COLÁISTE POBAIL MHIC DARA NAOFA

DECEMBER 2021

St. Mac Dara's CC

Christmas Newsletter

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

A Thuistí is a Chaomhnóirí,

Tagaimíd chuig deireadh téarma a haon agus dar ndóigh 2021. Bliain dhúshlánach dúinn go léir gan dabht ach chonaiceamar afách i gcónaí i rith na bliana an sprid agus agus an dearfacht ag soilsiú tríd. Fáiltím roimh Nuachtlitir Nollaig 2021 agus tá súil agam go mbainfidh sibh taitneamh as ár n-eagrán i mbliana.

I welcome our 2021 edition of St. Mac Dara's Christmas Newsletter and I hope you enjoy it. Thank you to Miss Denny for her work on it and to all who contributed to its production.

On behalf of the Board of Management, Deputy Principals Mr Cassidy, Mr Cosgrave and Staff of St Mac Dara's Community College, I compliment and thank the marvellous work of our staff, students and parents in maintaining the high standards associated with St Mac Dara's. We look forward to an exciting year ahead as St. Mac Dara's will be celebrating 40 years next September.

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

Mr. D. Ward is foireann Choláiste Pobail Mhic Dara Naofa.

Important dates:

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

College reopens - Thursday 6th January at 8.40am

Mock exams to be announced

Please remember to pay the Mock fees online

February Mid-term - 21st-25th February



School Website Keep up to date, access VsWare and the payment system through www.stmacdaras.ie



School Twitter Check out what we are up to weekly @stmacdarascc on Twitter!



Adult Education Our Adult Ed classes made a return this winter. Check out our website for more information.

2

School Library

Our pop-up school library opened to students this October with thanks to the Parents Association.

Students have been busy leasing books from the library this term. The library is open every Wednesday at morning break and students are welcome to pop in and take out a book. Teachers are always happy to recommend titles to students who are unsure of what they would like. There is a range of fiction, non-fiction, study guides and foreign language novels available to students and staff. Students interested in taking out a book should see Ms.Denny or Ms.Blanchfield.

Stand Up Awareness Week

Throughout the month of November, we celebrated Stand Up Awareness, to raise awareness of the LGBTQ community. Students received talks and engaged in discussions over the course of the week, and created some lovely displays around the college. We are proud to be an ally here in the college.

College Awareness Week

We celebrated College Awareness Week in November where students had the opportunity to attend virtual presentations from various universities and institutions. Many thanks to the Guidance department for the coordination of these events. It is excellent that our students have not missed out on these opportunities and have been able to attend online events.

'CPR 4 SCHOOLS' TRAINING

Students have been learning vital life-saving skills in their PE classes this year.

The PE department have linked up with the Irish Heart Foundation and are teaching our students how to deliver CPR if needed.

A big thank you to our PE teachers for facilitating this really important skill.











Book Club

Following the success of our book club in the last academic year, we are delighted to see that it is proving even more popular this year. Students from all year groups are invited to join.

So far this year, we have read 'Guard Your Heart' by Sue Divin and 'Murder on the Orient Express' by Agatha Christie. Sue Divin was delighted to hear we were reading her novel, and sent us her well wishes on Twitter!

We are always happy to welcome new members, whether you are a seasoned reader or just looking for a new extra-curricular activity.

Contact Ms.Denny, Ms.Elliott or Ms.Whelan for more information.

Supervised Study

Supervised study returned this September after a hiatus last year. Our supervised study sessions provide a quiet space for students to focus on their homework and study. Sessions take place three days a week, on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Enrolment for the new term is before January 7th, please contact Ms.Denny to secure your space or for more information.

Autism Friendly Schools

We are heading into year three of 'Autism Friendly Schools' and our sensory garden has proven to be a wonderful addition.

The garden was created and is maintained by a fantastic group of students. Students meet weekly in the OMG group and new students are always welcome.

A special thanks to Ms.Dingle and Ms.Elliott for facilitating this programme for students.

MICROSOFT CHANGEOVER

All staff and students now have Microsoft Office 365 accounts. Students received training at the start of the year from our TEL team on how to access their emails and use the Teams platform. We encourage students to check their Teams pages daily to keep up to date on any content or messages shared by their teachers.

