

# THE RCS SCÚP



## RCS STUDENT WINS STUDENT LEADERSHIP COMPETITION

BY: LOUISE BYRNE



Image; Aoi bhinn pictured with Rotary Wexford President, Natasha Hughes

We are thrilled to announce that 5th year student Aoi bhinn Doyle has been crowned the winner of the Regional Rotary Youth Leadership Development competition. This prestigious competition, run in partnership with Euroscola, is one of Rotary Ireland's longest-running youth projects, aimed at developing leadership skills and enhancing communication and teamwork abilities. Aoi bhinn's journey began in October when she entered the school competition, open to students over 16 years of age. Applicants were asked to submit a form detailing their leadership experiences, both inside and completed work experience in Dáil Éireann, where she addressed the Committee of Education on climate education and presented to a Czech delegation on the Irish Education

System. Additionally, Aoi bhinn is an ambassador for Mary's Meals Ireland, advocating and fundraising for the charity. After a successful interview, Aoi bhinn was selected to represent Ramsgrange Community School in the county competition. She progressed to the regional competition, competing against students from 15 other Wexford schools. Aoi bhinn impressed judges outside of school. Aoi bhinn's application stood out due to her involvement in various initiatives, especially during Transition Year. Notably, she once again and was chosen to represent Wexford in the national competition, which included students from Wicklow, Carlow, and Kilkenny. In this phase, competitors were questioned on broader topics, including local, national, and European issues. Aoi bhinn was announced as one

of the winners, alongside a student from Dominican College Wicklow.

This victory was a moment of immense pride for Aoi bhinn, her family, and our school. Ramsgrange Community School has a strong tradition of success in the Rotary competition, with 5th-year student Louise Byrne claiming the regional title in 2023.

Aoi bhinn, passionate about politics and current affairs, credited her previous experience in Dáil Éireann and encouragement from teacher Ms. Walsh and classmate Louise for her success. She is now looking forward to the Rotary trip in January 2025, which will include visits to Stormont, the Dáil, and the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

We are incredibly proud of Aoi bhinn's achievement and wish her continued success as she represents our school on this remarkable journey.

### Upcoming Events

BT Young Scientist	9th Jan
Review, Revise, Recap week	13th Jan
5th Year & LCA1 Parent	
Teacher Meetings	16th Jan
2nd Year Parent	
Teacher Meeting	28th Jan
School Closure	3rd Feb
1st Year Parent	
Teacher Meeting	6th Feb
Assessment weeks	4-14th Feb

### IN THIS ISSUE:

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# 'PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS LIBERATES'

**ESSAY BY: KARA HENDRICK WATERS**

Discrimination against people by governments leads to a rise in strong politicians. Only through Parliamentary Politics, the act of achieving political change through non-violent methods, can the liberation of these people be achieved. Three figures who personify this statement are Martin Luther King Jr, John Hume, and Nelson Mandela. Although these figures came from thousands of miles apart, they all aimed to achieve a common goal. The liberation of the oppressed.

Martin Luther King came from Georgia and grew up with the harsh racial segregation of Southern America. He began to lead the Black population in peaceful protests. These protests resulted in The Civil Rights Act of 1964, which authorised the Federal Government to enforce the desegregation of public accommodations and outlaw discrimination in public facilities and employment. In December of that same year, King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In March 1965, King led a protest from Selma to Montgomery. This was to highlight discrimination in voting rights for Black people. At the end of this march, King made a speech on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol building in Montgomery. In the speech he insisted, "Let us march on segregated housing... Let us march on segregated schools... Let us march on poverty... Let us march on ballot boxes" (these words were to have a rippling affect across the Atlantic, a few years later, in Northern Ireland). The march led to the passing of the Voting Rights Act, 1965; it looked like Parliamentary Politics could, and would, liberate.

**“Only through  
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political change  
through non-violent  
methods, can the  
liberation of  
[discriminated] people  
be achieved.”**

King inspired John Hume through his unwavering commitment to non-violent protest and social justice. This resonated deeply with Hume's own struggles and experiences of discrimination, while growing up in Northern Ireland. In following King's example, Hume envisioned a path towards solving conflict through understanding, co-operating and peaceful means. Hume was one of the first waves of Catholics to receive a free education. He grew up in the Bogside area of the



Photo: John Hume and Nelson Mandela in 2000. (PA)

city of Derry and saw first-hand the discrimination of Catholics in housing. As a result, he helped establish Ireland's first non-profit housing organisation. Catholics were also being discriminated against politically. This was because of Gerrymandering. Hume demanded, through peaceful marches and protest, "One Man, One Vote" whilst also encouraging the two communities, Catholics and Protestants, to simply talk to each other to solve sectarianism. He was a founding member of the S.D.L.P.s, an anti-sectarian political party, in 1970. He began to make connections in American politics, and he gathered support from the Irish Diaspora.

This put international focus on Northern Ireland. Hume won over many politicians by his gentle yet subtle persuasion. In the early 1980s he began the "Friends of Ireland" group, which condemned sectarian violence.

He also played a role in the Anglo-Irish Agreement of 1985. He pleaded with the Northern Irish populations to abandon violence on both sides of the schism and begin participating in parliamentary politics as he believed this was the key to achieving his goal.

Hume was one of the chief architects behind the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. After witnessing thirty years of violence, Hume's dream of peace was realised. He won the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize for his involvement in the peace process. By using Parliamentary Politics, he had liberated all people of Northern Ireland.

Similarly to the Black people in the USA, and the Catholics in Northern Ireland, the Black people of South Africa also had to choose to fight, non-violently, to achieve liberation,

Nelson Mandela was another leader who was a catalyst for Parliamentary Politics. He worked tirelessly throughout his life to achieve political change. Since the colonisation by the Dutch, and then the British, Apartheid, a discriminatory social structure where a white minority controlled the land, the wealth and the government was implemented and enforced by many acts and laws.

# 'PARLIAMENTARY POLITICS LIBERATES'

Nelson Mandela joined the African National Congress in 1944. He was an activist for equality amongst his people. He sought equality in housing, education and on ballot boxes. In 1963, Mandela was tried for sabotage, treason, and conspiracy. Mandela was given a life sentence and was lucky to escape the death penalty.

On his release, he continued to fight for justice. He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 and was elected President in 1994. Once again, proving discrimination and oppression against people, by governments, leads to a rise in strong politicians who believe in Parliamentary Politics and why it matters.

These figures had all experienced oppression. They had walked in the shoes of their populations. They had each been discriminated against due to their religion or race. This gave them a raw determination and extreme motivation to keep fighting for liberation.

All these figures risked their own personal safety for the greater good.

The determination of the pursuit of peace and justice connected them then and should connect us, worldwide, now. There is indeed no doubt, they proved how Parliamentary Politics liberates. I believe we can all learn something and be empowered by these people. These leaders spoke for the millions that had no voice. They selflessly sacrificed and suffered for a glimpse of change for future generations. They proved the great saying by Daniel O'Connell, "the alter of liberty only totters when it is cemented only with blood." Like O'Connell, understood that Parliamentary Politics was the only choice in liberating the oppressed they too understood the same.

We today, need to understand, oppression is a worldwide problem and can affect anyone, of any religion, race, or ethnicity. If Oppression is here, Parliamentary Politics has to and has proven to prevail with inevitable success.

