

## Message from the Principal

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we begin 2019, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members of our St. Mary's school community a Happy New Year.

As you are aware St Mary's Secondary School is experiencing an increase in enrolment with a current student population of 660 students. To accommodate our students we have this past term completed a significant building programme which includes a new state of the art Science / Physics laboratory and 5 new classrooms including a second Art room, toilet block and offices.

I would like to take this opportunity to send our best wishes to the following teachers who retired recently; Mr. Timmons, Ms Curtin, Ms O Connor, Ms Mc Guane and Ms Cudmore. I also want to extend a warm welcome to our new members of staff; Mr Beecher, Ms. Barton, Ms Cotter, Ms Crowley, Ms O Sullivan, Ms Mulligan, Ms Ni Chroinin, Ms Harrington, and Ms Thompson.

Our strong tradition of academic success was highlighted in the recent Irish Times analysis of progression rates to third level courses, where St. Mary's was ranked 5th out of 73 schools in Cork and 38th nationally out of the top 400 feeder schools in Ireland. I wish to congratulate student, their parents and teachers on outstanding results in Leaving and Junior Cert the 2018 State Exams. The breakdown of our 2018 Leaving Cert results far exceeds national norms, with 39% of students achieving over 500 points and a further 30% 400-495 points.

The Board of Management hosted a reception on December 3rd 2018 to mark the achievements of the top Leaving Cert and Leaving Cert Applied student and to students who were awarded scholarships based on their exceptional Leaving cert results. Congratulations to Grace Moloney who was our top performing student with 625 points and to Katie Relihan who was our top performing LCA student with 98%.

Curricular reform and the introduction of the new Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) is very much embedded in our teaching and learning. Third year students are currently completing their second classroom-based assessments and Assessment Tasks in English, Business and Science. Second year students will also compete classroom-based assessments across five subject areas. The results of all CBAs will be reported to parents in June. I look forward to presenting our current transition year students with their official Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement Certificates in January 2019.

On a closing note, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of all teachers who nurture your daughter's holistic education and ensure she reaches her full potential. Students of St. Mary's continue to showcase their talents in sports, music, drama and their participation in school events and clubs is a hallmark of our vibrant school. We aim to create a warm, respectful, spiritual and happy school environment. I also wish to thank parents for working in partnership with us and appreciate your continued support.

*Yvonne Bane*

## RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

The Board of Management hosted a reception on Monday evening 3rd December for recent top performing Leaving Cert students, third-level scholarship recipients and retired members of the teaching staff. Students were accompanied by family members. Also in attendance were members of the current teaching staff, the Parents' Association and the Student Council.



*Sinéad O'Riordan with John Hourihan, Chairperson BOM*

Grace Moloney was the top performing Leaving Cert student and Katie Relihan was the top performing Leaving Cert Applied (LCA) student in 2018. Grace Moloney and Kate Ivory have both been awarded a UCC Quercus Entrance Scholarship. Kate was also a recipient, along with Laura Long, of a JP McManus Scholarship. Lily O'Meara and Sinéad O'Riordan have both been awarded a UCD Entrance Scholarship.

The recently retired members of the teaching staff who received presentations were Martin Timmons, Kathleen McGuane, Carmel O'Brien and Pauline Cudmore.



*Kathleen McGuane, Carmel O'Brien, Pauline Cudmore and Martin Timmons*

Music for the reception was provided by Transition Year student Grainne Egan who played the piano and Second Year student Sophia Breen who played the concertina.

John Hourihan, Chairperson of the Board of Management

made a presentation to each of the students and retired teachers. Yvonne Bane, Principal congratulated the students on their achievements, thanked the retired teachers for their years of dedicated service and wished all every success and happiness in the future.