Students should see Mr.Cosgrave, Ms.Denny, Ms.Mathews or Mr.Burke if they have any issues with their accounts.





French Debating

Well done to our French debaters this term, Caoimhe Molloy, Lenci Phani Namburu, Moss Byrne, Sneha Nasa, Fernando Below de la Cruz and Louise Sharkey. A big thank you to the French teachers for promoting this extra-curricular activity!

Irish Debating

Comhghairdeas to our Irish debating team, Louise Sharkey, Katie Foley and Seán Kirwan. Students participated in the Comórtas an Phiarsaigh and were commended for their fluency and excellent arguments. Well done to students and thank you to the Irish teachers for encouraging this activity.

Cycle Clinic/National Bike Week

South Dublin County Council along with the Cycle Clinic, attended our school to carry out maintenance on the students bikes that cycle in. It was a great morning and they hope to make a return to us before the summer. During this week, surveys were carried out on students and staff on how they travel to school to help inform us moving forward in our promotion of cycling.



Restorative Practice

In September, we began our journey to becoming an officially recognised 'Restorative School.' We have joined forces with a past pupil Michelle Stowe and her organisation Connect RP to help us implement this process across our entire school community.

We recognise the great work being done across the school already, as evident by the numerous activities within this newsletter, and want to work to bring students along with us on this journey and help equip them with the skills to deal with situations in a restorative manner.

Staff have received two CPD sessions so far, and students have been piloting the 'Relationship Keepers' programme in their SPHE classes. An UBUNTU group of dedicated teachers has been formed and they meet informally to discuss the process regularly. Stay tuned for more information and check out <u>www.connectrp.ie</u> for ways you can become involved.

Student Council Elections

A big thank you to our TY students who have been busy conducting the Student Council elections for 2022. They have been learning about proportional representation and have been aided by their maths teachers. Thank you to Ms.Mathews, Mr.Carey and Mr.Burke for their work on this.

COLÁISTE POBAIL MHIC DARA NAOFA

Comhairle na nÓg

My name is Aoife Ivory (5th Year) and I have been a part of South Dublin Comhairle na nÓg and have recently been elected to the Comhairle National Executive.

South Dublin Comhairle na nÓg is a youth led council where we do our best to make changes in our local area and discuss things that are important to us and

the young people around us. We have meetings every month and we work around a theme. Last year our theme was climate action and our new theme for this year is being discussed.

Last year, we launched our 'Bin It To Win It' campaign. We released an animated video on food waste, surveyed schools and for the South Dublin County Council bins!

The Comhairle National Executive, which I am now a member of, is Ireland's National Comhairle na nÓg. Last year they worked on a youth travel card, which was included in budget 2022. Members also met with Taoiseach Mícheál Martin, Táinaiste Leo Varadkar and Minister Eamonn Ryan.

I love being a part of Comhairle because it gives me a voice and gives me the power to make actual change for young people.

Physics Online

On Friday 12th November, the physics classes in St Mac Dara's went to their online lecture on Black Holes. It was due to be held in person in UCD but due to Covid restrictions we were only able to attend online.

Unfortunately, our wifi had a few issues that morning but undaunted, our physics students found the way and had us hotspotting off a phone so we could listen in to the lecture!

Well done to all the Physics students and Mr.Cosgrave/Mr.Gaul.

Parent Teacher Meetings

Our 3rd and 6th Year PTMs went online this year using our new platform, Teams. The meetings were really well received by both staff and parents.

A big thank you to Mr.Cosgrave and the TEL department for all their work with the logistics and thank you to the parents for their support in this new structure.





DECEMBER 2021

Sports Teams

At last, our extra-curricular activities are back running for students. We have had to adapt to a new way of operating these activities, but the students and coaches have worked hard all term to make it work. A big thank you to the teachers who give up their time to coach these teams and give the students the opportunity to represent



their school. Here are some pictures of just some of



our teams this year. A shout out to our TY students for their

photography skills at the matches.



Maths Olympiad

In November, all Transition years and Higher Level 5th Year students took part in the Irish Maths Olympiad. A number of students will now be invited to take part in enrichment classes in UCD or Maynooth University. Well done to all that took part.