## Bibliography

- 1 Martin Luther King-general information used [.Martin Luther King, Jr. - Civil Rights, Nonviolence, Birmingham Jail | Britannica](#)
2. John Hume- Background and policies [Ireland's Greatest John Hume \(RTE 2010\)](#), <https://www.sdlp.ie/about>
3. Nelson Mandela- Background Information [Nelson Mandela Britannica](#)
4. Nelson Mandela Presidency- [South Africa History Online](#)



Martin Luther King Jr.: Julian Wasser, Encyclopædia Britannica



John Hume, the outgoing leader of the SDLP, in front of Stormont, the home of the Northern Ireland Assembly, in 2002. Photograph: Paul Faith/PA



Nelson Mandela Getty Images

# ANTI-BULLYING WEEK

BY: SHANE MEEHAN AND SENIOR PREFECT TEAM

Last week was our Anti-Bullying Week here in RCS and we held various activities throughout the week to raise awareness on the issue of bullying. Our student prefect team read out a positive, uplifting quote every morning over the intercom (see below). As well as this, there were in class tutor focuses to educate our students on the causes and the effects of bullying (see slides to the right).

We ran a school wide poster competition and at break times, there were thematic activities that any year could take part in. Our Amber Flag committee also highlighted the issue of bullying on their agenda.

Our aim was to raise awareness to the issue of bullying among the student population and we will continue to tackle the issue over the coming weeks and months as we pride ourselves on our safe and welcoming environment in RCS.

Congratulations to our poster competition winner who are named on the next page!

**What is Bullying??**

- As stated, in our anti bullying policy, "bullying is repeated deliberate aggression, whether verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against someone who is unable or unwilling to defend themselves in that actual situation"
- Please make sure you and your tutor have signed the Anti-Bullying Policy in your journal.

**Reminder of our Anti-Bullying Code**

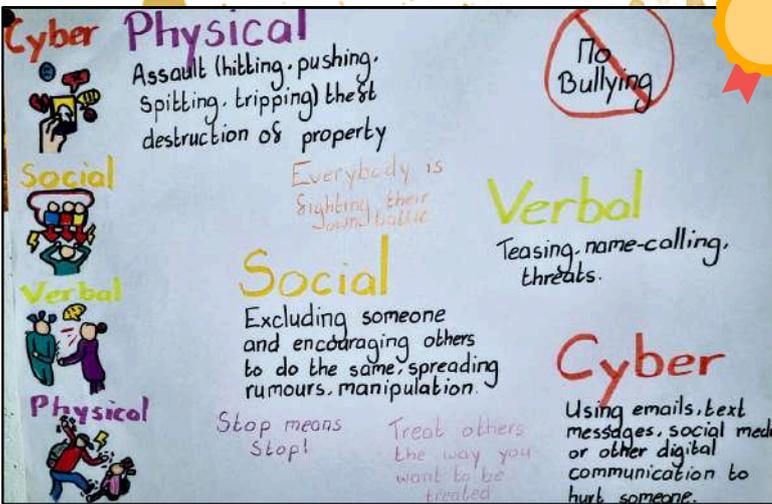
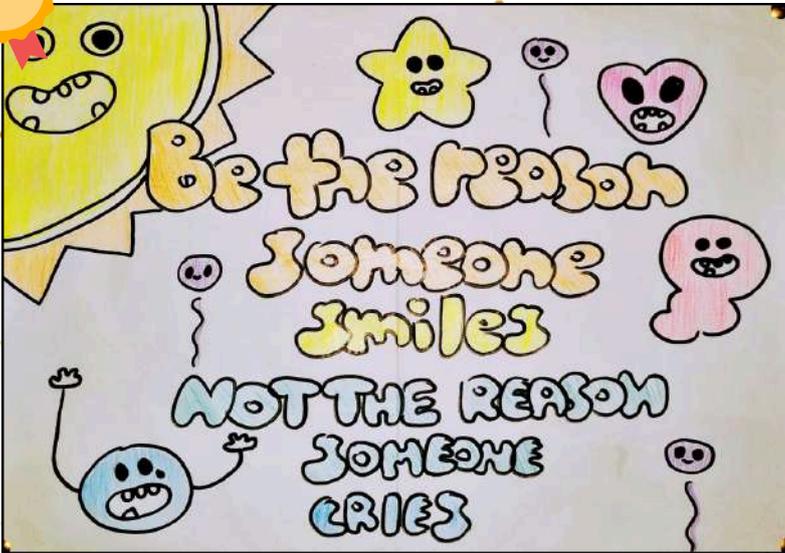
- I will not exclude or isolate another student in any way.
- I will not slag, name call or spread rumours about another student by any means.
- I will not physically abuse another student.
- I will not intimidate another student in any way.
- I will not prevent another student from participating fully in all school facilities.
- I will read and follow the schools Anti-Bullying Policy.
- All of us share the responsibility to ensure that Bullying is not tolerated in our school.

**What to do if you witness Bullying**

- 1**  
Don't ignore it
- 2**  
Report to a trusted adult
  - Your tutor
  - Your yearhead
  - Guidance Counsellor (Ms Miller)
  - Chaplain (Ms McCabe)
  - Deputy Principal (Ms Cadogan or Ms Kehoe)
  - Your parents
- 3**  
Offer support to the victim
  - Encourage them to speak up about it.



# ANTI-BULLYING WEEK



## Competition Winners

FRIENDSHIP TREASURE HUNT: AMY SYMES  
POSTER COMPETITION:

- ANNA ASSINDER FOR HER LOVELY QUOTE TO "BE THE REASON SOMEONE SMILES"
- EMMA FOLEY AND ANNABELLE BURDEN FOR THEIR INFORMATIVE POSTER ON ANTI BULLYING.
- HOLLY CASSIDY FOR HER BEAUTIFUL AND BRIGHT POSTER "BLOWING OUT SOMEONE ELSE'S CANDLE DOESN'T MAKE YOURS SHINE ANY BRIGHTER".



# AN OVERVIEW OF THE IRISH GENERAL ELECTION

BY: JONAH FLYNN

The Irish 2024 general election was called following the dissolution of the 33rd Dail on the 8th of November. Voting day took place on Friday 29th of November with 174 seats being decided. This was up from 160 seats in the 2020 general election.

The Irish electoral system is called single transferable vote proportional representation. Voters mark a number by the candidate indicating the preference. Voters do not need to mark a preference for each candidate. Put simply if you mark something for a candidate, they benefit from it and if you do not, they do not benefit. Once a candidate is eliminated or elected, their votes are distributed to the next highest ranked candidate remaining.

Fianna Fáil, Sinn Féin, Fine Gael, Labour, Social Democrats, Green Party, Aontú, Independent Ireland, People before Profit Solidarity, 100% Redress, Workers and Unemployed Action and Independents4Change all contested the election. The first seven mentioned above were the major parties. Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and the Green Party were the incumbents having been part of a coalition. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael provided most of the majority with the Green Party rounding the coalition out.

The following are the results of the elections (by number of seats):

	2024	2020
Fianna Fáil	48	38
Sinn Féin	39	37
Fine Gael	38	35
Independents (Not a party)	15	19
Social Democrats	11	6
Labour	11	6
Independent Ireland	4	0
People before Profit	2	5
Aontú	1	0
Solidarity	1	0
100% Redress	1	0
Workers and Unemployed Action	1	0
Green Party	1	12
Independents4Change	0	1

Verona Murphy (IND), James Browne (FF), Johnny Mythen (SF), George Lawlor (Labour), Cathal Byrne (FG), Jim Codd (Aontú), Bridín Murphy (FG), Michael Sheehan (IND), Mick Wallace (I4C), Martina Stafford (Sol), Peadar McDonald (Green), Jackser Owens (IND), Jason Murphy (NP), Michelle O'Neill (FF) and Stephen Power (IP) all contested the election in Wexford. Verona Murphy, James Browne and Johnny Mythen were favourites to win seats with George Lawlor, Jim Codd and Cathal Byrne battling for the fourth seat. James Browne and Johnny Mythen both suffered in votes because of their bases in the North of Wexford were split in the creation of the new Wicklow-Wexford constituency. George Lawlor was expected to take retiring Labour TD Brendan Howlin beating Jim Codd and Cathal Byrne. The quota to get elected in Wexford is 10,502 votes. Verona Murphy was elected on the first count with 11,340 first preference votes.

