

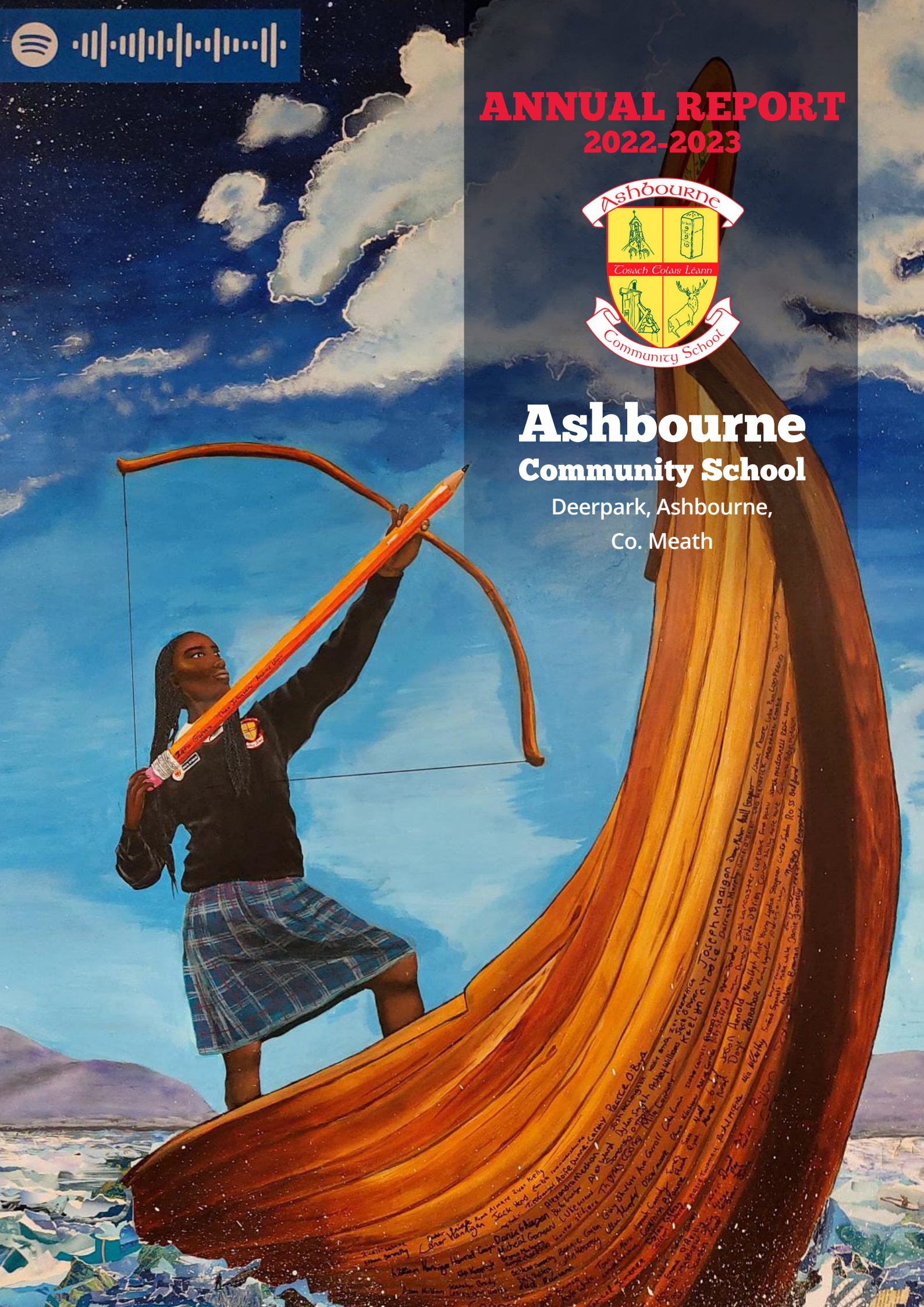


# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023



# Ashbourne Community School

Deerpark, Ashbourne,  
Co. Meath



*Thank you to all staff, students, for contributing to this report.*

*Thank you to Fiona Pike and the Annual Report Team,  
Sarah O'Rourke, Niamh Doran, Caitriona Galton.*

# ANNUAL REPORT

2022/2023



## ASHBOURNE COMMUNITY SCHOOL Ashbourne, Co. Meath

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TOSACH EOLAIS LÉANN  
"THE BEGINNING OF KNOWLEDGE IS LEARNING"

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# The Sixth Year Mural and our Front Cover for the Annual Report

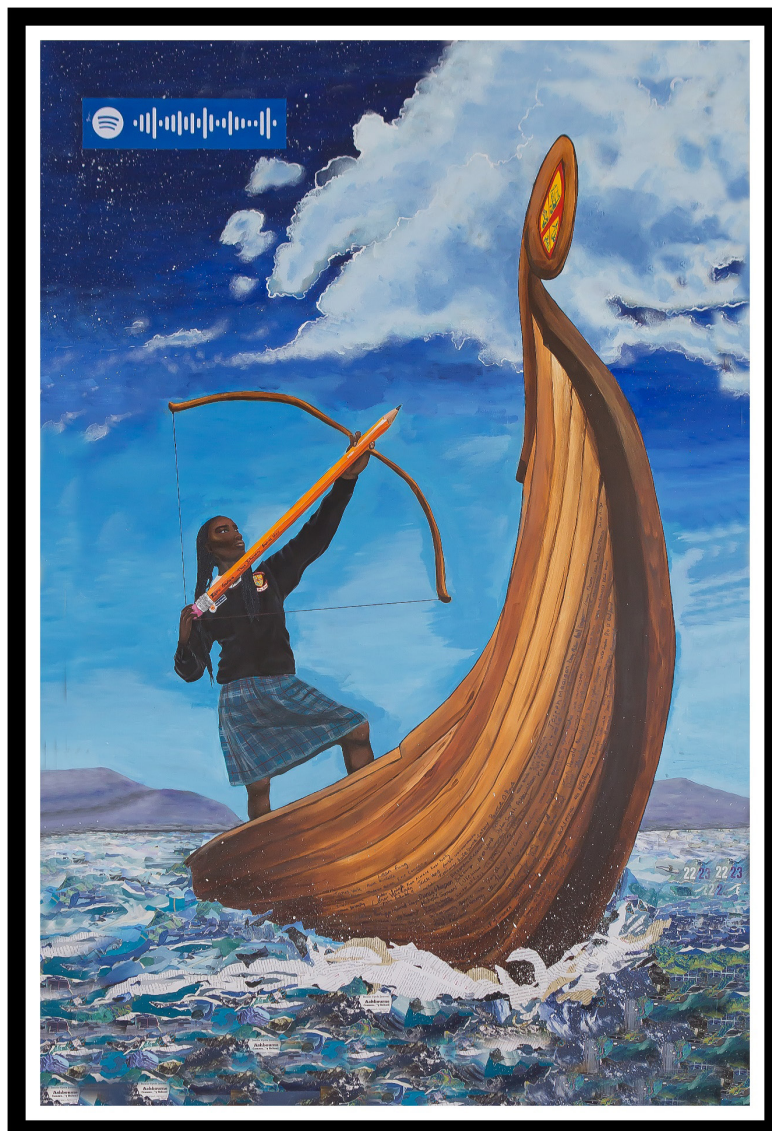
**Sixth Year Class 2022-2024**

**Mural created by Zosia Gozdzik, Theo Johnson and Beatrice Uiuiu.**

*Edited Extract from the speech given by Zosia Gizdzik at the Graduation Night*

The base classes of our Sixth Year group were named after rivers to spell out the name of our Year Head, Ms. Ryan. With our given theme of ‘journey’ for this year’s mural, we decided to embark on one final journey of our own through our mural. Our inspiration came from the idea of a Viking Longboat that is sailing away from its river out of the mainland into the vast ocean and beyond.

Our year group signed among the planks of the boat and we, the designers of the boat, have signed along the pencil. ... We decided to have our Head Student Laura Bolster at the forefront of the mural shooting for the stars with the sky helping to represent our future dreams, plans, and hopes.



**Fáilte! Aloha! Willkommen!**  
**Bienvenue! Witamy!**  
**Bienvenido!**



## Welcome to the Ashbourne Community School Annual Report for 2022/2023

As part of our recent Multi-Cultural Day, TY students Rachel Mahon, Anna Chaykovska and Katelyn Donnelly painted a Welcome Mural to represent the 65 languages that are spoken and present in our school. The girls created a circular display to represent the different languages in our school and to show that everyone is welcome.

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The 2022 - 2023 year, will be remembered as the year in which we fully returned to 'normal'. The annual report reflects the vibrancy of our school community and takes you beyond the major events into the classrooms of ACS so you can see the day-to-day work.

Each department's report reflects the dedication of staff members and the vibrancy and creativity that they bring to make the curriculum relevant and accessible to all our students. We continue to offer a full, broad curriculum. This year we added to our suite of subjects by adding Computer Studies at Leaving Cert. We began with a class of 12 in Fifth Year, but this number will rise as students become aware of it in the Senior Options Programme. It was not so long ago that we introduced both Politics and Society and LCPE, and those subjects are now firmly established in our programme.

This report gives an insight into each subject, but also reflects the amazing work being done in the co-curricular and extra-curricular space. It would be unfair of me to highlight any particular work or achievement but, suffice to say, what happens outside of the classroom is for so many students the reason they come to school and where they find their sense of identity. There were several new clubs this year including our chess club and our drama club – we are constantly looking for new ways to tap into the student/teacher interests in both the sporting and non-sporting space. We also have a Solás group providing a safe space for students and, along with our Green and Amber Flags, we are now working towards getting our LGBT+ Quality Mark. Our Jigsaw Health Team raised awareness around mental health amongst students, teachers, and parents.

It was great to return to face-to-face Parent Teacher meetings this year as well as opening up our school for Open Day after a couple of years of virtual events. Our Christmas carol service and our TY show were other events at which we were able to celebrate the talent of the school in a shared space. Our teams have returned to the fields and courts and have represented ACS proudly. There were some memorable school trips this year including the Paris, Salamanca, Camino and Ski Trip. Without the commitment of dedicated staff, these trips would not happen, so we pass on our gratitude to the staff who organise those trips as well as all staff involved in any co-curricular and extra-curricular event, team or club.

Our TY programme has been as vibrant as ever – the pandemic did nothing to dampen down the programme – when you read through the report, you will see the breadth and range of activities and events that have happened this year. Likewise, our LCAs have continued to fill us with pride in the work they do and the commitment and ingenuity that they bring to their work.

We remember Tina Lordan and Micky Naughton, past staff members, who passed away this year and we also think of wider members of our school community who died this year. We keep all of them in our hearts. We thank Martin McIvor for his many years of service to ACS both in the classroom and on the GAA pitch as he retired in October.

Behind the scenes, we are working hard to prepare for the opening of our Special Class in 2023-24, as well as an improved traffic management system at the front of our school which will target the safety of our pedestrians and cyclists. We also look forward to putting a €16,000 grant that we have received from Meta to good use by improving our IT facilities. 2022-23 was a fantastic year for ACS – the next year will be equally exciting.

Thank you to Gillian, Sarah, and Fiona for all the work they have done in collating this report and for encouraging and cajoling staff to produce their specific accounts. We hope that you get a feel for all the work that goes on every day in our school.



**Ciarán Stewart**  
*Principal*

## Meet our Principal and Deputy Principals



*Gillian Casey, Pat Moriarty, Ciarán Stewart and Niamh Kelly*

## Meet our Administration Staff



*Edel O'Grady, Eithne Wynne, Madeleine Harbison, Jo Buckley, Marion Coleman*



# Meet our 2022/2023 Staff



# 2022/2023 Head Students



*Laura Bolster, Sam Ryan, Caoilfhinn Browne and Conor Nulty*

# 2022/2023 Wellbeing Ambassadors



*Jamie Fennelly and Tom O'Hara*

# Subject Departments

## Art

The Sixth Year Art piece for 2022 was completed by Anna Skelton, Aimee Ennis, and Emily Simpson. It was kindly displayed on the curved wall at Reception by our caretakers Brian and Seán. Huge credit goes to the girls for the determination, creativity, and skill that went into creating such a fabulous piece. The first that we ever have had in a circular format.

The plan was put together by a team of Sixth Years during April and May 2022. The girls explain below the concept behind the design.

"We were originally inspired by the little cherry tree that was flowering outside the school when we started planning. Cherry blossoms represent new beginnings which is a nice metaphor for the end of our school days but the start of our future. We had been studying the work of Michelangelo and we were inspired by the circular composition of the Doni Tondo.

The final composition has blossoms swirling around the one of our Head Students under the tree and two students walking down a path into the distance. The path represents the theme for our graduation, "Journey."

We wanted a painting that was peaceful and hopeful after the difficult years, and we are immensely proud of what we have achieved."



*Sixth Year Painting with Anna (Left) Emily (Right) and Aimee (seated front)*

## Leaving Cert Results

Congratulations to LC 2022 on their fabulous results. They were very deserving as they were a hardworking and dedicated group of students who were always a pleasure to teach.



*Aimee Ennis. Leaving Cert 2022. Still Life.*



*Anna Skelton. Leaving Cert. 2022. Still Life*



*Ciara Wilde. Leaving Cert 2022. Lino Print.*

### Junior Cycle Results

Congratulations to the JC class of 2022. This was the first year that students in our school received results in JC Art and we had some exceptional work.



Painting JC. Saoirse Murray



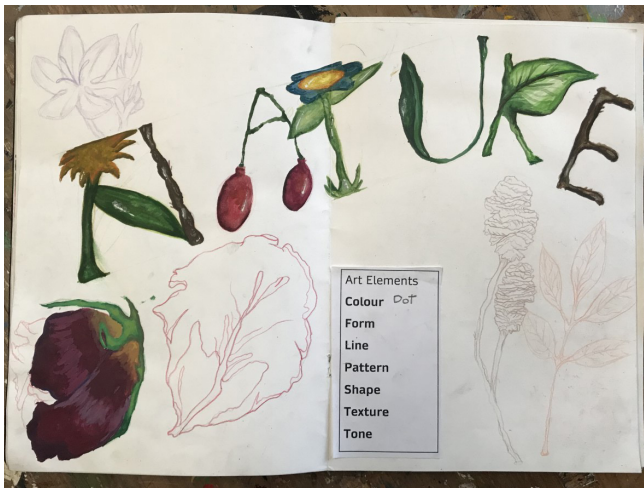
Painting JC. Kirsten Minto



Still Life JC. Anna Chaykovska

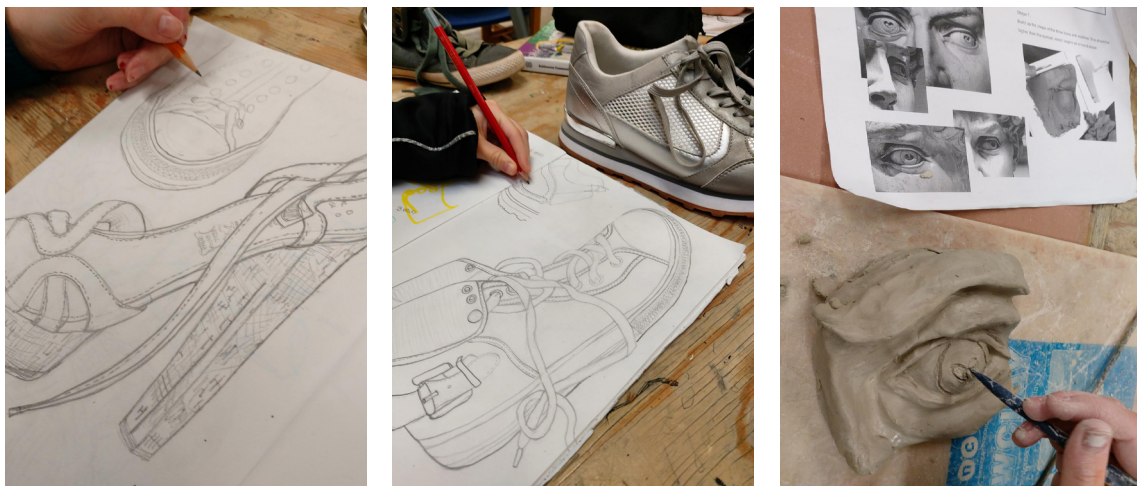
### First Years

A new group of First Years that arrived in September are settling in well. They began the year learning new drawing and design skills. They are now working in clay creating coil pots based on the theme of "Nature".



## Second Years

Second Years began the year with drawing and painting using shoes as their primary source. They also completed some lovely relief sculptures before Christmas based on Michelangelo's David.



They are currently working on CBA 1 in Strand Craft: Lino Printing. This includes researching artists and completing a three colour Lino print.



## Third Years

Third Years were busy completing CBA 2 before Christmas and then began working on their chosen exam piece for assessment in June. These included paintings and sculpture.

## Senior Cycle Art

### Transition Year

Transition Year students in Ms. Maher's class have been learning about coats of arms and calligraphy. They are designing and painting their own personal coat of arms together with a personalised motto in italic script. Ms Aiken's group have been learning colour theory and painting techniques.

### Fifth Year

Fifth Year Visual Art is being taught by Ms. Aiken this year. They have been busy developing art skills and learning about Irish art and its place in the wider world.

They have also been experimenting with materials and creating some exciting work.



### Fifth Year LCA

Fifth Year LCA have just completed their General Education Task with Ms. Maher and Ms. Matthews. They designed and built coil pots and wrote a report on the process. They also visited the workshop of Thomas Diem.



## Sixth Year

Sixth Years were delighted to be back in the art room creating artwork and began the year with lino printing. They went on an art trip in December to view the wonderful variety of art in the collection of the Hugh Lane Gallery. They were studying the Impressionist era in Visual Studies, so it was a wonderful opportunity to see the Impressionist collection which was bequeathed to the nation by Sir Hugh Lane. Students began working on their coursework in early December.

Several students are applying for NCAD and Portfolio Preparation courses. We wish them the very best of luck with their future careers in art and hope they will keep up the tradition of returning to the school to talk to our students about their creative pursuits.



## Sixth Year LCA

Ms Aiken's group Sixth Year LCA group have been learning colour theory and painting techniques.

## Visits by Artists

As part of the Visual Studies programme, we had the pleasure of a visit from past pupil and practicing artist Eileen O'Sullivan. She gave an excellent talk on the creative process she uses to research and create work. She spoke to both Junior and Senior Cycle students. They were very engaged and availed of the opportunity to ask questions at the end.

Aimee Ennis is currently completing an Art and Design Portfolio Preparation course in Coláiste Dhúlaigh. She paid a visit to the school and spoke to the current Sixth Years and showed them some of her artwork. Aimee is applying for the BA in Education and Fine Art in NCAD. We all wish her the very best of luck.

We will continue the tradition of the Sixth Year painting this year. A team of creative and dedicated students put a plan together in April and painting began in May. This year's concept is based on "the journey". When completed, this work will be signed by all Sixth Year students and displayed in a prominent place on the corridor.

We would like to take this opportunity to wish our Leaving Cert and Junior Cycle students the very best in their exams. Their excellent work will be displayed for all to see along our corridors in the new academic year.



# Business

It has been a busy year for the Business Department for the academic year 2022/2023. We are always looking for new initiatives to help promote and develop our subject area. Here are just a few of the highlights of another successful academic year.



*6th Year Economics Students*

## Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle results

Well done to all our Leaving Certificate and Junior Cycle students who received their fantastic results. Many students received top results across Accounting, Business, Economics and LCVP for the Leaving certificate, while we had several students achieve a Distinction at Junior Cycle level. Huge congratulations on your success. We are immensely proud of your hard work.

## Open Night

We held another highly successful Open Evening where we welcomed incoming parents/guardians and students. Some of our young entrepreneurs set up a stall in RA4 and along the RA corridor. It was a great chance to showcase the practical benefits of our option subject, which we believe is essential to developing skills for the future. We had various games for our incoming First Years to play, such as guess the entrepreneur and name the logo. A huge thanks to our young entrepreneurs who set up on the night, to our students who demonstrated the limited resources game and to all department teachers for the preparation put into making it a success.



## Classroom Based Assessment

In March 2023, our Second Year students completed their CBA 1. Students worked in groups to research and recommend a new family car. They also had to recommend a suitable source of finance and repayment plan for this purchase. The students worked extremely hard to get their task completed. Well done to all!!

## TY Business

In the first session of TY Business class, students completed the CV and letter of application, and application forms. A discussion took place, and an assignment was completed about Budget 2023. Students investigated their chosen career, looking at pathways to the career and evaluating it in terms of their subject choices and skills. Students also completed valuable work placement online courses in the IACT suite of courses under Compliance. These included Allergen Awareness, Fire Safety Awareness Theory, Food Hygiene, HACCP, GDPR Awareness, Health and Safety Slips Trips and Falls, Manual Handling Theory, and Responsible Serving of Alcohol.

A number of videos were submitted for the school entry to the Maynooth University TY Business Video Competition with the tagline, "ICE, ICE BABY – Inflation, Climate and Energy: a perfect storm or chance of a new dawn". Well done to TYs, Alannah Kelly, Sarah-Jane Behan, Rachel Mahon and Anna Chaykovska in Class Brady who represented ACS in this competition. As a way of thanking and acknowledging businesses, TYs submitted articles on at least one work placement across the year, and these were published in the TY Bulletin and on the school social media. Students also investigated a local, national, or international entrepreneur of their choice and created a PowerPoint presentation on it. All of this made up their credits at the end of each session.

## Mini-Companies

There were three TY mini companies this year.

- Jack Stafford, Ben O' Sullivan and Alex McCann sold ACS Player Fit Training Tops.
- Mikey Lematy, Ruairi Honan and Dylan Rowland sold ACS Gear Bags.
- Liam Monaghan, Danann Donnelly and Luke McPartlin and Owen Flood sold ACS Half Zips.

They learned about the ups and downs of setting up and running a business as well as discovering the difficulties and issues that have to be sorted out along the way. So, a great learning experience for all students involved.



## Financial Awareness Week

Financial awareness week took place from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January. This year we emphasised the importance of goal setting. Each day, announcements were made to highlight savings tips that would encourage students to achieve their financial goals. All students received a goal setting activity that supported them in keeping track of their savings targets.



*Thanks to TYs Fabien Kinsey, Julia Valentine and Alex Doyle for creating our Financial Awareness Week Noticeboard*



*Thanks to TYs Sarah Hegarty, Ciara Murray and Grace Toohey, and Ms McNamee*

## Computer Science

In response to the growing demand for Computer Science education in today's increasingly digital world, the school has recently introduced Computer Science as a new subject for the Leaving Cert curriculum. This exciting development means that students will now have the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills in key areas such as coding, programming, data analysis, and problem-solving. By studying computer science, students will be equipped with valuable tools that will serve them well in a wide range of careers and fields, including science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). Moreover, this move demonstrates our school's commitment to providing a comprehensive and forward-thinking education that prepares students for success in the modern world.

The Leaving Cert exam is broken down into 30% project and 70% exam. The project is based on four applied learning tasks that the students do across the two years. The exam consists of two papers: Paper One, assesses students' knowledge of theory and programming, and Paper Two, requires students to complete a practical programming task.

For their Applied Learning Task 4, the Fifth Year students had to program micro:bits. The students were split into three groups and each group focused on a different project: a streetlight, a remote control car, and a soil moisture detector. The group working on the streetlight project programmed the micro:bit to simulate a streetlight by turning on and off when light was detected. The group working on the remote control car project utilised the micro:bit to create a remote control that allowed them to move the car in various directions. Finally, the group working on the soil moisture detector used the micro:bit to measure soil moisture levels and alert the user when the soil needed watering. These projects allowed the students to develop their coding skills and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Moreover, it fostered a sense of creativity and innovation among the students, demonstrating the limitless possibilities of coding with micro:bits.



## CSPE

CSPE students have been engaged in several areas of active citizenship this year. There are three strands for each year of CSPE education; Strand One: Rights and Responsibilities, Strand Two: Global Citizenship, and Strand Three: Democracy.