Engineers in the Making!

First year students had to make and design their own unique vehicles. All students worked really well on the project and the engineering teachers were really impressed with their skills! Well done to all!

Student Council 2021/22

The 20/21 Student Council consisted of 12 elected members as follows. Chairperson – Moss Byrne Deputy Chairperson – Rebecca McGowan Treasurer – Aoife Ivory Secretary - Rachel Daly Feighery Junior Representatives – Eimear Murphy, Charlie Danaher, Aaron Brady, Chloe McDonnell Senior Representatives: Hollie Kavanagh, Wesley Idahosa, James Faherty, Luke Ramirez



Report from Student Council 2021

It has been a busy and hectic year for all the members of the St Mac Daras Student Council. Our Council was elected in December 2020 using the proportional representation voting system, but due to Covid it was mid-April before we got the chance to meet in person. We met online via Zoom several times in this period and were set up and ready to hit the ground running when we returned to school buildings. We have been involved in several initiatives over the course of the last year and we have detailed a small sample of these below.

Uniform Proposal

We made a proposal to management that all students would have the option to wear a skirt or a trouser uniform. Students, staff and parents were surveyed on this and there was over 90% support for the proposal. As a result, a new uniform policy is now being drawn up to reflect this change and we will have more information on this in the new year.

Canteen

There hasn't been a canteen service in our school since the start of the 2020 academic year. Students have been requesting this so we have suggested the option of a click and collect service with a local food provider and hope that this will be up running after the February mid-term break.

Mural

The Council are working on a mural to go on the container beside the PE hall. To do this we are collaborating with the TYs and artist Andrea Turcan. This mural will attempt to capture aspects of school life and the inclusive nature of the school. Work on the mural will begin in the new year.

Menstrual Products

A consistent supply of menstrual products in the bathrooms is necessary for students and we have been taking an active role in monitoring this and keeping it going. Thank you to all the teachers who supported us on this.

Christmas Decorations

We want to thank St.Jude's GAA club for the donation of a huge Christmas Tree. This was a major part of the Christmas decoration that we did in the school on behalf of all students. We also ran a Festive Door competition which had an 'upcycling' theme to promote the reduction of waste around Christmas time.

Overall, we have thoroughly enjoyed our time in office and we hope the next council which will begin work in 2022 get as much fun and satisfaction out of the role as we did.

Transition Year

Christmas Newsletter

Classes Dingle and Burren have had a busy start to Transition Year so far.

We asked the students of TY to write a few words about their experiences this term. Have a look to see what they have been up to and get a flavour for what TY entails in St.Mac Dara's!

TY Mentors

We would like to thank all the teachers who have dedicate their time to serving as mentors to our TY group. Their time, support and advice has been invaluable to the TY students and we are really appreciative of them.

Subsounds

This year we got an opportunity to attend sub – sounds. This is where we got to write our own songs, with the help of 2 people that came into our school. We firstly made the music to the song and then we thought of the lyrics for the song and put it together. We attended sub – sounds every Friday and so far we have attended for 8 weeks. At the start of sub – sounds they introduced us to an app on the iPads called Garage Band, which is an app with different types of instruments and you can record your music on it. Then we started to write our own song, and they helped us to write it. To write our own song we used different types of instruments such as: Guitar, ukulele, drums, piano the triangle and a few others to make our music for the song. We have also used the Garage Band app on the iPad. We picked the instruments that we liked to play on, and we also made up the lyrics after. At the start it was kind of hard to make the song as most of the people did not know how to play on any of the instruments.

All of us thought of the lyrics for the song and a few people volunteered to sing the song. Then after we will be done with the lyrics for the song we will put the music, and the lyrics together and practice it for few times. After that we will go to the recording studio and record our song!

Written by Maksym Kulikovskyi



iPads TY students have been busy improving their IT skills. Read more on this later!



TY Twitter Follow what our TYs get up to on our dedicated Twitter page @StMacDarasTY



Festive Wear Our classes organised some festive fun around the school for charity.

Photography and English Trip

I thought the trip to town was a really interesting trip, not only was it nice to get out and do a walking tour of town and take some pictures of a beautiful city, but to have the freedom of being able to go off get pictures and come back, showed how we are being treated as young adults.