*Laura Long with Yvonne Bane, Principal and John Hourihan, Chairperson BOM*



*Kate Ivory and Grace Maloney*



*Lily O'Meara with her father, Kevin*



*Katie Relihan with her mother, Ann*

# SCHOOL ASSEMBLY FOR ALL IRELAND WINNERS



*Paschal Sheehy from RTÉ with senior football team*



*Mourneabbey players celebrating with St. Mary's students*

Well done to Mourneabbey Ladies Football Club who won a Senior All Ireland title on Saturday 8th December in Parnell Park, Dublin. The victorious panel of players includes a number of current and past students. Mourneabbey players Ciara O'Callaghan, Ciara Lawlee, Eva Lankford, Kate O'Brien, Ellen Burke, Ashling Cronin, and Anna Ryan are current students. Also, the Mourneabbey captain, Bríd O'Sullivan, is a PE teacher at the school. Top scorer, Doireann O'Sullivan and

her sisters Ciara, Róisín and Meabh, are past pupils. On Tuesday 11th December, St. Mary's held a whole-school assembly in honour of the current and past students who won the All Ireland. Yvonne Bane, Principal, congratulated the girls on their fantastic achievement. Bríd O'Sullivan spoke on behalf of the players. She praised the school for its tradition of Gaelic football and thanked everyone in the school community for their enthusiastic support.



*Yvonne Bane, Principal, Bríd O'Sullivan, PE teacher and Sinéad Luttrell, Deputy Principal*



*Classroom in the new Prefabricated Area*



*Art Room in the new Prefabricated Area*



*New Physics Lab*

## NEW FACILITIES

Due to the increasing number of students attending St. Mary's, the school has recently completed the development of a new Physics Lab and the construction of a new, modern Prefabricated Area. The Physics Lab contains state-of-the-art scientific equipment and represents the commitment of St. Mary's to increasingly invest in Science education for our students. The Prefabricated building contains 5 new classrooms, including an Art room, office space and toilet block. A wireless projector and a Chromebook have been installed into each classroom. The teachers are utilising G-Suite to work collaboratively on projects, for example, Transition Year e-portfolios. This investment in ICT is the next step in the school's plan to improve its use of digital technology for teaching, learning and assessment.

## ART NEWS

Transition Year Art students are currently working on a school mural under the artistic direction of Ms. Evelyn Mullen. The mural will be outdoors. Images are being painted onto circular wooden boards which will be treated with varnish. Once attached to a wall, patterns/designs will be added to create a balanced uniformity thus allowing for all images to work in harmony.



*TY Art students working on a school mural*

## MATHS AND SCIENCE NEWS

The week of Monday 15th October was Maths Week at St. Mary's. The event was coordinated by the teachers in the Maths Department and supported by Transition Year students. Events included a Maths orienteering challenge for First Year students, quizzes for Second and Third Year students, a Maths countdown challenge for Fifth Year students, and a PRISM contest and a trip to the cinema to see Hidden Figures for Transition Year students. Finally, staff had to guess the number of sweets in a jar for their Maths Week challenge.

On 15th November, students from St. Mary's participated in the 32nd Irish Mathematical Olympiad (Round 1). As a result of their excellent performance, sixteen students from Junior Cycle and nineteen students from Senior Cycle were offered places at Maths Enrichment classes which are held in UCC from November 2018 to May 2019.

The Munster Maths and Science Fair took place in Mallow GAA Complex, Carrigoon on Sunday October 14th. St. Mary's students from different year groups showcased their Maths and Science projects at the event.



Munster Maths and Science Fair collage

## PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB



Photography Club members  
Lauren Sheehan and Eimear Lavery, First Year

The Photography Club meet every Monday at lunchtime. The club is run by Ms. Aisling Daly. Each week a new theme is assigned to students and they submit their best three pieces of work. The students have shown great creativity, imagination and talent in their entries to date and are constantly improving their photography skills. Ms. Daly has taken the Club on a number of recent outings, including trips to Mallow Castle and Cork City where they were tasked with putting their photography skills into action. Any student who wishes to join the club is more than welcome.

## GAEILGE24

On Tuesday, 13th November, students from St. Mary's accepted the challenge of speaking Irish only for twenty-four hours. St. Mary's was 1 of 300 schools in Ireland that took on the challenge. This was the fifth year of Gaeilge24, organised by Conradh na Gaeilge. The students had to speak Irish not just in school, but also at home and while participating in out-of-school activities such as sports. As part of the event, a sing-along was arranged in the school canteen at lunchtime. The event was co-ordinated by the teachers in the Irish Department and supported by the students involved in Coiste Gaelach. Participating students wore special t-shirts and wristbands provided by Gaeilge24. By participating, the students were given an opportunity to show their passion for, and commitment to, the Irish language.



