



Mag *Dara's* Annual

TY 2023
Issue 3



Stephanie Roche
Speaks out



We go together
Grease review



Darren Shan
On his writing career



Lia Cowan
Has big designs



Dear 16-yr-old me
Teachers look back

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Mag Dara's

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Editors' message

For the last few months we have been working to produce this year's TY magazine. We had a large team of students to create the 2023 edition. A lot of hard work went into its creation from our feature writers, photographers, advertisement team, sub editors, fashion writers, news and sports reporters and designers.

During the production of the magazine, every single student has had an insight into what the life of a journalist or newspaper person is really like.

The experience of being an editor taught us a lot: how to effectively communicate with our fellow peers to get the most out of them and their work and how to be organised and how to act as leaders. We really enjoyed working together with our team to create something of which we are all really proud.

The following pages are packed with interviews, news stories, reviews and fashion. You will also see some familiar faces.

Enjoy the read.



St. Mac Dara's Community College, Wellington Lane, Templeogue, Dublin 6W
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A cracking addition

New residents have moved into the school and are paying their own way.

It is not every day you find hens in a suburban school within the belt of the M50 but that's exactly what you can find now at St Mac Dara's. After months of preparation, with students chipping in to make a coop for the hens, they moved in.

Our school, students and staff are benefiting universally. A weekly staff egg raffle is held where members of staff get the chance to win some eggs. The hens also supply our Home Economics department, while they are also educating our students about where their food comes from.

“The hens are a wonderful new addition to our school. We have found only positives,” said Moss Byrne, headboy, who along with Ms Greene, our chaplain, planned and implemented this “egg-cellent” idea. From risk assessments, to cost analysis and presentations for funding, much work



went into this project and it has been a fabulous success. Now under the care of our Greens Schools committee, the St Mac Dara's hens are thriving after a perfect first year in the school.

We hope they enjoy their summer break in sunny Wicklow, and we can't wait to see them again in September. Well done to everyone involved, a big round of applause is deserved by all.

Canteen comeback

The canteen is returning to St Mac Dara's after three years of closure. Beibhinn Spencer finds out more.



The canteen is set to return to St Mac Dara's. Mr Ward has confirmed to MagDara's that the canteen will return as early as this term.

Food has not been made on the school premises since the kitchen closed in 2019.

A supplier has been selected, he said. “Glanmore Food are our new suppliers and they have already been in to inspect our kitchen,” said Mr Ward. He also shared the exciting news that management is hoping to run a pilot test to figure out if the new system will work efficiently. There will be no handling of cash and all payments will

be made by card. This may exclude some people from using the canteen. In a survey of 20 Transition Year students, 14 out of 20 had Revolut or some form of bank on their phone. However, some schools offer the ability to allow people to top up canteen cards, and this could mean that more people can use it.

A big question that had been asked multiple times was “Why did the canteen stop?” Our school had to make the difficult decision to stop the running of the canteen because of the pandemic.

“The pandemic happened, and it naturally stopped, due to social distance



we were unable to continue during the pandemic,” said Mr Ward.

Our school is very big on our healthy eating policy. The new food and drinks menu will follow that policy.

Mr Ward said: “Without a doubt it will follow it, we are so excited to try out all our new foods.”

Of course, we asked the question most people want to know: “Will there still be the option for sweet treats on a Friday?” Mr Ward answered very quickly: “I believe that healthy treats options will be available every day!”

We are ecstatic that the canteen will return. Keep an eye out for it!

Grease Is The Word

Over the course of two nights, St Mac Dara's Transition Year students took to the stage in front of sell-out crowds. Here, Garry Madigan recalls the experience and chats to some of its stars.

The recent production of *Grease the Musical* was a huge success, drawing in a large crowd and bringing the school community together. The musical showcased the incredible talents of the cast and crew, and captivated audiences with its energy and excitement.

Bradley Ryan Flynn, who played Roger, said "I very much enjoyed the musical as I got to make many new friends and got closer with many people in the year. My favourite parts of the musical was my song and the dance scenes."

The rehearsal process leading up to the performance was intense, with countless hours spent perfecting each scene and musical number. From the choreography to the vocals, every aspect of the show was carefully crafted to ensure a fantastic performance.

Grace Quinn, who played Cha Cha, said: "Taking part in Grease was a very enjoyable experience. I loved the challenge of having to come out of my comfort zone and doing something I had never done before. I'd definitely do it all again."

The cast and crew, which included students from TY, came together to create something truly special. Cian O'Connor, who played Danny Zuko, said: "Doing Grease was definitely a very fulfilling experience, with many ups and downs but in the end I feel I've learned a lot about myself because of it."

One of the most challenging aspects of the production was balancing the demands of school with the rehearsal schedule.



"At times it became difficult to remember all of my lines but it was a really fun experience," said Ruby Cullen who played Frenchy.

Many of the students involved in the show were also involved in other extracurricular activities and had to juggle their commitments to both. Despite these challenges, however, the cast and crew remained focused and dedicated to making the production a success.

Ethan Gray, who played Kenickie said: "I gained a lot of a confidence and made a lot of new friends, I loved the dancing, costumes and getting to sing *Greased Lightning*".

The production was met with enthusiastic applause and cheers. "My favourite part was definitely becoming closer with everyone and creating new friendships but it was great seeing the audience's reaction to the show," said Amber Keenan, who played Mary-Jo.

Many of the attendees were family members and friends of the cast and crew, but there were also members of the school community who came out to support the show. Stella Butler who played Patty, said: "The musical was definitely the highlight of TY."

The positive reception of the musical reflected the hard work of the cast and crew – and the staff who gave it their all – to make the show a success.

GIRL POWER!

Interview



The Shona project is a social enterprise that aims to educate, empower and inspire young girls in Ireland to become strong resilient and confident young women. Recently, the TYs had a workshop delivered by Tammy Darcy, the founder of the Shona project. In the workshop we discussed issues facing every teenage girl and how to support and encourage each other better. Afterwards, we caught up with Tammy to get her views.

What is your dream for young girls?

