

St. Mac Dara's CC

Christmas Newsletter

Happy Christmas! Nollaig Shona! Feliz Navidad! Joyeux Noël! Frohe Weinachten! Buon Natale!

Our warmest wishes for a safe and pleasant Christmas. Our school community has endured its toughest return this winter, so we wanted to showcase all that our students and staff have achieved so far. We hope you enjoy.

A Thuistí is a chaomhnóirí,

On behalf of the Board of Management and Staff of St Mac Dara's CC, I am delighted to welcome back our Christmas Newsletter.

I compliment the marvellous work of staff, students and parents in maintaining the high standards associated with our college especially during these very challenging times for all of us. Thank you to Miss Clune and Miss Denny for their work on this edition and to all who have contributed to its production.

Nollaig Shona daoibh go léir agus athbhliain faoi shéan is faoi mhaise.

Mr. D. Ward agus foireann Coláiste Pobail Mhic Dara Naofa

Important dates

College closes - Tuesday 22nd December at 12:20pm

College reopens - Wednesday 6th January at 8.40am

Mock exams for 6th Years - 29th January-12th February

Mock exams for 3rd Years - After the February mid-term

Please remember to pay the Mock fees online

February Mid-term - 15th-19th February



Remember November

Students were invited to remember loved ones lost during the month of November. Our display is featured in our school hall as a tribute to those important to us.

Photography Club

Thank you to our group of budding videographers for creating a helpful video for incoming 1st Year students of 2021.



School Twitter

We have been working hard to update our social media with all that is going on, including checking in with old alumni! Check us out @stmacdarascc

First Year

In September 2020 we welcomed classes Bangor, Kells, Ferns, Clones, Clonard and Durrow into First Year.

Our First Year students have been kept busy this term with lots of activities planned by our teaching staff.

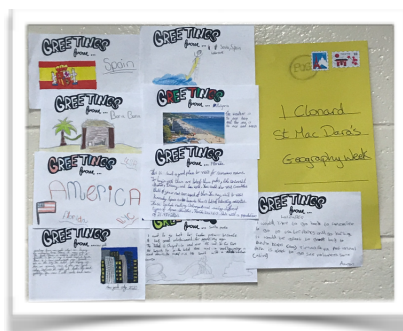
Maths Week Success

All First Year students participated in National Maths Week. Students watched live videos, took part in online quizzes and 1 Bangor even won the National Prize. Here they are pictured with their teacher Ms. Mathews.



Geography Week

Students took part in some activities for Geography Week 2020. The theme for this year was Travel. Students were given postcards to design with colourful images and information of places they would love to travel to. The postcards are now on display in the tutor base rooms. Students also competed in a Kahoot Quiz within their Geography classes. Well done to all and to Ms. Bryne for coordinating!



Internet Safety

First Year students have been busy learning about Internet Safety. This year we have relied so much on technology and the internet to keep ourselves connected, it is important that students learn how to work online safely. Students are busy working on posters to showcase their learning.

Enterprise Fair

Unfortunately the traditional First Year Enterprise Christmas Fair cannot go ahead this year, however all first year business students are currently working in pods to develop their own products. Some will be made available for sale privately with a select few available to buy online! Keep an eye on the school website and twitter feed for further details.



European Day of Languages

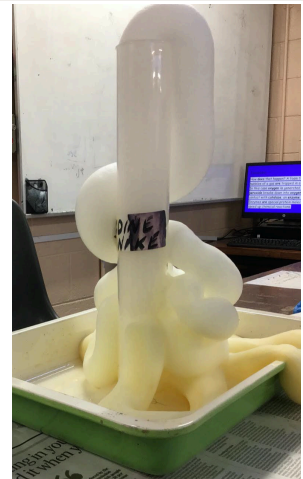
Classes Durrow and Clones completed a treasure hunt en español in September to celebrate European Day of Languages. Many thanks to our TY students and Ms. O. Brennan for organising this cultural activity.

Leinster Cricket

We were delighted to welcome Leinster Cricket to St. Mac Dara's this term to work with our 1st year students.

Second and Third Year

Science Week

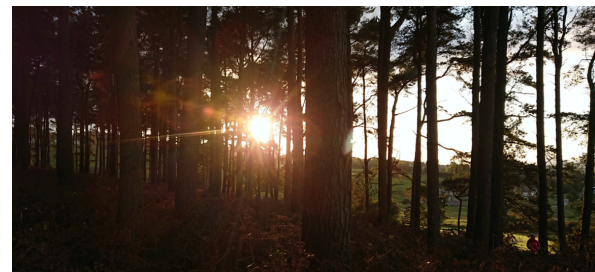


Our Second Year students engaged in quizzes and experiments galore as part of Science Week. Check out our Twitter feed for more pictures of the events! With all that has been going on, our second years have been doing a great job on their CBA investigations at home! Thanks to all who helped at home to facilitate these this year. We have lots of budding scientists!

Third Year students have also been completing some exciting experiments - including making oxygen!

