got there we had to get changed into ridiculous looking wetsuits, life jackets and helmets. We thought the water would be mildly warm because of the weather and our wetsuits, but we got such a shock when we jumped in, it was freezing! For the first ten minutes everyone was having fun just exploring the obstacles, but then it turned into a wrestling ring everyone was pushing each other and wrestling everywhere you looked. No one was safe, not even Ms

## Work Experience

For my work experience I went to a bird sanctuary called 'Bird of Prey Centre' in Blessington Co. Wicklow. It was a really interesting experience and I got to do a variety of different things with the birds. There are many different birds at the sanctuary; Harris Hawks, falcons and owls, to name but a few. I helped to train some of the birds which involved getting them to fly from a fence to my arm. It was a really cool experience and I really enjoyed it.

*Michael Gormley*

For my work experience I travelled over to Maidenhead in England to work at Maersk, a Danish shipping company. Maersk has been the biggest shipping country in the world since 1996. The famous hijacking of the Maersk Alabama ship was featured in the Tom Hanks film 'Captain Philips'.

I mostly worked in the data management section of the company, where I got to learn loads about servers and databases. I found it really interesting to work in such an important and famous company. The work that all the database managers and IT workers do manages cargo, some of which is essential to our lives.

*Sarah-Jayne Blay*

## Arts Week



Arts Week is week which gave us the opportunity to explore various different art mediums and to create our

own art. Each day of the week gave us a different experience.

### Monday

Our first day was all about preparation. One of the main things we did was create notebooks which we would use for the rest of the week. We had to design our own notebook in our own style.

### Tuesday

On Tuesday we went into the city and visited some art galleries. We got to talk with an artist and learned what it's like to work as one and how you might be-





come one.

### Wednesday

Wednesday's theme was communication and Ms Devis took us through some communication activities which involved plenty of talking and socialising.

### Thursday

That Thursday we learned about sounds. We were then asked to walk around the

school building exploring its different sounds. In groups we were then tasked with making a song using the sounds of the school building.

### Friday

We continued this task into Friday and finished and presented our songs to the class. We then spent the remainder of the day discussing the week and reflecting on what we learned.

All in all it was an interesting week which exposed us to lots of new things. Thank you to all of the teachers who helped us.

*By Isaac O'Neill*

## Gartan



At 7.15AM the bus arrived at the school, shortly after we set off for Dublin City. We had thirty minutes to get food and stretch our legs before the real journey began. It took roughly 6 hours to reach our destination in Donegal, not including the much needed bathroom break. The time on the bus passed pretty slowly with more than a few people getting sick.

Finally we reached Gartan, and were provided with our first of many carb heavy meals of white bread rolls and crisps!

Our first activity was aimed at improving our team-

work, though arguably it did the opposite for some groups. Then later that evening, after more carbs in the form of chips, we did 'The Nightline'. This involved walking around the forest blindfolded, following a rope, while our teachers soaked us with water. Who says corporal punishment doesn't still exist?

The rest of the week consisted of bread, kayaking, more bread, canoeing, a hike, with more bread, board games, more bread and much, much more (including bread). It was a great week which definitely brought us together as a form group, thank you to the teachers who brought us for making it so much fun!

*By Leah Morgan, Jessica McEvoy, Mannix*

*Kerskins, Liam George*

## In Dublin Week a Diary

### Monday

Our first day of in Dublin Week entailed going on the Bray to Greystones cliff walk as a form. Unfortunately the weather wasn't great and this certainly put a 'dampener' on the whole experience. However, with a waterproof jacket and proper shoes (which many lacked), you could kind of ignore the rain and just chat to whoever you were walking with. Conversations



ranged from dogs to fridges, and despite the weather it was an enjoyable two hours or so.

### **Tuesday**

Today we got to visit two museums. One was in the GPO and the other was the National Museum of Archaeology. We got to learn a lot about the 1916 rising and archaeology. And then *tháinig ár lá* and we were set on Dublin for the rest of the afternoon.

### **Wednesday**

Wednesday took us to 14 Henrietta Street which is a museum that displays over a hundred years of social history – most of which Ms McCarthy has witnessed! The house is an old Georgian townhouse which was then turned into a tenement house. At its peak over 100 families lived there. The tour was very informative and definitely worth a visit.

