



JOHN SCOTTUS SECONDARY SCHOOL

OLD CONNA, FERNDALE ROAD, RATHMICHAEL, CO. DUBLIN.

TEL: (01) 6680828,

E-MAIL: SECONDARY@JOHNSCOTTUS.IE WEB: WWW.JOHNSCOTTUS.IE

February 7, 2024

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.

Student Leadership Team

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

Deputy Head Students: Georgina Papadimitropoulos, Eric Hrofman

House Team Captain: Shona Haughey

Wellbeing Captain: Nika van der Kuil, Sadhbh Fitzmaurice

Visual and Performing Arts Captain: Cora Porter

Sports Captain: Adam O'Connor Kenn

Prefects: Katie Woods, Sofia Florides, Reuben Conneally

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

Thursday, March 7 - School Closed.

Please note that the school will close on Thursday, March 7, to facilitate a Professional Development Day for all teachers. Each year, the school is allocated two days for teachers' professional development. This is the second of the allocated days.

February Assessment

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

Scholarship for 5th and 6th year

The schools offer academic scholarships in 5th and 6th to students who achieve outstanding results in their Junior Cycle exams. The scholarship is a 35% discount on tuition fees. Students must achieve at least 2 Distinctions in their Junior Cycle exams. On average, only 3.5 % of students achieve a distinction, and getting 2 or more distinctions

is significant. We are delighted to announce that three students who complete the Junior Cycle exams in 2023 will be awarded scholarships for the 5th and 6th year.

Transition Year

Transition Year in India

The TYs embarked on a ten-day trip to India on 30th January. On the trip, Students can learn about some of India's rich heritage and culture by visiting Delhi, Agra and Jaipur sites. Students will also get a chance to visit a couple of schools for which the students have raised money. They will also visit other charity organisations that are carrying out amazing work, such as the Sheroes Hangout Café, which helps women who are survivors of chemical burn attacks, and the Bear Rescue Center which is a sanctuary for the Sloth bear, Deepalaya, which helps adults and children from the sanctity towns to empower themselves through education. To see some pictures from the trip, please follow the link [here](#).

Friday trips

TY's had three Friday trips in January. The first Friday was a hike up the Sugar Loaf, and the group were lucky enough to get perfect conditions to climb to the top and have lunch with excellent views from all around. The second Friday trip was a visit to the DSPCA, where students learnt about the amazing work done there and how to ensure animals are cared for at home. Afterwards, the group walked up to the Hellfire Club. The last Friday before we left for India was a hike up Bray's head and an upper cliff walk followed by ice cream on the beach. To see some pictures from the trips, please follow the link [here](#).

St Joseph's Shankill

On 17th January, Transition Year had a visit from two volunteers from St Joseph's Shankill to talk to the students about dementia, their work, and how to create a more inclusive environment.

Weightlifting Ireland

In January, the girls finished their module on Olympic powerlifting. The fantastic instructors, Aoife and Sandra, taught our students Olympic power movements using training weights.

Junk Kouture

In January, students finished their Junk Kouture projects, which they had all worked on since September. The Junk Kouture competition offers our Transition Year students a creative way to engage in sustainable fashion. The students created wearable fashion costumes using only recycled materials. Each costume has a unique theme, and a short video and photo were taken to enter the competition. An in-house JSS runway show will take place to show off the work after the midterm.

Erasmus Project

We are delighted that under the direction of Ms Shanahan, the school has successfully received a European Erasmus grant to develop innovative teaching methods in the area of Sustainable Energy. As part of this project, 6 business students will travel to Sweden in April for one week to work with students from other countries.

Ski Trip

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

End of year School Trips

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

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

School Events

Philosophy and Self-Discovery Week

Philosophy week, with the theme "Conflict resolution: How can I resolve inner conflict and conflict around me?" took place the week beginning Monday, January 22. 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.

Workshop by John Lonergan

The week began with a workshop by John Lonergan, the retired warden of several Irish prisons. He had a lot of gripping anecdotes involving inmates, and he gave good tips, which the students took on board. This became evident as students were heard quoting him the next day, saying, 'Don't use phrases like 'always' and 'never' and 'you should...' but rather 'I or we will ...'.

Overnight trip to Townly Hall

As part of philosophy week, TY students and 5th-year students went on an overnight trip to Townley Hall from the 22nd to the 23rd of January for an activity-based philosophy trip. On the trip, they explored the theme of "Conflict Resolution" through teamwork activities, yoga, scavenger hunt and meal preparation for over 40 people.

Mr Kortenhorst reported from the trip:

The Townley Hall overnight was an enjoyable and useful learning experience. Seeing how everyone did their little bit to make it all happen was heart-warming. A team of TYs with Mr Bourke took charge of the kitchen when they arrived and cooked a delicious pasta dish with vegetables, garlic bread, and a selection of desserts. They even managed a birthday cake! There were stacks of dishes to be cleaned after each meal, but various students also got stuck there. Mr Gorey had two good sessions on body language, speech and conflict resolution, while the other group had a relaxing hour of yoga with Ms Williams.

