

# Newpark Newsletter

Issue 68 January 2026



# The Principal Word



On Thursday 8 January 2026, I arrived at the National Basketball Arena in Tallaght as the third quarter was starting. Late, not uncharacteristically, as something 'important' had arisen in school just as I had been due to leave. I stood on the southside of the court, opposite the stand which was heaving with raucous support. It was impressive to see and hear that Newpark outnumbered, out coloured, and out sang Clarin College, Galway. It was blue and navy that caught all eyes on my side of the court.

The players meanwhile were in their zone, where they should be. Their athleticism, their skill, their endeavour, their synchronised movement not just a pleasure to witness but instructional also. This was a match indeed, being played at a level where even the neutrals were engaged and excited. The win, when it eventually came, was nail-biting, deserved, and emotional. Historic too, as while the archive is still to be combed, no one can recall the school achieving All-Ireland divisional success. School is a lot of things of course, but it is definitely this. Students together in lead and supporting roles, the outpouring of shared joy, the celebration of achievement borne of talent, dedication and hard work, the sense of belonging to a shared purpose, a shared place. To extend the school motto, '*aide-toi, la communauté t'aidera*'.



Congratulations to the Class of 2025 on their considerable success and achievement in the Leaving Certificate and to the Class of 2028 on their excellent Junior Cycle results. Hopefully all students have a strong sense that they were justly rewarded for their work and effort. I would like to acknowledge and thank my teaching colleagues for their contribution to the achievements of students. I also acknowledge and thank parents and guardians for their role in their children's success.

The PTA continues in its work and dedication to the school with the overall aim of supporting the student experience in Newpark. Thank you to all who attended the PTA AGM in October 2025. I hope it was helpful to gain greater insight into the activities and achievements of the association. The Christmas Market was once again a great success this year both in enabling a festive catch up with each other and in raising valuable funds for the association's work. Please keep an eye out for upcoming PTA events. Your support is greatly appreciated.



Our colleague Geraldine Sheedy retired from Newpark and from teaching at the start of this academic year. Ger was a teacher of English and a long time exponent and practitioner of additional education needs teaching. Her success emanated from her having the three cornerstones of excellence in teaching - the pedagogy, the passion and enthusiasm and the ability to relate to her students. Ger is a person of enormous integrity, sensitivity, erudition, and wit. She did this school a



great service, both as a teacher and as a colleague and we wish her all the best in retirement.

The school was recently awarded funding by the Department of Education under the Climate Action Summer Works Scheme for a new science laboratory. This will bring the number of science labs in the school to six and represents a fantastic development for the school. We already have top class science facilities, but this means as the school grows in numbers that we can maintain our high standards of built environment and continue to offer high class science facilities to our students. The school looks forward to welcoming another 168 students to first year in August 2026. Our student numbers are increasing because there is such high demand for places in our school. We are in an area with high demand for post-primary places, we are a comprehensive, co-educational school and we are Newpark, with a strong reputation for the student experience we provide. Along with the Minister for Education seeking for all schools to maximise their capacity, the school has an obligation to meet the needs of its community, both within its unique remit and within the local community, to the best of its ability.

Oide is the Irish national support service for teachers and school leaders, established by the Department of Education, aiming to provide high-quality, innovative professional learning and resources to improve teaching and learning across Ireland. The school is closed to students on three days this academic year to enable Oide to deliver professional learning to teachers and staff. The focusses are child protection training, cluster events with teachers from other schools and senior cycle redevelopment. The changes to senior cycle are being introduced in tranches and include redeveloped curriculum and new modes of assessment. Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Business and, of course, Drama, Film & Theatre Studies are already operating from their new specifications with Geography, Construction, Engineering and Physical Education due

to be updated from September 2026. As subjects are reviewed, each one will include new assessment components that are not a traditional written examination. These components could, for example, include a research project, oral assessment, performance assessment, portfolio assessment, creation of an artefact, field study, or an experiment/proof of concept/practical investigation. These assessment components will be worth at least 40% of the available marks and will be externally assessed by the State Examinations Commission (SEC). It is intended that this change in assessment processes will reduce the pressure on students that comes from final assessments based primarily on written examinations conducted during a concentrated period at the end of sixth year. The change in assessment will also mean that students are being assessed on different skills and competencies.



In November the school community experienced a deep sadness. The death of Isabel Iordanova Correyero, 1MKS, is a great shock and a great loss to us. Isabel had made many connections and joined in on so much in her short time in Newpark. As a community we are grieving, but we are steady. We are supporting each other, and we will continue to do so. Our thoughts and prayers are with Iordanka, Miguel, and Constantine (Class of 2020), all of Isabel's wider family and friends and indeed, with all families in the school community who are experiencing bereavement at this time. Isabel is greatly missed, and she will always be remembered. While acknowledging, especially with first year students, the strangeness of the normality in school, we will continue to foster that normality, and its associated routines, because we know that this is what best serves the young people in our care. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a hanam.

*By Mr Eoin Norton*

*Student artwork by Jairo Manaog (Class of 25) and Feidhlim Lennon (6th Year)*

# Impressive Individuals

## Leinster Clubs Rugby



Congratulations to Alan Marnell who was a member of the Leinster U18 Clubs squad who secured the Interprovincial crown. Despite his young age, Alan played a key role in the team's success. Although an injury brought his journey to an early close, this is surely just the beginning of Alan's Leinster career.



Most summers up to this point have been a getaway from normal life and relaxation. This summer was the beginning, hopefully, of many more filled with change and continuous work throughout. The 10-week programme brought some of the most fun, hardworking, and productive memories I've had, with a touring trip to Wales to face Welsh sides Scarlets and Ospreys being at the heart of it for us as a team. To then top it off at the end of summer, with the hard work showing through in the achievement of an Interpro championship win, is something that stands special to me and will stay with me for life.

*By Alan Marnell, TY*

## Leinster Metro Rugby



I started playing with the Leinster Metros last summer. The Metros is a development programme designed to improve your rugby ability. You move up through the ranks if you are good enough. There were three different trials to get into the Metros, with loads of players from different clubs attending. If you get selected, you train and play throughout the summer.

The first two trials were more focused on passing to see how good your hands were, while the last trial was more contact-based, with two full-contact matches at the end. I was happy with my performance overall and was delighted to receive the email saying I had been called up to play on the team.

We've played two matches so far. We won the first one, but unfortunately lost the second due to a poor attitude arriving at the game. We still have a few more matches to play in order to win the cup. I have developed a lot during my time with the Metros, even though we only have one training session a week. Overall, I am delighted to have gained this experience and would encourage anyone interested in rugby to give it a go.

*By David McAdams, 3rd Year*

## Leinster Hockey

Leinster U18s played in the Inter Provincial tournament held in Garryduff, Cork over the duration of a weekend. On the Friday, after an early wake-up and a long bus ride, we played Connacht and won 2-0. On the Saturday, we had two matches: one in the morning against Leinster South, which we won 3-0, and one in the afternoon against Munster, where we came out on top 2-0 after a hard battle.

On Sunday morning we played Ulster. A draw or a win



would have sealed a gold medal for Leinster, but they scored a stroke, beating us 1–0 and leaving us with the silver. Overall, it was a great weekend with lots of good hockey.

*By Yana Yoakley, 5th Year*



This year I was selected, along with David Rankin and Finn Harty, to take part in the U18s Interpros. The three of us from started training in the summer, and in the end we were all picked for the final tournament in Lisnagarvey.

We all arrived into Three Rock at around 8 a.m. for the bus, and we were there for about three hours before our first game against Ulster. The game started well, with us opening the scoring, and we finished the match 2–1 after a strong performance. The next day we had a tough game and lost 3–1, but we kept our heads high and set our sights on our third game, another must-win match against Ulster.

After a proper shift from us, we tied the game and it went to 1v1s. We all knew we had to win, and



we pulled it back in the end, taking the match and earning a place to play Munster one more time.

If we won the last game, it would be the first time Leinster had won up in Ulster in 10 years, and since the U16s had already won their tournament, it would also be the first time in 15 years that both Leinster teams won. We ended up winning the game 2–1, and it was celebrations all round - making history.

*By Josh Carroll, 5th Year*

## Leinster Football



I represented Newpark as part of the Leinster Schools squad in the SFAI Interprovincial Tournament. I was selected after taking part in trials over the course of four months and was really excited when I found out I had been chosen to represent Leinster. It was a proud moment to be selected and to have the chance to play at such a high level.

We played against Ulster, Munster, and Connacht over three days in Athlone Stadium. In the lead-up to the tournament, we trained regularly in Carlow and played friendly matches. This helped everyone to feel more confident going into the games.

Playing at interprovincial level was an amazing experience and very enjoyable, as the standard of football was very high. The atmosphere at the stadium was exciting, and it was great to play against strong

teams from all over the country. We won all three matches and finished the tournament as overall winners.

I really enjoyed the experience and am grateful for the opportunity to represent both Newpark and Leinster. I hope to keep improving and hopefully play for Ireland in the future.

*By Ellie Barr, 3rd Year*

## International Basketball



Last summer I had the opportunity to represent Ireland playing for the u15 basketball team. After a long year of training with the U15 academy, I got the unbelievable news that I made the team! I was so excited to be part of this incredible experience along side some of friends. We competed in the Four Nations Tournament in Manchester. With two incredible wins over Scotland and Wales, and a tough loss to England, we placed second. Representing my country in front of everyone was such an unbelievable feeling. It was such an incredible and unforgettable experience to be a part of and I hope to play with Ireland again in the future.

*By Elle Dodson, 3rd Year*



Over the summer, I had the incredible opportunity to represent Ireland in the Four Nations Basketball Tournament. Our bus left Tallaght at 4am, which



didn't feel great, but at least I got loads of sleep on the ferry. Once we got there, we were so hyped to play England (we lost), then we

played Wales and Scotland, winning those two games.

It was a great experience wearing the Irish jersey and competing. It was a huge honour and something we had worked towards for a long time. We ended up winning the silver medal, losing only to England.

We had great weather, along with a nice hotel with air conditioning, which was especially nice considering it was in Wales (Ireland + more sheep). Overall, it was an amazing experience to represent my country and school with some great teammates and coaches.

*By Gareth Hopwood, 5th Year*

## International Orienteering



During the summer, I along with the Irish Orienteering team travelled to the Czech Republic to compete in the European Youth Orienteering Championships. Competitive orienteering is a sport where athletes navigate through unfamiliar terrain using only a map and compass, racing to visit a series of checkpoints in the fastest time. Some of us came from Italy where we had been training in the weeks prior to the competition.

We competed for four days getting some great results but getting smashed by the Scandinavians per usual, we did beat some British though and to be honest that's the main goal. We met people from all over Europe many of which we knew already from previous international competitions. I'm very grateful to be able to travel to beautiful places and compete like this for my country - even if no one really knows what it is I do.

*By Fionnuala Rowe, 5th Year*

## Surf's Up!



When my dad and I go on a surf trip, we have so much fun and the waves are the best. I have been on surf trips that last a week, and the fun I have is incredible. When you stand up, it is kind of weird because you're thinking, "*what should I do?*" but it also just comes as second nature.

When I make a good wave, I go back to my dad and say, "did you see it?" hoping he was able to see it.



Even though my competitions haven't gone that well this year, I am still improving. Recently, I did a competition in Donegal for the

School Nationals, representing Newpark. It had been around five years since I last did a competition because of Covid. That day the conditions were difficult, but it was good practice. Everyone at the competition was really nice, and you get to meet loads of important people who help to build the Irish surfing community.

By Florence Ferguson, 3rd Year

## European Jiu-Jitsu



Congratulations to Leon Hapotii who won a silver medal at the IBJJF European Jiu-Jitsu Championships in November. Leon has an exciting year ahead as he will compete in two more European Championships before the end of the school year. In addition to his

success in Jiu-Jitsu, Leon is a member of the Irish MMA team and will represent Ireland at the European Championships in 2026.

## Planting The Game



On the 21st of November, I had the opportunity to travel to Uganda as part of a group of 30 inter-county GAA athletes from across Ireland. The trip involved fundraising for the charity Self Help Africa (SHA) and provided a valuable insight into the vital work the organisation carries out. During our visit, we travelled across Uganda, including Kampala, Jinja, and Sipi, with the shared goal of supporting the planting of one million trees in partnership with SHA. This initiative aimed to create a lasting positive impact by supporting local communities, benefiting future generations, and leaving a meaningful legacy.



Throughout the trip, we planted fruit trees at family homes and along the banks of the River Nile, and we visited schools where we connected with children of all ages through sport. One of the highlights was visiting the first officially recognised GAA club in Africa, where we witnessed the powerful role sport and the GAA play in positively impacting the lives of young people. The smiles and happiness we experienced over the eight-day trip are memories I will cherish forever.

By Ms Niamh Carr

# Just Keep Swimming



Portmarnock CS, Malahide CS and Tallaght CS travelled to Newpark to enter the annual Community and Comprehensive Schools Swim Gala on Wednesday 3rd December

The event was run by a small number of 5th years, who ably assisted in the organisation and running of the Gala. Newpark entered 38 students and won 1st place with a total number 88points.

A few students have submitted their experiences in writing below:

This was my first year participating in the school swim gala. I really enjoyed it. It was such a positive environment. Everyone was having fun. There were so many different events so, everyone had a chance to race. Overall it was good fun and I would 100% do it again.

*Senna Miller 1st Year*



The Newpark swim gala was held on the 3rd of December this year and was a huge success! There were three schools involved: Newpark, Tallaght and Portmarnock. Most Newpark students came in the top three of their events which is incredible. All pupils did well in the gala. This was also a great experience for the 1st Year students who haven't done galas before. A big

thanks to Ms Ormond, student leaders and other staff involved in organising the event.

*Juno Ormsby 2nd Year*

The first swimming gala of the year was so fun. I really enjoyed competing and cheering on others. My favourite part was the relays because there was so much team spirit. I can't wait for the next one.

*Holden Houston 1st Year*



The Newpark Swim Team have worked hard over the past few months. It's great to see a rise in numbers and several people from many years take an interest in swimming.

The Newpark Swim team have had great success in our most recent swim gala which took place in the Newpark Sports Centre on the 3rd of December. Many of our swimmers won several medals. We were competing against schools from Portmarnock, Tallaght and Malahide. Newpark came on top with the most points.

The atmosphere was just amazing, everybody cheering each other on and really enjoying themselves. It was a great opportunity for the Swim Team to bond, get to know each other and encourage one another.

A huge thank you to Rania Prentice, Laurent Bryan and all the volunteers who worked alongside Ms Ormond to organise this gala. It was so good, and we look forward to another great term for swimming and many more galas to come.

*Joel Pedapongu, 5th Year*

It was a great honour to represent Newpark and lead this fantastic team. Everyone gave 100 percent throughout training and on the day of the gala itself. Hopefully we can build on this success and keep momentum going into the next gala. I'm proud of everyone on the Newpark swim team and look forward to our next gala!

*Henry Simpson, 6th Year*

# Top of the Circle

## FIH Pro League



Some of our hockey players, along with Mark, Ms Browne and Ms Carr, took a trip to Abbottstown to watch a couple FIH pro league matches. We watched two brilliant games that day. The first match we watched was England vs Belgium men, which finished in an exhilarating 3-3 draw and went to sudden death one-on-ones, where England narrowly won.



The second match was Ireland vs England women and once again it was a class game. After Ireland taking the lead early on, England levelled the game in the third quarter and yet again the game went to one-on-ones. Ireland thankfully won retaining their first points in their debut year in the FIH pro league. Despite the terrible weather we all had so much fun and what an experience it was! A huge thanks to Ms Carr for organising a fantastic trip.

*By Harry Crammond, 1st Year*

## 1st Year Boys Hockey



This hockey season so far has been exciting and full of progress for our team. We played our first league match away against Wesley where we drew 1-1 in a very close and competitive game. After taking the lead, we were unlucky not to come away with the win, but it was a strong performance to start the league.

We also competed in the Titan Cup, where we made an impressive run to the semi-finals before narrowly losing to St. Andrew's. We now have an upcoming cup qualifier against Mount Temple, and the team is hopeful and motivated to put in a big performance.

The best part of our hockey season so far, in my opinion, is how much the squad has grown - we started with just a few players, and now we have over twenty players involved, which has made training more competitive and more enjoyable. We're also so lucky to have such great coaches in the legends that are the two Bens, Elliot and especially Mark Cullen!

*By Harry Crammond, 1st Year*

## 1st Year Girls Hockey



These past few months have been great for the 1st Year girls' hockey teams! So many people are learning and

improving on their skills. Many girls participate in hockey which shows how many enjoy it. At the beginning of the year, we had enough people to make four teams during the eight-aside league and now have two strong eleven aside teams.

