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A message from Principal, John Kiely

Students, Staff and Parents,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to our May 2021 Newsletter. What a year it has been for all of us and our families, but we have made it to the end of this school year. There have been many tremendous achievements by students, staff, classes, year groups and the wider community but the most significant is that we stuck together throughout the pandemic and overcame all challenges and obstacles that came our way.

We can take great pride in keeping Covid –19 from our school over the last year. We can acknowledge the great success and engagement of our Distance Teaching and Learning. We can celebrate the many successes right across the school during the year, not least that our own Mr. Conor Sweeney led his Tipperary Senior Football team to a historic Munster Title, a super achievement.

Our Leaving Certificate class of 2021 have had two very interrupted years of education and the manner that they accepted that challenge and faced all its difficulties is something they can be very proud of. We wish them well as they leave us after their exams in June, knowing that they have all the skills and resilience to succeed in the next phase of their lives and education. We look forward to seeing you all down the road at a Sports Day or other event to hear all about your journey.

Likewise, our Junior Certificate students in third and second year have had a significant disruption to their education. You have accepted this situation with admirable determination, and I know that this will be borne out in your results in the Junior Certificate exams you have completed here in school. Transition Year awaits you in September and you will all have a ball.

This year's Transition Year has been the most challenging and yet the most successful in the history of the school. Later in this newsletter you will see some of the incredible array of activities and successes that you have made happen since September. Well done to your Coordinator Ms. Quinn. You are now ready to take on the challenges of the Leaving Certificate over the next two years with the skills and confidence you have developed during your time in Transition year.

To our first-year students who arrived at the Abbey without having finished their Primary school education and without the usual preparation for Second level education I have to say a very well done. You have been super, and we are very proud of how you have joined the Abbey School community so successfully. Without doubt, you are one of the most united first year groups we have ever had. We look forward to seeing you progress again next year.

To our teaching and non-teaching staff, thank you so much for your trojan work with our students over the last year. You have been immense and instrumental in keeping us all safe and ensuring that the standard of education was not only maintained during the year but driven forward yet again. Enjoy your well-earned rest during the summer break.

My thanks to all our contributors but especially to our Newsletter Coordinator Ms. Aine O'Mahoney for putting this wonderful publication together. Finally, to you the reader I hope you enjoy reading our Newsletter and get a sense of some of the vast array of activities and successes we have had here in the Abbey in the last number of months.

Take care over the summer and see you in August!

John Kiely

Principal.

Merit Awards 2021

The annual Merit Awards is one of the most special and prestigious occasions of the year, a time to acknowledge not only academic excellence, but also the achievements of those who are entrepreneurs, performers, leaders and all-rounders. We would like to thank staff and students for participating in the selection and voting process. Congratulations and well done to all of this year's worthy winners

Extra -Curricular Achievements

Darragh Buckley

Courage and Resilience in Adversity

Shane O'Brien

Academic Excellence in Junior Certificate, Class of 2020

Shane O'Connor

Academic Excellence in Leaving Certificate, Class of 2020

Patrick O'Callaghan

The Edmund Rice Awards

First Year	Evan Slattery
Second Year	Patrick Lyons
Third Year	Peter Comerford
Transition Year	Aaron Mulcahy
Fifth Year	Shane Maher
LCA 1	Josh Flannery
Sixth Year	Frank Booth

2021 Academic Excellence Awards

First Year	LJ Roche
Second Year	Cillian Barlow
Third Year	Robbie McGrath
5th Year	Gabriel Ravelli
L.C.A 1	Evan Hawkins
Sixth Year	Bartosz Szyber

Transition Year Students of the Year

Caolan Halligan and Marcus Kinane



Brother Thomas Horgan Scholarship

Brother Horgan was a native of Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford. He joined the Christian Brothers early in his life and found himself teaching in Nenagh CBS, Tipperary, and eventually went on to become Vice Principal.

He joined The Abbey School in the late sixties, becoming Vice Principal and then Principal. Br. Horgan played a major role in shaping the Abbey and quickly focused on the students, in terms of further education and employment.

At the time, Agricultural Science was developing into a Leaving Certificate subject. Br. Horgan was one of the leaders in bringing this to the school and The Abbey became the first school in Ireland to have Agricultural Science as a Leaving Certificate subject. Br. Horgan was actively involved in the Abbey all his life.

The Abbey School Brother Thomas Horgan scholarship aims to carry the ethos of hard work, resilience, determination and selflessness which Br. Horgan portrayed throughout his life.

Congratulations to Daniel O' Dwyer who has been awarded the Brother Thomas Horgan Academic Scholarship for 2020-2021. Daniel is a student who has been focused and motivated and has worked consistently during the two years of the Leaving Certificate Programme. He has demonstrated great leadership, courage and resilience especially in the past year, which has been a very disconcerting year for all Leaving Certificate students. Daniel completed a rigorous application and interview process. Daniel hopes to study Engineering at UCC next year. We wish him all



the best in his upcoming exams and his further studies.