Gaeilge24 participants

## COLLEGE AWARENESS WEEK

College Awareness Week took place on 19th-24th November. Guest speakers from UCC, CIT and IT Tralee spoke to students in the Senior Cycle. CAO information sessions, and portfolio and interview sessions were organised for Leaving Cert students. LCA students attended Mallow College Open Day. Fifth Year students undertook Career Decision Making Testing. Mr. Paul Carey co-ordinated Transition Year students who spent the week on work experience placements. Stress management and study skills workshops were organised for Leaving Cert and Junior Cert students. First Year students had to research careers and make posters. Career information stands were set up in the school canteen for all. Many thanks to Ms. Niamh Mulligan for co-ordinating College Awareness Week.



Students participating in College Awareness Week

## GREEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Green School Committee and Transition Year Enterprise students are working collaboratively to encourage recycling within the school. Recently, a competition was organised which required students to use the appropriate bins when disposing of their waste. The prize on offer for the most environmentally friendly year group was a trip to the cinema. Congratulations to Second Year students who won the competition.

## MENTAL HEALTH WEEK



St. Mary's celebrated Mental Health Week during the week of Monday 8th October. The theme was 'young people and mental health in a changing world'. Students and all members of staff were encouraged to participate in a range of activities. All were welcome to attend the morning Breakfast Club. Moreover, healthy eating stalls were set up at different locations throughout the week. A talk, 'Adolescent Mental Health', was delivered to parents. Sports and physical activity were organised to promote 'healthy body, healthy mind'. Several relaxation and mindfulness experiences were offered to staff, including Tai Chi, Yoga and Pilates. Activities for students included an art and photography competition, positivity walls, poster competitions, gardening groups, 'Funky Feet', Zumba, flash mobs, bookmarks and stress management booklets. A speaker from AWARE delivered their, 'It's all connected' workshop. Many thanks to all who contributed to the success of the week.

## OPEN EVENING

The school's annual Open Evening took place on Wednesday October 3rd. St. Mary's welcomed the parents of prospective First Year students and invited them to view our modern facilities, meet our excellent staff, and sample the warm and caring atmosphere that characterises our school environment. It was a thoroughly enjoyable experience!



## MERCY DAY MASS

The St. Mary's school community celebrated Mercy Day Mass on Monday 24th September. We celebrated our strong Mercy tradition and Catholic ethos and reflected on how we can continue Catherine McAuley's legacy of caring and compassion.

This year's school theme, inspired by the recent Papal visit, celebrates 'St. Mary's as a Family of Families'. Pope Francis' words, 'Please, Thank you and I'm sorry' are the three central tenets of our theme. The entrance hymn was the official hymn of the World Meeting of Families, 'A Joy for All the Earth'. As an inclusive school community, we endeavor to be guided by the values of kindness, mercy, respect, patience, understanding and hope.



# STUDENT VOICE

## BALANCE WELLBEING DAY

On the 27th November 2018, a group of Transition Year students headed off to County Kerry, where they attended the very first 'Balance Wellbeing Day' in the INEC. This event was run in conjunction with Spin South West and hosted by radio presenter Louise Cantillon (aka our very own, Ms. Cantillon). This event was aimed at adolescents and was very much focused on the topic of physical health and wellbeing. Speakers at the event included Sports and Performance expert, Joe O'Connor, Spin South West DJ, Meghan Scully, who is also a columnist with The Limerick Leader and author of Broken Love, Monika Dukarska, Irish Rower, and Ronan Brady, a former Roscommon footballer. They shared with us their life experiences and expertise in relation to health and wellbeing. I found the experience very beneficial. This event is a brilliant opportunity for teenagers and adults to increase their awareness around their own wellbeing and should be experienced by all secondary students throughout the country. - **By Róisín Murphy, Transition Year**

