

# *The* Kintullagh Voice

DECEMBER 2023



The Newsletter of St Louis Grammar School, Ballymena



***N.I. Top Grammar School***



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# OUTSTANDING EXAMINATION RESULTS!

As we moved away from exam mitigations and back to formal examinations, St Louis results are stronger than ever.

At A Level 97.5% of students attained 3 or more A\*-C grades with 64.5% of all grades A\*/A and 87% of grades at A level A\*/B. We congratulate the 66 students who have left the school with 3 or more A grades and the 3 students (Conor Brolly, PJ McDonnell and Niall McIlhatton) who achieved a magnificent 4 A\* grades. A further 8 students achieved 3 A\* grades across a range of subjects at A Level.

Success continued at AS with a remarkable 54 students achieving 3 or more A grades. Furthermore, 4 students within the cohort achieved an outstanding 5 A grades and an additional 21 students secured 4 A grades at AS.

At GCSE level every single student attained 7 or more GCSEs at Grade A\*-C, including English and Maths, in fact 59 students have achieved an outstanding 9 or more A\*/A Grades with 81 students attaining 8 or more straight A\*/A grades and 90 students achieving 7 or more A\*/A grades. 7 students achieved 10 A\* grades.

These outstanding results do not happen by chance. They are the outcome of the commitment of the staff, sustained application by our students and the continuous encouragement by parents/guardians at home. St Louis is a community, where students, staff and parents/guardians work collectively. At St Louis we are all committed to excellence, endeavour and empowerment - faithful to our mission statement that every child within our care deserves to reach their full potential.



EXCELLENCE | ENDEAVOUR | EMPOWERMENT



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# PRIZE DAY 2023

On Friday, September 22nd, we came together to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our students throughout the previous academic year at Prize Day.

It was a lovely occasion as we welcomed students back into the school to celebrate their successes, particularly those who attained a commendable level of success and are now embarking on the next stage of their educational journey.

The event featured an inspiring address from our Guest Speaker, the accomplished past pupil Declan Lawn.

With a distinguished career as a screenwriter and director in film and TV, Declan shared his insights and experiences, emphasizing the importance of each student "telling their story" and offering motivation to pursue their aspirations with diligence.

Congratulations to all our Prize Winners; your accomplishments make us exceptionally proud.



5 x A Grades AS Level



Aisling Ardill - Recipient of Senior Music Cup



Aoife Hay GCSE Art Top Achiever



Benjamin Marr Top Achiever GCSE Maths in Year 11



Bronagh Dempster Faith in Action Cup



Catherine Doherty - Drama Performance Cup



Conor Brolly Top Achiever A level Physics and Further Maths



Conor McCormick Top Achiever Technology



Daniel Kelly Top Achiever BTEC Double Award Construction



Eimear Smith Top Achiever GCSE Business and PE



Emily Flavin Top Achiever GCSE Maths



Erin McAleese Top Achiever GCSE Construction and Religious Studies





Euan Pirie Top Achiever GCSE Irish



Grainne McAuley Top Achiever GCSE Drama



James Doherty Top Achiever  
GCSE Computer Science



Joel Cushenan Top Achiever in A Level History  
14 years full attendance



Kate McClintock Top Achiever GCSE Art and Music



Katie Bonnes Top Achiever  
A level Biology and Religious Studies



Katie Molloy Top Achiever  
A level Health and Social Care Single Award



Keira Young Top Achiever  
GCSE Single Award Science



Lara Ball Top Achiever A Level Drama



Mary Rose McDonnell Top Achiever  
GCSE Further Maths and Food and Nutrition



McGinley Award presented to Emily Sharpe in  
Year 13 for Endeavour



Mia Guidote Top Achiever  
GCSE Art, French and Digital Technology



Niall McIlhatton Top Achiever A level Maths



Niamh O'Shea Top Achiever  
GCSE English Literature



Peter Hanisek - Recipient of McKeith Cup  
for GCSE Physics







PJ McDonnell Top Achiever  
A level Computer Science and Economics



Pupils who achieved 4 A\* grades at A Level  
Conor Brolly, Niall McIlhatton and PJ McDonnell



Pupils who achieved 10 A\*/A grades including  
8 A\* at GCSE



Pupils who achieved 10 A\*/A grades  
including 9 A\* at GCSE



Pupils who achieved 10 A\* at GCSE



Ryan McKeever Top Achiever GCSE History



Ryan O'Neill Top Achiever Double Award Sport



Sara Fyfe Top Achiever BTEC Sport Single Award



Sean Curran Top Achiever A level PE



Selection of our pupils who achieved  
10 A\* or A grades at GCSE



Siobhan McGale Top Achiever GCSE Spanish,  
Geography and Double Award Science



Some of our pupils who achieved 5 A\* grades  
at A Level. Sean Corr, Joe Halloran, Katie-Bonnes

*Congratulations to all our prize winners!*





# A NIGHT WITH ST LOUIS

## at The Tullyglass House Hotel - 20th October 2023

A sell-out crowd packed into the Tullyglass Hotel on Friday 20th October for a memorable night of insightful conversation and storytelling with seven greats of the GAA.

The event, run by Friends of St Louis, centred on the theme 'The Student Athlete to the Elite Athlete.' Compere extraordinaire Shane Elliot probed the guests on their experiences of playing and coaching football and hurling at second, third level and beyond. The Dunloy man also branched out his questioning to more broad issues in the modern games of Hurling & Gaelic Football, drawing fascinating insights from the panel.

First up was Gaelic Football with Peter Canavan, Paul McFlynn and Paddy Tally taking to the stage. Wasting no time, Shane opened the discussion on the topic on everyone lips of late – the appointment of Mickey Harte as Derry Senior Football Manager. A lively and diplomatic discussion ensued between the two Tyrone legends – one who played under Mickey and one who coached with him – and the Derry man Paul who will be a member of Harte's backroom team for the incoming season.

The three men went on to contribute their thoughts on the state of modern football, its defensive setup and the challenges facing underage teams in an age of ultra competitiveness.

After an interval where guests enjoyed a delicious buffet and the music of St Louis Traditional Group, there was a presentation to the All-Ireland winning Camogie Team.

The second half of the night centred on Hurling and Camogie. The impressive panel consisted of Martin Fogarty, Ursula Jacob, Neil McManus and Lucia McNaughton.

