

News update - Friday, 12 September 2014

The school extends its congratulations to the 117 students who received very impressive **Junior Certificate results** this week. We express the hope that the students will use these results as a springboard to even greater success in the 2017 Leaving Certificate. In the meantime, enjoy all the opportunities presented by Transition Year.

A **study skills seminar** was attended by all 5th year students on Wednesday last. Many useful tips were passed on to students and the feedback to guidance counsellors after the seminar was very positive.

The school is delighted to report that a **Notification of Grant of Planning Permission** has been received from Wexford County Council in respect of our new school building at Pembroke Hill/Ballynagee. Building is now expected to commence in summer 2015. The new school will be built to cater for 900 students.

It was great to see so many students involved in lunchtime and after school training in **hockey, basketball, camogie and football** this week. Sincere thanks are extended to teachers who give so generously of their time in this regard.

All **prefects and vice-prefects** for the year have now been appointed. Please see the student section of our website for full details.

As part of their **CSPE projects**, students in 3.4 and 2.1 travelled to Dublin Zoo today accompanied by their teachers.

News update - Friday, 19 September 2014

6th year students travelled to the R.D.S. last Wednesday to attend the **Higher Options Careers Conference** and found the outing to be most beneficial. Many expressed their surprise at the wide range of 3rd level courses on offer.

The school looks forward to welcoming 10 students and their teachers from our twin school in Villingen, **Germany** for a week-long stay beginning today, Friday. In the course of their stay they will be accommodated by Loreto host families – many thanks! – and will visit many local venues, the ploughing match as well as undertaking a historical tour of Dublin. Sincere thanks to the teachers in the German department for all their work in planning this event. The return visit will take place on dates to be confirmed next spring.

The **School Planning Group**, representative of students, staff and parents, is up and running again for the year and will focus in on a number of policy areas for review and development, as set out below:

a) School self-evaluation and improvement plan - implementation
b) WSE-MLL Report - implementation
c) Literacy and numeracy - implementation
d) In-school management
e) Admission Policy
f) Healthy Eating and Exercise
g) Curriculum – Junior Certificate reform
h) Mobile phones
i) TL 21

The first area to be examined will be a new healthy eating and exercise policy. Any thoughts on this matter can be forwarded to Mr. O' Shea (Principal).

All 4th year students will travel to the **ploughing match** next Wednesday.

News update - Friday, 26 September 2014

Transition Year students will have their **Induction Day** in the rugby club on Tuesday, 30 September 2014.

Applications for places in our **1st year classes (September 2015)** will be accepted between 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday, 1 October 2014 and 12.00 p.m. on Friday, 24 October 2014. Application forms and details of the admission policy are both to be found on the school website – www.loretowexford.com

Thursday next, 2 October will be **“Goal Jersey Day”** in school. All students are asked to participate in this most worthy 3rd world charity appeal and to donate €2 each to Goal.

The school will be closed to students on Friday, 3 October 2014 to facilitate a **staff inservice** day.

10 October 2014

Over 70 speakers spoke to our 240 5th and 6th year students at a packed **Careers Night** in the school on Thursday, 9 October. Organised by the Guidance Department with outstanding assistance from members of the Parents' Council, this big undertaking proved to be very successful and beneficial. This event will now be held every second year as part of the school's comprehensive package of career guidance.

The annual **School Mass** took place in Rowe Street Church on Wednesday, 8 October in front of a huge turnout of students and staff. Celebrated by our chaplain, Fr. Jim Fegan, the liturgy was adorned by beautiful singing and music courtesy of the school's choir and orchestra. In a moving and challenging homily, Sr. Carmel (Deputy Principal) spoke of her time in Loreto Secondary School, Rumbek, Southern Sudan during the summer. She outlined the living conditions of Loreto students in that school and posed several interesting questions to Loreto, Wexford students in that context.

Applications for places in our **1st year classes (September 2015)** will be accepted up until 12.00 p.m. on Friday, 24 October 2014. Application forms and details of the admission policy are both to be found on the school website – www.loretowexford.com

17 October 2014

Our 121 6th year students are attending a **Stress Management Day** in the school today. The day consists of a series of 5 workshops – yoga, art therapy, mindfulness, Brazilian Zamba drumming, dance fitness – and whole-group inputs from a psychologist and the school Principal. It is hoped that participating students will gain experience from the day of ways of dealing with stress, not only as they face the Leaving Certificate but also as they cope with the daily demands of life. The school is most appreciative of all teachers and other personnel who assist with this important day on the school calendar.

All 1st year students attended a **retreat** in Ballyvaloo within the last week. Feedback from participants was most positive, with the walk on the beach being a particular highlight. The school thanks the Religion Department for organising these retreats.

A well-attended **Loreto Parents' AGM** last Monday night was addressed by Joan Freeman, founder of Pieta House. She spoke with profound compassion about the scourge of self-harm and suicide in the country but held out a very strong message of hope in the form of the considerable help that is now available through the Pieta House movement.

