



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

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28th November 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian,

62 school days have come and gone since the start of the term. There has been many activities in the past few weeks and here are some notices I would like to share with you.

Kick off your Christmas Season at the JSS Christmas Fair.

We hope that you will be able to join us for the John Scottus Christmas Fair this Sunday, Nov 30th, 11.30 – 4.00 pm. Come and have lunch or a cup of coffee!

Feeder School Tables 2014

The feeder school tables, 2014, were published on Nov 27. The tables indicate that John Scottus School have a 61 % progression rate to third level colleges. In the light of these tables, I thought I might inform you about the 6th years who have recently left.

The average numbers of CAO points attained by students in 2014 was 369. This compares to 380 in 2013, 437 in 2012 and 437 in 2011.

To summarise:

- 2014 – 369
- 2013 – 380
- 2012 – 437
- 2011 – 437

The average points total changes quite significantly because of the relatively small number sitting the Leaving Certificate in 2014.

Of the 28 who sat the Leaving Certificate:

- 64 % (18 students) progressed to recognised third level colleges home and abroad
- 11 % (3 students) progressed to Institutes of Technologies/NCI/DBS
- 14 % (4 students) progressed to Institutes of Further Education
- 11 % (3 students) either went working or repeated the Leaving Certificate

Some other points worth considering

- Only Trinity, UCD, DCU, UCC, MU, NUIG, UL and RCSI are recognised as third level in the statistics
- 70% of this year's Irish based college registration are of students who sat the Leaving in June 2014 ... hence the progression numbers are inflated by about 25%(Brian Mooney, Irish Times, Nov 27, 2014)
- Germany has a progression rate of 44 % to third level. This raises the question as to whether we should be measuring the success of our education system on third-level progression rates (Brian Mooney, Irish Times, Nov 27, 2014)

Creative Engagement Arts Grants

The school has been successful in getting two Creative Engagement Arts Grants funded by the Department of Arts and Department of Education and Skills.

Ms. Sinead Sweeny (Art teacher) has been successful in getting a grant of €1200 to create a school wall Mosaic with the help of artist Conor O'Brien. The aim of the project is to heighten the awareness of community/team spirit within our school

Ms. Nell Smyth (Drama teacher), with Ms Sinead Sweeny and Ms. Liz Byrne, have been successful in getting a grant of €1500 to fund the development of a film based on the recreation of an 'An Abduction' inspired by the kidnapping theme in Artemis Fowl. The aim of the project is to develop enthusiasm for performance and imaginative expression.

Both grants need to be matched by the school and funds raised from the Christmas Fair will be used for this purpose.

Radio Play

Students from the school have been involved in the development of a radio play 'On the shortest day of the year' involving Patrick Meehan (ex RTE) and writer of children's books 'The Shamroques'.

Fran Dempsey (Head of Music in JSS) has written the music and Liz Byrne (Drama Teacher) has directed it. Five 1st years, two 2nd years and two 4th years were part of the project, all rehearsed over 6 weeks after school and at weekends. During the October midterm 2 episodes were recorded. The broadcast dates for the two episodes and the documentary are as follows:

Documentary- December 10th, 3pm
 Episode 1- December 10th, 3.30pm
 Episode 2- December 17th, 3pm

The station is 103.2 Dublin City FM.

Literacy Week

Literacy week begins next week Dec 1st and here are some ideas for parents to help their child improve their literacy levels:

- Read regularly for entertainment yourself
- Have books and newspapers available at home
- Encourage your child to do more reading during free time
- Talk with children about current topics or newspaper articles,
- Check homework regularly,
- Listen to their child reading out their written work or presentation for school
- Encourage critical evaluation of adverts and websites.

Science Week

Science week (Nov 10th) was kick started with a spectacular display of science experiments from 6th year students and Ms. Bernice Cronin on Monday morning. On Tuesday all students put their knowledge of science together in a bid to get the highest score in a science quiz. The walls of the school were decorated with fun science facts to encapsulate the students ever inquiring minds. In Thursday's assembly the students learned about the recent Rosetta comet landing, a new movie released called 'The Imitation Game' which involves the Turing Test and students discovered how our perception can be deceptive by looking at optical illusions.