Every girl we meet, we always end the conversation reminding them that they are enough. Our dream for every young girl is to have the strength to recognise all of her abilities, that she takes care of herself, uses her voice to talk about things that bother her and also is brave enough and strong enough to ask for help, if she should need it.

What is the biggest problem facing young girls?

Bullying is one of the primary struggles we see when we work with schools. Girls have a way of tearing each other down, making everything a competition and getting each other right where it hurts, without it ever getting physical - most of the time.

Something we work through with the girls is the fact that hurt people hurt people. Meaning, people who are struggling only know how to cope by lashing out or being mean to others.

How can girls support each other to create a positive atmosphere around them?

A big thing that people struggle with, is the fact that not everyone is going to like you. Accepting it is so freeing. You can't live your life like a chameleon, changing yourself to fit in with everyone - it's exhausting.

Not everyone will be your cup of tea

either. So as the saying goes, "in a world where you can be anything, be kind". Instead of tearing each other down for making a mistake, we can just try forgiving and understanding things from the other person's perspective.

How can girls seek motivation?

Something us girls all have in common is that we often doubt our own abilities way too much. By actively seeking out role models or positive influences in our lives, we can see that our wildest dreams are possible, in turn, helping us find our motivation to achieve them.

Do you ever look at successful people and wonder how they got so lucky?

That's your first mistake. Very few do well based on luck alone. Most of the people who are at the top of their game have got there through steely determination, motivation and relentless work ethic.

Malcolm Gladwell (an expert on experts) says that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to become an expert at anything. That's a lot of hours, but it's reassuring because it means that anyone can achieve anything if they work at it. Talent and luck will get you so far, but only blood, sweat and tears will get you to the top.

What inspires you?

At the Shona Project, something that inspires the whole team is really simple. It's you. Girls in secondary schools all

across Ireland. Girls who have a lot going on. Whether it's family issues, lack of self-confidence, body image issues, learning difficulties, bullying, friendship drama, or mental health issues, we are inspired by all of you who get out of bed each and every day and take on the world.

What do you think every girl should know?

What's for you, won't pass you. But did you know it will wait until the time is right?

Those who rise to the top are not necessarily those who excel in school. Those who succeed are those who want it the most, and who have a good attitude and a solid work ethic. It is those who reflect in and learn from their mistakes and never, ever give up.

Can you tell us about the Shine Festival?

The Shona project has an event every year called the Shine Festival for girls and women of Ireland. Some of the events at the festival include a wellness, arts, career and sports stages as well as inspirational women sharing their stories and advice to the young women across Ireland.

To read more about the Shona project or get involved, visit the website shona.ie



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On The Ball

Stephanie Roche is one of Ireland's best known footballers. From playing soccer on the roads in Shankill where she grew up, to donning the jersey for Ireland, her career has been a varied and successful one. Aisling Kelly, Abbie Minto and Zara Laffan caught up with her.

When Stephanie Roche first started playing football, there were no girls' teams around. Roche was 11 years old and living in Shankill in Co Dublin, so she had to play on a boys' football team.

Roche gained a lot of experience, and at 19 she started playing on the Republic of Ireland women's senior team, going on to make over 50 appearances for the national side. Her career club career took her abroad, to England, France and the US.

"I knew loads of girls were playing abroad and that's kind of when I realised I could probably go away and play or get a career in football," says Roche.

When Stephanie was 22 she travelled to France for her first international contract, with a team called ASPTT Albi, and that kick-started her professional career. Later that year, Roche was nominated for a Fifa Ballon d'Or award, and finished in second place.

After France, she spent a short spell at Houston Dash in Texas in the US before moving on to Sunderland in England.

Roche is a great advocate for women in sport because although it has improved a lot in the last six or seven years, she herself has experienced discrimination.

She recalls how in her early years in Sunderland, the men's team were in the Premier League but got relegated to the Championship in 2017 and then got relegated again the following year, this time to League One. The first season

she was there, Stephanie and the team were treated brilliantly, the same as the men were. As soon as things started going south for the men they were cursed out of the club and made to train in different grounds from the men.

"The underage boys were treated better than us," she says.

However, now that Sunderland women's team plays in the Women's Championship, it has made huge changes in the way they are treated.

"The girls are back in the club and being treated just as well as the men, but before there was no comparison to the men's team," says Stephanie.

"I was doubting myself thinking I wasn't good enough"

Roche's career has not been without injury. In 2017, she broke her leg while playing for Ireland – which she describes as the biggest setback in her career. At first, she was told it was a stress fracture to her tibia which would mean she would be out for 12 weeks. However, she was misdiagnosed and she ended up being out for 18 months.

"Being injured is the hardest thing ever because the only thing you want to do is play football," she said. "It

was a struggle, not just physically, but mentally. Thankfully I was around my husband, who at the time was my boyfriend, and he was really good at motivating me and keeping me going. It was nice to have that around me."

There was one big moment in Stephanie's career that made her feel like quitting. After travelling to the US to play for Houston Dash in 2015, she was cut from the team very abruptly.

"I moved my whole life over to America and three months into my contract they called me in and just told me I was cut. It was so harsh because I was doing quite well," says Roche.

She said it was hard due to there being big hype about her being over there. It was all over the news in Ireland and she felt embarrassed.

"I was doubting myself thinking I wasn't good enough."

Roche had the opportunity to train with Boston but wasn't interested in being in America anymore so she went to try out for Sunderland. She was closer to home and felt the north east of London was quite similar to London which made her want to stay there. Playing at Sunderland boosted Stephanie's confidence again.

"I felt a good vibe around the place."

Stephanie calls herself stubborn, a person who sticks with things and won't give up. This resilience is definitely what makes her such a great player. A Manchester United fan, she loves Portuguese footballer Ronaldo.

"I admire how good he's been across his whole career. I've always looked up to him," she says.

Many sportspeople have superstitions or rituals they must do before a match. Roche is no different.

"Without being crazy superstitious I have a couple of little ones. If I have a certain meal I feel like I'll have so much energy during the match and I'd need to have that the next game as well. I always keep my shin guards on before the warmup. I always prepare my bag the night before a game to make sure I have everything."