### **Thursday**

On Thursday we went to the Criminal Courts. It was a highly anticipated event. We arrived in the courts, which looked more like a hotel! There was a lot of security and we had to pass through it to get in. Our first activity was to do a mock trial. We played the roles of four barristers, the defendant, witnesses, the judge, tipstaff and the jury. It was a good example of how the courts work, but unfortunately it was cut short as they needed the court room for a real trial.

After that we headed into different court rooms to watch live trials, it was a very interesting experience and a good insight into our justice system.

### **Friday**

Our final day of 'In Dublin Week' was the selfie hunt. We were put into three groups and were given a selfie stick, maps and instructions of what to do. Then the race began. We hopped on busses and walked around Dublin, collecting maps from various teachers stationed around the city and taking selfies along the way. We had to take a selfie at every destination we were given, including: the Spire, Temple Bar, a fruit and veg market, and more!

The experience was really fun and improved everyone's knowledge of Dublin city. It was a great form bonding experience too. The highlight was definitely getting into a pyramid to take a selfie!

*By Oran O'Sullivan, Anna Shepherd,  
Cristina Manning*

## **TY Green Schools**

### **Newparks Biodiversity Garden**

#### **'Build it and they will come'**

This year one of the TY geography classes has an opportunity to enter the Young Environmentalist Awards. This is an environmental action based competition that requires students to identify a local environmental problem, to learn about the issue and to then take action as a part solution. Focusing on native species and biodiversity loss, the Geography students have decided to create a school garden that will enhance our local wildlife. The new school garden will be beside the hockey pitches. The garden is also being created as a resource for Geography, Science and the Sustainability classes, to be used for ecology and for bug and wildlife identification. The students will also create an outdoor classroom that will aid students and teachers to learn and work outside. The Art department are working on making some decorative pieces for the garden and the Woodwork department are going to create natural signage for the woodland trees. The garden will have a water feature a vegetable bed, bird and bat boxes, some bug hotels, compost heaps and a hedgehog house. There will also be some fairy doors for any fairies that would like to come and stay! The garden will be a work in progress and it will continue to evolve every year. If you have a particular interest in gardening and wildlife and if you would like to help get in touch with Ms Adams or Ms MacNamara we would love to have you on board! Best of luck to the TY team on creating a beautiful garden for us and for our native species.

### **Plastic Outta the Park**

Taking the baton our new TY Plastic Outta the Park team have hit the ground running with some new initiatives for the campaign. Aided by the TY Oceans Awareness team, the group began the new term selling metal straws courtesy of ECO STRAW and bamboo toothbrushes courtesy of VirtueBrush. All TY students will also do a beach clean over the course of the year. A bin audit will begin this week to ensure that Newpark are still in line with our school policy as a single use plastic free school. The bin audit is a great way for us to continue to measure our success and we hope to find no plastic bottles in the count! TY Sustainability continue to run plastic education workshops



with the 1st years to ensure that all students are educated about the causes effects and solutions to plastic pollution.

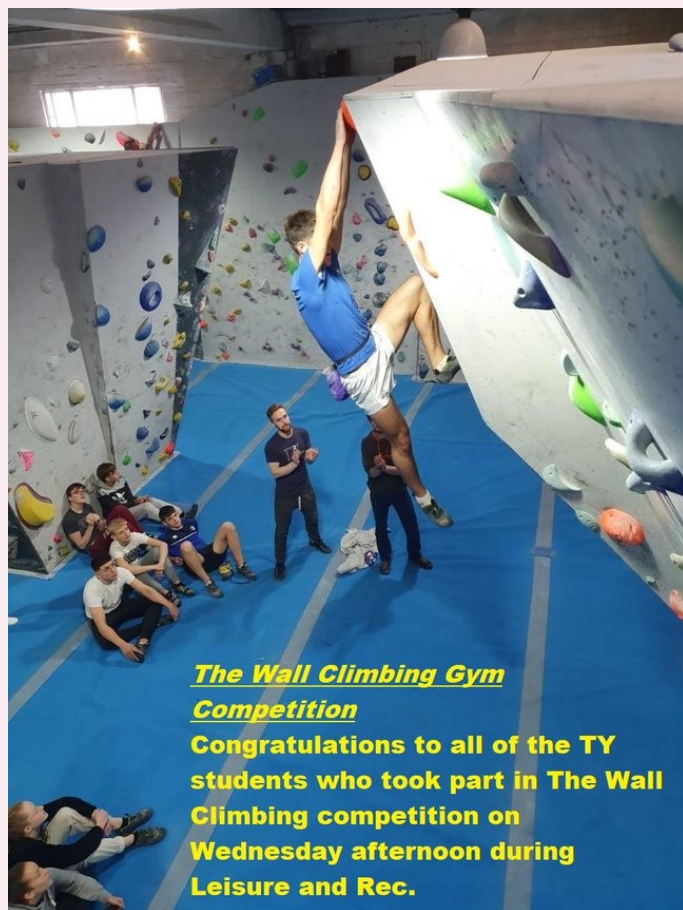
Endeavouring to spread our message about plastic free living this year we have invited in students from Wesley College, St Killians, St Pauls and Loretto Bray to learn about our campaign. The Plastic Outta the Park team will lead a plastic educational workshop and campaign strategy with the schools. The team will take the school's students through the same process of our project so that other schools can go single use plastic free too! We will keep you updated on all of the great work that we do at school. If you would like to join the Plastic Outta the Park team contact Ms Adams, Ms Achari or Ms O'Donnell.