James Browne and Johnny Mythen were elected on the eleventh count with 11,292 and 10,550 votes, respectively. George Lawlor was also elected on the final being the last uneliminated candidate. He had 10,066 votes in total. Cathal Byrne and Jim Codd were the fourth and fifth candidates in the race with 7,439 and 5,078 votes, respectively.



Image: Verona Murphy, from Ramsgrange. Elected on first count.

Overall, the likely prospect for a new government is a coalition consisting of Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael and a significantly smaller party to reach the 88 seat majority required. A handful of independents are most likely to form the minority grouping in the government such as the Healy Rae's in Kerry. It is unlikely that the Social Democrats will go into to power but Labour, the other left-wing party is willing to negotiate. Sinn Féin and the remaining Green party TD have ruled out being part of the coalition. Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael have both stated that they will rotate the office of Taoiseach as before. However, Fianna Fáil has said it wants its majority appropriately represented both in the cabinet and as how long their leader is Taoiseach for.

Overall, it was a good election for most parties; however some performed very poorly. Sinn Féin and Fine Gael both did well increasing the number of seats they held by 2 and 3, respectively. Labour and the Social Democrats both were one off doubling their seats in this new parliament. Aontú fell well short of its ambitions winning only one extra seat in Mayo instead of one in most if not all constituencies. The Green Party also did badly, losing all but one seat; that of its leader. Unsurprisingly 100% Redress won its one desired seat. It campaigned on the issue of the crumbling homes scandal. Finally, Fianna Fáil gained 10 new seats and retained its position as the largest party.

### Key terms explained

**Constituency** - a group of voters in a specified area who elect a representative to a legislative body. Ramsgrange's constituency is Wexford.

**Coalition** - This word means a union. In this context, it is when two or more parties join to form a government. For example, in Ireland - to be the main party in power, you have to have 88 seats. No party has 88 seats so different parties have to join together so that they have 88 or more seats to be in government.

## COP 29- WHAT WENT DOWN AND WHAT CAN WE DO?

BY AOIBHINN DOYLE



The 29th UN Climate Change Conference (COP29) was held from 11-22 November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan bringing parties together to increase action towards the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

This year's COP summit focused on securing the significant financial investments needed to reduce emissions and protect vulnerable groups and has since been known as the "Finance COP."

However, this UN conference has proven to be the most precarious climate summit yet, with less ambitious targets and more divisiveness between the different parties.

What caused most controversy was, as you can guess, finances or "climate finances" which refer to the funds provided by developed countries - historically responsible for climate change - to support climate action in developing countries.

This funding is crucial to enable these nations to achieve their climate goals. It contributes to both activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions (climate mitigation) and activities that help countries adapt to the impacts of climate change (climate adaptation).

Halfway through the gathering, many climate leaders wrote a public letter claiming COP was unfit for purpose and called for an urgent overhaul. Many senior negotiators expressed frustration with what some termed the worst COP in a decade.

Although a deal was eventually reached to triple finance to developing countries from 100 to 300 billion US dollars annually by

2035, it was not near the USD 1.3 trillion developing countries were asking for.

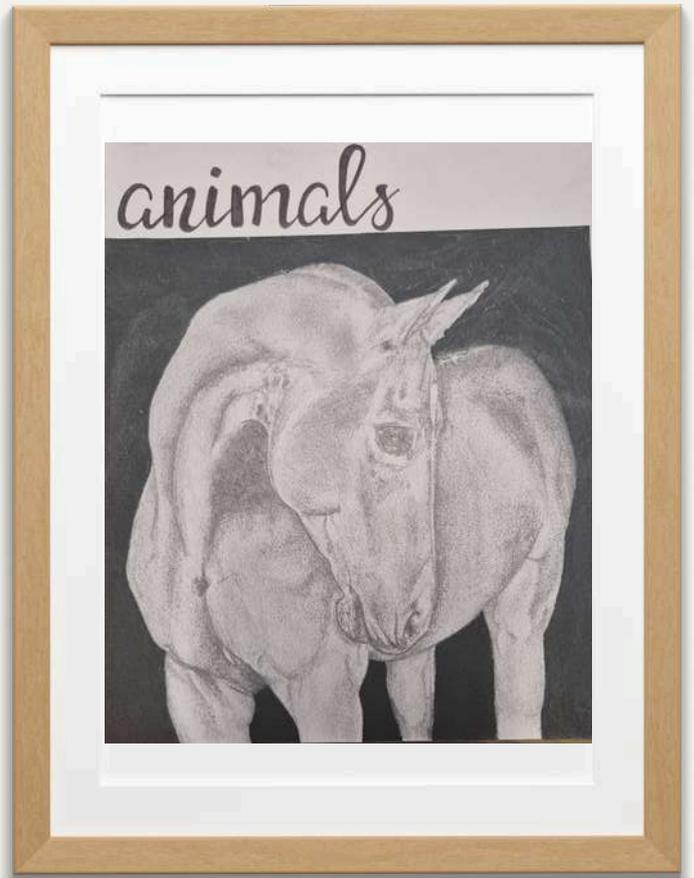
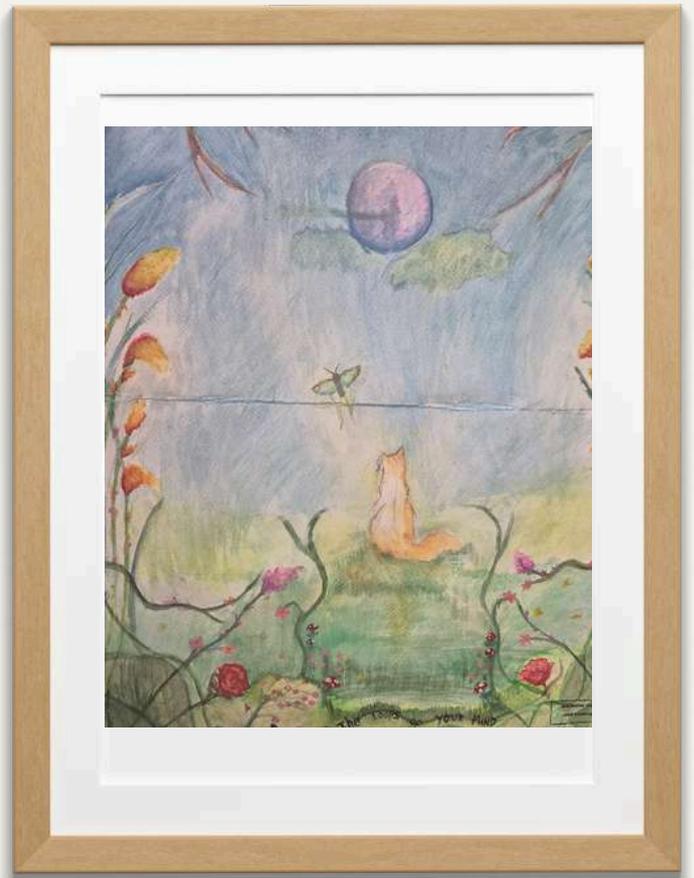
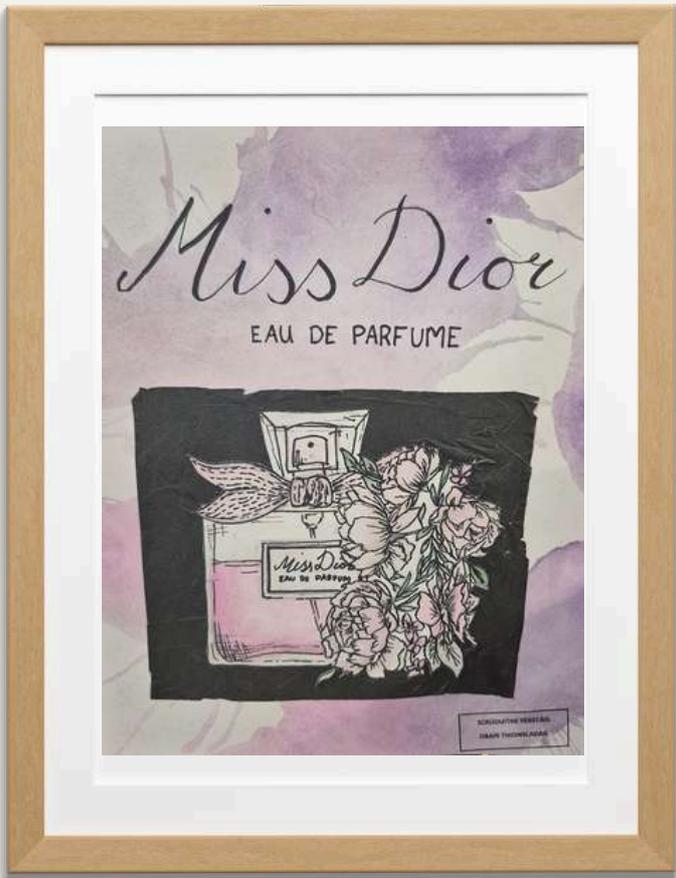
The choice of Azerbaijan to host COP this year was also questioned by many officials and groups as the country expressed a desire to expand gas production by up to a third in the next decade.