Applications for places in our **1st year classes (September 2015)** will be accepted up until 12.00 p.m. on Friday, 24 October 2014. Application forms and details of the admission policy are both to be found on the school website – www.loretoxford.com

24 October 2014

The **School Policies and Self-Evaluation** section of our website is kept under constant review. All members of the school community are asked to look at this section from time to time and to feel free to make submissions to Mr. O' Shea (Principal) on any matters contained therein.

Recent meetings for parents on the **CAO system** and **study skills** techniques were well-attended. Particular thanks are extended to the school's Guidance Department for organising these events.

The school will be closed for the **mid-term break** from 27 October to 31 October inclusive. It is hoped that everyone will enjoy the much needed break.

7 November 2014

The **Students' Council** is made up of 15 students and meets regularly to discuss matters of concern to students and to plan for a range of activities. The liaising teacher is Ms. A. Gunning and the Principal, Mr. O' Shea, meets council members every 5 weeks to review progress.

The following are the general issues raised in recent meetings:

- Queuing in lunchroom – how best to alleviate
- Healthy eating issues
- Clocks in rooms
- Toilet issues – locks etc.
- Random Acts of Kindness Week
- Planned activities – Loreto's Got Talent
- Lunch with Parents' Council: Monday, 8 December
- Photo for website
- Fire drill at lunchtime –clarity sought on procedure
- Return of summer exam papers to students
- Loreto rugby team

An **Incidental Inspection** was conducted by the Department of Education and Skills in the school on 4 November 2014. This "no advance notice" inspection consisted of the inspector following a group of 3rd year students into five different classes in the course of the morning. Feedback was given separately by the inspector to the teachers involved and then generally to the Principal at the end of the day.

It is pleasing to report that the inspector noted the following key strengths:

1. Great diversity experienced by students from theoretical to practical
2. Quality of teaching and learning was very good
3. Positive and affirming relationships very evident between teachers and students, so much "please" and "thank you" – key to good learning
4. Safe and secure atmosphere created in all classes
5. High levels of student engagement
6. Tasks set were appropriately challenging
7. Teachers were generally well-prepared for class
8. Lessons observed were well-structured and paced

He also discussed positive suggestions for developing lesson design, involving students more actively in their learning and the nature of feedback to be given to students upon the completion of tasks and assignments.

The **Green School Committee**, having already secured two green flags for the school, continues to be very busy and is planning the following for the current school year:

1. Continue to meet fortnightly.
2. Continue to monitor and evaluate recycling and conservation of electricity.
3. Draw up an action plan in relation to the conservation of water.
4. Formally apply in March 2015 for the awarding of a 3rd green flag.
5. By May 2015 achieve the standards necessary to be awarded the green flag.
6. Post May 2015, maintain the necessary standards to retain all 3 flags.

The school is most appreciative of the sterling work done by the committee. A nice day out might be the reward at the end of the year!

14 November 2014

The Principal, Mr. O' Shea, has issued a **letter to families** relating to two important educational matters – Assessment for Learning and Extra-Curricular Activities. It may be seen in the letters to families section of the school website.

Class tests will take place for all year groups next week. A school report will subsequently be prepared for every student and issued on E-portal. Additionally, a paper copy of the report will be presented to every student at academic assemblies to be held by Mr. O' Shea and Sr. Carmel on Thursday, 11 December 2014.

The Board of Management has adopted the school's revised **Healthy Eating /Exercise Policy**. The full policy may be seen in the policies section of the website but hereunder are the main points:

1. With effect from 3 November 2014, the vending machines would be stocked only with the following range of products:

- Dried fruit - small bag portion
- Unsalted nuts – small bag portion
- Dried fruit and nut mix – small bag portion
- Grain crackers and white crackers e.g. 2 or 3 crackers in packet with low fat cheese portions
- Small packet of plain biscuits e.g. 2 rich tea/digestive biscuits
- Fruit bar e.g. Kellogg's Nutrigrain bar– different flavours, Kellogg's Special K bar, Kellogg's fruit n'fibre bar, Nestle Fitnessse original or strawberry, Alpen Light apple and sultana (all fruit bars tend to be high in sugar and fat but these are reduced fat/ sugar options).
- Small dark chocolate bar
- Small portion bars of milk chocolate
- Fruit juices (pure unsweetened juice rather than juice drinks)
- Low sugar Ribena drink
- Low fat milk
- Sparkling water

2. The School Planning Group will be the responsible body in the school for monitoring and reviewing the range of products in the vending machines.

3. Our caterer, Glenda McKiernan, will maintain a healthy range of products in the lunchroom. She will also sell her products through the vending machines in an attempt to reduce the queues in the lunchroom at peak times.

In relation to the promotion of exercise among students, the following will apply:

1. The school will continue to provide a wide range of sporting activities, both competitive and non-competitive. Training for teams will take place at lunchtime and after school. Additionally, circuit and fitness training sessions will continue to be offered to all students both at lunchtime and after school. The Loreto tradition of "walking/running the block" at lunchtime will continue to be co-ordinated by the P.E. department.

