

PARENTS'

NEWSLETTER



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Dear Parents / Guardians

As the academic year comes to a close, we would like to take the opportunity to congratulate all of our Leaving Certificate students on completing their exams. A huge effort has been made over the past two years and a well deserved rest has been earned by all.

Congratulations also to our Junior Cycle students who have also achieved a major milestone by completing their exams.



Important Dates

Friday August 21st - Leaving Certificate Results will be issued online.
Friday August 28th - Return to school for all year groups.

Tyro Access Update

Any household that does not yet have access to Tyro will receive an invitation by email on Tuesday, 23rd June.
In previous instances, where both parents/guardians used the same email address, invitations could not be delivered successfully. To address this, one parent/guardian per household who has provided a unique email address will be selected to receive the invitation.





Leaving Certificate Applied

We are pleased to inform parents and guardians that our school will be introducing the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) Programme from August. This is a distinct, two-year Leaving Certificate programme designed to recognise a broad range of talents and to prepare students for adult and working life.

What is the Leaving Certificate Applied?

The LCA is an alternative to the traditional Leaving Certificate. It places a strong emphasis on practical learning, continuous assessment, and the development of personal, social, and vocational skills. The programme is particularly suited to students who learn best through active, hands-on experiences.

Structure of the Programme

The LCA runs over two years (four sessions). Instead of focusing solely on final examinations, students build up credits over time through coursework, tasks, and assessments.

- **Modules and Subjects:**

Students study a range of courses grouped into four areas:

- General Education (e.g. English and Communications, Mathematical Applications, Social Education)
- Vocational Preparation (e.g. Preparing for the World of Work)
- Vocational Education (e.g. Graphics and Construction, Hotel and Catering)
- Electives tailored to students' interests and strengths

- **Credits System:**

Students accumulate credits as they complete modules successfully. These credits contribute to their final award (Pass, Merit, or Distinction).

- **Key Assignments:**

Each module includes Key Assignments, which are practical pieces of work completed during class time and used to assess progress.

- **Tasks:**

Students complete a number of practical tasks set by the State Examinations Commission. These make up a significant portion of the final assessment.

- **Final Examinations:**

At the end of the programme, students sit a smaller number of written examinations, which account for a proportion of the overall result.

- **Work Experience:**

A central part of the LCA is regular work experience, giving students valuable insight into the workplace and helping them develop employability skills.

Progression Opportunities

The LCA is designed to prepare students for further education, training, apprenticeships, and employment. While it does not provide direct entry to university through the CAO system, it offers pathways into Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses and other progression routes.

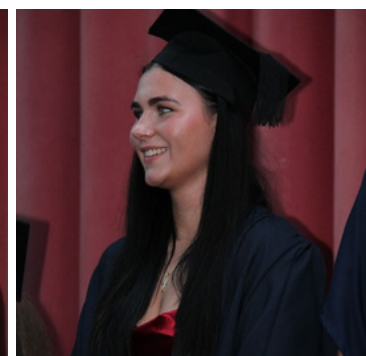
This programme offers a supportive and practical approach to learning, enabling students to achieve success and develop lifelong skills. Further information will be shared with interested families in the coming weeks.



Leaving Cert Graduation Ceremony

On Thursday, 21st May, we gathered in the school gym for the bittersweet occasion of celebrating the graduation of our much-loved (and occasionally late-homework-submitting) 6th Year students. It was an evening filled with pride, nostalgia, and just a hint of disbelief that these young people—once lost on their very first day—are now ready to take on the world.