## BUILD A BANK

Every year, our school takes part in the AIB Build a Bank Challenge. This year we have decided to call our bank 'Strictly Come Banking'. Our team consists of six members: Amy Lynch, Bank Manager, Ashling Cronin, CEO, Mary McCarthy, Financial Controller, Gráinne O'Leary, Digital Officer, Áine Alexander, Creative Design Co-ordinator, and Aoife O'Shea, Marketing Manager. We hope to improve the skills we already have and develop new ones. We will be attending the National Build a Bank final in March in the RDS, Dublin. At this final, we will meet other school banks, receive professional feedback, and be in with a chance to win prizes. If any student would like to open an account with us or lodge money into an existing account we are in the canteen every Friday at break. Follow us on social media for information about competitions and events! - **Gráinne O'Leary, Transition Year**

## CAPPANALEA OUTDOOR PURSUITS

Cappanalea was an experience of a lifetime. It was extraordinary, life changing, exhausting and immensely enjoyable. My week of outdoor pursuits flew. The morning before leaving for Cappanalea, I was worried I would be home sick, but all the leaders and teachers made it feel just like home. I would advise every girl to go on this bonding trip as I made friends with girls I had barely talked to in my first three years in St. Mary's. When the end of the week arrived, I didn't want to leave as we were having so much fun but at the same time, I wanted to go home and get back to my own bed! - **By Shauna Clifford, Transition Year**

## HOME ECONOMICS NATIONAL AWARD

On Saturday 10th November my mother and I took the train to Athlone to receive my award for the joint highest Home Economics result in Junior Certificate 2018. We went to the conference room of the Athlone Springs Hotel and I was shocked to see celebrity chef, Neven Maguire. We were seated, along with other award recipients and guests, at the front of the room. There were four other students who were also being presented with a Home Economics award. When I was called to come forward, I walked up with my amazing teacher, Ms. Anne Marie Buckley. They presented me with the award and photos were taken. Neven gave me a signed copy of his new cookery book. He then did a cooking demonstration for about an hour which I thoroughly enjoyed. We went for lunch in the hotel restaurant, and then we got the train back to Cork. It was a long, amazing day! Currently, I am in LCA 1, working towards my Leaving Certificate and I am looking forward to attending college in September 2020. - **By Ciara Madigan, LCA 1**



*Ciara Madigan and Ms. Anne Marie Buckley, Home Economics teacher*



*TY students enjoying their week in Kerry*

# STUDENT VOICE

## NIALL MELLON EDUCATE PROGRAMME



Leah and Hollie Corkery with school children in South Africa

My sister, Leah, and I travelled to South Africa on the 24th September with my dad, my uncle and 300 other happy Irish volunteers. We landed in Cape Town, left our bags in the hotel and headed straight to our building site. Not a moment was wasted as we were put straight to work. Our week mostly consisted of painting, block laying and plastering. We got to see many hidden aspects of Cape Town, including the slums and shanty towns. The experience was upsetting, yet life changing. The happiest moment in everyone's week was handing over the finished product; a primary and secondary school to the children that would be attending. There was both laughter and tears! I intend to go again next year. We made friends for life. If you would like to learn more about the Niall Mellon Educate Programme check out their website; [www.melloneducate.com](http://www.melloneducate.com). - **By Hollie Corkery, Transition Year**

**Transition Year**

## PENNY DINNERS WORK EXPERIENCE

From Monday November 19th to Friday November 23rd, eight TY students took the train from Mallow to go to work in Penny Dinners, Cork to complete their first week of work experience. During the week, Beth, Sarah, Emer, Helena, Éirann, Sophie and Lisa Ann worked to the very best of their ability and indulged themselves in the vibrant atmosphere of the Cork charity. Tasks that were completed included peeling and chopping potatoes and carrots, sorting donated clothes into specific piles, sweeping up around the centre, stacking shelves, organising food and cutlery, dishing out dinners and waiting on tables. Each student noted that tasks ranged from simple and easy to difficult and stressful, but every job garnered fruitful results. All students agreed that the best thing about the week were the people in the centre. From the staff volunteers to the people we served, everyone had a joke to crack or a story to tell. We all enjoyed our week with Penny Dinners and can't wait to return during our own time. - **By Beth O'Sullivan, Transition Year**