On a positive note, COP29 did manage to secure the carbon markets, which are trading systems in which carbon credits (a permit which allows a country or organisation to produce a certain amount of carbon emissions, and which can be traded if the full allowance is not used) are sold and bought. This will help many countries, especially LDCs (Least Developed Countries) who could use the carbon markets to enhance climate action and to help channel financial resources to support emissions reduction.



### Aoibhinn's top Sustainability Tips:

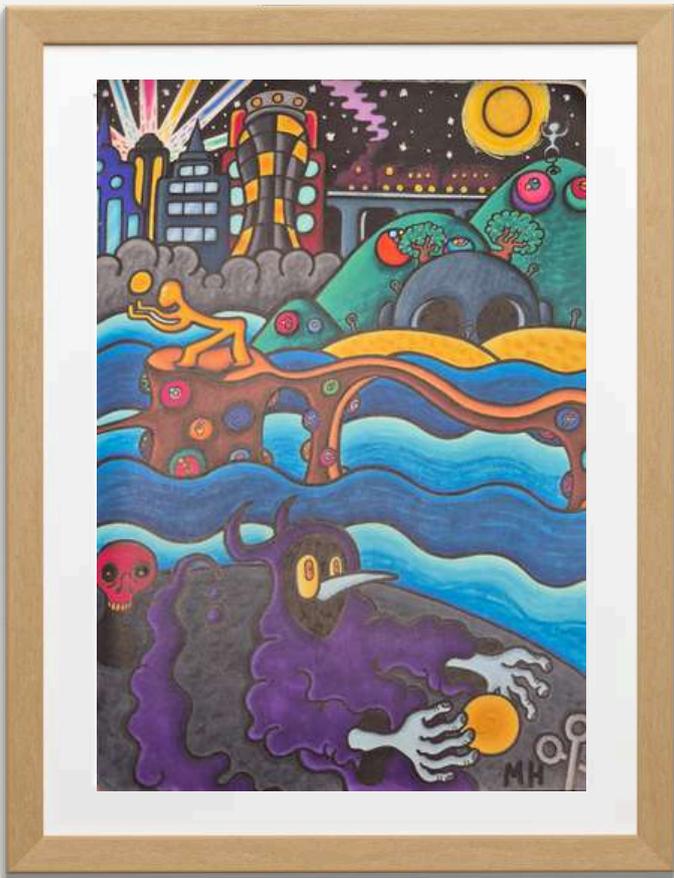
- Reduce, reuse, recycle. Make sure that you are putting your rubbish in the right bin and double-check the packaging to see if it can be recycled.
- Support the "Grow don't mow" initiative by allowing a section of your garden at home to go wild. This is a fantastic way to encourage biodiversity and attract wildlife.
- Stop using pesticides. Many pesticides are very toxic as they contain harsh chemicals which can damage the environment and your health. A great alternative to traditional pesticides are homemade ones which can be made from ingredients such as vinegar and soap.
- Try to avoid buying from fast fashion websites such as Temu and Shein and instead try to support local businesses in your area.
- Invest in a reusable water bottle or tea/coffee mug which will reduce the amount of waste going to landfills.



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*Our Wow Wall*

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A SECTION OF ART ON  
DISPLAY IN OUR ART ROOM

# Our Wow Wall

WITH THANKS TO MR CAMPBELL FOR SHARING

# THE CREATIVE ARTS AT RCS



## Festive poem by Amber O'Toole

Christmas time is finally here  
Be sure to spread lots of cheer.  
The snow falls softly, pure and bright,  
As Christmas lights adorn the night.  
The scent of pine fills the air,  
And hearts are warm, devoid of care.

Christmas time is finally here  
Be sure to spread lots of cheer.  
Presents wrapped up under the tree  
Opening them up with glee.  
Christmas dinner smells so nice  
Make sure you don't slip on ice.

Christmas time is finally here  
Be sure to spread lots of cheer.  
Popping crackers crowns on our head  
Many days later lunch is turkey and bread.  
Sad it's over we had loads of fun.  
All full up "ah go on, just one more bun,"



Aerial view of RCS

## Film life within RCS by Matthew Haskins

In RCS we are lucky to have a small but dedicated group interested in film and production. This year a group of students are creating a short documentary based on the theme of "Global Justice", In particular focusing on the theme of climate change. Some of you may have spotted students filming during the climate and nature summit which took place a few weeks back. Some of this footage will be featured in this documentary!

As it stands we are still coming up with ways to showcase how our school is promoting climate change awareness and would like to hear your thoughts. If you have any ideas which could be incorporated into our project please email 20-037@rcswexford.ie. Whilst getting a few shots using a drone we were able to capture some incredible photos of our school! As the year progresses you can expect to find updates of how our project is going! Bye for now :)

## Book Review by Luke Power

As the school year began, I decided to pick up a book that had been sitting on my shelf for over a year at that point. That book was *Never Let Me Go*, and it has stuck with me more than any other book I've ever read. The story of Kathy's life continues to haunt me every day.

It begins with Kathy's life as a carer, in her mid-thirties. She begins to reflect on her earlier life in a seemingly idyllic country boarding school called Hailsham. It follows her and her relationships with her friends, namely Ruth and Tommy, and their heartbreaking yet inescapable fate.

This book packs a twist about a third of the way through that I could not have expected. This book, after the reveal, is nothing short of heartbreaking. I wouldn't want to spoil it, but this twist makes way for deep, philosophical questions about humanity, love, and even the existence of the soul. This book will not leave you alone for months after you have read it, and Ishiguro's simplistic and unpretentious style of writing makes it quick and easy to read. Genre-defying, simple yet overpoweringly poignant, *Never Let Me Go* is one for those who want a book that will gently break their heart.



