

Message from the Principal

As we begin the second term of our school year 2019-20, I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members of the St. Mary's community a Happy New Year.

It has been a busy, productive and successful school year so far. I am glad to report to parents that our large, new group of First Year students have successfully made the transition from primary to post-primary and are well settled into school life. Highlights include our wonderful Open Evening, the U16 basketball team being crowned Southern Champions, and the thoroughly enjoyable Christmas Concert.

Once again, St. Mary's achieved excellent results in the Junior and Leaving Cert state exams. St. Mary's reached 130% of the national average in the Leaving Cert results 2019. A number of students received third-level scholarships based on their outstanding Leaving Cert 2019 results. These include Caoimhe Cronin, J.P. McManus and University College Cork (UCC), Aisling Gleeson, Mary Immaculate College (MIC), and Shauna Murphy, University College Dublin (UCD). Congratulations to all the scholarship recipients, their parents and teachers.

This term saw the end of the three year cycle of the school's Board of Management and the formation of a new Board by our trustees CEIST. Mr. John Hourihan has been reappointed as the Chair of the Board. I wish the new Board well in their important work over the next three years.

An incidental inspection took place in St. Mary's on Tuesday, December 3rd. The Inspector's Report was extremely positive. The inspector visited First Year lessons and noted that all lessons observed exceeded standards. She observed excellent collaborative learning environments with emphasis on peer learning, peer assessment and observation of each other's work. Students were encouraged to take ownership and responsibility for their own learning resulting in the creation of autonomous learners in keeping with the new Junior Cycle Framework.

I would like to wish the St. Mary's students who have qualified for the BT Young Scientist competition in January the very best of luck. These include Sophie McQuillan and Róisín Grant under the guidance of Mr. Rory Coote, and Clodagh Lehane and Camille Ní Shuilleabháin under the guidance of Ms. Cáit Thompson.

This newsletter shows that our students benefit from the highest standards of education and a wide variety of curricular and extra-curricular activities. This is due to the hard work and dedication of both students and staff.

Finally, I look forward to working with all members of the school community throughout 2020 and thank you for your continued support.

*Best wishes,
Yvonne Bane*

RECOGNITION OF ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE



Shauna Murphy



Caoimhe Cronin

On Wednesday evening, December 11th, a reception was held in the school for high achieving students in Leaving Cert and Leaving Cert Applied 2019, academic scholarship recipients and recently retired members of the staff. Students were accompanied by family members. Also in attendance were members of the Board of Management, the current teaching staff, the Parents' Association and the Student Council.

Presentations were made to Caoimhe

Cronin, Shauna Murphy, Anna Burns, Hannah O'Flaherty, Aisling Gleeson and Jenny O'Gorman on the basis of their excellent Leaving Cert 2019 results. A presentation was made to Natasha Cambridge who was the top performing Leaving Cert Applied student in 2019. The students who received third-level scholarships were Caoimhe Cronin, J.P. McManus and University College Cork (UCC), Aisling Gleeson, Mary Immaculate College (MIC), and Shauna Murphy, University College Dublin (UCD).

The recently retired members of staff who received presentations were Mary Higgins, Maura McAuliffe (teachers) and Ger Spillane (caretaker).

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



Aisling Gleeson, Natasha Cambridge and Jenny O'Gorman



Maura McAuliffe, Ger Spillane, Mary Higgins and John Hourihan, BOM Chairperson

LEAVING CERT SUCCESS 2019!