First Year students have been learning about the area of Rights and Responsibilities. Class Apollo are engaging in a programme called 'Innovate for Wellbeing', they will run a whole school initiative looking at ways to tackle stress and encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning.

They have also been critically engaging with the topic of poverty, learning about the differences between extreme and relative poverty, the root causes, and how poverty affects people in Ireland and globally.

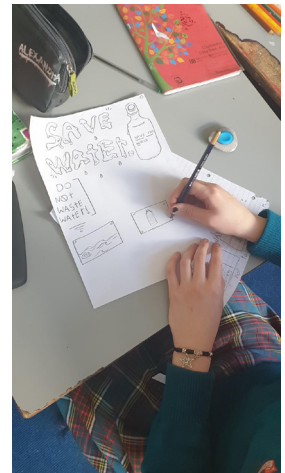
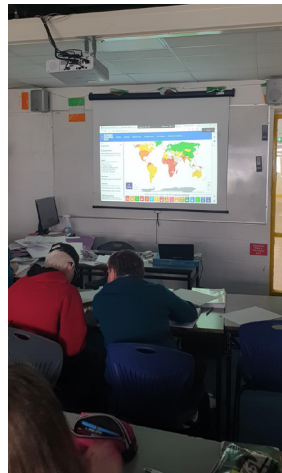
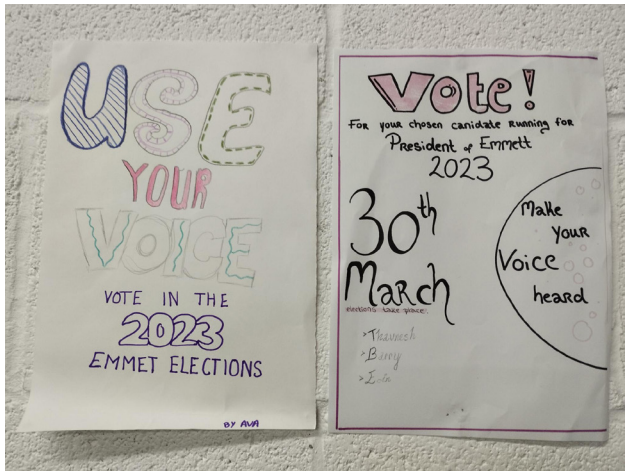
Second Year students have been learning about climate change and sustainability. They are engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Class hydrogen have been engaging with the SDGs through the lens of Fast Fashion, undertaking a collaborative research project on the social, economic and environmental impacts of Fast Fashion and presenting their findings. Class Iron have been exploring the impact of climate change and have undertaken 'Waste Diaries' to explore their own impact on the environment as well as investigating ways to decrease their impact and carbon footprint.

While Third Year students have been learning about democracy, and have been keeping track of global elections, systems of government and civil rights issues related to these around the world. Class Finucane have been learning about the current situation with the fight for gender equality in Iran. As part of their action project, they will be making a TikTok dance in the fight for women's equality in Iran and inviting other students to take part to raise awareness.

Classes Lonsdale, Emmet and O'Farrell explored the world of democracy by carrying out mock elections to help give them a feel for how the election process works including the use of Proportional Representation to count the votes.

Third Year students have also took part in the Graduate.ie Citizenship and Democracy Programme for the chance to win educational trips. Conor Dunne, a Third Year student from Class Hume, has won a trip to the European Parliaments in Brussels, Luxembourg, and Strasbourg as part of this competition. Well done, Conor!

Fantastic work has been done by the CSPE team to ensure students here at ACS are informed, active citizens with a desire to positively engage with their wider community.



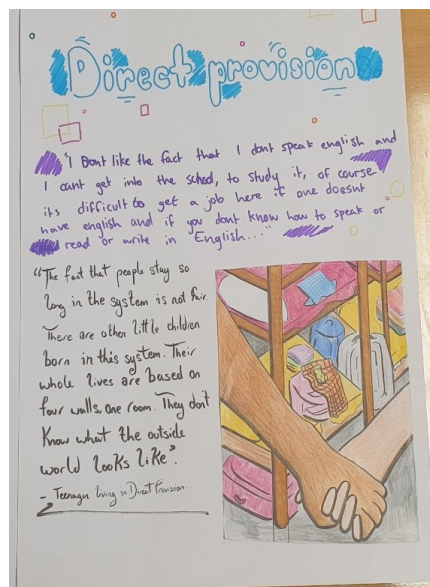
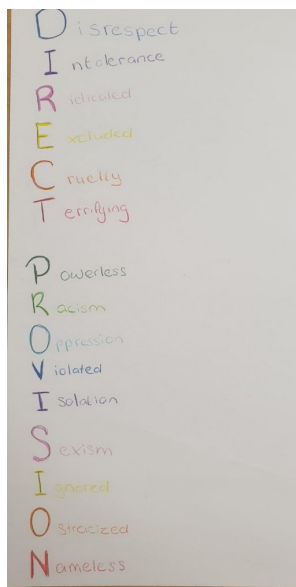
## Development Education

Development Education works to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality, globally and locally. It equips students with the skills required to make informed decisions and take responsible actions on issues they're passionate about.

Here in ACS, we are proud to be affiliated with Worldwide Global Schools. WWGS is an educational body that supports and recognises schools offering quality global citizenship education.

WWGS offer global passport awards every two years with strict criteria, to formally recognise quality work being done in schools. In ACS we have been awarded the silver passport award and are continually striving towards the highly coveted gold!

As well as interlinking this ideal throughout the whole school curriculum in various subjects, we are lucky to have a timetabled half year TY module in development education. The two groups have been very busy this year. The first group decided that the issue they wanted to focus on was direct provision in Ireland. They learned about why it was established, what the conditions are like, the criticisms of the system by various human rights organisations, and possible alternatives to the system. The class took action by making visual displays to increase awareness on the issue and signing petitions to end direct provision in Ireland.



The second group chose to focus on Fast Fashion. The class learned about the root causes, social, environmental, and economic effects, as well as possible solutions. To take action on the issue, the class have decided to run a competition for junior students in the school. The brief will be to create the best upcycled/sustainable outfit. The winners will be chosen from a group of TY panellists and there are fantastic prizes to be won.

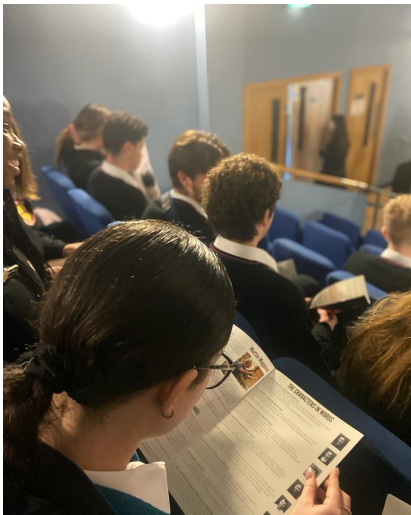
A small group of students are also designing and creating a mural of welcomes in every language represented in the school. This involved creating a survey, compiling responses, researching the translations, and creating a suitable design. This is to acknowledge the diverse student body we have here in ACS and to go a small way in ensuring every student feels included and welcome in our school.

# English

All year groups have been engaging in a variety of powerful texts both in class and for their own personal pleasure. Some of the novels include *Girl Missing*, *Stone Cold*, *Outsiders*, *Noughts and Crosses*, *Room*, *Educated* and *The Picture of Dorian Grey*. There is a rich myriad of films being studied, some students at Junior Cycle studied *Hunt for the Wilder People*, *E.T* and *Sing Street*. As part of the Comparative Study, Leaving Cert students are studying *Ladybird*, *Maradona* and *Winter's Bone*. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* is still proving to be a firm favourite amongst our senior students. The hero's quest for the 'golden round' captivates the modern audience. We bid *Romeo and Juliet* adieu and opened the hand of friendship to *Caesar*. Antonio the Merchant and Shylock the money lender entered stage right. The work of Heaney, Plath, Sassoon and Meehan enriched our students' experience of poetry.

## Macbeth

October was a busy month for Sixth Years, with all Higher Level and Ordinary Level students visiting the Clasach theatre in Clontarf to see a production of *Macbeth* performed by the Gaiety School of Acting. The performance was followed by an interactive workshop where students discussed some of the key themes of the play. This served as an excellent revision activity, which students really engaged with.



## World Book Day

On World Book Day this year, Ms Gannon shared with the whole school the famous poem by Julia Donaldson "*I opened a book*." Students in class paused for a moment to listen to the powerful message highlighting the importance of reading and the magic it offers to each and every one of us. On World Book Day the inaugural ACS 1000 Word Writing Competition was also launched. All students were encouraged to participate and submit their entries. Everyone has a story, and as Isaac Asimov said, "Writing, to me, is simply thinking through my fingers".



## I Opened a Book

I opened a book and in I strode

Now nobody can find me.

I've left my chair, my house, my road, My town and my world behind me.

I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring, I've swallowed the magic potion.

I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king And dived in a bottomless ocean.

I opened a book and made some friends. I shared their tears and laughter And followed their road with its bumps and bends To the happily ever after.

I finished my book and out I came.

The cloak can no longer hide me.

My chair and my house are just the same,

But I have a book inside me.

## Classroom Based Assessment

April saw all Second Years complete a Classroom Based Assessment. The task involves students having to research a topic and present it to their peers, through a means of their choice. The presentations proved to be entertaining and creative. Students were given a three-week window to prepare and practice their presentation for the assessment. Students were encouraged to choose a topic that was important or of interest to them. This led to a number of interesting topics being explored such as: The Willow Project, gender imbalance in sports, and a very innovative cookery demonstration!

Prior to the presentation, students brainstormed and discussed presentation skills and how to prepare their speeches. Students worked in class in pairs or groups to prepare and practice their speeches and presentations.

Through this task, students learned about the importance of maintaining eye contact, creating a clear and coherent speech, involving their audience in their speech, and developing confidence in public speaking - a skill they will carry forward in life.

## CBA Presentations



## Staff Poetry Competition

A poetry competition was held for teachers which encouraged them to display their creative prowess. Budding and established poets were asked to submit a ten-word poem. Entries, which ranged from comical to poignant in tone, were displayed on a noticeboard in the staffroom. Teachers voted for their favourite poem.

Below is a selection of the entries:

You're not perfect; still I put you on a pedestal

The world wide web went down  
People under 30 stopped.

Mick always made me laugh,  
Today he made me cry.  
(In memory of Mick Naughton, our beloved caretaker)

## Gaeilge

### Athruithe ar an Roinn i mbliana

Chuireamar fáilte is fiche roimh Thadhg Mac Donncha a thosaigh ag múineadh linn ag tús na bliana. Ghabhamar buíochas ó chroí le hiar-chomhghleacaithe na Roinne, Amanda O'Connor agus Máirín Uí Ghríofa, as an tacaíocht iontach a thug siad do Roinn na Gaeilge agus do na daltaí le blianta anuas.

### An Triail

Eagraíodh turas go dtí an Axis i mBaile Munna le daltaí ón séú bliain chun féachaint ar an dráma An Triail. Bhain na daltaí an-taitneamh as an dráma a fheiceáil beo ar an stáitse. Ba thuras den scoth é a chur le Gaeilge na ndaltaí agus lena bhfeasacht chultúrtha.

### Seachtain na Gaeilge

Bhí seachtain iontach againn sa scoil arís i mbliana ag ceiliúradh Seachtain na Gaeilge le chéile. Ba ócáid lánscóile í. Bhí Gaeilge le cloisteáil in a lán seomraí ranga agus ar an idirchum mar chuid de fhógraí an lae.

Ghlac na daltaí ón dara bliain agus ón idirbhliain páirt i dTráth na gCeist sa halla. Ba iontach an spraoi a bhí acu trí mheán na Gaeilge.

Cuireadh céilí ar siúl sa halla do dhaltaí sa chúigiú bliain. D'fhoghlaim siad Ballaí Luimnigh agus chaith siad an tréimhse sa halla ag rince agus ag gáire le chéile.

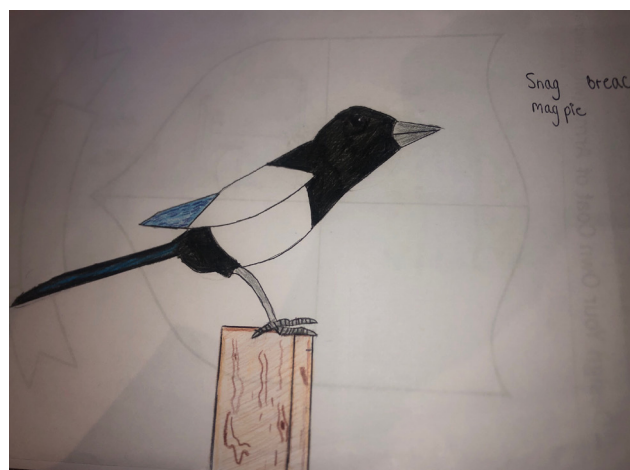
Bhí spraoi de gach saghas sna ranganna Gaeilge i rith na seachtaine. D'imir na dalta bíongó, bhí siad ag rince, ghlac siad páirt i gcomórtas ealaíne agus i gcluichí ar líne chomh maith. Táimid ag tnúth go mór le Seachtain na Gaeilge an bhliain seo chugainn.





## MRBanna

Rinne na daltaí sa tríú bliain Measúnú Rang Bunaithe ina ranganna Gaeilge. Rinne siad an-obair ag ullmhú don chur i láthair a dhéanamh os comhair an ranga. Bhí roinnt daltaí neirbhíseach ach ghlac siad páirt in ainneoin sin. Táimid fíor-bhródúil astu.



## Hi, a haiku!

Bhain rang Gaeilge sa dara bliain an-taitneamh as a gceardlann litríochta ar an haiku Dé Luain 26ú Meán Fómhar 2022. Maeve O'Sullivan an t-ainm a bhí ar an aoichainteoir, agus í ag obair do **Poetry Ireland/ Éigse Éireann**. Sa chéad tréimhse labhair Maeve faoin haiku. Filíocht taitneamhach í seo le seacht siolla déag i ngach dán, cineál

filíochta a cleachtaíodh ar dtús sa tSeapáin. Chloisfeá biorán ag titim sa rang, bhí an oiread sin airde againn ar bhriathra Mhaeve. Ansin, sa dara tréimhse, chuaigh gach duine amach ag féachaint ar áilleacht na timpeallachta. An fómhar a bhí ann agus bláthanna ildaite, crainn agus sceacha le feiceáil thall is abhus, corr éisc uaigneach agus snag breac glórach le cloisteáil anois is arís.

A bhuíochas leis an aimsir, d'éirigh linn a lán griangrafanna a thógáil. Aimsir ghleoite, an ghrian ag taitneamh sa spéir agus gaoth éadrom ag séideadh. Draíocht! Ar ais sa seomra ranga linn ansin agus scríobh gach dalta haikiu as Béarla. Bhain gach duine taitneamh iontach as an gceardlann agus gabhadh buíochas ollmhór le Maeve. Sna seachtainí ina dhiaidh sin scríobh na daltaí haikuanna as Gaeilge, beart iontach eile. Tá a lán de na dánta foilsithe ar instagram agus twitter. "Féach orthu," a deir Uasal Ó Maitiú. Tá siad go hálainn, cinnte!

Le: Amelia Leydon agus Alex Duggan, TY

## Hi, haiku!

Mr. Ó Maitiú's Irish class enjoyed their poetry workshop on Monday the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 when guest speaker Maeve O'Sullivan visited Ashbourne Community School. Maeve works with **Poetry Ireland / Éigse Éireann** and part of her work includes talking to secondary school students throughout Ireland about her compositions.

The haiku workshop was conducted in the first half of a double class. A haiku is a poem that contains 17 syllables, and the form originated in Japan. The students engaged with the material with gusto and enthusiasm and were especially delighted with the decision to go on a tour of the school grounds to explore nature during the second half of the double class. As it was a fine autumnal afternoon, many hoped to glimpse some of nature's sights and delights: cheeky flowers, trees, occasional thistles or grass, no doubt; a gurgling stream, rasping nettles, seeds snatched in a light breeze, chattering magpies, quite likely too; a secretive mammal or two. Everyone returned to the classroom soon afterwards, much inspired having observed nature and itching to try their hand at writing their own haiku in English. The students really enjoyed themselves in the workshop, guided expertly and imaginatively by Maeve. Many of their subsequent haiku as Gaeilge are currently being published on school social media. Well done to all!

By: Alex Duggan and Amelia Leydon TY Students

## Féach ceithre haiku a chum na daltaí, roghnaithe go randamach!

Ag siúl sna hallaí

Féachaint isteach san seomraí ranga-

Ag obair.

**Tom Broderick**

Duilleoga ag crith

Mar sheasamar i gcac fómhair-

Tost an tsrutha.

**Thomas Conlon**

Bhí an ghrian ag taitneamh-

Chanadh na héin ós ard

Insan pháirc féarach.

**Le: Leah Hallinan**

Fómhar, duileoga titithe,

Go hálainn:

Beidh báisteach amárach.

**Le: Ruby Lancaster**

## An Fáinne Óir

Bronntar an Fáinne Óir ar dhuine atá toilteanach an Ghaeilge a labhairt, dílis di, agus a léiríonn caighdeán ard líofachta sa teanga. Cuireann GAEL-LINN an Fáinne Óir ar fáil d’eagraíochtaí agus do Ghaeilgeoirí ar fud na tíre. Is féidir an Fáinne Óir a chaitheamh le léiriú do dhaoine eile go bhfuil tú toilteanach ár dteanga dhúchais a labhairt.

Cúis áthais faoi leith dúinn gur bronnadh níos mó ná fiche Fáinne Óir ar bhail na scoile i mbliana. Comhgháirdeas leis na daltaí agus leis na múinteoirí uilig a ghnóthaigh ceann. Bronnfar Fáinní eile an bhliain seo chugainn, le cúnamh Dé. Bí ag caint, a Chill Dhéagláin!

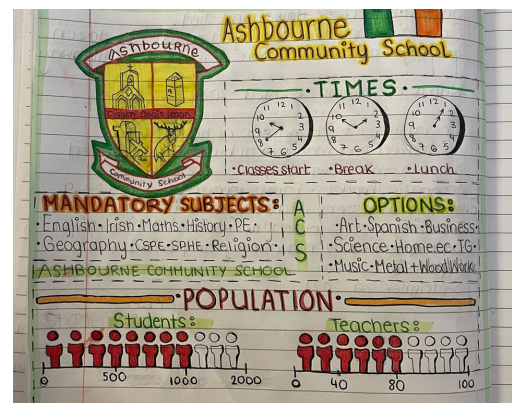
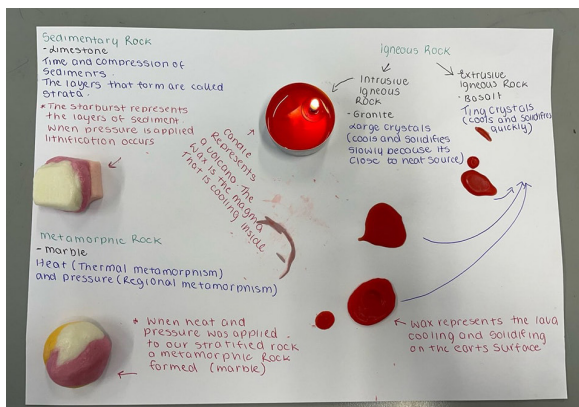
## Geography

It has been another active and productive year for ACS Geography students this year. The Sixth Year students continue their hard work in preparing for the Leaving Cert exams this summer. They have completed their Field Work project which will be worth 20% of their overall grade. This year, they visited Balscadden Bay in Howth to study the impact of coastal erosion on cliff formation. The students worked very hard and had a wonderful day out. The high-quality work of their Field Work booklets, along with their excellent mock exam results, bode well for the Leaving Cert in June.

There was another strong cohort of students opting for Geography in Fifth Year with a total of four separate classes. Students hit the ground running at the start of the year and have already finished learning about Physical Geography. They are now in a strong position heading into their final year due to impressive results in their Christmas exams, coupled with a strong work ethic, which are all good indicators of future performance.

Third Year students are working hard ahead of their up-coming Junior Cert exams. Three years of hard work have been punctuated with periods of home learning due to Covid lockdowns, but the students have coped admirably and performed fantastically well in their mock exams. It is hoped that this strong trend continues to the exams in June.

First and Second Year students have been working strongly and have learned about volcanoes, rocks, rivers, the sea and much more. The Second Years have completed their CBA 1 on “Geography in the News”, in which they have had to research and write an account of a major geographical event that has been covered in the media in recent years. They have shown a real interest in Geography and are really enjoying the subject and are currently looking set to reach the ambitious standards being set by this year’s exam groups.



# Guidance

The past year has been another busy one for the Guidance Counselling department. As in previous years, the Guidance Counsellors were available to advise Sixth Year students on the transition to the workplace, Colleges of Further Education and third level options following the Leaving Certificate and CAO offers. As the release of results were delayed, this happened in September in conjunction with working with the current cohort of Senior Cycle students. Advice was given both in person and by phone. The Guidance Department compiled a 'final destination' list of the class of 2022 which entailed contacting each Leaving Certificate student or parent/guardian. In most cases students were content with their offers and in other cases, we were able to offer guidance and re-direction depending on the students' requests.

Communication and work with Sixth Year students is year-long from group work to one-to-one work around CAO/UCAS/PLC/Apprenticeship applications, facilitation and access to college Open Days and careers events.

This year these included:

- Senior Cycle Careers Guidance annual trip to the RDS for the Higher Options conference
- PLC College trips including Colaiste Dhulaigh, Colaiste Ide and Dunboyne College of Further Education.
- All Fifth Years attended a Campus Tour of a Maynooth University.

Alongside the co-curricular events, we invited University Admissions officers for feeder colleges/universities to give talks to Sixth Years including: Maynooth University, DCU and TU Dublin, Dundalk IT.



Also, a local company based in Blanchardstown, Mercury Engineering gave a talk to Senior Cycle students about local apprenticeship employment opportunities. We also invited the ESB to the school and they provided an excellent presentation on the potential progression into apprenticeships. The Army presented to interested Senior Cycle students on careers in the Army both recruit and cadet routes.

In September 2022, we were busy linking in with local feeder primary schools by visiting the town schools and organising a Zoom session for all. We were very well received by the primary school students, teachers, and principals when we did our annual visit to the local primary schools. In October 2022, we hosted a remarkably successful and busy Open Day where the school community displayed the work of students, Senior Prefects gave tours of the school, the Head Students discussed their experience of Ashbourne Community School and parents heard how our pastoral and academic system work.

During the First Year Induction Week, ability testing was conducted with all First Years. The results were posted to the parents/guardians to give them an insight into their child's learning styles and they were encouraged to contact us with any queries. High achieving students were linked with the Centre for Talented Youth, Ireland (CYTI) DCU, and they are undertaking courses of interest.

Communication began in November with parents around Third Year EirQuest Interest and Aptitude Testing. Third Year students received lessons prior to testing to inform them about Senior Options and prepare them for this testing and explain its function. In December, the majority of Third Year students participated in the EirQuest Interest and Aptitude Testing. The results were immediate for students to see, and these results inform and guide students around Senior Cycle subject options and course choices.

As in previous years, we assisted students with additional access routes to college such as the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) applications. DARE applications became a focus in January and February and we met students and parents and worked closely with the SEN co-ordinator. Once the Student Universal Support Ireland (SUSI) application cycle opened, we alerted relevant students and helped those who needed input.

In early February, we had a remarkably busy and productive evening where we welcomed the parents and guardians of our incoming First Year cohort for an information evening detailing our subject options in ACS. This was a successful online meeting where we gave a clear overview of the expectations of post-primary education in ACS.

During February and March, the focus was on Third Year and TY students transitioning into Senior Cycle and considerable time was spent in helping them make informed and wise decisions about their future choices. This is a good starting point for students to reflect on where their strengths lie and is a positive place to start discussion with them. The professionalism of each subject department was demonstrated again this year when teachers gave their time to outline the subject details of each Leaving Certificate subject to all Third Year and TY students in the General Purpose Area. Alongside the practical workshop, all the PowerPoint presentations are available for students to check out on SharePoint. Third Year and TY students were provided with overviews of ACS programmes and Leaving Certificate subject options. Students also met their Guidance Counsellors in small groups of four to eight and some got one to one support with their decision making. There was positive feedback from our evening Senior Options Information Session for parents/guardians and students. All presentations, information documents and forms were uploaded onto the school Guidance page.