Now with Tallaght team Shamrock Rovers, where our own Mr Carey is a coach, Stephanie trains three times a week and has a match on Saturday. Every Monday and Tuesday she goes to the gym and trains on the pitch three times a week.

"On a Wednesday I try to do something for myself like spinning or boxercise," she says.

Of all the things she has achieved so far, Roche says the best part of her career was getting to play for Ireland. Her international debut was in 2008 away in Iceland, when Ireland won the game 3-0. Her home debut in 2008 was in Cork, when the team beat Kazakhstan, 2-1.



With her family watching on, Stephanie came on in the 87th minute and scored a goal.

"It was one of the most amazing moments ever. It was a really special moment."

The women's Irish team recently qualified for the World Cup for the first time after beating Scotland. "It was unbelievable, I was commentating that night for RTE. It was quite emotional I started crying," says Roche.

Now 33, Stephanie who is married to Dean Zambra, is in the process of buying a house and hopes to be able to start a family.

"I'm hoping for maybe one more year, possibly two, playing football. If I have a good season this year with Rovers, and possibly next season, I think I'd be happy enough with what I've achieved," says Roche who also runs her own coaching company.

Stephanie recently competed on RTE's 'Dancing with the Stars'.

"The training for it was really hard," she says adding that she knew before joining the show that it would consume her life but it was even harder than she thought it would be. Every dance had different technicalities. The judges were quite hard on her and she didn't know why; she tried her best and went out with the attitude of just enjoying it.

"It was definitely an amazing experience and I'm proud of myself for doing it," she says.



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A fantasy come true

With 60 books under his belt, Darren Shan is one of Ireland's most prolific authors. Max O'Hara and Darragh Moran caught up with him to ask for advice for budding writers of St Mac Dara's.

If you like fantasy novels, chances are you have read a book or two written by Darren Shan. The author, who lives in Limerick, has sold over 25 million books in 39 countries over the past 23 years.

Shan, whose real name is Darren O'Shaughnessy, had his first book published in 2000 and has gone on to write more than 60 books since. You may know him from *The Saga of Darren Shan* or *Zom-b* series, or you may be an adult reader who has read his books under the pen name Darren Dash.

Shan's first novel was called *Procession of the Dead*, published in 2000, but perhaps his biggest success was *Cirque du Freak: The Vampire's Assistant*, which was published in the same year, and got excellent reviews. The book was so successful that the rights were bought by the film studio Universal Pictures and it was made into a film, starring John C Reilly and Selma Hayek, in 2009. Right now, his *Zom-b* books are being turned into a television series.

We asked Shan about his early work and first books.

"I was 17 when I wrote my first book. I was very precocious. I thought I could do everything. I was also a very big reader. I think every writer starts out as a reader," he said.

His inspiration and influences came from reading. He used to enjoy *The Famous Five* and *The Secret Seven* series of books by Enid Blyton as a child. Later in his teenage years he became very fond of the horror novelist Stephen King and his work.

Darren told us that he believes "a writer's work is the result of what books he or she has read". He says it is important for writers to expose themselves to all types of genres when reading which can help influence their stories.

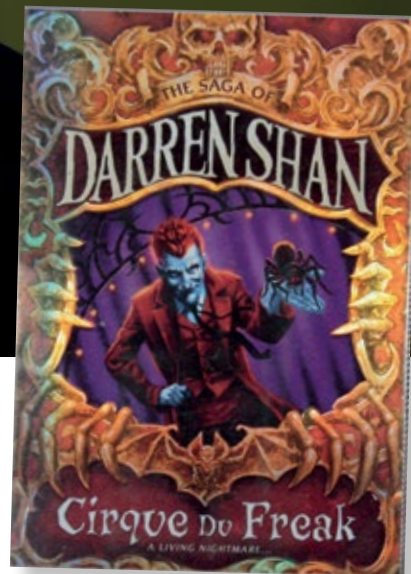
When it comes to his own books, he likes to write books with a horror/sci-fi/fantasy edge to them.

"Stick with it, learn from what you produce and become the best writer you can become"

He gave us a sneaky detail about his new book which is the 60th he has written so far. It is a sci-fi book for adults, published under his name of Darren Dash.

"My favourite book I have written so far is *The Thin Executioner* and if I had to keep one book out of all them I'd pick that," says Shan.

Published in 2010, *The Thin Executioner* is a young adult and dark fantasy



novel. Shan loosely based it on Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Shan is proud of his success.

"My hope from my late teens was that I could make enough money to justify writing full time. Even if I was earning a minimum wage I would have been happy. I just wanted to make enough to be able to afford to write full-time, to help afford the necessities and bills, and to not have to get a part-time job," he says.

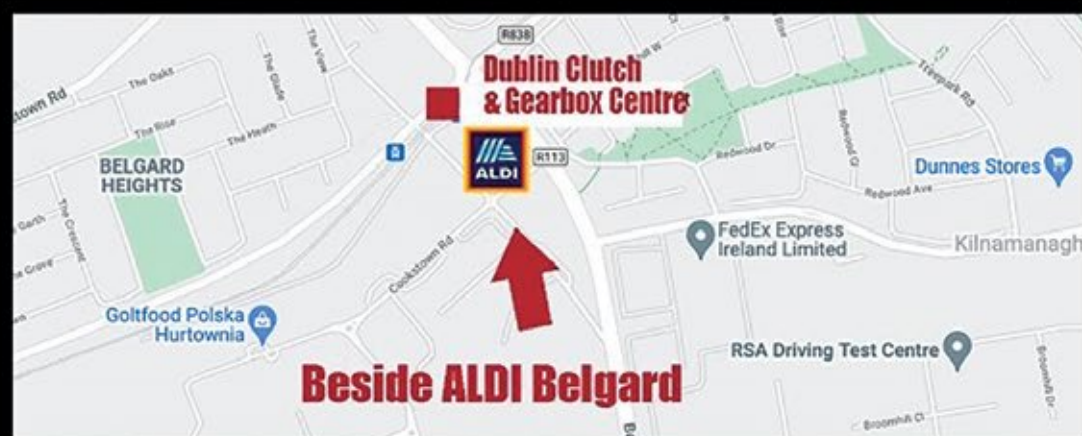
As a young adult he realised how difficult it was to make a living from writing alone and wasn't able to afford to write full time at that stage so got a job working in a TV company and also RTE. However, he did in fact end up with a great success story.