Leaving Cert Points	St. Mary's Secondary School	National Average
600 +	2.8%	1.4%
500 - 599	28.2%	11.9%
400 - 499	36.6%	24.1%
300 - 399	25.4%	25.3%
200 - 299	4.2%	19.2%
100 - 199	2.8%	11.6%
< 100	0.0%	6.4%



Swim team

MUNSTER SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Last October, St. Mary's entered 23 girls in the Munster Senior Schools Swimming Championships. This was the largest entry by any school. We competed in both individual and relay events. The majority of our swimmers achieved incredible personal bests. Jessica Harris, Ailbhe Lynch, Eimear Britton, Alannah McDonald, Holly Garvey, and Fíona O'Keeffe qualified for finals. Aoife O'Shea came second in her final and will represent our school in the National Swimming Championships in Castlebar next April. We entered six relay teams; two junior, two inter and two senior. The junior relay team did very well in their age category but unfortunately did not place. The inter relay team placed fourth out of twenty teams. The senior relay team swam outstanding races, placing first in the medley and third in the front crawl. All the relay teams have advanced to Castlebar. Well done to all the ladies who represented our school so well and best of luck to them in Castlebar. A special thank you to Caríosa Lynch, Chen Chen Moynihan, Vincent Harris and Ms. Louise Heavin for giving a helping hand and making participation in this event possible.



Senior relay team

TOASTMASTERS SUCCESS

Nine schools competed in the North Cork Toastmasters Speakeasy Contest held in the Hibernian Hotel, Mallow on Thursday, December 5th. Fiona Lonergan and Sinéad Barry, Transition Year, were selected to represent St. Mary's. Fiona Lonergan won Best Individual Speaker. Fiona's speech, 'What if?'; was about gender equality. Sinéad Barry placed third overall. Sinead's speech, 'Are you in control?'; considered how social media influences people. St. Mary's won Best Overall School. The two girls were mentored by Deirdre Linehan, Speakeasy Toastmasters Mallow, and supported by Ms. Anne Marie Buckley, TY Coordinator.



Fiona Lonergan, Deirdre Linehan, Sinéad Barry and Ms. Anne Marie Buckley

PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS



TY students attended the National Ploughing Championships, held between the 17th and 19th of September in County Carlow. We attended on the 17th. Students had to get on a bus outside our school at 6.15 am to get to Carlow in plenty of time for the opening of the gates to the Ploughing. The drive up was very long and everyone was extremely tired when we finally reached Carlow. Everyone was relieved to get off the bus and go into the Championships. We visited many educational stalls and received lots of free items such as pens, hats and even samples of food. The weather was glorious with the sun 'splitting the stones'. By the time we returned to the bus to go home, everyone was exhausted from walking around all day. The bus was like a sauna on the drive home and everyone was absolutely roasting! We stopped for Supermacs, which was needed and well deserved. We finally reached home after a long three-hour drive. Overall, it was a great day for everyone who attended. - **By Fiona Lonergan, Transition Year**

FIRST YEAR MENTOR PROGRAMME AND ACTIVITIES



First Year lunchtime dodgeball



Board games in the Library



Senior Choir and some members of the Traditional Music Group

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

The Christmas Concert took place in the Aemilian Theatre on the night of Wednesday, December 4th. Attendees were treated to seasonal music and carols from various musical groups including the Junior and Senior choirs, Transition Year music class, First Year music classes, the staff choir, the school orchestra, and the school trad group. Students from all year groups performed. Transition Year students performed a song from their upcoming musical, 'Dancing Queen'. The concert was a sell-out. The event was organised by the Music Department. They were supported by volunteer members of staff. A matinee performance was held earlier in the day. Rang Réiltín stole the show with their beautiful singing.



Rang Réiltín

Many thanks to the Fifth Year mentors who have been a wonderful support to First Years this term. They organise mentor meetings on a weekly basis and give very valuable advice to our new students to help them to integrate into our school community. For the last four weeks they have been running a schedule of fun activities for all First Years. Many thanks to Ms. Eimear Hallihan for coordinating this very valuable support structure and to the Fifth Year students, who generously give of their time.

First Years have also been given the opportunity to involve themselves in a large range of extra-curricular activities, which have been organised by staff members on a voluntary basis. These include sports activities (Games, Basketball, Soccer, Football, Dodgeball, Cross Country), Board games, Photography, Music, Maths Club, Homework Club.