All Second Year students had a workshop with Bodywhys which focused on the importance of positive body image, self-esteem, negative influences on body image such as social media and the supports available to them. This year we also facilitated an anxiety management course with selected Second Years after Easter.

Throughout the year we linked in with students to support them around their educational, vocational and personal needs.

## History

In the academic year 2022-23 the History Department of ACS yet again proved to be innovative and adaptive in our work practices to make sure it was a successful year for our students. Thanks to the collective teamwork by all the department members, we ensured that our History students had a rewarding and enjoyable educational experience.

This year our Second Year History students undertook their first Classroom Based Assessment. This CBA was called "The Past in my Place". Through this work students satisfied curiosities about their surroundings and connected with local history. A vast array of work was undertaken from planning and researching to site visits and report writing. Students with family connections further afield were also given the opportunity to connect with their heritage. For example, projects were submitted on battles from as close as Ashbourne to as far as Angola! What a wonderful learning opportunity for our students.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of March the department led the school in a flag raising ceremony to celebrate Flag Day 2023 in conjunction with the Thomas F. Meagher Foundation. We raised our new tricolour while some of our music students performed the national anthem. The event is organised to celebrate the Irish tricolour and to promote its message of peace and unity.



Some of our Junior Cycle classes took part in a “Cookie Excavation” to carefully remove chocolate chips from cookies using a toothpick to demonstrate how carefully an archaeologist must be in their line of work. Other classes tried on replicas of Roman armour when learning about Ancient Rome.

Our TYs took in a tour of Dáil Éireann on behalf of an invitation from T.D. Darren O'Rourke accompanied by teachers Mr Mac Donncha and Mr Carolan. The TYs had a tour of the entire building where they had a chance to experience the history of the building and all the famous portraits of the famous people that had come and gone. Students got to see where the Seanad debates the different laws and bills that have come from the Dáil. They viewed where guests of the Dáil eat before heading into the viewing gallery to watch the first meeting of the Dáil after their winter break. Students witnessed the different TDs debate and even got to see the Leader's Questions as Taoiseach Leo Varadkar took questions from Sinn Féin leader, Mary Lou McDonald. It was a very interesting day that students and teachers got to enjoy.



Sixth Year students successfully completed their research projects in March 2023. The breadth of topics which were investigated and written about was amazing once again. The class tackled everything from “The Butcher Of Prague”, Reinhard Heydrich's rule of Czechoslovakia, Jozef Pilsudski: Polish Statesman , Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's time in the gulag, and even the history of a horse who was decorated for bravery, “Sergeant Reckless”

Overall, the students engaged wholeheartedly with the research process and honed their investigative skills over the last few months.

# Home Economics

## First Year Cookery

The First Year students have settled in well and have been very enthusiastic especially when it comes to cookery. They have made a range of baked goods such as scones, queen cakes and Mini-egg Cookies for Easter. They have developed many skills this year and will continue to build on this next year.

## Second Year Sewing

In October all Second Year students began planning for CBA 1 which is a textiles project. It was their first time sewing for many of the students, but they grasped the basics very quickly. The students had six weeks to make a Christmas decoration using these skills and all students produced projects of a very high standard.



## Third Year CBA and Cooking Exams

In November, the Third Year Students started working on CBA 2. For this CBA, they were each given a cookery brief which they had to analyse and plan a suitable meal for the task. The students really enjoyed investigating and researching their tasks, and then in early March they each got to practice their dish under exam conditions. Their Cookery Exams took place the week before Easter, and we are very proud of all the hard work and fantastic culinary skills that were demonstrated. We wish them the very best in their written exams in June.





### Fifth and Sixth Year Cookery Assignments

Our Fifth Year Students worked hard throughout the year and completed three cooking practicals for their Journal Tasks. The tasks were linked to pregnancy, heart disease and gelatinisation. For their first task, they made meatballs in a homemade tomato sauce and after Christmas, they made low-fat chicken and chickpea curry and lemon meringue pie. Well done to all students on their efficiency and great work ethic in both the practical and write up of this task.

Sixth Years worked incredibly hard throughout the year to finish off and submit their completed journals. These were then submitted to the SEC in November for grading. As a department, we are extremely proud of the dedication of our Sixth Year students who have hard work over the last two years, and we wish them the very best with their exams.

### LCA Hotel Catering and Tourism

In Hotel Tourism and Catering, the LCAs were working on Module Two - Hotels, Restaurants, and Institutions. They researched the differences between each and identified examples in their local area. They completed their four key assignments which included analysing a Ted Talk by Jamie Oliver and preparing, cooking and serving a three course meal for all their teachers in April. Well done on a productive year Class Yangtze.



## LCA

2022-2023 was the first time in a couple of years that we had both a Fifth Year and a Sixth Year Leaving Certificate Applied group in ACS. We are delighted that with this as it is an excellent programme. LCA events and achievements are posted regularly on the school social media platforms – Facebook and Instagram are a very effective way of publicising all that is going on for LCA students.

Online courses were an option for Fridays where students did not have work placement. An example of one of the courses was the HSA Get Safe - Work Safe course: Health, Safety and Welfare in the Workplace for students starting work and work experience. It covers employer and employee duties, hazards and risks, as well safe



decision making. Most LCA found, and enjoyed work placements every Friday for the year.

On Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022, TY students, and students from Fifth Year LCA Class O'Sullivan took part in a two hour team-building workshop with Team-Works. Students completed many different team bonding activities such as a water relay race and Crack the Code game to help them bond. This was a great workshop full of a variety of activities that helps improves trust, energises the group, encourages collaboration, and increases productivity and creative thinking. Big thanks to the group leaders from @team\_works20, who had a wealth of experience and charisma and delivered a positive day for everyone involved.



LCA students alongside Guidance Counsellors Ms Rahilly and Ms O'Neill and Engineering teacher Mr Walsh attended the World Skills event in the RDS on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022. WorldSkills Ireland is a partnership between enterprise, industry, education, training and government that recognises skills and apprenticeships and prepares the talent of today for the careers of the future. A great day had by all with lots of information to research and talk about.



On Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022, Lizzie McGhee visited LCAs for a Barbering and Hairdressing workshop. Students were taught multiple skills and tricks about barbering and hairdressing. They learned about hair loss, psoriasis, and head lice. Lizzie taught the students how to use hairdressing scissors, blades and razors, and at the end of the workshop they practiced cutting each other's hair, which was great fun. The boys practised using the razors and doing fades, etc. - all under strict supervision. This was an interesting workshop to participate in and a great life skill to have. Lizzie is 15 years in the hair industry and has worked with one of the leading names in the men's hair world. She is a trained educator and assessor. She has trained worldwide and works on the salon floor, and backstage at award shows and work with media companies too. Her workshop was hands on, and she busted myths to guide us into a career in hair. Thanks so much to Lizzie for linking in with ACS and passing on her wealth of knowledge.



TY and Sixth Year LCA Class Yangtze attended a workshop on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2022 by Dogs Trust where they learned about the work that charity undertake on a day-to-day basis. There were several different activities within the workshop that introduced the students to the different moral and ethical issues relating to their work with the animals and how Dogs Trust always go back to their Promise statement – “to bring about the day when all dogs can enjoy a happy life, free from threat of unnecessary destruction”. The activities really engaged the students and got them thinking, especially those who are dog owners, as students were presented with the typical daily scenarios faced by Dogs Trust when rehoming dogs, which has become more challenging since COVID. The TYs and LCAs also learned about why dogs behave in certain situations they explored different dog behaviours and what they mean. The students were incredibly grateful for this learning experience. Many thanks to Audrey Gough of Dogs Trust for visiting us and telling us about their incredible work.

On Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022, all TY and Sixth Year LCA Class Yangtze attended a workshop with Naomi Finnegan, Clinical Midwife Specialist at the Sexual Assault Treatment Unit (SATU) in The Rotunda Hospital. SATU was established in 1985 and was the first dedicated unit of its kind in Europe. It has gained recognition as a centre of excellence based on the expertise that the unit holds in medical and forensic treatment of those who have been subject to sexual crime. Naomi did a brilliant job at getting across the key messages to the students about the very tough topics of consent and assault, explaining everything very clearly and engaging the students. She spoke to the students about what to do and who to contact if they or their friends were ever involved in an assault. She provided students with practical and helpful solutions so students would be equipped if ever, an unfortunate situation was ever to arise. Consent was also discussed. Throughout the talk, Naomi provided students with “What If” scenarios to the different groups of students. Naomi provided the students with space to work together so that they could discuss what they thought about the situation, who was in the wrong, etc. By the end of the session everybody who attended, both students and teachers, had learned valuable information to equip them with the steps needed to deal with the difficult situation should it ever arise.



In late October 2022, we got to congratulate Sixth Year Class Yangtze on their fantastic long-awaited results for sessions One and Two (completed in Fifth Year) key assignments for their Leaving Certificate Applied, as well as three tasks. These tasks each included creating a product/service, producing a task report, and doing an interview with an external examiner. Most students are on course for the top Distinction grade of over 85% at this stage. Lots of 10/10s in their three tasks in Art, Enterprise, and ICT, which takes a lot of work. Also, mostly 6/6s meaning 100% in their written and oral Irish LCA exam which they sat in June 2022. Very proud of you all. Setting a great

example to our Fifth Year LCA class. Thanks to all the LCA teachers for their hard work and support, as well as the three task anchors, Ms S McKenna (Art), Mr Newman (Enterprise) and Ms Mathews (ICT).

A big thanks to Thomas Diem of Diem Pottery for facilitating the visit of Fifth Year LCA O'Sullivan to his workshop and shop in Ashbourne in October 2022. This visit was part of the research section of their first task report for their Art module. Students created coil pots in Art with Ms Maher. The students prepared and asked relevant questions about his business, his work, the impact of Brexit and Covid, his online presence and the processes he follows to make his pottery. Lots of information learned for the write up of the visit out. The Art Task report was completed in ICT with Ms Mathews.



In November 2022, Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan joined with the TYs, and completed their First Aid Certificate Training Day with Medicore Medical Services. Lots of valuable information and practical advice on how best to cope in a crisis. A vital life skill and an essential part of our TY and LCA Programmes.



In November 2022, LCA Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan joined TYs for an Introduction to Barista Workshop with the Dublin Barista School. Content covered included understanding the espresso equipment, espresso technique, understanding the coffee grinder, milk chemistry and milk texturing techniques and understanding the coffee menu. All students got to make a speciality coffee and or hot chocolate.



Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan took part in a @mobilemusicschool Drumming Workshop on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2022, which is a great workshop for improving listening, communication and teamwork skills. A brilliant workshop.

Thanks to ACS past pupil Mark Donnelly who spoke to Sixth Year Class Yangtze about his business @huh\_clothing in late January 2023. Luke Gifford, Sixth Year LCA student invited Mark in as part of his Social Education Contemporary Issues Task on mental health. At HUH Clothing, Mark donates 10% of our sales every month to Mental Health organisations throughout Ireland, and around the world. To date the company have donated over €30,000 to organisations in need. An incredibly honest talk, the students and staff who were there were so impressed with Mark and his story. Great to have back Mark in ACS, ten years after his LC!



Our Fifth Year LCA Class O'Sullivan completed their General Education Art Task Interviews on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023. Beautiful pots produced and a detailed task report on this activity, as well as a research and sketch folder. Thanks to Ms Maher and Ms Mathews who anchored the task in Art and ICT. The first of six task interviews with an external examiner for these students. Preparing them for the world of work. Very proud of you all.



Well done to our Sixth year LCA Class Yangtze who completed their final interviews in their LCA with their Contemporary Issues Task Interview on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 and their Practical Achievement Task Interview on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. They have all come so far in the last year and a half. Beaming with confidence and ready for the world of work, apprenticeships, and college. Again, we are so proud of Sixth Year LCA Class Yangtze.

Our Sixth Year LCA students completed their practical achievement task interview on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2023. This task is where students in session three in the first half Sixth year take on to learn a practical skill, or develop a product, or provide a service over six to eight weeks. This must be completed outside of school time. It is all about challenging the students. Personal training sessions, training with a volleyball club, baking classes, photography classes, yoga classes, and upcycling were some of the tasks undertaken. Pictured is a chair which Jamie Fennelly took on to revamp over six weeks for her task. We think she's done a superb job. Well done to

Jamie and all of Class Yangtze in Sixth Year LCA and thanks to Ms Kavanagh who anchored the practical achievement task with the class.



LCA students visited Colaiste Dhulaigh, Further Education College with the Guidance Department, on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023. Students learned about many interesting Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) Courses at QQI level 5 and 6 and at Higher National Diploma in a wide range of disciplines. Most of the courses lead to entry to Universities and Institutes of Technology with some courses gaining entry to second year. CDCFE is located on four campuses, Coolock, Raheny, Kilbarrack and Malahide. LCA students also visited Colaiste Ide College of Further Education on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023. Thanks to Ms Rahilly and Ms O'Neill for these educational trips.



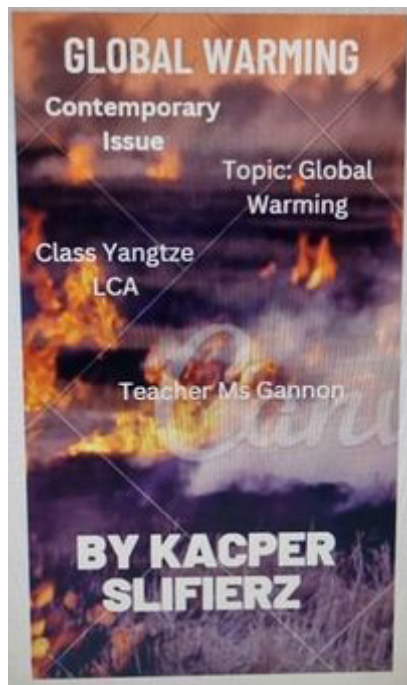
As well as completing key assignments for Religion and a Personal Achievement Task with Ms Kavanagh, Sixth Year Class Yangtze also completed Module One of the Foróige Leadership for Life Programme in Religion classes this year. They are the first LCA class in ACS to do this leadership programme.

In April 2023, Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan had three task deadlines – to see the task work and products produced by these hardworking, enthusiastic, creative, and entertaining students, between midterm and Easter was fantastic. They rose to the challenge even when faced with illness and time constraints and really impressed external examiners with the standard of their task work. In April 2023, Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan, students did interviews based on their task report for their Career Investigation Tasks. Thanks to Mr Newman for anchoring the Career Investigation Task. Also, in April 2023, students completed interviews on their audio book and task report for their ICT specialism task. In this task they also made a presentation to the examiner about their audio book, the product they made on Book Creator. Thanks to Ms Mathews for anchoring the ICT Task. It was lovely to hear the examiners say that these students are a credit to themselves, their families and their school. Fifth Year Class

O'Sullivan have advanced so many life skills over the last few months, all of which they apply to future projects and working life in the future. Once these task interviews were completed, it was back to class to complete the Personal Reflection Task with Mr McCauley, which was posted off to the SEC in early May 2023. Students who study Irish completed their Oral Irish Exam in May 2023. They sat their Irish Exam in June 2023 during the State Exams. Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan will all study a Modern Foreign language next year. In the final few weeks of term, LCAs teamed up with TYs to do some fundraising in Ashbourne for Special Olympics Ireland instead of work placement.

Sixth Year Class Yangtze sat the first ever papers of the revised specifications for three subjects in the ICT in May 2023, and in English and Communications, and Mathematical Applications in June 2023.

In ICT students complete a Mandatory ICT element in Fifth Year covering the modules of Introduction to the Computer and Word Processing, as well as Introduction to other Software Packages and Applications. In the Specialism ICT course covered across the four sessions of Fifth and Sixth year, students cover Word Processing, the Presentation of Ideas, Spreadsheets and the Internet and Digital Literacy. Students enjoyed learning about new ways to present their work, research and presentations on applications such as MS Word, MS Spreadsheets, MS Sway, MS Forms, Canva, and Book Creator. In March 2023, students in Sixth year LCA Class Yangtze, got the opportunity begin the iDEA online course. This is an inspiring Digital Enterprise Award. It is an international award winning programme that helps students develop digital, enterprise and employability skills for free. Through a series of online challenges, the students can win career-enhancing badges, unlock new opportunities and, ultimately, gain industry-recognised Awards that help students stand out from the crowd.



We are so proud of both LCA classes – Fifth Year Class O'Sullivan and Sixth Year Class Yangtze. For all LCA students, a 90% attendance rule is applied to get credits for key assignments. It is a valuable life lesson about the world of work – if you do not attend work, you do not get paid. Thanks to all the LCA teaching team and our wonderful SNAs for their support. They say it takes a village.... we are lucky to have a fantastic staff to support these students prepare for college, apprenticeships and working life. I wish to thank the dedicated senior management team, teaching staff and office staff, who supported me with both LCA classes this year, especially Ms Ryan and Mr O'Shea, Year Heads for Sixth Year and Fifth Year, and Ms Kelly, Deputy Principal for Senior Students, and the Tutors, Ms O'Dea for Class Yangtze and Mr Ormiston for Class O'Sullivan. LCA in ACS is a brilliant programme which needs the support of all the school and its stakeholders to be successful. There is a need for a programme like LCA to meet the needs of the students it caters for. LCA is suited to students who the school exams system does not suit. It is for students who have not had great success at Junior Cycle but want to remain at school to get a qualification. LCA is for students who much prefer a course that would recognise and credit (award marks to) practical skills. It is for students who want to go directly into a job, or into job training after school. LCA is for students who want a course that is closely linked to the world of work.

# LCVP

LCVP is a practical programme that suits practical students and is a real preparation for the world of work. The bulk of the marks (60%) goes for the portfolio. It promotes skills and qualities of self-reliance, innovation, and enterprise.

Sixth Year students completed their LCVP Link Modules programme as part of their Leaving Certificate in 2023 in ACS – they sat their written exam on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023, having submitted their portfolios in March 2023. In November 2022, students completed their recorded interview for one of their optional items for their LCVP portfolio. Most of the written items of the portfolio were completed in Fifth Year, including work placement.

We are hopeful of excellent grades from the Sixth Year group. The portfolios (60% of the final mark) that students submitted were of an excellent standard. A big emphasis was placed on preparing for the written exam (40% of the final mark) from Fifth Year with this group as students often think LCVP is all about the portfolio. The LCVP results will benefit many students for points, as well as preparing them for college and working life. LCVP is a great programme for students of all abilities, but particularly beneficial for those who struggle with written exams.

A big thanks to Andrew Ruitter of @newbarnfarmer who visited Ms Mathews Sixth Year LCVP class on Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022. Andrew spoke about the history of the business, qualities and skills of entrepreneurs, products and services, health and safety, finance, supports for businesses, marketing, the use of ICT and social media, self-employment, the SEM and Brexit. A very informative talk and a lot for the students to use for exam answers.



Our TY, LCA and LCVP students completed the HSA Get Safe - Work Safe course: Health, Safety and Welfare in the Workplace for work experience. It covers employer and employee duties, hazards and risks, as well safe decision making. Well done to all who completed it and added it to their achievements in their CV.



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## Post-Primary Schools (curriculum)

### Get Safe – Work Safe: Health and Safety in the Workplace for Students Starting Work



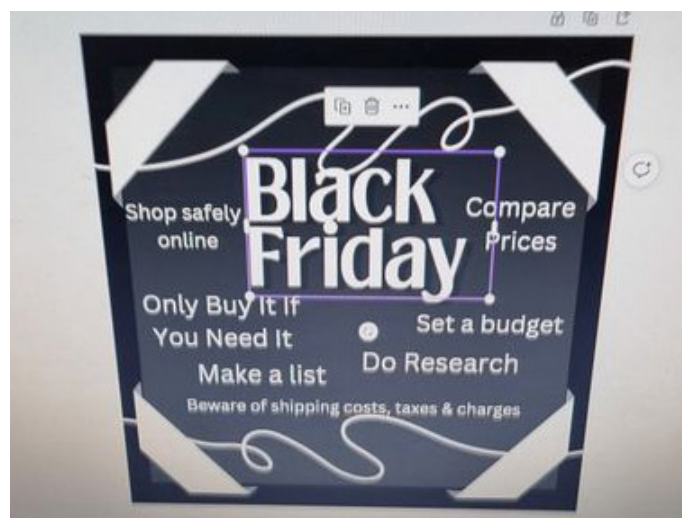
This course introduces students to the principles of workplace safety, health and welfare. The course is aimed at young people starting work for the first time or preparing for work experience. It is also suitable for further education students and as a refresher for individuals returning to the workplace.

In March 2023, Ms Mathews Fifth Year LCVP class began the iDEA online course. This is an inspiring Digital Enterprise Award, which is internationally recognised that helps students develop digital, enterprise and employability skills for free. Through a series of online challenges, the students can win career-enhancing badges, unlock new opportunities and ultimately, gain industry-recognised Awards that help students stand out from the crowd. Students are working on their Bronze Award and will continue this into Sixth Year.

A big thanks to Thomas Diem of @diempottery for facilitating the visit of some Sixth Year LCVP students to his workshop and shop in Ashbourne on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2022. Thomas spoke about the history of the business, qualities and skills of entrepreneurs, products and services, health and safety, finance, supports for businesses, marketing, the use of ICT and social media, self-employment, the SEM, and Brexit. Very informative and a lot of information for the students to use in their LCVP and Business exams. We are lucky to have fantastic businesses in Ashbourne who facilitate visits in, visits out and work placements. We really appreciate it.



On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2022, Ms. Mathews Fifth Year LCVP students discussed the pros and cons of Black Friday, as well as its origins. They then created posters on Canva with advice for shoppers on Black Friday. Their advice included: do research; set a budget; make a list; only buy it if you need it; shop safely online; beware of shipping costs, taxes and charges; compare prices; check returns policy; and buy Irish. Finally, they followed their own advice and compared the prices of sportswear and electronic items on a number of websites. They found some great bargains. Great work guys.

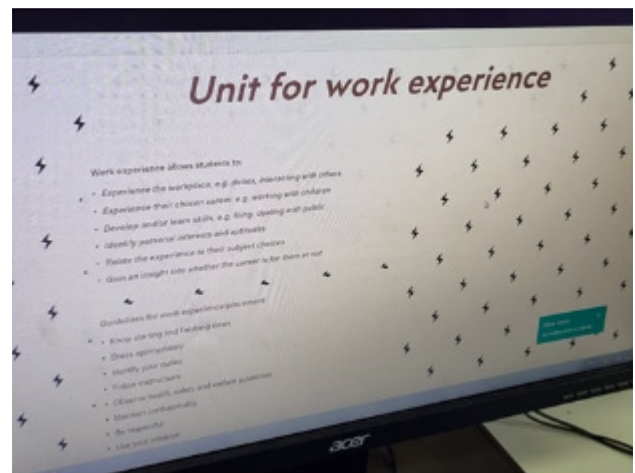


Over a number of weeks in November-December 2022, Ms Mathews' Fifth Year LCVP class organised the St. Vincent de Paul Ashbourne Food and Toy Appeal as their LCVP enterprise group task. In total 41 large cardboard boxes of food and gifts, €520 worth of vouchers, and €2850 (from Christmas Jumper Non-Uniform Day and Christmas Concert) was donated to St. Vincent de Paul in Ashbourne from Christmas Jumper Non-Uniform Day on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022. We also donated 15 €20 SuperValu vouchers to the senior citizens in Ashbourne. We are very proud of and thankful to all who donated. Everyone can make a difference in the lives of others. Students at ACS will always remember the link our school has with SVP and long may it continue. Voluntary Organisations and An Enterprise Activity are units in the LCVP course.