# TY SHORT STORY: WHISPERS OF HAZELWOOD HOUSE

BY: KARA HENDRICK WATERS

I always felt a special connection to Hazelwood House; it was a huge 18th century manor house surrounded by a lavish estate. This house belonged to my Grandmother Mrs. Dawnsley. The Hazelwood estate had been cared for by the Dawnsley family since the house had been built. The house was gorgeous but had an overtaking eerie feeling in some rooms. In a luxurious sitting room (the parlor as my grandmother called it) stood a large dark-wood Georgian door with a large brass knocker and a doorknob. There was no adjoining room for the door, and I always found that a little strange. Another thing I found strange was the mystery of my Grandmother's sister. At the top of the grand staircase in the center of the house there was a gold photo frame and inside it was the image of my Grandparent's wedding. Outside of a small chapel stood my Grandmother, youthful and smiling. Beside her, my Grandfather, an image of his day. He stood attentively and happily. His brother beside him also tall and sharp featured. But the figure beside my Grandmother stayed in my mind indefinitely. She was tall and slim. Her eyes stared down the ancient camera lens. Something about her eyes stayed with me and I saw them everywhere, even in my sleep.

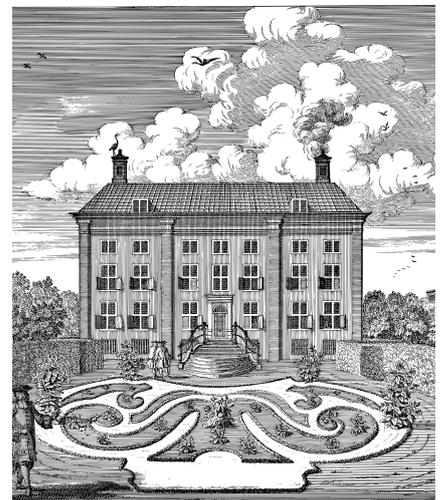
Every night for the past few months I saw those eyes. Anytime I mentioned this young lady to any family members I was dismissed. A door was slammed anytime I pried it open with a question. When my Grandmother passed on a Winter morning my family discovered she had left the house and the estate to me. I was the sole heir of the Dawnsley estate as well as Hazelwood House. I moved into my beloved manor the day after the funeral. I woke up every icy morning to the extreme silence of the empty house. This continued for many months. November passed,

December passed and slowly the morning milled into afternoons and nights. I began to think about the others that had gone before me. How many other men and women in my family had woken up here? Stared out the same windows? Or looked up at the same paintings? After what seemed like years of my life had passed, I noticed strange things about my house. People stopped calling to visit and the paintings began to change. It was early April when I started to feel watched. Like a monkey in the zoo. I decided to walk around hoping this phenomenon was a hysterical ailment that could be cured by a glass of water. I passed the photograph of my Grandparent's wedding, and those eyes began to stare. I couldn't take my eyes from the photo no matter how I tried. Suddenly a wave of dizziness washed over me and I heard a young female voice whisper in my ear "Come with me" it said. Her voice seemed to come from all around.

It came from every wall, every floor panel, everywhere I began to stumble as the pain in my head took over. I was now in the parlor standing at the door. That door. A ringing in my ears began to heighten. It grew louder and louder until I felt my head would burst. "Open it" the voice said. I felt useless against my actions. An invisible force was dragging my body towards the door. The door swung open. Darkness swallowed the room. I was pushed in. From outside I heard a thousand voices. Young, old, male and female. "You're part of us now!" They spoke to me and the words pierced my soul. I heard the female voice beside me. "It's the house" she whispered. "What?" I answered. "The voices. It's the souls of Hazelwood. It's everyone. Past present and future." Her words were like a knife slashing at my love for the house and pushed me deeper into the room

and I could see a light at the end of the room. She pushed me towards 'But who was she?' I thought to myself. To answer this question, I began to turn around the woman's head began to morph slowly at first then at speed. Her face turned to an old man, my Grandmother's caretaker Mr. Smith. He looked at me before morphing into my Grandmother's face. A younger face sure but one that could belong to no one other than her. We reached the light source. It was a window into the hallway, I turned around in order to ground myself.

The church from the photograph was behind me. I heard church bells ringing. My Grandmother was nowhere to be seen. Then suddenly the large church doors began to open and out came the wedding party. All except one. The party of people made their way over towards me. I faced the window and saw my reflection; my outfit had changed from my lounge clothes into a 1940s wedding suit. A coral colour. Everyone positioned themselves accordingly. My Grandmother beside me young and hopeful. "Smile" a voice said coldly seemingly out of nowhere. A flash stung my eyes. I smiled in a strange but comforting way. Then I left my body, I was gone. That was it. Now I was a mere girl in a photo.



## TY SHORT STORY: THE STAG

**BY: PADRAIC BARRY**

The Hunter snapped out of his quiet reprieve. He had long awaited this moment. Those antlers would make a fine addition to the mantle above the fireplace. The Hunter aligned the grim grey muzzle of his rifle with the Stags skull. And yet he paused for but the briefest of moments for a most inexplicable reason. The Stags crystal clear eyes locked with the beady scope. A heartbeat was all it took. The Stag fled bounding off into the thick green expanse. The Hunter cursed himself for his hesitation, anger erasing the feeling of peace that had once filled him. Pulling himself up from his grounded hovel the man surveyed the glade. The Stags flight had punctured that quiet bubble that had engulfed the area. Not a single sign of life could still be seen. In anger the Hunter struck out at the foliage with the butt of his rifle standing dirt high in the sky. All that effort wasted due to the folly of the moment. He had been tracking that wry white beast for days. And yet every time he came to that precipice between action and inaction he faltered. A feeling greater than words overtook him.

No longer he swore the next time he ran into that stag would be its last. Collecting his equipment and his wits the Hunter soldiered on through the undergrowth tracking the Stags trail until suddenly it fell away before a pool of deepest blue. The water from on high crashed down into the pool creating an almighty sound. Without any hints as to where the Stag had fled to the man sat by the pool and stared into the depths. The image he saw reflected back at him was one of a man beleaguered by the woes of the world. He had come out here for an escape from the world that had been built up around him.

He was old enough to still remember when his home world had looked similar to this. Green glades as far as the eye could see with fields abundant with frolicking children. All gone now. Great expanses of forest replaced with a concrete jungle. Forgiving fields of green replaced with the harsh bite of stone. He had so yearned for this brief

reprieve and now it was sullied by the cold sting of failure. His failure to kill the Stag was indicative of a greater problem that faced the hunter. This was the last season the Hunter would be able to practice his craft in these lands he felt most at home in. The city was expanding yet again like a great grey beast swallowing up all that stood in its path. Ever since the Hunter was a boy he had longed for the satisfaction of bringing down a stag. 'So why is it' the man pondered 'that I can't seem to take that final step to realise that dream?' Slowly the Hunter began to close his eyes. That anger from before quenched now by the acceptance of failure. The Hunter focused now of the beauty of the birdsong that echoed around the outskirts of the pool. A much more soothing melody than the cacophony that was daily life around his kind. Even the great crushing sound of the water seemed to subside becoming a steady rhythmic humping in the background of the hunters mind. The life blood of this land being brought in from up above. Thumping like that of a heart.

Suddenly the orchestra's movement was disturbed by a sharp crack. The Hunters eyes flew open at the sound and he scanned the clearing looking for the source of this interloper. Shock gripped the man as he lay eyes on the unmistakable gleaming white coat of the Stag. It stood a stone's throw away from the Hunters spot standing there with its diamond like eyes. It stared at him and a thought passed between the two, one that to this day the Hunter can't describe. And for the shortest of times this thought was all there was. An all-encompassing experience shared by two beings. But man was not made to be still. Ambition with its fiery compulsions flared up within the Hunter as he grabbed his rifle shouldering it within a heartbeat. And with the beat of a butterfly's wing the guns muzzle roared to life spewing forth an emissary of death.