The ceremony began with students entering in pairs, gliding more gracefully than many of us remember from P.E., to the beautiful sound of Margaret Lawler on the harp. Once assembled, the year group set the tone with a heartfelt rendition of *Schoolyard Days* by Amble—prompting a few misty eyes among staff who definitely do not cry at these things every year. Head Girl Anna Byrne and Head Boy Padraig Farrell formally welcomed guests with warmth and composure, proving that the future is indeed in safe hands. We were then treated to a rich display of musical talent, beginning with Sean Lawler's original accordion piece *Naoise*, followed by Aoife Kavanagh's stunning performance of *The Waves of Kilkea* on the flute. A particularly moving part of the ceremony was the "Ceremony of Light," where candles symbolised the many people and qualities that have guided this group along the way—from the Light of Memory, represented by First Year student Lilian Staunton, to the Light of the Future, carried by 6th Year student Freddie Keogh. It was a gentle reminder that no student walks this journey alone. Emma McEvoy's performance of *Night Changes* felt especially fitting as we all quietly wondered how time had passed so quickly.





The presentation of gifts followed, accompanied beautifully by Caoimhe O'Neill's Slipping Through My Fingers—a title that summed up the mood perfectly for many parents and teachers. Amy Nolan then sang Stay, keeping the emotions flowing, before Caleb Oglesby and Gearóid Proctor delivered the readings. In between, Shane Doyle and Fionn O'Rourke treated us to a remarkable and memorable performance of A Pair of Brown Eyes.

The Prayers of the Faithful were read in a wonderful variety of languages—Irish, English, French, German, Polish, Chinese, Russian, and Arabic—showcasing the diversity and spirit of our school community.

To lift spirits (and possibly prevent a full emotional collapse), Fionn O'Rourke and James Kinsella Staunton returned with a lively rendition of This Is the Life. The ceremony concluded with Mr. Gaughran's final address and the presentation of awards, striking just the right balance between heartfelt reflection and good humour.

As a fitting finale, the entire year group came together to sing Go Your Own Way, a powerful and uplifting conclusion that captured both the excitement and uncertainty of the road ahead. And then—true to tradition—caps were launched triumphantly into the air, marking not just the end of their school journey, but the beginning of everything that comes next.

As the class of 2026 left the gym for the final time, there was laughter, a few tears, and a shared sense that while they may be leaving the building, they will always remain part of its story. We wish them every success in the adventures ahead—and remind them (only slightly jokingly) that we'll still be expecting great things from them!

The following students were honoured with awards on the evening:

- Spirit of the School Award: Aoife Kavanagh and Luke Phelan
- Principal's Award: Pádraig Farrell and Luke Phelan
- Student of the Year Award: Anna Byrne and Fionn O'Rourke
- Academic Achievement Awards: Luke Chatten, Shannon Doyle, Hollie Lawler, Fionn O'Rourke, Luke Phelan and Sarah Reynolds
- Sports Personality Awards: Eoin Gray and Victoria Hickey

These awards recognise the outstanding contributions, achievements, and commitment of the recipients throughout their time in the school.



6TH YEAR GRADUATION PHOTOS



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Local History Awards Celebrate Student Research

Coláiste Lorcáin hosted its annual Junior Cycle Local History Awards presentation on Tuesday, April 22nd, celebrating the outstanding research completed by second-year students.

The school welcomed members of the Castledermot Local History Group — Liz Whelan, Michael Dempsey, Kathleen Phelan, Nábla Kane, Sharon Greene, Jackie Green and Emmet Kane — who attended to acknowledge the high standard of work produced by the students.

Mr. Ruth formally welcomed the guests and highlighted the importance of the occasion in fostering pride among students and deepening their appreciation of the rich historical heritage of Castledermot and its surrounding areas. Michael Dempsey followed with praise for the overall quality of the projects, noting the exceptional standard of the prizewinning entries. Emmet Kane then invited Nábla Kane to present the awards.

The joint runners up were Cormac Murray and Síanainn O'Rourke. Cormac's project focused on the history of Moone Church while Síanainn research concentrated on her grandfather, Dom O'Rourke, and his role in the founding of St Michael's Boxing Club in Athy. The overall winner was Jackie Dooley for her project on her great-aunt, Ester May Dooley, the only woman present at the historic handover of the Curragh Camp from British to Irish control following 1916.

Jackie received a newly commissioned perpetual trophy, created especially for the school competition by world-renowned sculptor Emmet Kane. The award, titled the *Eamon Kane Local History Award*, honours Emmet's father and Nábla Kane's late husband, a highly respected local history expert who passed away peacefully on April 16th last Easter.