The Abbey and Arravale Rovers Team up for the Future

Representatives of The Abbey School, Arravale Rovers GAA Club & Arravale Rovers Ladies Football Club gathered on Tuesday 26th April to launch the joint partnership in developing a Floodlit AstroTurf Pitch measuring 88m x 55M on Abbey grounds between the new PE Hall and the railway line right next door to Arravale Rovers GAA Grounds.

This state of the art facility will have a massive impact on the school's PE classes, school team training sessions and lunchtime activities, as well as greatly enhancing Arravale Rovers GAA, Ladies Gaelic Football and Camogie facilities for all adult and underage training.

The process commenced two years ago, where plans were developed, planning permission secured and finance raised. 50% of the costs so far have been secured through the Erasmus Smith Trust Fund and the Tomer Fund. Representatives from both Arravale Rovers and The Abbey have submitted a further application for funding to the Sports Capital Programme. We hope our application will be successful and see works to complete the project commence in 2022. Some fundraising will be required to complete the financing of the project and already plans are well underway for a Golf Classic to be co-hosted by the school and Arravale Rovers in September. All support would be greatly appreciated. If you wish to support this project, please contact the school office on 062-52299 or by email at abbeyoffice@eircom.net.

Finally, our thanks to Cllr Michael Fitzgerald and TD Jackie Cahill for assisting us during the different stages of this project. Special word of thanks to those from the school and the clubs who have worked tirelessly on this project to date.



Abbey Wellbeing in Lockdown Series

The school wellbeing team met online shortly after the Christmas holidays. It appeared teaching and learning was going to be taking place exclusively online for the foreseeable future. The team decided that it was important to support the students during the current lockdown in ways other than through the curriculum. From this the idea of four weeks of wellbeing related activities, which would lead us into midterm break was born. Each week was themed .

Land Art and Nature Photography

18th—22nd January

This week had nature at the heart of the activities and was led by Ms. Clara Ryan (Art Teacher). Participants were encouraged to go and photograph visually interesting things or one had an option to respond to the environment by creating a sculpture. The response to this campaign was phenomenal with entries received from students, parents, teachers and members of the wider community.



Winning Entry by 6th Year student Ethan Crowe
Achnagall Cross Bridge, Templenahurney, Bansha .

Sport and Physical Activity

25th-29th January

The activities this week were led out by Mr. Conor Sweeney and Mr. Michael Hanley and focused on the theme of sport and physical activity. A schedule of events were planned out for students, parents, school staff and any member of the community who wished to participate. Events included HITT circuit from the Body coach Joe Wicks, 10,000 steps challenge, push up challenge and re-

creating a favourite sporting moment challenge from any sport.

On Friday , a whole school initiative of a virtual 5km walk/run was launched and continued all weekend. An online fundraising campaign was set up for Pieta House as part of this activity. Over the weekend as a school community, we clocked 1,029km with €1,245 raised for Pieta House. A great team effort from all involved.

Nutrition and Eating Well

1st—5th February

Our Science teachers, Michael O'Dwyer, Eavan Ryan and Niamh McCarthy coordinated this week. The week kicked off with students and staff encouraged to document their food intake for the week through the use of a food diary. As the week evolved we were treated to match day meal recipes by Tipperary Football captain Conor Sweeney and 2020 Hurler of the Year Limerick's Gearoid Hegarty. The highlight of the week was a cooking demonstrating from 5th year students Conor Farrell and Sean Gubbins, who are members of the successful Abbey Angus Team. Both boys demonstrated how to cook Irish angus steak and burgers.

Recipe: Turkey Burgers & Pasta

From: Conor Sweeney

Ingredients:

3 turkey burgers	Handful of chopped broccoli	Fry lite oil
1 cup of pasta	Handful of cauliflower	1tsp cayenne
1 stir-in dolmio pot	½ red onion diced	½ tbsp honey
½ carrot sliced	2 tbsp soy sauce	Salt & Pepper

Method:

1. Place turkey burgers under a grill (until cooked through) / fry using low-cal spray
2. Cook pasta according to instructions
3. In the mean time, stir-fry all vegetables adding soy sauce, honey and spices using low-cal spray until vegetables are al dente.
4. Add salt and pepper to season
5. Drain the pasta and place in a bowl
6. Add the dolmio mix and stir-fried vegetables to the bowl along with the turkey burgers.



Motivation and Resilience

8th-12th February

This theme was purposely left for the week leading up to midterm as we envisaged students and staff may need some encouragement and positivity after a short but challenging half term, learning and teaching remotely. Events this week were organised by Ms. Julie King and Mr. Conor Hayes. Each day had a designated theme this week and within this theme, there was a video from a member of the school community, or somebody associated with The Abbey.