So far, we have had numerous amounts of matches and trainings. All four teams enjoyed competing in the eight-aside league and we are even more excited to start our eleven aside tournaments. We have already begun some eleven aside matches such as the A team playing against Mount Sackville in a cup, the B teams friendly against Santa Sabina and a friendly against Loreto Foxrock.

What makes the trainings and matches so fun is being able to play with your friends and missing a bit of school. There have been lots of fun memories such as all getting the bus together and getting lost when we got off the wrong stops.

We wouldn't be able to play any matches if it weren't for our amazing hockey coordinators and coaches. We all enjoy the matches thanks to Al and Ms Carr, and we really enjoy training thanks to Chris. Al and Chris are our main coaches and have taught us so much already even if we are only halfway through the year. We have had many laughs with Chris especially when he calls us all walkie talkies when we are a bit too chatty. We all enjoy hockey so much and can't wait for the rest of the season!

*By Amelia Burns, 1st Year*

## Minor Boys Hockey



This year so far has been very good in terms of the league. We have played many league games and have been very consistent. This is thanks to Ben Vincent and Ben Marnell, our coaches, and their intense training sessions.

We have played six games, winning three, drawing one, and losing two. We beat St. Andrews 3-1, which was a big win for the lads and something we were very proud of.

We are starting the Minor Cup this term and hope to get far in the competition. Thank you to all the coaches and organisers for the season so far.

*By Leo Marnell, 2nd Year*

## Minor Girls Hockey



The minor girls' hockey teams have been doing well this year. There is an A team and a B team, and both teams have played a number of matches, including cup, league, and friendly games.

All the minor girls' teams train on Tuesdays and Saturdays and play matches during the week. The A team played their first cup game against High School. At first, we were winning the match, but High School scored a last-minute goal. We tied the game but managed to win the 1v1s and move on to the next round!

The B team has also played some matches, and from what my friends have told me, they have been working hard at both matches and training sessions as well.

Everyone has really enjoyed training so far, and we are all getting much better at hockey. I can't wait to continue playing, and I'm sure everyone is looking forward to their next matches. Thank you to all the great coaches the hockey teams have, like Chris! They come up with strategies for the team, support us at matches, and make training more fun.

*Sofia Kiri, 2nd Year*

## Junior Boys Hockey

Junior boys' hockey had a decent start to the season, with an unfortunate 3-2 loss to Wesley, the best team in the league, followed by a win away against Kilkenny. We then had a run of games where we're the stronger team, go up by a goal but then concede in the final 10 minutes to only come away with a draw.

This has been the story of our season with only one win



and four draws to our name. Sadly, this meant we just missed out on the A league on goal difference, but we are now rebuilding for the cup, where we have a great chance to get to the final and maybe even further, with St. Andrews and Wesley both on the other side of the draw.

We are looking forward to these upcoming games and appreciate all the support we've had at the matches. I'd like to thank Vinnie and Ben for the time and effort they've put into coaching this year, we really appreciate it.

*By Jacob Vaughan, TY*

## Junior Girls Hockey



So far, this hockey season has been fun and exciting for everyone involved. We started the year with several training sessions to help prepare us for the matches ahead. These sessions focused on building our skills, fitness, and confidence as a team, and they really helped us get ready for the season.

As the weeks have gone on, we have continued to improve by working hard at training. We have been practising different drills, learning new skills, and focusing on teamwork. Everyone has been putting in a great effort, and it has been really great to see how much we are improving together. All of this hard work has helped prepare us for our matches in the Junior Girls Premier League.

Before Christmas, we were very busy and played six matches in a short period of time. These games were challenging but enjoyable, and they gave us a chance to test ourselves against strong teams. We were very happy to make it through to the second round of the Cup, which was a great achievement for the team, but unfortunately we lost against Muckcross in Round 2.

As the season continues, we are working hard to prove ourselves in the league while also making sure we are enjoying our hockey. The team spirit has been great, with everyone supporting each other on and off the pitch, and we are excited for the rest of the season.

A big thank you to everyone involved in running Newpark Hockey!

*By Alexa Yoakley, TY*

## Senior Girls Hockey



The Newpark Senior girls have had an exciting season so far, showing great teamwork and determination both on and off the pitch. We started the year with a completely different squad to last year, and although we had many new members on the team, it didn't take long for us to bond and work well together.



Everyone works hard during training sessions and matches, showing great skill and

teamwork, which has led to strong performances in games. Every single player has shown great determination, from defending goals to scoring them up front.

We were very lucky to reach the quarter-finals of the Trophy, which was a big achievement for the team, and we hope to finish the season strong!

*By Sara Balosanu, 6th Year*

# At The All-Irelands



## Day 1

On Wednesday the 22nd of October the senior boys' hockey team departed from the gates of Newpark at 7 in the morning. Although the early morning left some people sleepy, there was certainly a buzz of excitement in the air as a delightfully cheerful Mr Breaden embarked on the 2.5-hour journey to Limerick, sitting comfortably, in the throne that is the driver's seat of Newpark's unmistakable minivan.

After a lovely, cramped, and stuffy ride to Limerick, we arrived at the hotel and loaded all our bags off into our rooms. While some got lunch, most of the team acquainted themselves with the luxurious hotel. We then got back in the minibus and drove to Laurel Hill School to play our first game, against Ashton.

Whilst this game did not end well, we still had high hopes. We arrived back at the hotel and had a recovery session in the hotel's pool, sauna, steam room and jacuzzi. This came before our dinner in the hotel's restaurant after which the team had a debrief about the game just gone and the inevitable challenge of the next day that awaited us.



## Day 2

After breakfast in the hotel, we set off to our second game which took place in the Catholic Institute against Wallace. This was our most difficult yet most important game of the series. When we lost, we knew our chances of getting out of the group had been eradicated. However, we still had one game left to play

against Cookstown later that afternoon. So, we recouped back at the hotel and prepared for our final competitive game of the competition. We arrived at the pitch with energy levels and heads low but nonetheless ready to fight to the bone once again for ourselves, the school and our families that had travelled down to watch us. This game ended in a 3-3 draw which we felt hard done by as we knew ourselves, we should have one that game.

As we drove back to the hotel to change before going to the tournament dinner, our excitement rose as we realised our full efforts and energy could now go towards reminding every school in that hotel that we are definitively the best craic in Ireland.



Sebastian and Finn prepared themselves for the famous butter eating competition, and when the King's Hospital team joined in we had no problems showing them how the game was played and giving them a much needed lesson in how to excel.

Bowls of butter acquired, we set the reigning champion Seb and his opponent Finn beside each other ready to go, armed with ten packets each. Unsurprisingly Seb pulled through with his win against a well-spirited Finn, completing the back-to-back win, devouring ten packets of butter in thirty seconds. Once the teams for the finals day and friendlies were drawn, we headed out of the venue back to our hotel.

## Day 3

For the final day we played a friendly against last year's champions, Banbridge Academy. Although Banbridge were up for and expecting a hard-fought game, we had other ideas in mind, resting the legs of those who had played all the minutes in the previous games and spending the entirety of the game trying, unsuccessfully, to get Tom, our star striker, a goal.

After this wet and cold game, we changed quickly and began the journey back to Newpark. As this journey was considerably quieter due to the tiredness of the squad, we were able to reflect on the few days gone by.



Once we put the disappointing results aside, we realised that regardless of the success of the, we have grown and bonded as a team and that we have just experienced one of the best trips we will ever have together. We realised that at the end of the day, this is why we play sport: not to win games or gain bragging rights over other schools but to represent our own school and to be proud of it, to bond and develop relationships with our teammates that will last and be cherished well beyond our finite days in school.

*By Daniel Gifford, 6th Year*

## Behind The Lens



In October I was privileged to be given the opportunity to photograph this year's All-Ireland Tournament in Limerick for Newpark and Hockey Ireland. I had to travel down by train but I didn't mind, I was delighted to be able to play a small part in this historic event. After weeks of planning, organising gear and buying enough snacks to last for a month, the day had finally arrived. It was an early start on the Thursday morning and after getting the 8am train from Heuston station I made it just on time for Newpark's second match of the tournament.

Then it was game time, I got some shots of the warm up and sat at the end of the pitch Newpark were attacking and aiming to get a picture of each player in action, the subs watching on and most importantly tell the story of the game. Unfortunately, Newpark lost this game and were out of the group stages with no hopes of making the semifinals. This was heartbreaking

and I felt so sorry for the team. The emotions were high, everyone was really upset - even I felt really bad. I put the camera down and went over to comfort my friends.

With a quick pit stop back at the hotel, I had just enough time to edit a few photos and eat a bit of food. It was then onto the next match at university of Limerick. I got some shots of the lads warming up and a team photo before the game began. Thankfully the rain held off a little, and the sun was starting to come out which made for some really nice shots. At the end of the match I got a few photos of the lads together.

It was then back to the hotel where I had just enough time to send a few photos over to Hockey Ireland as they were planning a social media post. I then got suited and booted ready for the All-Ireland dinner.

After the dinner they held the draw for the All-Ireland semi-finals which was due to take place on the following day. I had a big responsibility to capture photos of the draw taking place and a group picture of each of the captain with the president of Hockey Ireland, it was then a quick drive back to the hotel where I sent in the picture to hockey Ireland.

On the Friday I got the opportunity to photograph the two finals for Hockey Ireland. Although it rained for the entire game and one of my lenses stopped working it was a really great experience, and I got some great photos especially of the cup lift and celebration. Some of my shots were even used on the Hockey Ireland and Leinster Hockey Instagram accounts over the course of the event!



It was a busy two days but I'm really proud to be able to capture memories for the team and be part of covering the tournament.

It was a trip I'll never forget and a great experience. A big thank you to everyone who helped make it possible, you know who you are!

*By Henry Simpson, 6th Year*

# The Basketball Diaries

## 1st Year Girls



This term in basketball, we learned important techniques like lay-ups for scoring close to the basket, the three-man weave for teamwork and passing, and zone defence for positioning. These practices helped to improve our skills. Although many of the girls doing first year basketball are new to the sport, I think that we have all gotten a good understanding of it through training. We are all enjoying training thoroughly and I can't wait until we start matches. Thank you, Ms Browne!

*By Hanna Dimitrova, 1st Year*

## 1st Year Boys



This term was a wonderful start for the 1st Year basketball team. As a team, we grew close to each other and are always happy to help one another. Thanks to our great coach Johnny, we have all improved in one way or another.

At the end of each training session, we play a match to improve our coordination in games and our control of the ball. On behalf of the entire 1st Year basketball team, we would like to thank Johnny for coaching us.

*By Ivan Konovalov, 1st Year*

## 2nd Year Girls



So far, the 2nd Year girls basketball team has been doing great. Some new players joined at the start of the year, and we also have a new coach. Thank you to Mr. Colgrave for training us every Tuesday! Some members of the team also have hockey on Tuesdays but still make time to come to basketball.

The team is working hard during training, trying their best and improving their basketball skills. Most players only started last year but are already very good. The team is coming together really well, and we will play our first match next week. Hopefully it goes well and we get to play more matches throughout the year.

I think everyone has enjoyed basketball training so far and has had lots of fun!

*Sofia Kiriy, 2nd Year*

## 2nd Year Boys



So far this year basketball training has been going well thanks to Johnny, our coach. Personally, I think the team has progressed so much since last year. We're looking forward to playing against

other schools and I'm sure everyone is as excited for the games as I am. Our matches are due to start soon, hopefully within the next week or two.

*By Adam Oak, 2nd Year*

## U16 Boys



The U16 Boys Basketball team has had a great start to the year. We won all of our group-stage games and made it into the knockout rounds of the Cup, which was a huge improvement on last year.

Unfortunately, we were knocked out of the Cup, which brought our season to an end. Even so, we are all very proud of the progress the team has made, as everyone has shown big improvement since last year.

Now, we are focused on training and preparing for next year. We have all loved playing basketball this year and had loads of fun. A big thank you to our coaches, Art and Ms O'Keeffe, who have been great.

*By Oisin Breen, 3rd Year*

## U16 Girls

This year, the U16 Girls Basketball team has had an amazing and competitive season, with three brilliant wins and many great games. Unfortunately, we did not advance this year; however, this does not reflect the incredible development the girls have shown throughout the season.

We have had great training sessions this year, with lots of participation and strong skills on display. None of this would have been possible without our coach, Ms O'Keeffe.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone back next year as we progress to senior basketball.

*By Elle Dodson, 3rd Year*

## Senior Girls



The Senior Girls Basketball team has come so far since I first joined three years ago. What started off as a small team who could barely put points on the board, has developed into a group we should really be proud of.

We train every Thursday with our two amazingly supportive coaches - Mr Doyle and Ms O'Keeffe. Shoutout to you guys! Us girls come from fourth, fifth and sixth year, and this year for the first time - a third year, who should get a notable mention, Elle Dodson. She's the best player on the team by a landslide - which is humbling to say the least. However, we all get along great, and the tunes at training keep morale high!



This year we managed to learn, and integrate, in basketball terms, a screen, which is an achievement in itself. Among our other successes was getting into our league quarterfinal. It was a tight game against Sancta Maria, and an even more upsetting defeat as we lost by only a basket. We also qualified for the All-Irelands, but unfortunately lost early into the knock-out tournament. We did manage to squeeze in a team breakfast that morning, loading up on pastries and orange juice!

Overall, it's been an action-packed year for the team. And despite all the new members, we worked cohesively and did ourselves proud. I've really enjoyed being a part of the squad, and I hope it continues to flourish in the years to come.

*By Fia Scally, 6th Year*

# Hoop Dreams - All Ireland Champs



This year has been the best for Senior Boys Basketball in recent memory. We started the year strong, winning all our league group games by at least 20 points, and have continued in a similar form throughout the season.

In early December, we played our regional final against Gaelscoil Coláiste An Phiarsaigh. We won comfortably, securing our third regional title in the last four years. In the first week back to school after Christmas, we had our All-Ireland Cup Final. By reaching the final, we had already gone further than any Newpark team ever has, and we managed to take it one step further by beating Clarin College 57-55 in a true nailbiter of a game.

We now look forward to the All-Ireland League, which starts at the end of January, as we aim to complete the treble.

Thanks to our coach Mr Doyle for all of his hard work to get us to this point.

*By Noah Dodson, 6th Year*



# On The Ball

## 1st Year Boys Rugby



The 1st Year rugby team has done really well this school year. We came second in our sevens tournament and have managed to win or draw all our matches except for one. The main challenge we face is having enough players for matches - at most we have around 16, just enough for a 15-a-side game.

Even with our low numbers, we still have a very good chance of winning our league. However, with injuries and some players unavailable, we may have to forfeit the league and focus on 10-a-side friendly games instead. More players coming down to try it out would really help us. Don't worry if you have no experience - most players are starting for the first time, so everyone is at a similar skill level.

We train on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. If you're free, come to the changing rooms near the school entrance. It's especially good for new players to come in the next couple of weeks because we've been training on the basketball courts, focusing on handling skills with games of "tip," rather than full-contact matches. It's really newcomer-friendly!

A big thank you to all of our coaches for their effort and support. I'm really excited for the games and tournaments ahead.

*By Mani Cowman, 1st Year*

## Junior Boys Rugby

This year, the junior rugby team has done really well. We have an exciting group of players who have worked hard to get to the position we are in. All of the lads have shown huge improvement from the start of the season, and you can see the difference week by week.

We had a disappointing loss to Wesley in the Fr Godfrey Cup, but even getting there was a big



achievement for the school. Looking ahead, we have a good chance to go on and win the league if we continue to get results. So far, the lads have done really well, going unbeaten in nearly every game and picking up bonus points along the way.



We still have a few tough fixtures to play, but if we perform as well as we have so far, we can get the results we need. In the Cup, we have an exciting semi-final against CCM, and we would love to see some support like we did against Wesley.

If we all work hard, we could be in a position to win the double again - just like last year. That would be fantastic for the second years in their first year of junior rugby, as well as for the third years, who might have the chance to win the double again.

*By Max Lennon, 3rd Year*

## Biarritz Bound



We started off waking up at 2:30am to meet everyone at school to get a bus to the airport at 3:30. It was an early start, but everyone was excited. We put our bags onto the bus and headed off to the airport. We boarded the plane and as it was so early in the morning most people slept through the flight. We landed and got a bus straight to where we were staying. When everyone got unpacked and ready we headed off to a team-building session.



We went to a gym and had to wait outside the building for a while until the owner finally arrived. When he arrived, he set up four different workouts and said to get into teams of five. Once everyone was in their teams, one person had to do the rowing machine, one had to do box jumps, one had to do squats

with a weight, one had to do burpees, while the last person was had a rest. We had to do each exercise for a minute straight and we repeated that five times. Everyone was wrecked after it but Gus Murphy and Jack McDonnell decided to do a bronco after it, which they got very good times in. We went back to the cabins after the team building, everyone had their showers, and we went for dinner. After dinner we had some free time to go outside and play some rugby.

