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# Cumarsáid

## Newsletter December 2021



# OUR LADY'S TEMPLEMORE

### Welcome from the Principal

I am delighted to introduce the Christmas edition of Cumarsáid. Our commitment to providing high quality learner outcomes and learner experiences has continued this term as students engage with the curricular and extra-curricular programme on offer at Our Lady's. Students are working hard and all year groups have now completed their term assessments. The work of the Learning to Learn committee and the year teams is to be commended as they provide guidance for students on study skills, exam preparation and exam techniques.

While the school experience is still curtailed by public health guidance, we are delighted that students can participate in a range of extra-curricular activities including sporting events, Stand Up Awareness Week, College Awareness Week and a variety of Transition Year Activities. Students have enjoyed great success on the sporting fields with our U16 ½ team securing a place in the final of Corn Shéamuis Uí Dhonnchú and the Junior Ladies Footballers advancing to the final group games which will take place after Christmas. Our camogie players and athletes have also enjoyed success this term.

The visit of students, teachers and principals from our partner schools in "The Flipped Classroom" Erasmus project was a tremendous success. Irish participants and our international visitors from Sicily, Bulgaria and Slovenia enjoyed every moment of the action-packed week. The work of staff and students on this project is very much appreciated. The "flipped classroom" is an innovative teaching methodology which enhances students' autonomy and engagement in their learning. It was wonderful to observe students make new friends and develop their IT skills in a stimulating learning environment during the Irish mobility which took place from 6th – 10th December. The project will continue for the remainder of this academic year and plans are already in place for the mobility to Sicily next March.

As we look forward to 2022, we have an ambitious programme of work. We will continue to work hard to realise the potential of each student in our school community. We are excited about the multi-million euro building project which will include our Autism Facility, additional teaching spaces and a toilet block. The work will commence in early January and has an expected completion date of December 2022. Our focus on enhancing digital literacy will continue in the new year as part of our School Self-Evaluation process. Work on embracing diversity will be supported by our TL21 Learning Project in conjunction with Maynooth University/Laois Education Centre and our Erasmus Project with partner schools in Malta and Spain. We are grateful for the support of the National Council for Special Education and the National Behaviour Support Service in reviewing our Code of Behaviour and we hope to conclude this work by the end of the school year.

I extend Christmas greetings to all members of our school community and their families. May you enjoy the peace of the season and may you celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ our Saviour in a special way this year. Merry Christmas and a very happy and safe New Year.

Beannacht Dé oraibh go léir.

Patricia Higgins



## BUILDING PROJECT

On 2<sup>nd</sup> November we learned that our proposed building project was granted approval by the Department of Education to proceed to the construction phase. We were thrilled with this good news as the building of an autism facility was identified as a key priority at Our Lady's in 2014 when we opened our first class for students with a diagnosis of autism. We are delighted to announce that Mc Keogh Brothers Ltd will build the new facility. The multi-million-euro investment will deliver a state-of-the-art autism facility on the ground floor and it will also include classrooms, offices and a toilet block on the second floor. The new facilities will ensure high levels of comfort for students and the additional space will enhance the learner experience for all.

The planned building project will ensure that the school is best placed to serve the needs of the community for decades to come. The construction phase will commence in January, and it is expected that the work will conclude within twelve months. We look forward to the official opening of our new facility in the 2022/2023 academic year.



## SHOEBOX APPEAL

Well Done to students and staff for your wonderful contribution to this year's Team Hope Shoebox Appeal!! The response was fantastic with over 160 shoeboxes and a generous amount of cash donation also from staff. Each box means so much to the child that receives it. It offers them so much hope knowing that others are thinking of them. That's over 160 children for whom Christmas will be brighter this year because of the generous spirit of our school community in Our Lady's. We can be very proud of our combined efforts.



• **UPCOMING EVENTS:** Pre-Examinations 7th February — 18th February

## ERASMUS MOBILITY AT OUR LADY'S

A hugely successful Erasmus Mobility took place on the week of 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> December at Our Lady's Secondary School. It was a wonderful interactive experience of various cultures, traditions and a sharing of educational ideas, which undoubtedly will enhance teaching and learning in our school.