Motivation Monday

Monday's motivational message came from former Abbey student and teacher and legendary Tipperary hurler and manager, Nicky English. Nicky's video offered plenty of positivity regarding staying active and connected for anybody who may be finding lockdown challenging.

Tune In Tuesday

The contribution today was from Mr. Conor Reale who is a History and Geography teachers at our school but is currently seconded as a Parliamentary Education Officer at The Oireachtas. Conor's message used the analogy of motorways having service stations to come off when to refuel and refresh, to convey how important it is for our minds to do the same especially as this pandemic tests us mentally.

Two student members of the Wellbeing team, Liam Carew and Shane O'Connor designed a presentation on Digital Wellbeing and Safety and this was presented by them to all students after the midterm.

Wellbeing Wednesday

Our video contribution for "Wellbeing Wednesday" came from Dublin Footballer Shane Carthy. Shane advised having a daily plan is key to getting through the lockdown period. Shane also worked with out TY students on March 12th, during an online workshop. His work with schools is exemplary. Shane hopes that through his words and actions he can show people that there is a way out when they are feeling over-

whelmed or struggling.

Time Out Thursday

Thursday was about taking a time-out to reflect on the journey you have come through especially over Christmas and through this lockdown period. Our video input came from within our talented teaching staff, Ms. Brenda O'Donnell is an English teacher and Year Head to our 1st Years. Brenda reflected on the challenging year had by all members of The Abbey School community and their families. However, she also documented all that we have to be grateful for, as we continue through 2011.

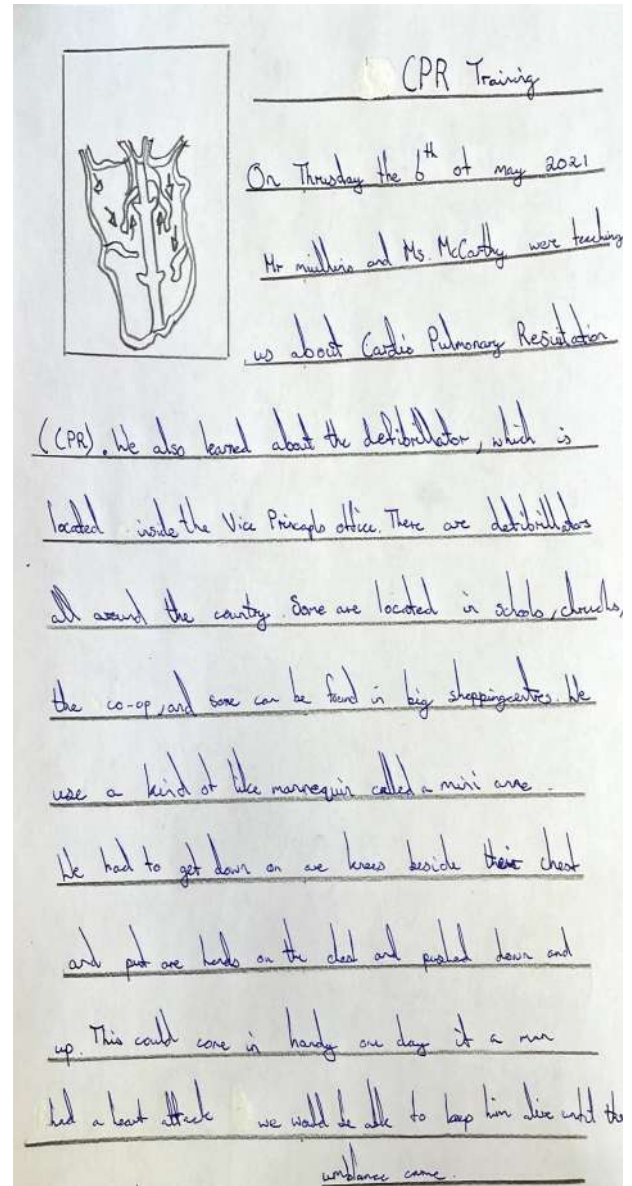
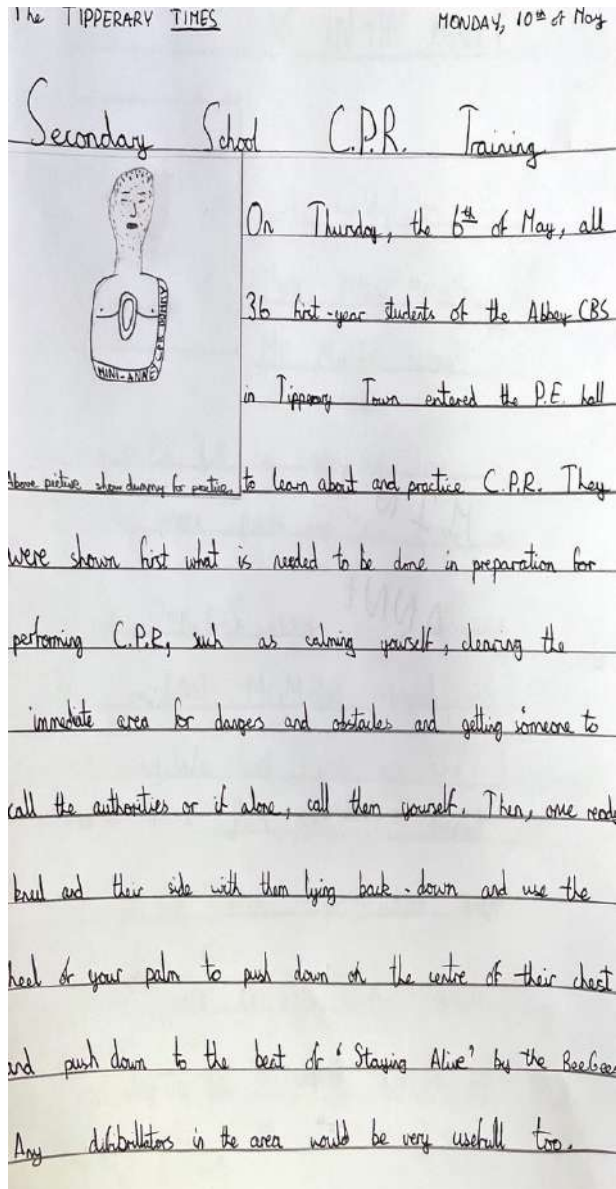
Focus Friday