To start the trip, we went from Portobello to Christ Church where we took some beautiful pictures. We then went down Dame Street to George's Street and took pictures of brick buildings and street art. We then went to Stephens Green and took photos of the water reflection and had our coffee break.

For the next part of the trip we went to the National Gallery. We went straight to the photography part of the museum where we saw some amazing photographs including photographs of the Troubles. Then me and my friend were allowed to go to some other parts of the museum such as the art gallery of Jack Yeats, the brother of one of the greatest poets in the world to this day.

We then went to do the English part of our trip where we went to the the Seamus Heaney Exhibition. It showed so many accounts of his life, awards and his writing process of his poems. The exhibition was so interesting as we got to see so many of his personal belongings such as his postcards, letters etc.

In the end the trip was a great day out filled with new information and fun. I really enjoyed the trip and hope there are many more to come.

Written by Ella O'Halloran.

GOAL Fundraising

The Transition Year students were involved in the planning of the GOAL Jersey Day in our school. We started by designing the posters to inform the rest of the school about Jersey Day and the details of it. Once we had that finished, we decided on the planning of the stations for collecting the donations on the Friday. After the Jersey Day, we began the counting of the amount raised for GOAL. The total amount after the fundraiser was €937.91.

About a week later, a former student who works at GOAL came into our class to tell us about where the money raised was being spent. We were told about the meal kits, the houses, schools and hospitals. It was very informative and we all had good fun organising it.







Guest Speakers

During our school year so far we have had a GOAL and PlanAfrica speaker come visit us during some of our classes. They have showed us how we can potentially make an impact on our planet and the people that are more in need/less fortunate. We have been shown how we can directly make an impact in our country and on an international level.

GOAL goes to Africa and Syria and visits the local schools to teach children basic life skills and how to survive so that they are learning skills for their future. GOAL also delivers care packages to these countries that, these contain food, water, and medicines. Just 50 euro is enough to feed a whole family for one month.

PLanAfrica does things in multiple countries and not just Africa alone. They do make trips to Africa multiple times per year and live the same lifestyle as the people who live there and help them. They patrol the area and destroy any poacher traps so they can protect the local animals. They rehabilitate any animals that were stolen and try prepare them for going back into the wildlife. If the animals are unable to return to the wilderness then they will stay in care. For our own local community PLanAfrica has a meet up/ gathering of people who will bring either food,



clothes or hot drinks. They will split into smaller groups and go around Dublin to the homeless population and gift them some of these things.

A big thank you to past pupils Eamon Sharkey (Class of 2003) and Cameron Elliott (Class of 2018) for giving their time to come in and speak with the students.

Written by Finnen Sheehan.

TY iPads

In TY this year, every student was given an iPad to help with their work and to reduce paper waste. The school decided to trial this on the TYs for the first year in the school's history. I personally, along with Victor and Gavin, find the iPads as a good learning tool for school. I find that using the iPads has helped me with my speed of typing and has helped with my research for projects in class. If a teacher wants to do a class that includes the use of iPads they don't have to book them, which is a positive for other classes that want to do CBAs or projects, etc.

Written by Darragh Kiernan, Victor Dowling and Gavin Duffy.

Diary of a TV Producer

Working with Sunshine TV has been amazing for so many reasons and I have gather many new skills. I have had many different roles during my work experience, such as camera women, producer, lighting assistant and interviewer. Developing a TV show is a lot more work than I had ever expected and has been very rewarding. Sunshine TV provides shows for elderly people twice a week and for this work I had to learn about targeting a certain demographic. Along with the skills of filming and planning a programme, I have learned about how important social media can be to a new business. I was put in charge of the company's Facebook page and have learned many new methods to attract new people and gather subscriptions. I have developed my sale skills as well, learning to attract people with a unique selling point and help bring in new customers. I have loved my work at Sunshine TV and how many unique opportunities I have been given to meet some incredible people.

Written by Sarah Lawlor.