"Success isn't being financially successful like having bestsellers in the charts. Success needs to be producing the best stories you can produce. Stick with it, learn from what you produce and become the best writer you can become," he says.



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AA *Approved*

A day in the life...of a physio

Donie Fox talks to Emily Carroll, Katie Fitzgerald and Grace Quinn about his work as a physiotherapist, his training and why he does what he does



"The best thing about being a physio is getting to know my clients in the local community"

The reason I wanted to become a physio was because when I was younger and playing sport I got injured quite often. One of my most common injuries was that I would pull my hamstring two or three times every year and it became quite frustrating. I wanted to know how to prevent these injuries and through that I discovered my curiosity about the career path of a physio.

For my Leaving Cert I did Tech Graph, Biology, Geography, French, Irish, English and Maths. In my opinion biology is the most relevant one of them as the first year of the physio course in UCD is all about anatomy.

The best thing about being a physio is getting to know my clients in the local community and being based in an area where I am nearly always around the same people and I'm able to forge good connections and friendships with the people who are around me. I, in particular, enjoy working in a close community like St Jude's because I can make closer connections with people in my local community. In comparison to the last practice that I worked in, in the city centre, I wasn't in touch with local people as much, after I graduated from UCD in 2013.

I use many different skills day to day while working as a physio: interpersonal relationships/communication; time management; presentation, and empathy. I also have a good few responsibilities

in my job, they are: inventory management, face-to-face time-greeting; front of house; gym maintenance; helping my patients

My working day

I get up at about 5.30am, I have my breakfast and get ready for my day. I arrive to the practice at about 6.30am. I make sure the clinic is clean and ready for my first patient. From 7-11am I begin to see my patients for 45-minute slots each. I leave five minutes in between my clients to take notes on the previous client. I then go for home at about 11am and have my lunch and bring my dog for a walk. I come back into the clinic at about 12.30pm and then I start seeing more patients for another three hours. On a Thursday I help out and coach the senior camogie team.

School Celebrates 40 Years



St MacDara's is preparing to celebrate its 40-year anniversary. We sat down with one of the longest serving teachers in the school, Ms. O'Reilly, and we asked her a few questions.

How long have you been teaching here?

I started in September 1984 as a higher diploma student teacher, I was temporary the whole time for the following year and finally made a permanent teacher in 1986.

What is your favorite thing about working here in the school?

The students would have to be my favorite, I love getting to teach them and seeing them succeed.

Do you have a favourite memory from St. Mac Dara's?

There are too many to choose from, I have so many wonderful memories in St Mac Dara's, it would be hard to choose just one.

What subject do you like teaching more, French or English?

Both subjects are equally extremely rewarding to teach.

What teachers are you most fond of?

No one in particular, but I am very fortunate and privileged that several students whom I thought and was very fond of as students are now teaching alongside me as teachers.

How would you describe your experience of working in St. Mac Dara's?

Very fulfilling, very satisfying, I'm enormously grateful and j'ai adoré chaque minute de ma vie ici comme professeur de français et d'anglais au lycée St. Mac Dara's, Merci énormément!

We also sat down with principal Mr. Ward and here's what he had to say:

What is the most rewarding thing about your job?

Working with, meeting, talking to, supporting and caring for the students of St. Mac Dara's, guiding them through their school journey.

How long have you been working in St. Mac Dara's?

I have been working in the school as principal for 4 years.

What is your favourite memory of being principal of the school?

The learning and social interactions with the people in the school. It is great seeing students reach their full potential and reach their goals – then coming back and saying thanks.

When you were younger, did you think you'd be principal of a school?

I always wanted to be a teacher when I was older, I never set out to be a principal. I would love to be a principal and teach in the school at the same time.

Do you have any advice for the students of St. Mac Dara's?

Be caring and respectful and always do your best!

In what ways are we celebrating the 40th anniversary of the school?

All our recent events have had something to do with the 40 years. We are having a social occasion where the past teachers are coming to the school for our 40-year book launch!

Interviewed by Ruby, Seoladh and Rebecca

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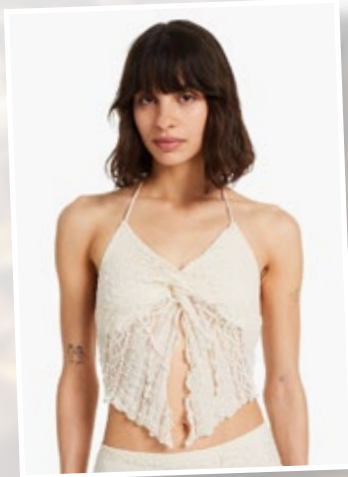


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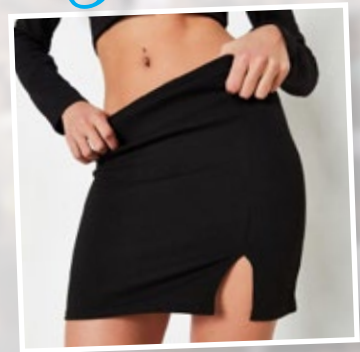
FESTIVAL Fashion

Different patterns and styles go in and out of style constantly. Trying to keep up can be tiring physically and also tiring for your bank account. The key is to always have some basics on hand and only buy clothes you genuinely like instead of what other people are wearing.

Finding something to wear for festivals and concerts can be hard when you don't know what to base your outfit on. Whether you have upcoming events, upcoming concerts, or just need summer clothing inspiration, take a look at some of these items and see if they would suit your personal style.