Dr. Breda Lonergan who is a parent representative of our school and a GP in the local Kylecourt Clinic, took time out of her busy frontline role, to outline the importance of remaining steadfast in our approach to reducing the spread of the virus. We also had a poster made by Shane O'Connor and Liam Carew which conveyed the message of this entire wellbeing initiative over the past number of weeks. Our wellbeing series was a success due to the people that invested in it, students, staff, parents and the wider community.



First Year CPR Training

First Year Students composed diary entries to reflect on their CPR Training



First Year Students during their CPR Training

My School Placement in The Abbey School by Kieran Breen

On the eleventh of January 2021, I commenced my final school placement. I was returning to the Abbey School in Tipperary town, where I myself completed my post primary schooling. My initial thoughts of returning to the school varied greatly. I was looking forward to experiencing the school from the other side of the desk but with this came apprehension. I was excited to return to the school to relive the many fond memories from the traditional classroom setting to sporting events. However, I also had fears which I needed to overcome, I questioned my ability to adapt to the online setting and move to remote learning. I wondered about the students and how they would engage with me as a new teacher not to mind a new teacher online.

Final year placement comes with its own pressure of lesson planning and extensive preparation, and with the move to the virtual classroom initially this pressure did intensify to some extent, however the support and reassurance offered by colleagues in the Abbey School quickly reduced these concerns. In particular the guidance offered by my cooperating teachers Ms. King, Mr. Ó Murchú, Mr. Riall and Mr. Quirke were essential for my progression throughout the placement period. They provided me with the information to support students in their learning while also sharing tips on how to best approach certain topics and chapters. Knowing that I could call upon my cooperating teachers to ask for advice and support at any time was a great comfort to me and something that I am very grateful for.

I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to teach classes in 1st and 2nd year in both Irish and Business allowing me to improve my own abilities in both subjects while also experiencing the different courses and mixed ability of the year groups. It certainly has enhanced my ability to teach and adapt my lesson designs depending on the year group.

The Abbey School continued to offer me every opportunity to enhance my ability as a teacher including the chance to do oral practice with Leaving Cert Irish stu-

dents. Not only did this opportunity help in my skills as an oral examiner but also gave me the opportunity of experiencing senior classes and to witness how the needs of students change, something of which I must be acutely aware of as a qualified teacher.

Initially, I did view the concept of 'remote teaching' as a negative aspect of my school placement, however I now recognize the many skills it has taught me. Online teaching took me out of my comfort zone and forced me to face and overcome any challenges that occurred. The Abbey School are to thank for this capability in overcoming, as a student in the school, teachers often challenged us to set targets and achieve goals, something of which I continue to do. In the online setting, I learned to utilise technology resources to help create interactive and engaging lessons and to adapt from the face to face to the online environment.

It must be mentioned that none of this experience would be possible or as enjoyable without the enthusiasm of students and their interest in engaging and participating in the online classes. Despite being away from friends and being taught through a screen, the students adapted well and embraced the move to online learning. Students were more than willing to share opinions, answer questions and ask for help. Students remained respectful throughout the remote learning experience; I am only sorry that I did not have longer in the face-to-face interactions with them to further support them in their own learning but also to enhance my ability as a teacher.

In the remote setting, the main focus was developing the academic ability of the child and admittedly I was disappointed that I did not get the opportunity to participate in other activities within the school, in particular the sporting events organised in the school to develop all aspects of the students including Wellbeing. However, I did get a glimpse of the community spirit of the school when invited to partake in the Malin to Mizen Head Virtual Walk/ fundraiser, an event that encouraged students to get out and be active as well as us as teachers!