Fifth Year LCVP students in Ms Mathews class used Microsoft Sway to create and store their notes on Unit Four Work Experience beginning in February 2022. Sway is an app from Microsoft Office that makes it easy to create and share interactive reports, personal stories, presentations, and more. Students started by adding their text and pictures and searched for and imported relevant content from other sources. They finished off their work with appealing design templates to make the notes more appealing to look at and learn. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules cover Preparation for the World of Work and Enterprise Education, as well as developing life skills and ICT skills. LCVP Link Modules can be taken in Fifth Year instead of a language or as an extra subject instead of non-exam PE.



LCVP students completed work experience in Fifth Year from Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Students completed their Work Experience Diary, on return to school in mid-late February and into March 2023. This is one of the optional portfolio items for their LCVP portfolio.

In May 2023, our Fifth Year LCVP groups attended a visit out to Butlers Chocolate Factory. A visit out to a local business is a requirement of LCVP Link Modules. Students learned about the history of the cocoa bean and the history of Butlers Chocolates in the Butlers Chocolate cinema and museum. There was a guided tour of the glass-panelled walkway over the factory floor. Students learned how to make the chocolates through an interactive chocolate demonstration. They decorated and took home their own Butlers chocolate novelty.

We welcome that there are no longer specific subject grouping requirements in LCVP Link Modules since September 2022. This has already seen a huge jump in LCVP numbers this year and we hope this continues.

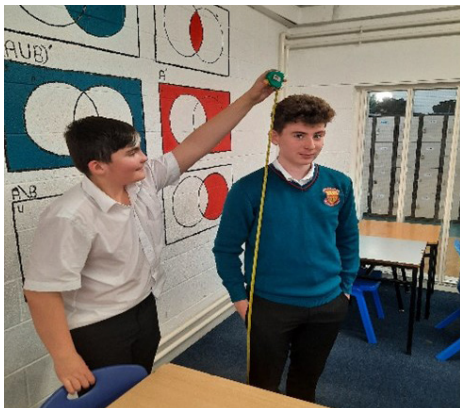
# Mathematics

The Maths Department had a huge year in 2022/23. Our incoming First Year students settled in well and last year's Third Year students received some great Junior Cycle results. Maths Week kicked off in mid-October with a huge array of Maths games and puzzles that were enjoyed in all year groups.

Second Years completed their CBA 1 with some amazing investigative projects. Students wondered how much it would cost for long holidays to America and this helped to lead and drive their task for their CBA 1 as they investigated costs of flights, accommodation and entertainment.

Mock Exams came around and our Third and Sixth Year Students in February. They showed everybody all the hard work they have been putting in over the last two years. In addition to this, our Numeracy Week was held in late February, which encouraged students to return back at problem solving with daily puzzles to keep everybody busy and curious.

The Maths Support Centre also opened up again this year after the Mocks spearheaded by Mr Glennon. Students from Third and Sixth Year were given the opportunity to drop in at breaktime with any maths problems or exam questions they needed help with.



# Modern Foreign Languages

Throughout the year Spanish, French and German teachers used a range of teaching methodologies and activities to help our students in their learning of the language, with a particular emphasis on digital technology.

In ACS, language students were timetabled classes in the Language Lab each fortnight. This gave them the opportunity to consolidate the vocabulary and grammar topics learned in class with online activities. Students also had the opportunity to create cultural projects about Spanish, French and German speaking countries. Having this experience in the computer room was beneficial when it came to submitting homework and assignments during the year through Teams.



The French Sixth Year students were afforded the opportunity to spend an October weekend in Paris where they were given the chance to practice their language skills and soak in the Parisian culture.

Fifth and Sixth Year students in Spanish meanwhile headed off for a week during their February Midterm to Salamanca where they attended classes every morning in Colegio Delibes. Then in the afternoons and evenings, they took part in various cultural activities organised by the school. An amazing experience for all with so much language and culture learned, as well as new friendships made.



On the 9<sup>th</sup> of February Fifth Year French students, Matthew Feane and Lucy Kalu, and Fifth Year Spanish students, Amal Salawu, Marina Olivera Bocuzzi, Conor McCluskey, and David McCluskey, took part in a Translation Workshop. The European Commission, together with DCU and UL, held this workshop to highlight Translation as a career. Students listened to several Irish translators, who work with the EU explain what sort of work they do and tell their story as to how they got there. They learned about the skills you gain and benefits of learning another language, as well as looking at courses that students can take at Third level. A highly interesting and beneficial workshop!

TY students took part in their annual trip to see an MFL film. This year they travelled to the Arts Centre in Kildare to see 'Delfin' a coming-of-age Argentinian film, and French students went to see 'My Brothers and I' in May.

Some groups experienced a French, Spanish and German breakfast during this year. This gave them the opportunity to try some traditional foods from abroad. TY French students were also taken to the Home Economics kitchen to make crêpes, and the group also worked on preparing a recipe booklet filled with typical French foods such as, crêpes, croque monsieur, Gateaux au yaourt, and pain perdu.

The academic year of 2022-23 saw the Junior Cycle programme being offered to all Junior year groups. Second Year students completed CBA 1 this year, where they completed roleplays and oral presentations in the target language in front of the group.

All Junior Cycle students also compiled pieces for their language portfolios, and we have seen great examples of work, from comic strips, blogs, podcasts, to TikTok videos and writing letters and emails.

## Japanese

Ashbourne Community School is one of three Irish schools that offer a Junior Cycle course for Japanese. Since introducing the Japanese course at Junior Cycle, Japanese is now studied from First to Third Year. For Junior Cycle Japanese, students focus on the basics of the language and intercultural matters.

As culture is embedded in language, we have learned that there are several specific words to address each family member in Japanese. For example, there are different words for your own father and when referring to someone else's father because showing respect is very important in Japanese culture. Eleven students from the Third and Sixth Year have started a Pen Pal project with the students of English at a high school in Osaka, Japan since January.

Students have learning opportunities to exchange their target languages through emails, and we hope that this project will be developed more in the future. The Third Year students tried their hand at cooking Japanese dumplings. We hope that they enjoyed it and took on the challenge by trying to cook them again at home. For TY

students, we have introduced a lot of cultural points to explore, students seem to enjoy learning table manners including the use of chopsticks.



## Music

Music plays a very big part in the lives of students both in and outside the school. There is always music being played throughout the school, whether it's an informal lunchtime jam, or one of the concerts that we put on every year.

### Learning an Instrument

We always encourage Music students to learn instruments. Ukulele, Guitar, Bass Guitar, Keyboard and Drums were all tried out by students with some great results and a lot of fun.

### Composing

Students were given the opportunity to try to make sense of their circumstances through the creative process of writing Music. We covered many different styles, everything from Rap to Ballads, Pop to Advertisements. We also included Instrumentals and we allowed students the flexibility to compose what they wanted to, and the results were incredible. Ashbourne has some amazingly talented students. The Second Years used these as part of their Composing portfolio for their CBA.

### The Use of Music Technology

The students had great fun using GarageBand to help them with their composing. The Second Years would have used this software to help them with the CBA 1 in Composition. TYs also used Garageband and this was a very popular class with the students.

## Lunchtime Gigs

There were a few pop-up lunchtime gigs throughout the year.



## Christmas Carols in the Library

The Choir and School band played music for the Ashbourne Music Appreciation Club in the Library.



## The Christmas Concert

The Choir and School band put on a concert of Christmas songs and Carols in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul. The GP was packed, and it was an enormous success.



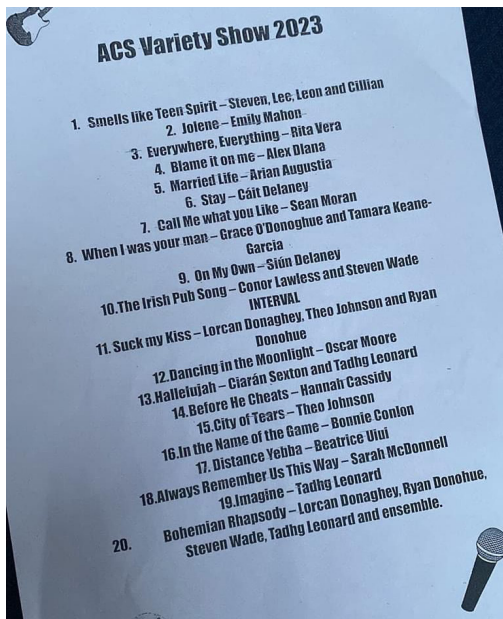
## Seachtain na Gaeilge

The Irish Musicians played for some of our very young members of the community! It is great to get out into the community to play music.



## Variety Show

This year's "Variety Show" took place on Thursday May 11<sup>th</sup> in the GP which showcased the incredible talent of students from all over the school. It's always a great night and it is always so wonderful to see our students perform.



## The TY Show

This year the TYs, directed by the brilliant Grainne Kennedy, have their show "Musical Mayhem" on Tuesday March 27<sup>th</sup> in the Sports Hall. It will feature music from well-known shows. It promises to be a memorable night.

A sincere word of thanks to all students who took part in any of the events during the year. Thank you for giving up your time and sharing your immense talent.

*"Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything" - Plato*

# Physical Education

The Physical Education Department aims to provide students with a broad and balanced experience in a wide variety of activity areas. These activities are shaped by the specifications laid out both at Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle PE. Each year, we have both a Department and Student review of the programmes to ensure we are providing an environment that is high in quality and that motivates and enthuses students to strive to develop their Physical Literacy, alongside their knowledge and understanding. When school year kicked off in late August, we assessed the curriculum over the last couple of years and discussed how we moved forward in a post Covid-19 world.

## Junior Cycle Programme

These activity areas are delivered over the three years of Junior Cycle. The programme is now planned to take into consideration the impending changes at Senior Cycle. The curriculum models at Senior Cycle as well as the specification of Leaving Cert Physical Education are now being used as a reference point to allow students to experience a positive learning journey through Post Primary Education. More connections are being made between Junior Cycle PE and Senior Cycle with a link module also being used in TY.

The following activities were agreed in late August at our PE Dept meeting, and we drew up an outline of each of the activities for all year groups such as: Athletics, Gymnastics, Dance, Table Tennis and Tennis, Orienteering, Fundamental Movement Skills, and Adventure Activities and Team Building.

## Transition Year Programme

In 2022/2023, it was agreed that the TY modules would be Health Related Activities (HRA), Leaving Cert PE link module, Tag rugby, Games (Invasion), Net Games- Table Tennis, Badminton, Volleyball & Striking and Fielding.

HRA allowed the students to learn how to monitor and assess fitness components, as well as holistically evaluate and learn the benefits of a healthy and active lifestyle. Thankfully, we were able to utilise the local gym (Gym Plus) for this module. All four TY groups participated in a five week module in Gym Plus which gave them an understanding of HRA and a variety of fitness workouts in a real-life setting. Permission slips were issued and signed. Students were then able to participate in this module with a gym instructor which was supervised by their PE teacher.

We also secured the services of a tag rugby coach who was able to come in and give the students a five week module on tag rugby as well as promoting the game of rugby. Students were shown the fundamentals skills and participated in various game scenarios over the course of the module. An enjoyable experience for all concerned.

A LCPE link module was also set up to try and bridge the gap of knowledge for students making their subject choices and interested in LCPE (as exam subject). A variety of practical and theory-based classes were completed over the course of a five week module.

The students also experienced modules in Badminton, Volleyball, Table tennis, Basketball and Rounders delivered by PE staff.

## Senior Cycle Programme

Senior Cycle students had a higher skill level and knowledge of the games/activities, so the focus switched to a number of curriculum models. A variety of activities would be taught through the following curriculum models: Health-related physical activity, Sport education, Contemporary issues in physical activity, Adventure education, Personal and social responsibility, and teaching games for understanding. Students practiced a range of skills in a variety of 'live' play scenarios. They covered a variety of activities such as Basketball, Handball, Badminton, Volleyball, Foot Tennis, Table Tennis, Tennis, Fitness and HRA, Dodgeball/Benchball, Futsal, Tag rugby, and Frisbee. The curriculum for Senior cycle aims to extend beyond just teaching skills and sport specific aspects, it is also envisaged that the curriculum teaches a number of key skills, such as information processing, being personally effective, communicating, critical and creative thinking and working with others.

All afore mentioned blocks for all year groups were assessed via an end of block reflection, a task/assignment or an in-person question and answer session.

## Tag Rugby

Graham Brennan, who is the Leinster development officer for the area and works with Ashbourne Rugby Club, came into the school to do an intro-tag rugby module with all First Year groups before the Easter holidays. Students learned the basics of the game as well as looking at the key skills such as, passing, throwing, catching and evasion techniques. There was a wide range of skill levels as some students had played before while some had not. Therefore, a variety of strategies were used to cater for all levels with the main aim for everyone to get involved and play the game in a safe manner.



Graham also ran a TY Tag Module in Term One between September and December. Again, the focus was on the basic skills as well as the TGFU approach to learn the game in 'real life' game scenarios. Graham also ran a couple of sessions with the Sixth Years during their TGFU module. This has proved a valuable asset and contact to have in the local community.

## Tennis Club and Tennis Courts

ACS thankfully has an abundance of clubs and facilities in its proximity. We secured use of the tennis courts that are a two minute walk next door to the school for a few weeks this year between February and March. Students across all year groups were able to use the courts in their Net/Wall module. Classes rotated on a week-to-week basis and looked at the basics of tennis utilising the four tennis courts that have only been built and made available in recent years. Each group was led by their PE teacher who ensured the module ran smoothly and the facilities were utilised to their full potential.





## Leaving Certificate Physical Education

This was the fifth year of the Leaving Certificate Physical Education curriculum being offered at ACS. The offer of LCPE at ACS is a fantastic opportunity for our students, as it will enable our students to further pursue their interest in this subject and will give them an excellent baseline knowledge and understanding to potentially engage in a future career within the field of Physical Education and Sport. The subject has been well received by the students with them displaying an excellent attitude to learning in both a theoretical and practical perspective. Students have been engaging in topics such as, Skill Acquisition, Biomechanics, Stages of Learning, Psychology of Performance, Diet and Nutrition, Health and Fitness, Training Programme Design, Target Setting, and Analysis of Performance. The specification is vast and has promoted student learning in many areas of Physical Education and Sport. At present the number of students taking on this subject is increasing as this academic year we had two Sixth Year classes and two classes of Fifth Years.

This is the second year that all elements of the course will have been completed and submitted to the SEC for correction. There are three elements to the course, and all will have been successfully completed this year for the second time since the introduction of LCPE in 2018. Sixth Year students led by Mr Wasson and Ms Garvey completed the Physical Activity Project (PAP), which was submitted late December 2022, and the Performance Assessment (PA) was submitted late March 2023. These projects make up 50% of the marks with the other 50% coming from the written paper in June.

## LCA: Leisure and Recreation

To successfully complete the Leisure and Recreation course students are required to complete two modules over the two-year course. There were two cohorts of LCA groups this academic year- one group in Fifth Year and one group in Sixth Year.

### Fifth Year LCA

The Fifth Year students have engaged with 'Module Two: Physical Activity for Health and Fitness'. This module is designed to enable Leaving Certificate Applied students, through their participation in several physical leisure and recreation activities, to understand the importance of exercise to the maintenance of fitness and the promotion of a healthy and active lifestyle. It gives students the skills and knowledge to understand the benefits of participation in physical activity as a lifelong activity. The module also allows for the development of personal and social skills.

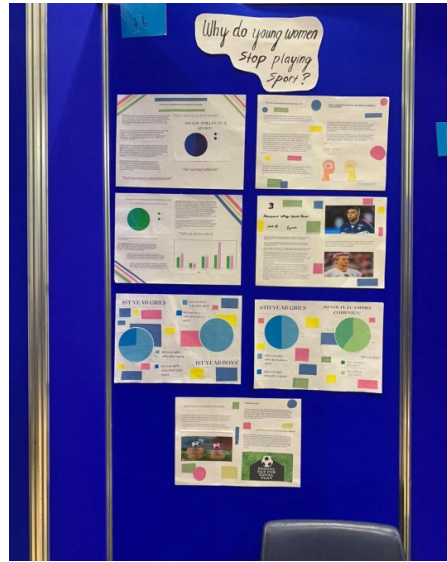
Key assignments of this module include monitoring heart rate for a week, recording and participating in activities that promote aerobic fitness, creating a diary for a fitness programme and leading a group in warm up and cool down exercises related to a chosen activity.

### Sixth Year LCA

This year Sixth Year LCA students participated in Module One: Physical activity for performance. Throughout this unit they participated in an array of sports and physical activities, Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball, Badminton, Personal Exercise and fitness and Olympic Handball. Students have acquired the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in a variety of sports in a healthy and safe manner. As students had to learn the rules, roles and strategies of these games, and how transferrable they are to other aspects of their life as they have developed personal and social relationships, cultivated leadership, organisational and communication skills.

## PE Xpo

PE Xpo is a competition that surrounds the science behind sport. It is essentially a Young Scientist Exhibition but for sport and physical activity. Students must create a sport related project that can be entered into any of the nine Junior/Senior categories. Three TY groups attended and submitted a project at this year's Xpo held on the DCU campus. The projects were entered under the following categories: Nutrition, Women in Sport, and Sport's Psychology. The work began on these projects after the October midterm and the groups must be commended on their significant efforts. The projects included a whole host of different elements such as, collecting, collating, and analysing data as well as presenting their findings on the day of the Xpo. The groups spoke excellently while showing great enthusiasm as they represented the school wonderfully.



## Politics and Society

The Politics and Society department had yet again another busy, innovative, and successful year. Students will sit the LC in this subject for the sixth time this summer.

This year has been a very engaging and eventful year for our Fifth and Sixth Year students with plenty of fantastic classroom debates, discussions, and research into a wide range of topics that were relevant to the world they live in. From the war in the Ukraine, to human rights and gender quality to identity politics. This group of students had a wide ranging and at times, a conflicting set of views that they were able to express and discuss in what were some remarkably interesting classes. Students lived through and learned about challenges effecting the world from global warming, gender politics and the cost-of-living crisis.

Our Leaving Certificate class completed their Citizenship Projects which is worth 20% of their exam that challenged them to play an active role in several issues in their society. They investigated how online activist movements are contributing to political change, the concept and consequences of greenwashing, whether the status of women in Ireland reflects the status of democracy in the country and the causes and consequences of terrorism. There were a fantastic range of projects submitted with some students conducting webinars while others presenting to younger students. A great set of highlights for the year included, one group talking about their project on Louth Meath FM Radio and another group that had an article that they wrote published in the national newspaper, the Irish Daily Star.



**sineadbrassillmfm** Great chat with Freya and Ava from Ashbourne Community school who joined me on 11-1 today to discuss their project on discrimination women in politics face as part of their politics and society class. Great points raised and I hope their teacher was listening coz they deserve an A

*Ava Carroll and Freya Dolan who joined Sinead Brassil on the 11-1 show on LMFM*

Throughout the year, the Politics and Society class has allowed students the chance to think critically and be challenged in their thoughts and opinions. It is fantastic to know that several students have since gone on to Third Level where they are studying some courses that include elements of either Politics or Sociology.

In May 2023, both the Fifth and Sixth Year classes went on a trip to Dáil Éireann. The students got a tour of the entire building, getting to see the history of the building and all the famous portraits of the famous people that had come and gone. Students then got to see where the Seanad debates the different laws and bills that have come from the Dáil. They also got to view politicians debate and were able to see the Leader's questions.

Exams results at Leaving Cert have been excellent with the majority of students taking the Higher-Level paper at Leaving Cert. The students this year within the department are extremely gifted and talented. Some of the Leaving Cert research projects were among the best ever produced in ACS. We look forward to awarding two students the Politics and Society Award this year as we feel that it's important to recognise the outstanding work of our most talented students.

Looking forward, we are delighted to see such a keen interest in this still relatively new subject with many students wanting to study this very relevant subject in our everyday lives. It is both a challenging and rewarding subject that suits any student who is interested in human rights, equality, diversity, sustainable development, power, and democratic decision-making while becoming a more informed and active global citizen.



*Fifth Year Politics and Society group Clothes Drop Off to highlight Sustainable Consumption*

## Religious Education

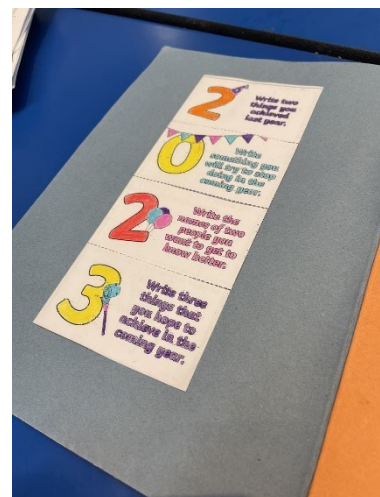
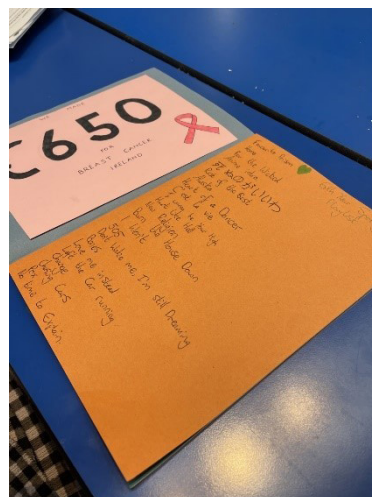
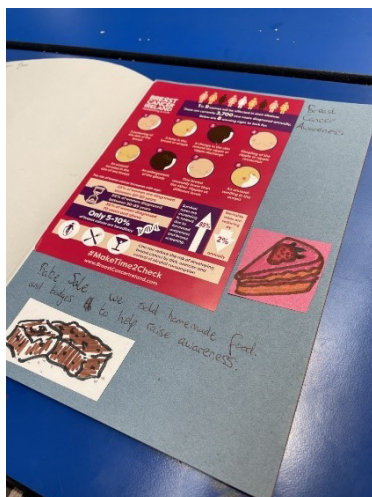


Religious Education focuses on developing knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values to enable young people to come to an understanding of religion and its relevance to life, relationships, society and the wider world. The course is built around three interconnecting strands: Expressing Beliefs, Exploring Questions and Living our Values. As ACS is a multi-denominational school, we celebrate all faiths and none. Some examples of religious dates that we have celebrated this year are St. Patrick's Day and World Hijab Day.



A huge addition to of RE Dept this year has been the reopening of our Meditation Room which was closed in previous years due to Covid. The meditation room provides an area for meditation and prayer within the heart of ACS. A massive thank you to transition year students who helped get the room back to the peaceful and sacred space that it is today.

In First Year, we have been focusing on the major world religions. Students completed projects on a particular world religion. In Second Year, we have been focusing on completing an action project for a local charity. Third Years decorated the garden with Christmas lights with all proceeds going to charity. Another group of Third Years completed a charity walk for SVP. TYs completed various modules throughout the year from Faith and Film to Cults/Sects. Fifth Years have been discussing the death penalty and morality while Sixth Years have been working on their scrapbooks which will be displayed at their graduation in May.



Our principal aim of religious education in Ashbourne Community School is to explore what people believe and what difference this makes to how they live, so that our students can gain knowledge, understanding and skills needed to handle questions raised by religion and belief, reflecting on their own ideas and ways of living.

## Chaplaincy

*"I came that you may have life and you may live it to the full" (John 10:10)*

It was a lovely change to be back in ACS, in full-time education capacity this year. The year began with meeting our new cohort of First Year students and facilitating workshops on 'Friendship' with each class group.

As Chaplains, we worked closely with the local Ashbourne St. Vincent de Paul in the run up to Christmas. As well as working towards the major liturgical events throughout the year. We also worked as part of the SST team (Student Support Team) to identify and liaise with the most vulnerable of our students in order to offer support. The year saw a stark rise in the number of students seeking support because of post Covid related anxieties.

The provision of bereavement support was also a key element of the year. Support was offered to both staff and students as necessitated.

To convey the liturgical message throughout the year, a variety of prayers and reflections were communicated to the school community via the intercom and online assemblies. Various visual exhibits were also created with students from various year groups and displayed around the school to communicate the gospel message.



*Many of us have at times walked the Emmaus Road,  
wondering where God is ... When all along He walks beside us.'*

## SEN

The SET team includes Miriam Boylan, Dorothy Butterly, Stephen Dunning, Áine Jacob, Geri Lalor and Miriam Meade who act as Anchors and link teachers with particular year groups to plan, execute and review the SEN plan in Ashbourne Community School.