## TY Community Action Flossie and the Beach Cleaners



Another new TY initiative this year has been the collaboration with local charity Flossie and the Beach Cleaners. The partnership with the charity began in 2017 when the Plastic Outta the Park team helped to raise funds for the charity to buy Ireland's first sea bin. This is a bin that is placed into harbours and sucks in plastic without harming fish or marine animals. Like us, the charity endeavours to educate others about the causes effects and solutions to plastic pollution. Six TY students meet the charity for weekly beach cleans and they help to run plastic workshops with primary school students. The feedback from the charity has been fantastic and we hope to see this initiative supported by TY students every year. Well done to everyone involved. Keep up the great work!

*By Ms Adams*



**The Wall Climbing Gym Competition**  
**Congratulations to all of the TY students who took part in The Wall Climbing competition on Wednesday afternoon during Leisure and Rec.**



# Creative Writing

## Quiet by Maya García-Verdugo Merin

I wake up in a hammock dangling above the stairwell in the school. I carefully lean over the edge to see the three flights of stairs curling down to the floor below. Ever so slowly, I stand up, the hammock quivering precariously below my feet, and I reach for the banister and climb around it onto solid ground. I hum a random tune as I untie my bed from the stairs and stuff it into my pack then skip down a floor in a hunt for food.

I want a good breakfast today, so I search for ideas in all of the cupboards. Now I know exactly what I want, I just need a few things. I skip down another flight of stairs and down the road to the shop where I find what I need: eggs, strawberries, whipped cream and a banana. I check that the eggs and cream haven't gone bad and then return to the kitchen to commence the festivities. Just fifteen minutes later, I have a beautiful stack of pancakes before me, layered with cream and fruit. Only one thing remains, coffee. But that can wait for now I think. I hop up the stairs, two at a time to the top floor again. I haven't tried getting up onto the roof yet and I think now is not the best time to try so I go for the next best thing: a fortress.

Well kind of, it was more a pyramid stack of tables in one of the French classrooms, but I put on an episode of something exciting using the projector and ate my breakfast lying down on the uppermost table of my regal table stack. But then, something bad happened... I got bored.

That's the one rule I have. Don't get bored...

## The Rain by Selma Reby

The rain. It was always the same. Heavy. Drowning. The torrents of water thundering against the roof made the little room suffocating. Far too small to breathe in.

He knew it well, the four grey walls of the room and the view through the little window were the only things he saw. The cracked and aged walls, full of history and memories, and the odd rat. The cracked and chipped wooden door, much stronger than it appeared. It opened a few times a day, just enough for supplies to be passed in. The window, only the size of his head and placed tauntingly just above eye level, revealed a beautiful world that he could never be part of, that never seemed quite real. Standing on his toes, he would gaze out longingly.

But when the rain came, as it often did, the world seemed to melt, colours blending together in the un-

ending cascades of water. It was artistically captivating but he always felt even more alone when he could not see the people. The wonderful, busy, interesting, ordinary people.

Sometimes he saw himself in the reflecting glass and imagined he was out there, in the vivid world with the endless stream of individuals. It was tragically beautiful, like a dream. He almost thought he was imagining it, but the messages he heard through the door told him otherwise.