My Experience as an Exchange Student in The Abbey School by Thomas Sourroque

I have spent nine months at the Abbey School and it has been an amazing experience. I have learned a lot of interesting things. I wish to thank all of the staff that work in the school, teachers, the headmaster and all other people that work at the school.

My experience inside the Abbey school was an incredible and unforgettable experience. I would be lying, if I said that it was easy. At the start of the year I was completely lost, I didn't speak the language, it was a new school, I didn't know my fellow students, I had to wear a uniform. At the beginning I was welcomed by the headmaster, he was so kind and very welcoming, this helped me so much by reducing my stress. The teachers and all the staff were really kind and understanding of my lack of English and they helped me a lot.

After a few months, I adopted new habits. I made some friends at school that helped me again to overcome the stress and the lack of English, because they understood my difficulties. I really like the atmosphere inside the school as well.

Unfortunately, because of Covid 19, we had to work online. This was not the best part of the year but the school was very supportive during this phase.

To finish I would like to say that I am really happy I spent a year in a school like The Abbey School. I am a bit sad to go back home because I would like to stay here and spend more time with all my friends from the Abbey school.



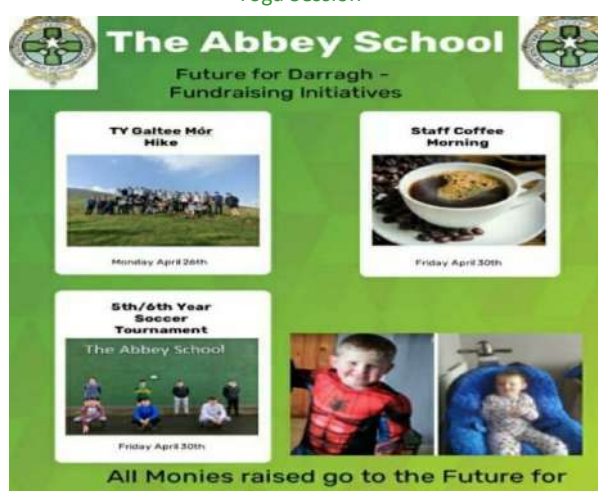
Thomas Sourroque pictured with Gabriele Ravelli and Axel Stendahl. Our three exchange students who we were delighted to welcome to The Abbey for the 20/21 Academic Year

Active Schools Week

This year we took part in the National Active School Week and we were delighted to also take part in this year's Active Flag event which aimed to promote physical literacy and activity levels. Activities for the week included a first year "Wellbeing Walk", a TY Hike to the Galtees in aid of the "Future for Darragh" campaign, a Yoga session kindly facilitated by Ms. O'Connell and summer tournaments at lunchtime. The week concluded with our TYs, 5th and 6th Years taking part in a fundraiser soccer tournament in aid of the "Future for Darragh" campaign. As well as getting out and active it raised funds for a very worthy cause and we wish Darragh and all the Ryan family the very best of luck.



Ms. O'Connell treating First Year Students to a Yoga Session



We were delighted to help raise money for the "Future for Darragh" campaign. Through our three fundraising initiatives, €523 was collected. A big thank you to everyone who supported this very worthy cause.

Transition Year 2021



vided over 30 saplings to the school which were also planted by the students. The process has been a learning experience for most; they have learned how to prune back plants, how to plant bulbs and how to set flowers and seeds, how to set trees and how to cut back ivy to protect the host tree. The opportunity to work outside and take a break from the unfortunate necessity of wearing masks has been a great relief for students as well as providing them with an appreciation and ownership of the environment that surrounds them every day. Well done to all on a job well done.

Greenschools

This year our Greenschools efforts towards a Green Flag were thwarted, like many activities, because of Covid 19. We have had an unforeseen increase in items that we cannot recycle and unfortunately cannot be reduced. There has therefore been a change in focus of the Greenschools group in TY. Their focus this year has been on improving the exterior of the school and working on improving some of the vast grounds of The Abbey. Every Friday morning the TYs have done trojan work and have benefited from the physical effort needed to carry it out. They have planted over 300 daffodil bulbs along the front of the school including down the avenue and around the lovely stone arch to commemorate the school's history as an abbey. They have revived the front bank of the school clearing back overgrown ivy and rooting out weeds, planted a wildflower section and reseeded an area of grass. They have revamped the beds in the yard by replacing the bark mulch, pruning back plants and weeding. Tipperary County Council pro-



Young Social Innovators "Use Your Head, Use Your Helmet"

TY Students were very motivated with making progress on their Young Social Innovators project 'Use Your Head – Use Your Helmet' throughout the year. The team was led by Darragh Buckley, Ben Ryan and Shane O' Connor with many other students involved with various aspects.