Diary of a Street Artist

My work experience is with a street artist named Emma Lene Blake. She spray paints. I go out with her on Wednesdays, whether it be helping her on her projects, or doing my own! The first two weeks I went to Grangegorman and did my own first piece, a recreation of one of my own original drawings, and spray painted it. This project was a group of nearly 20 artists coverings a big wall around a building site at Grangegorman. The different styles were amazing to look at. Artists did stencilling and freehand. One other week, I helped Emma finish a piece in The Square Tallaght bringing awareness to Mental Health. Soon after, I went up to The Bernard Shaw and helped Emma out with a piece promoting Damien Dempseys new documentary. Then she offered a job to me. I had to do a mural themed Dracula outside Bram Stoker's old house, the creator of Dracula. And



recently I did a piece with Emma for a Christmas Craft Fair in Inchicore. This work experience has been amazing and I will continue to work with her outside of work experience, and hopefully bring this into a part of my future and maybe a possible income for me. I plan making an income out of my art and I already have.

Written by Apryl McDonnell.

Diary of a Mechanic

In Transition year, every student has to do work experience every Wednesday in 3 different types of work experience for the entire year. So far I have just done my first work experience. I am a mechanic in Brendan Kane Motors in Ballymount. I got the work experience from my Auntie because she knows the owner of the mechanics.

On the first day of work experience I actually missed it because my employer was on holidays. When I actually first went into work experience, I mainly just cleaned up the place and watched the mechanic work on the car and helped him. Since then I have been helping more and more. I have been doing more jobs every week. I help clean up the place and change the tyres on some cars. I have also changed the oil on some cars. I also have checked the tyre pressure on the cars tyres.

Written by Adam Malone.

Diary of a Carpenter

In Transition Year, every Wednesday for the entire year we are in school, we go to work experience. We have to change employer 3 times per annum. Our first job we have is from start of September to the end of December. Our second job is from start of January to Easter. Our third job is from after Easter to the end of the school year.

For my first job I am working as a carpenters apprentice. I work for a company by the name of Advanced Homes. We do private work, which is basically just working in houses not owned by corporation or government. We do attic conversions, extensions, renovations etc. The co-owners of the company, Jason and Tom, can give you the best price to quality and time for any job in Ireland.

Written by Finn Smith.

Economic and Environmental Studies

The TY class planted a mix of bulbs around the front of the school just before Halloween for an initiative run by the SDCC "bulbs not bonfires", to promote non-bonfire orientated activities during the holiday period.

The class also took part in the Global program – air quality campaign. The TYs stuck test tubes around the school which had been sent out to us. Students had to pick three areas to leave them for 4 weeks. This program is to determine if our air has nitrogen dioxide around the school grounds. We are awaiting our results. Thanks to Ms.Bursey for her work in this important subject.

Glasnevin Trip

On the 26th of November the two TY classes went to Glasnevin Cemetery. We got one bus into town and another out to Glasnevin Cemetery. We got a guided tour around Glasnevin and we saw some famous people graves. We saw Daniel O'Connells amazing grave, we were allowed to go into the tower where he is buried. The tour guide said if you touch the grave it gave you good luck for a year!

We also saw Michael Collins grave, Eamon De Valera, and Stewart Parnells. After we were finished the guided tour, we went to the coffee shop in the cemetery and had some lunch. The food in the cemetery was very nice.

Then after we had lunch we were told we were going to go down into the National Botanic Gardens. We spilt into three different groups and got a tour guide for each group. They brought us around the Botanic Gardens and showed us different types of trees and plants. We got to try some fruits that were growing on the trees and plants. We all enjoyed the day at the cemetery.

Written by Dylan Duffy.

TY GAA Future Leaders Programme

Both of our Transition Year classes were delighted to be joined by former student Kevin McManamon as part of the Wellbeing Module of their Future Leaders Programme. Kevin is a well-known Dublin footballer and is an experienced Performance Psychology Consultant who works with the Irish Olympic Boxing Team, amongst others. Kevin delivered a four-week workshop on the area of Resilience in conjunction with the Soar Foundation. Our TY Group were engaged and challenged throughout and really enjoyed the experience and we hope to get Kevin back in again on an annual basis. We would like to thank Kevin for all his hard work and to also wish him the very best on his recent retirement from inter county football. He has been a fantastic representative for Dublin and his club St Judes and we are excited to see what he does next.