We said farewell to Susan Carey in December. She joined the team in ACS in 2005. Her care, grace, patience, diligence, kindness and smiling sunny disposition is greatly missed. We wish Susan every happiness in her retirement. As an SNA Susan has worked tirelessly over the years. She was a great advocate for the students she worked with showing huge commitment to her work.

The SNAs Maureen Flanagan, Carmel Mc Connell, Nuala Mc Donnell and Lisa Smith continue to greatly enhance the work of the SET Department and provide valuable support to the students in their care. They have been joined by Kerrie Coughlan whom we welcome to the team.

One of the most popular members of our team is Alfie. He visits once a week generally and brings joy, peace and calm wherever he goes. He gets involved in school life in every way, including sporting a Christmas jumper in aid of the Vincent de Paul fund raiser in December. Alfie is very popular with students, and he is very well cared for and walked during his regular school visits.

The supports provided continue to be underpinned by the Continuum of Support which is based on a solution focused approach. A very wide range of supports are provided in ACS to support students. Under the Continuum students with the greatest need receive the greatest support.

We work closely with our colleagues in chaplaincy, career guidance and counselling and subject departments to deliver support to students. The SET Department continues to provide programmes of support for students in the areas of literacy, numeracy, emotional literacy and social skills to name but a few. The supports offered are student focused and aim to support the learning of students within our school community.

The SEN Department continues to link with the many external agencies that involved with the care of students within our school community. These include: National Educational Psychological Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Speech and Language Services, Occupational Therapy Services and the National Council for Special Education who work with us to determine our resource hours and our SNA allocation each year.

This year, like every year, a considerable amount of time is devoted to RACE (Reasonable Accommodation in Certificate Examinations). Applications are made to the SEC (State Examinations Commission) for those students in receipt of additional support who meet the criteria laid down by the SEC for reasonable accommodations and for whom the accommodation sought is their usual way of working.



# Science



## Leaving Cert Biology Ecology Trip

Our four Sixth Year Biology classes were fortunate to get a dry, albeit cold, day in November to carry out their four mandatory experiments on a Grassland Ecosystem at Dublin Zoo. We had the knowledgeable and friendly environmental guides from the zoo to assist us. The students worked efficiently through their abiotic and biotic measurements, and quantitative and qualitative habitat experiments, noting adaptations of flora and fauna to their environment. Estimating the height of established oak and beech trees using a student as a reference point was a popular exercise. Technological advances have helped, with the mobile phone app "Plantnet" providing a catalogue of European plants as a mobile reference guide. This allowed students identify a local plant in the ecosystem by simply taking a picture of the plant in question and comparing it to the database of plants catalogued. This is one you can certainly try at home.

Lunch was followed by a visit to the primate section of the zoo where students were entertained by the antics and acrobatics of the chimps and orangutans, and whose behaviour reminded them of themselves!

## Junior Cycle Science

Our Third Year science students performed well in their mock exams and are on track to complete their exams in June.

Second Year students are completing an array of interesting investigations as part of their Extended Experimental Investigation CBA. Topics range from how our sense of smell affects our ability to identify flavours to the effect of concentration on chemical reactions. Students are working well and enjoying the experience of carrying out their own scientific research. In May, the best projects from each class will be entered into our SciFest@School event.



## TY World of Science

In April, Transition Year students undertook a trip to Dublin Zoo. The theme of the day was “Conservation” and what we can do, as individuals, to slow down the erosion of natural habitats.

All TY students take part in the World of Science module which gives them the opportunity to explore all the aspects of science, including Chemistry, Biology and Physics. The students have completed experiments and projects in these areas. For example, Ms McHugh’s classes completed a research project on a disease/illness of their choice, and have completed various experiments, including titrations and flame tests. They also enthusiastically took part in challenges including designing a way to protect an egg when dopped and designing a bridge. Ms Kendall’s class have explored microbiology. They swabbed different surfaces and places in the classroom and grew bacteria in nutrient agar plates. Ms Kendall also posed the question “How long is a long time?”, and the class examined the last 4.5 billion years of life on the planet and mapped the major biologic events onto a calendar which condensed 4 billion years into 365 days of a year, with humans only appearing at midnight on December 31<sup>st</sup>!

## TY Environmental Science

Ms Dornan’s TY Environmental Science groups have been focussing on the areas of biodiversity and food, in line with our current Green Schools theme. Students have completed projects exploring where common food products such as coffee and chocolate come from and how their production impacts on the environment. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February, a combined group with Ms McCarthy’s Development Education class took part in a pilot Zoom workshop on crop diversity, hosted by An Taisce. In May, the group attended a woodworking workshop at BeeWise in Kilmessan, where they built bird boxes, bug hotels and hedgehog houses for the school grounds.

## Trip to Dunsany Castle and Teagasc Animal & Grassland Research Centre

On 10<sup>th</sup> November, a group of TY students from Ms. Dornan’s Environmental Science class and Ms. McCarthy’s Development Education classes took an educational trip to the Teagasc Animal and Grassland research centre in Grange, and Dunsany Castle. At the Teagasc centre, they were given a tour of the farm and shown the ins and outs of the research and other work that the technicians and researchers do on a daily basis. They were shown the dairy and beef herds. The classes were taught about the dairy calf to beef system, the suckler system, multi-species swards and abatement of methane emissions from the environment. The two classes found these presentations interesting, and they also enjoyed looking at the cattle and the other functioning parts of the farm.

At Dunsany Castle, the group met Randal Plunkett, the owner and 21<sup>st</sup> Baron of Dunsany. They were given a guided tour of the estate, which is spread across 1,600 acres. Plunkett spoke to the group about his rewilding of the estate and the increased biodiversity that has occurred since he started his rewilding campaign. He discussed biodiversity and the multitude of species living both above and beneath the forest floor. The group also encountered wild deer on the way back to the castle. Plunkett is a great character with an enthusiastic sense of humour, he really made an impression on the students and really grabbed their interest. It was a very successful and eventful trip and piqued their interest in conservation and biodiversity.





## Certified Angus Beef Competition

Two groups of students in TY entered this year's Certified Irish Angus Schools Competition. Each group produced a three minute video based on a theme of their choice as their entry into this excellent competition. William Delaney of Certified Irish Angus was blown away by the high standard of this year's entries. Judges shortlisted a number of groups for interviews based on their video, including our TY team of Liam Galvin, Andrew Gough, Harry Begg and Tommy Herron. On Monday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2023, the group headed off to Technical University of the Shannon: Midlands Midwest Athlone for their interview with the judges. While they did not make it through to the next round of the competition, they did ACS proud and really enjoyed the experience.



## Ag Science Farm Trip

On 26<sup>th</sup> October, the Fifth Year, Sixth Year and TY Ag Science classes visited two local farms that are certified organic enterprises. The first stop was Kiernan's Organic Farm in Rolestown where they got a tour of the farm and learned about the different things they produce, including oats, mustard, beans, and silage. After lunch, the group travelled to McNally's Organic Farm, which has its own on-site farm shop where they sell directly to the consumer. The trip was designed to give students an understanding and appreciation of two organic enterprises. They learned a lot about what it takes to be certified organic and what challenges and opportunities there are with organic farming.

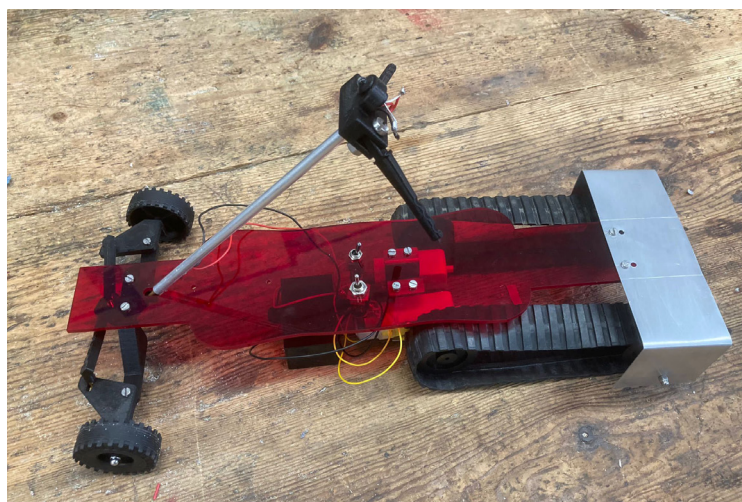
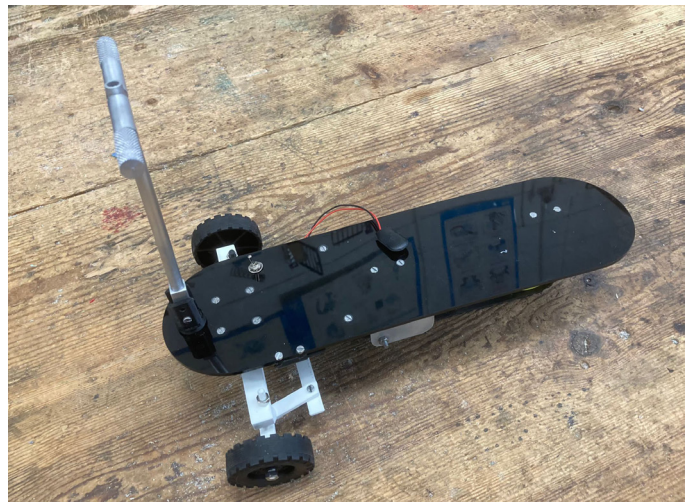
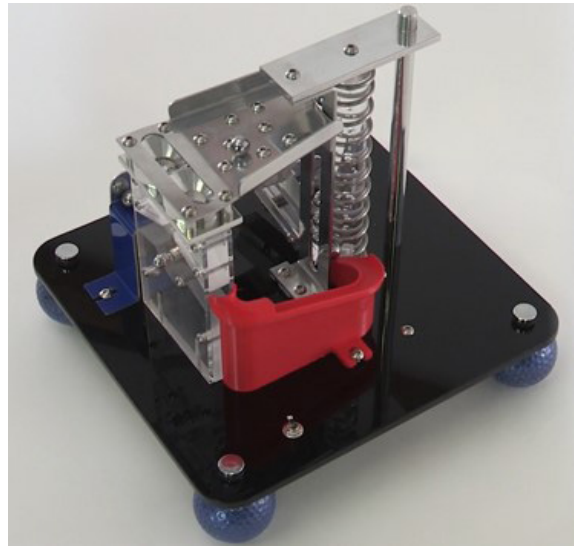
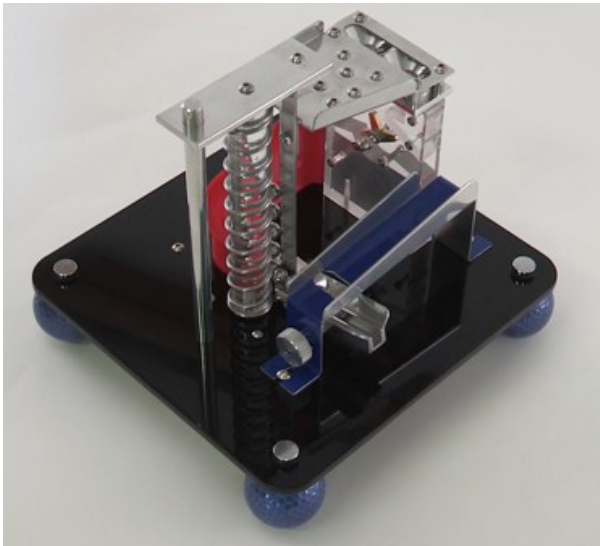




Most of the Leaving Cert students undertook the Higher Level project this year, where students were tasked with designing and manufacturing and 'Electric Tracked Skateboard'. This project had specific criteria for students to fulfil, such as fold down utility handlebars which posed a bit of a challenge for the students, but all students put their best foot forward to try and incorporate this into their designs.

We have two year groups completing the LCA programme in Engineering this year. Both groups are working their way through their key assignments and building upon their skills since September. The Fifth Year students have rose to the challenge of Engineering as they have made excellent progress so far and have made coat hooks, key rings, and worked in groups to create model airplanes. The Sixth Years have worked hard on their LCA task and project while also working through their modules. They have put in good effort in the decorative metalwork module to create wristbands by etching their own designs onto strips of brass.

Overall, Engineering has had a good year and we wish all our students the best of luck in their exams.



## Graphics/Design and Communication Graphics

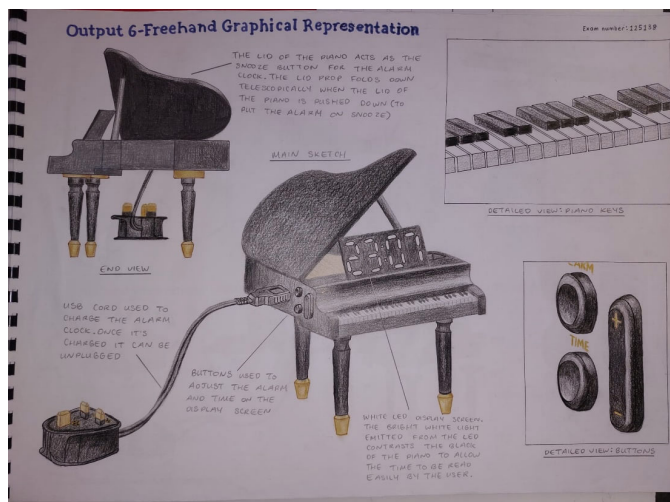
Graphics/DCG has had a very good year with a particularly good uptake of students in First year. These students began exploring Graphics straight away in September where they have mainly been working with two dimensional shapes, learning how to construct them accurately, and exploring where they appear in everyday life.

The Third Year cohort completed their CBA 2 on 'The Geometry of Food Packaging' which directly informed their Junior Cycle project on the same theme. Students used their research from their CBA 2 to sketch and accurately draft an item of food packaging while studying the basic geometry that makes up the packaging. The computer aided design (CAD) element was omitted from the project this year as an allowance for the time missed during the covid pandemic. Nonetheless, students put in excellent effort to completing their projects to a high standard.

The Sixth Year DCG students began the year by completing their Leaving Cert projects, which is worth 40% of their overall grade in the subject. Students worked diligently since September on the theme of an 'Alarm Clock' at higher level, where research was carried out on existing alarm clocks before sketches and CAD models had to be completed. Students then created their own concept designs for the alarm clocks which were all excellent and displayed very well within their portfolios.

Transition Year students were offered a flavour of DCG this year as they were given the chance to complete a CAD module. This module consisted of using the computer software Solid works where they were tasked with completing a slimmed down version of the DCG project. This was a great learning experience for the TYs who chose this option as it gave them an insight to DCG as a subject for those considering taking it for their Leaving Certificate.

Overall, we have had a good year with Graphics/DCG, and we wish all of our students best of luck in their exams.



## Wood Technology/Construction Studies

The Wood Technology classrooms saw an upgrade of some of their machines and equipment this year with new planers, saws and drills being installed over the summer months and throughout the school year. The upgrade of these machines has been very welcomed to allow for more accurate processing of wood and this will allow students to continue to create projects to a high standard in all year groups.

The Sixth Year students have been busy throughout the year working on their Leaving Cert projects and portfolios. They have all worked very hard to create projects to a high standard that they all should be proud of. The main types of projects created have been coffee tables and model houses. Both types of projects have created great learning curves for the students which will aid them in their upcoming exams in June.

The Third Year students completed their CBA 2 and then began exploring the different themes for their Junior Cycle projects. The themes for this year's projects are centred around the environment, wellbeing, and a functional desktop organiser to help them with study. Students have put significant effort into designing and manufacturing their projects to their chosen theme. The chosen design and a project evaluation was also worked on by each student in the slimmed down 'My Design Journey' folio, which is usually meant to be more comprehensive, but adjustments were made due to the pandemic.

This year saw the return of the Fifth year LCA students completing the 'Graphics and Construction Studies' subject. Some students had not set foot into the construction studies classroom before, so students had to learn about the different tools and equipment used to create projects. Students explored various aspects of design and manufacture and put their learned skills to the test to create models of garden furniture and decorations.

Overall, this year has been successful for the Wood Technology/Construction Studies subject, and we wish all the students the best of luck in their exams.



## Transition Year

### An Overview

The journey for the TY group of 2022-23 journey began in September 2022 with an email or two, and four tutor groups called after famous Cavan GAA All-Stars – Brady, Faulkner, Galligan and McCabe. Our TY theme for the year was **New Beginnings**. TY is a great time to start something new which brings new opportunities and is so empowering. TY is a chance for students to learn important lessons about themselves. We looked at the importance of positivity for the year of TY. Every TY student on their own or in a team, found solutions, were the difference, played their part, and impacted positively on their own life at home, in school and in the community, and in the lives of others. TY is about developing skills, thinking outside the box, and finding the solution, not dwelling on a problem.

The TY Class of 2023 have had a fantastic year with lots of workshops, activities, guest speakers, projects, events, achievements, online courses, TY programmes and work placements. There have been many highlights, too many to mention them all... Dublin Zoo Trip, Navan Adventure Centre, GoQuest, 1stDrive Driving Skills, TeamWorks Teambuilding Day, First Aid Certificate Course, Drumming Workshop, Movie Magic Workshop, Skipping Workshop, GAA Future Leaders, TY Journalists, Certified Angus Beef Schools Competition, IWA TY Wheelchair Basketball

Competition, Relay Marathon in aid of Daffodil Day, Foroige Leadership for Life Programme, Safer Internet Day Ambassador, Green Schools, #andshecycle Ambassadors, Water Ambassadors, Climate Ambassadors, Rubbish Film Festival Team, and our first live TY show in four years – Musical Mayhem.

It has been a pleasure to work with the TY class of 2023 to see them mature, advance their skills, learn new skills, become more confident, make new friendships, and move out of their comfort zones.

Many thanks to the TY students, parents/guardians, teachers, support staff and management of ACS for all their input and assistance this year. My job was made easier with the support of the TY tutors: Ms McCabe, Ms McCarthy, Ms McNamee, and Mr Sheerin, and all senior management team in ACS. In addition, Ms. Scannell and Ms Kelly, have been a great support to me with every project, initiative and idea I had all year. I cannot forget Ms Casey who had a year of changing rooms to fit over 60 workshops, trips and initiatives.

Graduation Day was again held in our fantastic Sports Hall on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023 – what a rollercoaster of emotions for TYs and their families. As students finish TY, they should remember all the fun they had, the lessons they have learned, the friends they made, and all their achievements.

I wish all the TY Class of 2023, the best of luck as they head into Fifth year. I hope that the confidence and knowledge they have gained, together with the new friends they have made, will encourage, and inspire them towards success. I hope they will not miss my emails too much! They have taught me a lot, and I will miss them and remember them all fondly. I am very proud of them all.

Finishing TY is a milestone. Students should look at how far they have come. Keep learning, keep trying, keep accomplishing, and keep venturing on through their journey.

Finally..... the Class of 2023 – some advice..... **There are three Cs in life – Choice, Chance and Change. You must make the choice, to take the chance, if you want anything to change.** Best of luck.

Congrats to the TY Award Winners for 2023. There were many students in the running to win awards. So well done to all.

#### **Online courses completed in TY included:**

IACT Computer Skills, Career Skills, Driving Skills, Hospitality, Citizenship

Health and Safety Authority Get Safe – Work Safe: Health and Safety in the Workplace for Students Starting Work Placement

Concussion Coach

Climate Changers

HSA Safety at Work

Project One Sky Wellbeing

Alzheimer Society of Ireland Dementia Awareness

How To Land Your First Job in Hospitality

#### **Trips, workshops and talks in TY included:**

Causey Farm Team Building Day

Refugee Council Workshop

CreateSchool Podcasting Workshop

Dogs Trust Ethics Talk

Rubbish Film Festival Workshop

Sexual Assault Treatment Unit Education Workshop

Colm Delves Virtual Reality Lab in DCU Trip

Sam Dennigan Biodiversity Workshop

Dublin Barista Workshop

PExpo Competition

Performing Arts Workshop with George McMahon (Fair City)

Cycle Right Training Workshop

School of Life Etiquette Workshop  
 Spanish Film at Newbridge Riverbank Arts Centre  
 1stDrive Driving Skills Day  
 SKIPnROPE Skipping Workshop  
 Mobile Music School Drumming Workshop  
 PALS Positive and Assertive Life Skills Programme Workshop  
 Medicare First Aid Course  
 The Fundamentals TY Workshop (personal development, leadership, team building and goal setting)  
 Rory O'Connor Mental Health Talk  
 Movie Magic Workshop  
 Balance Nutrition Workshop with Paula Duggan  
 Dublin Zoo Conservation Workshop  
 Team-Works Team Building Workshop  
 Bank of Ireland Money Smart Business Quiz  
 Circus Skills Workshop  
 GoQuest Teamwork Activity  
 Bloom The Art Project Wellbeing Art Workshop  
 Relationships and Sexuality Workshop  
 Extern Supporting Communities Gambling Awareness Talk  
 Agricultural Science Trips  
 Lizzie McGhee Barbering and Hairdressing Workshop  
 IWA TY Wheelchair Basketball Regional Championships  
 Carol Rooney Drama Workshops  
 History Classes to Dail Eireann Trip  
 David Kent (Journalist) Talk for TY Journalists  
 #andshecycles Bicycle Security Marking Session with Garda Barbara Kelly  
 Grainne Kennedy Dance Workshops  
 Sports Psychology Workshop with Anthony Sheriff  
 FitFor45 Fitness Workshops  
 The Active Challenge Workshop  
 French Class Cinema Trip  
 BeeWise Environmental Science Class Workshop  
 Inspire Ireland TY Poetry Slam Workshop  
 LGFA GAA Coaching Course Workshop  
 LGFA 1<sup>st</sup> Year Girls Blitz Event  
 An Taisce Crop Diversity Workshop  
 FIT (Fastrack into IT) Training Workshop  
 Croke Park Tour and Awesome Walls Trip for TY boys  
 Awesome Walls and I Wish Conference Trip for TY girls

**Programmes and initiatives undertaken throughout the year included:**

Leading Ireland's Future Together (LIFT) Leadership Programme  
 FAI Kickstart 1 Soccer Coaching Course

Walk in my Shoes Programme  
DNG Real Estate TY Programme  
Houses of the Oireachtas TY Programme  
TEFL Programme  
STEPS Engineering Your Future Programme  
DkIT Computers Week  
Camino and Gaisce Walk  
Lollipop Day Collection  
Special Olympics Collection  
St Francis Hospice Bake Sale  
ISPCC Bake Sale  
Lots of Socks Day and Bake Sale for Down Syndrome Ireland  
St Francis Hospice Coffee Morning in Ashbourne House Hotel  
Irish Cancer Society Daffodil Day TY Relay Marathon Challenge  
TY Show "Musical Mayhem"  
Safer Internet Day  
Certified Angus Beef Schools Competition  
Jigsaw One Good School Programme  
Foroige Leadership for Life  
Mini-Companies  
Gaisce  
TY Journalists  
Young Social Innovators  
GAA Future Leaders  
Safer Internet Day Ambassadors  
Project Science  
Climate Ambassadors  
Water Ambassadors  
#andshecycles Ambassadors



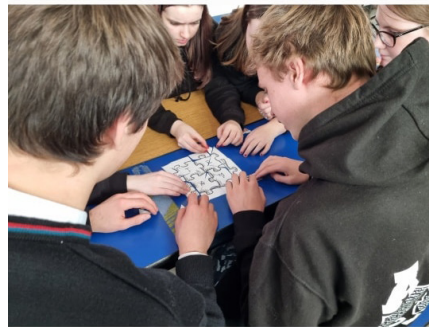
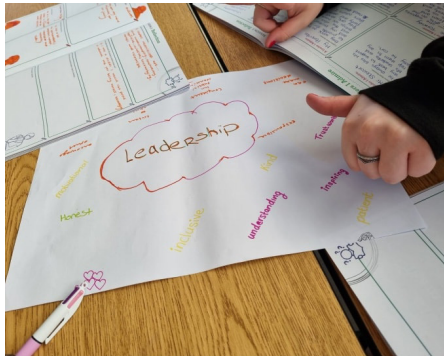






## Foróige

In October 2022, a group of 60 students in TY started Module One of the Foróige Leadership for Life Programme. Ms McLoughlin, Ms Mathews, Ms Mongey, and Ms Kavanagh are trained facilitators for the programme. This year Ms Mathews and Ms Mongey facilitated the course with 60 TY students. In all, 75 students in ACS took in the programme, 60 in TY and 15 in LCA Sixth Year Class Yangtze. The programme empowers young people with leadership capabilities to reach their full potential and have a positive impact on the world around them. It allows young people to learn, practice and develop the core soft skills they will need in their future lives. Module One is a 15-week leadership programme to help students to become a good leader by building different skills like confidence, communication, teamwork, and self-esteem. Students completed different teamwork activities to help them interact with others and to get familiar with their peers in the classroom. The workbook completed during each session helps students to assess their progress including reflections. Each student finished the programme by completing a two minute presentation on their leadership goal to their class. Some of the topics covered included: Definitions of Leadership, Leadership Qualities, Communication Skills, Problem Solving, Self-Awareness, Values, Community Leadership, Philanthropy and Global Leadership, Goal Setting and Presentation Skills.