The innovative project aimed to raise awareness of the prevalence of acquired brain injury amongst Ireland's young people with a focus on the lack of helmet wearing by young cyclists. The students created a prototype device to remind cyclists to wear their helmet when they sit on their bike, with the added benefit of having somewhere to store their helmet.

In addition to creating the unique innovation, the students also coordinated a cycle safe programme for local primary schools highlighting the safe routes in the locality as well as cycling etiquette. In the Autumn of 2020, TY's participated in several cycling workshops with Jim Kissane of the Tipperary Wheelers Cycling Club to create their own safe cycling course for younger cyclists. In December 2020, members of the YSI team visited Cullen N.S. to pilot their cycle safety workshop with all students in the school. The plan was to continue with this great community effort and visit many other primary schools in early 2021 but the most recent lockdown delayed that plan.



TY YSI Team at Cullen School piloting their Cycle Safety Workshop

Since returning to school on April 12th, momentum

built back up with this initiative. The team enhanced the workshop and carried out a more interactive version with our current 1st Year students on May 07th.

It is a super project with huge potential and the team were delighted to be shortlisted in the YSI Finals awards for "Make Our World Safer Challenge Category". The YSI Awards Ceremony took place on Thursday 13th May and the team received the huge accolade of being place 2nd overall in Ireland winning the Silver Award.



Cycle Workshop with First Years on 7th May



YSI National Winners (Silver Award), Darragh Buckley, Shane O' Connor and Ben Ryan

Edmund Rice Student Leadership Course

During the spring of 2021, 20 of our TY students participated in an Edmund Rice Student Leadership Programme facilitated by Thomas Murray of Edmund Rice England and members of ERST in Ireland. We were one of three Edmund Rice Schools nationally that participated in the pilot programme that will become available on a larger scale next year.

The students delved into the four themes of the course by working on one topic within each theme.

Theme1: History and Life of Edmund Rice

Theme2: Social Justice (Advocacy and Human Rights)

Theme3: Leadership

Theme 4: Planning an Advocacy Campaign

The learning has been very valuable for them as a group in addition to the synergy created in zoom breakout rooms with their peers from Oatlands College and CBS Kilkenny.



TY Student Leadership Group

TY Galtee Mór Trip

On the 26th of April, Transition Year students gathered at Cush, met by guide Mike Moroney and teachers Mr. O' Murchú, Mr O' Dwyer and Mr. Riall. At 9:30, we departed, all looking forward to reaching Galtee Mór. About 30 minutes after our departure, we crossed the Lough Curragh Stile and started the first climb of the day towards Lough Curragh. By 11 o' clock, we had reached the lake. Before we had

even had time to take in the views we sprinted into the freezing lake, the 16 degree heat beating down on us had taken its toll! After that we began the toughest part of the climb, a steep incline taking about 30 minutes to complete. The rest of the way saw us walk alongside the wall indicating the Tipperary-Limerick border and eventually reach the cross of Galtee Mór. After many photos were taken at the top, we began our descent, arriving back at the Cush car park at 3 o' clock. A day thoroughly enjoyed by all!



TY students with their guide Mike Moroney

Young Economist of The Year Awards

TY students Liam Carew and Shane O' Connor recently won a Gold Award for their project entered for Young Economist of The Year which is anchored by the Professional Development Service for Teachers. They received a gold medal and a certificate of participation last week. In addition, their project which focused on "The Changing Landscape of Irish Retail Banking and its Impact on Consumers" was short listed for eligibility for further placings in special interest awards which took place in an online awards ceremony on Thursday 20th May. The boys had further success at this awards ceremony, winning the national silver award with second place in the TY Category. The final aspect of their success is an invitation to sit an exam to determine eligibility for the Irish International Economic Olympiad Team. This is another outstanding achievement for both Liam and Shane. .



Inside Out

Inside Out came about as a result of growing concerns around the amount of people with disabilities and older people in our community that have been victims of crime in the past. Seven victims of crime share their experiences of crime on this project in an effort to help make society a safer place for all in the future. This valuable programme was led by Anne Bradshaw (HSE) and Superintendent Des Bell (An Garda Síochána). Four students from each of the three post-primary schools in Tipperary Town were chosen to participate. The twelve Transition Year students engaged with the victims and recount their stories in victim impact statements throughout the book. Thirty females serving time in custody at Limerick Prison participated on the project to offer comfort and understanding to victims of crime and to help steer young people away from committing crimes in the future. A victim can be defined as a person who has suffered harm, including physical, mental or emotional harm or economic loss, which was directly caused by a criminal offence. (Criminal Justice, Victims of Crime Act, 2017).” Engaging with young people on this project has been therapeutic and helpful for victims”, Victim B Jennifer says:

All students worked over the year with Anne and Des along with victims of the crime and also some perpetrators to these criminal offences. They got to understand how crime impacts people in their community, especially those with disabilities. From the other side, they also got some insight into why some of the perpetrators of crime had engaged in these offences, hear their background story etc. The TY students have enabled the programme content to be accessible and relevant to the needs of victims, young people and the broader community in general. The four students who participated on the programme from our TY group are, Sean Kingston, Adam Lohan, Darragh O’ Brien and Ben Ryan. They had a huge role to play and were so giving of their energy and commitment to the project even during the difficult months of lockdown. Our very talented Art teacher, Ms. Jolene Carey has had some of her great creativity published through images in the final booklet also. Huge

credit to Anne Bradshaw and Des Bell and the many others within the HSE and An Garda Síochána who gave such enthusiasm to the programme and enabled it to come to fruition even when a global pandemic stood in their way. Inside Out Crime Awareness Handbook has been recently published and is a fantastic read which captures the series of the programme in great detail.