This tank top is for warmer weather and can be paired with mini-skirts or cargos, €15.99 bershka.com



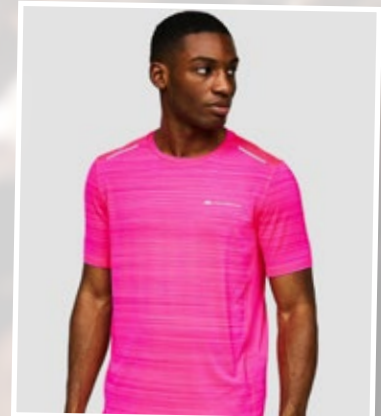
A must have mini skirt easily paired with any type of top or t shirt, €17 misguided.co.uk



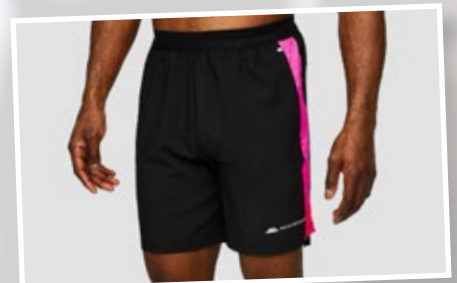
The multi-printed slinky hook and eye crop top is a perfect crop top to pair with neon colours, €18 prettylittlething.ie



Trendy and must-have parachute trousers, available in eight colours, can be paired with almost any top, €19.99 stradivarius.com



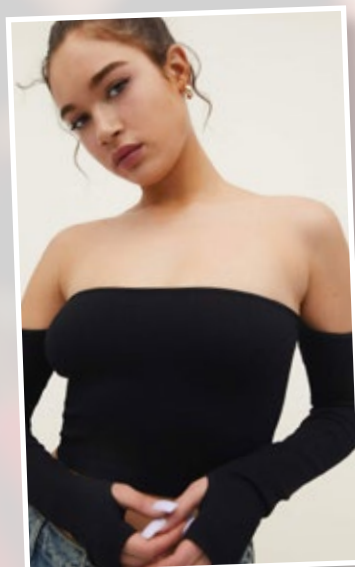
This fashionable gym gear dye t-shirt is suitable for all events, €42 monterrain.co.uk



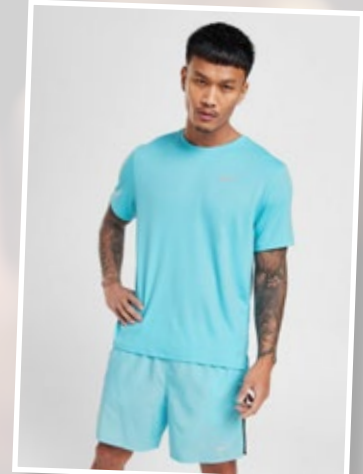
Matching shorts, available in other colours also, are perfect to finish off an outfit, €48 monterrain.co.uk



A cute mesh cover up for any festival or concert, this green mesh grunge print is €22 prettylittlething.ie



Another top best styled with skirts or cargos, €15.99 stradivarius.com



Another matching set perfect for all events, available in bright vibrant colours, €35 for t-shirt, €38 for the shorts jdsports.ie

On Point

Designer Lia Cowan is making waves in the fashion world. She takes a look back with Jenna Kerrigan into what got her started



From Foxrock in Dublin, Lia Cowan is an artist and designer who is quickly becoming one of the best in the business. She has dressed lots of famous people, including Nicola Coughlan from Derry Girls and Bridgerton. Lia approaches her design like that of an artist, researching diverse themes and responding to them. Her sculptural background also adds a layer to her work. Each of her pieces have their own story and, as she says, their own heart.

What did you want to be when you were younger?

I really wanted to be a teacher. I loved art it was my favourite subject in school, and the thought of working with people and teaching was the most appealing to me. I started working in a secondary school as an art teacher. I also wanted to be an actor, I'm not sure why but I think everyone does at one point.

Would you say you were surrounded by fashion when you were younger?

I went through different stages of style and thought the clothes I wore were cool. The way I dressed was the way I expressed myself and I loved it, but I never considered it as a career, it was just something I like to do.

Did you find it difficult to express yourself in secondary school?

I dressed differently and I mostly hid that from everybody. I tried to wear what everyone else was wearing but there was always a part of me that wanted to try new styles. I embraced my style when I got to National College of Art and Design (NCAD). Everybody wore mad things and so that's when I really started to express my sense of style.

How did you decide you wanted to do fashion in the end?

I loved NCAD and I loved the creating and designing side of things. My boyfriend bought me a sewing machine and said, "I think you'll be good at this". I started doing t-shirts and selling them. They sold well and I got a taste for design. I did a course in the Grafton Academy of Fashion and as soon as I started my course a light bulb went off. I was hooked. I started teaching myself as much as I could and quickly, I felt like I had to catch up and when you are obsessed and so in love with it you never really stop.

Would you recommend going to NCAD?

I did sculpture and education at NCAD. The best thing about it is you can take so much in. If you are creative and you are not sure of what to do but you really like art, I would definitely recommend going.

What was the first piece of clothing you ever made?

A crop top with fluffy sleeves with lots of volume or a scrunchie just as little side project.

What was the idea behind your most recent collection?

The Undisciplined Tulip collection was based on my aunt who passed when I was 18. She was a huge part of my life, and she always inspired my creative side. She made a tulip tapestry, and the idea behind my collection is that being a disciplined tulip people want women to be small, quiet, vulnerable and they never want to speak out especially when it comes to body images issues.

I wanted to change that and inspire women to have their voice heard, to realise that all body images are ok and to be an undisciplined tulip.

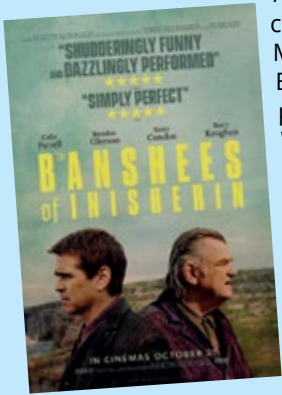
My aunt was very powerful and outspoken and always stood her ground. She was always herself and I looked up to her.

Congratulations to you on your engagement. Would you consider making your own wedding dress?

There would be no one in this world I would trust to make my wedding dress. It would be such a fun a special to do and to have the time and plan it would be amazing.