Second years attended a Geo-science workshop by Geology Survey of Ireland. Mary Carter from GSI held a fascinating talk on Meteoroids, Volcanoes and Earthquakes. Students were engrossed in interesting facts on meteoroids, the causes of earthquakes and volcanoes and how scientists record earthquakes with seismometers.

The students witnessed a real seismometer recording the motion of the ground beneath them, examined real meteoroids that were found on Earth and also got involved in acting out the movement of seismic waves through solids and liquids particles. The workshop was a great way of showing how science plays an important role in the Earth's geography.

Thank you to all teachers and students that helped promote the relevance of science, technology, engineering and maths in our everyday lives during science week

French Play

On Friday afternoon, Nov 14th, John Scottus School welcomed the 'French Theatre for Schools' company to the school. They performed 'Le Rôle', a story about a French girl who receives an audition for an English role in an Abbey Theatre production but is very nervous about it. She enlists the help of her friends to overcome her difficulties with singing and speaking in English and eventually gains the confidence she needs to take on the audition. All the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year students did an excellent job in managing to stay focused for the entire 70 minutes of the French play and in particular, Odhran O'Reilly, William Hou, Cian Dahdouh, Dulguun Sandagsuren, Persephone Kianka and Bill O'Toole are to be congratulated for their cameo appearances. It's very important that young students are exposed to as much authentic French as possible and a big thank you to FTFS for coming in to perform for us.

Sports Update

Junior cycle students continued their hockey and soccer modules this term. All students from junior to senior cycle travelled to the UCD Sports halls for a module of indoor basketball. The focus on all activities is to progress the fundamental skills and to encourage a greater learning experience/enjoyment of physical activity.

For a recent update please click <http://www.johnscottus.ie/2014/11/sports-update.html>

Extra curricular sports

Girls junior and 1st year hockey teams have continued to progress through the Leinster leagues. Cross country training has just commenced in preparation for the DCU invitational event in January. The 3 Ultimate Frisbee teams travelled to their first matches in the Dublin schools leagues. For more details please click

<http://www.johnscottus.ie/2014/11/ultimate-frisbee-league.html>

Study Seminar Day

The Study skills seminar was held in the school on Saturday Nov 8th. Mr. Daniel O'Connor the organizer reported that it was excellent. 22 attended and all students reported that they enjoyed it and greatly benefited from it. There was also a parents evening on Nov 26th which was also excellent.

Staff Development

The staff planning day on Nov 21st examined how the concept of Mindfulness directly maps to the school motto of "Delight in the present". Staff explored how the school could become a ' Mindful' school in all aspects, inside and outside the classroom. Teachers considered the proposition that every learning moment can be considered a mindful moment, as it is only when a student is fully engaged in the present does learning occur.

For you information here is a definition of Mindfulness:

"Mindfulness is deliberately paying full attention to what is happening around you and within you – in your body, heart and mind. Mindfulness is awareness without criticism or judgement. "(Jan Chozen Bays, 2011, How to Train a Wild Elephant: And Other Adventures in Mindfulness).

Web safety

In relation to Social Media and web activity, parents are encouraged to closely monitor all activities. For some helpful information for parents regarding web safety, please follow the link <http://www.internetsafety.ie/website/ois/oisweb.nsf/page/safety-guideparents-en>

Subject/Teacher List

Please click [here](#) to see the list of teachers in the school and the subjects they teach.

Mary White

It is with deep regret and sadness that I must inform you that Mary White a teacher in the primary school passed away on Nov 19th in St Vincent's Hospital after a road accident.

Even in death her gentle and generous nature continued to benefit others in saving and improving their lives, through her role as an organ donor. I am sure that we will all remember Mary White, her mother, her sisters and her bereaved friends and colleagues in our prayers and meditation. May she rest in peace,

Upcoming events

- Parent-teacher meetings for 1st, 2nd and 5th years will take place on Dec 1st
- Literacy week begins on Dec 1st
- Speech Competition Dec 4th
- Transition Year Display Night Dec 11th
- Carol Service Dec 19th, Friday 11.30 am

A philosophical thought for the day

“It is never too late to be what you might have been.”

- George Eliot

Yours sincerely,



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