Students Voice From Inside Out Project Participants

Sean Kingston “Meeting real victims of crime was a great experience on this project and I was looking forward to hearing the prisoner’s stories”

Ben Ryan “We learned a lot about crime on the project, but we also met people with visual impairments and people with disabilities”

Darragh O’Brien “This project was great to show us there are two sides to every story, we learned about the impact of crime on the victim, but it also taught us about the person who committed the crime”

Adam Lohan “I learned a lot about the impact of



Art Work by Ms. Jolene Carey

“A butterfly changes forms many times over its lifetime - always evolving.”

BT Young Scientist Success for Abbey TY Students

Transition Year students, Shane O' Connor and Liam Carew from The Abbey School Tipperary Town, were one of the many hundreds of groups to enter the 2021 BT Young Scientist. Their project entitled "Assessing the Impact of Second Level Education on Key Aspects of Adolescents' Life and Development" was chosen to get through to the finals of the competition which occurred virtually this year with judging going from the 6th-8th January. After 3 rounds of judging, they were awarded 1st Place in the Social and Behavioural sciences category.

As the boys came to the end of their Junior Cycle journey last May, they began to reflect on their time spent in Secondary School. In assessing their education experience to date, both boys felt they had developed well and grown exponentially. They were aware however, that some of their fellow students had differing experiences to them. From this curiosity emerged the question: "How does Second Level Education impact on students?" The successful project began from here.

On acceptance into the competition in October, the boys set about formulating a plan. The initial stage was to develop a survey. This survey would be distributed to students in secondary schools of varying social and gender mix. Advice was sought from NUI Galway lecturer Mr. Bernard McCarthy in creating the survey. With the help of their supervising teacher, Ms. Eavan Ryan and school principal Mr. John Kiely, their survey was distributed amongst students. Over 600 responses were received.

A series of interviews were then undertaken to develop their qualitative data. Mr John Kiely, Principal and Limerick Senior Hurling manager was interviewed to gain his view on student experiences along with Guidance Counsellor, Mr. Conor Hayes. Irish Second Level Students Union Education Officer Alicia O'Sullivan in her interview shared her experience with the ISSU and as a student activist. Others who were interviewed and provided invaluable information were Deputy Chief Inspector at the Department of Education and Skills Padraig MacFhianachadha, Senator Joan Freeman and Professor Selina McCoy, Research Professor with the ERSI. Some of the conclusions the boys arrived at as a result of their investigations were:

- "Being with Friends" and "Socialising" were the two most reported positive elements of second level education for students.

- For students who felt that second level education had not had a positive impact on their social development excessive homework and exam pressure were the two main reasons given.

- Students indicated that COVID-19 had negatively impacted all key aspects assessed.

- 29% of students had dropped the majority of their physical activities outside of school since starting second level. 86% of these students dropped their activities during Junior Cycle.

They produced a project book of over 105 pages containing all of their findings. Shane and Liam were delighted and honoured their project claimed first place in the Social and Behavioural Sciences Intermediate Group category at this year's BT Young Scientist Competition. Shane and Liam's win continues a successful tradition that The Abbey School have with the BT Young Scientist Competition. In 2017, Tadhg Carew and Jack Quirke represented the school in the BT Young Scientist. Their project won third place in their category.

For Shane and Liam, the experience of competing in the 2021 BT Young Scientist has been the highlight of the Transition Year programme and they would recommend it to all schools and students. Since the competition, the boys have worked hard to develop their project. On a school level, Shane and Liam have joined the Abbey's Wellbeing Team as Student Leadership Representatives.



TY Art

In April, TY students completed a ceramics project with our Artist in Residence, Thomas Wollen. Thomas is a ceramicist from Cloughjordan who was able to come to our school through the Creative Schools engagement programme.

Transition Year students created pots based on their time spent during lockdown, inspired by the work of artist Grayson Perry. After moulding the pots into the correct shape, Thomas thought the boys about the process of Raku Firing which involves bisque firing clay, glazing it and a reduction firing with wood chips and lastly it is cooled in a bucket of water.

This was an enjoyable and unique experience for the students to get an insight into the life of a working artist as well as the world of pottery.



