



St. Mary's Summer Newsletter 2021

Reflection- Looking Back & Moving Forward

We gather together to reflect on what has been a tumultuous year,
 We began by moving from online platforms, adjusting to the world outside our homes,
 We masked up, followed yellow arrows, marshalled by Covid protocols and guided by lead worker representatives.
 We supported our students to unmute, and to be physically and socially present with one another,
 We grew in confidence as the year unfolded and as we catapulted back to online teaching in January
 We drew on our courage, creativity, adaptability and resilience to succeed.
 We look towards the Summer, with hope, safe in the knowledge that we did our best in the face of the storm.
By Michelle Cooke, Guidance Counsellor

Message from the Principal

The health and safety, and pastoral care of students were to the forefront of all our endeavours this year. The continuity of learning whether in physical or online classrooms was commendable. I applaud students on their high levels of engagement, resilience and courage. Sincere thanks to all members of our school community; students, staff and their parents/guardians for their unwavering support in what has been a challenging academic year.

This year we adapted and re-imagined how school events were run through a COVID lens. Our Annual School Awards were live-streamed to classroom pods, prayer services were pre-recorded, the 6th Year and TY Graduations took on a virtual dimension and activity days were run in small group pods. There were many opportunities to smile behind the masks. Congratulations to all the Student of the Year Award recipients.

Best wishes to Mr. Richard Bohane on his retirement. I thank him for his tremendous contribution and dedication to St. Mary's. He will be fondly remembered by staff and students.

I wish the Leaving Certificate class of 2021 every success as they complete their state exams and results of written exams or accredited grades will issue on September 3rd. The school-based Junior Certificate and CBA results will issue in June.

The Board of Management of St Mary's Secondary School welcomed the recent announcement by the Dept. of Education of a major school extension to include 11 general classrooms, Science laboratory, Multi Media room, Art room, Home Economics room and SEN suite. Our extension will deliver the standard of accommodation required for a school with an increasing enrolment to over 850 students, and provide exceptional facilities for St Mary's students long into the future.

There will be brighter days ahead. As vaccines continue to roll out and the country begins to re-open, there is reason to be hopeful and optimistic. Enjoy the summer break and I look forward to welcoming all St. Mary's students back from August 25th onwards.

Yvonne Bane, Principal

Leaving Certificate Awards 2021

Spirit of CEIST Award:

Grainne O'Leary

Catherine McAuley Award:

Emma Muldoon Ryan

6th Year Student of the Year:

Shonagh McPhillips



Annual School Awards 2021

Annual School Awards 2021

Congratulations to all students who won Student of the Year Awards 2021. This award is a testament to the student's hard work, commitment to academic studies and positive contribution to her year group.

Due to Covid restrictions, we were unable to hold our annual school awards ceremony again this year. Alternatively, each year group gathered remotely to celebrate and reflect on all the wonderful work completed and the courage and resilience shown by all students this year.

Well done to the award recipients and to all members of the St Mary's School Community for making this past year a successful one.



Ms Dillane, Year Head, Bernice Cronin, 1st Year-Student of the Year & Ms Hickey, Deputy Principal



Ms Bane, Principal, Sarah Hadden, 2nd Year-Student of the Year & Ms O'Leary, Year Head



