



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

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February 18, 2022

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

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

Philosophy Themes

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

What are the natural principles to live life?
Do good habits bring freedom and happiness?
How can we respond naturally?

Philosophy and Self-Discovery Week

Philosophy week, with the theme "Does our speech uplift" took place the week beginning Monday, January 24. The week culminated in the Philosophy Fair presentations, where students with the best philosophical projects from each class presented to the rest of the school. In the weeks before Philosophy week, students in all classes prepared a presentation on their chosen philosophical question. Well done to Adam, who won the Junior award with "How would humans react if society collapsed?" and to Afshin and Sam, who were runners up with the topic of "Is beauty a fact or just taste". Well done to Katie, who won the Senior award with "Can Science explain everything" and to Anahita and Kaede, who were runners up with the topic of "Can humans be perfect".

Covid Update

We are still awaiting guidance from the Department of Education on Covid-19 restrictions. We will consider the directions received when the school reopens after mid-term and make appropriate changes where possible.

February Assessment

In-school exams, including the mock exams for 3rd year and 6th year, have taken place over the past week. Teachers will assess the quality of work produced and provide feedback to students after midterm. Using this feedback, the school will send reports to parents before the end of the term in March. We hope that these reports will show what learning has occurred in the previous two months.

Anti-Bullying Policy

The Board of Management conducted its annual review of its anti-bullying policy at its last meeting. To see all school policies, please click [here](#).

Study Skills

On Tuesday, February 8, Super Generation gave a study skills workshop exploring raising school and exam performance, dealing with anxiety around exams, and becoming more motivated to study. We will also be receiving the online guide shortly on study skills for parents to view. The feedback from students was very positive, and we hope it will help them develop strong study habits.

Lost and Found

Please note that Ms Swan is organising a "lost and found" every Thursday between 1 and 1.10 pm in front of the school.

Open Morning and Enrolment

We are delighted to announce that we will be enrolling 44 students in 1st year next August 2022. Traditionally we have enrolled one class into 1st year. Since last year this has now expanded to two classes, and we look forward to the energy and enthusiasm of these new students. We moved to our new location in Old Conna in 2017, and our profile in the area has dramatically increased. The increase in the school's profile is mostly due to word of mouth. Thank you for sharing your experiences of John Scottus.

We held an online Open Morning on Thursday, January 27, for parents enrolling children for August 2023. We had an excellent turnout, and we also expect to have very strong enrolment into 1st year of August 2023.

Student Leadership Team

Our 5th year students have sent in their applications for the various student leadership roles. The interviews for the Student Leadership Team will take place after mid-term. It is great to see our students put themselves forward for leadership positions.

Padma Shri Award – Mr Kortenhorst

We are delighted to share the news that the President of India has awarded Rutger Kortenhorst the prestigious Padma Shri Award 2022. The Padma awards are one of the highest civilian awards in the country. The Awards are given in various disciplines/ fields of activities: art, social work, public affairs, science and engineering, trade and industry, medicine, literature and education, sports, and civil service. Mr Kortenhorst was one of only ten people of a nationality other than Indian to get an award. Well done Mr Kortenhorst.

Chemistry Olympiad

Chemistry student, Caitlín, has successfully progressed onto the next round of the National Finals in the Chemistry Olympiad competition. Well done, Caitlín.

Collection for Five Loaves

Our collection for the W.H Five Loaves homeless charity in Bray was very successful and raised €142.81, along with a van load of supplies. Thank you for all your generous donations, and congratulations to the 2nd year students for organising this charity event.

Interview with the Luxembourg Ambassador

Our 5th-year Business students participated in an interview with the Luxembourg Ambassador on Migration Issues in the EU. During a very enjoyable two-hour interactive session, the students discussed the causes and impact of Migration in EU.

Transition Year Update

Among many other things, Transition year students have started a sign language course, completed a First Aid Course and participated in Sustainable Schools Workshops. They have also completed their DATS or Career Aptitude tests to help inform their 5th-year subject options and choice of 3rd level study.

The TYs are now organising their outdoor adventures. They have set up a committee and organise their trips every Friday. In environmental studies, the students have planted a new hedgerow along the staff car park. In Junk Couture, submissions have been completed, and students now await anxiously to see who gets through to the semi-finals.

Despite the wind and rain, the students bravely went on a camping trip to Lough Dan this week. Well done to all students involved and Transition Year Coordinator, Mr Telford, for their enthusiasm, resilience and inclusivity.

Tuesday, March 22 – School Closed for Junior Cycle Teacher Training

Please note that on Tuesday, March 22, all our teachers will be attending training on the new Junior Cycle curriculum and assessment methodologies. Hence, the school will be closed, and there will be no classes taking place on this day. I appreciate your support in this important professional development event for teachers.

Extra-Curricular Activities

Athletics

Our Athletics events have been one of the least disrupted sports with Covid. Our students have been competing in events throughout the year. In the most recent East Leinster Championships, our 1st year boys team won bronze medals, Blaithin Donelon won silver in her event, and Iona McCool Murnane qualified for the Leinster Championships in Santry.

Hockey

Our hockey season is in full swing. We are still training every Wednesday, and the first of our girl's hockey league matches will be taking place after the midterm.

Soccer

Our Soccer teams continue to train every Wednesday with games to continue into the Summer term.

Basketball

Basketball training continues every Friday at lunchtime. Our 1st year boys have been entered in a basketball league, which is due to commence after the midterm.

Frisbee

The lifting of restrictions brings the return of indoor sports such as frisbee. Our Senior boy's team travelled to Gonzaga for their first game of the year. More will follow as tournaments begin to be organised.

Board Games Club

The Board Games club continues during lunchtimes. Interested students should talk to Mr Burns.

Horse Riding

John Scottus will have a horse-riding club for the first time. Sessions will begin after mid-term on Wednesday afternoon. Please get in touch with Ms Williams or Mr Pender to express your interest.

Sailing

It is also hoped that the very popular sailing club will also resume after the mid-term. Please get in touch with Mr Bourke to express your interest.

Music Extra-Curricular Activities

The long-awaited return of Musical clubs is just around the corner. The music group had their first meeting this week, with a turnout of over 20 students. After the midterm, Ms Williams plans to take two music sessions a week in the library from 1.00 pm to 1.30 pm. The min-Orchestra group will meet on Tuesday, and the singing group will meet on Friday. There are also plans to take a Guitar group meeting on Monday.

Instrumental lessons in the piano and guitar are also planned after school. Special thanks must be given to Ms Williams for organising these activities.

Students should keep an ear out for the rest of the year for more clubs and activities being organised.

Summary of Events coming up

Monday, February 28 – School reopens

Thursday, March 17 and Friday, March 18 – School Closed, Bank holidays


Tuesday, March 22 – School Closed, Junior Cycle Professional Development for Teachers

Friday, April 8 – End of Term

Philosophical thought for the day

"The mind is not a vessel to be filled but a fire to be kindled." –
Plutarch

Yours warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Declan Kelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a long, sweeping underline.

Dr. Declan Kelly

Principal

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