Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition

Musical Rehearsals in the John Bosco Centre - October



Each Monday during October, our TYs have had musical rehearsals in the John Bosco Centre. We meet at the Bosco for 9am and we finish at 3.30pm.

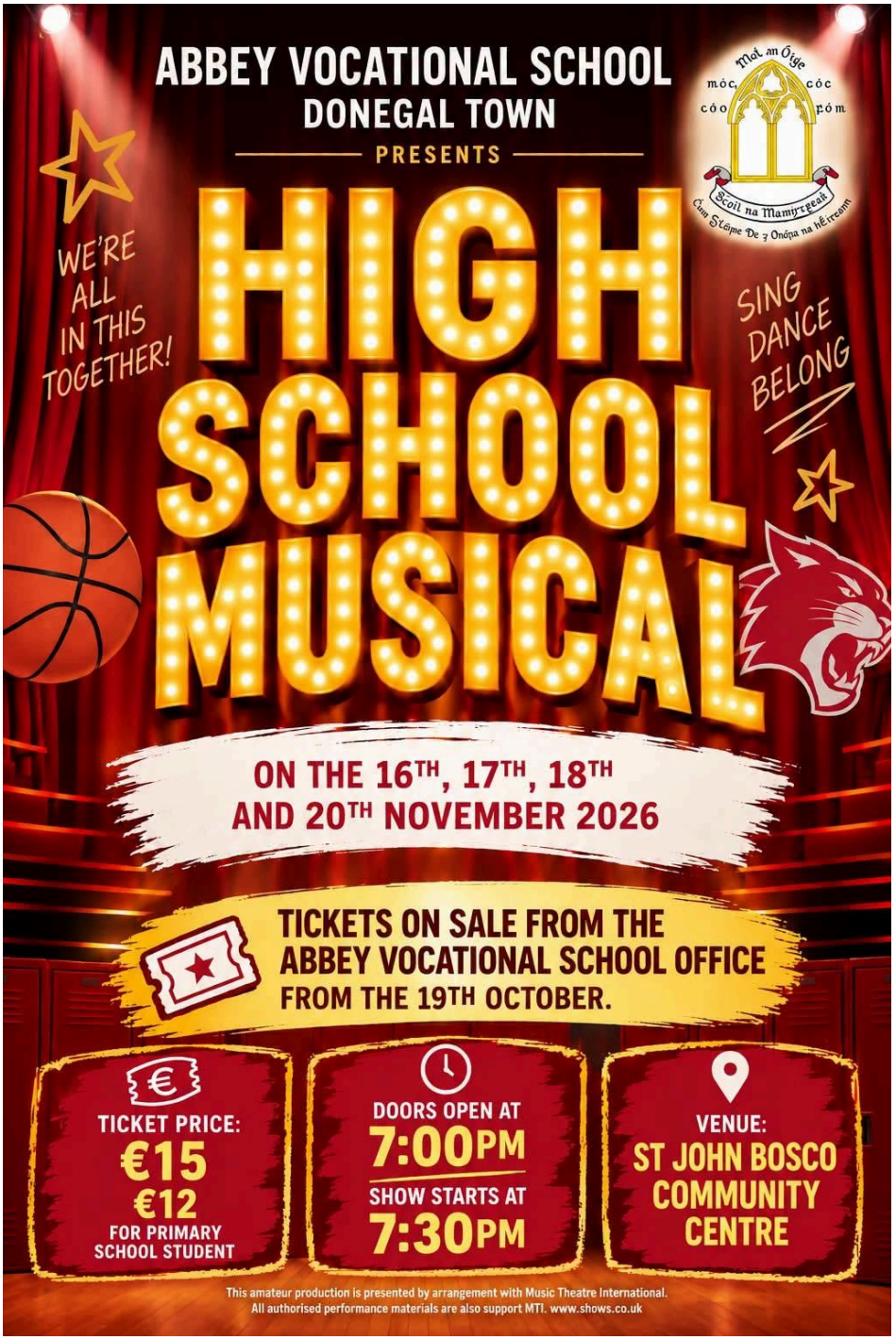
Due to our large year group, we have split our cast in half - The Red Team and The White Team. The Red Team (TYA, TYB, TYC) are on stage Monday and Wednesday night and The White Team (TYD, TYE, TYF) are on stage Tuesday and Friday night.