On the second day we were woken up at 6am, we went for breakfast and then went back to our cabins. We were told at breakfast to get everything ready for training. After everyone was ready, we went to the pitches for a training session. There were three different parts to the training at the start. There was a tackling drill with Mr Adams, a rucking drill with Mr

Smyth and then a small touch game with Mr Weymes. After these drills it started lashing raining for about ten minutes, everyone got soaked and we were freezing. After this training everyone wanted to just get back and have a shower.

Once everyone got back and was ready, we got on the bus and went to the nearest swimming pool. We had to wait for about 30 minutes outside of the building, until they finally told us that we had to split our group into two groups because our group was too big. One group were supposed to go into the pool first while the other group sat on the benches and waited their turn. Just as all the second years were getting changed, the employees said you weren't allowed to get into the pool unless you were wearing speedos which no one had. So, all the second years had to get changed back into their clothes and we had to get the bus back to the cabins. We were allowed to go to Lidl instead of the swimming though which was good and Matias Gordon's Lipton iced tea got taken off of him because he bought too much of it: it was used as rewards for other people.



On day three we got woken up at 6am by Mr Smyth, we had breakfast in the sports centre. The food was alright. After breakfast we started training for our rugby matches against a mix of Bandon Grammar School and Mont de Marsan for our first match and Gonzaga for our second match. Each match was 20 minutes long. We lost the first match as they had a grown man playing claiming to be 15 (he had a full mustache!). The second match was lots of fun. Going into it we thought that Gonzaga would win, but once it started, we found our rhythm of play and won the game. David McAdams was legendary, bumping four people in a row and only getting tackled when there were three people on him. Gus Murphy stepped two people at once and then grubbered the ball which was claimed and scored by Vann Clarke. Leo Marnell pulled

off a brilliant cross field kick which was again claimed and scored by Vann Clarke. We had many more good moments from others as well. We played amazingly well and won the game.

Later that day after we had lunch in the sports centre, we all got on a bus and went to a lagoon near the beach.



We paddleboarded in the lagoon, we paddled out to an island and back, we had a relay race too. It was so windy, but we still had so much fun. Once we went home, we got ready to go to a professional D2 game between Biarritz Olympique and Mont de Marsan. It was a

great game with an amazing atmosphere. Biarritz won and the local fans were going crazy.

On the final day we had breakfast and then packed our bags and cleaned our rooms. Once we had checked out, we got on a bus headed towards Biarritz town for some free time. We shopped around and had some food. When our time in Biarritz was over we got back on the bus and headed to the airport but we had fun and played music along the way. At the airport we checked in our bags and got on the plane home. The plane ride was two hours which wasn't so bad. The trip was so much fun, and I wish I could do it again.

*By Harry Kenny and Jack McDonnell, 3rd Year*

## Senior Boys Rugby



The Newpark Senior Rugby Team has had a productive start to the season. With pre-season training beginning at the start of August the lads were eager to get going



when school started. Our first league game was away to De la Salle, Churchtown. While missing some players from the spine of the team and

integrating several Transition Year Students new to Senior Rugby they were able to come away with 36-14 win.

The lads knew that the games ahead would get tougher with the next game being at home to St Conleth's who had brought last year's season to an end. Welcoming back more players from injury, further training and commitment really showed where we managed to pull off a 34-22 win in a mixed game. We played well storming into a 14-point lead after ten minutes before being pulled back to 22-22 with ten minutes left. Then two quick fire tries in the last ten saw us to a comfortable win and really showed our potential.



This brought us into Cup Season. Our first-round win against St David's, Greystones was hard earned and has brought the team together as we were down to 18 available players due to injury. This win saw us meet St Conleth's again in the second Round. Miserable conditions led to a tough and physical game where we had to dig deep to grind out a win. We took the lead for the first time in the game with only five minutes left to play bringing us to the Quarter Final stage. A narrow 10-7 defeat to St Benildus saw us exit the cup at this stage. While this has been disappointing, the response of the team has been excellent with students seeking extra training with greater numbers as we turn our focus towards our remaining fixtures in the League with the aim of winning the league this year.

*By Mr Gary Smyth*

## A Day In Ancient Ireland



Before midterm, our 1st Year History students went on a trip to Wexford to visit the Irish National Heritage Park. We swapped our classrooms for crannógs and spent the whole day learning history in a hands-on way. The bus journey took about an hour and a half, and everyone was excited as we arrived at the park.



When we got there, a tour guide brought us on a journey from Stone Age Ireland all the way to the Viking period. We visited sixteen different sites in total. Most of them were reconstructions, but some were original, and all of them were really interactive. At each stop, the guide told us the history of the place and then let us explore it ourselves. Seeing the houses, paths, and tools up close really brought the past to life and helped us imagine what life in ancient Ireland was like.



Overall, the history trip was a great experience for everyone, and it helped us learn about Ireland's past in a fun and memorable way.

*By Naima Clark, 1st Year*



## Exploring Explorium



*Recently our 1st Year Science classes visited Explorium. Here are some accounts of the day.*

Going to Explorium was definitely a highlight of the first term for some of us 1st Years. I remember coming out of science class after learning about the trip and **EVERYONE** was talking about it! We were all so excited, and the trip totally lived up to our high expectations.

We hopped on the bus with our form, and I think it's fair to say we were pretty giddy with excitement. When we arrived, we began looking around at all the interesting activities and mind-bending illusions. We got to see two shows; the lightning show and the robotics show.



My favourite was the lightning show because we all put on special headphones and got to see real lightning making music right in front of us! It was super cool, and we were all really interested in the science behind it. In the robotics show, we learned all about electronics, and we even got to meet robot dogs that could jump, spin, and even dance!

During all this adventure, we had worked up an



appetite, so the €10 meal deal with chicken tenders, chips, and a donut filled us all up. There were so many things to look at, from illusions and magic tricks to bikes that flip you upside down and stripy rooms that confuse you and make you feel all topsy-turvy!

We enjoyed this trip so much and are all so grateful that we got to go on such a cool trip!

*By Ellen Rooney, 1st Year*

When we arrived at Explorium, we all went to a room to put our bags down. Me and my friends went straight upstairs after that and started walking around, looking at and trying out some of the activities. One of my favourites was the low-gravity room.

We all got called into the robotics talk, and at the end of it the woman brought out robotic dogs. After that, we went around again until we were called into the lightning show, where the lightning started to play songs.

Then we were called for lunch, and we got chicken nuggets and chips. Me and two of my friends went to a spy activity where we walked around and played games.

*By Síofra Walsh, 1st Year*

My favourite part of our trip to Explorium was probably

the lightning show, although I also really liked the robotics show. In the robotics show, there were two robot dogs. In the lightning show, they made real lightning and played music along with it, including *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

There were lots of interactive activities to do as well. There was also a great student lunch option where you could get a donut, a drink, and chicken tenders for ten euro.

I hope we get to go back again sometime soon. It was a big highlight of our first term, and we were very excited. The trip definitely met our expectations, and it was one of my favourite trips we have been on so far.

*By Amber Cruise, 1st Year*

All the 1st Years went on a trip to Explorium. We went to a workshop on lightning and got to see some really cool things, like a room that makes you feel dizzy and a machine that makes clouds in the shape of circles. Some people also did the hanging challenge, where they time you to see how long you can hang for. When we were getting the bus home, we saw deer! Overall, it was a fun trip.

*By Emma Siliauskas, 1st Year*

## Bin It!



Recently we did the Bin-It Workshop in school. This showed us the effects of not putting your gum in the bin once you are done.

Two people came into Newpark to show all the 1st Years that it's important to bin your gum when you're done. One of the activities they got some people to do was with two targets, one clean target, and one dirty target. They gave a few people bean bags to represent the chewing gum. They got to decide where to put the gum. Most people put it on the clean target because it

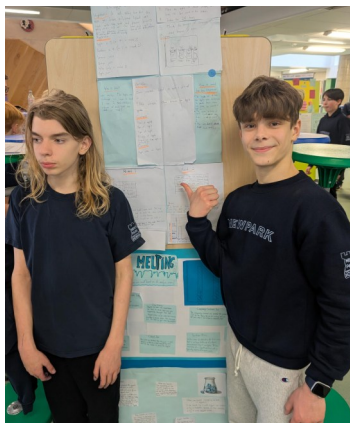


had the most room. Nobody realised that there was a bin beside the targets.

They also did a few skits showing us that anyone can litter, not just certain ages. They acted out children, teenagers, adults and elderly littering. After all of this, we found out that people prefer to have their own clean space and clean public areas.

*By Sophia Cullen Rolfe and Naima Clarke, 1st Year*

## NOVA Council



Hi, I'm Tom O'Neill from 1st Year, and in this article I will tell you about my participation in the first NOVA Council in-person meeting in Brussels, from the 11th to the 13th of October this year. This included a meeting with representatives from the EU Commission, whereby

the eight children on the council were given an opportunity to express their views on online safety.

### What is the NOVA Council?

The NOVA Council is a group of eight children, including myself, organised by Eurochild, an EU-funded network dedicated to campaigning for the rights and safety of children across Europe. The council's purpose is to advise EU officials on online safety for children.

### What did I do there?

Saturday was mostly a get-to-know-everyone experience, with a trip to the Museum of Illusions thrown in as well. Sunday involved an all-day trip to the Eurochild office where we discussed various online safety-related topics, such as cyberbullying, AI, and age appropriate content, and created an advocacy message for the European Commission. On Monday, we had a meeting with a European Commissioner, with whom we discussed the topics from Sunday.

### What will happen next?

Over the coming year, we will have several online meetings, and eventually an in-person presentation for the EU around this time next year.

Overall I really enjoyed the experience and I'm looking forward to participating in future meetings and events.

*By Tom O'Neill, 1st Year*

## Healthy Eating



All the 1st Years had a healthy eating workshop where we learned about nutrition and maintaining a healthy diet. The speaker shared some really interesting facts, like how much sugar is in some of our favourite drinks and how consuming sugar can make us want to eat even more. We also

learned that fibre is especially important when you are younger because our bones are still developing.

She explained how different foods affect our energy levels - some provide long-lasting energy, while others give only short bursts. Typically, foods high in sugar and fat give us short-lasting energy, while healthier options keep us going for longer.

Overall, the workshop was very informative and gave us a better understanding of how the foods we eat affect our bodies and wellbeing.

*By Emma Siliauskas, 1st Year*

## Wellbeing Workshop



In September, the 3rd Years had a wellbeing workshop. We started with an hour-long nutrition talk, followed by a series of short lectures on different topics including motivation, sport psychology, mindfulness, yoga, and study skills.

During the motivation and sport psychology session, we discussed how to cope with pressure, why it's important to continue playing sport as we get older, why pressure can be beneficial, and how athletes manage it. We also completed a worksheet to measure our own anxiety levels before and during matches.

After the healthy-eating talk, we learned about the Pomodoro study technique, developed by Francesco Cirillo in the late 1980s. As we are studying for our state exams, this technique was especially useful. I've tried the Pomodoro technique myself, and it works really well.

The mindfulness session lasted 30 minutes and was a relaxing break from the normal school day. Ms Keating guided us through it, and we did activities like colouring, playing with playdough, and writing down the things we do and feel when stressed. She also shared a PowerPoint to help us reflect. It was a great way to clear our minds.

For the other 30 minutes, we did yoga with Ms O'Rourke. It was a calming session where everyone either lay on their back or front while Ms O'Rourke guided us through body awareness exercises. There was a fish on the whiteboard and a scented spray in the room to help create a relaxing atmosphere. Some people even fell asleep, while others simply rested with their eyes closed.

Overall, we can all agree that it was a fantastic day, and it's definitely something that should be done again.

*By Cate Steele, Danny Smith and Josh Crammond,  
3rd Year*

## HerSport Workshop



In September, girls from 2nd and 3rd Year took part in a workshop run by HerSport. Her Sport is Ireland's leading platform dedicated to levelling the playing field for girls and women in sport. When we arrived down to the GPA, we were asked who plays sport, and I think nearly everyone put up their hand. From there, we learned about the main reasons girls drop out of sport, why sport is so important for our health and confidence, what motivates us to take part, and why it's worth staying involved even when challenges come up.



We also took part in a fun activity where each table tried to name as many female athletes as possible, and then as many male athletes. My table had the highest number of women athletes by quite a lot, something that sparked a good conversation about visibility in women's sport. We are lucky to have lots of female role models in Newpark.

Overall, the workshop was really enjoyable and gave everyone plenty to think about. Hopefully it will encourage even more girls to stay involved in sport and to feel confident and supported while doing so.

*By Cate Steele, 3rd  
Year*

# Council Matters

## Freshers' Day



September saw Newpark's second ever Freshers Day. For those of you who weren't able to attend, first of all you missed out, but Freshers' is a day where first year students are invited to the GPA for an afternoon to be haggled at by club leaders from Newpark's wide range of clubs.

The Cultural Council (run this year by the wonderful Allegra, Alice and Finley) only began in 2018, back when the school was home to a measly four or five clubs. Now however, there are a grand total of 31 lunchtime clubs with upwards of 64 club representatives, and that's not even including afterschool sports.

Some of the wonderfully wacky clubs you can find in Newpark include (but are not limited to): Debate, Warhammer, Badminton, MUN, Music Appreciation, Seisiún Ceoil, Ciorcal Cainte, Crochet/Knitting, Pride, Pokémon, Film, Dance, Drama and many MANY (many) more. Not forgetting of course some of the fallen angels over the years – shout out to the Kermit the Frog Appreciation Society and the Anime Club.



*By Muireann Breen, 6th Year*



Freshers' Day consists of big colourful posters and displays, live music, some dazed wandering, and a lot of persistent club leaders. The premise is: the club with the most names on their sign-up sheet wins.

On Monday, 24th September 2025, the 1st Years, went to the GPA to explore all the clubs and ECAs that we can get involved with. The Freshers event was organised by the Cultural Council.

At the Freshers, we had lots of fun learning about and immersing ourselves in the different ECAs and clubs available at the school. Many people signed up for sports such as hockey, rugby, basketball and swimming. Some of the popular ECAs and clubs include Extra Drama after school on Fridays, Jewellery Making Club, Badminton, Pride Club, Crochet and Knitting Club, and Christian Union. These are just a few of the many options on offer.

Overall, we had a fantastic time discovering everything the school has to offer. A big thank you to the Cultural Council for organising such a fun and informative event!

*By Maeve Doyle, 1st Year*

## The Cultural Council

The Cultural Council is back and badder than ever! An extremely democratic election at the start of the year saw myself and Finley Gleich elected as leaders of the Council, with Alice Gill demoted to deputy to prevent her complete monopoly over power in Newpark. With this trio, an all-knowing and all-seeing trifecta was born. What does the Cultural Council even do, I hear you ask? Remember that great Halloween costume competition? Yeah, that was us. Mr Norton is a mere figurehead - the real power comes from the Cultural Council.

If you have ever been part of a club in Newpark, you have thrived in the shadow of the council's care. So if you want to be part of the organisation that truly runs Newpark, talk to Ms Johnston about joining us. See you there!

*By Allegra Zipser, 6th Year*

## Christmas Wellbeing



The Wellbeing Team ran a carols and hot chocolate morning before Christmas. We arrived in and set up a table in the GPA, where we gave out free hot chocolate to students and teachers. The music department arranged for the choir to sing Christmas carols to help bring some Christmas spirit.



The only issue we had was that we couldn't get the hot chocolate down from the Home Economics room fast enough to keep up with demand! There was a long line of students waiting, ready to stampede at any moment (just kidding).

Overall, the morning was great fun, and I'd like to thank all the teachers and students who helped out.

*By Sadhbh Ryan-Griffin, TY*



## The Prefect Perspective

*Find out what the prefects have been up to in an article that nobody wanted or asked for!*



The 25/26 prefects have had a swell time so far this year. After revamping the prefect room during summer, it's become a hotspot for toastie and tea making. A weekly cleaning rota was made whereby each group must take a selfie of the sparkling clean room. We did a mug gift giving exchange, and another Kris Kindle during Christmas. We even got a Christmas tree for the room! The annual Milanos dinner took place, and awards were given. Some good fun was had that night!



The prefect pairs met the 1st year buddies, where we decluttered lockers and hosted a Christmas quiz. We opened the prefect room doors to Isabel's friends for hot chocolates and cakes, which really bonded the group. Overall, it's been a delight to be part of the prefect team.



*By Fia Scally, 6th Year*

## Halloween Dress Up Day



Heather Humphries. The Young Offenders. Shrek. You may be wondering what these things have in common... The revered and renowned Newpark Halloween Costume Competition of course! This year, in tandem with the Cultural Council, myself and Allegra Zipser (with assistance from the great Finley Gleich) had the honour of organising and presenting this famous and influential competition which saw the GPA transformed into a parade of creative and hilarious costumes. With Ms Fox on music and Ethan Cannon Gonzalez on photography, we knew there was nothing that could stop us.