Discussion centred on the challenges facing young athletes in an age of social media. Ursula Jacob shared her own story of dealing with Twitter trolls when she talked about enough being enough.

Neil McManus then issued a crying call for Ulster GAA to step up their efforts for the small ball in the North.

Martin discussed how ego can impact not just the players, but everyone involved with a team.

And finally Lucia, a past pupil of St Louis, spoke about her love for the game, the friendships made and continually striving to be the best every time she goes out onto the pitch.







# PASTORAL DEVELOPMENT

## *NAPCE UK Pastoral Awards*

St Louis were nominated for Pastoral Development of the Year at the 2023 UK National Awards for Pastoral Care in Education.

The category represents a pastoral initiative or idea that has achieved positive outcomes and has improved the learning experience and future life chances for young people.

The awards were held in Worcester at the Worcestershire County Cricket ground on September 29th and were attended by Mrs McGreevy.

The event provided an opportunity to value and recognise the important contribution that pastoral care makes to the future life chances of children and young people. We were presented with our finalist certificate at the awards, and were delighted to have been recognised!



# GAEL LINN QUIZ

On Thursday 12th October, a group of Year 10 students embarked on a trip to the annual Gael Linn quiz, which was held in the Devenish complex in Belfast.

Students were faced with several rounds of questions through the medium of Irish and listened to a Guest Speaker from Comhairle na Gaelscolaíochta, who highlighted the wonderful range of opportunities that are available within the Irish language sector.

Amid the intense quizzing, one team stood out, securing a very commendable second place. They will proceed to the Gael Linn quiz final in January.

Events such as these serve as a reminder that learning Irish extends beyond the classroom, and it was wonderful to see our Year 10 pupils represent our school so well. Maith sibh agus ádh mór ar Lucy McGilligan, Rory McConnell, Shayne Dorrity and Ellie McGeehan from 10 Lyndon who are through to the finals!







# TRIUMPH IN THE AIR

## *Molly Soars to Become Senior World Champion*

We are thrilled to announce that we have a gold medal world champion among us! Molly, an exceptional student, has secured her place in history as NI's first Double Mini Trampoline (DMT) Senior World Champion. Her remarkable achievement not only brings pride to our school but also underscores her unwavering dedication to both academics and athletics.

Molly's journey to the pinnacle of the trampoline world is nothing short of inspiring. Balancing her rigorous training schedule with Antrim Phoenix Trampoline Club alongside her studies at our school, Molly has proven that dedication, hard work, and passion can lead to extraordinary success. Her commitment to excellence has been evident throughout her trampoline career, marked by a series of accolades at the underage level.

What sets Molly apart is her ability to transition seamlessly into the senior ranks while maintaining her winning streak. Her perseverance and talent have not only earned her a gold medal but have also elevated her to a position of distinction as the first senior world champion from Northern Ireland in these disciplines.



As a school community, we couldn't be prouder of Molly's accomplishments. Her success serves as an inspiration to all our students, emphasizing the limitless possibilities that come with hard work and dedication. Congratulations to Molly on a well-deserved gold medal, and we look forward to witnessing your continued success on the global stage!

# A LEVEL IRISH STUDENTS RECORD A PODCAST!

Our senior language students, Cumann Lughaidh, and their teachers Miss O'Brien and Mrs Campbell, were delighted to welcome back Grace McQuade, a St Louis past pupil, to record a podcast! A Level Irish students embraced the challenge of conversing fully in Irish on a range of topics.

Grace was required to record a podcast as part of her Irish & Politics course in Queen's University, Belfast. Grace provided current A Level pupils with an excellent opportunity to practice their spoken Irish in a context other than the classroom. Pupils spoke fluently and proficiently about their experience of Irish in the school and the wide ranging extra-curricular opportunities from Seachtain na Gaeilge events to Gaeltacht trips and more! Pupils also discussed the growing presence of the Irish language on social media, how they wish to continue learning Irish in University and the importance of maintaining their high level of Irish.

Miss O'Brien and Mrs Campbell both spoke on their personal experiences that lead them to be teachers of Irish.



They both reminisced fondly on their Gaeltacht days as a student, ceannaire and teacher and how they wished to share this experience with the Irish pupils in St Louis.

Snippets from the podcast have been released on Gaeilge ar Scoil Lughaidh Facebook and Instagram pages! Follow along for more information.

Beatha teanga í a labhairt – the life of a language is to speak it!







# WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

World Mental Health Day took place on Tuesday 10th October and St Louis Grammar chose to mark this day by promoting mental health awareness and well-being through a sponsored 'Mood Walk'. Walking is one of the most effective ways to enhance one's mood and take care of mental health.

St Louis Grammar School is not only a recognised Investor in Mental Health School but also a Level 5 Take 5 accredited school. This makes their 'Mood Walk' event a natural fit with both our missions. The Mood Walk event corresponds with the 'Active' and 'Connect' elements of the Take 5 approach to mental health and well-being.

St Louis worked closely with AWARE NI in the lead up to the day. AWARE NI also conduct Mood Matters workshops with pupils as part of our ongoing collaboration.

The event involved around 1200 students and approximately 70 staff members throughout the day. Each year group, along with their teachers, participated during designated periods.

It was an enjoyable day and most importantly it raised awareness about the importance of mental health and our efforts to support it.







# ST LOUIS SCHOOL NETWORK QUIZ WINNERS

We had 5 school quiz teams competing against the other St Louis schools within Ireland.

This is the first quiz organised and held by the St Louis Schools Network, and the standard of question was extremely high.

Well done to all of our teams for participating, but special mention to Team 4 who won!

A big thank you to Mrs McCollum for facilitating a great opportunity.



# MISS LAVERY PICKS UP IRISH NEWS ALL STAR 2023

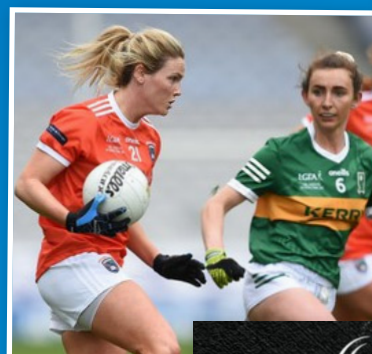
We congratulate Miss Lavery, a commendable member of our school community.

This October, Miss Lavery secured an Irish News All-Star at midfield, showcasing her exceptional talent and dedication as a player for Armagh Ladies Footballers.