Arts In Focus

Galway comes alive with **The Banshees of Inisherin** Rated 16



The Banshees of Inisherin is a dark comedy/drama directed by Martin McDonagh and stars Colin Farrell and Brendan Gleeson. The story takes place at the end of the Irish Civil War in 1923 on Inisherin Island. Folk musician Colm Doherty (Gleeson) starts ignoring his lifelong friend Pádraic Súilleabháin (Farrell), causing Pádraic's life to spiral. As he becomes increasingly upset, Colm becomes more resistant to Pádraic's attempts to reconnect. Eventually, Colm gives Pádraic an ultimatum, leading to a tragic outcome.

The cast of the film features 11 main actors only, and the performances are fantastic. Colin Farrell delivers a brilliant performance as a dull and lonely man desperate to reconnect with his old friend, while Brendan Gleeson portrays a tragically stoic man who, for his whole life, has been living on the island. Barry Keoghan's character is the most tragic of them all. He plays Dominic, who has known nothing but abuse and pain his whole life. Kerry Condon plays Siobhán, Pádraic's sister, and the difference between her and Dominic's fate highlights the contrast between characters.

What made this film so thought-provoking was the film being an allegory of the Irish Civil War. It was a bloody, but ultimately self-harming conflict that ended unsatisfactorily; in the film two friends, who are fighting for no reason. Pádraic is a representation of Irish people, who were pushed to the breaking point by their relationship with the other side. Siobhán is representative of the people who departed for America to get out of the conflict for a fresh start.

The film's central conflict asks the question: "Is the life you're living now more important than the one you will be remembered for?" Colm says yes, and Pádraic says no, and this is the heart of the film's conflict. I highly recommend the *Banshees of Inisherin* for its incredible performances, tight script, beautiful cinematography and fascinating look at its themes of pride, isolation, legacy and tragedy.

4.5/5 Garry Madigan

Five must-watch TV shows (for older teens)

Better Call Saul (Netflix) -

The Emmy-nominated prequel to *Breaking Bad* has recently concluded its final season. While the show starts off slow, its well-written characters and carefully-crafted story draw you in. The final season is its strongest, offering a mix of emotion and intensity that makes for a natural and perfect conclusion. It stands right beside its parent show as possibly one of the best programmes ever made.

The Last of Us (Sky, NowTV) - A post-apocalyptic drama and an adaptation of the popular video game, the show portrays the journey of its characters, Joel and Ellie, as they navigate



the dangers of a world ravaged by a deadly fungus. It sets itself apart from similar genres by focusing on characters and story. The chemistry between leads Pedro Pascal and Bella Ramsey is fantastic and enhances your connection to the story. The nine-episode season provides an unforgettable journey filled with themes of love, loss and survival, and a finale which will polarise viewers.

Succession (Sky, NowTV) - This Emmy award winning drama follows the

Roy family, owners of a global media empire, as they fight for power and control. Though it takes a few episodes to find its stride and is a very dialogue-heavy show that may require some patience to get into, the payoff is worth it. The show is currently airing its fourth and final season, and it is shaping up to be its best. Its perfect blend of twisted, dark humour and drama, complex characters and incredible performances make it a fantastic watch.

Severance (Apple TV+) - A blend of sci-fi and drama follows the employees of a company whose memories have been surgically divided between their work and personal lives. The nine-episode show has a mysterious and engaging plot which leaves you guessing up until the end. Great acting and an incredibly intense finale that pays off all that came before.

Stranger Things (Netflix) - The show's fourth season is a return-to-form and sees the gang back together again as they face a new threat from the Upside Down. While not as consistent as its first season, and with a 2-hour-plus finale that can feel long winded at times, the show still remains as entertaining as ever with brilliant visuals and standout performances. The show's fifth and final season is set to air in 2024.

Garry Madigan

Boys Should Cry

Boys Don't Cry by Fiona Scarlett is an emotional novel featuring two brothers from Dublin. Set in the flats of inner city Dublin, an area that has many social issues such as drug abuse, the book tells the story of brothers Finn and Joe. Joe, the older brother, is a talented artist attending a gifted school but struggles to not go down the dealing route like his dad did.



Finn is very different from Joe and is mainly focused on his childhood illness. One thing both sides of the story have in common is that the boys are both talking about a difficult time/story in their lives.

The relationship between the brothers is so sincere and very realistic. They always look out for each other through difficult situations. One of the major themes in the book is the toxic expectations of how men should act and how they are portrayed as tough and strong.

Boys Don't Cry is a simple read with a powerful message.
Aoibhe Harlow

Free your mind...

Mental health issues are very common among young people. Katie Souhan, Hazel Turner and Róisín Holmes examine ways to improve your mental health.

About one in four young people suffer from serious anxiety. That's according to a My World survey on mental health in Ireland, which was released in 2019.

More than 19,000 young people between the ages of 12 and 25 took part in this survey carried out by Jigsaw, the national centre for youth mental health, and UCD. Twice the number of young people have severe anxiety now than compared with when the My World survey was carried out in 2012. The number one health issue for young people is their mental health, according to Jigsaw.

The organisation has been trying to provide people with ways to improve their mental health. There are many known methods that have been proven to work but here are just three that could do wonders for you.

Build your self confidence

Self-confidence is how you feel about yourself in relation to others. If you don't like yourself it can be damaging to your mental

health. To build your self-confidence you can try talking it out. Talking out your worries with someone can make you see things clearer and also help you release some of the stress the problem is causing you.

Keep a journal. List things you are grateful for or good things from your day to stay positive. Doing good deeds can also help you build your self-confidence. It can make you feel good about yourself and help the people around you at the same time.

Above all, don't be so hard on yourself. If you make a mistake, try not to beat yourself up about it. Everyone makes mistakes.

Get moving

Exercise is a powerful way to fight anxiety and depression. It promotes all kind of changes in the brain including neural growth and reduced inflammation. It also releases endorphins, which are chemicals in your

brain that energise you and make you feel good. Aside from all that, exercise can be a great distraction.

Sleep

Your mental health can affect your sleep, and a lack of sleep can affect your mental health. This creates a cycle where your sleep can get progressively worse as can your mental health.

You should try to get at least eight hours' sleep each night. There are different ways to help people sleep; some will not work for you, but others certainly will.

Establish a routine – go to bed at the same time each night. Take time out to relax before sleeping. Change your screen and device settings so that the phone isn't so bright. Better still, turn your phone off all together. Filling in a sleep diary can also help you to sleep better.