Ms Bane, Principal & Tara Brennan, 3rd Year-Student of the Year

Annual School Awards 2021



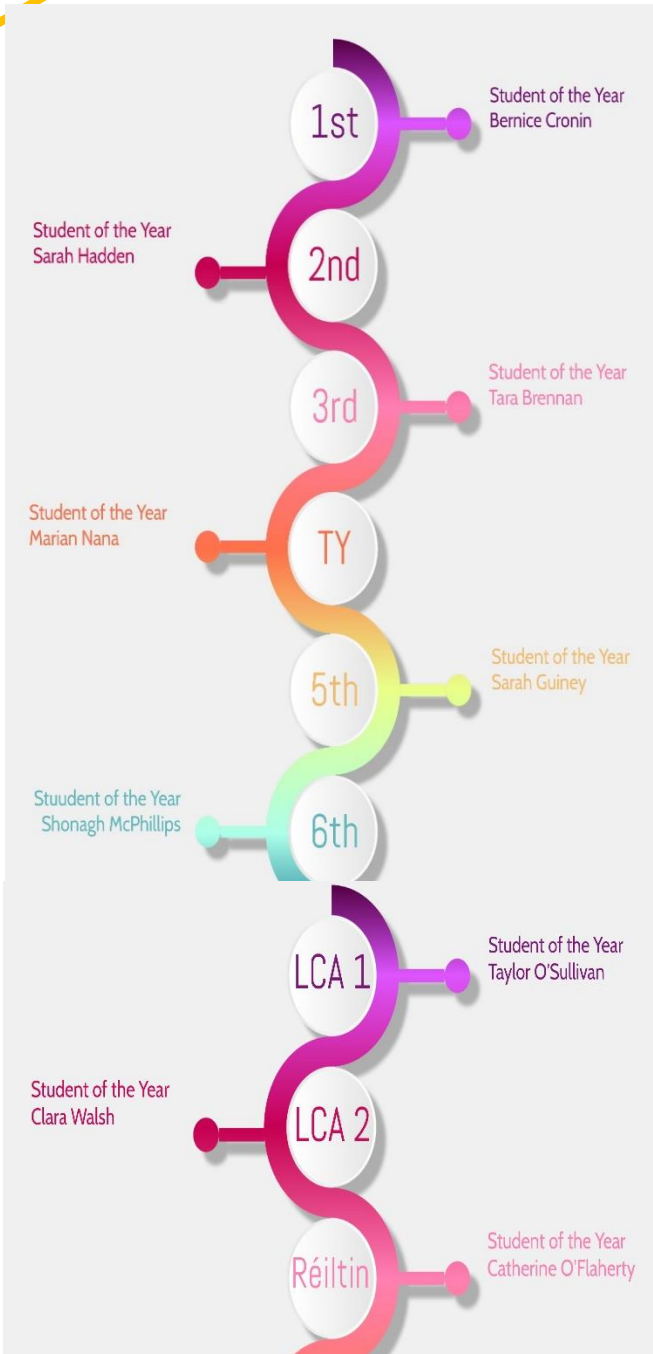
Ms Luttrell, Deputy Principal, Ms Buckley TY Co-ordinator & Marian Nana, TY Student of the Year.



Ms Bane, Principal, Sarah Guiney, 5th Year Student of the Year & Ms Hickey, Deputy Principal.



Ms Bane, Principal, Sr. Anne Maria, LCA Co-ordinator & Taylor O'Sullivan, LCA 1 Student of the Year.



Annual School Awards 2021



St. Mary's Secondary School, Mallow



Catherine O'Flaherty,
Reiltin Student of the Year



Grainne O'Leary, Spirit of CEIST Award &
Ms McQuillan, Year Head



Clara Walsh, LCA 2 Student of the Year &
Ms Hickey Deputy Principal



Ms Bane, Principal & Shonagh McPhillips,
6th Year Student of the Year.





Leaving Certificate 2021 Online Graduation Mass



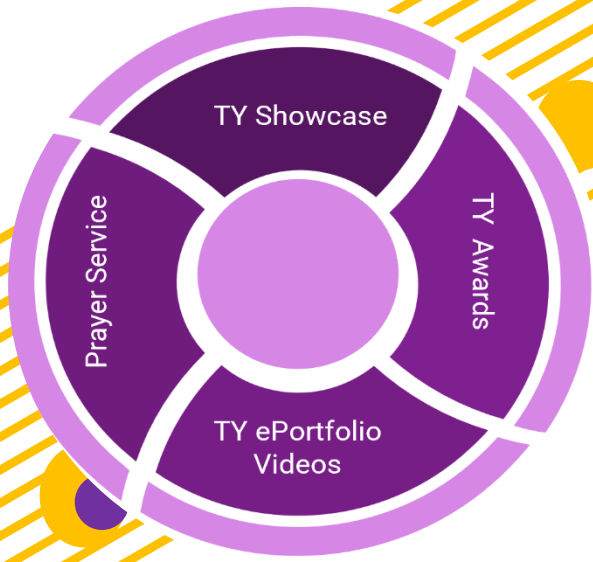
Congratulations to the 6th Year students who graduated on Friday 14th May 2021. Our Graduation Mass was live-streamed from St. Mary's Church to five classroom pods.

Fr Carvill noted how apt the theme of this year's mass was "See, I hold you in the palm of my hand". Isaiah is encouraging us to rest in God's comfort and acceptance, to surrender ourselves into His engraved hands, to trust Him for tomorrow. As one chapter closes and another begins, let the LC class of 2021 move forward in courage and hope. Sincere thanks to Fr. Carvill, religion and music teachers and all students who contributed to make the live-streamed mass such a memorable event.

The LC Graduation speeches by Student Council Reps Beth O'Sullivan and Shonagh McPhillips recounted fond memories and reminded us that whatever pathways we follow we will always be St. Mary's girls at heart.