Governed by our esteemed judging committee (led by the fantastic Ms Kovacs and Ms O'Keeffe), there was a steep competition this year, with some of

my personal favourites being Inigo Montoya and the Dread Pirate Roberts of The Princess Bride, a worming-grandad, Avril and Yvonne's fantastic Wednesday-themed costumes, Elephant and Castle, and Shrek and all of his pals.

The parade went very smoothly and we had a fantastic audience who were only too happy to react with cheers and applause to every competitor. After a tense few minutes of waiting and slight controversy surrounding the winners of the group prize, the judges announced our winners to be The Young Offenders, 1st Year with heavy bag and Heather Humphries, who were all well worthy of the award. Another win for the Cultural Council in the bag...



*By Alice Gill, 6th Year*



# Clubs and Socs

## Anti-Racist Group



This year I decided to join the Anti-Racist Group and help out this year. It's something I'm quite passionate about and I think it is one of the most important things in the school environment.

This year has been off to a good start. We started with a good number of people coming and partaking in the club which was great to see, especially students from Junior Cycle. We did exercises on stereotypes and other topics which were quite successful and a good way to start off the year.

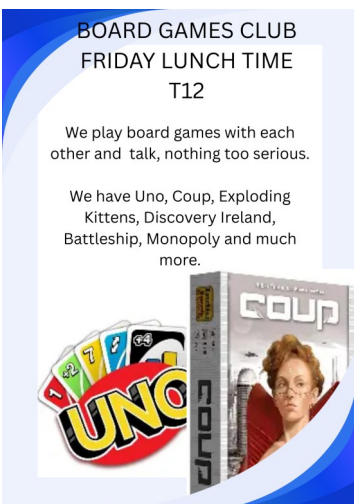
We're currently working on a proposal for a policy against racism and racist bullying which is very exciting and could be quite beneficial to the school.

We are really trying to make a difference and keep an open environment. We encourage anyone to drop in if they feel they passionate about the topic or want to discuss it with the group.

By Josh Carroll, 6th Year

## Board Games Club

At Board Games Club, we just chill and play board games. We have a moderately sized collection of games available for everyone to play. These include classics like Uno, Battleship, and Monopoly, as well as some lesser-known games such as Coup and Discovery Ireland. We usually have around 10 people here every Friday in T12. Come along!



By Isaac Moore, 2nd Year

## Book Club



The Newpark Book Club started the year strong, with lots of new members. We decided to read A Good Girl's Guide to Murder by Holly Jackson. Here are some of our thoughts:

Lara – *“Very, very thrilling. My friends say the second one isn't as interesting.”*

Evelyn has read the third one and says, *“It is intense, more brutal.”*

Florence kindly lent her copy to Ms Colin, who thought it was *“Too long.”*

Alannah – *“Thrilling, exciting, wonderful. I would recommend all books by the author.”*

BB – *“It was good.”*

Then we decided to read The House on the Cerulean Sea by TJ Klune. Below are some reviews:

Tom – *“A warm, fuzzy children's book.”*

Sebastian – *“I liked the end; it was wholesome.”*

Evelyn Roche – *“A happy, warm cuddle of a book. Why do you hate happiness?”*

Vaishnavi – *“I didn't read it.”*

Giacomo didn't read it, but read The Perks of Being a Wallflower while reading The Hobbit and Small Things Like These again.

Tora – *“Better than Frankenstein. Upbeat; I liked it.”*

Book Club is on Thursday lunchtimes in the library. All are welcome! Come for the books; stay for the friendship, debate and arguments about the books!

By Ms Lydia Colin

## Christian Union



In Christian Union this school year we've been fortunate enough to see some new faces as well as some familiar faces with very successful enthusiasm from the 'open day' for Newpark's 1st Years at the beginning of the year. With help and leadership from Mr. Lamprecht, Alessia Soporan, Allegra Zipser and Lily Drew, Christian Union have been continuing to meet every Monday at lunch time to share The Word, commune with friends and play some games.

Over the Christmas period, CU were able to gather in Stillorgan centre to do some caroling with Temple Carraig. CU are also looking forward to our Weekend Away this January, where we will get to meet with other schools to spend the weekend in Ovoca Manor to learn about God, play games, share meals and enjoy campfires together. Over the rest of the school year, we hope to continue to meet with other schools, provide a space for people all over the school to come, hang-out, ask questions about God and faith, and find some quiet in the chaos of the school day.

*By Lily Drew, 6th Year*

## Ciorcal Cainte



An téarma seo, bhí an t-atmaisfeár iontach! Chaithimid a lán t-ám ag comhrá, ag gáire agus bhí go leor craic ann. Bhí an-seans ag mise agus James chun an club seo

a eagrú, chuir sé an dúil ag daoine chun Gaeilge a labhairt in iúl. Bhí an t-ádh orainn don tacaíocht go bhfuairamar, agus d'fhreastail go leor daoine chuig an gciorcal gach seachtain. Chuireann gach daoine iarracht a labhairt i nGaeilge gach seachtain gan a bheith inníoch, agus glacaimid le gach leibhéal Gaeilge. Beidh níos mó gníomhaíochtaí ag tarlú, agus (ar ndóigh) níos mó spraoi. Tá siúl againn go leanfar an spraoi agus an craic ar aghaidh sa míonna ina dhiadh sin! GRMMA!

*By Elise Nangle, 5th Year*

## Creative Writing Club



Creative Writing club is the perfect opportunity to explore your passion for writing! Whether you're interested in writing poems, lyrics, short stories or plays, it's an excellent place to meet fellow writers, receive feedback or simply get inspired! We meet every Thursday in M5 for daily writing prompts and chats. Everyone is welcome!

*By Robyn Yelverton, 3rd Year*

## Crochet and Knitting Club



We've had a lovely year in the Crochet and Knitting Club this term! There have been lots of wonderful projects made by our members, from plushies to scarves



and little baby boots. It's amazing to see so much skill and interest.

It's also been great seeing lots of new faces after our success on Freshers' Day, with many experienced members and beginners joining the club since then. This term, we've

also been introducing more knitting to the club, with the addition of new knitting needles for anyone who wants to knit or pick up the craft.

So come in on Friday at lunchtime to T9 and give it a go - I'll be happy to help!

*By Vaishnavi Dheepson, 5th Year*

## Debate Club



The hardest thing about debating competitions is not debating, it's getting invited. We'd all but given up on joining the secondary school debating circuit. But thanks to Ms Johnston, Newpark took part in its first conference, the UCD Literary & Historical Society Mace.

We arrived with effectively zero experience, accompanied by plenty of nerves, and the usual coping strategy of excess preparation was not an option.

In Mace debating, there are only 15 minutes between learning your topic and delivering your speech, and you aren't allowed to use the internet. Speeches are a full five minutes, so there isn't even enough time to write a speech, let alone rehearse one. Adding to the pressure was learning who our opponents were, likely one of the numerous St Andrew's or CBC teams.

The inevitable result of the stress was a trainwreck of a first debate. After using seven of our fifteen minutes trying to find the room we were debating in and waffling through the rest, we were glad to finish. Our relief was short-lived when we realised there were two

rounds to go. Despite the sub-par news, we weren't panicking; we had come to a realisation - debating is addictive. As we went on, we developed a taste for it and even began to feel that the fifteen minutes was generous.

If you have any interest in competing, or just want to beat your brother in arguments, come find the surprisingly welcoming Debate Club in M3 every Monday lunchtime.

*By Ethan Canon Gonzalez and Joss Brooks, 5th Year*

## Drama

Extra school drama on Fridays has always been a place for students to let off stress and enjoy playing drama and improv games with their friends. It's a great introduction to Newpark drama without any of the worry that can come with putting on a play. The returning second and third years were excellent and seemed to enjoy themselves very much each week. I was excited (and also a little shocked) to see the huge turnout of 1st Years joining, who were all very talented as well.

Overall, the group was amazing, and it was always fun to see them every week. I've got a feeling the Junior Plays this year will certainly be a sight to behold. I would like to thank Ms Devis and all the teachers who graciously donated their time to let us stay at school later, and of course our leader Muireann Breen, who showed up every week despite 6th Year responsibilities and led us fearlessly through an ever-growing crowd of 1st Years.

Having fun with friends in extra school drama was a key memory from my junior cycle, and now getting to help with it feels very special. I hope most of all that the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Years enjoyed themselves and continue on with Newpark drama. Even if they don't, it is always good to get out of your comfort zone and try something new.

*By Josefina Cooper, 5th Year*

## Jewellery DIY Club

We meet in T9 every Tuesday lunchtime and take out materials and paper. It's really fun because we can make anything we want. Ms Farlow has kindly donated a lot of materials for making jewellery. I often bring in sweets to enjoy while we work!

Everyone is welcome to our club so there is no reason not to join us!

*By Ayushi Yadav, 2nd year*

## Global Citizens Committee



This year there has already been a lot of work done by the Global Citizens Committee. We have gone around classes and sent a survey to every student in the school to promote awareness of a serious problem; food waste, as well as continuing to reach out to local politicians to change our community. Tackling food waste is a big task, and our main goal at the moment. We still have some work to do, but we are confident that this year we can continue our plans and make some changes to how food waste is handled at Newpark.

*By Josh Crammond, 3rd Year*

## Music Appreciation Society



2025 was a great year for the music appreciation society; its first year of existence, in fact. Convening in M3 every Tuesday, we have savoured sounds from ample sources; from jazz to country, from Adrienne Lenker's 'Songs' to King Crimson's 'Discipline' – melodies ranging from dulcet to clamorous, but constant in their beauty.

Access to music has been limited in Newpark - since

the introduction of the Yondr pouches - yet art will find a way to grow through the concrete of suppression, and music cannot be trapped between walls. So, if on a Tuesday you find yourself on the M floor corridor, I'd recommend you drop in. The tunes are sweet, the people are friendly, and – if you're not careful – you might just enjoy it.

*By Garret Nugent, 6th Year*

## Pride Club



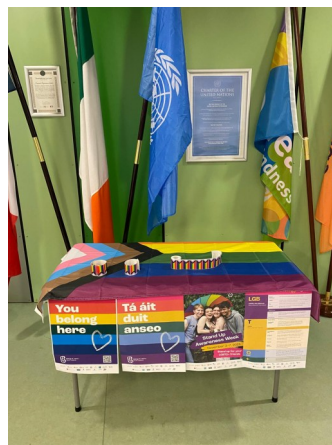
Newpark Stand Up! Week 2025 took place from the 3rd -7th of November this year. Stand Up! Week is a way to show our support and allyship to our LGBTQ+ friends. Newpark Pride club organized events for the week.



On Monday, we handed out rainbow flag stickers and made some announcements for the week. On Thursday, we did a quiz in G5 and on Friday, we held our annual "Gay'ke Sale" at breaktime.

We raised €252.15 for BeLonG To, Ireland's LGBTQ+ Youth Organisation. Thank you to everyone who baked or bought cakes and helped us to raise so much!

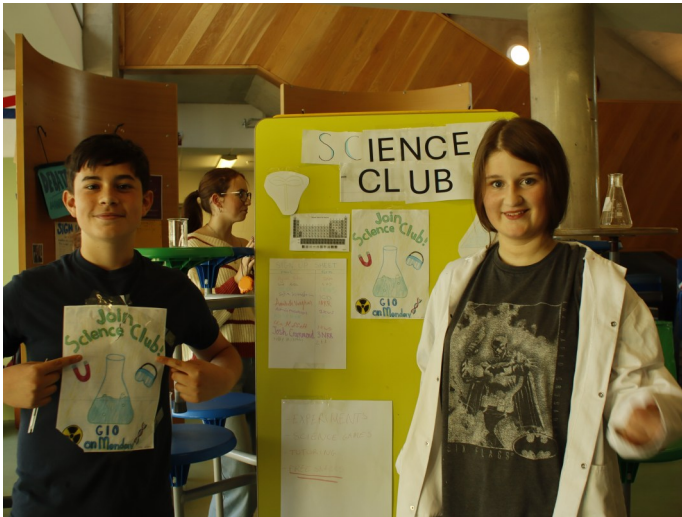
Friday was also our "Rainbow Jumper Day", where each



year group was asked to wear a different colour of the rainbow to show they stood up against homophobic and transphobic bullying. It was a successful week; thank you to Ms. Keating and everyone who organized, baked and supported!

*By Cate Steele, 3rd Year*

## Science Club



As a new club, Science Club has had a good year so far. We like to do experiments (like when we did Elephant toothpaste), small side projects and explore different ways to verse ourselves in Science. It is a fun and relaxed club where we like to take new opportunities and try new things. Anyone is free to join at Monday lunch in G10.

*By Helena Adamsons, TY*

## Warhammer Club



Warhammer Club is by far one of my highlights on a weekly basis. It's just a group of people either playing the game or painting figurines and chatting about anything and everything cool or nerdy going on in their lives. It's a great way to meet people and have fun. And don't worry if you've never played before - I still haven't - but it can all be explained easily. If you're even on the fence a little bit, just go for it! I promise you won't regret it.

*By Casper Ryan, TY*



# ECA Clubs—January 2026

## MONDAY

### Badminton

Sports Hall at 1.10

### Christian Union

T11 at 1.10

### Debate

M3 at 1.10

### Warhammer

M2 at 1.10

### Science Club

G10 at 1.10

## TUESDAY

### Visual Art

T15 art-room at 1.10

### Global Citizens

T5 at 1.10

### Model United Nations

RB12 at 1.10

### Music Appreciation

M3 at 1.10

### Jewellery making/DIY

T9 at 1.10

### French Board Games

T1 at 1.10

## THURSDAY

### Ukelele

G6 at 1.10

### Film

T15 art-room at 1.10

### Dance

Theatre at 1.10

### Lego Club

T16 art-room at 1.10

### Book Club

Library at 1.10

### Pride

G4 at 1.10

### Newsletter

T12 at 1.10

### Creative Writing Club

M5 at 1.10

## FRIDAY

### Chess

M6 at 1.10

### Crochet/Knitting

T9 at 1.10

### Board Games

T12 at 1.10

### Pokémon

T12 at 1.10

### Anti Racist Club

MV1 at 1.10

### Band

G7 at 1.10

### Ciorcal Cainte

M8 at 1.10

### Newpark Voices

G6 at 1.10

# The Green Pages

## Fast Fashion



On Friday October 3rd, a group of my peers and I were invited to see the first screening of *"Losing the Thread: The Cost of Fast Fashion"* at the Lighthouse cinema in town. It was an amazing experience that was not only enjoyable but informative. I got to meet many amazing people and hear fascinating and harrowing stories about the cost of fast fashion worldwide. It also had a clothes swap in which you give in old clothing you don't need any more and grab new clothing you would like.

All in all, it was a wonderful experience from which I benefited both academically and socially. I can't wait to learn more and help with the spreading of information about fast fashion. Plus the free sandwiches they provided weren't half bad.

By Casper Ryan, TY

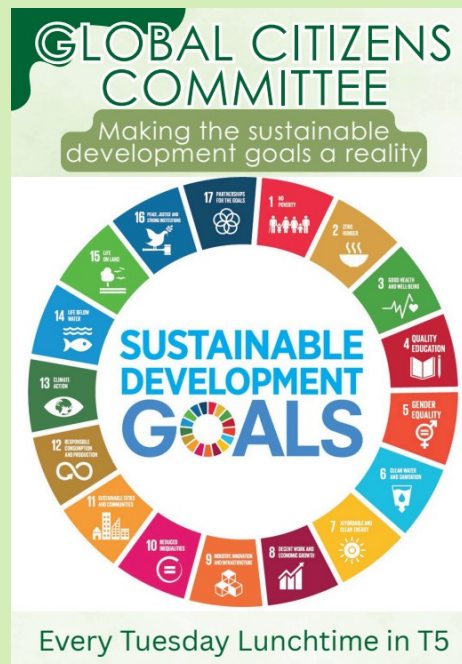
## Global Citizens Committee Update



Did you know, every time you throw an aluminium can into general waste, you waste enough energy to power a laptop for 5 hours? In our daily lives, it's easy to

overlook where our waste ends up. We toss food scraps, plastic, paper, and waste into one bin without a second thought, simply to be *"out of sight, out of mind."* However, what we fail to understand, is the sheer scale of the environmental and social impacts we bring as a result. By throwing as little as one item into the wrong bin, you increase the chances of contaminating its contents, and therefore preventing it from being recycled.

This is why at Newpark, we are committed to making waste sorting a priority- because even small actions can make a huge difference. We have numerous recycling and plastic bottle bins located throughout the school. But we, as a school have a work to do in this regard, and we are seeking to improve our school's waste management system in the near future, although the effectiveness ultimately depends on students and teachers alike to use them appropriately.