Our Partner schools came from Bulgaria, Sicily and Slovenia, while Austria attended virtually online. We were delighted to welcome the Principal of the Bulgarian school, Darinka Stoyanova, and their coordinator, Daniella Lazarova and their students. We also welcomed, the vice principal Elenka Kajtna Zorko and Nada from the school in Slovenia and their students. Finally we welcomed the principal from Sicily, Alfio Russo, and the coordinator Patrizia Fadda and their teacher Concetta Alongi together with their students. We welcomed online the principal Helmut Kainz and the main coordinator Irene Seier together with their students from our Austrian school.

The Erasmus project received EU funding to develop the initiative of Flipped Classroom Teaching and Learning, using IT technology. Many educational videos were produced by our international students, in an effort to teach various topics and skills, eg Internet Safety, how to teach English verbs, how to teach hurling, how to make Kaiserschmarrn Kuchen, and many others. The idea was that students were teaching students, facilitated by their teacher. This initiative hopefully encourages students to take ownership of their learning experience as opposed to just being receptors of information.

We had a lovely opening ceremony with traditional Irish music, song and dance which was beautifully performed by our students from Our Lady's and prepared and organised by our music teacher Ms. Johnston. Our visitors were indeed enthralled by the experience of Irish culture, considering the fact that the students from Bulgaria had never flown before, or had never been outside of their country before, it was a cultural immersion that was most enjoyable.

We carried out workshops in the mornings and had activities in the afternoons. We visited Holycross Abbey and Bunratty Folk Park. We went on a day trip to Dublin, where we visited the Hugh Lane Gallery and Collins Barracks. We did a walking tour of the city. In the evening time we went to the Zoo Lights. The highlight of the week was our cultural evening in the school. Our Home Economics teacher, Ms. Kinane prepared a beautiful meal of Irish Stew for our international guests. This was followed by a ceili which was great fun. Thanks to Ms. Cashmann for her help in coordinating this event. The Bulgarian guests performed their traditional dance and the Slovenians provided some fun and games.

We had a wonderful night of culture, music, song and dance in the Templemore Arms, provided by pupils of Our Lady's who were highly entertaining. The Clonmore School of Dance, run by Danielle and Leona Bowe were most entertaining guests, performing to a very high standard. Past pupil Cillian Roche was a joy to listen to on the uilleann pipes. Ms. Higgins also gave us some lovely tunes on the accordion. It was an evening when you would be proud of Our Lady's and the community.

The week went by quickly and it was time to say goodbye. Friendships were formed, cultural experiences were exchanged, and teaching and learning took place. It will not be long before we will travel to Sicily on our next Mobility in March 2022.

It is important to thank all the students who were involved at various levels. They were exemplary in their engagement and attitude. They had a lovely sense of fun and laughter at all times. Thanks to the parents who gave huge support. A special word of thanks to all the teachers and management at Our Lady's who gave this Erasmus project such time and support. Thanks to Martin Grey and Pat Murnane who helped out with the sound system. Thanks to the TY students who gave great support daily. Thanks to Tina Fogarty (Coordinator) and Emily Bergin who organised the Erasmus event.



## WELLBEING

After a difficult and challenging time since the beginning of the global pandemic, we all need to mind ourselves and each other, now more than ever. National and international events including World Kindness Day, Stand Up Awareness Week, Remembrance Day and International Men's Day were acknowledged at Our Lady's in an effort to help raise awareness amongst our students. Stand Up Awareness Week is supported by the Department of Education and the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. It helps to build a school system that values the safety and wellbeing of LGBTI+ members of our school community. We also celebrated Mercy Day on 24th September. This year in particular we remembered with great gratitude and affection all of the Sisters of the Mercy Community who contributed so much to so many families in Templemore over the years. The Mercy Convent closed for the last time on 15th November and will be missed by many, after providing a long tradition of education and goodwill in the area.

We look forward to the days getting longer and brighter in the New Year and the opportunities that lie ahead. After a busy term, we hope that everyone gets the chance to relax, unwind and take time out during the holidays to do the things that you enjoy most. Do your best to help others as much as possible. A little gesture or act of kindness can go a long way and make a big difference in another person's life.



