



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Dec 15, 2022

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We have arrived at the end of a very eventful first term. I thank everyone for their dedication during the first term: students, parents, teachers, staff and the extended school community. Here are just a few notices I would like to share with you.

Please note that the term will finish at 11.30 am next Wednesday, Dec 21.

Defibrillator

Thank you for your generous donations to the fundraising initiative 'install a Defibrillator at the school'. A tremendous €2250 has been raised. This is a fantastic contribution to a very worthy cause.

Parent-Class Teacher Meetings

Parent-class teacher meetings will take place on Monday, Jan 16, starting at 5.00 pm. This opportunity to talk formally with the class teacher and discuss your child's progress occurs once each year. The meeting also provides the opportunity to make plans for the coming year and to specify one or two specific aims. The meetings will take place online via Teams, similar to the subject-teacher meetings held in October and November. The office will be in touch with you in the new year about the times of the meetings.

Assessment Results

The November assessment results will be available shortly on the student administration system VS Ware. They are the first of the three primary assessments that take place each year. The assessments in each subject assess the learning taking place since the start of the year and indicate learning progress to date. If you have trouble accessing the results, please get in touch with the office.

After-School Study

After-school supervised study resumes on Monday, Jan 9. After-school supervised study occurs on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4.00 pm to 5.30 pm. On Wednesday, it takes place from 1.30 to 4.00 pm. Parents can make payments for supervised study using the school website.

Bus Transport

There was considerable response to the survey about bus service from North Wicklow. We have tried to source the most competitive quote in the past few weeks. However, the prices of buses came back very expensive. We surveyed parents again on the fees that would make the service financially viable, but unfortunately, there was not a sufficient response to make the service viable. We will conduct the survey again next September to determine the demand for such a service.

Transition Year Update

The students have participated in photography, first aid and special effects makeup courses. They have also participated in Friday adventures, Work experience and a workshop in DCU organised by European Space Agency. A handful of students have now also begun to work with the JSS primary school students teaching science, and it has been a great learning experience for both the students involved and primary school students. Hopefully, this can continue to develop further.

Here are some links illustrating the various activities they have been involved in recently.

First Aid Course - [Link](#)

Glendalough visit - [Link](#)

Newgrange visit - [Link](#)

Special Effects Workshop - [Link](#)

European Space Agency workshop - [Link](#)

Erasmus Grant

We are delighted that under the direction of Ms Shanahan, the school has successfully applied for a European Erasmus grant to develop innovative teaching methods in the area of Sustainable Fashion. This project will support student workshops. Funding will be available for some Business students to travel to Norway.

School Events

Charity Fund Raising

Students have organised several fundraising initiatives in the last few weeks. I hope you have not been overwhelmed!

Our collection for the W.H. Five Loaves homeless charity in Bray is ending. Thank you for the generous donations so far. The charity is looking for non-perishable foods and warm adulting clothing- no children's clothing this year. The charity will collect all donated items on Monday, Dec 19, so there is still time to clear out those food cupboards!

Our Christmas Jumper Day on Friday, Dec 16, brought much-needed money to support the charity Focus Ireland. Our Global Citizen Education Committee is also preparing 20 shoe boxes to send to Ukraine.

Finally, the students in the JSS Art Club have been very busy over the last two months putting their talents to amazing use in aid of the Purple House Cancer Care Support Centre. The Christmas Cards can be purchased in the school next week using cash or ordered online and picked up at the school.

Christmas

Our 6th-year leadership team has been highly creative and enthusiastic about organising events for Christmas. The events organised include Candy Cane Santa, Talent Competition, Carol Singing and Christmas Dress up. A huge congratulations to all involved for raising the spirits of all students during this Christmas period.

Ice-Skating

All Students went ice skating with their respective classes on Friday, Dec 16. From the feedback received, the trip was thoroughly enjoyed by all. I must thank the various teachers for organising such a fun day out for our students.

Science Week

This year's Science Week was celebrated from Nov 14 to Nov 18 in John Scottus School. The Science Department organised several events to bring Science awareness and Science fun to the school community. The hall was transformed into a hall of fame for famous scientists from Marie Curie to Richard Feynman. A Science jokes wall was also created to highlight various scientific concepts and humour. In-class quiz competitions were organised for all year groups, Chemistry, Biology, and Physics quizzes.