As of 2023, we found that Newpark produced on average around 1000kg of general waste each month, of which 11% was food waste, and 37% could have been recycled. This means almost half the general waste we produced in our school was incorrectly

sorted and ended up in the environment, going to landfill or for incineration. Studies also show that 1% of the human body is made up of plastic - this is plastic that is found in the water we drink, the food we eat, and the air we breathe, all stored in our tissues. This is like eating a credit card every week, all because of improper waste disposal. Recycling is as simple as doing homework - we all do it, we just have to do it better and faster. If you would like to help us reach that goal this year, we would love to see you at Tuesday lunchtime in T5.

By Natan Gorzelanczyk, 5th Year

# Gold Week

## The Bake Sale

This year, the much-loved Gold Week bake sale was held on Friday the 3rd of October by Caoimhe, Lily and I for our fourth and final time. It was quite a triumph if I do say so myself; we sold out, employed a successor, and Sebastian's cinnamon rolls successfully caused their annual war.

For those who aren't aware, Gold Week is an annual initiative run by our year to raise money and awareness for Childhood Cancer Ireland in memory of our wonderful friend, the late Mia Seligman. This year, the bake sale managed to scrape together a hefty €702.65 (approximately) between everyone's generosity and baked goods. We also managed to find ourselves the lovely, extremely helpful Camila Mullins from first year - who reached out completely of her own volition - to help us sell everything. After passing down our coveted bake-sale knowledge, next year we hope to hear about her organizing the whole thing (no good deed goes unpunished Camila!)

The best thing about this particular Gold Week event was how willing everybody was to help out. Between nearly drowning in boxes of homemade pastries handed to us at the crack of dawn in the GPA, and the kindness passed over in two €20 notes ("*no change!*") from a singular person, it really restores your faith in humanity. Good job Newpark! Keep up the good work when we're gone.

*By Muireann Breen, 6th Year*

## The Sea Swim



As always, the annual Gold Week swim was spectacular. We all marched down to Seapoint with Ms Devis and Ms Johnston, full of excitement and anticipation.

For the sponsored sea swim, it may have been quite

cold, but the before, during, and after tea kept us all warm. Everyone cheered each other on, and it was great to see so many students joining in and supporting one another. This is always a wonderful way for our year to come together and celebrate part of Gold Week.

Thanks to Ms Devis for organising the first one way back in January of 2nd Year! I hope this tradition will be carried on when we leave, as it's such a fun and memorable way to mark the week.

*By Lorna Gillanders, 6th Year*

## The Gold Show



On Thursday the 2nd of October in the Hunter Theatre, Newpark hosted its annual Gold Show as part of the Gold Week fundraising. With a total of 16 acts there was a wide range of talents displayed. From duets to full on bands to a DJ set it was a very good time. Robin, James and I were doing the lights so we had the best view of all the acts and I can tell you with absolute certainty that every act was incredible.

We had a variety of acts from soloists, to duets, to bands, to dancers and for the first time ever at the Gold Show we had a DJ, who really got the crowd hyped up. We were also treated to a surprise performance from Mr Byrne and Mr Twamley.

I can't go without mentioning our hilarious hosts Alice and Finley who kept the audience entertained even when not everything went smoothly. Allegra made a beautiful speech at the end, speaking about Childhood Cancer Ireland and all the good they do. A huge thank you and congratulations to everyone who made this show possible, I can't wait for next year!

*By Josefina Cooper, 5th Year*



## Goal Jersey Day



Newpark celebrated Goal Jersey Day, a nationwide initiative that raises awareness about global inequality and the importance of active citizenship. Students and staff embraced the non-uniform day with enthusiasm, sporting jerseys from their favourite teams, ranging from local clubs to international icons.

A huge thank you to everyone who participated and contributed. The money raised helps GOAL continue their vital work in vulnerable communities around the world.



# LCA Spotlight

## Upskilling



It was another great day in LCA when on Wednesday the 17th of September, the 5th and 6th Year LCA group visited World Skills Ireland exhibition at the RDS in Ballsbridge.



While attending the event we learned loads and got some hands-on experience about the different apprenticeships on offer and the many different paths we could take after school. A big highlight for me was getting to try podcasting with a few of my friends.

We also got the opportunity to hear a talk from Irish comedian and author Rory O'Connor, of Rory's Stories fame, who shared his life story and tips for success. Rory had also completed the LCA, so it was inspiring to hear how successful he had become. We even got a chance to get a picture with him after.

A big thank you to Ms Feighery for organising the trip and to Ms Brennan and James for coming with us too!

*By Henry Simpson, 6th Year*

## A Greystones Getaway



On a sunny Wednesday at the end of September, a large army of 5th and 6th Year LCA students descended on the DART and made

our way to Greystones as part of our Active Leisure and Social Ed. courses. We had a great day out, guided by Greystones native Ms Devis. We went for a walk on the beach while she told us all about how wonderful Greystones is.

After we got our steps in, we were sent around the town to do a scavenger hunt and find some landmarks around Greystones. To finish the day, we visited Happy Pear and completed an assignment based on the food they offered.

A big thank you to Ms Devis for being our fantastic tour guide and organising this trip. It was another great day out in LCA, and everyone really enjoyed it. We would love to go back to Greystones to explore more another day - but only if they build a McDonald's!

*By Andrew Russell and Henry Simpson, 6th Year*

## Brendan Balfe Visits LCA Social Education



As part of our LCA Social Education course, the 5th Year LCAs interviewed radio presenter Brendan Balfe to talk to him about what life was like when he was

younger and what the Dublin community was like in years past. He was interesting to talk to and clearly took great pride in his work in radio and music. The thing I found most interesting the way he has seen the radical increase in media in Ireland within his lifetime. When he was young practically no one had a TV and there was only one Irish radio station, now known as RTE. Now there are more outlets for media than one can count on their fingers, from streaming services like Netflix, social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram, which some people of Brendan's generation view as a terrible thing and a distraction from real life. However, Brendan saw it as a good thing allowing for more interaction with the media and with other people.

His attitude towards life was, as he put it: if you have the choice between sitting and dancing; dance. Which we took to mean, give everything you can give a go, a go. I thought this was a very cool way to think about things, to try everything you can and not worry about whether it will work out, just to give it your best, and hope things will work out.

*By Oisín Smith, 5th Year*

## The Gift of Gifted!



On Thursday 4th December, the 5th and 6th year LCA group visited Gifted in the RDS as part of our VPG class.



We had a really enjoyable day, walking around all the stands, learning about Irish business and I finally got started on my Christmas shopping.

We even got the chance to visit the food village where there were loads of free

samples, you could nearly eat a whole meal as there was a large variety of products ranging from sausages to chips.

A big thank you to Daki for giving us the tickets and to Ms Feighery, Ms Brennan and James for organising the trip. It was a great way to kick off the Christmas term!

*By Henry Simpson, 6th Year*

## Lino Prints

Taking inspiration from their local landscape, LCA Craft and Design students completed lino prints. The process requires a lot of technical skill and patience. Do you recognise these locations close to our school?

*Prints by Amelia Mooney Browne, Sophie Hickey-Johnston and Alex Byrne.*



# TY Times

## An Olympic Threepeat



The TY Olympics was one of the few TY activities that I had never heard of until the week before it was happening. I remember being annoyed at the fact that the TY Olympics was happening as it would cut into valuable portfolio filling time, but still feeling excited for it regardless. The most interesting part of the Olympics for me was actually the buildup to the event.

They were already all everyone could talk about in TY on the Friday. About how each form was going to win. But nobody was as confident as us, 4LRG. During Politics class we even had a meaningless vote for who would be team captain, all knowing full well that team captains weren't even a thing. We also became increasingly aware of the rivalries between form teachers and of the importance that we win, to give 4LRG its third win in a row.

When the Olympics began, we collectively ran to the first event, where we had to pass a balloon in a line with our feet. We suffered a humiliating defeat, and demotivation was clear amongst everyone. The next game involved trying balloons to our heels and popping those of the enemy team. That game we won without any difficulty, and we were ready for what was next. The sports hall was turned into an obstacle course that we had to complete blindfolded. We completed the obstacle course reasonably quickly and ended up at the top of the obstacle course leaderboard. We then ran from the PE hall back to the GPA, where one of our team members was tripped by a member of an enemy team. That was when we knew that any option less than victory was unacceptable.

The next game involved building armour for an egg so

that we could drop it from the second floor without letting it break. Our team came up with an ingenious plan to ensure our victory. As it would be unfair to the next teams that participate in this event, I will not disclose what our plan was, but what I can say is that it brought us to victory.

We then rushed back to the PE hall for the final event. Tug-of-war. I hate any activity that is physical, and it was more entertaining to watch and cheer on. We lost one of the tug-of-wars, but won every other one. After the event was over, Mr Lennon announced the results. For each form that he announced, the excitement grew amongst all of us. He eventually got to the top two, of which we were one. When he named the enemy team first, we knew we had won.

I assume that he was congratulating the enemy form for their efforts, as the first thing that I heard clearly was *"But you still didn't win, the winners are 4LRG!"*. We cheered, and every member of 4LRG except for me started running in all directions. I made very sure to avoid as many collisions as I could, but I was still run into a few times.

The whole time I knew that our victory was inevitable. All the other forms are clearly inferior, and success was the only possible outcome. I had been trash talking the enemy forms for the entire day, and none of them seemed to realise their inferiority. In the end, they were forced to accept that we are the better form, as we each got to hold the TY Olympics trophy and rejoiced in our third straight victory.

A big thank you to the whole TY team for making this event possible.

By Sol McCullough, TY

## Food For The Seoul



Ms Lee brought the TY Korean class on a trip to the Drunken Fish; a Korean restaurant located in town. As we walked inside of the restaurant, we were brought upstairs to be seated in the beautifully decorated dining room. The menu was written in Korean, and the tables were set out in the traditional Korean style. We ordered our own meals in the Korean that we had learnt in school, thanks to Ms Lee.



There was a broad selection of meals to eat such as kimchi, Korean chicken, and delicious beef stew. Overall, it was a terrific experience, and our class enjoyed not only the food, but the traditional atmosphere we were lucky enough to experience.

*By Molly Soden-Cowap and Eloisa Rigo McSweeney,*



# A Madman's Guide To Gartan

*Can you make sense of this madman's week in Gartan?*

"screams echo through the night"



"sighs of agony"

"ladders lead to lies, snakes tell truths, the dice show the path"



"the water is so very cold"



"they sing dissonantly"

"the voices like marshmallows"



"the mist hides them"

By Kuba (the madman) Krasniewicz, TY

"they haven't found me yet"

"they can climb too"

"I found them"



"total leg annihilation"

"blisters appear everywhere"



## Arts Week



Arts Week was a really good experience this year. It was a chance to have a load of fun with the form, but also to be part of a musical and see how hard it actually is. Whenever I watch musicals, I don't appreciate how difficult it is to sing and dance at the same time. The week before we chose "Voulez-Vous" from Mamma Mia and "Summer Nights" from Grease to perform. We started the week by choosing people to be the characters in Grease. I was chosen to be Danny, the main male character, which didn't make the singing and dancing any easier. The characters for Voulez-Vous were also picked, but I wasn't one of those people, much to my relief.



Next we moved onto dancing. It was really fun learning the dances, especially the dance for Voulez-Vous which was a lot more complicated. It took us a long time to get the dance right. Along with onstage performances, we were also responsible for our own costumes, including tie-dye t-shirts and painting on leather jackets. You could tell who the artistic people in the form were, because they had the best costumes by far.

On the Friday morning, it still seemed like we had everything to go over, especially the dancing, but we managed to pull it all together for the final performance at Friday lunchtime. It was really fun to perform, the atmosphere amongst the form and the audience was

amazing, and very similar to the Junior Plays, which I did in 2nd Year. The main reason it was so fun was because everyone gave it their all. It was a bit of fun, and I can't wait to see all the other forms do it. It is one of my highlights of TY so far.

*By Jacob Vaughan , TY*



In 4JMA's Arts Week, we all worked together to put on two songs and scenes from two musicals. We chose "Singing in the Rain" and "Voulez-Vous" from Mamma Mia. We made sets on the Wednesday, and we tie-dyed T-shirts for Mamma Mia. We assigned characters for the scenes: Emily played Sophie, and Eve, Casper, and Vencel played the dads in Mamma Mia. I played the director in Singing in the Rain, Daniel played Cosmo, and Sadhbh played Kathy in Singing in the Rain.



I loved doing the Arts Week performance - learning the dances, doing the singing, and putting it all together as a form. I really loved it, and when we put everything together it worked really well. During Voulez-Vous, it felt like an actual party. It was so fun getting to work together, and I'm really looking forward to seeing how everyone else enjoys their Arts Week in TY.

*By Clara Maxwell, TY*

## In Dublin Week



What better way to start than with the weather? It was surprisingly decent throughout In Dublin Week, except on Tuesday and Friday when it produced that special Irish drizzle - the kind that soaks you so slowly you don't realise you're wet until it's too late.

In Dublin Week is designed as a chance for us to bond as a group, learn how to navigate the city, and experience some of the culture Dublin has to offer. We definitely managed all three.

On the first day we walked up Bray Head. After a break at the top, we made our way back down - some of us walking, others sprinting. Although this short expedition didn't seem to have much purpose, it was probably my favourite day of the week.



The next day we went on the Dark Dublin Tour. It was quite interesting, and we were shown some cool street art like the "fish in the bag" piece and Love Lane. However, as someone who struggles to stand still for more than 15 minutes, my attention drifted fairly quickly.

The day after that brought another tour, this time of the GPO. We learned about the 1916 Rising. Even though much of it was familiar from school, we did pick up a few new facts - most of which I've already forgotten - but I do remember that there's a statue of

Hermes, the Greek god of messages, above the GPO entrance.

And then - can you guess? Yes, another tour! Thankfully this one was shorter and took place in the Zoo, and who can really complain about that? After the tour we explored the zoo, ate food, and even played in playgrounds.



On the final day we had the selfie hunt. Three groups of not-particularly-competitive students were released into the maze of Dublin city to take selfies making us look like typical tourists and complete lunatics. After all our efforts, my team came last.

All in all, the week went tickety-boo.

*By Clarissa Maybury, TY*



## Beep Tests and Bucket Hats



For TY PE both classes went to the National Sports Centre of Ireland in Blanchardstown to do fitness testing, learning about where we can improve in our sport. This included two trips to the sports centre, one in September and one in November, to see whether we could improve our results.



Once we got there, one group started the day off with some gymnastics, which was really fun and we spent a lot of time on the trampolines and springboards, while the other group went straight into some testing in the gym, looking at bench-press and deadlift. The two groups then switched areas and did the other tests. After the break one group did agility and speed testing, while the other did power tests. Lastly, after another break both groups combined to do the yo-yo fitness test, to test our aerobic fitness. The yo-yo test is basically just the beep test (running up and down), except with breaks and it starts on faster levels. I, being someone who loves running, really enjoyed it, but I get the feeling that not everyone else did... Once everyone had run as much as they could, we had finished the testing, and we all got these bucket hats that everyone at school was very curious about when we returned.

Two months later, we repeated it the day to see if we had improved in these areas. The day consisted of the same routine, except there was no gymnastics. Even

though the fitness at the end was brutal (again), it was a really fun time to get away from school and a good learning experience for how to improve in sport.

*By Jacob Vaughan, TY*

## Online Consumption



On a cold, wet Friday morning the form of 4LRG were pulled out of the depths of our traditional morning routine to be given

a rather unique experience by the DRCC. This talk had everything: inspirational TikToks, walking debates, unique discussions and criteria we will never forget. The pick of the bunch was the walking debates and I'm not just speaking for myself: ask the rest of my class. We were told we are the best group they have ever had, and I take great pride in that.

This talk was delivered by two ever talented women who gave a great talk on the influence of influencers and how our minds are easily perceptible to these negative ideas online. This talk helped us to continue to be wary of online and the dangers that come with it.

*By James Craig, TY*

## Chasing Waterfalls



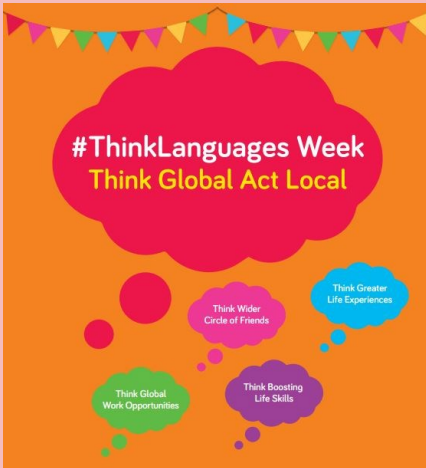
TY Geography students went on a trip to Powerscourt waterfall to conduct a river investigation. Our task was to determine if it would be safe to build a bridge over a meander. Before we began our work, we went and took a look at the waterfall which was amazing! We were lucky to have an overcast day

considering what the weather can be like in Ireland.