Miss Lavery, who also serves as the coach of our ladies' football teams, brings a wealth of experience and passion to her role, enriching the performances of our young ladies footballers.

Her achievements not only make her a credit to her club and county but also an invaluable asset to our school. We are incredibly proud of Miss Lavery's accomplishments and consider ourselves truly fortunate to have such an inspiring role model guiding and motivating our players.

Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition!



# JAKE AND ENZO AWARDED MOST INNOVATIVE PROJECT!

Sentinus Young Innovators provides an opportunity for young people to exhibit Science and Engineering project work and have it assessed for a range of awards. All STEM projects are welcomed and you can enter project work which has been carried out within curriculum time or as an extra-curricular activity.

In October, Jake McKillop and Enzo Murray presented their project at the event in Belfast and scored a very impressive 92%. They developed a prototype Kevlar removal system for Dupont and was marked on such criteria as Sustainability and Safety Concerns. The judges commented on how well Jake spoke and that his delivery could well have been expected from someone who was much more experienced. The Dupont representative also had high praise for Jake and Enzo's design and will be preparing a business case for it to see if it could go through to proper production.

Jake and Enzo were awarded the Most Innovative Project after all of their efforts! Well done to both pupils and thank you to Mr Trainor for facilitating.







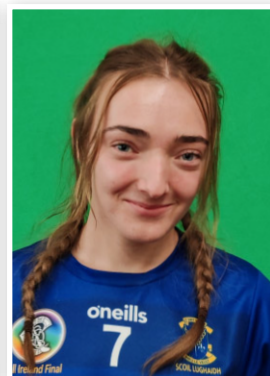
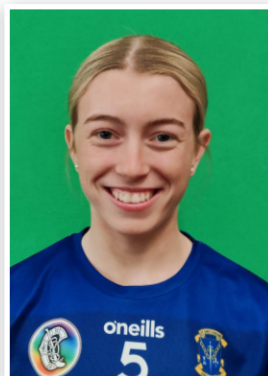
## 5 ULSTER SCHOOLS CAMOGIE ALL STARS

We are delighted that we have five camogie All Stars within our school this year. For the second year running, St Louis has the most camogie All Stars out of all the colleges in Ulster.

- Anna McKillop from Loughgiel Shamrocks
- Aisling O'Donnell from St Marys, Ahoghill
- Ciara O'Boyle from St Marys Rasharkin
- Dearbhla Dobbin from Geraldine's, Portglenone
- Erin Coulter from Bridini Ogá, Glenravel

Over 120 camogs attended the first trial in October, with only 45 being asked to attend the second trial. 45 girls from all over Ulster battled to impress the selectors and make the final 24. We are so proud of our five Upper Sixth students who are all very worthy winners of this award.

Dearbhla, Anna, Aisling and Ciara are all picking up their first award, Glenravel's Erin Coulter is collecting her second consecutive award. These are incredibly gifted young ladies who have given their all every time they have wore the St Louis jersey, and we have no doubt this is one of many awards the girls will achieve in their playing careers.



## ABP AGRICULTURE AMBASSADORS

*Orlagh wins overall outstanding individual achievement award!*

Congratulations to Orlagh Donaghy, one of our ABP Agriculture ambassadors, who won the overall Outstanding Individual Achievement Award in the final of the ABP Youth Challenge!

The team received a trophy for their research project and were congratulated for their knowledge of Succession in Agriculture! Well Done Orlagh, Grainne, Declan and Garron!







# CAREERS CONVENTION

Pupils attended a Careers Convention hosted by St Louis Grammar School on Thursday 26th October. The event was a resounding success, with the participation of over thirty local and global companies, as well as Further and Higher Level Institutions. The event provided an excellent opportunity for St Louis pupils and their parents to explore diverse career pathways and to learn about Higher Level Apprenticeship opportunities.

The Careers Convention enabled pupils to engage with professionals from various industries and gain valuable insights into potential career pathways. Pupils asked questions, sought advice, and this broadened their understanding of the job market. This opportunity allowed pupils to find out and understand the importance of acquiring relevant qualifications and skills for future success.

Employers and educational representatives were delighted to engage with pupils and their parents, offering years of experience and advice on career routes. Their expertise on the world of work and skills in demand, provided an invaluable insight into the various careers and career pathways that young people can investigate further.

It was noted how well pupils demonstrated a keen interest with employers and engaged with representatives at the convention, showcasing their drive to explore different career options and make informed decisions on their future in the world of work.

## Testimonials:

*"It was extremely well organised and the pupils were all very enthusiastic, well-mannered and showed genuine interest."*

*"The pupils are a credit to the school!"*

*"Excellent event, a great opportunity for pupils to represent themselves in the adult world."*

*"Very worthwhile event. Exhibitors approachable and knowledgeable."*

*"A fantastic opportunity for our daughter to hear career pathways taken by other young adults."*

*"An excellent and very informative evening. Very helpful for pupils and parents."*







# ROTARY IRELAND YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMPETITION

The Rotary Ireland Youth Leadership Development Competition, in conjunction with Euroscola, is one of the longest running youth projects and it rewards young people with clear leadership potential.

Rotary Ireland has been organising this event for over twenty-five years and we see first-hand the opportunities and benefits it gives to the young leaders of today and tomorrow. It is an opportunity for young people to enhance their personal development and improve their communication and teambuilding skills. Students learn life skills, as well as gaining confidence in public speaking and debate.

Gráinne McAuley in Year 13 has successfully progressed through the three stage interview process of the competition which has seen Gráinne win a five day all expenses paid trip, which includes a visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg in February.

This is a wonderful achievement for Gráinne! Well done and we wish you the best of luck on your trip!



# NEWLY QUALIFIED FIRST-AIDERS

Well done to the dedicated individuals in our school community who recently completed a First Aid course with Emergency Life Skills, mastering essential techniques such as choking response, CPR, and AED usage.

Those who have earned this certification can proudly include it in their personal statements, demonstrating not only a commitment to the safety of others but also positioning themselves strongly for potential future endeavors, especially for those considering a career in the healthcare industry. Well done to all for investing in such a crucial and commendable skill set!

Many thanks to Mr Quinn for facilitating such a worthwhile course!



# MAKE A NOISE ABOUT BULLYING

Anti-Bullying Week took place from Monday 15th - Friday 17th November. The theme was Make a Noise About Bullying.