It found its mark between those two sapphires. A red smear welled up almost like a third eye had been placed there as the Stag fell. Dead. Stunned, the Hunter set the rifle down.

Expecting exuberance all he found when he looked inward was an ugly feeling that he could not place. Forgetting all about his trophy the man lay down by the pool again and started into its depths. And yet he did not recognise the bloodstained figure staring back at him.

All at once the Hunter realised what he felt; sorrow.

For he had just killed a little bit of paradise.



Luke Power (regular contributor to our book reviews) was runner up in the National Library of Ireland Poetry Aloud Competition.



Soapbox Speech Competition (November). Luke and Holly received a Highly Commendable Award each!

# UKRAINIAN ACTION IN IRELAND

**BY: VALERIIA STEPANENKO**

Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, Ireland has accepted almost 110,000 Ukrainian refugees. If you want to learn how they are settling in Ireland and helping their Motherland and each other, you should keep reading this article to find out!

Ukrainian Action in Ireland is a charity organisation set up in response to the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine by a group of Irish and Ukrainian volunteers. They work with people, communities, partner organisations and government representatives and their aims are to contribute to Irish-Ukrainian collaboration and integration of Ukrainian refugees into the Irish society, advance Irish-Ukrainian friendship and be the Ukrainian voice and action in Ireland. Ukrainian Action in Ireland also helps Ukrainians in need. So far, they have gathered donations and bought 19 ambulances, 21 pickup trucks for medical evacuation, power stations and so much more!

The organisation also often conducts surveys of Ukrainians in Ireland and the programme called **#УкраїнціВІрландії** (Ukrainians in Éire) where they tell stories of Ukrainians who found refuge from the Russian war in Ukraine. For example, they told a story of Hanna Shchokina who fled the war in Ukraine. She has two music diplomas from Ukraine, and having had them verified in Ireland, started teaching this subject to many new children and organised a child music group. You can learn more about this on their Instagram page.

**Bake Sale for Ukraine** (@Bake\_sale\_ua) is an initiative of food and craft fairs to raise funds for Ukraine. This is organised by Ukrainians in Ireland, Igor and Olga Pashchenko, and the event is hosted in the Knox Hall, Dublin. On the 7th of December they held their 10th bake sale, raising 12,000 euros. The funds are split between the following Ukrainian organisations:

1. Bakery Good Bread which is an

inclusive bakery that gives adults with mental disorders a chance and feeds people in the front-line territories

2. Misto Dobra which is the biggest shelter for evacuated children, women, elderly and pets in Ukraine

3. Leleka Foundation, which supplies front-line medical professionals.

As they have stated on their Instagram page, they are hoping to organise the next Ukrainian market in spring.



Photo: Founders of the Bake Sale for Ukraine – Igor and Olga Pashchenko

There are also many other Irish-Ukrainian charities and initiatives to help Ukrainians in need in Ireland. If you want to help them or just learn more about this, refer to the following organisations:

- The Irish Refugee Council;
- Ukraine Civil Society Forum;
- Association of Ukrainians in Republic of Ireland.

These are some of the organisations and volunteer initiatives aimed at helping us Ukrainians, however nothing would be possible if Ireland hadn't accepted many of us, Ukrainians, and gave us shelter and support. Our nation will forever be grateful to the Irish for giving us refuge and helping us at this crucial and difficult time. Thank you, Ireland!



Sources:

- <https://www.rte.ie/news/business/2024/10/23/147699-5-cso-ukrainians-in-ireland/#:~:text=It%20found%20there%20were%20109%2C566,to%2094%2C164%20a%20year%20earlier.>
- <https://www.ukrainianaction.ie/>
- <https://www.ukrainianaction.ie/research-2/ukrainian-action-2024-survey-of-ukrainians-in-ireland>
- <https://www.facebook.com/BakeSaleForUkraine/>

# TRANSITION YEAR UPDATES

By Alannah Byrne

This term, TYs have been really busy. Our first placement of work experience finished up with a couple of students participating in extra placements. Maggie, Alannah, Colleen and Padraic all participated in SETU's try events. Oran and Josh got the opportunity to participate in TY immersion weeks in Beat and Dunsink Observatory.

We also went on numerous trips this term. We went with the senior music classes to the Wexford Opera Festival, we attended AVCON in Balldonnell, we got a tour of the National Stud, we attended a Comedy show, and we had Team building days for us to get to know each other.

We've done lots of volunteering for worthy causes; some students visited and volunteered at the Hope shoebox appeal sorting center, others coordinated the TY Under the Tree food hamper initiative for local families.

We've been busy learning new skills and content as we have also received talks about intellectual property, traditional building methods, First Aid and numerous careers talks. All TYs participated in the RCS Giant Christmas market with their mini businesses.

We are incredible excited to see how our BT Young Scientists team (of TY students) do in January!

Here are a few photos of what we've participated in:



# Teacher Feature!

BY: HOLLY CASSIDY

Our 'Teacher Feature' interview crew have been working hard over the last few weeks to find out bundles of fun facts and information about some of our incredible teachers here at RCS. This term, we asked one fantastic teacher seven questions - so, which teacher is featured this term and what did we ask them?

## Ms Cadogan - Deputy Principal

One of RCS's amazing deputy principals, Ms. Cadogan shared loads of funny and interesting answers with us for this term's article. Let's take a look!

### What made you pursue a career in teaching/as deputy principal?

I always wanted to be a teacher to share my passion for learning. It's incredibly rewarding to see students grow and succeed, knowing that I played a part in their educational journey.



### If you were not a teacher, what would you work as?

I'd be a personal shopper. I'd get to use my organisational skills to find the best deals and have an excuse to spend all day in the shops and call it 'work'.



### What is your favourite thing about RCS?

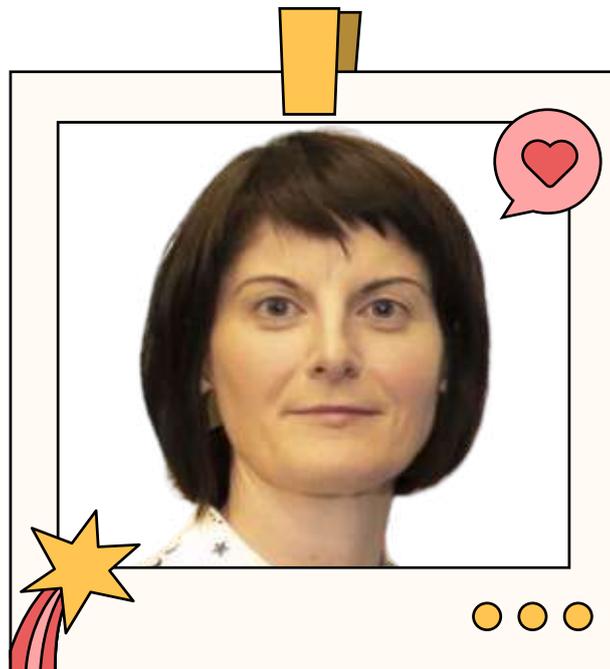
'Cookie Wednesday'. Just kidding! It's the amazing students and staff who make every day an adventure.

### Do you have any special/ hidden talents?

Well, I have super speed! I can cover a lot of ground in a short period of time. Just don't blink, or you might miss me!

### If you could have any pet in the world, what would it be?

Definitely the Holstein Friesian cow. They're like the supermodels of the cow world.