We spent time in and out of the river carrying out experiments, for example how fast the river flows, how wide and deep the river was and the type of rocks found in the river. These experiments were fun but standing in the river in wellies was absolutely freezing! After completing all the tasks we headed back up to the café for a bit of lunch before we left. The trip was great fun and everyone enjoyed themselves.

*By Alexa Yoakley, TY*

# ThinkLanguages



This October, the Transition Year classes participated in ThinkLanguages 2025, a nation-wide initiative to inspire students to learn new languages and about different cultures, by taking part in different workshops and events. It was

organised by both staff and students from the European Section, and it was Newpark's first time participating. With the help of the school community, we were able to organise a variety of workshops and activities for our year.

Students got to take part in a number of workshops done by different teachers: these included language tasters, quizzes and other events: TY students learnt about Francophone and Germanophone countries' cultures, did linguistics puzzles, took Spanish and Swahili language tasters, did Russian ballet practice and a lot more. The workshops were short but packed with activities, and students got to sample four workshops each. The aim of these workshops was not only to encourage and foster an interest in language learning, but also to show the diversity and broad range of cultures and differences in Newpark's community. We feel that the people who took part got to experience a whole new area of life in Newpark, one that might not be instantly noticeable through standard classes, by discovering new facets of the community, and also by letting the people leading these workshops teach about things they wouldn't normally get to.



Some students also got to take part in a Japanese Calligraphy workshop, provided by the Japanese embassy. They learnt how to write their names in Japanese characters, and also some words in Kanji. It was a great experience for all those involved and it was a great way to include the local community.



The TYs also got to take part in a panel of guest speakers. Members of different groups and organisations came in to talk about the importance of language learning and how it can open up new pathways in our life and give us a multitude of new opportunities. These included members of the French and Japanese embassies, a European Union law specialist, a lecturer from Trinity, and more. We got to hear about their experiences learning languages and ask questions.



Additionally, Roland, our school caretaker, gave us a talk about his experience moving to Ireland from Hungary, learning English, and how that allowed him to gain a lot of new experiences. It was really great to hear stories from within our own school community, not only from people we've never met.

Finally, we closed out the watching Ballon, a German language film. It was a completely different day to normal, with a lot of new activities. While it may have been Newpark's first time taking part, we hope it won't be the last, and we want to thank Ms Travers for all her help with organising and coordinating the event.

*By Damián Colazurdo Bedrossia, TY*

## Carol Singing



The Transition Year music class had the wonderful opportunity to visit Newtownpark House nursing home to sing a few Christmas songs. We brought two acoustic guitars, bongos and two cajons and the rest of us sang. We walked up to the home and were brought into a room where a few of the residents were sitting and waiting for us to sing for them. We did a nice mix of old and new Christmas songs, so they seemed to know most of the songs, and a few started to sing along! It was a really enjoyable and valuable experience. It was nice to hear everyone enjoying themselves and get into the Christmas spirit!

Some people had to leave early for rugby (or didn't bother to stand up), which explains the thrown together picture, but everyone had a great time and spent a while after the singing talking to the residents and spreading some Christmas cheer.

*By Eve Byrne, TY*

## Thrills and Spills



On the Thursday before Christmas break, the TYs went ice skating in Dun Laoghaire. When we all hit the ice, it's fair to say we were a little wobbly on our feet... or skates! There were lots of falls at the start, but plenty of laughs too.

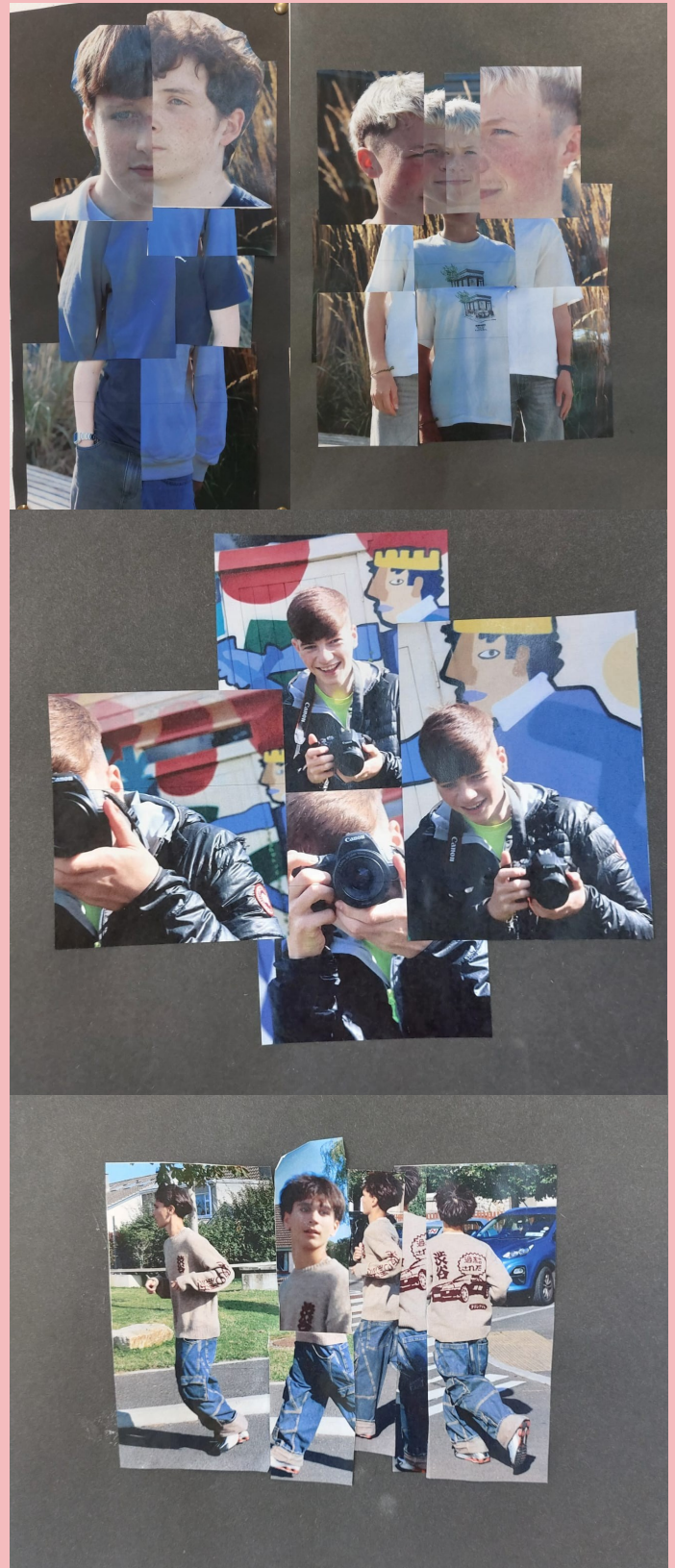
After a while, we all got the hang of it. I must say, Ms Magan and Ms Feighery were skating right alongside us, while the other form teachers stayed

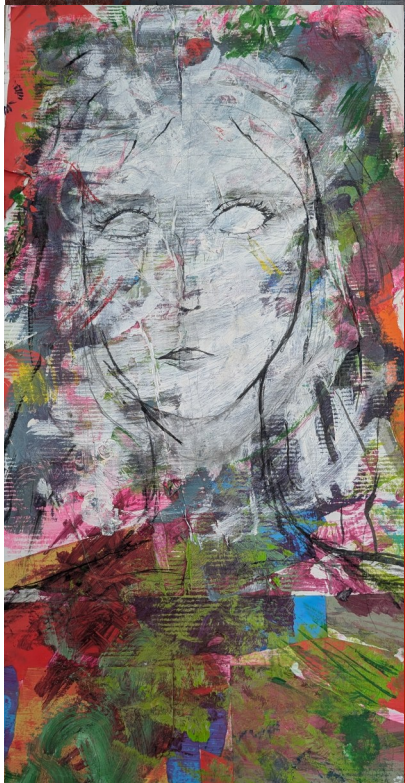
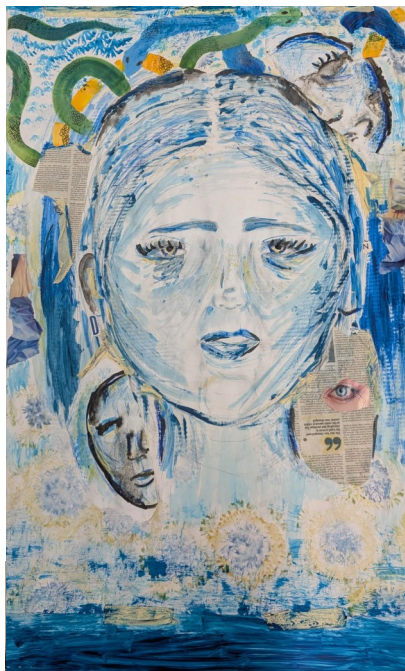
on the nice, hard, stable ground - maybe they were too scared of falling, who knows!

*By Bella Kenneally, TY*

## Joiners

The TY Photography class had a lot of fun creating these unique photographic portraits. They are called 'joiners' and are inspired by Artist David Hockney's photographic work. Hockney joins photos of his subjects together, which mimics how we see people in real life: from lots of angles and with movement. These portraits bring to life the photographic subjects in a unique and playful way.





Art by Mr King's TY class

# The Redbrick Report



*Catch up with our Redbrick crew and find out about all of their adventures this year!*

## Dunnes Stores

On September 7th, we went to Dunnes Stores (Avril drove us!) I bought a breakfast for €5, which included bacon, hash browns, eggs, sausage, and toast. After we finished our food, we looked around the shops. I also bought a donut for €3.50; it was okay. After that, we went back to the Redbrick.

*By Eoin Acres, 2nd Year*

## Rathfarnham Castle



On the 6th of October, the Redbrick building went on a trip to Rathfarnham Castle. We travelled there on the school bus. Once we arrived, we had a snack. After our snack, we went to the playground. Following the playground, we visited the charity shops. After the charity shops, we had our lunch. Once we finished

lunch, we took the school bus back to Newpark.

*By Ethan Webb, 2nd Year*

## Howth



On the 20th of October, the Redbrick crew went on a trip to Howth. We took the DART train from Seapoint to Howth. Once we arrived, we went for a walk and saw a seal. After that, we went to Leo Burdock's for fish and chips.

*By Ethan Webb, 2nd Year*

## Greystones

On Monday, the 12th of January, our Redbrick group went on a trip to Greystones. We left at 10:00 a.m. to get the DART train from Seapoint to Greystones. Once we arrived, we went to the SuperValu shop and then had a snack. After that, we looked around some of the charity shops. We then had lunch and later went to Costa Coffee. After Costa, we took the DART train back to Seapoint and walked back to school.

*By Ethan Webb, 2nd Year*

## Bray Bowl

On January 19th, the Redbrick team went on a trip to Bray for bowling. We took the DART train to Bray. Once the bowling was finished, we got the DART train back to Seapoint. When we arrived in Seapoint, we walked back to Newpark.

*By Ethan Webb, 2nd Year*

## Art In Every Space

What makes somewhere beautiful? That is the question we set out to answer on one gorgeous Monday morning. On the 20th of September, both the 5th and 6th Year Art classes headed off to Dun Laoghaire to explore how art and design influence public spaces. So much of our lives is spent in public spaces, and great effort is taken to influence how we feel in those spaces, as it affects our everyday experiences. How do you feel walking around your area or going to school every morning? Safe? Intimidated? Proud?



The first site we visited was the King George IV monument. Overlooking the harbour, once the largest in the world, it is a symbol of British power and dominance. A tall obelisk with a crown on top. It commemorates the visit of King George and the renaming of the town to Kingstown.

We also stood in awe of a gigantic sea urchin sculpture, The Mothership. Seeing a sea creature magnified like that reminded us of the otherworldly nature of the ocean...and it also made for a good back scratcher. Nearby, we were astonished by the stonework of Imogen Stuart and Ciarán Byrne, depicting the meeting of Saint Patrick and King Laoghaire.

We admired an epic archer and discussed what makes a public art piece successful. If a piece is disliked, you get annoyed every time you walk past it, and nobody respects the space. However, if a piece is there long enough, people often become accustomed to it. It's like The Spire - you might not be proud of it, but life feels a little strange without it (or maybe you simply loathe it).

Later, we visited the DLR Lexicon to see Karen Ebbs' exhibition *An Outer Reflection of an Inner Reality*. In a grey and hopeless world, colour and whimsy are powerful tools for change, and Ebbs' bright, gestural paintings aim to *"inject our world with the audacity of hope."* Her work explores themes of reality, perception, and reflection, drawing influences from human relationships to neuroscience.

The exhibition blends large, vivid oil paintings of



abstract shapes and patterns with full-length mirrors, creating a dreamy, immersive effect. I found it really beautiful, not just because I got to look at myself in mirrors for 20 minutes, but also because of the clever use of space and mirrors to create an open, airy feeling.

Both trips were very enjoyable and inspiring, showing how art, whether in public spaces or galleries, shapes the way we experience the world. I would encourage anyone interested in art to explore public art or visit an exhibition like Ebbs'.

*By Ethan Canon Gonzalez and Florence Chipperfield,  
5th Year*

## Wonder



My drawing titled 'Wonder' is a submission I drew for the 71st Texaco Children's Art Competition which was awarded highly commended by the judges. The process began when I scouring the internet for inspiration and came across a photo that was really striking and tells a story that I really wanted to convey.

It took around 15 hours to draw and I utilised combination of paints and colouring pencils. I would really recommend for anyone who enjoys art to get involved in art competitions or events as it's a great opportunity to meet new people or draw something from a prompt that you wouldn't have thought of before. Huge thanks to Ms Feighery for all her support with this piece!

*By Kate Glanville, 6th Year*

## Library Happenings: Books, Nooks and Banter



Hello from the library team, Carol and Sharon, who are always here when you need help choosing a book!

We have revamped the library this year, which hopefully makes it a little easier for you to find books. There are many new books, including titles from Holly Bourne, Kacen Callender, Sally Rooney and Daniel Tawse. We hope to get some additional shelving in the new year, so we can display even more fantastic books selected by the team and donated by kind parents.

Shout out to Ms Feighery, who continues to keep the library supplied with lots of colourful student art. We really value the talent of Newpark students and your artworks make the library a vibrant, interesting space for both students and staff!



We also have some new additions in our cosy Book Nook: a coffee table which hosts a variety of puzzles, mindfulness magazines and colouring books to keep you entertained and relaxed.

We want the students to be involved in the library, so if you have a book recommendation, or suggestion about the space, please let us know.

Please drop in and remember we're open at lunch.

*By Ms Sharon Burrell*

## A Lucky Break



On the 27th of November, the 6th Year Maths classes had a school trip to the IFI in town to see 'Beat the Lotto'. This Irish documentary film about the use of statistics to profit from our national lottery was a much-needed break from the stresses of 6th Year, and a lovely change of pace,

as school trips are uncommon for the Maths department.

The film was thoroughly enjoyable, but one question plagued the minds of the audience members: How much maths does it really take to realize that simply buying every lotto ticket guarantees a win?

Following the film, 6th Years were briefly set loose upon town, leaving a trail of plague and pestilence in their wake.

*By Garret Nugent, 6th Year*

## Let's Get Quizzical!



Newpark's 6th Year students were invited to participate in a national Politics and Society Quiz being held by the Oireachtas at Leinster House.

Lorna Gillanders, Sebastian McKay and Laila Mackey represented Newpark in their heat. They came second and progressed to the

national finals where they narrowly missed out on first place. As a result Newpark rank 5th overall in Ireland. The questions ranged from political history to intricate workings of the Oireachtas. The team represented themselves to the highest standard showing excellent knowledge in the quiz. Afterwards they had a chance to meet and talk to local politicians which provided valuable insight into the working life of a politician.

*By Mr Wesley Forsythe*

# Model United Nations



## PARKMUN

*"Delegates we are aware that there is a lot of very important topics to get through here, so we will try and keep it brief!"*

Those were the words spoken repeatedly by over 200 students from 14 different schools as they rushed through the two days of PARKMUN 2025, on the 7th and 8th of November.

I was fortunate enough to serve as a head chair for the SPECPOL (Special Political and Decolonisation) committee, and what an honour it was. Over the two days, I hosted over 20 students as they debated some of the world's most pressing topics, from Refoulement, to Terrorism, to rising tensions. And as someone with quite extensive MUN experience, I am incredibly glad to say that it was some of the most exciting, interesting debate I've ever seen. Newcomers and seasoned delegates alike worked together and created a productive and lighthearted atmosphere that suited PARKMUN perfectly. We had such a good time in SPECPOL, that we even did a few rounds of karaoke,

belting out classics like Piano Man and California Girls.