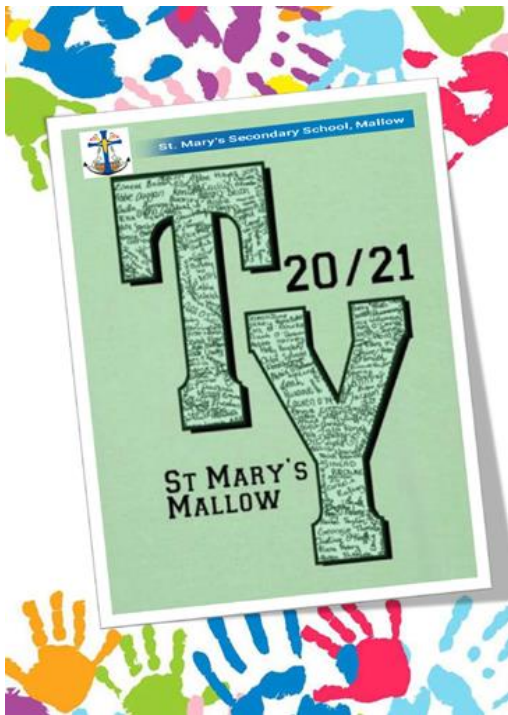


TY Graduation 2021

The TY Graduation took place on Thursday, May 20th. It showcased the plethora of achievements of this year's cohort of students. Many thanks to our TY Coordinator, Ms Buckley and Deputy Principal, Ms Luttrell for organising this event and producing our TY Yearbook. The morning began with a pre-recorded prayer service. This was followed by a coffee morning and cakes in our baseroom pods.

ICT was to the forefront as each class produced an e-portfolio video which was live-streamed to each classroom pod. The TY Showcase highlighted the broad range of experiential learning a hall mark of the TY programme, ranging from careers events, bonding workshops, mini-companies, fashion & design, music, film editing and podcasting, poetry slam, public speaking, sports science, gael Linn and craft & design. Many thanks to our e-portfolio and class tutors for helping us collate our showcase videos. TY students from each class introduced their showcase and made speeches live-streamed from the Tearmann.

The Virtual Art Gallery videos were live-streamed containing photographs produced by students in the photography module. Ms Buckley and Ms Luttrell then visited each classroom pod and presented each student with certificates spanning areas such as the Gaisce Bronze Award, Young Social Innovators Awards, Leadership for Life Certificates and GAA Certificates. We will treasure all the memories and experiences from TY. The graduation concluded with students writing messages in our Yearbooks.





STUDENT
VOICE

St. Mary's Student Council 2020/2021

This year in light of COVID, with different timetables/lunchtimes for junior and senior students and to keep numbers at meetings smaller, we had junior and senior student council meetings.

Despite school having to shut its doors from December to March, we were involved in many activities & events, some of which are described below.



Junior Members 2020/2021

- In September 2020 - the senior student council piloted material boxes as an alternative to lockers and all student reps provided feedback on COVID 19 changes in their meetings.
- October was a busy month - On October 1st, we welcomed Fr. Carvill to our Tearmann to celebrate a special prayer service for Mercy Day and the opening of the school year. A recording of the service, which included class reps from the student council was shown to religion classes. Mercy day was especially significant this year celebrating 175 years of the Mercy tradition in Mallow. Later in October, the junior student council were consulted on a student ICT survey and their ICT training needs for online teaching and learning. On October 16th, we coordinated the Funky Feet competition & €1000 was raised for Trocaire.

In November, St. Mary's Living with COVID Video was recorded with clips of student council class reps reinforcing the key messages of our COVID response in relation to hand sanitising, wearing masks, social distancing, one-way system, sanitising desks, using boxes instead of lockers, designated lunch areas and ventilation in classrooms. These clips were merged with the scientific rationale behind our new routines as presented by Prof. Luke O'Neill. This video was shown in SPHE and religion classes.

JUNIOR STUDENT COUNCIL 2020/21		SENIOR STUDENT COUNCIL 2020/21	
Class	Reps	Class	Reps
1 Aenghus	Rachel Colton	TY A	Ellie Ryan
1 Brian	Brid O' Callaghan	TY B	Danni Jackson
1 Cillian	Keelin O' Sullivan	TY C	Jessie O' Leary
1 Darragh	Eimear O' Connell	TY D	Sophie Ryan
		TY E	Doireann Heffernan
2 Aoife	Sarah McCarthy	5A	Sinead Barry
2 Bláithín	Keira Manley (Chairperson)	5B	Sarah O' Malley
2 Cáit	Sarah Hadden (Secretary)	5C	Aoife Mills
2 Deirdre	Laura Buckley		
2 Eimear	Rachel O' Sullivan		
3 Aodhán	Noelle Buesmaill	6A	Shonagh McPhillips (Chairperson)
3 Brendan	Samira Babatunde	6B	Eimear Keane
3 Cormac	Eimear Lavery	6C	Beth O' Sullivan (Secretary)
3 Diarmuid	Lailat Yahaya	6D	Grainne Egan
		6E	Dearbhla Berry
Réilín	Claire Lehane	LCA 1	Orlaith Casey
	Nicalla Hooton	LCA2	Riches Uwoghiren Edos