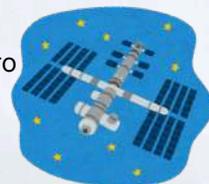


### What is your favourite Christmas movie?

The original Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. It's not your typical Christmas film, but nothing says 'festive spirit' like a chocolate river and a factory full of sweets.

### If you could take the whole school on a school tour to anywhere in the world, where would you bring them?

I'd take them to the International Space Station. Imagine the fun of zero gravity! Plus, the view of Earth from space would make for the ultimate class photo.



## Just don't blink, or you might miss me!

Ms B Cadogan

To conclude, from her always wanting to be a teacher to having super-speed, Ms. Cadogan's answers have taught us all something new! Which answer was your favourite?

## Focus on Germany for Christmas!

### Senior Cycle Trip to Germany by Ben Cassidy

Hallo zusammen

Mein Name ist Ben und letzte Woche war ich mit dem Austausch in Duisburg im Nordwesten Deutschlands. Am Austausch waren SchülerInnen der fünften, sechsten und der TY-Klasse beteiligt. Es war unser erstes Mal in Duisburg und wir sind bei Gastfamilien geblieben. Wir hatten nur drei Tage in Duisburg aber wir haben viel gemacht. Am ersten Tag sind wir nach Düsseldorf in Deutschland geflogen und wir haben uns mit unseren Austauschfamilien getroffen. Wir haben in der Schule auch Weihnachtslieder auf Deutsch und Englisch vom Schulchor gehört und wir haben auch ein bisschen auf Irisch gesungen. Am zweiten Tag sind wir in das größte Einkaufszentrum Deutschlands in der Stadt Oberhausen gegangen. Am letzten Tag gingen wir zusammen zur Schule. Die SchülerInnen in Duisburg lernen chinesisches – ganz schön verrückt für uns. Am Abend sind wir ins Stadtzentrum von Duisburg und auf den Weihnachtsmarkt gegangen. Er hat sehr schön ausgesehen und das Gebäck hat lecker gerochen. Wir hatten dort sehr viel Spaß.

Hello everyone

My name is Ben and during the first week of December I participated in the exchange to Duisburg in north-western Germany. The exchange involved students from the fifth, sixth, and TY years. It was our first time in Duisburg and we stayed with host families. We only had three days in Duisburg but we made the most of our time there. On the first day, we flew to Düsseldorf in Germany and we met our exchange families. We also listened to the school choir singing Christmas carols in German and English for us and sang a Christmas song in Irish. On the second day, we went to the largest shopping centre in Germany in Oberhausen. On the last day, we went to school together. The pupils in Duisburg learn Chinese - quite crazy for us. In the evening, we went to the city centre of Duisburg and to the Christmas market. It looked really nice, and the pastries smelled delicious. We had a lot of fun there.



Holly Cassidy - winner of the Great German Bake off!

## DID YOU KNOW?

- "Silent Night" (German: "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht") is a popular Christmas carol, composed in 1818 by Franz Xaver Gruber to lyrics by Joseph Mohr in Oberndorf bei Salzburg, Austria. It was originally written in German.
- Children in Germany receive their stockings on Saint Nicholas Day, 6th December.
- The advent calendar tradition originated from Germany. First used by Germans 19th and 20th centuries, many families began to mark the days leading up to Christmas by burning a candle or marking walls or doors with a line of chalk.
- The modern Christmas tree (weihnachtsbaum) originated from Germany.





# SPORTS ROUND UP



U15 Girls Soccer

Congratulations to our U15 girls soccer team victory over Bridgetown College in the first round of the Minor Cup!



1st and 2nd-year hurlers

Congratulations to the team who won 2 out of 3 games in the Wexford GAA Coaching Blitz



Junior Ladies Rugby

A fantastic performance by the Junior Ladies Rugby Team in their blitz in Wicklow



U16 girls basketball

The team had their first match of the season but unfortunately lost 19-5 to Our Lady of Lourdes Secondary School.



Ladies Football

Seniors: With two wins from three, we now await other game results to see if we progress to the next round.



Ladies Football

Juniors: Two wins from two in their group stage blitz, with victories over Coláiste Abbáin and Enniscorthy Community College.



# SPORTS ROUND UP



Thanks to Bobby Murphy for collating



Leinster Schools Combined Events  
Congratulations to Isabelle Aspel on securing 3rd place in the Leinster Schools combined events, achieving a new personal best!



Equestrian: RCS team came 6th in the team competition!



Equestrian Success  
Well done to our team of Rebecca, Niamh, Caitlin, and Brooke on achieving 2nd place. Jessie also came 2nd in the Open competition.



1st and 2nd-year hurlers  
Congratulations to the team who won 2 out of 3 games in the Wexford GAA Coaching Blitz



Senior Footballers  
Opening game against , achieved first win of the season.

**Well done to all our sportpeople and good luck in the new year!  
Thank you teachers and SNAs for volunteering your time so we can play sports!**

# KEEPING HEALTHY DURING WINTER

BY: YELYZAVETA MOLDOVAN

## Causes of increased morbidity in winter:

One of the reasons for the increase in illness in winter is that cold weather contributes to a weakening of the body's immunity due to insufficient vitamin D.

Another reason is that in winter, we spend much more time indoors and come into contact with the virus through carriers that may be in the room.

In addition, when we inhale cold air, the blood vessels in the nose constrict, which prevents white blood cells from reaching the mucous membrane and killing viruses there, which then enter our body.

## How to avoid getting sick?

In winter, it is important to have a **balanced diet** with a high content of calories and vitamins. You should **eat about 4 meals a day**, about 200 grams each. This is necessary because the body feels the drop in temperature and the reduction in daylight hours, the body begins to store energy in the form of fat, which acts as a reserve in case of energy needs.

It is important to **drink enough water**, focusing on your weight and health, because this will determine the amount of water you need to consume during the day, for example, with an average height and weight of 60 kg, you need to consume about 1-2 liters per day, but with the same height and weight of 90 kg, you need to consume about 2-2.5 liters of warm water daily. This is necessary because in winter, the body loses more moisture due to its increased use during thermoregulation.

**Exercise** is also a way to protect yourself from disease, whether it's a 30-minute walk in the fresh air or a 15-minute exercise routine every morning. The effectiveness of such a simple action is indicated by a study that shows that activity reduces the risk of catching a cold by 20% compared to those people who lead a more passive lifestyle and sit a lot.

It is also beneficial to consume trace elements such as iron, magnesium, phosphorus, calcium, iodine, zinc and potassium, which are found in figs,



dried apricots, dates, and raisins. They are necessary because they stimulate the immune system and increase its activity.

## How to get better faster

Many people know about the simple rule of recovery, taking vitamin C pills or just eating fruits filled with it such as apples, citrus fruits and apricots. Because this increases the acidity of your blood, the activity of the virus is significantly reduced and monocytes and lymphocytes can get rid of the virus faster. And drinking plenty of warm liquids, this liquids often differ from person to person, and this list of recommendations from different people can help you choose something that you like.

- My family prefers the classic tea with lemon, raspberries and honey.
- Ms Cantwell drinks warm water and orange juice more often when she is sick.
- Ms Bates prefers water with lemon, ginger, echinacea infusion and honey.
- Ms Neary, in turn, drinks warm water with ginger and chili pepper.