The trophy, crafted from ebonised Irish oak and gilded with 23-carat gold leaf, draws its design inspiration from the passage tomb at Newgrange and the alignment of light at the winter solstice. Emmet Kane is an internationally acclaimed master craftsman known for his work with native hardwoods, particularly Irish oak. In 2015, Emmet became the first living person to have an exhibition in the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks, Dublin. Emmet continues to exhibit, lecture and demonstrate his craft worldwide. Following the presentations, Nábla Kane spoke about each of the winning projects, referencing Harry Clarke, the world-famous stained-glass artist who created the windows in Moone Church, and sharing personal reflections on Dom O'Rourke and Ester May Dooley, both central figures in the students' research.

The school wishes to express sincere thanks to the Castledermot Local History Group for their continued support in encouraging students' engagement with local history. Thanks also to Mr Ruth for his support and enthusiasm, and to Ms Lorraine Townsend, Head of History at Coláiste Lorcáin, for her dedication, enthusiasm and meticulous organisation of the event.



School Summer Building Works

As soon as the state examinations were completed a team of builders arrived to begin work on the school's energy retrofit. This work will continue throughout the summer months. The development will consist of:

- Replacement of existing double height external timber screens and doors to the gym hall with a glazed curtain walling system with solid aluminium squandrels and doors.
- Replacement of existing high level external single glazed system to the gym hall with a double glazed curtain wall system.
- Installation of 2 x Air Source Heat Pumps with 2.8m high perimeter screen enclosures.
- Installation of a vandal resistant EVC car charging local electrical enclosure, distribution board and dual car charging outlet.



Head Girl, Anna Byrne, reports on Ladies Football with Castledermot

My name is Anna Byrne, and I am a member of Castledermot LGFA. As well as being head girl for our school, I was also captain of the 2025 Minor Ladies in Castledermot. Last year was one of the best years for all the Castledermot ladies, with our teams from under 14s up to Senior ladies bringing home 7 cups and titles. I was a member of the Senior Ladies team and the Minor Ladies. Our first cup won was the Senior Ladies cup back in May 2025, with Castledermot winning by 5 points, our Minor Ladies, u16s, u17s, and u14s were also cup holders with the u16s and u17s bring home 2 cups each. In Feile this year the u15 women's team won Kildare Feile B and came second overall in the whole country in the u15s Feile final, just missing out by 2 points to a team from Galway. As well as having such skilled players on our team, we happen to have 4 girls who are or were Kildare County players. Grace Murphy and Kim Chatten (both 2nd year) represented Castledermot on the Kildare u14s LGFA squad in 2025.



This year, Grace Byrne (Transition year) and Lillianne Keatley (3rd year) represent Castledermot on the Kildare u16s LGFA squad. All four of these girls have outstanding talent and each deserved the place they earned on the squad. We have many age groups from u6s all the way up to Senior in Castledermot LGFA, with our youngest being 5 and oldest being 34. Since 2019, there hadn't been a senior Ladies team in Castledermot, but thanks to the newly appointed Chairman of Castledermot GAA, Aidan Byrne, and many of our coaches, especially Jason Dooley and Jon White, they were able to restore the Ladies team and bring victory that was needed for the club. As a 6th year and as a senior player myself, I couldn't imagine life with Gaelic football. I play with people I care about and it's a way to escape from the books for an hour or two. I highly recommend starting up Gaelic football (especially in Castledermot!!), as you never know how much you'll enjoy it until you try it!!

Fifth-Year Student Cian Keogh's Remarkable Journey with the Kildare Minor Football Team



Cian Keogh, a fifth-year student, has experienced an incredible journey with the Kildare Minor football team over the past few months. In the Leinster Championship, they triumphed against Louth, who were the favorites, in a closely contested match held in Louth. They advanced to the final with an impressive performance against Meath on May 22nd at O'Moore Park in Laois, ultimately securing the trophy.