Our Sixth Form Anti Bullying Prefects presented to the whole school at assembly during this week to highlight their services and the impact bullying behaviours can have.

Being kind is more important than anything and our Prefects emphasised this to the whole school community. Our Anti Bullying Prefects meet every Wednesday in the Creativity Hub to welcome any pupil who wishes to discuss any issues of bullying behaviours. Anti Bullying Prefects are recognisable by their yellow Anti Bullying badges.



# ANTI-BULLYING HEAD PREFECTS



Hi, My name is Connor McAleese and I am honoured to find myself with the opportunity to serve as one of your Head Anti-Bullying Prefects this Year. The Anti-Bullying Team aims to ensure St. Louis can remain a place where students can feel comfortable and where their mental wellbeing is not in question. I Hope to be someone you would be willing to speak to about your problems; we are here to help you. Don't be afraid to speak with any of the Anti-bullying team about any worries you may have, and they will be more than happy to listen.



Hello, my name is Maria Blaney. I am one of the Deputy Head Girls and I also oversee the Anti-Bullying prefects for this year. We aim to make the school a safe place, full of respect and trust by ensuring that all students feel comfortable and included. If you are experiencing bullying behaviour of any kind, the Anti-Bullying prefects are always available to talk, whenever needed. We are happy to offer any advice and answer any questions you may have, so please feel free to approach any one of us for help.

Hi, my name is Ríoghnach Murray, and I am delighted to be one of the Head Anti-Bullying prefects this year. Our goal is to create a positive school environment where all pupils feel comfortable and can enjoy their time at St Louis. If you are experiencing bullying, or know of someone who is, we provide a safe place to let your problems be heard. We are happy to give any advice, and also be a friendly face to chat to, throughout the school day.



Hello, my name is Jude Osborne, and I am honoured to have been given the role to be a Head Prefect of Anti-Bullying for this incoming year. It is the aim of the Anti-Bullying Head Prefect team to create a sure and safe environment for our students, as well as offering support to those who need it. It is our goal to create a St. Louis environment where everyone can feel welcome and included. If you or anyone you know are experiencing bullying behaviour inside or outside of school, the Anti bullying body are here to listen and offer support as we understand it may be intimidating to approach a member of staff. If you have any concerns, I am more than happy to help.



Prefects will be located in the creativity hub at break time every Wednesday for any pupil to have a chat. Pupils can approach prefects in the corridor by looking out for their yellow Anti-Bullying badges.

## Other Anti-Bullying Prefects include:

Eva Liggett  
Caiomhe McAuley  
Cara McAuley  
Eva O'Neill  
Shauna Robinson  
Eadaoin Toner  
Rory Dunne  
Pearse Martin

Knowing what is right  
Doesn't mean much



Unless you are doing what is right!







# YEAR 10 MOOD MATTERS WORKSHOP

On 28th September 2023 my class took part in a Mood Matters workshop delivered by Aware NI.

All of Year 10 participated in the programme. During the workshop we learned what mental health is and the triggers that can affect our mental health. Our mental health is determined by how we think, feel and act towards situations, and just like physical health, we all have mental health and need to take care of it.

By talking about and understanding our mental health we learned the positive effects this can have on our lifestyle and on the interactions and friendships we have with our peers.

Overall, the workshop was very beneficial and engaging and I thoroughly enjoyed it.

**Ursula O'Loan**  
10 Laragh



## GAEILGE 24

Gaeilge 24 is a fantastic annual event organised by Conradh na Gaeilge, which was held on the 14th November this year, in order to support and promote the use of Irish.

The aim of the day is to encourage young people to speak as much Irish as they can for 24 hours- in school, at home and in their local communities. This challenge is not just for fluent speakers of Irish- but for everyone studying Irish who is up for the challenge to use the language that they have outside of the classroom!

This year the theme was based around 'Future of our Language.' The event challenged pupils to take part in a range of activities entirely through Irish here in St Louis- HIIT and Yoga sessions 'as Gaeilge', quizzes, bingo, and a 'guess the word' competition.

Well done to all those who took part and embraced the opportunity to use a 'cúpla focal' with enthusiasm!

Labhair í agus mairfidh sí!







# LONDON 2023

The London 2023 trip had dubious beginnings as pupils and staff battled extremely inclement weather to make it to Belfast International Airport on time. However, as much as she tried, Storm Debi did not dampen our spirits and, after a slightly turbulent take off, the A2 Politics, Geography, Drama and Music Departments were London bound. Thanks to the meticulous planning of Mrs Johnston, our itinerary was packed with visits enabling all pupils and staff to experience different facets of each other's subjects.

As the Geographers navigated us through the streets of London (led by the fearless Rory Dunne), we learned about the socio-geographical aspects of London and how it has changed over the years. A visit to Canary Wharf also gave us an insight into the opulent world of capitalism where we visited a shopping mall that housed a Landrover showroom and a barber shop that gave buzz cuts for £50. This sparked lively conversations about the value of money, work/life balance and even comparison of property prices between London and Toome.

A walk across Westminster Bridge brought us to Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. Here we were treated to a tour of the buildings, including the House of Lords and the Great Hall of Westminster. We also saw many familiar faces in the lobby as MPs left a fiery Prime Minister's Questions and had an impromptu chat with the MP for North Antrim.

Mrs Johnston arranged a workshop where pupils could discuss pertinent issues with MPs, and we were very lucky to have representatives from both the SDLP and the DUP to give their perspectives on the issues on the minds of our young people. Jude Osborne's forensic questioning of Paul Girvan led to a good-natured debate between the two, while Claire Hanna was challenged on how SDLP need to appeal to younger voters.

If a sense of revolt was present in the workshop, this may very well have been inspired by the two musicals pupils had watched on the previous evenings. Les Misérables and Hamilton provided two very different flavours of political rebellion. A rejuvenated visual show in Les Mis created a more modern performance that impressed everyone. However, the overwhelming consensus was that Hamilton had an energy and vitality that could not be rivalled.

All of these activities and visits were invaluable, but equally important was the sense of camaraderie amongst pupils and staff as we traversed the streets, tube stations and sights of London. Late night chats in the common room and laughs over pizza kept our spirits high as energy levels dipped. These encounters will be just as memorable as the many unique experiences we were afforded on this amazing trip.