End of Year Celebration and Greenway Cycle

Tuesday, May 18th marked the final formal day of school for our TY students. In a year like no other they have achieved so much. When they should have been heading on a European tour, they did not leave the county until May 19th. They are a courageous and resilient group of lads who have made the best of a very difficult year. We wish we could celebrate your end of year with a formal graduation, but it just is not possible. A highlight of the year was the first and final trip of the year cycling the Waterford Greenway on Wednesday 19th May. To the TY class of 20/21, it will always be one to remember. Thank you for your participation from all the staff at The Abbey.



School Tours

First and Second Year students travelled to the University of Limerick Adventure Centre in Killaloe on Thursday and Friday 20th & 21st of May. The weather wasn't in their favour for both days but this did not impact the boy's participation or enjoyment. A great day was had by all.



Timeout Session

On Friday 26th March, 5th, LCA and 6th Year students had a "timeout" session where they caught up with each other and teachers and had tea/coffee and Easter eggs outside of the classroom to reflect on the last few weeks back at school.

Teachers were also treated to egg earlier in the week. Both of these initiatives were organised by the staff and students representatives of the school Wellbeing Team and Student Council.



Abbey Sports Day 2021

This year our Sports Day returned as the Falcons, Pumas, Pythons and Sharks fought it out for the top spot. The Abbey Sports Day is running over 40 years and the school was eager to keep this proud tradition going and thought of innovative ways to do so in the current Covid-19 climate.

This year's sports day activities took place over two days to ensure social distancing and challenges ranged from hurling and football, keepy up challenges to traditional favourites such as "Hand of God" and 4 Corner Tug-of War.

The highlight of the week took place on Friday evening when the school announced its annual sports award winners, the Sports Day champions as well as the announcement of the prestigious "Abbey Sports Star of the Year". Previous winners include the likes of Nicky English, Ciaran McDonald, Damian O'Brien, Johnny Ryan and reigning champion Niall Sharpe. This year's recipient was Donagh Hickey, a worthy winner who has represented the school in all codes and has represented Tipperary at Minor and U20 level in Gaelic Football.

The final act of the day was to announce the winning team and with only 45 points between first and fourth, it proved to be one of the closely fought battles in years with the Pythons taking the honours and claiming their third title.



Footballer of the Year 2021
Diarmuid Looby with P.E teacher
Mr. Michael Hanly



Hurler of the Year 2021
Eoin Marnane with P.E teacher
Mr. Michael Hanly



Sports Star of the Year 2021 Donagh Hickey with members of the Sports Department

Abbey Junior Sports Day 2021



Senior Abbey Sports Day 2021



Sports Awards 2020



1st Year Soccer Player of the Year
Alex Webster



1st Year Hurler of the Year
Darragh O'Hora



U15 Footballer of the Year
Liam Finnane



U15 Hurler of the Year
Robbie McGrath



U16 Rugby Player of the Year
Ben Ryan



U16.5 Hurler of the Year
Orrin Jones



U16.5 Footballer of the Year
Micheál Lowry



Senior Footballer of the Year
Donagh Hickey

Smiling - Seamus O Rourke's Advice

I know we can't see a face with that mask on,
But smile from under your chin all the way down to your toes
And from the bridge of your nose upwards
Bring a smile into your eyes.

To some you might just look surprised but so what!
Ask them what they've got in the way of positivity and Joy,
Try whistling for a while, whistle a jig or a reel or a bohemian rhapsody backways
And if you cant whistle with your mask on, whistle inwardly instead,
maybe make a humming sound, don't keep such a symphony to yourself let it rip,
not everything has to stop.

Dance, do a little dance while standing in line
when everyone else is two meters away, do a shuffle just a one, two, three, feel free
to elaborate.

Go for a high kick or a twirl or a spin or a swing
anything from Ben Crosby to Bob Dylan to Stomzy giving it lots of attitude!!!
Be a cool dude like Hozier, be a soldier, grab hold of life, fight the negativity to the
left and right.

Call on your generosity and your spirit of goodwill and kindness and for goodness
sake stay away from the cloak of daggering.

Those circling the band waggon are circling all in vain, for pain has been this way
before, it has knocked at our door many times, these fleeting tweets of hype of
spite should make us want to say, Get the hell away, not today, today we play.
Play, play with your kids and your grandkids, grab your sons and daughters and
lavish them with love and hugs and squeeze them tight, make funny faces, blow
rhapsodies, make rude noises that proes out laughter and squeals of delight,
that's the flight.

Tell someone a joke, if you haven't got a good one, make one up, make tea, make a
cup for everyone and talk, talk, talk to yourself if there's no one there, who cares if
you answer back, interview yourself, give yourself a prize for hanging in and not
giving out.

Shout, shout if you're in trouble or when you see your team score, and if this past
year has taken its toll shout even more, shout hip hip hooray.

Come on find your smile again and this time remember to wear it out on life and
love and something funny that you once said.