Next, they faced Kerry in the All-Ireland Championship in Limerick on June 6th, making history as the first-ever minor team to defeat the Kingdom. Cian played a vital role in this achievement, scoring two crucial goals. Following that, they competed in the All-Ireland semi-final against Tyrone on Friday, June 19th, where they were narrowly defeated in a highly competitive game.

The future looks promising for Kildare football. Congratulations to Cian on his remarkable success!



TY Graduation Ceremony

Our Transition Year Graduation Ceremony and Ball took place on a gloriously sunny Monday, 25th May, in the Seven Oaks Hotel, Carlow—setting the perfect scene for an evening of celebration and style.

Parents were welcomed with tea and coffee as students made their entrance in pairs, each looking every bit the part after a year of growth, adventure, and the occasional well-earned day off timetable. Following the presentation of awards (see list below), parents were invited to depart and leave the students in charge of the evening—always a brave but necessary step!

What followed can only be described as a full and enthusiastic takeover of the dancefloor, with TY students showcasing moves that ranged from impressive to... highly creative.

All in all, it was a fantastic evening filled with glamour, laughter, and plenty of memorable moments. A special word of thanks to the TY Ball Committee for organising such a wonderful event, in particular Alannah Sherry and Isabel Flood, whose efforts ensured the night was one to remember for all.

The following students were honoured with awards on the evening:

- Student of the Year: Anthony Nowak.
- Academic Achievement Awards: Grace Byrne, William Clifford, Erica Corrigan, Patryk Klosinski, Gabriel Kovacevic and Anthony Nowak.
- Sports Personality Awards: Grace Byrne and Harry Bryan.



TY GRADUATION PHOTOS





Coláiste Lorcáin Awards Ceremony

Coláiste Lorcáin hosted its Awards Ceremony for First, Second, and Fifth Year students for the academic year 2025/26 on Thursday, May 21st. On this page, you will find a list of award winners. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all recipients and encourage them to maintain their excellent efforts in the years ahead.

Student of the Year Award Winners

Fifth Year

Ross Donnelly, Sarah Doyle

Third Year

Said Bgano

Second Year

Grace Murphy

First Year

Cillian Byrne

Academic Award Winners

Fifth Year

Lauren Curry, Ross Donnelly, Kayleigh Griffin, Kimora Kelly, Darragh Lazenby, Akhila Thelakattu

Third Year

Ella Brownridge, Charlie Higginson, Neal Lazenby, Oscar Le Mahieu, Zoey Moss, Eimear O'Reilly

Second Year

Megan Behan, Kim Chatten, Grace Murphy, Siannainn Marie O'Rourke, Lauren O'Sullivan, Maya White

First Year

Cillian Byrne, Anna Curry, Khaleesi Doyle, Sophie Miller, Noah Murphy, Lillian May Staunton

Sports Personality Award Winners

Fifth Year

Cian Keogh, Sarah Doyle

Third Year

Lily Anne Keatley, Tommy O'Shea

Second Year

Páraic Kane, Lydia Tansey

First Year

Anna Curry, Noah Murphy







Junior Cycle Exams Party



On Wednesday, May 20th, third-year students enjoyed a delightful gathering in the Home Economics room to relax before their exams began. Organised by Ms. Spruhan and Ms. Nally, this event allowed students to take a break from their busy schedules, enjoying music and cake in each other's company. Each student also received an exam pack (see photo below), containing everything they needed for their upcoming tests. As the photos show, the students truly valued this time to unwind!



TY 2026: THE YEAR OF “YES, WE DID THAT TOO!”



The TY students had an absolutely jam-packed year—so busy, in fact, it's hard to fit it all into one paragraph (but we'll give it a go anyway!). From the pitch to the dance floor and everywhere in between, they threw themselves into a huge range of activities: GAA Coaching, Sign Language, a drama workshop, hairdressing, Flamenco Dancing, Dancing with Dermot, tennis and bowling, a forensic science workshop, barista training, drumming with Dave, RAST training, Segways, road safety, First Aid... and that's before we even get to the trips!