## STUDENT COUNCIL

The Student Council have been working hard since September, fundraising for charities, promoting student voice and other activities. We meet weekly. We organised a Christmas Jumper Day in aid of St. Vincent de Paul. We organised a First Year competition to create Christmas tree decorations from recycled materials to increase the awareness of the importance of recycling. We helped to increase awareness of the importance of donations for the Christmas hampers. Student Council representatives attended school functions, including the Board of Management Reception which acknowledged and made presentations to top achievers of the Leaving Certificate class 2018, scholarship recipients and retired staff of St. Mary's. Student Council activities are shared on our Instagram. We ended the year by being treated to hot chocolate and festive treats, organised by Ms. Anne Dunne, our Student Council Liaison teacher. We look forward to organising lots more activities and promoting a positive school atmosphere in 2019! - **By Sarah Barrett, Transition Year**

**Transition Year**



Shabeena Jehan after receiving her Junior Cert results in September



Student Savers mini company who won Best Team Spirit Award at the North Cork Enterprise Fair



Halloween Fancy Dress



# FIVE BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDATIONS FOR YOUNG ADULTS

1. *Bridge of Clay* by Markus Zusak
2. *Orphan Monster Spy* by Matt Killeen
3. *Dread Nation* by Justina Ireland
4. *Love, Hate and Other Filters* by Samira Ahmed
5. *Children of Blood and Bone* by Tomi Adeyemi

## COMMUNITY LINKS: SILVER SURFERS

A group of Transition Year students have initiated a Silver Surfers Programme for this school year. This involves secondary school students teaching computer skills to older members of the local community. Also, they bake homemade 'goodies' for our appreciative silver surfers in order to enhance the social interactions that accompany the Programme.



Cello players at the Christmas Concert



Winter Wonderland Christmas display



Santa and Mrs Claus visit St. Mary's



Sacred Space



Transition Year volunteers arranging Christmas hampers for charity



Staff Choir performing at the Christmas Concert



Junior Choir performing at the Christmas Concert, 13th December

# NEWS IN SPORT



Swim team

## SWIMMING

Well done to our swim team who participated in the Munster Schools Swimming Gala held in the University of Limerick, Sunday 21st October. Many swimmers achieved personal bests, with some coming home with gold, silver and bronze medals. Congratulations to Aoife O'Shea who qualified to swim in the Schools National Finals which will be held in the National Aquatics Center, Dublin next February.

## PE

Second Year classes took part in the six-week Irish Life Schools Fitness Challenge 2018.

## BASKETBALL

Our U16 team made the county final where they were beaten by Midleton. They will now compete in the regional finals. Our U19 team competed strongly in the league. First and Second Year leagues begin in January. A special thank you to Chloe Ferris, 6th Year, who made a valuable contribution to basketball in St. Mary's over the past six years!



U16 basketball team

## SPORTS LEADERSHIP

Twenty one Transition Year students have undertaken a very worthwhile module delivered by Shirley Lankford in conjunction with Cork Sports Partnership. The module equips students with the skills and knowledge needed to plan and deliver fun activities to primary school children. Once each student fulfills the course requirements they will receive a Level 1 Award in Assisting Sports Leadership.



Munster Schools Cross Country participants



First Year camogie players

## FOOTBALL

First Year football training takes place every Wednesday from 3.30 pm to 4.30 pm. Thus far, the team have played matches against Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig, Christ the King, Kinsale Community School and Coláiste Mhuire, Buttevant. They lost one match and won three. The junior team enjoyed a good win over Kinsale. Our senior team reached the Munster quarter final, beating Coláiste Choilm, Ballincollig and St. Flannan's College, Ennis along the way.

## SOCCER

The junior soccer team trains every Monday evening after school. They defeated Carrigtwohill in Round 1 of their main competition. Clodagh Lehane is an excellent captain. They play Round 2 in early 2019. Many thanks to Transition Year students Aoife O'Sullivan, Shauna Dalton and Eva Lankford for their coordination of training sessions.



Junior soccer team