



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

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February 9, 2023

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

We have arrived at our mid-term after a very eventful first term, and I would like to take this opportunity to share a few notices with you.

Defibrillator

We have now installed the new defibrillator in the school's front lobby.

Thank you all for generous donations to the fundraising initiative 'install a Defibrillator at the school'. Parents raised a tremendous €2400, a fantastic contribution to a worthy cause.

Student Leadership Team

The interview for our Student Leadership team took place recently. It is great to see our students put themselves forward for leadership positions. Our new Head Girl is Anahita Aryan, and our new Head Boy is Euan Gallagher. Also, students have put themselves forward for other leadership roles, namely:

Deputy Head – Gabriel Mullins and Charlotte Reid

Well-being Coordinator – Johannes Natsch

Prefects – Jo Costelloe, Rintaro Okuda and Samir Graur

We look forward to working with them on their various initiatives.

February Assessment

In-school exams, including the mock exams for 3rd year and 6th years, have taken place over the past week. Teachers will assess the quality of work produced and provide feedback to students after the midterm. Using this feedback, the school will send reports to parents before the end of the term in March. We hope these reports will show what learning occurred in the previous two months. The assessment results will be available on the student administration system VS Ware in a few weeks. If you have trouble accessing the results, please contact the office.

Roadworks

We thank you for your patience as Irish Water has continued with the roadworks on Ferndale Road. Hopefully, it will finish in a couple of weeks. We will update you as we receive information.

Lexia PowerUp Literacy Program

We are introducing the Lexia PowerUp Literacy Program for all 1st years. Lexia PowerUp is a computer-based program that adapts instruction to the specific literacy needs of learners. It uses a structured and systematic approach in three areas essential to

becoming a proficient reader: word understanding, grammar and comprehension. We hope the program will develop the literacy skills to access the curriculum in all subjects. We will be in touch with 1st-year parents shortly with more details about the program.

Transition Year Update

The Transition year students have had an enjoyable and educational trip to Iceland! Some of the Highlights included the Golden Circle and the South Coast, which comprised waterfalls, Geysers, a Geothermal power plant, the blue lagoon, and lots of snow. The feedback so far has been very positive, and I thank our Transition Year coordinator, Mr Bourke, for organising a great trip. To see some pictures of the event, please click [here](#).

The Transition students sat their DATS Psychometric assessment recently. This assessment aids them in decision-making regarding their senior cycle subjects and future careers. Our career guidance teacher, Ms Maguire-Timmins, will meet with students and parents after mid-term to discuss the feedback from these assessments.

Transition years also completed an introduction to Irish sign language and the history and context to sign language. Our students are fast learners, and by the 2nd lesson, there was silence as the class communicated with each other through sign language. Some students are now looking into teaching what they learned in primary school.

Erasmus Project

We are delighted that under the direction of Ms Shanahan, the school has successfully received a European Erasmus grant to develop innovative teaching methods in the area of Sustainable Fashion. As part of this project, 6 Business students will travel to Norway on March 11 for one week, working with students from other countries. In preparation for the trip, they have already had one online meeting with Norwegian students.

Ski Trip

Students from the 2nd, 3rd and Transition years depart for the ski trip to Italy on Saturday, February 11. We wish all involved an enjoyable and safe trip.

End of year School Trips

There are several trips organised for the last week of school in May. Our 1st and 2nd-year students will visit the Carlingford adventure centre. Our 5th and Transition year students will travel to Munich.

I thank all teachers for their enthusiasm and generosity in organising these fantastic trips for our students.

School Events

Art Club

The art club students raised €264.27 for the Purple House Cancer support centre in Bray by selling student-made Christmas cards. The Purple House has kindly invited the students to come and visit so that the students can see where their money will go. Thanks to everyone involved, both students and Art Club coordinator, Ms Sweeney, for their support and generosity in this endeavour.

Philosophy and Self-Discovery Week

Philosophy week, with the theme "Can we be kind in every moment, even when it is hard?" took place the week beginning Monday, January 23. The week culminated in the Philosophy Fair presentations, where students with the best philosophical projects from each class presented to the rest of the school. In the weeks before Philosophy week, students in all classes prepared a presentation on their chosen philosophical question.

Well done to Rishi, who won the overall award with the topic "Do aliens exist?". In addition, well done to runner-up Aisling, with "Does the end justify the means" and to Anna with the topic "Does the afterlife exist".

In addition, our 5th-year and Transition Year students went to Towley Hall, Drogheda, on Tuesday, January 7, for an activity-based philosophy day. During the day, they explored the theme of "What would a wise person do now?" through teamwork activities, yoga and preparing meals. To see some pictures of the trip, please click [here](#).

Model Council of Europe Debate

Our 5th-year students are busy preparing for the Model Council of Europe debate. It takes place in Dublin City hall and the topic for discussion this year is "Energy and Emissions reduction targets for 2030". Each school in the debate is assigned a country to represent, with John Scottus representing the Netherlands.

Extra-Curricular

Returning to school in January meant a return to many extra-curricular activities in JSS.

Athletics

Our Thursday afterschool athletics club has continued attracting many students looking to work on their fitness in a fun environment through a combination of indoor circuits and outdoor running. Our athletes attended the January East Leinster Cross Country championships in the Phoenix Park. Twenty students participated in the event, and all had a great day despite the rain. We must mention Daniel Quilty, Joshua Mullins and Oisin Donelon, who were highly placed in their events. To see some pictures of the event please click [here](#).

Ultimate Frisbee

Our Frisbee coach Sam continues to hold lunchtime sessions on Tuesdays (Junior students) and Thursdays (Senior students). Our Seniors attended a mixer event in the National Indoor complex in Blanchardstown. The competition mixes students from other schools for frisbee players from around Dublin to get to know each other.

Soccer

Our Junior Girl's Soccer team continue to train and has three more games remaining in our league. Unfortunately, in our first game after Christmas, the team lost. Our 1st and 2nd-year girls then travelled to Holy Child Sallynoggin for a friendly match. The JSS girls came out on top of what was a hotly contested encounter.

Our boys soccer continues to train away with games scheduled for after the mid-term break.

Basketball

Finally, our basketball season got underway this month. After many months of lunchtime training, our 2nd-year boys' team got their league off to a winning start with a 22 - 20 point victory over Presentation Community College Terenure. Yude He and Joshua Mullins made significant contributions to the scoreboard in this game.

Hockey

Our girl's hockey teams continue to train away with games scheduled for after the mid-term break.

PE Curriculum Update

The term saw two new activities on the PE timetable. On Tuesdays, students were transported to Bray Emmets GAA club for a health-related fitness program of circuit training. On Thursdays, students chose to go to the "Angels gymnastics club" for a schedule of gymnastics with the "Angels" coaches or games on the Astro.

Guitar lesson

Guitar lessons with Gavin have been successfully running this term on Tuesday at lunchtime and will continue next term. Please get in touch with Ms Williams if your child is interested in learning guitar.

Philosophy Themes

Whole school assemblies have continued for the past month on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. In addition to regular updates on school events, we have explored various questions, such as:

How do you play the part of a student?

What would a wise person do?

Do good habits bring freedom and happiness?

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

Summary of Events coming up

Monday, February 20 – School reopens

Monday, March 6 – Start of Seachtaine na Gaeilge

Friday, March 17 - School Closed, Bank holidays

Friday, March 31 – End of Term

Finally, a philosophical thought for the day:

"Concentration is the secret of strength in war, in trade; in short, in all the management of human affairs" – Emerson

Yours warmly,



Dr Declan Kelly

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