A black and white advertisement for RTP Physiotherapy. On the left, a woman is running on a treadmill. The background is dark with the RTP logo in large white letters, followed by a blue arrow graphic. Below the logo, the text 'REHAB | THERAPY | PERFORMANCE' is written in white. Further down, 'OPEN NOW FOR BOOKING' is written in large blue letters. Below that, a list of services is shown in white: '- PHYSIOTHERAPY', '- RETURN TO PLAY', '- PERFORMANCE COACHING', and '- PHYSICAL HEALTH'. At the bottom, the booking information is provided in white: 'Book at www.rtp.physio or email info@rtp.physio'.

Dear 16-year-old me..

Max O'Hara and Darragh Carolan asked four members of staff from St Mac Dara's what they would say to themselves at 16 years of age. Here, Anto, Ms. Reid, Mr. Curran and Ms. Manning reflect on how they felt at the time, offering invaluable advice to themselves and to all of us



Life was a lot different when I was younger. In the 1980s there was no other influences like the internet. I played GAA for Cuala and football with Pearse Rovers where Paul McGrath started out. I used to play the bass guitar and I was in a band called H2O. I would say music was one of my biggest influences growing up. Being the youngest in my band I had a lot of influence from the older

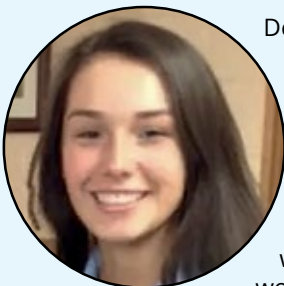
members, and we had a good few shows as the band lasted a good number of years.

I would tell my 16-year-old self to learn to listen to yourself and not to be influenced by older people. I met Christy Moore when I was younger and as one of my idols the one thing, he told me was "self-belief breathes success" and that is something I have lived by ever since.

School was great for me. I went to St Kevin's national school for primary and then Sallynoggin community college. I did my group cert in 3rd year, the inter cert in 4th year and my leaving cert in 6th year. Unfortunately, music was not an option for the leaving cert back then like it is now. I would have chosen to do music for my leaving cert if I had the option.

After secondary school I started straight into a factory warehouse driving forklifts for a summer job but ended up staying for several years. I definitely think one thing I would emphasise to my 16-year-old self or anyone of that age would be to believe in yourself because I think a lot of young people do not have that belief and a lot of things can make self-belief hard for younger people.

Anto the caretaker



Dear 16-year-old Emma, I am writing to you as your 25-year-old self. I'm happy to say you regret nothing and life so far is great. Looking back now I think you had a very 'be grand' attitude, keep this up as everything works out and you had a lot of fun on the way. However, here is some advice I would have liked to have heard.

- Stop pouting in photos. You'll regret this in the future when you're looking for a 16-year-old self-picture and, despite what you think, you don't look good.

- You'll be happy to know that you're still playing sports at 25 and have no intentions of stopping soon. From starting

off as one of the youngest on the team you are now one of the oldest. There are some unbelievable days ahead of you of big celebrations, including a party in a barn and you'll be happy to know after 12 years of playing you finally beat Tinahely.

- Never miss a festival! Even if you think you cannot afford it and would be better off working you're wrong and the FOMO is worse than being broke

- Keep your Uggs, they come back in fashion.

- Keep spending time with your grandparents, take your head out of your phone, the time is precious, and they have great stories that you are going to hear and not get to ask some of them about. Get your hugs in now because there is going to be a two-year gap in your next one.

- Although you didn't plan for the college course you're going to do, you will meet some unbelievable people, have the best fun and end up exactly where you're meant to be, doing something you love.

- Be sound to your teachers, they could become your colleagues someday.

- You will get to travel, this might be very delayed, but you'll get there one day.

- Lastly, your friends and family are all legends, and you have the best time and stories together and in the words of Ronan Keating 'life is a roller coaster you've just got to ride it'.

Emma Reid



When I was a teenager I enjoyed life. I came from a loving, caring home, got on with my parents and siblings, enjoyed going to school (but not what I learned) and I had a very active social life. Being a teenager was great but it also carried with it the knowledge that I was heading towards adulthood and that I would have to make decisions about the kind of life I wanted to lead.

My ambitions were modest and simple. I wanted to get a job, a car, to have a social life and, ultimately, to settle down, marry and raise a family in a house with a garden. I achieved all these things, and more, but it wasn't always easy and straight forward. I am happy, I am still happily married and I have three lovely boys (grown men now) of whom I am very proud. I love my job and the school I work in. I get to travel a lot and I regularly go to Glasgow to watch my favourite soccer team - Celtic.

So what advice would Big Mr C give to Little Mr C? You know that you must work hard in school to create good opportunities but you can and should work harder. Work as hard as you can in school but also get the study/life balance right. Thank people more often for the kindness they show you. I wasn't good at that in the younger version of myself and it's something I still need to work on.

Similarly, offer praise more often because people like to know that what they do is appreciated. Lastly, I would advise myself to follow my dreams. As it happens I did. But what I didn't understand when I was younger was that it is ok for dreams to change. Dream, dream big, work hard to fulfil your dreams and embrace the diversions as they arise. After all, life is a rollercoaster.

Alan Curran

I was 16 in the age of iPods, sidekick phones and 'The Hills'. We were listening to pop punk bands, wearing far too much eyeliner and using Maybelline dream matte mousse foundation (traumatising).

Our style icons were people like Paris Hilton and Lauren Conrad, and wearing trousers under a skirt, big chunky belts and loads of scarfs seemed like a completely normal outfit. For me, being 16 was an age of decisions, responsibilities and



thoughts of my impending future. I remember being at the end of my own TY in Sancta Maria College, already missing the freedom and fun of it. TY is such a special year and we are all very lucky to have had a chance to do it.

I had a good idea already that I wanted to become a teacher when I was older, or go into education in some form – I considered being an art teacher at one stage. I remember being stressed about making my Leaving Cert subject choices and wondering about which college I might want to go to. Those decisions seemed so big and final then. However, I also felt like I had so many choices of paths to follow, so many chances to experience things, so many exciting opportunities.