Explorium, Glendalough, the iWish Conference, Baltinglass Education Centre—and of course, the unforgettable trip to Italy—just added to an already action-packed schedule. It's safe to say there was never a dull moment, and even with all of that, there are still plenty of activities we haven't mentioned! TY proved once again that it's a year for trying everything, discovering new talents, and making memories (and maybe learning a skill or two along the way!).



Explorium & Jump Zone



On the 9th of February Transition Year students enjoyed a memorable and action-packed trip to Explorium and Jump Zone in Dublin, making the most of a day filled with exploration, activity, and fun from start to finish.

The group departed from the school at 9:05am and travelled by bus to their first stop, Explorium. Here, students enthusiastically engaged with a wide range of hands-on scientific exhibits. Among the highlights were the ever-popular "bed of nails," a sprint track that tested their speed, and a machine that measured the power behind their football kicks! Students also attended two live shows—a robotics demonstration and an exciting lightning show. The latter proved especially captivating, as they witnessed a working Tesla coil in action, sparking great interest.

The energy levels remained high as the students moved on to Jump Zone, where they spent an hour bouncing, playing dodgeball, and enjoying the trampolines. This was a clear favourite for many, with laughter and friendly competition filling the space.

The final stop of the day was Dundrum Shopping Centre, where students had time to relax, explore, and grab a bite to eat. It provided a perfect opportunity to wind down and socialise after an already busy day.

Students departed Dundrum at 5:00pm and arrived back safely at the church car park at 6:40pm, tired but in great spirits after such an enjoyable outing.

Overall, the trip was a huge success, with students thoroughly enjoying every aspect of the day. It was clear from their enthusiasm that this is an experience they would gladly repeat given the opportunity.



Love All in Carlow

Transition Year students swapped the classroom for a bit of action on the 11th and 18th of May, taking on not one, but two sports challenges!

One group rolled into the Dome in Carlow for a spot of bowling, where strikes, spares, and the occasional mysterious gutter ball kept spirits high. Meanwhile, their sporty counterparts took to the tennis courts, bravely facing serves, volleys, and the odd runaway ball.

While we can't quite claim we've produced the next Wimbledon champions (just yet!), there were definitely flashes of talent and plenty of determination on display. Most importantly, there was great craic all round, with both groups thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Given the success (and entertainment value!) of these outings, we're already looking forward to building even more activities like this into next year's TY programme. Who knows... 2027 could be our year for tennis glory... or at least fewer balls in the net!



TY trip to Italy: Four Days of Pizza, Rain...and Roller Coasters!

Our recent TY trip to Italy (13th–16th April) was nothing short of unforgettable—packed with early mornings, cultural highlights, a little bit of rain, and a *lot* of laughter.



Day Two: Venice – Rain, Canals and Carbs

Day two brought a trip to the magical city of Venice. After travelling by coach and then water taxi into the heart of the city, students were greeted by picturesque canals—and, unfortunately, persistent rain. However, true to form, the weather did little to dampen enthusiasm. A guided walking tour gave students insight into Venice's unique history, followed by some well-earned free time.

Students sampled local food (with pizza once again proving a firm favourite), explored shops, and embraced the independence of navigating one of Europe's most iconic cities—while sensibly staying in groups, as instructed.

The return journey by water taxi provided a chance to relax after a full day of sightseeing—and dodging puddles.

Day One: Milan – An Early Start and a Stylish Arrival

The adventure began *bright and very early*—students met in the church car park at 3:30 a.m., with the bus departing promptly at 3:45 a.m.

While excitement was high, energy levels were... questionable!

After navigating airport queues and a smooth flight, the group arrived in Milan just after midday, ready to explore. The itinerary included visits to some of Milan's famous landmarks, such as **Sforzesco Castle and the Peace Arch**, giving students a taste of Italian history and architecture.

Of course, no visit to Milan would be complete without a bit of shopping, and students enthusiastically embraced the city's fashion culture. A sudden downpour added a touch of drama, with students dashing for shelter—but spirits remained high.

The day concluded with a visit to the breathtaking **Milan Duomo**, followed by dinner at the accommodation, where students enjoyed what many declared to be "the best pizza ever."