## LEARNING TO LEARN

The Learning to Learn Committee have continued their work around study skills this term. Third and sixth year have been given an opportunity to review exam results to identify how they can improve in each subject. Students are encouraged to identify and learn from their mistakes. Goal setting and identifying specific areas of focus have been explored in an effort to help students to manage their own learning and to improve grades. As we approach the end of this term, 3rd and 6th year students are assisted with the preparation of study plans.

### LEARNING TO LEARN STUDY SKILLS FOR SIXTH AND THIRD YEARS

*16 Days away from school – use them wisely!*

*Were you happy with your November results?*

*Think about the study you can get done over the two weeks*

**THINK OF THE POSSIBILITIES**

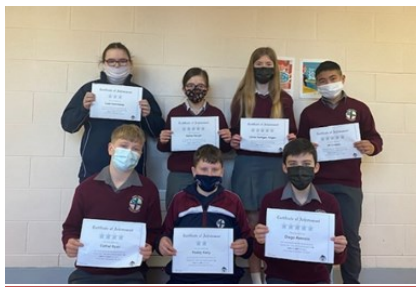




## SCHOOL SELF EVALUATION

As part of the School Self Evaluation process in Our Lady's this year our focus is on **Digital Literacy**.

Our aim for this year is to improve the digital literacy skills of our students. First year students take part in classes weekly that help them to improve their typing skills and navigate the digital world. Second year students are developing their IT skills in English classes each week by creating and presenting PowerPoints. These vital IT skills will be essential for the completion of their CBAs for Junior Cycle.



1<sup>st</sup> years who completed a typing test

Starting after Christmas, all Junior Cycle students will be taking part in a monthly Drop Everything and Read Initiative. The aim of this initiative is to give students time during the school day to read for pleasure. Students will be encouraged to bring a book or reading material of their choice to class, teachers and students alike will stop the work they are doing in a subject and take some time to read.



## COLLEGE AWARENESS WEEK

College Awareness Week was held throughout Ireland from the 22nd - 28th of November. During that week, students in Our Lady's were reminded of the importance of furthering their Education and gained an insight into the many options available to them after the Leaving Cert. Ann McBride from the newest Technological University, TUS Midlands Midwest spoke to 6th year students. TY students were given an opportunity to learn about the different Higher Educational Institutes throughout the country and the differences between them. Junior students enjoyed searching for clues as they were given a fact-finding exercise to do as part of a competition held that week.



## SENIOR CYCLE

### 6TH YEAR GEOGRAPHY FIELDTRIP

On Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> of October, the 6th year geography students completed their geography field study. The group went to Lehinch in Co. Clare to complete the fieldwork study which is a very important aspect of the Leaving Certificate Geography course. A great day was enjoyed by both students and teachers.



### 6TH YEAR PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Sixth year, Leaving Certificate, PE students enjoyed the PE and Performance Workshop which was held at Technological University of Shannon. Michael Fennelly, Lecture in TUS gave a very informative talk to 6th year students. He informed them about Sports Psychology in their Thurles campus.



### 5TH YEAR LCVP

5th year LCVP students enjoyed a presentation from Sean O'Farrell Cloncannon Bio Farm. Sean told them about the benefits and challenges of bio farming. How he promotes his business and bio farming as a career choice.



## LEAVING CERTIFICATE APPLIED

LCA1 students have been very busy organising their first task. During the term the class organised a lunch time soccer tournament for second year students. It was a great success which was thoroughly enjoyed by all second years.

LCA1 students interviewed our chef Joe Morrissey as part of a research project. Joe has been part of our school for almost 11 years and prior to this, he spent over 24 years as a soldier in the Irish Defence Forces. Joe told students about the various jobs he worked in from a very young age. He shared many stories of his time in the army including the rigorous training he went through when he joined in 1985 and his experiences during his eight overseas trips as part of Ireland's peace keeping duties. Students thoroughly enjoyed the chat with Joe and came away intrigued by the stories he shared.



LCA2 students had an opportunity to visit Templemore College of Further Education to learn about the courses on offer there and the many opportunities available to them after the LCA programme. Many thanks to the principal of TCFE Noel Colleran and Deputy Principal Micheal Lenihan for the warm welcome.