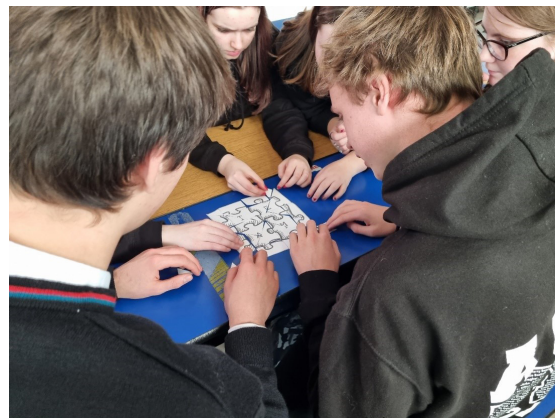
## Gaisce

The Gaisce President's Award is for young people aged between 15-25. It is a great opportunity for students to get involved in various activities and learn vital lifelong skills.

In 2021 the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, celebrated Gaisce's 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Bulbs for Bees. There were over 600,000 bulbs distributed nationwide. In October 2021, TY students who had just started their Bronze Award, planted bulbs around the school. On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022, students finished for their Bronze Gaisce Award by doing a hike in Howth as part of their adventure journey. Well done to all students who have worked hard all year, taking on a personal skill, physical activity, community involvement and an adventure journey. TY is a great year to take on this programme as there are ample opportunities for students to get involved in various activities.

Thanks to Ms O'Connell for running this programme and being the PAL (President Award Leader) in ACS. Hopefully some of the students will go on to complete their Silver and maybe even Gold Gaisce Awards in the future.

Students will now be presented with their Bronze medals and certificates by Ms O'Connell.



## TY Journalists

### The Storytellers of ACS

The TY Journalists are a small group of TY students who are dedicated to sharing the events and daily work that go on in our school.

There are a range of topics that we cover - sporting events with our teams, class trips, talks that occur in the school, and even personal articles about our work experience. We're telling the stories of our school in through the lens of a student.

Students have the choice to choose what kind of article that they would like and once we've written an article, we submit it to our editor, Ms Pike, for proof reading before she sends it on to our publisher, Ms Mathews.

We use Teams and many email chains to communicate our ideas for articles and who is covering what, so it is quite organised.

This year the TY Journalist initiative has grown in numbers, and we also had a visit from a past student and local journalist, David Kent, who told us all about his experiences and gave us tips for our own articles and potential future careers as writers.

The journalists have a lot of fun reporting, telling the public about our school's wide variety of events, lessons, clubs and opportunities. It has been a great opportunity for us to develop new skills, explore a possible future avenue of work while getting to showcase our school and building our own portfolio of work.

Please check out our school's Facebook page to check out a plethora of our articles on Facebook!

*By Fabien Kinsey, TY Journalist*



## Snapshot of TY Journalist Articles

### For The Art of It All

We stepped into Ms Aiken's art class on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November as her TY students are on a journey of discovering painting and colour. The students are enjoying the relaxation while learning the skill of thinking. They learn about different types of paint and how acrylic paint dries darker, and how you can continuously paint over it. Ms Aiken encourages her students by quoting Michelangelo to them, "You paint with your brain, not your hands".

Her students learn how to paint by physically painting, mixing colours and studying the colour wheel. They're learning the balance of colour and to always test it beforehand.

The TYs told us that they love art and they enjoy the art class because they have a very experienced teacher in this field. They also said that they enjoy the absence of exam pressure and that it is a therapeutic environment with music often playing in the background as they work. However, it is a different program to teach due to the

different levels students are at as some students took art during the disruptive Covid-19 Junior Cycle years and others are only starting art this year.

Along with art and colour, Ms Aiken teaches her students how to not waste materials, to be organised and to always challenge themselves. Teaching this class is always very busy, but she makes sure to get to every student individually. Ms Aiken is a very experienced teacher and artist who allows everyone to learn at their own pace while pushing themselves as well. Thank you to Ms Aiken for allowing us to visit today and to experience her classroom.

By TY Journalists, Fabien Kinsey and Julia Valentine



### ACS TYS Wild about Rewilding

A group of TY students from Ms Dornan’s Environmental Science class and Ms McCarthy’s Development Education class took an educational trip to Teagasc in Navan and Dunsany Castle on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022. At the Teagasc Centre, they were given a tour of the farm and shown the ins and outs of the research and other work that the technicians and researchers do on a daily basis. Teagasc is a government state agency for development and research in agriculture. They were shown the dairy and beef herds. The classes were taught about the dairy calf to beef system, the suckler system, multi-species swards and abatement of methane emissions from the environment. The two classes found these presentations very interesting. They also enjoyed looking at the cattle and the other functioning parts of the farm.

At Dunsany Castle, the group met Randal Plunkett, the owner and 21st Baron of Dunsany. They were given a guided tour of the estate, which is spread across 1,600 acres. Plunkett spoke to the group about his rewilding of the estate and the increased biodiversity that has occurred since he started his rewilding campaign. He brought the TYs across the grasslands and showed them more of the success of his project. He brought the group through the forest located on the estate too. He spoke about biodiversity and the multitude of species living both above and beneath the forest floor. The group also encountered wild deer on the way back to the castle. Plunkett is a great character with a great sense of humour. He really made an impression on the students and really grabbed their interest. It was a very successful and eventful trip and piqued their interest in conservation and biodiversity.

By TY Journalist, Harry Begg



## TY Show

### Musical Mayhem - "Oh, What a Night!"

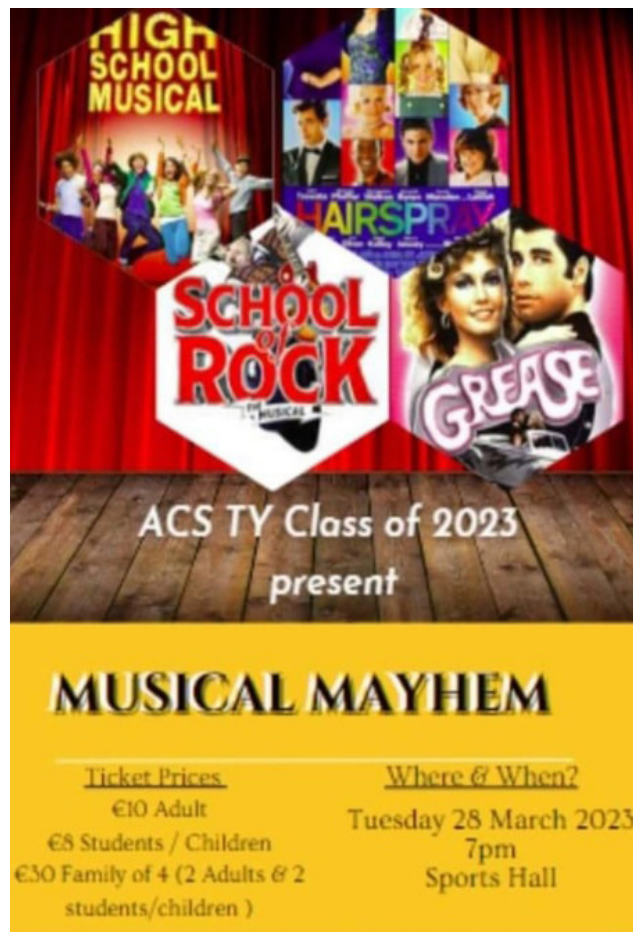
On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 the hard work of our TY students was finally out on show. Since early January 2023, four groups of TY students have been attending dance and drama classes with Grainne Kennedy assisted by Áine Mooney who choreographed and produced the whole show. We had three judges - the previous and retired TY Coordinator Mr Finian O'Connor, and past pupils and now staff members, Ellen Bonner (Riverdance Dance Captain) and Sarah O'Rourke (Award Winning Milliner and Entrepreneur). There were four acts on the night, *Grease*, *Hairspray*, *High School Musical*, and *We Will Rock You*. Every student was decked out in their fabulous costumes supplied by Grainne.

The show started with an undefeatable love story between Danny and Sandy in *Grease*. Moving straight into big dresses but even bigger hairstyles was *Hairspray*. There was a break for the audience to get some fresh air. There were fantastic prizes to be won in the raffle during the interval. Thanks to everyone who bought raffle tickets. Starting back strong after the interval with a love story yet to blossom between Troy and Gabriella in *High School Musical*. Finishing the night of strong with the crowd singing along to *Another One Bites The Dust*, *I Want To Break Free*, and *We Will Rock You*. While the judges tallied their scores to see who would be crowned Musical Mayhem 2023 there was some unbelievable dancing from both Hollie O'Hare and Amelia Leydon leaving the crowd speechless. Hollie performed a HipHop piece, and Amelia performed an Irish dancing piece. Well done girls.

When the scores were final and with excitement through the roof, High School Musical got to dance one last time - but this time as the Musical Mayhem Champions 2023!

A thank you for all the hard work the backstage crew went through to get different props together. The night would not have happened with the help from Ms Mathews, and all of the other staff who helped build a fantastic night for everybody. A special thanks for their patience and hard work to Grainne Kennedy and Áine Mooney - we are all so grateful. Thanks to everyone who attended.

By Kirsten Fennell, Hollie O'Hare and Jessica Duggan, TY Journalists





# Student Voice

## Senior Prefects 2022/2023

The first time the Senior Prefects met as a group was at the Training Day on Wednesday August 24, 2022. The main focus of the training day was to establish a team as a cohesive group and to explore the various roles that they as Senior Prefects would undertake. Challenge activities engaged the students and framed their interactions with each other as the activities explored skills that are needed when interacting with people such as, verbal and nonverbal language, and body language. These activities were later discussed in the context of what it means to work in a team. Prefects reflected on their year ahead by looking at goals, aspirations, challenges with the emphasis on being realistic and helping teammates. The day culminated with an energetic, positive attitude for the year ahead.

The seven Senior Prefects and four Head Students started the school year with a positive and capable demeanour. They were immediately immersed in the First year Orientation Day by helping First Year tutors by giving small tours, sorting lockers and key, and helping the first years navigate the complex world of their timetable and "the journal". In the first term they maintained a presence in the First Year corridor at lunch time and before school, on the look-out for any First Years who might be finding the transition to secondary school difficult while also popping into tutorial occasionally in the first month to say "hello" and to ask "how are things going?"

Throughout the year Senior Prefects facilitated at the five Parent Teacher Meetings after school as well as being a positive presence on the corridors, liaising with the Student Council and attending Guth Na nDaltaí term meetings.

In the end-of-year evaluation survey many of the Senior Prefects said they gained self-confidence in public speaking while others were happy in the knowledge that they made a difference to First Years in their transition to secondary school.

## Guth Na nDaltaí

Student Voice is a major element of our school, and we encourage all students to participate in the many clubs and committees that are on offer. Staff offer many clubs and committees such as Green Schools committee, Amber Flag Committee and Student Council. All these committees and groups give students a voice in the school and allow the students to work on different projects that may interest them. These groups are very student driven with many students choosing the direction and projects that they work on. They all work on different projects within the school to raise awareness of charitable organisations and different causes and projects that interest the groups and committees.

Our latest element of student voice in our school is Guth Na nDaltaí. Guth Na nDaltaí is a forum that is open to all students to express opinions and concerns about the school. It began in 2017, so that students' opinions and concerns can be addressed to bring about change to make the school a better and more comfortable place for the students. These meetings are run for the students, and by the students, with the elected Head Students chairing the Guth Na nDaltaí meetings.

The Guth Na nDaltaí meetings were held once every half term this year. Before Christmas, these meetings were held on a Tuesday morning before school started, in the GP or the Mezzanine area. After Christmas, the meetings changed to one lunchtime each half term and took place in Red Area 5. The change was prompted to allow more students to attend and to try and make students more aware of the forum. Attendance had been an issue, with an average of ten students attending each meeting. It was the hopes of the Head Students to boost these numbers, so the meetings were promoted through the various medians at our disposal, e.g., electronic noticeboards, announcements etc.

All issues raised at these meetings were brought to the Senior Leadership Team of the school by the Head Students, where compromises were met where they could be.

The Head Students ran the meetings very well and should be complimented for their efforts in promoting the meetings within the student body. Help was also sought from the teachers who facilitate other student voice clubs and committees to promote the Guth Na nDaltaí meetings.

The aim of the forum is clear, to ensure that every student in the school has a voice and place where it will be listened to. This forum will continue into next year and hopefully attract students from all over the school to engage in the developments and changes to make it a better place for the student body.





## Student Council

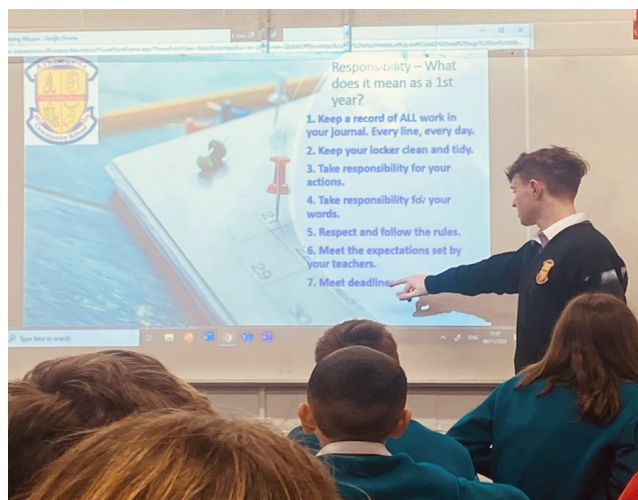
This year we warmly welcomed new members into the Student Council through an application and interview process. It was fabulous to see new faces join the Student Council as they are all so eager to work together for the betterment of our school environment and community.

Throughout the year, the Student Council worked hard towards achieving a number of goals and aims. We were initially given the issue of organising a new system for the "Lost and Found" within the school in order to make the system easier for students to find their lost items. We explored our options, spoke with students and staff, and continuously reviewed its progress to ensure that everyone was satisfied with the new location of the Lost and Found and its operation.

We have also reviewed the School Journal and we have discussed and debated its merits and functionality. We have worked with staff and students to decide upon a few necessary changes that we feel will benefit students next year throughout the academic year.

We sent members of the Student Council to attend a webinar for One Good School who then reported back to the Council their findings from this webinar, and we are now currently discussing new ideas as a result. Recently, we met with another school from Swords through Microsoft Teams where we discussed the operation of each of our Schools' Student Councils. We compared and contrasted our methods and work to see if we can implement changes to build on our current model. We are also currently working on gathering feedback from the Third and Sixth year students on our recent Wellness Days in our school and plan to do this through a survey of the students in order to capture their views and ideas.

## Wellbeing in Our School



### Wellbeing Ambassadors

Tom and I were given the honour of being the very first Wellbeing Ambassadors of Ashbourne Community School. We were presented with the idea of Wellbeing Ambassadors late last year after both interviewing for the Head

Student roles. The concept excited both of us as it was an opportunity to mould and develop our own role.

We were heavily involved in the First Year Induction Day by helping them settle into their new school environment and we also assisted at the Open Day in October for potential incoming First Year students. We had an incredible night at the First Year Activity night, in which we –along with the Head Students and Senior Prefects- took a small group of students and supervised them.

We had the opportunity to introduce First Year students to the variety of support we offer in our school if they feel they need a lending hand during their time in our school. I had the chance to work alongside Ms. McLoughlin for 10 weeks with First Year Class Apollo to highlight the “One Good School” learning programme learning diverse ways to improve mental health and making a difference in the school. I have really enjoyed getting to know everyone I have met along the way.

We would like to thank all staff members, particularly Ms. Ryan, Ms. Casey, and Ms. Hanahoe for their support in creating this role and their continuous support throughout the year.

## Student Wellbeing

“Student wellbeing is present when students realise their abilities, take care of their physical wellbeing, can cope with the normal stresses of life, and have a sense of purpose and belonging to a wider community.” (NCCA 2021 p5)

Active wellness days were designed and facilitated with the above definition in mind. All year groups enjoyed a variety of activities that afforded each student an opportunity to reflect on how they can focus on being well. It also allowed local facilitators to showcase what wellbeing events are on offer in the local community of Ashbourne.

“Can we do that again?” was a phrase that was frequently heard as students completed their sessions. A sure sign that the inaugural Active Wellness Days were thoroughly enjoyed. Dance, yoga, Taekwondo, a drumming workshop; a selection of what was on offer for students. Much fun was had along with time for students to get to know each other outside of the classroom. Students were encouraged to get out into their community and find a wellness activity to suit them.



## Pilot Wellbeing Programme First Year

Connectedness and feeling part of something are fundamental indicators of wellbeing. The wellbeing pilot programme trialled this year with our First Year group of students as we wanted to build on this along with encouraging students to become more responsible for their learning and respectful in their day-to-day interactions in school. The content of the course varied from getting to know the history of ACS, understanding the link between class names and the journey of learning ahead, recognising the importance of meeting expectations set, exploring ways to study efficiently and effectively, and writing letters to your future self. The course was led by class tutors in First Year.

## Teacher Wellbeing

Teacher wellbeing is critical for school wellbeing and stability because promoting teacher wellbeing enhances the capacity of schools to meet the needs of diverse populations (Roffey, 2012)

On August 29<sup>th</sup> 2022, the staff of ACS took some time away from planning for the new academic year ahead. Staff enjoyed a tasty lunch which was then followed by a team building event organised by Celtic Adventures. The weather was very much on our side and plenty of fun and entertainment was had. It was a truly positive start to the new academic year and allowed staff to connect with colleagues outside of the teaching and learning space.



## Incoming First Years 2022/2023

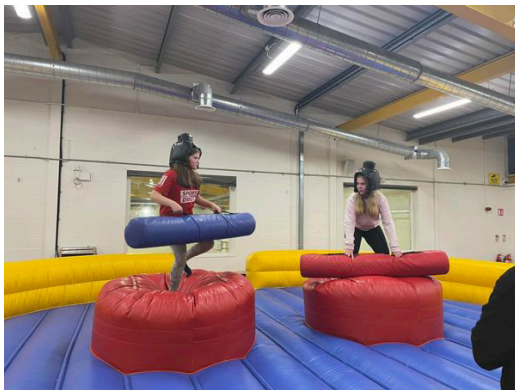
On August 30<sup>th</sup> we welcomed our new First year students to ACS 210 new students were joined by their parents in the Sports Hall where they were welcomed by Mr. Stewart and various other school representatives.

We look forward to seeing them get involved in life in ACS and see them develop over the next few years.



## First Year Activity Night

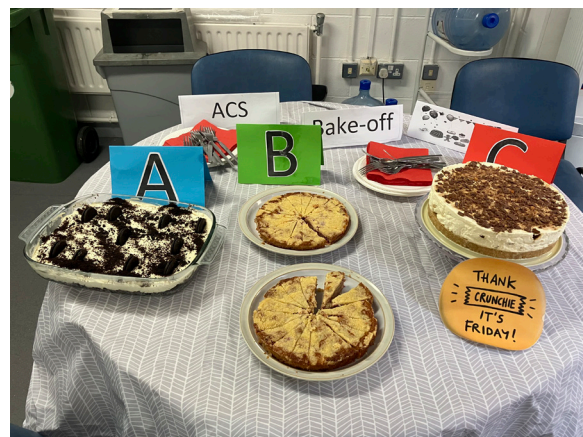
The First Year Activity Night made a comeback on Friday October 21<sup>st</sup> after being paused during COVID restrictions. There were a wide variety of events on the night to keep the students entertained such as football and basketball, futsal, sumo suits and video games. It was really lovely to see such an event make a return as our first years spent the evening getting to know each other while having a lot of fun! A huge thanks to all the student volunteers and the teachers who supervised and helped make this night such a great success.



## ACS Bakes

### Staff Bake Off

Baking was high on the agenda this year as staff and sixth year students were busy baking. The Bake Off made a spectacular return the ACS Staffroom at the end of September with staff signing up to take part in the heats to show off their bakes. There was a huge interest from the staff every Friday in this competition with tastings and voting being taken very seriously as bake-off competitors voted for their preferred bakes in each heat. In the heats, staff made a bake of their choice and after five heats, the winners of each heat took part in the semi-finals. The first semi-final was chocolate themed, and the second was fruit themed. It was a tight finish in the end with Mr Reilly taking the title of Star Baker with his Yule Logs beating Ms O' Donoghue's Christmas themed cupcakes in the final. There was a tremendous atmosphere in the staff room each week as the Bake Off took place and some very satisfied bellies too!



## Sixth Year Bake Off



With the Great British Bake-off on our screens and our teachers competing in their own bake off, we thought that it was time to highlight the talents and skills of our amateur bakers in Sixth Year with our own ACS Sixth Year Bake Off competition.

We felt was an opportunity for a bit of fun and light relief from their studies. 60 students signed up to be involved. The groups worked in threes with one stipulation that one member of the team had to be male!

For the first round, the students could bake anything they wanted to, and the brownies, cookies, cupcakes, pavlovas, cheesecakes, and cakes arrived in.

Three secret judges "blind" tested the bakes, initially judging the bakes on taste only and then in the final on both theme and quality of the bake. Each week the winning group moved forward to the final and each Thursday while the bake-off was held, the sixth years had the opportunity during their breaktime to sample the treats once judging was complete. The theme for the final was Christmas on Winter.

Huge thanks to the teachers Ms Boylan, Ms O'Dea, Ms Kelly and Ms Rahilly for giving their time and taking on the arduous task weekly and to Ms Aiken and the Head students, Caoilfhinn Browne and Conor Nulty who joined them for judging the final on the 15<sup>th</sup> of December 2022.

The final was very tight with only one mark between groups. However, only one team could be crowned ACS Sixth Year Bake-Off Champion 2022 and this team was Katelyn Brady, Lesley-Ann Walsh and Jack Hand. The students received a voucher for €25 each.

All runners up received €10 voucher. Groups were awarded a small prize for the bakes that impressed the judges throughout the competition that had not made it through to the final.

Runner up groups were from Week one Thomas Cooney, Evie Connolly and Milo Connolly. From week two Niki Mardari, Mateusz Urych and Thomas Flood and from Week three Katie Twomey, Alex Meehan, and Enda O'Brien.

### The winning entry



Some entries during the competition



**Local Community Garda Talks**

We have had many informative and fabulous talks this year from our local Community Garda colleagues in particular Garda Barbara Kelly. Talks were given on Road Safety, Cyber Crime and how to stay safe online, Drug Awareness and Legislation, and lastly Coco's Law. We are hugely grateful to our Community Garda colleagues for taking the time to visit us here in ACS and to provide us with this vital information to help us protect ourselves now and in the future.



**JCT Whole School Training For Staff**

On Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> of March, all staff in ACS engaged in a very productive JCT training as part of an Inservice day. It was a tightly filled schedule that aimed to look at planning in our school for the Junior Cycle. Staff participated in a number of Whole Staff meetings in the morning in order to engage and discuss the needs and priorities of our school for staff and students alike. Staff split into groups during these meetings in order to collaborate and share ideas before feeding back their points to the whole group.