One piece of advice I would give my 16-year-old self would be to follow your own path, no matter what. None of my friends wanted to be teachers or applied to the same colleges as me, and the thought of being alone facing college was incredibly daunting. But I am so glad that I followed my own dreams and progressed how I did. My friends and I have kept in touch all these years later, so I didn't have to worry after all.

Sarah Manning



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Joe Fallon



Success for the Seniors



Huge success for St Mac Dara's as its Senior camogie team are crowned Senior champions just two weeks after the Junior team also gets a major win.

The senior final was played up in Tymon Park St MacDara's took on Gaelcholaiste Reachrann in March. The girls of MacDara's secured a comfortable victory 4-11 to 1-14.

Both teams fought right up until the very end as the Donaghmede girls were not giving up. They put up a super challenge for our team, which allowed the Mac Dara's girls to show their supporters on the sidelines their skills and determination in this game of camogie.

Co-captains Saoirse Gavigan from Crumlin GAA club and Amy Barrett from St Jude's GAA club were unbelievable for the Templeogue side causing problems for the Gaelcholaiste Reachrann side.

Both Anna-Marie Durkan and Orla Keighran had an impressive game as Anna-Marie popped over three points while Orla Keighran added two goals and three points to the scoreline.

Only four points separated the sides at half time but scores coming from Rebecca Horan, Saoirse Gavigan and Orla Keighran really settled the Mac Dara's side down and kept them apace with great hope. Clodagh Walsh scored a vital goal for the Templeogue girls before getting injured mid-way through the second half.

MacDara's did a lot of super defending throughout the game coming from all the defenders, in particular Orla Nerney, Katie Fitzgerald and Elena McCarthy. Grace Quinn, when introduced, made a number of vital clearances in the second half.

Goalkeeper Mia Clohessy was extremely effective between the posts, saving many shots and having super puck outs.

Despite a couple of scores from the Donaghmede side, the Templeogue girls held out right up until the final whistle when they claimed the title. It was a great day for the girls, their coaches, the community and especially their school.



"Each and every girl on the senior panel really put their hearts on the line to get to the stage of the final"

The Mac Dara's team featured girls from a range of clubs: St Jude's GAA, Ballyboden GAA and Crumlin GAA. Just like the juniors before them, each and every girl on the senior panel really put their hearts on the line to get to the stage of the final.

They trained hard, put in the work, won their matches, and a lot of it was down to the Trojan work that Ms Cormican and Ms Brennan put into training and working with these girls. Their win and success was truly deserved.

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**7 FORTFIELD AVENUE,
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**105 GARVILLE LANE,
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WHERE'S WARD?



O D B C D I G I T A L E T T N Y N
O I B B M E S S E N G E R X H G A
N R O B B K R I I X N I S H D P O
L J J L D B P R P M N O M N O S Y
I E D O T I D I G S T W E S M E U
N S M G D N J N T Z P I T Y K G I
E Z R G W M E A Z O R E L O J A C
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N Y Q R W R R C E U A I K A T N E
M B S C A O A M T G K J E M W A F
Q T Y M V S L U A U A Z D Y I V A
J A I K T Z O L I J U G G U T D C
G W L Z R Y P T O M C Y N P T A E
O W W T E R L J C F R X D E E W B
I D I S A D V A N T A G E S R T O
V Q F K A I D E M L A I C O S N O
E G W C V I D E O F O L L O W X K

Riddle Answers: 1. A Secret 2. The number 8 3. The letter 'r' 4. Chicago 5. Breath

Answers below

1. If you have me, you want to share me. If you share me, you don't have me. What am I?
2. Turn me on my side and I am everything. Cut me in half and I am nothing. What am I?
3. What is seen in the middle of March and April that can't be seen at the beginning or end of either month?
4. What is $\frac{3}{7}$ chicken, $\frac{2}{3}$ cat and $\frac{2}{4}$ goat?
5. I'm light as a feather, but not even the strongest person can hold me for more than 5 minutes. What am I?



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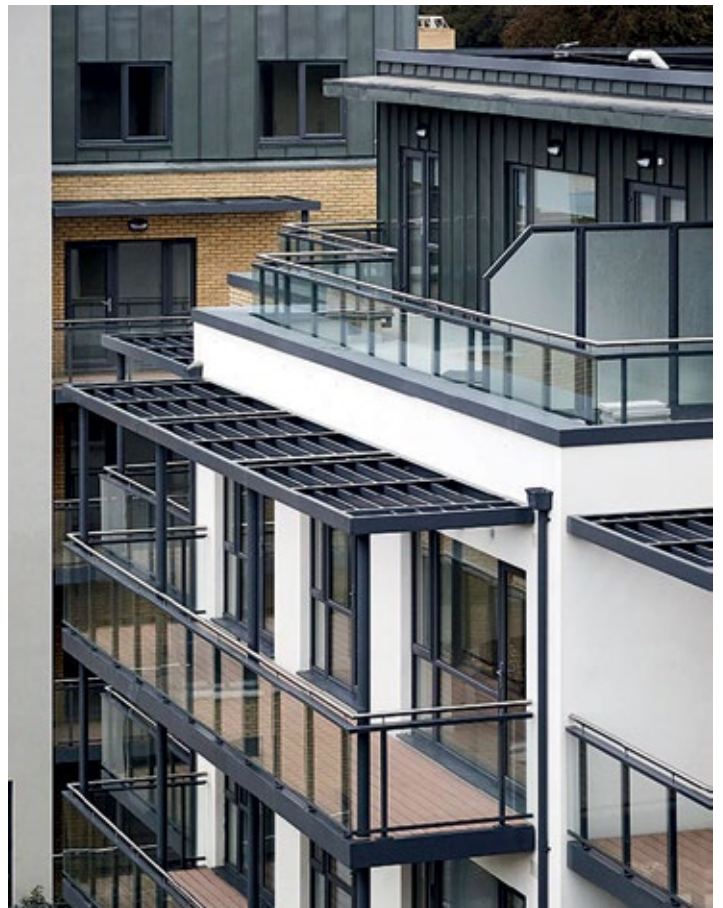
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