# CLODAGH'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY

## *A Multi-Talented Athlete Shines Bright*

We are immensely proud to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of Clodagh, a truly exceptional individual whose passion for sports and relentless determination have led to an impressive list of accomplishments. Clodagh's journey in soccer began at the age of 7 when her remarkable talent was spotted and she was invited to train with North End United's team in Ballymena. Clodagh quickly became a standout player, earning accolades such as U8 and U11 Player of the Year.

Her dedication to the sport took her through various leagues, including successful stints in the Harry Gregg League and Lisburn League, where she clinched the Lisburn Shield in 2018 and reached the final of the Foyle Cup in 2019. Clodagh's skills didn't go unnoticed on the national stage; she was invited to the Northern Ireland development squad at the age of 10, eventually representing NI against renowned teams like Manchester City and participating in international tournaments.

From playing in Croke Park to winning the Girls' Premier Section in the NI U16 Supercup, Clodagh's versatility and commitment are truly impressive. Her contributions to Glentoran's U18 team, her involvement in the Antrim LFGA county panel, and her participation in the UEFA European Qualifiers with the NI U17 squad showcase her prowess in soccer at various levels.

Beyond soccer, Clodagh has excelled in Gaelic sports, earning recognition for her contributions with her club Kickhams Creggan and as well as our school teams. Currently studying a challenging combination of subjects in school, Clodagh aspires to pursue Physiotherapy at the university. Clodagh epitomizes the perfect balance of academic excellence and sporting prowess.

As Clodagh continues to make waves in various sporting arenas, we are privileged to have such a remarkable and inspiring student-athlete within our school.

Clodagh was recently in Hungary with NI's U17s for the Euro's. Here is what a typical day looks like for Clodagh when away representing NI.

### **Training day in Hungary**

9:00 breakfast  
9:50 samples and wellness  
11:00 team meeting  
11:30 training  
15:30 lunch  
15:00 recovery in  
the swimming pool  
16:30 study  
19:00 dinner  
19:45 team meeting  
and analysis  
21:00 supper  
22:00 lights out

### **Match day**

9:30 breakfast  
10:00 samples and wellness  
10:45 team meeting  
11:00 leave hotel  
11:50 arrive at stadium  
12:10 warm up  
15:00 kick off  
15:30 leave stadium  
14:00 lunch  
16:45 ice baths  
17:00 recovery in  
the swimming pool  
19:00 dinner  
19:45 team meeting  
21:00 supper  
22:00 lights out







# CIVILISATION!

On 7th November, two other aspiring Civil Engineers and I visited QUB for an inside view of Civil Engineering projects in and around Belfast. During CIVILisation Belfast, we went to different sites such as:

- The Lagan Weir in Belfast, where we got to go underneath the weir through a service tunnel, learning about how the tunnels were created and how they are maintained.
- The Loft Lines construction site, a new set of luxury apartment buildings set to cost around £175 million, situated next to the Titanic Quarter. We were shown the methods they would use to improve the structural stability of the buildings using piles.
- The new Belfast Grand Central Station, currently under construction, where we had a virtual tour of the finished product of their £200 million redesign. We were allowed to go around the area, seeing the current progress of the construction.
- Victoria Square, where we learned about the fascinating physics behind the existence of such a large building. Surprisingly, the top of the building wobbles, which was quite interesting.

Throughout our visit to these sites, we were given detailed insights into how each of these brilliant structures were made, and we had a great time doing it. Personally, I think that this trip was a great opportunity for me to see the ins and outs of the intricate processes of how structures and mega-structures can come to be, as it's the smaller things that matter when it comes to civil engineering. At the start of the trip, I had assumed that we would just be getting a display of how they build buildings, never realizing how much effort needs to go into creating such structures.

While we didn't get to see every bit of work that goes into civil engineering, I feel as though the trip has taught me some of the more important stuff when it comes to structure and has shown me that even though you need to be smart to do engineering, the skill to communicate effectively is likely more important, as civil engineering isn't a solo job. The ability to do work and to communicate research is what allows engineers to work together and allows them to combine their independent fields to create something magnificent. Altogether, I would say that the trip was very educational and entertaining. If anyone ever considers civil engineering, they should consider more than their sheer intelligence because it is the communication between people that matters more.

*By Sean McCloskey, Lower Sixth*







## ECO COUNCIL

We are thrilled to announce the establishment of our new 42 member Eco School Council, a dynamic initiative aimed at fostering environmental stewardship and sustainability within our school community.

Committed to instilling a sense of responsibility for the planet among our students, the Eco School Council will serve as a platform for passionate individuals to collaborate, innovate, and drive positive change. As we embark on this transformative journey, we envision a school where eco-consciousness becomes second nature, and where every member actively contributes to the well-being of our planet. Through engaging projects, educational campaigns, and collective efforts, the Eco School Council will not only raise awareness but also empower our school community to adopt greener practices. Together, we aspire to create a lasting impact on both our immediate surroundings and the broader global environment, forging a path toward a more sustainable and ecologically harmonious future.

Please follow us on Instagram @slg\_ecocouncil to keep up to date with all of our activities.

#WeAllHaveARoleToPlay



*'I joined the Eco-Council because I want to help the planet and get to know more people who have the same passion for the planet as I do! In the future, the Eco-Council and I hope to reduce paper waste and increase biodiversity around our school'. Méabh (8 Lismoyle)*

## IRISH DANCING SUCCESS

***Year 9 Prodigy Cody Loughran Sweeps Irish Dancing Titles in Remarkable Success Streak***

We are incredibly proud of Cody Loughran's achievements in Irish dancing over the past few months.

Cody, 9 Lismoyle, has achieved the following in Irish Dancing:

- Tri Wizard Champion Age 15 – 24.09.23
- British National Champion Age 15 – 29.10.23
- Open Leinster Champion – 10.11.23

These achievements highlight Cody's talent and dedication to Irish Dancing. It's commendable to see such success at a young age, and it speaks for the hard work and skill Cody has demonstrated in the field of Irish Dancing.







# MATHS WEEK IRELAND 2023

From the 14th - 22nd of October, St Louis Grammar celebrated Maths Week Ireland. Maths Week Ireland 2023 had a huge following of over 480,000 pupils participating from all over the island of Ireland. Our celebrations included pupils of all ages using Maths in many different ways!

25 of our Year 14 A Level Maths students visited our feeder school St. Colmcilles to work with the primary school pupils. They took on the role of the teacher by creating exciting and engaging Maths games with a focus on problem solving.