Some students experimented with their singing voices in the Rotunda. It sounded very solemn and musical. The Treasure Hunt was tricky enough as some letters from the previous year were still up in the trees; despite all that, the winning team took all nine

selfies with the nine hidden letters from which they had to come up with the word TRANQUILITY. This twenty-four-hour workshop brought us all closer together, and everyone showed their best side for the duration of the trip. It's definitely worth repeating.

Wellness morning

On Friday morning, Feb 2, 3rd years participated in a wellness morning before the beginning of their mock exams. They did calming yoga, had treats and hot chocolate in the canteen, and played the winning two sports from their Philosophy of Sport projects. Philosophy of Sport is a part of the 3rd Years Philosophy classes where they are tasked with creating their very own sports. They then present these brand-new games to their classmates. The two winning games, Hunger Balls and Foot-lic (a football Gaelic hybrid), were so fun that they might find their way into our next Founders Day activities. Thanks to all the teachers who ran all these activities as they were a great success.

Extra-Curricular

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

Green Schools

The Green School Committee has recommended and continues to work on our theme of Energy. One representative from each class meets fortnightly. The aims are to increase awareness and reduce school energy use. Committee members practice important skills such as taking minutes of meetings, creating presentations, and public speaking. We hope to get our 3rd green flag in 2024!

Film Club

A record attendance of 47 students stayed after school to watch our most recent movie screening. Students enjoyed an afternoon of snacks and the Christmas classic Home Alone. Our next showing will be on Tuesday, February 20th at 3:45 pm where we will have a mystery movie for students to enjoy. There will be two more screenings before the end of the year, one at Easter and another before the Summer holidays. All years are welcome to join.

Athletics

East Leinster Cross-Country Championships - Phoenix Park

On January 24th, 25 members of our Afterschool Athletics club travelled to Phoenix Park to compete in the biggest event on our Cross-Country calendar. On the day, we had students representing the school in various categories, including the Inter girls, Junior boys, junior girls and minor boys' sections.

Conditions on the day were difficult, with high winds and distances of 1km - 3km. Despite the challenges, all of the JSS students rose to the occasion and competed excellently on the day. The standout result of the day was our junior girl's team placing 2nd in the team event, with Zoe Van Den Bergh getting the highest individual placement with a 3rd place medal.

Athletics training continues every Thursday after school. With the Cross-Country season coming to a close, our attention will now turn to some of the Track and Field events that will take place over the next few weeks and months.

Soccer

u17 Girls League

St. Killian's German School 6 - 2 John Scottus

The John Scottus girls played St. Killian's German school in the second last game of their group stage the first week back to school after the Christmas break. The girls, who were down some numbers due to injuries, travelled to Clonskeagh with just 12 players and fought valiantly throughout. The JSS girls had the brighter of the opening exchanges, and although St. Killian's had chances of their own, Brenna Gallagher, Zoe Van Den Bergh and Kayla Flavin, with a wonderful solo effort, went closest to breaking the deadlock. With those chances gone-a-begging, St. Killian's responded and went two goals up in a matter of minutes. Just before halftime, Brenna Gallagher got one back for John Scottus, following in her shot to smash the rebound home from close range. St. Killian's struck first in the second half before Zoe Van Den Bergh raced through, brought the ball past the goalkeeper, and coolly slotted home to an empty net to make the score 3-2. The effort the girls had put in started to take its toll at this point, and some knocks and injuries meant we went down to 10 and then 9 players. The numerical advantage started to pay off, and some wonderful goals from very talented St. Killian's striker gave them a comfortable win in the end. The u17 girls have one final game in their group, and victory will be enough to see them advance to the knockout stages. All to play for.

John Scottus 5 - 1 Rockford Manor

Our u17s girls' team wrapped up their league campaign with a convincing win vs Rockford Manor and, in the process, secured their place in the knockout stages. The JSS girls started the strongest and were on the front foot from the very start. Leenjte Van Den Bergh, Amelia Lynam and Blaithin Donelon were winning the ball well in midfield and defence and playing good passes forward. Brenna Gallagher, Kayla Flavin and Milly Fischer all went close to scoring in the opening quarter. The Rockford Manor defence was breached midway through the 1st half when good work from Brenna Gallagher resulted in her being in possession on the edge of the box. She squared the ball across for Zoe Van Den Bergh to coolly slot home. The girls didn't have to wait long for their second. A great through ball from Amelia Lynam was latched onto by Zoe Van Den Bergh, who neatly found the corner for her second of the day. Just before halftime, the JSS girls got their third when Brenna Gallagher smashed home from close range after reacting quickly to a breaking ball in the box. The Rockford Manor girls came out with more energy in the second half, and a real end-to-end game ensued. Blaithin Donelon got JSS's 4th with a fine finish before a poacher's effort from Zoe Van Den Bergh completed the scoring and her hat-trick. Rockford Manor won a penalty late on which was excellently converted. No less than all their endeavour deserved. A good win sees the girls advance to the knockout stages.

u15 Girls League

John Scottus 6 - 2 St. Laurence's

Our Junior girls travelled to St. Lawrence's Secondary School on Friday, January 19th, in what was a must-win game. After a slow start and going one goal down, the girls really

pulled together and worked hard. Annalia Halford scored a great goal to equalise proceedings, and from then on, there was no looking back. More goals from Annalia, Zoe Van Den Bergh, Kayla Flavin and Keelin Doyle meant the result in the second half was never in doubt. Overall, it was a great team performance, especially in defence, where the girls fought hard for every ball. The result means our u15 girls have also advanced to the knockout stages of the Leinster League.