St. Mary's Student Council 2020/2021



- During December, we promoted the annual Christmas Hamper appeal for St. Vincent de Paul and also organised a Christmas jumper day on December 11th.
- From January to March, the school building may have been closed but the student council continued to meet online and students provided support for one another. Student reps were consulted on issues relating to their year groups and were a valuable voice on many occasions.
- On April 27th, Sarah O' Malley and Aoife Mills (5th Year) along with Sarah Hadden and Keira Manley (2nd Year) attended an online gathering organised by CEIST our Trustees to express their thanks to our students for their resilience and fortitude over the last year. Prof. Luke O'Neill provided encouragement and advice as the country opens up.
- May 6th - The Irish Second Level Students Union's (ISSU) Annual Assembly (AGM) held online was attended by four delegates from our council. May was a time of graduations for leaving certs and transition years. Thanks to the student council reps from both years for their involvement and heartfelt speeches!!



It has been a pleasure to be a part of the student council this year and we would like to wish the leaving cert class of 2021 the very best of luck in their exams and everyone in the school community a happy and safe summer.

Student Council 2020/21



Comórtas Óráide Gael Linn- Sophia Breen

I mbliana rinne mé an comórtas óráide le Gael Linn. Bunaíodh Gael Linn i 1953 ar mhaithe le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge. Shocraigh mé páirt a ghlacadh sa chomórtas seo mar tá an spéis agam sa Ghaeilge. Ní hamháin gur mhaith liom dúslán a thaibhairt dom féin ach theastaigh uaim feabhas a chuir ar mo scileanna cainte freisin.

Chuir mé isteach ar an gcomórtas sinsearach, ba chomórtas é do dhaltáí ón idirbhliain go dtí an Ardteist. Bhí an chéad bhabhta ar siúl i mí na Samhna. Tugadh cúig ábhar cainte dúinn le roghnú. Roghnigh mé an rún "Tá na Rudaí is luachmhara sa Saol seo Saor in Aisce". Rinne mé fíis dom féin ag labhairt ar feadh ceithre nóiméad ag phlé mo rúin. Labhair mé faoi na rudaí tábhachtacha sa saol go háirithe na rudaí a fhoghlaimíomar ón gcoróinvireas. Bhain mé taitneamh as an óráid seo a scríobh agus í a fhoghlaim.

Bhí gliondar chroí orm nuair a cháiligh mé don chéad bhabhta eile i mí Feabhra. An teideal a roghnaigh don bhabhta seo na "Tá deireadh le 'comhar na gcomharsan' in Éirinn". Arís bhain mé taitneamh as an óráid a ullmhú agus tháinig feabhas ar mo mhuintín agus scileanna cainte.

Bhí mé at mhúin na muice nuair a fuair mé amach go raibh mé ag bogadh ar aghaidh go dtí Craobh na Mumhan! An teideal a roghnaigh mé ná "Tá na deiseanna céanna ann d'fhir agus do mhná i gcúrsaí spóirt"- "men and women have the same opportunities in sport." Ba é seo an óráid is fearr liom. Bhí sé an suimiúil agus dúshlánach mar ní riabh a lán ama agam chun é a ullmhú. Mar sin chuir mé feabhas ar mo bhainistiú ama. Rinne mé taifead ar mo óráid 4 nóiméad agus sheol mé é ar aghaidh go Gael Linn.

Craoladh Craobh na Mumhan ar Youtube agus Facebook ar an 20u Aibreán. Taispeánadh físeanna ó scoileanna eile. Bhí gach éinne ar fheabhas. Ar an drochuair níor éirigh liom dul ar aghaidh go dtí Craobh na hÉireann. Tháinig an bainisteoir ó Ghael Linn go dtí an scoil cúpla seachtain níos déanaí chun duais a bhronnadh orm.