**A GIFT they'll love**  
Gift Ideas from Mollie and Kelly

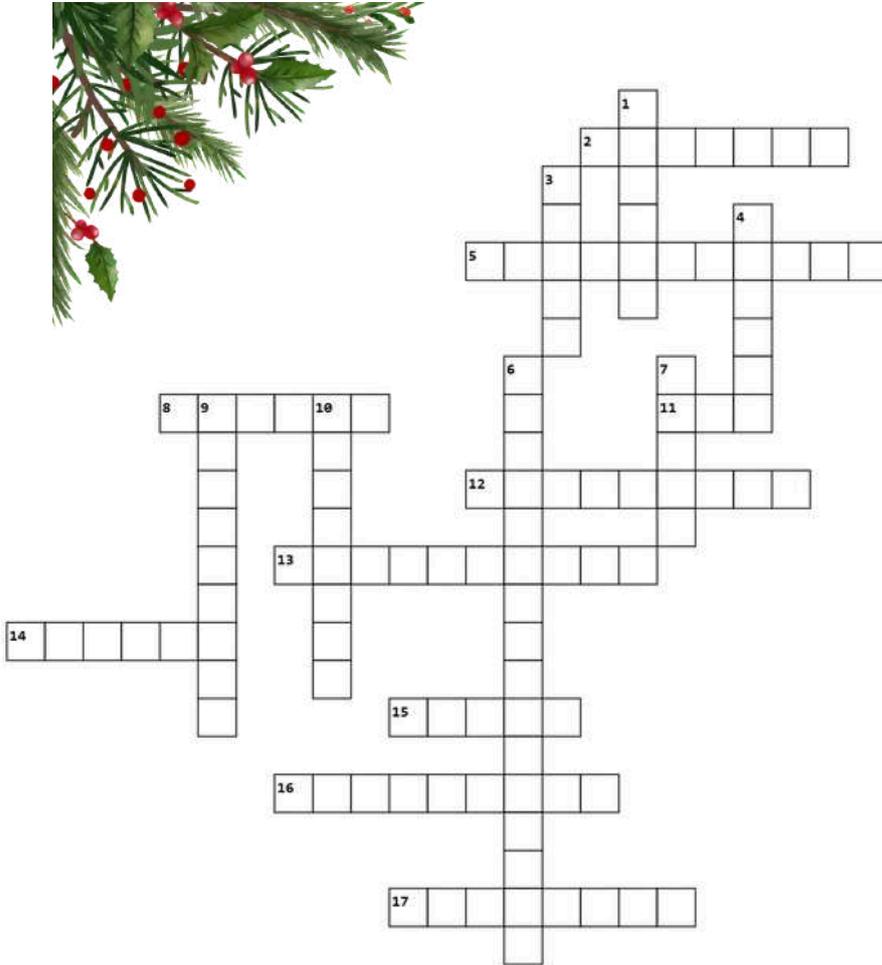
1. Lynx gift set
2. T-shirt/crewneck
3. Socks or boxers
4. Hat & Gloves
5. Aftershave
6. Headphones Headset

1. Sol de Janeiro Gift set
2. Bubble skincare
3. White fox hoodie
4. Jenny glow perfume set
5. BePerfect X Annalivia set
6. Pyjamas

# HO-HO-HOLIDAY BRAIN TEASERS!

BY: AMBER O'TOOLE



**Across:**

- 2. Santa's red-nosed reindeer
- 5. A traditional Christmas biscuit
- 8. A reindeer has this
- 11. If it's really cold the ground may become \_\_\_
- 12. You should kiss whoever you walk under this with
- 13. A popular Christmas flavour associated with candy canes
- 14. Santa's famous saying
- 15. Jingle \_\_\_
- 16. A person may come to your door and do this on Christmas Eve
- 17. Christmas falls in this month

**Down**

- 1. The main dish to Christmas dinner
- 3. Delivers presents on Christmas Eve
- 4. A famous snowman
- 6. Got left home alone
- 7. Santa's reindeer whose name begins with V
- 9. Where Santa's workshop is
- 10. Scrooge's first name

## The RCS Cold Christmas Wordsearch

O	H	A	S	S	C	E	B	E	N	E	Z	E	R
R	P	F	E	A	O	E	L	M	E	R	R	Y	B
E	L	E	G	N	A	F	T	I	N	S	E	L	D
C	O	L	N	T	L	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	L
N	D	O	L	A	R	F	H	V	I	X	E	N	G
A	U	B	L	I	T	Z	E	N	E	O	D	P	N
D	R	E	B	M	E	C	E	D	R	K	I	N	G
A	A	E	G	I	N	G	E	R	B	R	E	A	D
F	N	Y	J	O	Y	F	U	L	I	G	H	T	S
L	G	D	E	T	E	E	D	I	T	E	L	U	Y
R	E	D	N	E	L	A	C	T	N	E	V	D	A
E	L	E	R	A	S	N	O	E	L	Y	L	L	T
T	I	L	T	W	O	N	D	E	R	I	I	E	L
E	C	I	C	Y	L	S	T	N	E	S	E	R	P

- ADVENTCALENDER
- LIGHTS
- BLITZEN
- COAL
- FRIENDS
- SANTA
- ICY
- VIXEN
- TINSEL
- NOEL
- ANGELIC
- WONDER
- GINGERBREAD
- PRESENTS
- YULETIDE
- DANCER
- EBENEZER
- DECEMBER
- KING
- ELF
- RUDOLPH
- MERRY
- JOYFUL

**Christmas Riddle**

*I travel the world in a single night,  
 Delivering gifts with joy and delight.  
 I'm pulled by reindeer, guided by the sky,  
 But my name's not known by most  
 who pass by.  
 I wear a suit that's red, and boots so  
 white,  
 But who I am, you'll need to guess  
 right.  
 I'm not Santa, though I'm part of his  
 crew,  
 Solve this riddle, and you'll know  
 who!*

Who am I?

This Newspaper was brought to you by:

- Louise Byrne (contributor and editor)
- Kara Hendrick Waters
- Shane Meehan
- Bobby Murphy
- Jonah Flynn
- Aoibhinn Doyle
- Amber O'Toole
- Matthew Haskins
- Luke Power
- Padraic Barry
- Valeriia Stepanenko
- Alannah Byrne
- Mollie Murray
- Kelly Byrne
- Yelyzaveta Moldovan
- Holly Cassidy



While every effort has been made to ensure that everything here is factual and that we've been as inclusive as possible, the Student Newspaper is part of the RCS Learning Experience and we may not always get things right. Please note that any omissions of any big event, issue or person is not intentional. However, if you feel something is missing or there's a lack of balance, we'd love an article from you for the next issue!

Opinions expressed by students in articles are those of the individual students and not necessarily those of the school.

**Christmas GIVEAWAY COMPETITION**  
**THURSDAY 19<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**

THIS NATIONWIDE COMPETITION IS OPEN TO ALL PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE A TICKET IN A LOTTO RUN BY OUR SERVICE PROVIDER 'OUR FUNDRAISER'

**HOW TO ENTER**

**1** EVERY LINE IN OUR LOTTO DRAW ON 19TH DECEMBER 2024 HAS A **FREE** CHANCE TO WIN\* 1 OF 5 MAGICAL PRIZES. TO ENTER PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:  
<https://www.ourfundraiser.ie/org/ramsgrangecs>

**2** STAY BY THE PHONE AFTER 7PM AND ANSWER THE QUESTION BELOW CORRECTLY.....

What is the name of Santa's red-nosed reindeer?

a) Dancer  
 b) Comet  
 c) Rudolph

**Good Luck!**

\* TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY  
<https://www.ourfundraiser.ie/terms-and-conditions>

BUY 3 LINES TO TRIPLE YOUR CHANCES OF WINNING!

YOUR SUPPORT MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

€2,500 CASH PRIZE

2 X OASIS PLATINUM TICKETS

META QUEST 3 VR BUNDLE

THE ULTIMATE CHRISTMAS HAMPER

€500 DUNNES STORES GIFT CARD