Cheeverstown Friends

We are so delighted to be able to reestablish our physical link with Cheeverstown this academic year. Due to Covid restrictions last year, our students were unable to visit their friends in Cheeverstown House. Our TYs have been able to start visiting the centre in recent weeks and we look forward to strengthening our link with this wonderful establishment.

Student Wellbeing Committee

In the new school year, St.Mac Dara's TY classes founded the well-being committee. Our small group of students came together in September to explore how we could help better our school community in terms of mental health and LGBTQIA+ awareness. So far, our group has been responsible for posters and helpful flyers scattered around the college and there is so much more to come from the group! The wellbeing committee has been in contact with all sorts of charities to gather useful information on mental health that can be applied all across the school. We are excited to see what our committee will do next!

Written by Sarah Lawlor.

The best part of Transition Year so far

Students were asked about their favourite part of their TY journey so far. Here are a selection of some of the answers. Friendships being at the heart of their favourite experiences characterise the fantastic group of students that we have this year.



What's being said on our Twitter?

...



St. Mac Dara's Community College @StMacDarasCC · Sep 22 Today began our journey to becoming a Restorative Practice school with @connectrp and @mstowerp. A massive thank you to our staff leaders @MsRLalor.Ms.Delaney and our Ubuntu Team for leading and engaging in such meaningful training this afternoon. We're excited for this journey! $\bigcirc 1$ 1, 4 0 28 <u>,</u>↑, лh

michelle stowe @mstowerp

Replying to @StMacDarasCC @ConnectRp and @MsRLalor

Well....I'm allowed say you're my fav school in the whole wide world as I spent 5 happy years there as a student and began my career there as a teacher delighted to be reconnecting with a wonderful school & amazing people that have given me & my family so much love #community

7:58 AM · Sep 23, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone



Fíona Scarlett @Scarlett_for_ya · Nov 26

Take a look at this! Stunning posters for the boys created by transition year students @StMacDarasTY . Blown away by the talent and the thoughtfulness! 💘

St.MacDara'sTY @StMacDarasTY · Nov 25

4 Dingle got creative this week designing movie posters inspired by the novel 'Boys Don't Cry,' by @Scarlett_for_ya. Well done to Niamh, Aaron, Katie, Apryl and Eoghan for the attached creations!





Fíona Scarlett @Scarlett_for_ya · Nov 26 Replying to @StMacDarasTY

Oh. this is incredible!!!! Thank you so much Niamh, Aaron, Katie, Apryl and Eoghan for creating such stunning posters that represent the book so well. Absolutely honoured! 🤎

0 1

⊥

 \cap ۲٦





Replying to @StMacDarasCC and @LibrariesIre

We love this! Brilliant to see readers encouraged with the Bookflix board, and we think we spy a Boys Don't Cry cover @Scarlett for ya ••

12:14 PM · Oct 13, 2021 · Twitter for Android



Maynooth University

Seamus Heaney: Listen Now Again @SeamusHeaneyNLI · Oct 21 It was wonderful to welcome the students! Well done @StMacDarasCC for making the city your classroom for the day. We were delighted to be a part of it 🤓 🖋 📝 #backtoschool

St. Mac Dara's Community College @StMacDarasCC · Oct 21 4 Dingle had a photography and English trip today, visiting the National Gallery @NGIreland and the Seamus Heaney exhibition @SeamusHeaneyNLI. A great day out with a fantastic group of students! Thank you to both exhibitions for a great trip.



Maynooth University Undergraduate Admissions @Mayn... · Oct 22 ... Brilliant @StMacDarasCC thanks a million for sharing! Hope you enjoyed the 👱 @rafamoral talk - we look forward to planning some more + - + @MU_MathsStats talks in the future! #MathsWeek #MaynoothUniversity

St. Mac Dara's Community College @StMacDarasCC · Oct 22 4 Burren enjoying @mathsweek 'Do Statisticians have Superpowers' with 👱 @rafamoral @StMacDarasTY @MaynoothCAO





St. Mac Dara's Community College @StMacDarasCC · Oct 11 Heading into year 3 of Autism Friendly Schools - here is a sneak peak of our sensory garden, created by some fantastic students @AsIAml #SayYesToAutism

#AutismFriendlySchools





We Wish You All a Happy and Safe Christmas!



See you in January 2022!