TY BONDING DAY



On Friday, October 11th, all three TY class groups attended a Bonding Day in the Mercy Centre, Mallow. We were welcomed by Declan, the Bonding Day Coordinator, who briefly explained what we would be doing throughout the day. We played one-on-one games, team games and a 'getting to know you' game. After our break, we engaged in giving compliments. Each girl took an A4 sheet of paper and wrote down her name. These were then passed around. Once every single person gave a compliment to everyone else, we were given back our sheets. The Coordinator gave us time to read them, and even put on some sad music to 'set the mood'. Once all 'tears' were shed, we did some quick meditation. - **By Sinéad Barry, Transition Year**

ART NEWS



Christmas Art display created by Rang Réiltín. They were helped by Transition Year students Sarah O'Malley, Kelly O'Meara and Caitlín Duffy.



Rang Réiltín mental health group artwork. They were inspired by the artist Kelsey Montague. They created their own interactive wing art.



Participants in the First Year Art Elements Midterm Competition. The groups explored Line, Value and Colour.



Second Year Mental Health Ireland Art Competition. Students submitted drawings depicting 'The Five Ways to Wellbeing'.



Second Year CSPE Cover Competition. They had to create covers for their CSPE (Civic, Social and Political Education) copies. The images they drew had to represent their understanding of what CSPE means to them.

MUSIC NEWS

Tuning Up

In Term One, First Year Music students attended two concert workshops in the Aemilian Theatre. Both were part of the Tuning Up series organised by West Cork Music. Tuning Up is part of Cork County Council's Arts in Schools Programme. The Busy Trio performed on Tuesday, October 8th and the Artemis Brass Ensemble visited us on Monday, November 4th.

Cork Pops Orchestra

Second Year Music students enjoyed attending the Cork Pops Orchestra concert in City Hall, Cork on Thursday, November 7th.

Dancing Queen

Transition Year students are currently stepping-up their preparation for 'Dancing Queen' this coming February.

CORK SCHOOLS CROSS COUNTRY

The St. Mary's team of Aoife O'Connor, Eimear Lavery and Anielia Borkowska-Hogan came 3rd overall at the Cork Schools Cross Country Challenge in Riverstick on Thursday, December 5th. Anielia also won an individual bronze medal. Well done!

Cross country team



SILVER SURFERS

As part of Transition Year, students have the opportunity to participate in the 'Silver Surfers' initiative. Twenty-seven TY students are being incredibly generous with their time and patience. They are teaching important computer skills to elderly members of the community. Once weekly, the students and elderly meet in the school Computer Room, where necessary computer skills are taught, such as setting up email and using Google. A bond has been created between the students and the attendees. Students bake cakes each week and enjoy sharing these with the 'surfers'.

STUDENT COUNCIL 2019-20



Student Council 2019-20

Student Council elections took place after the October mid-term break with each class group having a representative to ensure all students have a voice.

First Year

Sarah Hadden (1 Cáit)
Keira Manley (1 Blaithín)
Ciara O'Brien (1 Eimear)
Anna O'Connor (1 Deirdre)
Anna O'Flynn (1 Aoife)

Second Year

Bethany Browne (2 Brendán)
Clodagh Lehane (2 Cormac)
Daniella Obenge (2 Diarmuid)
Katie O'Toole (2 Aodhán)

Third Year

Ciara Hunt (3 Aisling)
Aoife O'Sullivan (3 Saoirse)
Anthea Dzingwa (3 Clodagh)
Molly Bugler (3 Doireann)
Eva Foley (3 Neasa)

Rang Reiltín

Claire Lehane

TY

Sarah Healy (TY C)
Ailbhe Lynch (TY B)
Valerie O'Leary (TY A)

Fifth Year

Eva Lankford
Fiona Marian
Caitlín Murray
Beth O'Sullivan

LCA

Clara Walsh

6th Year

Hikmat Babaola
Doireann Browne
Queensly Erhabor
Ellen Murphy

Student Council Coordinator

Ms. Sheena McQuillan

RELIGION NEWS

In November we Remember

It was a busy first term for the Religion Department. We had a beautiful remembrance mass in the Convent Chapel for the faithful departed to mark the month of November. "God of consolation we remember those who have died, For those who suffer pain we ask for respite and the comfort of your embrace. Grant all those who have died the grace of your eternal light. Amen".