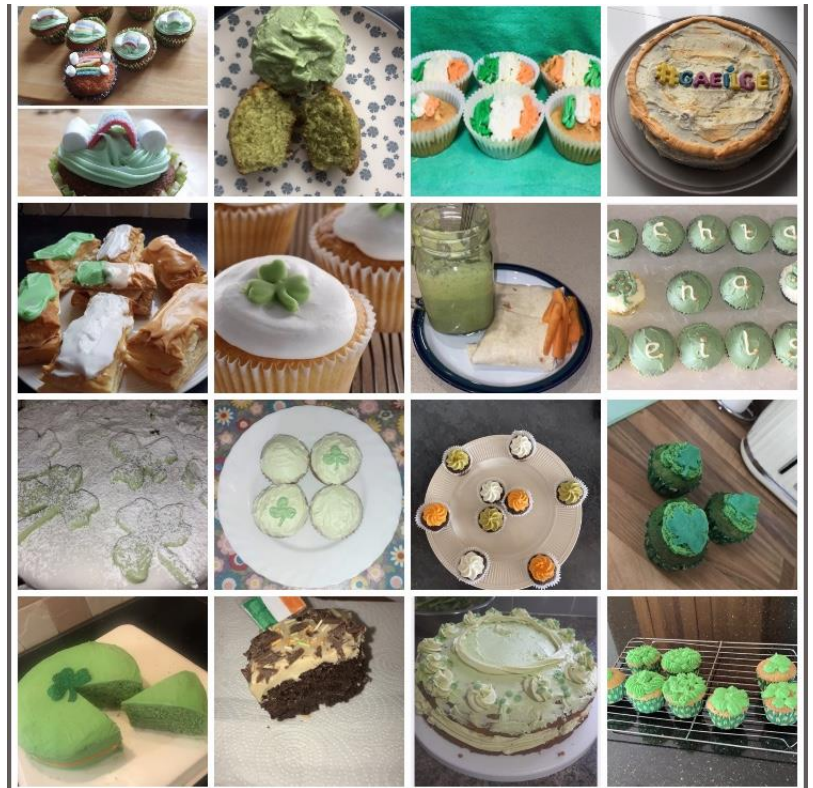
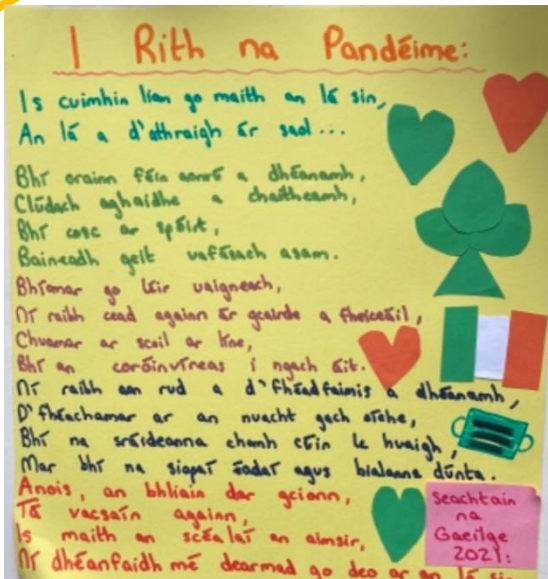
Ba thaithí iontach é seo agus bhí an bhród orm páirt a ghlacadh sa chomórtas ar son Meánscoil Naomh Mhuire. Tá mé an bhuíoch do Ms Ní Chróinín as an gcabhair ar fad a thug sí dom. D'fhoghlaim mé a lán ón gcomórtas seo, chuir mé feabhas ar mo chuid Gaeilge, mo mhuintín agus scileanna cumarsáide. Mholfainn go mór do dhaltáí páirt a ghlacadh sa chomórtas óráide seo chun scileanna nua a fháil agus grá don Ghaeilge a neartú.



Seachtain na Gaeilge i Meánscoil Naomh Mhuire.

Chuireamar tús iontach le Seachtain na Gaeilge. B'é an téama ná "An Ghaeilge."

Bhí na mílte iontrálacha iontacha againn don chomórtas, mar a fheiceann sibh thíos - bÁCáil, filíocht, ceol, ealaín agus gléasadh suas - tá daltaí iontacha cruthaitheacha againn, gan dabht! Comhghairdeas dona buaiteoirí!



Is aoihbhinn liom Éire,
 Tá spraoi agus craic againn.
 Is aoihbhinn liom Éire,
 ní aon deacracht ann ar chor ar bith.

Is breá liom Seachtain Na Gaeilge,
 Is maith liom an teanga a labhairt.
 Is breá liom an ceol agus na polcas,
 Táim i ngrá leis an tír!

Bíonn paráid ann gach bliain,
 Do lá naomh Pádraig.
 Gléasann muid suas i mbán, glas agus ór,
 Nach breá an rud é sin a stór?

Is aoihbhinn liom Éire,
 Tá spraoi agus craic againn.
 Is aoihbhinn liom Éire,
 ní aon deacracht ann ar chor ar bith.



SEACHTAIN NA GAELIGE



TY Outdoor Pursuits

On the 27th of April 2021, our TY year group went on a fantastic outing to Ballyhass Lakes Adventure Centre. Upon arrival, the atmosphere was full of excitement, as the whole year was delighted to be on the first trip of TY. After so many activities were cancelled to adhere to COVID-19 guidelines, this excursion was deeply cherished by all.

It was an action-packed day, full of pursuits ranging from the thrilling heights of abseiling, the Leap of Faith and ziplining, to the perishing depths of the aquapark. The challenges we faced, helped us conquer our fears and bond closer together through a number of team-building activities. Although the weather was chilly with sporadic showers, we did not let it dampen our spirits. Thankfully, our last endeavour was the notoriously limb-numbing aquapark, as the water sapped the remains of our energy. Despite the cold however, it was clearly the most enjoyed activity by all.