An tSraith Shóisearach do Mhúinteoirí

**Junior** **CYCLE**  
for teachers

After lunch, which was kindly provided by Artie, staff moved into department meetings. In the first part of the department meeting, members were encouraged to bring teaching resources that they use in their classroom that they find useful and felt may be of benefit to their colleagues. This collaborative session of the meeting was well received by staff as departments members had the opportunity to share and explain their resources and every left feeling that they had new resources and ideas to try out in their classrooms for the benefit of their students.

Departments then used the remainder of their Subject Department Meeting planning time to focus on the needs of their subject at JCT level by focusing on areas such as schemes of work, Units of Learning and CBA planning. This was a highly successful day as great strides were made by all subject departments.

## Awareness Weeks and Days

### Anti-Bullying Week



*"Our values are principles and standards that guide our behaviour."*

Anti-Bullying week  
Ashbourne  
Community School  
28<sup>th</sup> Nov – 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec  
2022



ACS is a partnership of students, staff, parents and guardians and our local communities.

*"Bullying is targeted behaviour, online or offline, that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society."*

During Anti-Bullying week, and every week, in ACS our school endeavours to promote our whole school approach in taking a stand against bullying in all its forms. Our school fosters inclusion, respect, and care. In a whole school assembly on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 students were reminded of what inclusion, respect and care looks like in our school. Our school is a partnership of teachers, students, parents/guardians, and our local community. We all have a collective responsibility in taking a stand against bullying.

## Financial Awareness Weeks

Our Financial Awareness Week ran from Monday 9<sup>th</sup> to Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January. This was a great time to encourage students to create goals for the year ahead. Whether it is for planning, shopping or goal setting, lists allow us to keep track of each part of our lives and plan ahead. The aim of the week was to provide students with the skills and knowledge that allows them to make informed decisions with all their financial resources.

Students received tips throughout the week on how best to manage their resources. All students received a goal setting activity in their emails. Some of our TY students created some information boards to raise awareness of financial planning.

We also set staff and the local community Paul Merriman's savings challenge for the year. All activities were promoted on our social media pages.

WEEK	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	ACCOUNT BALANCE	WEEK	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	ACCOUNT BALANCE	WEEK	DEPOSIT AMOUNT	ACCOUNT BALANCE
1	€1	€1	19	€19	€190	37	€37	€703
2	€2	€3	20	€20	€210	38	€38	€741
3	€3	€6	21	€21	€231	39	€39	€780
4	€4	€10	22	€22	€253	40	€40	€820
5	€5	€15	23	€23	€276	41	€41	€861
6	€6	€21	24	€24	€300	42	€42	€903
7	€7	€28	25	€25	€325	43	€43	€946
8	€8	€36	26	€26	€351	44	€44	€990
9	€9	€45	27	€27	€378	45	€45	€1,035
10	€10	€55	28	€28	€406	46	€46	€1,081
11	€11	€66	29	€29	€435	47	€47	€1,128
12	€12	€78	30	€30	€465	48	€48	€1,176
13	€13	€91	31	€31	€496	49	€49	€1,225
14	€14	€105	32	€32	€528	50	€50	€1,275
15	€15	€120	33	€33	€561	51	€51	€1,326
16	€16	€136	34	€34	€595	52	€52	€1,378
17	€17	€153	35	€35	€630			
18	€18	€171	36	€36	€666			

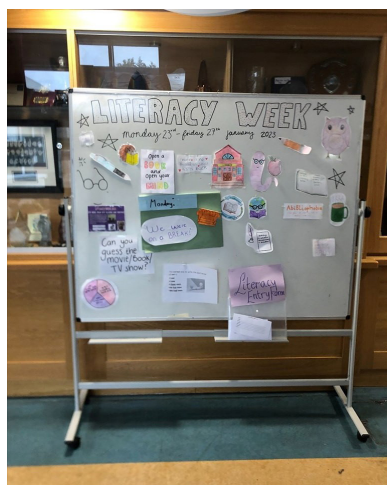
## Literacy Week

Literacy Week took place in January in ACS. The theme for Literacy Week this year was; 'Literacy - it's more than just reading and writing!'

Staff and students shared what books they were reading, TV series they were watching, and podcasts they were listening to. The aim was to highlight that literacy includes engagement with language in any form and is a skill we use every day.

Students also got involved in a competition where a riddle was placed on the Literacy Board at reception. Students had to solve what book/film/song/news headline was being referred to. Answers included: 'The Hunger Games' and 'Michael D Higgins says no to homework'.

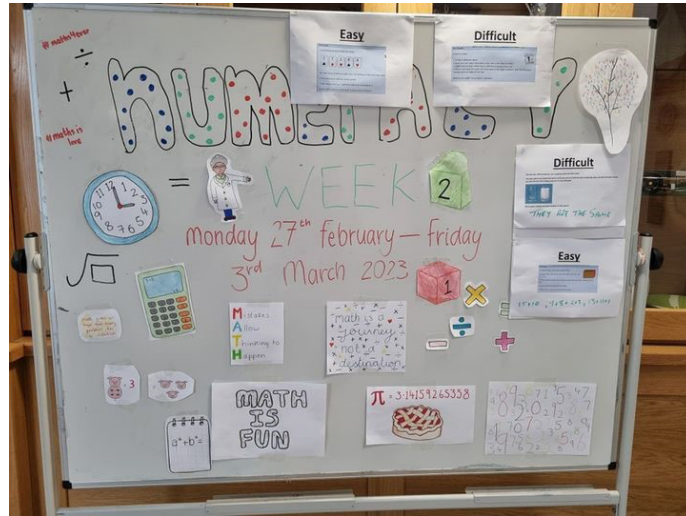
Below are some of the book/TV/podcast highlights of the year!





## Numeracy Week

Numeracy week took place in ACS at the end of February where students were given tasks and puzzles to try to complete each day. Their maths and problem-solving skills were really put to the test. Students were able to work in pairs, or on their own to solve word problems. Many found it difficult but loads of fun was had as students engaged with all manner of tasks throughout the week.



## Relationships Week

We had Healthy Relationships Week in ACS. It marked the beginning of six weeks of Relationships and Sexuality Education lessons for all students in all year groups. Topics covered include consent, boundaries, healthy and unhealthy relationships as well as reproduction, and the effect of social media on our understanding of relationships. Letters outlining specific topics for year groups have been uploaded to Cloudschool. Well done to all students who engaged so positively!



## International Women's Day

*~The world needs more women like you~*

On this International Women's Day, Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2023, we celebrated and thanked all the inspiring, kind, caring, empowering, strong, and motivated women in our lives, wherever they may be.

The white board at reception celebrating International Women's Day, created by TYs Sarah Hegarty, Ciara Murray and Grace Toohey.



## Safer Internet Day

Sharing Information Online: "The Dos and Don'ts"

My name is Julia Valentine, and I am the Safer Internet Day Ambassador in Ashbourne Community School. I was working with Webwise Ireland and other ambassadors around Ireland to spread awareness about internet safety in post primary schools.

Together with my Safer Internet Day Committee, I began my campaign in January 2023. The title of my campaign was, "Sharing Information Online: Do's and Don'ts". I began my campaign by gathering my Safer Internet Day Committee which consists of Fabien K, Jasiu G, Ava N and Alex D.

They helped me to begin my campaign by creating posters and PowerPoint presentations, helping me to run the Safer Internet Day Poster Competition. They also supported me by creating my Awareness Board which sat outside reception. I also compiled some tips which were emailed to students every day during the week.

The PowerPoint presentations created were on the topics of Coco's Law and sharing personal information online. The Coco's Law presentation was shared with the SPHE teachers who then showed the presentation to their class. The PowerPoint presentation on sharing information online was presented Fabien K and I in St. Declan's National School. Thanks to the staff there for the opportunity.

I am so thankful for this opportunity with Webwise and I learned so much on how to educate people the right way.

By Julia Valentine, Safer Internet Ambassador



# School Ambassadors

## #AndSheCycles

This year, the #andshecycles ambassadors have worked on various projects promoting cycling and its benefits to all students. We began our work with a survey, the information we gathered from this helped us recognise areas to target our efforts towards.

We held a bike security marking event with Garda Barbara Kelly. Bikes were marked with UV pens which improves security as it allows bikes to be recovered if lost.

Our major event for this year is Cycle-fest, this is a sponsored cycle celebrating cycling as a fun and effective way to travel. Students participating will collectively cycle 390 km in aid of World Bike Relief, a charity that expand opportunities by providing bicycles to people in rural communities around the globe.

We have partnered with other climate ambassadors in the school to publicly promote our cause by displaying a decorative mural.

Overall, we as ambassadors have progressed on our journey in encouraging young people to cycle to school this year.

By Seren Barry, #andSheCycles Ambassador



The #andshecycles campaign was developed to explore, understand and address barriers to cycling for teenage girls. This year as #andshecycles Ambassadors it was our duty to continue the hard work of ambassadors before us and promote the cause. At our first event we learned that only one in 250 girls cycle to school. After hearing this statistic, we were saddened that more girls were not reaping the benefits cycling has to offer to themselves and the environment. We decided to make a change and use our platform to empower young girls, making our school different, the exception to the data. Throughout the year we talked to students about their real problems and how we could help. After listening to their concerns, we found that the main barrier to cycling was embarrassment and safety. But of course, there are some circumstances that we cannot help with, for example distance from school. However, we felt that there were initiatives we could approach to help girls in other aspects to get in the saddle.

We had a lot of work to do, and as we are a mixed school that we would plan our events including everyone who wanted to take part. We wanted to add an element of fun to our events and bring students together. We first started off with a survey so we could gather data on all the students and see what the cycling statistics were like. Through this we found that we had an eager group of students who loved cycling and that want to promote cycling to other students and show them the benefits of it. We firstly started off with a raffle so we could fund other events.

With the idea of fun in mind we decided to run a charity cycle called Cycle-Fest. The objective of Cycle-Fest was to get students to collectively cycle the distance between Kerry and Donegal and to also raise money for a charity. We also chose to work with the non-profit organisation, 'World Bike Relief' as we were very impressed with the work that they have done in third world countries by making cycling available to all. We also wanted to make cycling in our community safer. We did this by Bike Marking. Bike Marking is done by using a UV pen to write students' Eircode's onto bikes and local Garda Barbra Kelly kindly came in to do this for us.

To summarise our year as ambassadors we all conclude it was a pretty crazy journey with a few bumps in the road, but we are so glad we took this ride together as we learned so much and had a lot of fun along the way.

#andshecycles Ambassadors

Seren, Keelin, Lara and Laura.



### Climate Ambassadors

The Climate Ambassadors have been very busy this school year. They completed a training day in February in the Hyatt Centric Hotel in Dublin City which was very beneficial and gave them a lot of ideas. Since then, they have labelled all the bins in the school, recycling and general waste, with details of what should be put in each bin and have been working towards installing compost bins in the Home Economics rooms and canteen. They have also been collaborating with the water ambassadors and #andshecycles team on painting a mural in the school representing the three groups.



### Green Schools 2022-23

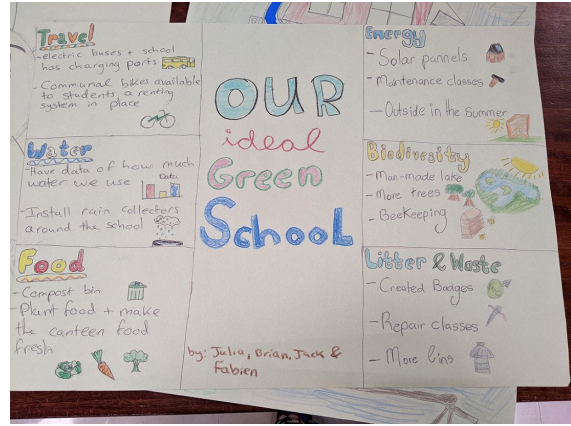
2022 has marked the beginning of Green School’s committee embarking on their efforts to achieve their tenth Green Flag. This is a two year process which will round off a momentous 20 years of Green Schools at ACS in 2024. Our theme for this flag is Food, Biodiversity and Global Citizenship.

The first task was to complete a survey to establish the baseline awareness of our school community about food production. We are in the process of finalising our school map which will highlight areas relating to food production, consumption and disposal as well as biodiversity in our school grounds.

After Easter, we will be planting crops including lettuce and peas, which will hopefully be ready for harvest by the end of the school year.

ACS has been asked, as an “outstanding” Green School, to take part in An Taisce’s celebrations of 25 years of Green Schools in Ireland. As part of the celebration, we will add a poster to a time capsule which will be buried at the base of a tree planted to mark the occasion. The poster will show our environment related hopes and wishes for Ireland in 2048.

In May, our Green Schools committee visited Dunsany Castle and BeeWise for tours highlighting the importance of biodiversity.



### Water Ambassadors

On Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, our four Water Ambassadors, Siún Delany, Devin Maher, Bronwyn Harland and Aisling Timmons, completed their first training day in Dublin. They met with other students from Dublin, Monaghan and Louth to discuss water treatment, problem solving surrounding over-use of water and different innovations to bring back to our own school. It was a really fun and informative day.

Then on the 26<sup>th</sup> of January 2023, three of our Water Ambassadors were delighted to be welcomed to Mount Carmel Secondary School for a support session as part of the Water Ambassador Programme 2023 with students from across Dublin. They reflected on design thinking, focused on communication development, and shared ideas to raise awareness around water conservation which was another wonderfully informative day!



## Water Ambassadors' Poster Competition



## Clubs

### Chess

The school has recently established a new chess club, providing an exciting opportunity for students who are passionate about this intellectually stimulating game. Open to all students, regardless of their skill level, the chess club has quickly become a popular extracurricular activity. Here students are able to learn new strategies and techniques, as well as compete with their peers in friendly matches.

Not only does this club provide a fun and engaging way for students to spend their free time, it also helps to develop valuable cognitive skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and strategic planning. With the success of the chess club in its first year, we hope to continue to grow and foster a love of the game among our students for many years to come.



### Drama

The ACS Drama Club began in September and has had a very productive year. They have delved into the world of improv and script writing. Each week students would have a two to three-minute performance, and if they did not perform, they were helping other groups with their productions. Every week, students got involved and worked together to create fantastic show pieces. This not only helped build their confidence, but also helped to build new friendships within the school.

In December, the Drama Club members took a trip to the Abbey Theatre to see the world of drama in action. They were brought onto the set of the play 'The Weir', where they got to go behind the curtains to the backstage to

see the wig room and costume department. In these sections, they were able to try on costumes from different productions. Students had an exciting time exploring the backstage world of the Abbey Theatre and enjoyed getting stuck in.

## JIGSAW - One Good School

Jigsaw is a youth mental health charity that offers support to young people aged 12-25. This year Ashbourne Community School became involved in their ONE GOOD SCHOOL initiative.

This initiative seeks to support the mental health of wellbeing of students, staff and parents in secondary schools across Ireland. Our school aims to provide a safe and supportive learning environments for staff and students, and so we undertook ONE GOOD SCHOOL as we hoped it would further develop the building of life skills, resilience, and a sense of connectedness amongst peers, staff members, and parents. This initiative included a series of interactive workshops for staff and students, webinars for parents, online resources for teachers as well as peer education training for six of our TY students.



## JIGSAW Week

To launch ACS as a JIGSAW One Good School in October, we held a JIGSAW week for staff and students, where we sought to raise awareness about the initiative. The theme for this week was 'Everyday may not be good, but there's something good in every day', which became the hashtag #somethinggood.

Our peer educator team of six TY students, Alana Rock, Jamie Hanney, Kirsten Minto, Seán Reid and Jasiu Gozdzik, arranged several activities for students in the school. Whilst staff activities were organised by the staff members on the One Good School Team: Méabh O'Dea, Amy McLoughlin and Gillian Casey.

### Day One

A whole school photo competition was launched. Students were encouraged to share #somethinggood from their day. Each day, highlights were shared on the school Instagram page. Our photo competition winners were; Alyssa Minto (First Year), Saoirse Carney (First year) and Jason Folan (Third year)

### Day Two

Staff were treated to a JIGSAW breakfast, sponsored by LIDL. During this breakfast, staff were invited to complete a JIGSAW online course 'A One Good School Approach'

### Day Three

Students were surprised with an intercom raffle. JIGSAW stickers were hidden under random chairs across the school. The lucky students who found them were treated to a prize.

### Day Four

Staff were surprised with a personalised positivity post-it, written by our Jigsaw Peer Educators.

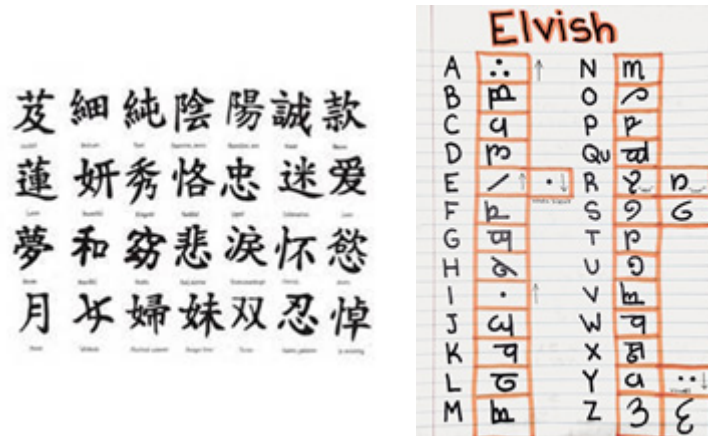
### Day Five

A special delivery of chocolate bars was delivered to every staff member in ACS as a way of saying, 'Thank You'

## Linguistics

Linguistics is the scientific study of language and its structure and in the Linguistics Club we try to find patterns in the words and grammar so that we can understand their use and meaning in that language. Students meet up weekly in BA02 with Ms Slevin to try their hand at a range of languages from well-known languages to more obscure, minority and sometimes dead languages. The goal is to develop students' problem-solving skills and to inspire them to consider the fascinating range of careers at the intersection of language, linguistics (the study of human language) and computing.

Every year the school enters students into the All-Ireland Linguistics Olympiad (AILO) and this year, 1044 students from 106 schools, in 30 counties, took part in the Olympiad. One of our Fifth Year students, Conor McCluskey, narrowly missed the top 100, by less than half a percent, and the chance to take part in the national final. If you are interested in learning more about AILO or to try your hand at a sample puzzle, check out <https://ailo.adaptcentre.ie>



## Solás - LGBTQ+ Safe Space

In 2021 a request from some students to have a safe space in our school for the LGBTQ+ students in ACS brought Solás into fruition. Solás, which means 'light and hope', was under the guidance of Ms. O'Neill and Ms. McKenna and they met the students at lunchtime in RA02 every week.

In September, three students from Solás participated in the first Pride Picnic over in Kingswood College. Students from Piper Hill, Nass Community College, Kingswood and ACS met and shared their school life experiences as LGBTQ+ students in Ireland in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Students also made plans for Stand-Up week. It was a wonderful day celebrating diversity and uniqueness!



From September 2022 the Solás group has grown in strength and numbers. In November, students from the Solás group organised different events for Stand-Up Week. Displays were made illustrating the changes in Ireland over the last 100 years. Students created a lesson for each academic subject celebrating one famous person associated with the subject. Ms Kavanagh prepared a lesson for each SPHE class highlighting the impact of homophobic language on society which was delivered to all students. On the 17<sup>th</sup> of November all staff and students in ACS were encouraged to add some colour to their uniform in support of our LGBTQ+ community. The Solás group had face tattoos and stickers for anyone who wished to wear them. The Solás group came together on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> to have a pizza party and watch the film *Dating Amber*. It is great to witness the growth of Stand-Up week in ACS.



## QMark

In September ACS was invited to participate in BeLong To's Q Mark Safe Schools accreditation. The Q Mark aims to review the various aspects of school life (including policies, uniform, culture, and environment) to ensure we are a safe inclusive space for all students. Ms Kavanagh, Mr Glennon, Mr Walsh, Ms Tersgini, Ms Lennon and Ms McKenna are the teachers driving the Q Mark. Surveys were sent to all stakeholders, and a student focus group was created to get as much feedback. This information will be the foundation of our action plan. As part of the Q Mark, all teachers will receive three and a half hours of training.



## Peer Education

The Peer Education programme is where six senior students learn all about a course called 'Let's Talk- Sure Why Not?', how to be a peer-educator and how to deliver workshops to younger year groups in the school.

'Peers' play an important role in young people's lives. Young people are more likely to seek support from their friends than adults. The use of peer-to-peer education has grown in popularity recently as it is believed to be a more effective method for mental health promotion. Jigsaw's 'It's Time to Start Talking' is a 40-minute workshop which focuses on promoting help-seeking behaviours. It encourages young people to talk to someone they trust when they're not feeling okay. I found that by taking part in the training to become a Peer Educator, I now have a better understanding of mental health, I have improved my presentation skills, and, I also believe that there is no need for stigma when seeking help.

We undertook three training days with Brenda Bradley from JIGSAW Meath. The first took place here in ACS, our second training day happened in Athboy CS (our partner school) with the final day in the Newgrange Hotel in Navan.

During the first session, she walked us through the course to help us gain a greater understanding of what we would be doing. In the second session, we learned presentation skills which gave us confidence for delivering the course to the younger year groups in our school. Then we practiced delivering the workshop in front of each other in the final session. We picked up lots of tips and tricks for making an effective presentation. We are now trained to deliver the workshop and will be doing so in the final term of the school year.

By Alana Rock, Peer Education Mentor



# School Trips

## Camino

On April 3<sup>rd</sup> 35 TY students, 12 Fifth Year students and four teachers met up at terminal One at 4pm to embark on our 2023 Camino trip. Upon arrival, we were transported to Sarria by bus and arrived at our accommodation. That evening we planned our schedule for the following day. The next morning, we started our walk after breakfast at 7.45am following an SSS session, (Shea's Stretching Session) the weather was perfect for walking and students were excited to get under way.

Along the way students and teachers talked and laughed and listened to music. Students found their own pace very quickly and settled into a rhythm that was comfortable for them. There were times when students walked in large groups and other times when they walked in twos or threes. Teachers worked through the group and engaged with students along the route. Generally, we arrived at our destination each day around 3pm where upon we checked students into their accommodation. Students took some time to relax and recover after the days walking before dinner each evening around 7pm. Afterwards students and teachers enjoyed some board games and general chat before hitting the hay at about 10.30pm.

We walked a total of 120km over five days passing through some of the most beautiful countryside and small villages. As a group they got on so well, the sense of good humour and comradery among the students and teachers was a real highlight. Before the trip I explained to students that this journey was more than just a walk and so it proved to be. Students ran the full gamut of emotions from excitement, happiness, sadness and at times reflection. It was great to hear from students along the way about the assorted reasons they were walking. In some cases, they were walking on behalf of someone or in memory of someone. Others looked forward to the physical challenge and the sense of achievement they would feel upon completion of "The Way".

Along the way students collected stamps or "sellos" in their Camino passports and chatted to many people from across the globe. Many also took the opportunity to practice their Spanish.

The final days walking saw us enter the city of Santiago in epic fashion to the sounds of "Amhran na bhFiann" and walking behind the school flag - the locals certainly knew the Irish had arrived in town. Arriving at our destination, the Cathedral of St James, it was hard to hold back the tears as students and teachers hugged and congratulated each other on completing the Camino and achieving something incredibly special.

The following day students collected their certificates "Compostela" and enjoyed a tour of the cathedral and some free time to enjoy the city of Santiago. Later that evening many students attended a special Easter Saturday mass. We also had a fun awards event where students and teachers voted for students in such categories as "most likely to return to the Camino" and "the Spirit of the Camino".

I would like to pay tribute to teachers Barbara Vipond, Fiona Pike and Brendan Howlin without whom this trip would not have been as successful as it was. A huge amount of time went into organising this trip from September last year. The trip simply would not have happened without their considerable dedication and hard work. The care and attention given to students throughout was second to none and it was a pleasure to walk and work with them on this trip. It takes a lot of hard work, dedication, humour and a little "madness" to head off with a group of 47 students for a week. The students themselves were great ambassadors for the school and Ashbourne town. It was a pleasure and a privilege to walk with them and share in the experience of "The Way"

Pat O'Shea (Team Leader)



## Salamanca

During the February midterm, a small group of eager and excited Fifth and Sixth Year students went to Colegio Delibes in Salamanca, Spain, for a week of classes and activities. This is the third time that we have brought a group here and this trip was equally successful.