Heaped on the floor were pages upon pages of drawings, places he could only imagine, and only ever visit when he closed his eyes. They were more real to him than the outside, and the voices behind the door pitied him for it, they said so when they thought he was asleep. He wasn't quite sure what pity was. Perhaps he should pity them, he thought, reaching for a blank page with an ink-stained hand. But what did they know of true art, they were just voices. He touched the pen to the page and began to lose himself.

*Maya and Selma, Co-founders of Creative Writing*

## Roald Dahl Day



On September 13th Newpark continued its' annual tradition of celebrating Roald Dahl day. To mark the day, a competition was held for first years, and some teachers read Roald Dahl extracts in class.

The competition was to create your own bookmark inspired by Roald Dahl and his books. There were lots of amazing entries and it was so hard to choose a winner out of everyone's fantastic bookmarks, but in the end the winner of 1st place was Silvia Cuili Cummins, for her beautiful ode to Roald Dahl with her Esiotrot bookmark. She won a €20 book token.

Well done to everyone who entered a bookmark into the competition, they were all so imaginative. The man himself would have been proud!

*By Nóinín Cooling*



## TY One Line Short Stories

Trust in family. – James Killen

Baby legs gone, blood everywhere! – Mannix Kerskins

Eyes dark, his body limp. – Fionn Jordan

The bell rings. Freedom! Shouts! Summer begins. – Liam George

Dad went to the shops...10 years ago. – Jordan Young-Elliott

Ice caps melting, homeless polar bears. – Sean Armie

Willingly, I took my last breath. – Erika Gallagher

The door opened. She screamed 'Help!' – Orla Gul

It was dark, silent. Then ... BANG! – Ria Phillips

Broken wine glasses, she's on the floor. – Anna

Shepherd

It's 1912. Where are we? On the Titanic! – Christina Manning

'Love working in the twin towers!' – Sarah-Jayne Blay

Getting married...where's the bride? – Leah Morgan

## 5th Year Painting Project

A selection of work from a 5th Year painting class.  
Work from the following students,

(Siobhan Roulston, Hannagh Brennan, Sarah Hannigan, Ailbhe Larsen)



## Interview Denise Fennessy



Denise Fennessy is something of a Newpark legend. She has worked in the school for thirty-nine years, and is a part of a long line of Fennessy's working in Newpark. She was known around the staffroom for her professionalism, wit and most of all her love of Liverpool.

### How long have you been working in Newpark?

Thirty-nine years, my family used to work here so I used to come here after school to help out. It was always a family thing.

### What's your favorite thing about Newpark?

I have to say I have always happy working here, I got on with the teachers and the staff, and I always loved seeing all the students here coming and going throughout the years you know. I was always happy, I have to say I will miss the place!

### What was the old building like?

The old building was all ground level we had A B C corridors and we all had our own corridor and I supposed it was better because we didn't have any stairs but now, we have stairs. My family we were in charge of looking after the main building.

### Do you prefer this building to the old one?

I have to say yes, the building now is more modern but I have to say I won't miss the stairs that's why I always get the lift! But I'll miss the place.

### Did you have a break when the new building was being built?

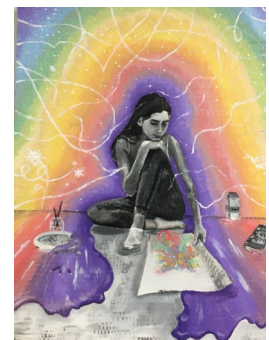
No, we had a big tent kind of thing around in the basketball courts and we all had our sections that were the classrooms and I still had to work there.

### What will you miss most about Newpark?



I always had a great time me and Bobby and the other caretakers would always have our tea breaks. I was always chatting with the teachers and the students knew how I was a big Liverpool fan, so they would always come up to me and talk about everything about them and that's probably most of the things I always enjoyed here just those little things. I will definitely miss all the teachers and the student I probably won't miss all the work though!

*By Hannah McNally and  
Georgia O'Rourke*



*(Neal Yakub, Ulyana Kuzmenko, Bruno Ciulli)*



## You'll Never Walk Alone— Mr. Lowry Visits Anfield



For Mr. Lowry's retirement the student body gifted him with a Liverpool kit and tickets to see them play at home in Anfield. He was accompanied by his son Stephen and had a brilliant time.

Mr. Lowry would like to send his thanks to all the students of Newpark for this amazing gift.