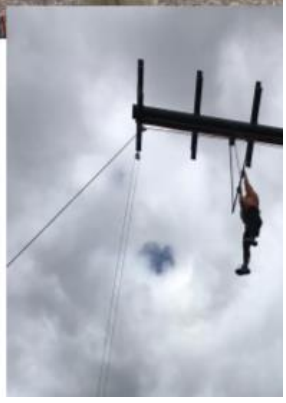
Beyond any doubt, this was an unforgettable experience that will be remembered and adored by the year group as one of the highlights of our TY. The COVID-19 lockdown left our expectations of a trip very low, so this was an amazing surprise to be met with when returning to school. We truly appreciate all the effort that our TY co-ordinator Ms. Buckley and the PE department put into organising this special day for us.

Written by Rachel Taylor.





Ballyhass





Young Social Innovators 2021

This year, we were fortunate enough to participate in YSI (Young Social Innovators). TYD focused our project on Discrimination during our religion class with Ms Desmond. Our class divided into 3 miniature projects under the umbrella heading of Discrimination. The subgroups included Disability, Gender Stereotypes and Culture in our school community.

For the culture project, they aimed their attention and project towards the first years in our school and focused on the different cultures among the year group. They chose culture as it is a very relevant topic at the moment given how diverse our school community is

Disability

For the Disability project, they aimed their focus towards educating people on the importance of ISL (Irish Sign Language) and raising awareness around the deaf community and hearing loss. They aimed their project towards TY because this is the age that we would start looking for jobs and it is a useful skill that would help us be able to communicate with our wider community.

Gender Stereotypes/Equality

For their Gender Stereotypes project, they decided to focus on Gender Stereotypes in Sport and aimed their project at 1st year and TY students in our school. Their aim was to raise awareness on this social issue and how people can stop it from happening.

Amy Harrington, TY D





Pope John Paul II Awards

John Paul II recipients Emilia Seputyte and Lara Moynihan.

The Pope John Paul II Award is a faith achievement award for young people between the age of 16 and 18. The Award enables participants to take an active part in the life of their Church – in the life of their community and society

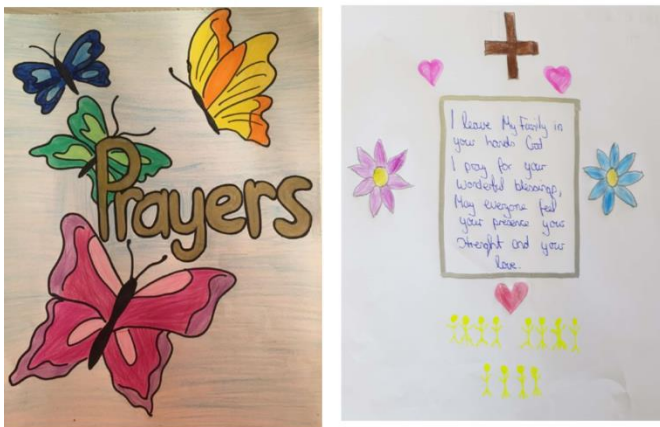
The Award is committed to helping young people enhance their spiritual, physical, emotional and social development through participation in school, parish and community activities. Congratulations to both girls on this wonderful achievement.



Religion News

This year marked the 150 anniversary of the Mercy Sisters in Mallow. Our Mercy ethos is palpable in St Mary's.

TY Religion students pictured below in the Tearmann where they spend time during class meditating.



TYB and TYC put together a collection of their favourite prayers in R.E. class. Aisling Creedon TYC designed the cover.





Around the School

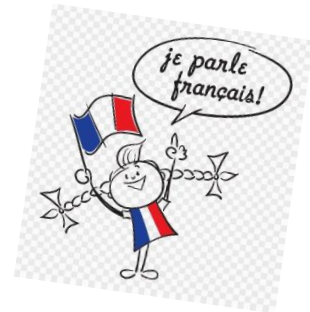


French News

Second year French students worked hard on their CBAs this term. Well done to all students on completing this task.

Pictured here are some of the 2nd years from classes 2 Aoife and 2 Eimear; Niamh Lavery, Daisy O'Toole, Nicole O'Rahilly, Abigail O'Regan, Caoimhe Sheehan, Maeve Pagnon and Aoife O'Brien.

Félicitations à toutes nos élèves !



TY French students were busy preparing for Summer Assessments and PORTFOLIO interviews coming up to the end of the school year. Students enjoyed a French film during the week of the TY graduation celebrations. *Nous vous souhaitons de bonnes vacances et amusez-vous bien cet été .*

Pictured: Sophie Ryan, Molly Bugler, Roisín Myers and Emma Buckley.





Second Year Fun Day 2021



On Wednesday, May 19th, our fabulous year head, Ms O' Leary, along with Ms Hickey, Ms Lutrell and our P.E. Department organized a fun day for our 2nd year year group which marked the end of the school term!