Junior Boys

Ringsend 4 - 1 John Scottus

On January 30th, our 2nd and 3rd year boys travelled to Irishtown to play Ringsend College. The first half was a tight affair, with both teams matching each other well. Ringsend went closest early on with a long ball over the top, putting one of their strikers through on goal. His shot hit the crossbar. From there, the John Scottus defence started to come to terms with the long ball approach, and Oisín Conlon and centre back subdued their attacks well. Late in the half, some good play on the left wing allowed Daniel Quilty to release Corin O'Leary one-on-one with the goalkeeper. He coolly slotted home to give the away team the advantage. With minutes to play in the first half, Ringsend managed to score twice in quick succession. This was a real blow to undo a lot of the good work that we had done in the first half. The second half became a far more open affair, with both sides creating many chances. Both Senan Kelly and Emre Ucar really got things moving in midfield. Unfortunately, we couldn't capitalise on the opportunities we created. As the half wore on, Ringsend proved to be the more clinical of the sides and, in the end, ran out 4 - 1 winners. It was a good performance for the lads, which was not accurately reflected in the result. However, that is our league over for this year. We will continue to play friendly matches throughout the year to prepare for our u15 and u17 teams next year. This will be the first year that we will have boys' teams entered in both those age categories.

Basketball

Boys' 1st and 2nd Year Basketball league.

After a successful 3rd year league, it is now the turn of the 1st and 2nd Year Boys to take to the Basketball court.

January 17th V Gaelcholáiste an Phiarsaigh, Rathfarnham

For most of the boys, this was their first introduction to basketball and provided a great opportunity to play and learn a new sport. Although they lost, they fought hard as a team and brought away some valuable learnings. They now know what to expect in their next game and are eager to return to the court. The final score was a very respectable 20 - 11.

January 26th V St Killian's, Bray

After a slow start and being down by 10 points at halftime, the boys fought hard and came right back into the game, and in the closing minutes, were very unlucky not to win. It was a much-improved performance and only their second game. They are quickly learning to play together as a team. The highest scorers on the day were Aaron Hoffman with 10 points and Oisín Donelon with 8 points. Overall, it was a much-improved team performance with great defending from all the lads, especially Kai Tandy and Connor Wood. With confidence growing in each game, we are confident that our first win is very close. The final score was 20-22 to St Killian's.

Team on day:

2nd year: Conor Wood, Oisín Donelon, Harry Dunne, Kai Tandy, Callum Nolan, Finn Merryweather, Aaron Hrofman, Alfonso Zunzunegui

1st-year boys: Gagan Harsha, Lucas Tyner, Alex Carmody and Ruben Swan

Hockey

Girls Hockey

The school hockey leagues are coming to completion over the coming weeks, and both teams have been getting great game time and experience.

Our juniors were up against a very tough Loreto Foxrock team in the cup in December and made themselves and the school proud in their efforts.

The minors have had two fantastic league games in the last few weeks, with wins against Mount Sackville and Loreto Stephens Green. Our first years have joined the minor squad, and it's been great to see them get plenty of play.

Boys' hockey

The boys continue to train on Wednesdays, and there have been huge improvements in their skill levels. The first-year boys' next game is scheduled against New Park Comprehensive on March 6th.

PE Curriculum Update - update

The new school term has seen us start two new activities in our PE lessons. On Tuesdays, students travel to Angels Gymnastics Club, where they will participate in their gymnastics module. On Thursdays, all students will travel down to our local GAA Club Bray Emmets. During these lessons, we will use the Bray Emmets facilities to cover the Health-Related Fitness component of our curriculum. Students will perform fitness testing and circuit training.

Philosophy Themes - update

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

How do I develop good habits?

How do I resolve conflict?

What is my attitude to making mistakes?

Do I produce quality work?

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

Summary of Events coming up - update

Monday, February 19 – School reopens

Monday, March 4 – Start of Seachtaine na Gaeilge

Thursday, March 7 – School closed, School Professional Day

Monday, March 18 - School Closed, Bank holidays

Friday, March 22 – End of Term

Finally, a philosophical thought for the day:

"Life is game board. Time is the opponent. If you procrastinate, you will lose the game.
You must make a move to be victorious" – Napoleon Hill

Yours warmly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Declan Kelly".

Dr Declan Kelly

Principal

Phone: 01-6680828

Email: dkelly@johnscottusoldconna.ie