Mercy Day mass, 24th September



Bishop William Crean,
Diocese of Cloyne

Bishop's Visit

Bishop William Crean, Diocese of Cloyne, visited our school on Tuesday, October 15th. A prayer service was held in the Gym, following which, Bishop Crean addressed the assembled student and staff bodies. The Principal, Yvonne Bane, then accompanied Bishop Crean on a tour of the school before he met with a student representative of each class in the Tearmann.

Shoebox Appeal

Thank you to all the students and their families who responded to the shoebox appeal for Team Hope. We delivered over 70 shoeboxes.

Public Speaking

The Knights of Columbanus held a public speaking competition in St. Mary's on Wednesday, November 27th. Emma Muldoon, Katelyn Murray and Shauna Dalton represented St. Mary's with great conviction and enthusiasm. The topic they chose was: 'Young people today can be drawn to the faith and supported in their faith by music, film and the arts in general'.



Mercy Day buns

OPEN EVENING PICTURE PARADE

ART



FRENCH



HOME ECONOMICS



GAEILGE



MUSIC



RELIGION



HARMONY WORKSHOP



On Monday, November 11th, the TY C class attended a Harmony Workshop on drug abuse and alcoholism. It was delivered by a guest speaker named Roger Metha. Roger got involved in Harmony Workshops as he was concerned about young people being peer pressured into taking drugs and drinking alcohol, and he wanted to spread awareness about the dangers of doing these things and how easy it is to become an addict. During the workshop Roger talked about famous rappers and musicians who have overdosed on drugs or who were alcoholics. He talked about how alcohol and drugs affected their childhoods and their adult lives. The musicians and rappers he mentioned were Amy Winehouse, Eminem and Grandmaster Flash. He talked about musicians and rappers specifically because Roger has an interest in music, and enjoys rapping. He talked about his childhood and how alcoholism and drug addiction had affected it deeply. He talked about how he uses rapping as a way to deal with his past and to express his feelings. At the end of the talk he encouraged the class to write and perform their own rap about drugs and alcohol. The workshop was very informative and the class learned a lot about the dangers of alcohol and drugs. The talk was also fun and the class enjoyed it and would recommend it to other classes and schools.

- By Lauren MacDermott, Transition Year



Photography students on a trip to the English Market, Cork City

BOOK CLUB

Five historical novels recommended by the History Department:

1. *Between Shades of Grey* by Ruta Sepetys
2. *Tattooist of Auschwitz* by Heather Morris
3. *Days Without End* by Sebastian Barry
4. *Goodnight Mister Tom* by Michelle Magorian
5. *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* by John le Carré



Friday, December 6th was Christmas Jumper Day. All proceeds went to charity.



STAND UP AGAINST LGBTI+ BULLYING WEEK

Stand Up Against LGBTI+ National Bullying Week ran from Monday 11th to Friday 15th of November. The aim of the week was to promote inclusivity and equality in schools and to educate students on the harmful effects of homophobic bullying. During the week, an informative presentation was shown to almost every class in our school. This presentation was made as part of the SPHE and RE Programmes. It was presented by six Transition Year students: Laura Barszczewska, Sinéad Barry, Katelynn Cremin, Ava Palmer, Aislinn Healy and Shanna Darsan. This National Awareness Week was organised by BeLong To and endorsed by the Department of Education. On the Friday, all students had the option to wear brightly coloured jumpers as a way of showing support in all the colours of the rainbow. - **By Sinéad Barry and Ava Palmer, Transition Year**



TY presentation team



Group members

MUNSTER MATHS AND SCIENCE FAMILY FAIR



Women in STEM display

The Munster Maths and Science Family Fair took place in Mallow GAA Complex on Sunday, October 13th. A delegation of students and teachers from St. Mary's managed an exhibitor stall. They presented on 'Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths)'. They showcased the great work being done in St. Mary's to promote STEM. This was the ninth year of the event.