Geography Week

Second year students also took part in Geography Week 2020. The overall theme this year was Travel. Students were tasked with a photography challenge with the theme 'Exploring my 5Km.' There were some fantastic photos sent in. The overall winner of the challenge was Christina O'Brien from 2 Basket with her beautiful image of the sun-rays peaking through a woodland area. Congratulations Christina!



DATS and Standardised Testing

Our 3rd Years have been a very positive group in light of all the changes they have encountered in their school life over the past couple of months. They have had some very important days here at the college.

Firstly, they sat their DATS test which ran very smoothly and students will be receiving their results soon. Thank you to Mr.Finnegan and Ms.McCormack for facilitating the DATS.

Secondly, students sat their standardised tests in Literacy and Numeracy organised by Mr.E.Carey and Ms.Galligan. Thank you to them for organising these tests. The results have been very impressive, well done to all.

Many students are also busy with various Classroom Based Assessments in many of their subjects. We would like to commend the students for their hard work and dedication to their studies this term.

Transition Year

In September 2020 for the first time in the school's history, we welcomed two Transition Year classes to St. Mac Dara's.

Our two groups, Burren and Dingle, have been busy with their philanthropic work this term. Keep up to date with our Twitter page @StMacDarasTY

Bloody Sunday Commemorations

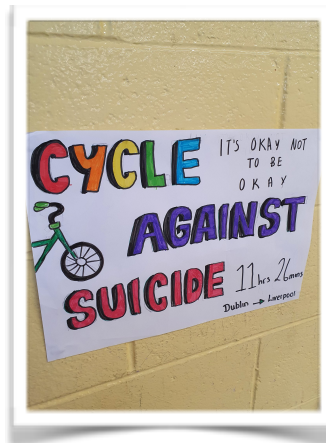
TY students marked the centenary of Bloody Sunday. They created this wonderful historical display for our school. Well done to all involved and to Mr.O'Brien and Mr.ORiordain for organising.



Charity Appeals

On December 17th, students of 4 Burren will cycle to Liverpool to raise awareness of Mental Health as part of 'Cycle Against Suicide.' They have become Headstrong ambassadors and are delivering lessons to all 1st Year students.

4 Dingle are focusing on helping the homeless by collecting coats and jackets for their 'Warm for Winter' campaign. The students will travel into town and place the coats on the Ha'penny Bridge.



Podcast

Our 4th year Burren class have completed a podcasting module in English with Ms N.Kelly. The podcast is called 'Life after the Leaving' and our students interviewed people on their careers and what path they took after their exams. This theme was decided on to promote future aspirations and job interests. Check out 'Life after the Leaving' on Apple Podcasts and Spotify now!



SDGs

Our TY students are learning about Sustainable Development Goals and collected plastic bottles to build eco-bricks! Thank you to all students and Mr.Curran.



Fifth and Sixth Year

Juvenes Translatores

Four of our Sixth Year students took part in the prestigious competition in conjunction with the European Commission. Our students worked meticulously for two hours, translating across three languages. Well done to those involved; Niall White, David Kane, Eoin Grenville and Freya Nelson.



PE becomes new Leaving Cert subject

The new course was started by thirty 5th year students on their return to school this year. Students will complete the two year theoretical and practical course and sit it for the Leaving Cert in 2022 under the guidance of Mr.J.Carey.

Physics Day 2021

Physics Day 2021 will be very different this year. With our current Covid restrictions, gone will be the throng of students in the hall experiencing a myriad of physics experiences. Gone will be the excited voices and bright eyes as they get their hands on experience of some magical physics.

However, undaunted, the 5th year Physics students are going to put together a video presentation of different Physics experiments which will be shown to all students who will be sitting safely in their classes. Well done to the 5th Year Physics students and Mr.Cosgrave for taking on this new challenge. We wish them the very best of luck in their endeavours.

School Video

5th year students Ruairí Donohoe, Sam Van Gelderen and David Perry have been busy recording and producing a new school video. Keep an eye for the video - coming soon!



School Hoodies

Well done to our Sixth Year students for organising school hoodies to commemorate their time in St.Mac Dara's. The hoodies were available in purple or navy, with the students initials on the sleeve. It is a lovely memento to have once they leave the school, and for the time being, it keeps them warm!



Miscellaneous

Student Council

Please find below an update from our Student Council President, Gearoidin Burke.

This year we had a great group of students on the students council. The students on the council are Bartosz Zawikowski, Grace Clarke, Horatio Okoror, Katie Fitzgerald, Laura Walsh, Luke Devlin, Rebecca McGovern, Rory Kelly, Sean Kirwan and myself Gearoidin Burke.

This year's student council has been very different because of COVID. We have tried very hard to work as a team and do as much as we could.

We had a training day back last January and got on very well. We set out goals for the year ahead. Because of COVID and being out of school we communicated through Google Classroom and tried our best to get work done. For example, instead of visiting the local primary school in May, as we usually would to talk to the sixth class students about starting secondary school, we wrote them a letter with advice about starting in their new schools.