In St Louis the Year 8, 9 and 10 classes took part in a Maths Olympiad. This involved pupils taking on 25 tricky maths questions to win a coveted Maths Week certificate.

On Friday 20th a group of keen mathematicians from Year 10, along with Mrs Carey and Miss Warnock, visited Queen's University Belfast. They heard from Fr. Colin Wright on 'The Unexpected Maths of Juggling'.

Congratulations to our Maths Eyes photo competition winner Daire. Daire submitted his photo of a wind turbine. He used his Maths Eyes to see Maths in the world around him.

Daire said "There are  $360^\circ$  in a full rotation, there are three blades, meaning 3 angles. How many degrees are between each blade?  $360 \div 3 = 120$ . There are  $120^\circ$  between each blade!".

Thank you to all of the brilliant entries we received!



*Thank you to everyone who got involved and helped to make Maths Week Ireland 2023 a success!*



@SLGBallymena



[www.stlouisgrammar.com](http://www.stlouisgrammar.com)





# THE MATHEMATICS OF JUGGLING

## *Patterns and Predictions: A Day at Queen's University*

St Louis pupils were invited to Queens University for Maths Week Ireland, in which twenty Year 10 pupils were accompanied by Mrs Casey and Miss Warnock.

Upon arriving and taking many photographs we headed inside the building for a presentation from Colin Wright, who kindly demonstrated the mathematics of patterns and predictions. At first, he made us think and recognise patterns shown on a screen, he then demonstrated patterns with juggling. He then proceeded to talk to us about his previous job. He used to make sure ships weren't going to crash into each other using patterns. After his speech our group made its way to the Student Union for lunch and to wait on the bus. In conclusion the day was brilliant and a great experience for all.

*Izabela Kosciolk*

For Maths Week 2023 we went to Queen's University Belfast on Friday 20th October 2023 where we attended a presentation from Colin Wright on the Mathematics of Juggling.

We arrived at Queen's University around 11:50am. We took our seats in the Great Hall of the Lanyon building and waited for the presentation to begin. There were four other schools also attending the presentation. At twelve o'clock it began. Colin Wright introduced himself and began to show us his juggling skills. He taught us about how juggling depends on the pattern you chose and the number of balls you juggle. Colin taught us how we use patterns and predictions in everyday life and how we may not even notice it, for example; in juggling. He gave an incredibly interesting talk about patterns and predictions that will really help us see Maths in everything and will help us in future exams. We spoke to Colin afterwards and he very kindly began to teach Miss Warnock how to Juggle. We all agreed she was very talented and should leave teaching to pursue it full time! We took a picture with him and we really enjoyed his insightful presentation. Afterwards Freya and Louis gave an interview for the Maths Week Ireland Instagram! It was a brilliant experience!

*Clodagh McAllister*



## YEAR 11 STUDENTS SHINE IN LMC COOKERY DEMO

Livestock and Meat Commission visited our HE Department to complete a practical demonstration with Year 11 students.

The cookery demonstration was fun and informative, with the demonstrator passing on many useful nutritional and cookery tips. The Year 11 students benefited from learning the importance of the Northern Ireland Farm Quality Assured (NIFOA) beef and lamb, food safety, food hygiene, quality assurance, provenance and cooking methods.







# FESTIVE FUN IN THE KITCHEN

## *Year 8 Students bake Yule Logs for Christmas*

As the holiday season approaches, the spirit of Christmas has taken over the kitchens of our school, where Year 8 students have embraced the joy of Yule log making.

Our young chefs have come together to create delightful Yule logs that not only taste delicious but also reflect the festive spirit.



# WOMEN'S AID WORKSHOP

Women's Aid visited St Louis in September and October to complete the second year of their Healthy Relationships programme for Year 13.

The focus of these workshops was on promoting discussion around domestic abuse and healthy and unhealthy relationships. Both sessions were very informative and pupils were excellent at immersing themselves in discussions around these important topics.



# QUB MATHS COMPETITION

*'On Thursday 7th December, I was part of the team that participated in the Queen's University Maths Competition.'*

*On Thursday morning, we took the train up to Belfast for the event. It started with two rounds of ten gruelling maths problems which we worked as a team to solve with very little time. This was my favourite part because I loved working as a team and seeing all of the different solutions we came up with to the questions. In the afternoon, we had a maths quiz which included a multiple choice round, a true or false round and an observation round where we had to watch a video and remember as many obscure details as possible such as how many people were in the room. Overall, we enjoyed every second of the competition and we were pleased to find out that we got third place! I thought it was a really fun day, full of challenging but interesting maths problems and I would love if I got the opportunity to compete again next year.'*

Siobhan McGale, Lower Sixth





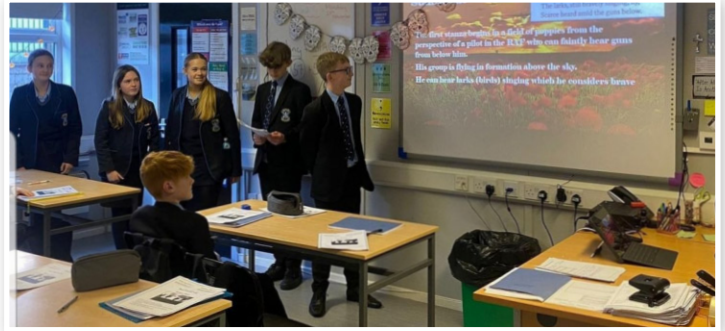


# LEARNING AND TEACHING THROUGH TEEP

At St Louis we continuously strive towards outstanding Learning and Teaching, through our commitment to the Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme.

This programme, also known as TEEP, is a pedagogical framework and training programme that acknowledges teachers' expertise and experience and builds a culture of collaborative practice, and leads to greater consistency in approach.

This year teachers are using a range of engaging and interactive strategies to encourage independent learning. Independent learning is a way or process that gives pupils ownership of their learning. The independent learner makes informed choices, set goals, and make decisions to meet their learning needs.



## YEAR 8s PARTICIPATE IN BOOKBUZZ!

Bookbuzz is a reading programme that promotes reading for pleasure. By participating in this programme, our Year 8 pupils were given the opportunity to choose their own free book to keep. Our pupils loved the range of books to choose from and were delighted that the rest of the books were available to read in our School Library!