WEEK OF OUTDOOR PURSUITS



Settling in at base

TY students attended the annual trip to Kerry for outdoor pursuits during the week of Monday, September 9th. I was picked to stay in Cappanalea instead of Killarney. We packed up our bags and stocked up on sweets and extra pairs of socks. We got the bus at 9 o'clock on Monday morning. 40 students were sent to Cappanalea. After a two-hour drive we arrived. We hauled our belongings off the bus and trekked into the Centre to meet our instructors and all the staff. We were split into four groups. We were then shown to our dorms. There were six people to a room on average. After unpacking our belongings and speaking to our roommates for a bit it was time for lunch. Lunch was the same everyday; soup and sandwiches. An instructor spoke to us about the activities we would be doing for the week. We did abseiling, kayaking, navigation and camp craft. On Thursday we packed our backpacks with camp equipment, food and extra clothes and set out on a four-hour hike across the mountains with our assigned groups. Our instructors were there to supervise us but we were mostly left to make our own way. When we finally reached the end of the hike it was time for us to abseil off a sheer cliff. When we finished that we had to kayak across a lake to our campsite for the night. When we reached the campsite we set up our tents and the rest of our camp. We then made dinner. When it got dark we sat around the fire talking, singing and making smores which were so nice. We then got into our tents and went to sleep. The next morning we had a one-hour hike back to the Centre where we put away the equipment, went for showers and packed-up our belongings. We then got back on the bus and drove home. It was one of my best ever experiences.

- **By Fiona Lonergan, Transition Year**



On the water

NEWS IN SPORT



Football players

LADIES FOOTBALL

St. Mary's fielded three teams in both Munster and County ladies football competitions. The First Year team won their opening three games, beating Coláiste Choilm, Coláiste an Phiarsaigh and Christ King. They are now through to the county semi-finals. The senior team were unlucky in their group games. The junior team qualified for the Munster quarter-finals by beating Coachford, Glanmire Community School and Christ King.

DODGEBALL

During Term One, First Year students played dodgeball on Wednesdays at lunchtime. Participating students developed their teamwork skills and benefited from physical activity. Well done to all involved!



Soccer Squad

SOCCER

Well done to the Junior and First Year teams. They have showed tremendous commitment and perseverance to soccer throughout the school year so far. Our First Years approached Christmas on maximum league points after a number of very impressive performances. Our Juniors have trained consistently in preparation for upcoming fixtures. Training takes place every Monday from 4-5pm. New players are always welcome!



Soccer Squad



U16 basketball team

BASKETBALL

The basketball season has gotten off to a great start. Our U16 basketball team are Southern Champions. They beat Crosshaven in a thrilling final by 44 to 32 points. They will represent the South in the regional finals in January. Unfortunately our U19s lost out in the semi-final to a very strong Crosshaven team. We wish the minors and juniors the very best as they begin their league campaign in January.



U19 basketball team

CAMOGIE

The First Year camogie team attended a blitz in Blarney on Wednesday, October 16th. Despite bringing no silverware home, the girls played brilliantly and displayed excellent playing and teamwork skills. A special commendation to those girls who only took up the sport in September and congratulations to those more experienced players who demonstrated great leadership. This is a team with great potential so keep an eye out!

ORIENTEERING

Fifty students entered Cork Schools Orienteering events in Doneraile Park, and Fota House and Gardens. We were very successful in both. Camille Ní Shúilleabháin won in the 2nd and 3rd year categories. Clodagh Lehane came 3rd in Fota in the same category. Sarah Stewart won the 1st year category in Doneraile and placed 2nd in Fota. Alice O'Sullivan in Sixth Year finished 3rd in Doneraile and 2nd in Fota. These were just some of the fantastic results achieved. We are eagerly looking forward to the next event which takes place in March in Tramore Park.



Orienteers Clodagh Lehane and Camille Ní Shúilleabháin