**YNWA!**

## Student Voice and Leadership



Student Voice and Leadership in the school is led by teacher team, student Council, prefects, Cultural Council and soon to be Sports

Council. This year, apart from improving our existing and well-established structures (student council and prefects), we've chosen to focus on the alternative forms of student leadership and voice in the cultural and sporting areas of the school.

We felt that students should be given an opportunity to lead their own clubs and societies and have their own voice. Student voice has always been a part of the school but this idea of a group of student leaders working together from different clubs and societies is a new one.

The students are excited and are fully embracing the opportunity to take ownership of their own ideas. Since we began the process, we now have four extra clubs (Film, Creative Writing, Anime, Irish, Cooking and Drama) that are run by students. Student leaders from already established clubs (LGBTQI, Visual, Green Schools, Chess, Orchestra, MUN and CU) in the school and the new leaders have now established the Cultural Council where we are hoping all the different clubs and societies in the school will share their experiences and will co-ordinate cultural events in the school.

As well as all these exciting developments in Student Voice, we are looking at ways of developing student leadership further. This year we are trying out Leadership in Lifeskills in 5<sup>th</sup> year as well as running the Foróige Leadership for Life programme. Foróige's international youth leadership initiative, the Foróige Leadership Programme is an exciting programme that enables young people to develop the skills and qualities of good leadership and challenges them to use these skills for the betterment of society.

The programme has been developed as a way of exploring vision and passion, and to enable young people to develop key skills such as planning, decision making, critical thinking, goal setting and problem solving that are core to leadership. Twelve students in 5<sup>th</sup> year have begun this programme and we hope this grow in the future.

*By Ms Devís*



## A Word from the PTA



Once again, the PTA at Newpark have come together for the start of another exciting year. This year a number of new members have joined the committee and others have departed, in particular we would like to thank Sinead Hanna who has been a key member of the Newpark PTA over many years and has been Chairperson for the last two years. Her boundless energy and commitment has resulted in lots of PTA activities and in particular the now annual Christmas Fair was initiated and driven by her.

Kicking off this term in September, last year's 6th year students started off their debs celebrations, organised by the current 6th year parents and the PTA, with a most beautifully decorated GPA. A big shout out to Lisa (who has a son in 6th year) for her time and creativity in transforming the GPA. Be sure to admire the Christmas market decorations that she is creating too!

The AGM on September 25th saw many parents/guardians, espe-



cially from 1st year, and committee members attend a well presented and informative evening. The PTA value new members and it is wonderful to welcome enthusiastic people who want to be involved in Newpark. November is the month of parent/guardian social evenings and on the 5th there was such a great turnout of first year parents that we ran out of glasses! This is always a fabulous time to meet new and familiar faces and for first year parents especially it is a great way to meet parents of children who are in your child's form. The 2nd/3rd year social evening was attended



by a smaller group but was none the less very enjoyable.

Turning to the more serious business of developing studying and concentration skills, on 25th November the GPA was packed with 3rd, 5th and 6th year parents/guardians and students, for a talk on Study/Concentration skills presented by the funny and articulate Prof. Aidan Moran. The PTA organise a series of talks throughout the year and in February Michelle Stowe will discuss Restorative Practice and in March Coleman Noctor will present a talk on Protecting Mental Health. Details will follow nearer the time.

The Christmas Market on 7th Dec is the PTA's largest fundraising event and it is volunteerism at its' best as the whole school community come together and contribute in all sorts of ways, from manning stands, to baking, to cooking, to providing music, to decorating the GPA. And of course all of it would be pointless if there wasn't such support from students and parents who come on the day.

Next term will bring with it some much needed sun hopefully, and some more fundraising. Our second-hand uniform sale is a good way of acquiring, a uniform, often in near perfect condition, for a fraction of the cost. Our table quiz will not disappoint those who seek to challenge their academic skills and details on both will follow next year. Finally, the PTA would like to extend never ending appreciation to all the parents/guardians for their support, views/concerns and donations. We wish you season's greetings over the festive season. Stay safe and well and enjoy the break.

*By Lizzie Pashley*

### Newsletter Team:

Mr.Kirwan, Ms.Ring, Mr.Lamprecht, Liza Kurevleva, Sean Lorenzo, Slobodon Teodorovic, Nakai Mudiwa, Mea Gigon, Georgia O'Rourke, Eva O'Donnell, Hannah McNally, Sarah Glanville, Nóinín Cooling, Silvia Cummins Ciulli, Evelyn Lysaght. Luke Conaghan, Isobel Smiley