Every morning, we begin with the first scene and work our way through until the end of our production. During this process, our director, Karla Lacey, gives us stage direction when needed. Ms. Carr and Ms. McCarthy helps us with our singing and getting our timing right. Ms Kelly, Ms. Robb and Ms. Brady helps with our choreography. While one team is performing on stage, the other team is practicing on the floor below.

Over the last few weeks, we have made significant progress and it's slowly coming together. Everyone is putting in lots of effort, learning

all the dances and words to the songs. We have also been rehearsing during school hours in the library and assembly area. We will continue to rehearse after the midterm break before the show begins. We hope to see you there! Ticket information below.



Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition

Tony O'Reilly Gambling & Addiction Workshop - 1st October

On the 1st of October, all TYs attended a Gambling Awareness and Addiction workshop in the Balor Theatre in Ballybofey.



The talk was given by Tony O'Reilly and he told us his own personal story of his gambling addiction. He told us how it all began when himself and his friend placed a bet on a football game. Although he only bet €1, his friend bet more, and after winning in the last second of the game, they both won a decent sum of money. This is where Tony O'Reilly's addiction started and soon he was constantly placing bets - although small, only around 10 to 20 euro at a time. Soon he started to bet more money and he lost more doing riskier bets and eventually maxed out credit cards and ended up in debt.

It wasn't long until his wedding came around, and although he had enough money, he gambled it and soon had none. The father of the bride offered to pay for the cost of the wedding, not knowing that there was no money for it. The wedding happened in Cyprus, and there were computers in the reception area that you could use for a small amount of money. On these computers O'Reilly ended up betting the 6,000 thousand and losing it, three days before the wedding. He described how although your wedding is supposed to be an enjoyable day, his day was filled with dread and regret over having no money



to pay for the wedding. After the wedding, he was looking to see if there were any bets that he had forgotten about and he found one still active as it was a four-part bet. All that needed to happen for him to win the bet was for a horse to win a particular race, and it did, giving him enough money to pay for the wedding.

Although his addiction was almost found out, and he knew the true feeling of not having enough money to pay for anything, his addiction didn't stop there. His job at a post office soon got upgraded and he was working directly with the money in the safe they kept there. It wasn't long before he was stealing small sums of money, by cutting a small piece of the plastic off the back, taking some notes, and re-sealing the packaging. He did this until there was an audit far earlier than he had anticipated. They checked all of the packages of money, except for five at the back, and three of them were the ones that were missing the money.



His addiction continued even though he almost got caught, almost lost his job, and almost got in a lot of legal trouble for stealing money. Eventually, he stopped trying to be discreet and just stole lots of money in huge sums. All the money he stole he gambled, and lost it quicker than he gained it. He had another audit eventually, and this time although they weren't checking the actual money in the safe, they saw that certain numbers didn't match up in relation to the money, and

Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition

O'Reilly lied about helping people move banks instead of getting caught stealing.

Eventually he had stolen upwards of 1 million euro, and one day when he drove to work, he saw cars outside for another audit, and knew he was caught. He drove to Belfast where he threw away his phone so he was uncontactable. He was staying in a hotel with the money he got from gambling, only around €500, and it wasn't long until he was caught and arrested. This is when his addiction was discovered, and he lost a lot of his friends and family, he lost his job and his marriage.

After he was released from prison, he shared his story by writing a book and doing workshops spreading gambling awareness and how to avoid it. In the end he stole a total of €1.7 million and gambled a total of €10 million, making €9 million in profits in small pieces, and an overall total of 6,934 bets over his addiction lasting about 10 years. He described how gambling is everywhere now in certain games or sponsorship of sporting events.It was a very informative workshop that taught us the warning signs of gambling and how to avoid it.

The Road Safety Roadshow - 7th October

On the 7th of October, all TYs attended the Road Safety Roadshow in the Aura Leisure Centre in Letterkenny. We had to meet our tutors in a designated room for each group, we then had an assembly and were told about what would be happening that day. All TYs were then allowed to get an early break, and then came back to the school and got on the bus.

Once we arrived we all went into the Leisure Centre and sat down, it was an enormous space and there were around eight other schools there as well. We waited for about ten minutes for the other schools to arrive and then it started.

Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition



We were introduced to a guy named Sean who was an actor. He played this guy who had just asked a girl out on a date and he was going to pick her up. He then left and on the screens it showed a reenactment of a car accident in which Sean and his girlfriend were in. This then led to us meeting the next speaker who was a guard, he talked about all the accidents he gets called to and how sad his job is, the saddest part was definitely when he was talking about having to go to the families and inform them that their loved one has been in an accident. He then left and the next clip was of the paramedics responding to the scene. This part was really sad as the man was talking about all these horrific accidents and how he would always pray the next call wouldn't be as bad but they normally always were. Later we were introduced to a nurse, she talked about how heartbreaking it is seeing all the aftermaths of these horrendous accidents. After that she showed us a slideshow of the injuries that people had suffered as a result of being involved in accidents.



For the next part we heard real stories about real people who passed away due to car accidents, told by their loved ones. The first story was about this woman's sister who was always the life of the party and loved to go out, but one night she unfortunately crashed her car on the bend coming up to her house and died on impact. The sister was heartbroken and had to look after her sister's child. The saddest part was when she mentioned the fact that she and her sister used to always be mistaken for one another but after she passed they never were.

Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition

The next story was about a woman's son, her son was a new driver but he was very careful on the road, even using the indicator turning out of his driveway when no one was even there. His dad asked him one morning to go out and buy some crusty bread for the breakfast sandwiches, and he happily went off because he loved driving. On the way home from the shop the car slipped on black ice and due to his inexperience on the road his car was sent flying forward and into a slurry truck and he died on impact. This story was heartbreaking as the mother has kept his bag the same since the accident.

The Show ended with us seeing a live demonstration from paramedics, how they access someone who's been in a car accident, they try to go in from the back, remove the seat and get you on a gurney through the back.

From this roadshow, TYs definitely had an eye opening experience of the dangers on the road and the importance of safe driving.

Junior Cycle results day- 7th of October



On the 7th of October, all our TY students and the students who continued onto 5th year received their Junior Cycle results. Our TY students started off the morning by going to the Road safety workshop, making it back to have lunch at 1:45pm. All of our former Junior Cycle students were given the instruction to be in the gym by 2:30pm in time to get organised into alphabetical order in their TY class groups with the addition of the few fifth years who decided to continue with senior cycle.

This all happened just in time before parents started to arrive and waited at the back of the gym until the result envelopes were given out. Firstly our principal, Mr Thompson gave a speech about how this is an amazing day for us, he congratulated us on our hard work and wished us the best

Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition



with our results. Also telling us to celebrate safely. Our students received their results one by one from Ms Mohan and Mr Doherty as Mr Thompson called out the students' names.

After the students all received their results envelopes they all could open them as they pleased. Music played in the background as the students opened their results. This was a very joyful day for our former junior cert students and all of them were thrilled with their results. All the students were able to celebrate with their parents, if they attended, could show their teachers their results and head home to continue celebrating.

Huge congratulations to Caoimhe Pollard who received 9 distinctions overall which is a massive accomplishment!

Overall, this was a huge accomplishment for our TY and fifth year students who completed their Junior Cycle exams before the summer. The school is proud of all of our students for the hard work they put in to achieve these results and hope that they are also proud of themselves!

SEPI Training Day - 8th October

On the 8th of October, a select group of 14 TY students attended the SEPI Training Day. This took place in the Clanree Hotel in Letterkenny. The TY students arrived at the school at 8:30 in the morning.

Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition



The bus left at 9:00 and arrived in Letterkenny at 9:55.

When the students arrived, they were given their own lanyard. These lanyards told the TY students which table and team they were a part of. These teams were made up of 5-7 students, each from different schools around Ulster. The day started at 10:00. The students were then given an outline of the programme,as well as the dates the trips would take place. Then, the TY students were given time to get to know each other as they would be working together for the next few months.

The students were then given many different challenges and scenarios to solve, which involved active problem solving, innovative thinking and teamwork. These challenges also served as a way for the students to showcase their ideas and win prizes based on their creativity. The students were also provided with lunch during the day. After these activities, the students were signed up to numerous different applications and academies that would be used throughout the programme.

Overall, this was an educational and fun filled experience for all involved. They had an opportunity to mingle with students from across Ulster who they wouldn't normally meet. They could apply their very own ideas in this programme. They improved their teamwork skills by interacting with new peers.



Transition Year Newsletter 2026 - 2027

October Edition

Coming Up In Our November Edition of the TY Newsletter

- ATU Sligo Open Day
- SEPI Programme
- High School Musical
- TY Work Experience 1