The Engineering competition was back by popular demand. This year's challenge was building a free-standing 30cm tall tower using drinking straws to support two table tennis balls in 10 minutes. Thirty students participated. The teams explored some very clever ideas involving various geometrical shapes. The winning team successfully built the tower in 7.3 minutes. Well done to Jacob and Elijah from 6th year! Finally, Mr Pender demonstrated a water rocket launch on the Astro pitch to close this year's Science Week. Thank you to Mr Pender, Mr Brady, Mr Pender, Ms Grace, and Ms Gubbins for organising all the events. To see some pictures of the event, please click [here](#).

Stand Up Week

In the week beginning Nov 14, the school celebrated Stand Up Week. The week is a nationwide campaign against LGBTI+ bullying in schools. The week started with introducing the theme: "Can I choose words that heal, not hurt?"

The week's activities include Door Decoration, Wall of Fame and "Watch your language" workshops. The week ended with a multi-coloured clothes day, raising funds for *BelongTo*, a charity supporting LGBTI+ young people in Ireland. Well done to our 6th-year students and Ms Franklin for organising the week.

5th and 6th-year Business talk

On Thursday, Nov 24, the Vice President of the Customer Care Unit for Europe from the company UPS came to the school to share business insights with our 5th and 6th-year students. We thank Ms Shanahan and Ms Gubbins for organising illuminating talk.

Extra-Curricular

The autumn term has been busy for sports in JSS. Hockey, soccer, frisbee and athletics events have all happened over the last few months.

Athletics

Our Athletics team has been busy training on Thursday after school. The dark evenings have not deterred the enthusiasm as training has now moved to the Astro pitch, where

we can use the new lights. On Wednesday, Nov 9, our athletes travelled to Blackrock to compete in a cross-country event. To see some pictures of the event, please click [here](#). We look forward to the team competing in more competitions in the new year.

Hockey

Our Junior girl's Soccer and Hockey teams are also in full swing. Our hockey girls are most of the way through their league, where they have had some really tight games against St. Raphaela's and Loreto Bray.

Soccer

Our soccer girls had a great win in the first round of the cup, coming out 6-2 winners in our first-ever girls' game at home. The league is only getting going in soccer, so our girls have many more games to look forward to. Our u15 boys have also been busy with matches. Unfortunately, we lost our first two games in the league and the cup, but both were very competitive. But with such great numbers training, the boys are looking forward to more tight games after the Christmas break.

Ultimate Frisbee

We also had senior and junior frisbee tournaments for both boys and girls on Thursday, Nov 24. Training for frisbee takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and more competitions are scheduled for after Christmas, with the first being at the end of January.

Basketball

Finally, our Junior boys' basketball team has been training hard during Thursday lunchtimes and is looking forward to their season, which starts after Christmas.

For a complete list of what extra-curricular clubs currently are on offer in John Scottus, please click [here](#)

Music and Drama

During lunchtimes, the choir and drama groups have been rehearsing 'Twas the night before Christmas' and Christmas carols for the talent show. The music groups have also been jamming Thursday lunchtimes, and students will perform a Christmas selection at our end-of-year celebration.

Philosophy Themes

To provoke discussion and thought, some of the themes for the past few weeks have been:

What does "May all be happy" mean in practice?

Do you ask questions?

What thoughts and feelings do you keep in your heart?

What is True?

Am I this body?

For more information about the assembly themes, please click [here](#).

Philosophical thought for the day

"Most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be" – Abraham Lincoln

Summary of Events coming up

End of Term – 11.30 pm, Wednesday, Dec 21

School Re-opens – Thursday, Jan 5

Parent-Class Teacher Meetings – Monday, Jan 16

Philosophy Week – Starting Monday, Jan 23

Mock Exams for 3rd and 6th years – Thursday, Feb 2 to Friday, Feb 10

Exam Week for 1st, 2nd and 5th years – February 8 to February 10

Mid-term Break – Mon, Feb 13 to Fri, Feb 17

Lastly, I would like to take the opportunity to wish you and your families a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Yours warmly,



Dr Declan Kelly

Principal

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