To me, the thing that makes PARKMUN stand out as a conference is its accessibility to newcomers. PARKMUN was my first conference, and this year most of the delegates I spoke to were the same as I once was. First time delegates who are finally able to speak their mind on the issues they find most important. And to get to support these young delegates in developing their debating skills was one of the most enlightening and exciting experiences one could have. Thank you to PARKMUN, specifically our facilitating teachers, Ms Rider and Ms Kavanagh, and our conference organisers and leaders Evelyn Roche, William Kehoe and Munaki Mudiwa, for developing this environment.



If you (yeah you, the reader!) would like to join Model United Nations for any reason, maybe because you want to debate, or because you care about politics and what is happening in the world, or just because you want to hear new perspectives, I would highly encourage you to join. See ya there!

*By James Carter, 5th Year*



# TERMUN

*(Reading is required to be done in a transatlantic newsroom accent)*

October 3rd, 2025. The Newpark delegations of Egypt and Pakistan arrive in the ferocious rain to Terenure College, where Terenure Model United Nations is about to begin. Accompanying them, the highly accomplished Florence Chipperfield serves as a chair for the Ecology & Environment (commonly shortened to E&E) committee. Together, both delegates and chairs bedazzle the conference, sparking debate across the committee rooms and general assembly hall: where will they go next?

Across the two-day event, the delegates from Newpark elegantly and confidently articulate themselves in committee, fighting on topics ranging from child soldiers to human rights exploitation, to genocides, to gerrymandering, and many more. First time delegates and the most experienced fought together, to protect the issues most important to them. They made alliances with other delegations and, through these dark times, stood strongly against the often-frightening topics terrorising the world and its nations.

In General Assembly (GA), delegates ensured their voices were heard, with a Point of Information (POI) and a speech coming from the Pakistani delegation, which eventually led to both of those resolutions passing through GA.

In E&E, Florence commanded the delegates, operating as a firm yet kind chair, who encouraged and helped many delegates in speaking over the two days. Later on, the chair would additionally oversee the General Assembly, keeping order over the rambunctious crowd of UN member nations.

Overall, an incredible performance, specifically to the outstanding delegate of Pakistan, Katie of the Health and Youth (H&Y) committee, who won an award for their highly intelligent and skilled debate in committee.

The Newpark delegation returned home successful, thankful to Terenure College for their sublime conference, and eager for the next one: the tremendous PARKMUN 2025, which we hosted in our own school on the 7th-8th November.

MUN Club operates weekly, every Tuesday at lunch in RB12. We hope to see you there.

*By James Carter, 5th Year*



# The Language Ledger

## Projet Chapeaux



Cette année, la classe Européenne a créé des chapeaux magnifiques pendant leur cours d'art. Ils ont utilisé divers matériaux. Voila des exemples.

*Par MMe Fiona Fullam*

## Erasmus+ Exchange Project



Erasmus+ is the European Union's programme for connecting students all over the EU, and six non-EU countries. They do this as a way to spread new skills and knowledge throughout all of the EU.

Newpark's Erasmus+ project this year was centered around sustainability. It intended to teach Irish and South Tyrolian students about the many ways to be sustainable, and to invite the creation of new ideas. This was done throughout the week that the South Tyrolians were in Ireland, alongside teaching them about our culture and history. The first activity day of the Erasmus was a trip to Dublin City Centre. We were split into two groups, and a tour guide took us around Dublin, showing us many historical sites and speaking about them. While this was new for the South Tyrolians, the Irish students got to see many sites that we have learned about in History. Following that, we went up to the EPIC Museum to have lunch, then went around the museum. The EPIC Museum is about Irish Immigration and showed how the Irish people have affected the rest of the world. The rest of the week was similar to this day.



On Wednesday we went up to Airfield Estate to do a sustainability workshop and tour the farm and gardens. On Thursday, the visiting students came to our first four classes to experience school learning in Newpark and then we got the Dart to Bray and did bowling and Quazar. On Friday, we went to the Rediscovery Center in Ballymun for a sustainable food workshop which was really interesting. Then both Irish and South Tyrolian students presented PowerPoints about their respective counties and their schools. On Saturday, the South Tyrolean students went to Malahide Castle for the full day and then left for home the day after. The week was good fun and showed how students from different countries can work together, learn from each other and socialize as if they were neighbors.

*By Sidney Cullivan, TY*

On Wednesday, 22nd October, we met our exchange students to get the L25 bus to our day at Airfield Estate. When we arrived, we were split into two different groups to learn about sustainability through some activities. First, our group went around the farm to look at the chickens, sheep, and pigs. We also got to see cows being milked and how the milk is processed. Along the way we got to learn how Airfield is sustainable and how they try to make their restaurant and products as healthy and sustainable as possible.

After a lunch break where we had the opportunity to explore the grounds, we were divided into small groups with the exchange students, who we had now become friends with, to make homemade butter. We used Airfield's own cream from their cows and hand churners. This was fun but took ages and our hands hurt after all the churning! However, it tasted good when we tried it with brown bread.

Finally, we took a tour of Airfield's gardens and learned how they try their best to be sustainable there too - they even make their own compost. We got to learn all about soil and did a small workshop on it. At the end we all went out with our exchange friends. It was a great day.

*By Hazel Howe and Roisin McDonnell-Scheer, TY*

We all had such an amazing week during the South Tyrol Sustainability exchange with the students from South Tyrol. It was such a new experience getting to know someone from a different country, who experiences completely different things to us in their country: from the weather to the shops they have to their lifestyle. We made great friends for life with all of them and we can't wait to see them again when we go to South Tyrol in October 2026.



On our fourth day with them, they spent the day with us in school and got to see what our school system and classes were like. They all thought it was very different to their own classes. They don't have some of the subjects we have (just like we don't have some of the subjects they do) so it was interesting for them to see what they were like. During lunch time we had our Lounge at Lunch: they were all very excited to see the different talents of Newpark and enjoy a bit of music while eating their lunch.

After school we all went to Bray Bowl to do some bowling and laser tag. We were all put into teams with an even mix of people from Ireland and people from South Tyrol so we could all bond more with each other. It worked very well because everyone was very competitive and we all got more comfortable with each other. After Bray Bowl, we went for a walk on the Bray promenade and down to the beach to take pictures of the sunset and a couple of us who were brave got ice cream even in the freezing cold weather!

Overall we all had such a nice time and it was a once in

a lifetime experience. We made memories that will stay with us forever - along with friends who will stay with us forever too.

*By Aoibheann Hannigan, TY*

Erasmus+ is a student exchange programme that takes place across Europe. We did a Sustainability project with students from South Tyrol. They came over for a week before midterm. On the Thursday we went bowling with them in Bray. The journey down was quick and easy and I noticed the Erasmus students finding the view on the Killiney Dart track really nice and were taking photos. The Erasmus students were really nice and were encouraging US to bowl which I found really ironic. We did quasar tag as well, and we all had a lot of fun with it.

*By Dominik Toth, TY*

## The Sponsored Silence



On Wednesday 8th October, some 1st Years took part in the annual Sponsored Silence. The aim for the Sponsored Silence was to raise money for the Ndiini School Food Programme and Newpark Student Support Fund. The top three students who raised the most money would get prizes from Ms Keating! 1st Years weren't obliged to do the Sponsored Silence, it was optional.

The challenge for the Sponsored Silence was to stay silent for twelve hours! I think I talked for about ten minutes the whole day. Ms Keating was the teacher who organised the event. Only the 1st Years were allowed to take place in the sponsored silence. Thank you to Ms Keating so much for organising the sponsored silence we all had a great time doing it. We also raised €1395.50, which is amazing!

*By Maeve Doyle. 1st Year*

## The Chaplain's Reflection



Waiting in a queue is never fun, especially if you're in a rush. You're checking to see how long it's taking for people to be attended to at the top of the queue, looking at your watch or the clock every 10-15 seconds and overall, feeling a bit stressed. The time seems to pass slower the more you urge it to pass quicker.

By the time you read this, the waiting for Christmas is over; the Elf has visited 24 times (!), the presents have been opened, the carols have been sung and the Christmas dinner has been eaten. The anticipation is over. We focus so much on Christmas and when we do, we tend to forget the season that immediately precedes it: Advent. Advent is actually the beginning of the new liturgical year in Christianity; it is all about waiting and teaches us that waiting is a good thing. In this modern world, we are not used to waiting; we don't have to spend a week thinking about what is going to happen next on our favourite T.V. show because we can watch (most things) on demand. But waiting forces us to think, it creates reflection and tries to get us used to the idea of patience.

During Advent, Christians watch as a candle is lit on the Advent Wreath each week. This could be interpreted as a "countdown to Christmas", like our Advent Calendar but it is not; it is "expectant waiting" and a preparation for the hope that the new year brings. Each candle symbolises something different. There are usually three purple candles, one pink candle and a white candle in the middle. The first purple candle is traditionally associated with Hope; the second, Peace. The third candle lit is usually the pink candle and this symbolises Joy. The final purple candle, lit on the fourth Sunday of Advent, represents Love. On Christmas Day, all four candles are burning brightly as the white candle in the centre is lit, representing the coming of Jesus and Christmastide.

It is not an accident that Christians celebrate Christmas in December, the darkest of months, close to the winter solstice on the 21st. Jesus is seen as the "light of the world" and with that, the days start getting longer, we look towards spring. The new year brings light and

light means hope; hope comes out of the darkness. Whether you are Christian or not, this time of year brings everyone together in an atmosphere of hope and togetherness.

The school community has suffered a great loss after the passing of Isabel Iordanova Corryero, 1MKS in November. There is no "easy fix" to grief, no shortcut past the pain. Some days will be dark and some will have more light. Sometimes, the grief will hit out of nowhere. But it is best that we try not to anticipate it; that we are mindful when it comes to our own emotions and the emotions of others.

The new year brings with it a pressure to come up with a long list of resolutions we think we have to make. Instead of resolutions this new year, let us try to extend the meaning and feeling of Advent and Christmas into 2026; the Hope that is evident in the season and that we should carry with us throughout the whole year.

*By Ms Amy Keating*



## Carol Service Cover Designs

Check out these amazing covers from our 1st Year students in the annual Carol Service cover design competition.

*1st Place* – Front Cover - Anna Tuzhilkina 1CD

*2nd Place* – Juno Packham, 1CD

*3rd Place* – Nóra Tripolszky 1CBE

*4th Place* – Ellen Rooney 1KWS

*Highly Commended*

Josephine Del Sesto 1CD

Lilia Moffett 1KWS

Katherine Sharkey 1CD

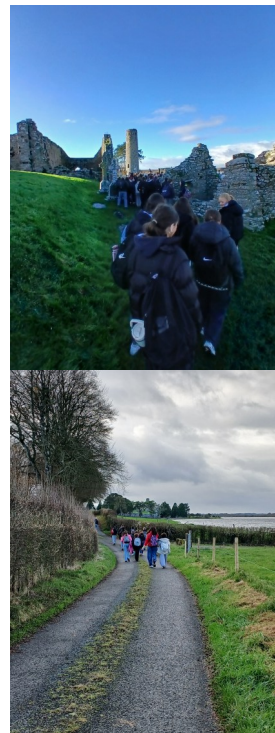
Lily Tracey O'Connor 1CBE

Antoni Tymoteusz Wosinski 1CD

## 2nd Years Walk in the Footsteps of Pilgrims



On Tuesday, the 18th of November, all of 2nd Year went on a trip to Clonmacnoise in Co. Offaly. Clonmacnoise is a ruined monastery on the banks of the River Shannon, founded by St. Ciaran in 544 CE.



We took the bus most of the way, and then we walked the pilgrimage route. It was a five kilometre walk to the monastic site, on paths and roads in the countryside. The weather was nice and there was no rain, so the walk didn't take long. I remember the feeling of relief when we finally saw the round tower appear in the distance after what felt like a very long walk. We have been learning about pilgrimage in World Beliefs class so this was a great way to understand how pilgrims might feel on their journey.

When we arrived, we sat down and ate our lunch before going inside to watch a film about the history of Clonmacnoise. We also looked at the three crosses, ranging from youngest to oldest. The youngest one is still intact and the oldest is barely recognizable. Later the students and teachers went outside to learn about some of the buildings, and why they exist. After that, we explored the statues, ruins, and other interesting things around the site. Eventually, we got back on the bus, and the ride home was surprisingly fun after a really enjoyable day out.

Sofia Kiriy and Alice O'Reilly, 2nd Year

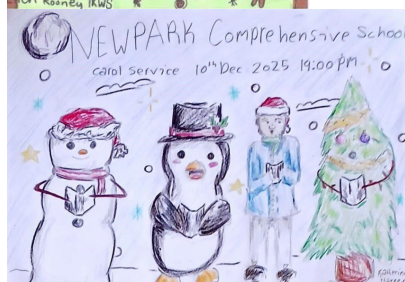


Newport Comprehensive School Carol Service

Wednesday 10th December 2025



Newport Comprehensive School Carol Service  
Wednesday 10th December 2025  
7pm



# Behind The Curtain

## Twelfth Night



Set on the fictional island of Illyria, twins Sebastian and Viola are separated in a shipwreck and the play charts their experiences on the island. Sebastian is rescued by Antonio; Viola, thanks to a trusty sea captain, disguises herself as a boy to work for the Duke Orsino. Orsino is pining for the Countess Olivia who has her eyes on someone else. What follows are peculiar encounters with knights, chamber-maids, stewards, officers, priests and lots of confusion.

### A Note from the Drama and Music Departments

It has been so wonderful to come back from secondment to all these talented and enthusiastic students and teachers who believe in the power of theatre and music. This play is one of my favourites as the writing is so clever and it also lends itself to collaboration with the amazing Music Department. Our production is set in 1999... Why? A year of Y2K and uncertainty and of course The Backstreet Boys!



It has been such a joy to combine music, dancing (thanks to past pupil Ruby McAlister) and Shakespeare. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Aoife Fox and her band for bringing this play to life, the Art department (especially Mr Byrne) and of course my partner-in-theatre, the incredible Anna Johnston.

*By Ms Cathy Devis*

Twelfth Night 2025 has been a fantastic opportunity for collaboration between the Drama and Music departments. When reminiscing on the early 2000s movie take on Twelfth Night – 'She's the Man' we thought late 90s early 2000s could be interesting musically. From early on we knew Backstreet Boys would come at a key moment in the play and from there we explored 1999 as a year: Y2K, and a fantastic amount of one hit wonders. It brought me to rediscover NOW 44 from that year and all the music stemmed from there depending on the mood of the scene and characters' feelings. We have had a lot of fun learning the songs and bringing extra instruments into a band setting. We also included a 90s inspired original song composed by Joss, Will, and Ruby.

*By Ms Aoife Fox*



### A Note from the Actors

Every year they say the Senior Play can't get any weirder, and every year they are wrong. That being said, this year's production of Twelfth Night was one of the most enjoyable, fulfilling experiences I've ever had the pleasure of being a part of. I couldn't believe my luck when I was offered a part, I can still picture the door of T11 bursting open to Ms Devis midway through junior drama on a bright, September evening. I



play was met with an overwhelmingly positive response, even Mr Norton had a few words to say about it! (15 to be exact)

I could not recommend taking part in a Newpark play enough; they've 100% been the best part of school for me over the past five and a half years. I'm so lucky to have gone out on such a fantastic one, with even more fantastic people.

*By Muireann Breen, 6th Year*



When I first heard that the Senior Play this year would be a production of a Shakespeare comedy accompanied by the questionable songs from the year 1999, I imagined a story told with careful grace and elegance, with a lovely spark of Newpark spirit. The end product turned out to be less poetic, but a far more rambunctious and lively play than I ever could have imagined.

I was very lucky to be a part of this wild ride, and from the beginning it was quite the experience. Our wonderful directors Ms Devis and Ms Johnston had assembled a crack team, the best of the best in Newpark drama to bring these characters and their story to life.

And what a cast of characters we had. From the disdainful and terrifyingly tall Malvolio, to the shrewd Maria, and to the many, messy love triangles involving Viola, Olivia and practically every other character in the play.

All of these characters were cast to absolute perfection, and every single rehearsal I spent with them all was incredible. Everyone could be so funny with their performances, but when it was necessary they could bring the audience and the story back to reality in a profoundly beautiful way (heavy pronunciation on the t).

It became abundantly clear to me early on just how much of an ensemble this play truly was. Every single

was with Ben and Oisín at the time (who many of you will remember as the hilarious Sir Toby Belch and Andrew Aguecheek) and we all got so excited when we were told our characters that we nearly forgot about the large room of 1st Years we were supposed to be in charge of.