In St Louis we work hard to develop a love of books and reading throughout the school community. We know the huge impact that reading has for communication skills, general knowledge and success across the curriculum. We are confident that Bookbuzz has encouraged and nurtured a life-long love of reading in our Year 8s!







# ELEVATING ATHLETIC PERFORMANCE

## *Improved Strength and Conditioning Suite*

In a transformative leap toward excellence, our school proudly unveils – a state-of-the-art Strength and Conditioning Suite designed to elevate the training experience for our school athletes. Recognizing the evolving needs of our students and the ever-advancing world of fitness, we've taken a step away from traditional machines and embraced a contemporary approach to foster the development of well-rounded and resilient athletes.

The new Strength and Conditioning Suite is a testament to our commitment to providing the best possible resources for our students' athletic growth. Equipped with cutting-edge functional training equipment, free weights, and dedicated spaces for dynamic exercises, the suite is meticulously designed to cater to a diverse range of training modalities. This shift from machine-centric workouts to a more holistic and functional approach aligns with current sports science principles, ensuring our athletes are well-prepared for the challenges of their respective disciplines.

The layout of the suite has been carefully planned to create an inspiring and motivating environment. Mirroring the aspirations of our school's sports program, the vibrant and dynamic space encourages collaboration and mutual support among our athletes. The emphasis on functional movements and agility training will not only improve athletic performance but also reduce the risk of injuries, allowing our students to train confidently and effectively.

We hope this space becomes a hub of achievement, where personal bests are surpassed, and the pursuit of excellence becomes a shared journey among our teams.

**Our lead Athletic Development Coach, Aaron Smylie from The Training Hub, Cloughmills, says:**

*'What a transformation!*

*This is now a modern training gym – loads of space for the pupils to move and the additional racks allow for sessions to run far easier. There is a huge opportunity for learning as the pupils will gain experience working through the various movement patterns rather than spending time on machines.'*

**Panellist of our Mageean and MacLarnon Teams, Darach Bradley added:**

*'The high standard of equipment provided in our new gym encourages me to train to an equally high standard. It has created a great environment where the team can train together off the pitch as well as on it. We have already made great use of the facility and hope it can contribute towards our MacLarnon Cup campaign.'*

**Captain of the Senior Camogs, Dearbhail Dobbin commented:**

*'This dynamic space provides us with the tools to enhance our strength, power, and overall athletic performance. We are grateful for this investment in our athletic development, and it's already making a noticeable difference in our team's performance and cohesion.'*







## KS3 FILM CLUB TRIP

Our KS3 Film Club enjoyed a trip to Movie House Cinema, Glengormley, for a free screening of 'The Super Mario Bros Movie' on Friday 24th November.

Pupils were rewarded for their dedication to the lunchtime club so far this year and got the chance to sit back and relax while enjoying the mayhem, magic and even some music from the latest cinematic adaption of the famous plumbers' escapades!

We are grateful to Into Film NI for this opportunity through their annual Film Festival and to Mrs Carey for organising this event. Our pupils immensely enjoyed themselves.

A reminder to all Year 8 and Year 9 pupils that Film Club continues in Room 46 every Tuesday lunchtime (Week 2) and anyone is welcome to join at any time.



## ART MIA PRAISE CARD

Art/MIA praise card designed by Conor McCormack and a separate photo of Conor himself with a gift he received from school for his design.

Conor participated in Graphic Design Enrichment classes with Mr McMenamin where he demonstrated top level skills and creativity in his designs and was therefore nominated for the task of designing a new Praise Card for Art/MIA. The result was amazing and we look forward to sharing it with our deserving pupils. Well done Conor!



## MYELOMA UK

Hugh O'Donnell and Ryan Addison are two of our remarkable pupils who made a great effort in aid of their team mate who is battling Myeloma, an incurable cancer.

Hugh and Ryan arranged a fund-raising event, running two marathons in 48 hours. The weather conditions were terrible, but the two boys battled on and they averaged three hours in total and raised awareness and thousands for Myeloma UK. Hugh and Ryan then spoke in front of the Myeloma Support Group and everyone was blown away by their enthusiasm talking about mental and physical fitness. We are really proud of the boys initiative in organising such an event. The resilience it took to complete and their heartfelt support for a team mate.

Well done to Ryan and Hugh!







# YEAR 8 SUMMER READING CHALLENGE

Congratulations to the Year 8 Summer Reading Challenge Winners who received a certificate and a Waterstones voucher for their amazing book reviews written in the summer. Well done everyone!

8 Laragh – Liam Robb  
8 Layde – Regan Loughran  
8 Lisbreen – Henry Blake

8 Lismoyle – Connor O'Kane  
8 Lurig – Ianis Filip  
8 Lyndon – Orla O'Halloran



# BPW PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

On Thursday 25th November, three Year 14 students took part in the Ballymena heat of BPW Northern Ireland Public Speaking Competition. The team was comprised of Peter McElroy (Chair,) Annie McCrory (Speaker) and Michael McPeake (Expresser of Thanks).

This competition mirrors the form of a public meeting and tests the students' improvisation skills. Annie was teamed with the Chair and Expresser of Thanks from another school, whilst Peter and Michael were teamed with a different speaker. The marks from each student from St Louis were combined to arrive at an overall total for each school's team. Annie took to the floor with pupils from Ballymena Academy. Annie's speech focused on the challenging topic of 'Objectivity in and she received glowing feedback on her performance.

Both Peter and Michael were excellent in their roles as Chair and Expresser of Thanks respectively. Peter confidently introduced a speaker from Ballymena Academy who delivered a speech on the topic, 'Why I believe Mental Health should be prioritised just as much as Physical Health in Schools'. Peter also managed questions from the audience to the speaker, as well as posing questions himself, as the Expresser of Thanks, Michael charismatically summarised and expanded on the speech from Ballymena Academy.

The standard of all teams on the night was very high, and we are thrilled that St Louis Grammar is one of two teams who now progress to the NI final in February. We wish them all the best as they prepare for this event!







# GLITTERING NIGHT OF ELEGANCE

## *Highlights from our School Formal at the Galgorm*

On the evening of the 29th of September, our Upper Sixth students and staff came together for a night of glamour and celebration at the enchanting Galgorm Resort.