The students had five hours of classes per day and every afternoon and evening they got to experience the delights of this beautiful and historical city while taking part in various activities. These ranged from salsa and cooking classes to cultural and art focused walking tours of the city. An unexpected fun activity was a myths and legends tour where we got to roam the city late at night learning about unusual and dramatic tales of some real people and families from the city. However, the highlight of the trip was doing an exchange with a local secondary school by joining them for a table quiz and then meeting up that evening for a tapas tour – truly living the Spanish experience!



## Ski Trip

During February midterm, 78 students and teachers headed off to Andorra for our annual ski trip. We had a superb six days on the slopes of Grandvalira where students attended ski school for four hours each day. The students showed great determination and commitment during their ski lessons. Their progress during the trip was inspirational.

In the words of one student after we came back from the trip “I had an amazing experience with everyone which will last a lifetime of memories for years to come”.

We are enormously proud of all our students. Their behaviour was complimented by not only the teachers but also airline staff, the hotel staff, our ski reps and their fantastic ski instructors. It was a pleasure to be part of making these memories with you.



# Extra Curricular

## Athletics

Following on from last year's success at the athletics Leinster Championships ACS students have been putting their best feet forward again this year. In Last May Shane McGrath, Mollie Whyte and Laura Bolster qualified for the Leinster Track and Field Finals; Shane winning intermediate boys 200 metre final. Following this, in November last Shane finished fifth in the Irish Schools Combined Events (200m, long jump, 800m, shot put, and 60m hurdles).

In January, ACS took 39 students to compete in the North Leinster Cross Country Championships in The Phoenix Park, our largest showing yet. Hopefully, this spurs more athletes on for next year. With the better weather approaching, in theory, we are looking forward to more events in the summer.

Athletics is not about winning the race, but competing, often against yourself. It is a challenge for one. Sometimes getting out there and doing it is success alone. We want to encourage all students to be their best and athletics a place where you can do that.

As Usain Bolt said, "I trained four years for none seconds, and people give up when they don't see results in two months."

So, get out there and do it, in two months you will be better, guaranteed.



The Athletics season continued as fourteen ACS students braved a sunny, yet very windy day at the Meath Schools Athletics Championships at Claremont Stadium in Navan on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Events represented were the 80m and 100m sprints, the 500m, the 800m, the 1500m, and the long jump.

Congratulations to all 14 students who competed. Special congratulations to Leo Hussey in First Year who, by the width of a nose hair, took a bronze medal in the U14 minor boys 100m. Shane McGrath in TY took double gold medals, winning the U17 intermediate 800m and the long jump with a very impressive leap of 5.70m.

Every student should be proud of themselves for putting themselves forward and challenging themselves, because as we say in ACS, to finish first, first you must finish. We are so proud of you all.

Thanks to Mr Watsham for the info and photos, and to Mr Watsham and Mr Barry for accompanying the students.



**Leo Hussey (right)**  
**Bronze**  
**U14 boys 100m**

## Basketball

### Boys Basketball

The basketball teams at Ashbourne Community School may not have won any championships or titles, but the overall experience was still highly enjoyable for the staff and students involved. Despite not achieving success in terms of results, the team members developed strong bonds with each other and had a lot of fun while also improving their skills on the court. Additionally, the school's focus on building a solid foundation for future years meant that the team had access to good coaching and training, with special thanks to the TY and Fifth Year students who helped train and manage junior teams, all of which bodes well for the success of the program in the years to come.



### Girls Basketball

Following on from the enforced absence of school's basketball due to the covid pandemic, it was fantastic to see competitions back up and running for the 2022/23 season. With over 800 schools playing competitive basketball, it continues to be one of the most popular sports in Irish schools. The PPSC run league competitions for Minor, Junior, U16 and U19 at four different grades, with ACS competing at C level. Our First and Second Year girls played their first ever round of games in February and displayed all they had learned at their weekly training sessions.

Our Senior Girls had a fantastic season and reached the quarter final stages of the league. ACS began their campaign on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> of October beating Gaelscoil Reachrann 28-19. In their second game they beat Loreto Balbriggan 40-30. A much closer and nerve-racking game was had against Lusk CC with ACS pipping them to the post on a score line of 27-24. They ended their Round Robin with a win against St Marys Glasnevin 52-31. The girls have huge potential and are hoping for more success next year.



## Camogie and Hurling

### Senior Camogie

On Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> of March, our camogie team travelled to Clane GAA in Kildare to take part in the Leinster GAA blitz. 15 of our Senior Girls took part and played four games against schools from Louth, Meath and Kildare. Great determination was shown, and the girls demonstrated wonderful skill on the day. This was a fantastic achievement as the camogie team is new to the school and going forward, we hope there will be many more days out for the girls. Thanks to Ms Oats and Ms McCabe who mentored and accompanied the team.

### Boys Hurling

Congratulations to all members of last year's U16 North Leinster Hurling winning team who received their medals today Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022. First hurling title for ACS. Well done lads and to Coaches Mr Murphy and Mr Ryan.

Senior Hurlers won both of their group games against Prosperous and Athy. They received a walkover from Dunshaughlin and are now through to the North Leinster Final.



### Equestrian

The students of Ashbourne Community School have been very successful in the Interschools Show Jumping competition this year. Students from several year groups joined together to form teams for this extracurricular event. The teams had victories in the Killossery league, winning first place in the last leg of the league. They also achieved second place overall in the final competition. The parents of the students have been a huge support, bringing the horses to the shows and spending the competition days helping prepare horses and riders for jumping. The TRI Interschools team are currently preparing for the TRI Show Jumping final where we expect to see more success from these talented riders.



**Equestrian Success**

5th place in the TRI Interschools League at Wexford Equestrian on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2023

Back LtoR: Leeland Burtenshaw, Hannah Lynam

Front LtoR: Aimee Walsh, Saoirse Kiernan



**GAA Football**

**Under 16 Boys GAA**

Our U16 Boys team competed in the 'A' Championship for the 2022/23 season. We wanted to compete and test ourselves at the top table of school. We knew it would be a step up from the previous grade but both players and management were eager to give it a go. We faced St. Pat's Navan in the first round. This game was evenly contested in the first half, but the Navan School pulled away in the second half and ran out deserved winners. We faced Moate Community College away in round two. This was a more evenly matched game with the game going down to the wire with Moate winning in the end by four points. That result eliminated us from the championship. We were then entered into a Shield Semi Final where we faced St. Mary's Edenderry away. This game was tight in the first half and our lads just ran out of steam in the second half as St. Mary's ran out nine-point winners and progressed on to the Shield Final.

This concluded our season. A disappointing end but overall, a positive season. We are sure that these lads have better days ahead and they were a credit to the school the way they behaved all year. The U16s Boys Team was coached by Mr Newman, Mr Glennon and Mr Finlay.



### First Year Boys GAA

We are extremely proud of the way that the full panel of First Year Boys GAA participated in their series of games. They had three competitive matches, and two additional panel matches this term. Their season culminated with a Leinster Semi-Final appearance, a fantastic achievement for ACS and the players involved. We are all agreed that this current panel has significant potential for success in the years ahead if the players can maintain and build on the progress that they have made this year. Well done lads.



### Second Year Boys GAA

Second Year Boys finally got to take to the GAA field after not having a chance to play football last year. They were in a very tough group but showed great heart and spirit in their three games against St. Josephs, Ardee and De La Salle. Unfortunately, they did not make it to the Championship Semi-Final but they did make it through a tough Shield Semi-Final against Dunshaughlin. The tough training sessions and previous games really paid off as the boys won on a scoreline of 5-3 to 2-6. They now await a final against Ardee again.





**U16 Girls GAA**

In September 2022 Ms O’Connell, Ms Cassidy and Ms Mc Namee started training for the U16 competition. There were many girls at every training session all showing great enthusiasm. Training took place each Wednesday from 4 – 5 pm. We started off the year with a great win against Dunboyne. Unfortunately, we suffered a loss to Mercy Navan by a close margin. We had a bye in the final round of the group. We did not qualify for any further matches in our U 16 competition as only one team came out of the group. There were some challenges between November and February to keep girls interested as the U14 competition started in January. There are some incredibly talented players with enormous potential for the coming years as they move on to the Senior Team. A Group of TY students helped with training and matches which was a major help and advantage to us all. Ms O’Connell, Ms McNamee and Ms Cassidy are hoping to organise a team bonding event before the end of the year.



**U14 Girls GAA**

U14s started in January 2023. Ms Mc Namee, Ms Cassidy and Ms O’Connell trained the girls every Wednesday after school. Many First Year students and new students to the school got involved in training and matches which was great to see. Over 40 girls signed up for the team.

Unfortunately, we suffered a loss to a strong Oldcastle team and were given a walkover by Gormanstown. We did not qualify for any further matches in our U16 competition as only one team came out of the group. There were some challenge matches against Coláiste na hInse and an upcoming match against Loreto Navan to keep the girls interested along with training every Wednesday. In April, First Years attended a GAA blitz in Maynooth after having taken part in a Blitz organised by TY students in March. The First Years had an absolute ball at both Blitzes and got stuck right in.

Throughout the year there were great numbers for training and matches at both U14 and U16 level. This shows the enthusiasm students have, to play and represent ACS. The success of the Meath Ladies over the past few years had really impacted the number of girls interested in Gaelic Football. Huge credit must be given to ACS past students Máire O’Shaughnessy and Aoibhin Cleary who have had huge successes in recent years, from Leinster medals, All Ireland medals and All Star Awards.



## Golf

Ashbourne Community School was well represented in golf this year. Mark Muldoon, JJ McManus, Rory O'Boyle and Jack Ronan represented ACS in the Leinster Junior Schools Championship in the local Ashbourne Golf Club. The boys performed really well on the day but were placed just outside the qualifying spots to progress to the next round.

The three youngsters, Mark Muldoon, JJ McManus and Rory O'Boyle represented the school in the Leinster Senior Schools Championship held in the Lucan Golf Club. The boys played very well on the day on an unfamiliar course. The competition was very tough with only three teams progressing to the finals and the boys were up against Fifth and Sixth Year students from other schools. The team played great on the day and the experience gained will stand them in good stead going forward as they will all be eligible to play in the same competition for the next three years. The future of golf in Ashbourne Community School is in very good hands.



*Mark Muldoon, JJ McManus and Rory O'Boyle at the Leinster Senior Schools Championship in Lucan Golf Club.*

## Rugby

### Junior Girls Rugby Blitz

Well done to our Junior Girls Rugby team who competed very well at the recent Rugby Blitz in Dundalk IT.

Massive congratulations to Ava Cleary and Katieanne Bobbett who were selected at this blitz to try out for the Northeast Leinster rugby team.

Ms. McHugh and Ms. O'Donoghue are extremely proud of the two girls and the rugby team.

Huge thanks to Graham and the TY girls, Anna Chaykovska and Rachel Mahon, who have been training the team.



## Boys Rugby

Junior and Senior Boys rugby took off again this year after a couple of Covid interrupted years.

This year the rugby teams were trained and coached by Graham Brennan of the Leinster branch of IRFU and Ashbourne Rugby Club. The U/16 and U/19 teams participated in a number of interschool blitz competitions which led on to Interschools Cup and Shield competitions. Both Ashbourne teams represented the school with pride and were unlucky not to come away with some silverware. Valuable experience was achieved, and it will set up both teams nicely to take on the challenges of next year.

Three senior students were nominated for the future stars team in Leinster. Daniel Holmes, Enda O'Brien and Leon Mahon were nominated in their respective positions. A great achievement for the lads and the school.

Many thanks to Graham and teachers Mr Reilly and Mr Ormiston who accompanied the teams on match days and to Mr O'Shea who organises the administration of the teams.



## Soccer

### Boys Soccer

#### First Year Squad

The First Year Boys soccer team had an impressive start to their first experience of football at ACS. Competing in the Metro North A League they had impressive wins in the group stage, beating Beneavin 6-0 and St Paul's Raheny 3-2 in their first group games. A draw in their final group game saw them top the group and book their place in the semi-finals. They met Portmarnock in the Semi Final and in a closely contested game, the lads were devastated to miss out on a spot in the final after a 2-1 loss AET. Despite the disappointment, it was a great first year for the lads with fantastic potential for the years to come.



### U15 Squad

The U15 Boys team have already had experience of winning having won the Metro North A title in first year and it was no surprise they competed incredibly well again this year. With a win and a draw in the group stages they went through to the semi-finals only to narrowly lost 2-1 against a strong St Paul's Raheny side. In the Leinster Shield there were fantastic wins against Coolmine and Castleknock before meeting Creagh College from Wexford in the last 16. The lads were by far the better team and were unlucky to lose 4-3 AET to finish their season.



### U17 Squad

The U17 squad unfortunately didn't have as positive a season as they were capable of. Two losses meant they were unable to qualify from the group stages. However, this squad is full of very good footballers who have put in great dedication and work in their training so hopefully we can have success next year.

### U19 Squad

This year saw many of this group play their final game for ACS. Many of these lads were part of the team who won the Metro League in First Year for the first time in the school's history. This team is full of fantastic footballers who were competing in a very tough league. A win and a draw in the group stage was enough to qualify for the semi-finals where they were narrowly defeated by Blackrock College 3-2 after extra time. Nonetheless, they have made history during their time at ACS.



**Girls Soccer**

**Minor Girls Soccer**

ACS Minor Soccer Girls had a very good start to the soccer season winning four out of their first five games. The first defeat came in the Quarter Final of the Cup, losing out to Loreto Kilkenny. However, they quickly shook it off and continued with a draw and a win for the remaining league games. As a result of these fine victories of 6-0, 7-0, they saw their way into the regional cup final. Unfortunately, the girls didn't perform on the day and as a result they suffered another defeat at the hands of Drogheda. This saw the end of our season. However, there were some outstanding performances from the girls throughout the season with many players playing together outside of school. We look forward to next year so we can build on our experience of this year.



**Senior Girls Soccer**

ACS Senior Soccer Girls took part in numerous games this season in both the league and cup. The girls were very unlucky in a few games as they led the way coming in at half time, however, they were unable to keep the lead. As a result, we saw an early exit from the cup and suffered some defeats in the league. The girls kept their spirits high with some playing soccer for the first time. The girls show some great skill with some set pieces, triangle passes and taking on players down the wing. Unfortunately, it was not ACS's year for the senior girls.



## Volleyball

### U14 Girls Volleyball

The Junior Girls Volleyball Team had their first game against Ardee Community School. The girls played very well and showed great determination but were narrowly beaten. We wish them all the best in their next round of games. Thanks to the TY helpers Oran and Kirsten who helped mentor the team. A big thanks also to the PTA who sponsored our new jerseys.



# Student Achievement Outside of School

## Amy Spratt

Transition Year was a wonderful year for me to try and experience new things. Entering TY in Ashbourne Community School, I was enthusiastic to learn about my own interests, skills, and talents and where they might take me in the future.

I got the opportunity to do my work experience with Project One Sky, an Irish company whose aim is to further develop student wellbeing using technology. In my work with Project One Sky, CEO Colm Fallon gave me the chance to take on the role of a podcaster. I created a podcast called Amy Interviews, where I interviewed Tony Griffin, Grace Vella, and Shane Carthy, and used their stories to start a conversation amongst young people. I believe that through talking we can learn a lot about ourselves, and others. I wanted to be a voice for young people interested in developing themselves as people, and to let people know that if they have any issues or worries to talk to someone.

From TY and creating my podcast, I was asked to speak at a charity event to raise awareness for childhood cancer and the charity, 'Aobheann's Pink Tie'. I am a childhood cancer survivor and in 2022 I reached ten years cancer free. As I said in the speech, my job now is to give back and to always be a voice for childhood cancer. Experiencing cancer at an early age has made me realise the value of life and to grab every opportunity with both hands. I see life through new eyes and give everything a go nowadays. TY opened so many doors for me and allowed me to raise awareness on issues I feel strongly about.

By Amy Spratt, Fifth Year Student



## Fayomade Owoade



*The Sisters*, the photo entry by ACS 2nd Year student, Fayomade Owoade (Class Potassium) is one of the 20 shortlisted photos in the *Walk in My Shoes Frame of Mind* Competition.

*Frame of Mind* is an annual competition from Walk in My Shoes (WIMS) which aims to increase mental health awareness and reduce stigma through creative practice.

Secondary school students across Ireland were invited to submit photographs showing meaningful moments that feel important to them and support their positive wellbeing.

# Student Sporting Achievement Outside of School

## Girls Ruby Division One

We are extremely proud to say that five of our ACS Girls are now Leinster Rugby Division One under 18s League winners. The game was played on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> of March in Carlow against Athy. This is an amazing achievement as the Senior Girls section is still relatively new in Ashbourne. The team is a combination of Ashbourne RFC and Balbriggan RFC players – the team is called “AB”. There was an enormous amount of time and effort put into this partnership by both clubs, management, and from the girls themselves to get to this point.

Players involved on the day were Amber Finglas, Emma Gallagher, Beibhinn Donnelly and Anna Chaykovska. Rachel Mahon is another regular member of the team but unfortunately was unable to make the final on the day. This is a huge achievement and the mark of extremely hard work and dedication by the girls to reach such heights.



## Soccer

### Boys U15s football

Well done to ACS students Cillian Ryan, Tommy Toth and Finn Moylen who got to the quarter final of the East Mallorca Cup with Shelbourne Football Club U15s, eventually losing out to Rangers FC. Great experience for a bunch of great players.







*A huge congratulations to Third Year student Cillian Ryan who was selected for the Ireland U15 squad for the games against Latvia. He also scored a goal in this match where they won 6-0. A fantastic achievement.*

### **Athletics**



*A huge congratulations to First Year student Wayne Keogh who won first place in the 50-metre race in the Leinster Final of the Special Olympics. We are so proud of you Wayne. A brilliant achievement. Wayne is pictured with Principal, Mr Stewart and Year Head of 1st Year, Ms Morrissey.*



*Congrats to Sixth Year student Laura Bolster on amazing in the 123.ie National Indoor Championships in Athlone. Laura won gold in the U19 60m sprint with a new PB and won bronze in the U19 long jump. Photos from Cushinstown Athletic Club*



Well done to TY student Shane McGrath who won his first gold medal at the National Indoor Championships yesterday in U17 Long Jump. Fantastic achievement.

## GAA



Well done to Third Year student Daniel Doherty of Donaghmore GAA and the Meath U16s on their win against Tipperary in the Gerry Reilly Cup in Dunganny on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. So proud of you Daniel.



Congratulations to First Year student Chloe Doherty who has been selected for the Meath U14 squad and also to Éabha Magee, Fifth Year, and Katie Twomey, Sixth Year, who are representing Meath at Minor Level this year. Info and photo credit Donaghmore Ashbourne GAA



*Congrats to ACS TY student and Fingal Ravens player Max Duffy who has been selected for the Dublin Minor panel 2023. A wonderful achievement. Best of luck Max.  
Info and photo credit @fingal\_ravens\_gfc*



*HS Meath Awards 2022!  
Congratulations to ACS Fifth Year student and @donashgaclub player, Michael O'Sullivan, who is the Meath Minor Club Football Championship Player of the Year. Very proud of you.*

## Rugby



*Well done to ACS Second Year student Tom Stewart who, along with three other @ashbournerfc Under 15 players, has made the Northeast Leinster Development Team. Best of luck Tom!  
Tom is pictured second from right.*

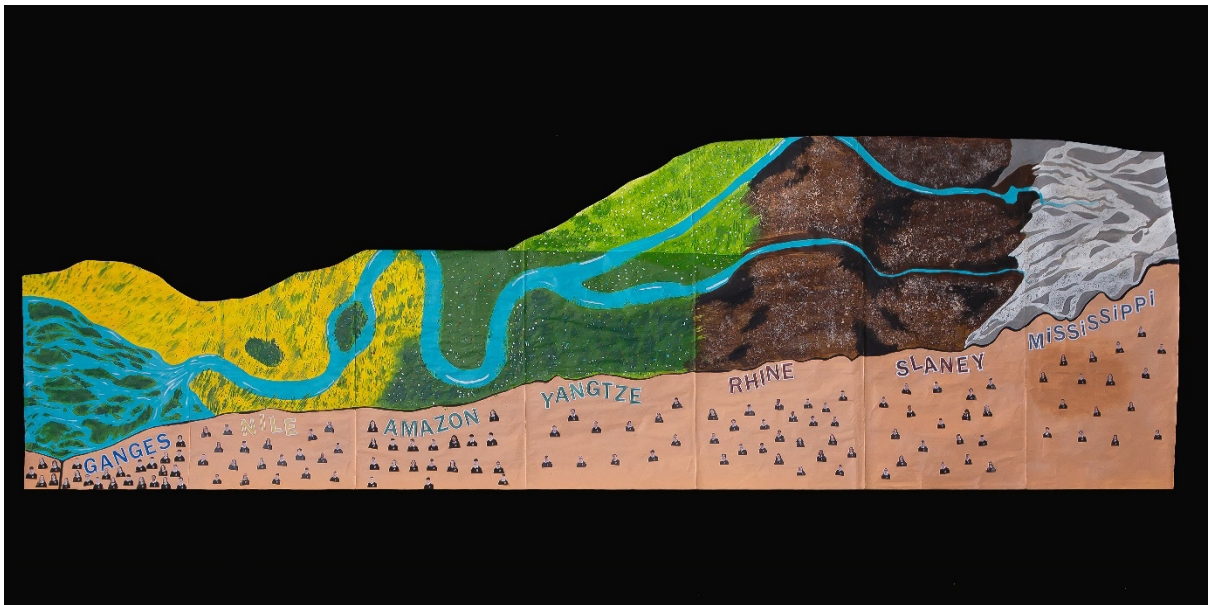
# Junior Cycle Results for 2022



Congrats to the JC Class of 2022 on your excellent results after three difficult years. Thanks to all the staff and your families who supported you. The results are a milestone, but they won't define you. Please be mindful of those who may be disappointed. Tomorrow is a new day full of possibilities, promise and hope. We at ACS are very proud of your efforts.



# 6th Year Graduation and Awards











# Retirements

This year we said goodbye to Martin McIvor who had been with Ashbourne Community School for 26 years! We wish Martin the best of luck in the future playing his much loved golf during retirement.



# In Memory Of

**Tina Lordan**



‘The candle that burns twice as bright burns half as long’. We, the community of ACS, were shocked and deeply saddened at the passing of our beloved colleague and friend, Ms Tina Lordan (Murphy) - Tina left such an indelible mark on our school community as a Teacher, Tutor, Guidance Counsellor, colleague and dear friend.



**Tina Lordan**  
*In ár gcroíthe go deo*  
**Ashbourne**  
**Community School**  
**2006 - 2020**

**Go soisí an síorsholas airtbhí**

Tina the warmth of your smile and presence.  
The laughter that could be heard from the staffroom when you were around.  
The shoes, Oh Tina those wonderful stylish shoes.  
Your forever in our hearts at ACS.

Jo Buckley

## Mick Naughton

The community of ACS were shocked and deeply saddened at the news of the passing of our beloved retired colleague and friend, Mick Naughton on 6<sup>th</sup> March. Mick was part of our caretaking team in ACS for 13 years until he retired on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Mick was a man of character and good humour. Nothing was ever too much effort for him. He always went about his daily work with a smile. He loved to chat to staff and students on the corridors, as well as at our many staff gatherings over the years. He shared his wisdom and experiences in an entertaining fashion.



May Mick rest in eternal peace. Thanks for all you did for us in ACS.  
Ní bheidh a leithéad arís ann.  
Mick always made me laugh.  
Today he made me cry.  
Rhona Gannon.



For more on our school, please scan the QR Codes below to access our Facebook and Instagram pages.



*Instagram QR Code*



*Facebook QR Code*



# Ashbourne Community School

Deerpark, Ashbourne,  
Co. Meath