Day Three: Gardaland – Facing Fears and Getting Soaked



For many, this was the highlight of the trip: a full day at Gardaland Theme Park. Students arrived early, ready to make the most of the day—and wasted no time heading straight for the biggest roller coasters. Initial nerves quickly turned into excitement, with even the most hesitant thrill-seekers conquering their fears.

Water rides proved especially popular, despite leaving students absolutely drenched. In fact, some enjoyed them so much, they returned again...and again...and again.

By the end of the day, students were happily exhausted, with many falling asleep on the bus journey home after a day filled with adrenaline, laughter, and just a little screaming.

Day Four: Sirmione – Sunshine, Gelato and Goodbyes

The final day brought a more relaxed pace, with a visit to the beautiful lakeside town of Sirmione, following breakfast at Garda Village. With sunshine finally making an appearance, students enjoyed strolling along the lake, shopping for souvenirs, and of course sampling authentic Italian gelato—purely for cultural purposes, of course!

There was also an opportunity to take in the stunning surroundings of Lake Garda, reflecting on what had been a packed and exciting few days.

Later that evening, the group travelled to Milan-Bergamo Airport for the return flight home, arriving back—tired but happy—with plenty of stories (and slightly overfilled suitcases).

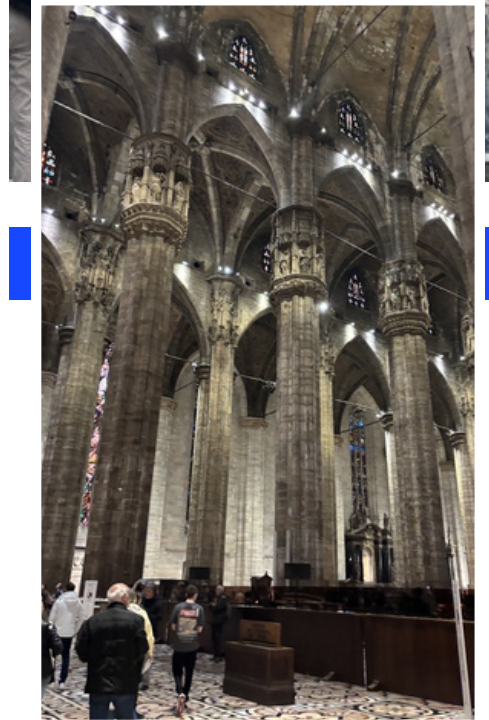


Conclusion

From pre-dawn departures to late-night returns, from historic landmarks to theme park thrills, the Italy trip offered a perfect balance of culture, independence, and fun.

Most importantly, it gave students the chance to create lasting memories with their peers—memories that will undoubtedly be retold (and exaggerated!) for years to come. We look forward to many more adventures like this in the future. Thanks to Mr. Walsh and all the travelling teachers for their organisation and support.







Student Voice Public Speaking Competition

The Student Voice Public Speaking Competition took place on Friday 15th May. Huge congratulations to all students who took part - all of you spoke with confidence, passion and enthusiasm, presenting a range of powerful arguments. Pictured are the Junior & Senior Gold Trophy winners Roisin O'Reilly and Cathal Hanley. Both Lori Brunkard & Zoey Moss received the silver recognition models. Special thanks also to the Student Voice group who led the initiative.



Drama Workshop with Fair City's George McMahon

On Thursday, April 23rd, Transition Year students participated in a fantastic Drama Skills Workshop led by George McMahon from Fair City. The students took centre stage, collaborating to produce some incredibly witty and insightful performances. George conducted a highly enjoyable and engaging workshop that left the students buzzing with excitement afterward! We eagerly anticipate his return.



Foróige Leadership for Life Programme

14 TYs graduated from the Foróige Leadership for Life Programme on Thursday 19th March. This leadership programme is designed to equip young people with the skills and confidence needed for leadership in society. This is the second year the programme has ran in the school and the students involved have proven themselves to be exemplary role models for their peers and community. Well done to all involved!