Since being back we have had a few meetings. We wrote a piece which hopefully you have heard about the uniform. Our main goal was for girls to be able to wear trousers. This was a main goal because a lot of females in the school want them.

We have helped with a few things since being back. We have given feedback on COVID in the school and things that needed to be done so students felt safe. We have given feedback about vs ware and other small things. We have also given feedback about how we can help make the school feel a bit safer for students. This year has been hard for us but our main goal since being back was making students feel safe.

Our next thing we shall be doing as a council is putting up the Christmas tree and making the students have a bit of Christmas spirit and making this year a little normal.

Sincere thanks to local company Templeogue Christmas Trees for the donation of a beautiful tree. Thanks to Mr.E.Carey and Ms.Cosgrave for all their work with the student council.



Global Passport

Congratulations to our students and Mr.Curran on securing the Global Passport. The school was awarded the Global Passport - its third in succession - as an acknowledgement of the school's outstanding Global Citizenship Education programme. The Global Passport is awarded by World Wise Global Schools who provide grants to schools who promote the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.



Senior Cycle Book Club

Senior cycle students are invited to join the school book club. The club focuses on reading for enjoyment and will meet monthly to discuss a chosen novel. We are always looking for new members. Whether you read all the time, or are looking to pick up a new hobby, you are welcome to join us. Speak to Ms.Denny or Ms.Elliott for more information!



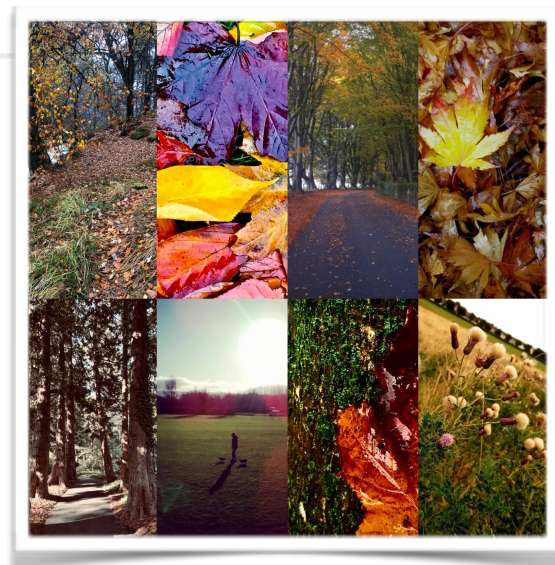
All-Ireland Hurling Final

We would like to wish the best of luck to our own Mr. De Búrca who will be playing for Waterford in the All-Ireland Hurling Final this Sunday. Hon the Déise!

Photography

Our students have been busy snapping photos across all year groups. Here are a selection of some of the lovely photographs captured within our locality.

4 Burren have created their own Christmas cards from photographs taken and are selling them in aid of Cheeverstown. They will also be completing a penalty project with Cheeverstown. We treasure our relationship with Cheeverstown so we are delighted to be able to continue our work this year.



Website Team

Thank you to all the students who continue to make such a vital contribution to the school website. The team meets every Thursday after school and consists of Jamie Lawlor, David Perry, Louise Sharkey, Moss Grace Byrne, Aoife Ivory, Maria Maher, Ciaran Smith and Aidan Alexander.

We are lucky to have such a great bunch of students involved and new members are always welcome. Please contact Mr.Burke if interested. Thank you to Mr.Burke for his work on the website. Visit the site www.stmacdaras.ie for more information.

Community Links

Students in 4 Burren are sending Christmas cards to the residents of Glenaulin Nursing Home. Students of 4 Dingle have also become penpals with the service users of Cheeverstown. We are so proud of our students and their kind nature. We have no doubt that these cards and letters will have a positive impact on the residents and users of these care homes. Well done to all involved and Ms.Elliott and Ms.Clune for organising.

GAA Future Leaders Programme

Congratulations to all the Transition Year students who recently completed the Future Leaders Wellbeing Module and received their certificates.

In this module students worked on developing the tools to help manage their own wellbeing. Students are currently developing workshops to pass on what they have learned to our first year students and we are looking forward to seeing what they come up with.

Christmas Video Celebration

The music department have been recording and videoing two Christmas songs (O Holy Night & White Winter Hymnal) to be put on the school website. Students have been working hard to learn these songs and put them together for this production. A special thanks to the 2nd Year Music class, 6th year music students and Saibh Skelly for her work recording these songs.

Alumni Visits

We have had some great visits from past alumni.

Cameron Elliott (Class of 2018) spoke to TY students about his army career and his charity 'Plan for Africa.' David Nugent aka 'The Kids Coach,' (Class of 2016), completed a 'Mentoring Mindset' course with our TY students. Eamon Sharkey (Class of 2003), Director of Fundraising for GOAL, spoke to our students about where their fundraising goes. Students raised €1221 for GOAL in September.

We love hearing from our past students, so please get in touch!