The much-anticipated School Formal was a resounding success, creating lasting memories for all who attended. The venue sparkled with joy as students dressed in their finest attire, enjoyed an evening of music, laughter and camaraderie. As we celebrated our Upper Sixths, marking seven incredible years at SLG, the sense of nostalgia and shared experiences added an extra layer of significance to the night. We extend our gratitude to all who contributed to making this night possible, from the dedicated teachers who organised, our head team and everyone in between.

Here's to the memories created and the bonds strengthened as we came together for a night of elegance and celebration, marking the culmination of seven remarkable years on the hill of Kintullagh.



# EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

On European Day of Languages, students enjoyed a wide range of activities organised by The Modern Languages Department.

During registration, all classes took part in a Kahoot Quiz activity to find out interesting facts or funny stories about their teachers and their language learning journey. During lunch time, students attended a German language taster class to find out more about the language and the culture.

In language classes, students participated in a languages quiz and throughout the week, many students went on a Treasure Hunt around the school to find out facts about languages spoken all over the world. Well done to all the winners from all these activities, especially those who won our "Design a Bookmark for Languages" competition.







# CHESS CLUB WINNERS

**Congratulations to our Chess Club Winners for Term 1!**

1st – Luke Cooper – 10 Lisbreen

2nd – Paul McAuley – 8 Lisbreen

3rd – Oscar Cardy – 8 Lisbreen



## CULINARY DELIGHTS AND FESTIVE CHEER

### *A Day to Remember at Forestside Cookery School and the Christmas Market*

On the 11th of December, GCSE and A-level Food and Nutrition pupils embarked on a culinary adventure to Forestside Cookery School in Belfast. The day promised not only a feast for the senses but also invaluable insights into the artistry of creating restaurant-standard dishes.

The highlight of the day was a captivating demonstration by the renowned Chef Jeffers, who skillfully crafted a mouth-watering masterpiece, stuffed chicken wrapped in crispy bacon, accompanied with mushroom and truffle sauce. This culinary delight rested on a bed of perfectly sautéed kale and spinach, accompanied by the elegance of fondant potatoes. As Chef Jeffers expertly navigated the kitchen, our students were not just spectators but engaged learners, absorbing the finer points of culinary craftsmanship.

Everyone had the opportunity to savour a portion of this exquisite creation. There was unanimous agreement—Chef Jeffers had not only tantalised our taste buds but had also provided a real-life glimpse into the meticulous preparation that goes into crafting dishes of restaurant quality.

Pupils then travelled across the city to the Continental Christmas Market hosted at the City Hall. The market, adorned with festive lights and brimming with the scents of international cuisine, offered a sensory feast of its own. From the tempting aromas of sizzling delicacies to the enchanting sounds of holiday melodies, our students immersed themselves in the festive spirit, appreciating the diverse cultural offerings from around the world.

Returning to school, it was evident that the trip to Forestside Cookery School and the Christmas Market was more than an excursion, it was an educational and informative experience. In the spirit of the season, we extend our gratitude to Chef Jeffers, Forestside Cookery School, and everyone who helped organise such a lovely day for our pupils.







# ST LOUIS GRAMMAR HEAD GIRLS AND HEAD BOYS 2023 – 2024



**Annie McCrory**  
Head Girl



**Conn Fyfe**  
Head Boy



**Maria Blaney**  
Deputy Head Girl



**Dearbhail Dobbin**  
Deputy Head Girl



**Zach Hughes**  
Deputy Head Boy



**Joseph McNeill**  
Deputy Head Boy



**Maria Gately**  
Deputy Head Girl



**Charlotte McKeefry**  
Deputy Head Girl



**Michael McPeake**  
Deputy Head Boy



**Hugh O'Donnell**  
Deputy Head Boy





# SOROPTIMIST PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

On Wednesday 12th October, Year 13 students, Orlaith Gould and Erin McAleese entered the local heat of the Soroptimist Public Speaking Competition.

It is a longstanding, prestigious competition with the aim of encouraging girls to play a more prominent part in public life. Entrants were given a choice of 6 topics to deliver a speech on; both Orlaith and Erin chose, 'In health "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure'.

It was a privilege to listen to all of the talented entrants and both Erin and Orlaith lit up the stage with their inspirational words.

All speakers were presented with certificates to recognise their passion and enthusiasm.

Huge congratulations to Erin who was awarded first place, receiving a £50 Waterstones voucher and will compete in the Northern Ireland final in February. We wish Erin all the very best as she prepares for the next stage of the competition.



# CENTENARY CELEBRATION MASS

## *with Guided Tours*

7th January 2024

Our Centenary begins with a celebration Mass to mark the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the St Louis Sisters to Ballymena.

On 8th January 1924 on a cold snowy day, the first four Sisters of St Louis, accompanied by the Mother General and Canon McNamee, from Monaghan, arrived in Ballymena. They were warmly welcomed by the Parish Priest, Very Reverend Thomas Canon O'Donnell, who was instrumental in bringing the Sisters to Ballymena.

Canon O'Donnell had long been anxious to establish a Convent for the education of the Catholic girls of Ballymena so in September 1924, St Louis High School was started with an enrolment of 55 pupils.

We celebrate that 100 years later St Louis Grammar School has an enrolment of 1181 and is a thriving school, providing exceptional Catholic education in the heart of Ballymena.



We welcome everyone in our St Louis community to join us for this celebration Mass in the school Sports Hall on Sunday 7th January, followed by refreshments and a guided tour.

You can register at the following link:  
<https://tinyurl.com/Centenary-Mass>



# KEY DATES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

**Christmas Holidays** Thursday 21st December 2023 – Wednesday 3rd January 2024

**Staff Development Day (pupils should not attend)** Thursday 4th January

**Years 11 – 14 ONLY** should attend school Friday 5th January

**Year 10 Ski Trip – Saturday 6th** Saturday 13th January

**Open Nights** Wednesday 24th and Thursday 25th January

**Staff Development Day (pupils should not attend)** Friday 26th January

**Year 13 Romania Trip** Sunday 4th – Sunday 11th February

**Half-Term Holiday** Monday 12th – Friday 16th February

**Years 8 and 11 Parent/Teacher Meeting** Monday 19th February

**Years 8, 9 and 10 Book Fair (Library)** Tuesday 5th – Thursday 7th March

**Years 9 and 10 Parent/Teacher Meeting** Friday 15th March

**St Patrick's Day Holiday** Monday 18th March

**Centenary Spring Concert** Tuesday 26th March

**Easter Holidays** Friday 29th March – Friday 5th April



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