Then the rehearsals began. Even before we had read the script through, I loved it. Over the next two months we watched as the play grew arms and legs and a life of its own. We spent hours in the theatre after school going over scenes, nailing down dance moves and growing grey hairs trying to decipher Shakespeare. Throughout the whole endeavour we also made marvelous friendships and hilarious memories together. One rainy Sunday morning the cast nearly filled out the entirety of Greenville Deli (the plan was to study; the plan was also abandoned). We did many a full rehearsal in matching rainbow skirts that we found in a box in the green room. And all of us nearly broke ribs stifling laughter during tech week backstage to the despair of our poor directors, sorry guys! Finally, the week of the show came and the energy in the theatre was palpable and electric. Glitter, hair extensions and colourful make-up coated the walls and wooden floor, and the band filled the air with the 90s music we now all know off by heart. On Saturday night, the show took to the stage for the final time and was followed by a lot of tears and snot from us all. I am personally still very deep in post-show blues. On the bright side, our slightly bonkers





character fed off each other, and the dynamics between the cast brought every scene to new heights. Removing even one of those characters, meant the play, and the whole cast would feel completely different.

By the time the show was upon us, it was like a dream. Backstage we would laugh and have the craic, but as soon as we stepped foot on that stage there was nothing except the world of Twelfth Night, and all of our kooky characters. By the last night, I felt like a part of my soul had been left in that world.

These past few months have been some of the most whimsical moments of my life, and I am so very grateful that I was able to be a part of such a fantastic production and to work alongside so many extremely talented people that I respect so much. I have to thank our brilliant directors Ms Devis and Ms Johnston for all of the dedication and effort they put in to pull this show together, as well as everyone else who got involved from the absolutely fantastic musicians, led by Ms Fox and Ms Scott, to the incredible stage crew and light team.

It's been an unforgettable experience, and one that I will hold in my heart long after I leave Newpark.

As the great actor Garret Nugent once said: *"Long Live Newpark Drama"*.

By Ben Carroll, 5th Year

## A Stage Manager's Perspective

Stage crew is always a great way to get involved in drama if you don't have the incredible amount of time



that the actors and teachers dedicate to the play. This year's Senior Play was of course no different. The wonderful team (Fionn, Joel, Clara, Jessica, Dalina and I) put in lots of work to ensure the slick and smooth set changes so thank you again to the team and everyone else involved.

By Lorna Gillanders, 6th Year

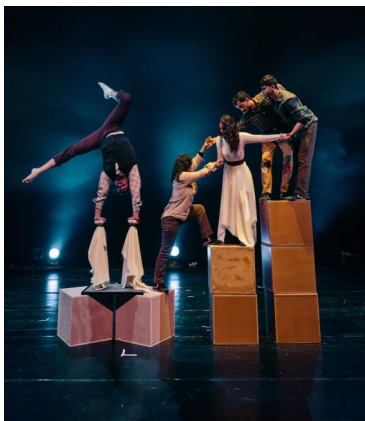


## A Trip To The Circus



On Monday the 20th of October, 3rd and Transition Years embarked on a trip to the city centre to see a show by the Palestinian Circus. The show is called Sarab, the Arabic word for mirage, a 55-minute play created in 2017 which uses contemporary circus theatre to highlight the difficulties faced by refugees around the world. It is very low-tech, using nine wooden cubes, seven performers, and dozens of dolls, yet the show has still toured the world and received critical acclaim.

The Palestinian Circus was created in 2006 to bring the circus to people in Palestine and is here in Ireland for the first time. It offers young people the voice to speak up about their daily life, their struggle for freedom and their immense desire to live a dignified life in their homeland. Their tour in Ireland is produced by Doulab for Circus and Dance.



The play itself opens with a five people lying on the ground, with boxes on top of or next to them. Each person gets a moment in the spotlight before heading to the next actor. The actors then huddle together around a light for warmth, symbolising

how lonely and lost they feel. The actors do not speak a word of dialogue throughout the play, only music, snippets of pre-recorded text in Arabic and English, gunfire, sirens, and the sound of a baby crying are heard, but that is more than enough to tug on your heartstrings.

The play shows incredible feats of strength, acrobatics, and contortion. The actors are able to raise a metal Chinese pole into the air, and then one of the actors climbs it to the top. There is no great climax in the play, but the story told without words is breathtaking. At the end of the play, one character is forced into a

suitcase, showing us how trapped the Palestinians feel in their own homeland.

We were then given the privilege of asking the cast questions at the end of their performance, and we discover that they cannot even take a plane from Palestine to get to Ireland. They have to go across the border into Lebanon to get here. The performance was beautiful and I would highly recommend it to anyone.

*By Josh Crammond, 3rd Year*

## Drama, Film and Theatre Studies



September 2025 brought about the introduction of two new subjects to the Leaving Certificate: Climate and Sustainability and Drama, Film and Theatre Studies. We are very fortunate to be one of 52 schools in the country introducing Drama, Film and Theatre studies this year. Personally, I have been waiting for this opportunity for over twenty years. Finally, the day came in early September when twenty seven students in 5th year began their journey into this new and exciting subject. We have two classes running this year with Ms Rider and myself teaching it.

It has been so wonderful seeing how the students respond to the specification which embraces collaboration and creativity. We have also been very lucky to receive state of the art equipment which will help us develop the practical and technical skills of this new subject. We are looking forward to seeing all the amazing pieces of theatre and films that our multitalented students will create.

*By Ms Cathy Devis*

It's not very often you get to witness a brand-new subject for the Leaving Cert just appear right in front of you, but the past few months being in one of the two new Drama, Film, and Theatre Studies classes have been absolutely fantastic.

Being the first year ever to have this as a Senior Cycle



class, it truly felt like something fresh and different, despite many of us dabbling in these areas before. As a Leaving Cert subject, it's been very well balanced between the fun and exciting practical pieces, and the interesting, discussion side of things.

Most recently, after many long months of waiting,

we received all of the brand-new film equipment. It's by far the most advanced equipment for a film class I've seen in Newpark, and even though we've only looked at it in wonder and curiosity so far, we're all extremely excited to start using everything practically.

The whole experience has been super exciting to have as a class for 5th and in a few months, 6th Year, and I'm positive that it will only reach new heights as it continues.

*By Ben Carroll, 5th Year*

## Berlioz Trip



On Tuesday, November 25th, inside a week of seemingly endless trips, we music students found ourselves dragging ourselves out of bed, still half asleep, and making our own way to the National Concert Hall. Here we were to experience the privilege of being up close to our very own National Symphony Orchestra as they performed a piece from one of our studied works, 'Marche Au Supplice' from Hector Berlioz's ambitious and loud (and undoubtedly desperate and manic) 'Symphonie Fantastique.'

Along with a sea of other schools, some arriving by foot, some arriving by their very own hired buses (yes lads), we swarmed into the auditorium and ran into friends, chatted, read, scrolled, what have you, while the orchestra patiently and thoughtfully set up their

instruments. Before long, it hit around 10:30 and the lights dimmed and - this is my favourite part - the orchestra began to tune. Horns, strings and woodwinds washed over us and hundreds of rowdy boys and girls hushed with anticipation, before our conductor and Jessie Grimes, our presenter, emerged to polite applause.

Dressed brightly and with a charmingly playful and off-kilter manner, obviously no stranger to the stage, Grimes told the story behind this particular symphony as the orchestra effortlessly played through Movement II ('Un Bal,' which would have been on the course as well, if not for the COVID Leaving Cert. changes we've clung onto by some miracle). We all found the story amusing as she detailed Berlioz's often... let's say "unsound" methods of trying to woo an actress from London, leading to an intense, possibly drug-induced dream depicting his own execution, hence the name of the fourth movement translating to 'March to the Scaffold.'

Then came the syllabus stuff. We were, once again, walked through the musical features of the themes that we must know for the exam as we all - respectfully - listened, but secretly hoped that they would play the whole piece at the end. Finally, as Grimes excused herself to another, more enthusiastic applause, I personally let out a sigh of relief as the orchestra granted us a full performance of Marche au Supplice, and it was just as powerful and riveting (and, most importantly, loud) as one would expect. Personally, previously only hearing this piece in the classroom, half-asleep, on some Thursday afternoon, I was enamoured with the performance and so was Garret, sitting beside me, occasionally making eye contact with me (eyes delirious and mouth agape, naturally). Then it was over. Chatty and enthralled, we filed out of the venue.

After that, we all took advantage of the free time we were given to gallivant around town. I personally ran to the record shop in hopes of getting a good find (to say my hopes were crushed is an understatement) before heading back to school. Head hung low as if to let the concert experience I crave so deeply gently drip off me, seemingly ready to learn about fascism, or calculus, perhaps the modh coinníollach, I spent much of that time daydreaming about ophicleides, descending g minor scales and one lonely clarinet.

*By Finley Gleich, 6th Year*

## Christmas Singing at the Áras



On Saturday, December 6th, I was lucky enough to be invited by the Make-A-Wish Foundation to sing at Áras an Uachtaráin for the annual Presidential Tree Lighting Ceremony. I performed as a member of the Dublin Youth Choir, and as a soloist.

The event consisted of several performances, the first being a private performance for President Catherine Connolly, where I got to meet her and her husband, Brian McEnery. Then, we all got to don our Christmas jumpers and sing for the Make-A-Wish kids, accompanied by performer and storyteller Niall de Búrca. It was an honour to meet these children. The Make a Wish Foundation is a wonderful charity that aims to grant wishes to children who are living with life-threatening illnesses. During this set all the kids sang carols with us, one girl (who was wearing a fabulously sparkly dress) was singing Jingle Bells with marvelous enthusiasm.

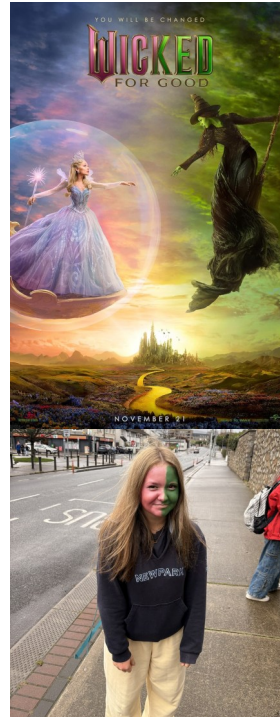


We then did another performance for the President and the Make a Wish families. Finally it was time to light the Christmas tree! We all bustled out to the front of the Áras (the part you see on the news on RTE, very cool), and after a countdown in Irish, the tree lights came on. President Catherine Connolly then came and

stood next to me while we caroled together, which was pretty lit. After that she told me I have *"Some voice!"* and I exploded a little bit (but only on the inside). Overall, it was an amazing experience, full of carols and Christmas cheer!

*By Evelyn Roche, 5th Year*

## A 'Wicked' Trip



On the 18th of December, both of the 3rd Year music classes went to the IMC in Dun Laoghaire to watch Wicked For Good. We left after 3rd period and got the bus to Dun Laoghaire. One of the buses was delayed, so that class arrived late, while the other bus was on time and got there early. We did miss the start of the movie, but they kindly restarted the whole film for us. When it started, Ms Fox passed some sweets around.

In our music classes, we have been studying musical theatre and have really enjoyed watching productions like High School Musical and Hamilton. So much so that for this trip to see Wicked For Good, some of us (Elena!) even painted ourselves green and pink in the spirit of the musical!



We all thoroughly enjoyed watching the musical. It was a fantastic way to learn more about musical theatre, from the choreography and costuming to the different genres and the hard work that goes into making a production.

We all had a great day and are very grateful to our teachers for organising such a fun and memorable trip.

*By Cate Steele, Elena Berea and Jamie Harten, 3rd*

*Year*

# Battle Of The Bands



Live music has never sounded so good! On the 23rd of October, Newpark held its second annual Battle of the Bands, organised by the PTA and a wonderful group of student volunteers.

The energy was buzzing as students piled into the theatre to see which band would win the ever-so-coveted first place prize - a BIMM recording session - as well as a variety of other impressive prizes. The prestigious judging panel consisted of Alan Cullivan of BIMM Music Institute; Danny Snow, bassist for the indie band Villagers; Suzie Shorten of Blackbird Events; Kevin Flaherty of the EMI record label; and actor-singer Phelim Drew.

The night kicked off with a mind-blowing DJ set from first year Finn (having that much talent in first year should be illegal), followed by the first competing act, Harry Sood. Though Harry only joined Newpark this year, he's already made his mark with skilled and soulful music performances. Playing "A Team" by Ed Sheeran, alongside a heartfelt original, Harry definitely charmed the crowd.



Next up was Carrie, a 2nd Year band made up of Marcus, Sam, and Oisín. Their rock energy was infectious as they performed the night's first (but

definitely not last) rendition of "Kilby Girl" by The Backseat Lovers. The electric bridge got the crowd hyped, and their chemistry on stage made for a super fresh and exciting performance.

Before we knew it, Midnight Manifesto, made up of 5th Years Joss, Ruby, Will, Tora, and Elise, took the stage. Their technical skill was clear from the start as the instruments melded together beautifully, and they even switched instruments halfway through! Their version of "Come On Eileen", complete with Ruby's stunning violin solo, was impossible not to dance to.

The following act was Shards of Salt, which possessed all the key elements of a teen boy rock (emo?? nu metal?? who knows) band: long sleeves under short sleeves, head banging, and an equally banging cover of The Smashing Pumpkins. Playing "The Boy", as well as "I'm Not Ok," by My Chemical Romance, Louie, Christopher, Jake, Tillman, and Inti swept the stage with their dazzling ability (and angst).

Then came The Rock Studio consisting of Matthew, Turlough, Alex, Piran, and Oscar, who blew the audience away with stage presence and charisma. Both "Kilby Girl" #2 and their original were amazing, with guitarist Piran (spoiler) going on to win the award for best guitarist. I hope everyone reading this is Liked and Subscribed to their Instagram account for more excellent covers...



If you want to really rock out, look no further - Red Herring (Joss, Tuathla, Cara and Eva) both literally and figuratively shook the theatre with their grunge sound and even more amazing guitar! Joss' drumming was super high energy and complimented the set perfectly. The cover they played of "Scotty Doesn't Know," plus their original, had an epic grunge vibe, and it was amazing to see an all-female band.



Then came the penultimate act: Buxtehude 7! As one of the judges so eloquently put it: *"I would go to a concert of just these guys"*. Drew, Tommaso, Reuben and Daniel brought back the long-sleeve-smashing-pumpkins vibe in a BIG WAY. Between their cover of "Mayonnaise" and their original Modern people, the raw talent and chemistry of the group was jaw-dropping.



The final act of the night (but certainly worth waiting for) was Alannah and her dad, Greg. The pair gave a beautiful performance of some indie tunes like "Last Goodbye" by Jeff Buckley, and there was not a dry eye in the theatre (just me?? ok...) Their vocals complimented each other wonderfully and it was clear that some serious talent runs in the family.

Finally, after an absolutely fire night of mind-blowing covers and originals (as well as a pretty spectacular

performance by the teachers' band Partially Achieved), the overall winner was announced... Buxtehude 7! There was an incredible range of talent on display, and it was one of those Newpark events that leaves you feeling awed and slightly humbled by the insane skills of your peers. Roll on next year!

*By Florence Chipperfield, 5th Year*



# The PTA Update



It's amazing how quickly we've reached the end of another bustling school term! As we pause to reflect, it's clear that this has been a vibrant and eventful few months for the Newpark PTA community.

Our PTA year began in style with the much-loved Debs Reception in September - a wonderful evening celebrating the Class of 2025. The GPA looked fantastic, beautifully transformed with fully sustainable decorations that set the tone for the year ahead.

October was a particularly busy month. We held our well-attended PTA AGM on the 8th, a great opportunity to look back on last year's achievements and set our sights on exciting plans for the coming months. Also in October came the phenomenal Battle of the Bands, which rocked the GPA over two unforgettable nights. The energy, talent, and creativity on stage were truly inspiring - an incredible showcase of our students' musical gifts!

We were also proud to support the third year of PARKMUN, Newpark's student-led Model United Nations conference, helping with catering and funds.

Fast forward to the Christmas Market on 29th November - and what a day that was! With 24 stalls (including six run by students) offering handmade crafts, artwork, jewellery, books, baked goods, and more, the atmosphere was buzzing with festive cheer. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed: our



stallholders, local businesses, raffle supporters, and the many visitors who made it a memorable community celebration.

In December, we rounded off the term with refreshments for the school Christmas Carol Service, always a true highlight of the season.

Throughout the term, the PTA has continued our campaign to replace the school minibus and to support a wide range of school needs and initiatives - from funding first-aid supplies and servicing the existing Newpark minibus and backing projects like the Trinity Walton Club STEM programme, PARKMUN, and the Debs reception. We also keep the Lost Property office running smoothly behind the scenes - a quieter but important part of our ongoing work!

We'd love to welcome new, enthusiastic parents to join the PTA team! We have quite a few existing PTA members will be leaving the school within the next two years, so we particularly need parents/guardians of junior cycle students to consider joining the PTA. It's a fantastic way to get involved, meet other parents, and make a real difference in school life.

Feel free to reach out if you'd like to learn more and mail us at [pta@newparkschool.ie](mailto:pta@newparkschool.ie) for further information. Thank you for your ongoing support!

*The Newpark PTA Committee*

## ***Newpark Newsletter Issue 68***

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**With thanks to all our other contributors.**