Firstly, there was a prayer service at 9am through a zoom call where prayers of the faithful were read, followed by a quick, mindful meditation. Student of the year for 2nd year was also announced.

Shortly afterwards, each of the class groups went outside to the school field where we took part in 'Novelty Games'. These included relay races, space hopper races, an egg and spoon race, tug o' war and a very creative game where we threw water balloons to and fro trying not to drop it!

Luckily, we were blessed with the weather although there was a bit of a drizzle here and there.

Later on, we competed in an enjoyable and heated game of rounders within our class groups, followed by a Zumba class, led by Theresa Napier and Yoga, led by our wonderful teacher, Ms. Maryinowska! We even got to enjoy a well earned 99 as an ice-cream truck was also organised as a special treat.

After our big break, each class got to watch a movie of their choice, we got to bring in snacks that we could enjoy in the process too. Overall, it was such a great way to bring such a strange year to a close and we are so grateful to have such thoughtful, hardworking and generous teachers to put the time and effort into such a day!

By Ciara O'Brien 2 Eimear.



1 Aenghus & 1 Dara Dance





1 Aenghus & 1 Dara Dance





St. Mary's Student of Steel Challenge



The St. Mary's Student of Steel Challenge was a really fun and thrilling experience. I really enjoyed taking part in this challenge as I think it motivated me to get up and exercise during the tough times throughout the second lockdown. All students from first year to transition year participated in the challenge which involved timing yourself performing five basic exercises. Once I had my times for the first week I was determined to improve on these as the weeks went on. We were given a 30 day HIIT program to follow in order to try to help improve our fitness and in turn our times.

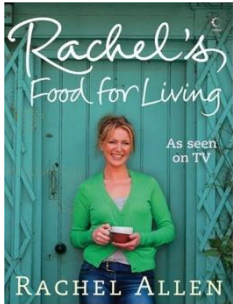
My favourite exercise to take part in was the wall sit which tested my leg strength. I really enjoyed this one because it was the one I did best in and I felt really good after it. The one I found the hardest was the lower press-up position hold. I now know I must work on my upper body strength when exercising. The plank, hollow rock and a music challenge which required you to hold a squat were the other exercises we had to perform.

When we finally came back to school we repeated the challenge and my times were a lot better. I think this was because I'm very competitive so seeing everyone else pushing themselves during the challenge made me even more motivated and encouraged me to hang on longer!

This was a really enjoyable experience and I think it would be a lot of fun to perform the challenge at home with the entire family!

By Orna O'Leary, 2 Eimear.





Claire's Cook-along with Rachel Allen!



On Saturday the 24th of April, I participated in a cookery demonstration online with Rachel Allen. I was really excited to do this as she is my idol. I got the opportunity to make crunchy granola, white sourdough bread, cheese and chive scones and shakshuka. I loved making the shakshuka because it was a different type of dish than I would normally have made. I learned how to correctly make sourdough bread and not to over handle the bread as it makes it tougher. I found making all the dishes at once challenging but such a rewarding experience. I would recommend other students who are interested in cooking to do this cooking class with Rachel Allen should they be so lucky to get the opportunity.

Claire Lehane - Réiltín





Rang Réiltín

Rang Réiltín finished the school year with a very busy week of activities. Catherine O'Flaherty was awarded student of the year and Claire Lehane received an award for outstanding leadership and generosity. We travelled to Fota Wildlife Park by train and enjoyed time out of the classroom, the array of animals distracted us from the continuous rain.

We said goodbye to Roxie Smith who graduated from Rang Réiltín and wished her well in her continued studies. We also wish Jade, Claire and Catherine the best of luck in LCA. Our final Friday was fun-filled with drama by Ms. Joanne Crowley, Bingo with Mr. Bohane, a lovely lunch and culminated in a graduation ceremony.



YO'GA



St. Mary's Secondary School, Mallow

TY Yoga

"I'd like to see yoga taught to school children across Ireland" – President Higgins.



A regular yoga practice is a wonderful way of connecting with your body, your breath and your mind. Adding yoga to your weekly routine can help to manage stress, increase concentration and resilience as well as build confidence. Yoga also develops strength and flexibility, and it supports the anatomical and physiological changes that occur during adolescence! Last but not least, it is fun and provides a great opportunity to connect with others and....yourself!

Our students had the opportunity to access online yoga classes at home during the lockdown – this allowed many to disconnect from the remote learning and counterbalance the hours of sitting. After returning to the school, weekly yoga classes have also been added to TY students' timetable. Despite the rather unpleasant weather in April and May, every Thursday we were blessed with crisp mornings and energising sunrays which allowed us to practice outside, on the beautiful green grounds of St Mary's Secondary School.