**Leaving Certificate Applied**  
- A Different Way

**Remember doing LCA:**

- ✓ gives you a qualification
- ✓ develops your skills
- ✓ broadens your horizons
- ✓ builds your confidence
- ✓ opens doors to your future career



## TRANSITION YEAR

Despite the public health restrictions our Transition Year students have managed to stay active throughout the term. TY classes have enjoyed many activities including a Personal Safety Talk from Alex Walsh, an Irish Oral Workshop, a variety of fitness classes and a trip to the Derg Isle Adventure Centre.

### Breast Cancer Ireland

Juliette O'Connell from Breast Cancer Ireland gave a very educational workshop to all TY students. The presentation promotes good breast health, taking the fear out of a breast cancer diagnosis, and educating young women about how to perform a self-breast examination. On the day TY students also presented Juliette with a donation they had raised from a bake sale.



### Personal Safety workshop

TY students took part in a Personal Safety workshop with Alex Walsh. Alex gave a presentation on the importance of internet and personal safety. The presentation began with an interesting insight into his personal experiences followed by practical tips and demonstrations on how to protect yourself in the event of a physical attack or assault. It was a fantastic workshop with the overall aim of students feeling empowered to protect themselves and respect others.



### Fable de la Fontaine: - Félicitations

Congratulations to TY French students Stacey Meade, Colm Gleeson, James Grey and their teacher Ms. Sinead Harding, who came second in a national TY French competition. 47 schools entered the competition. In order to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of French writer Jean de la Fontaine they submitted a video where they acted out and read a French fable "Le Corbeau et Le Renard". A huge thank you to all the TY students who created the set, worked in the background and also to Ms. Quinlisk, Ms. Cashman, Mr. Burke and Mr. O'Hara for all their assistance.



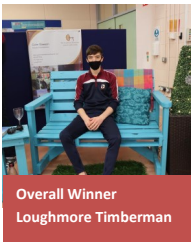
### Healthy Relationships Course

TY students completed a 6 week Healthy Relationships course facilitated by Ascend. Over the 6 weeks they looked at areas such as Healthy and unhealthy relationships, consent, gaslighting, signs of abuse and helping a friend.



## TRANSITION YEAR CHRISTMAS MARKET

Companies through to County Final are—Loughmore Timberman, Stand and Dry, K9 Crafts and Seoidin Jewellery.



Overall Winner  
Loughmore Timberman



Best Stand  
Stocai OLT



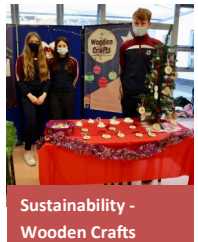
Best sales - Our Lady's  
Shorts



Best Interview -  
KSM Crewnecks



Best Marketing -  
Seoidin Jewellery



Sustainability -  
Wooden Crafts



Best Idea - Stand  
and Dry



## SPORTS AT OUR LADY'S

### Corn Shéamais Uí Dhonnchú

Our Lady's were very unlucky to lose out to a strong Rice College team in the Munster final of Munster P.P.S Corn Shéamais Uí Dhonnchú.

Final score on the day was 1:15 to 1:9. It was a tough sporting game and Our Lady's never stopped trying. Unfortunately, it wasn't our day. The team put on a great display throughout the Munster campaign and deserve great credit in how they applied themselves.



### Junior Ladies football

With more than 55 junior girls interested in representing the school in Ladies football we felt it was best to enter 2 teams into the league. Our Junior B girls competed against a very strong Presentation Thurles team in their first game & were sadly beaten. But this did not dampen their enthusiasm and the girls gave an excellent display against St. Angela's Waterford winning on a score-line of 3-14 to 2-11. This team will play Colaiste na Sceilge, Cahersiveen after Christmas to see which team will proceed into the Munster Cup or the Plate.

The Junior team are gaining experience with each game, made up predominantly of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year students, it is an excellent learning curve for them. They have contested games against Urusline Thurles & Rockwell College and will play Colaiste Dun Iascaigh after Christmas. We wish both Junior teams the best of luck in their final group games.