Each yoga class started with a physical practice and finished with students' favourite pose – Savasana. This was the time when pupils could totally relax their bodies, focus on their breath and simply rest...Even though it was just a short relaxation, it enabled us to return to the classrooms feeling refreshed, recharged and re-energised!



LCA 1

Leisure & Recreation



This year we had to deal with Covid 19 while doing PE and it was very different compared to other years. PE was still enjoyable even though we had to deal with "the mask" and social distancing! We still had fun as we were spending time together and getting to know each other better (LCA1 and LCA2). We had to take precautions as we are still dealing with Covid to this day which is frustrating.

In Leisure and Recreation, we looked at Positive Female Role Models in sport and it was interesting!

Another topic we studied was the many benefits of being physically active.

We read articles about various topics such as how to avoid Osteoporosis, these were really very fascinating, and they gave me an insight about how important it is to look after ourselves.

We played volleyball, tennis, badminton, and basketball while adhering to Covid restrictions. We also did Pilates with Shirley Lankford. These classes were the highlight of the year for me as I really enjoyed the classes, Shirley made it more enjoyable for me in a lot of ways.

We did a Tabata class too, but I didn't really like it as I have an issue with my knee, and it is a tough work-out! I much preferred Zumba with Teresa Napier, that was brilliant fun too!

For my lockdown classes at home, we did yoga, and it was really relaxing and calming. It was just what was needed after concentrating on schoolwork all day.

I really enjoyed our LCA1 program and look forward to LCA2 Covid or no Covid!

Written by – Nicola Forde LCA1



I ♥ PE



1st Year P.E.

While Covid has changed the way PE is taught it hasn't stopped our class, 1 Darragh, from making the best out of a very unusual situation! Our teachers came up with creative ideas so we could have the best experience possible. We studied the benefits of physical activity with our teacher Mrs. Heavin. It was very interesting because some of what we learned I had never heard about. We learned that physical activity reduces stress and anxiety, improves strength and endurance and it also builds healthy bones. We also learned how easy it is to achieve 60 minutes of activity each day, whether you go for a brisk walk, run or a HIIT workout. It is especially important for kids/teenagers, last year only 13% of children met the National Physical Activity recommendation of an hour of physical activity a day. The second thing we learned about was F.M.S. (Fundamental Movement Skills) such as running, jumping, throwing and hopping. To practise these skills we incorporated them into our warm-up and main session. This included throwing up a tennis ball and catching it, catching a frisbee and jumping high. I found Spikeball one of the most enjoyable things we did. It was fun getting into teams with new people and seeing the competitive side of my classmates. After three weeks of learning the skills we got to practice in a tournament.

Unfortunately, after the Christmas holidays schools were closed and we had to retreat to online learning where Ms. Marynowska took over our class and we did 8 sessions of Yoga. It was very calming and refreshing. After our 8 sessions of Yoga we moved onto HIIT sessions with Ms. O'Connor. I found these sessions challenging because I was off my usual fitness schedule because of Covid, thankfully after a while I got used to it. Fortunately, after the Easter holidays we got to go back to school and we started a new module on Dance. We were taught dances, made up our own dances and attempted the Jerusalem Dance. I found it really fun! Lastly, we took part in the Student of Steel Challenge. I found this really motivating as it pushed you to your limits.

I really appreciated all the hard work of our teachers so thank you! Even though it was tough with masks we got through it. It has been a crazy yet memorable First year in St. Mary's.

Written by Berenice Cronin 1st year.



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Leadership
for Life
Programme

Leadership for Life Programme 2021

What is Leadership?

Leadership is someone who has a positive attitude and who strives for characteristics of a good leader and communicates and cooperates well with others; they show trust and respect. They are assertive yet don't dominate and are good at conflict resolution.

Module 1

In module 1 we learned about critical thinking, communication skills, problem solving, self-awareness, values, personal and global visions and SMART goals. At the end of each session, we reflected on the work completed and our understanding on the topic we learned that week. We all completed a presentation on our SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timed) leadership goal.

Module 2

In module 2 we carried on learning about how to become good leaders. Some of the topics we covered were about self-awareness, conflict resolution and critical thinking. We put our knowledge into action by doing activities such as riddles, reacting to different scenarios and solving a problem using SODAS (Situations, Options, Disadvantages, Advantages and Solutions). Finally, we created a team research project where we chose a topic that we felt could put our skills that we've learned to good use

Would we recommend doing Leadership for Life.

We would highly recommend upcoming Ty's to take part in the programme. Foróige's Leadership for Life is an exciting programme that enables young people to develop the skills and qualities necessary to be effective leaders, as well as challenging them to use these skills for the betterment of society. We learned some very valuable skills which we will use throughout life. We made new friends, but most important we learned more about ourselves and the type of leader we are and can aspire to become.

By Allie O'Keefe & Ella Coughlan