2. The move to our new school building in December 2016 will see a major improvement in the range and quality of sporting and exercise facilities e.g. a full size sports hall, fitness suite, astroturf hockey

pitch, full size GAA pitch, hard court play areas. This will ensure that all classes throughout the school will have a double period of P.E. each week and increased access to more and better facilities. It is the intention of the P.E. department in the school to apply for the Sports Mark Flag at that stage.

21 November 2014



Last week a group of Transition Year volunteers trained to become **Paired Reading** tutors here in Loreto. The volunteers learned how they can help younger students foster a love of reading by simply reading together for enjoyment. 17 of the volunteers have been selected to read with 1st year students at lunchtimes from 1.45 -2.05pm. Many of the other volunteers will put their training to good use outside of school. Hopefully the tutors will pass on their love of reading to the younger girls. Best of luck to all involved!

The school is very happy to report the success of the following past-students who have recently received **University Scholarship Awards**:

University	Student
NUI Maynooth	Rachel Bermingham
UCD	Aisling Busher
	Laura Haddigan
	Amy Hassett
	Emily Lewanowski-Breen
	Holly Loughman
	Ruth Sinnott
	Ciara Skelton
	Zoe Zimmermann
TCD	Megan Cullen
	Aoibheann Maxwell
UCC	Louise Foley
	Laura Bernard

These awards are based on the excellence of Leaving Certificate results and, as such, are achievements of which the students, their families and school are very proud.

28 November 2014

Prefects and vice-prefects are currently evaluating their role in the school by asking, and hopefully answering, the following questions:

- What are the main responsibilities of prefects/vice-prefects?
- What words would you use to describe the role of prefects/vice-prefects in the school at present?
- Can you think of additional responsibilities that you think should be taken on by prefects/vice-prefects?
- Have you any other thoughts about student leadership in the school?

Their responses will be considered by the School Planning Group as part of a meaningful review of student leadership in Loreto.

The new co-ordinator of the **Literacy and Numeracy** teams in the school is Mr. Joe Cummins. Meetings of the teams are ongoing and a revised school plan for these initiatives will be published shortly.

3 December 2014

Christmas Reports for all year groups will be available on e-portal with effect from Tuesday, 9 December 2014.

In addition, Mr. O' Shea and Sr. Carmel will hold an assembly with each year group on Thursday, 11 December 2014 to review overall results and to provide a paper copy of reports to all students.

The annual coming together of the **Students' and Parents' Councils** for Christmas lunch will take place on Monday, 8 December 2014.

Both groups serve the school well and it is a good idea for them to get to know each other by means of this informal event.

The **School Planning Group** continues to meet weekly to review and develop policies and to ensure that the process of school self-evaluation is both ongoing and meaningful.

In recent times the group has developed a new healthy eating policy and has proposed changes to the mobile phone policy. The group is now reviewing progress made to date on the recommendations and suggestions in the WSE-MLL Report (September 2013) and has, as its next task, a meaningful re-assessment of the role of prefects/vice-prefects in the school.

The group welcomes new members from the ranks of staff, students and parents – please contact Mr. O' Shea if interested.

12 December 2014

Christmas Week is almost here, one of the highlights of life in Loreto, Wexford.

The first big event is the Trade Fair that takes place on Tuesday morning. This allows 4th year mini-companies the chance to display their goods or services to all year groups in the hope of capturing their fair share of the lucrative Christmas market. Persuasive students usually manage to achieve their aim!

This is followed on Wednesday by three stagings of the 6th year show. The bar continues to be raised on this event every year when 6th year students, with no little help and mischief from staff, produce a fun-filled drama with music, song and hilarity, all in aid of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

One of the liturgical highlights of the year takes place on Thursday afternoon when the entire school community assembles in Rowe Street Church for the annual Carol Service. Led by our chaplain, Fr. Jim Fegan, this event combines biblical readings, inspirational thoughts, traditional carol singing and a festive sing along to produce what is always a deeply-moving and enjoyable celebration of the real meaning of Christmas.

Friday morning is reserved for Mr. Murphy's Christmas Table Quiz when students' general knowledge is tested by a series of challenging questions compiled by Mr. Murphy and his team of musical and not-so-musical elves!

Friday is also a No Uniform Day with the proceeds once again going towards our adopted charity at this time of the year, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

If we survive the above, we should all be ready for a well-deserved Christmas holiday beginning at about 12.00 on Friday.



It is my pleasure, as Principal, on behalf of the school's Board of Management, to wish all members of the Loreto, Wexford school community – students, staff and parents – a very happy and meaningful Christmas and to express the hope that 2015 will be kind to one and all.

2015 – the year in which the building of our new school will commence!



Billy O' Shea,
Principal.

9 January 2015

Transition Year students travelled to the **BT Young Scientists Exhibition** in Dublin on Thursday, 8 January 2015. All were impressed by the wide range of interesting projects on display.

6th year Art students travelled to Dublin this week and visited the Dublin City gallery, the Hugh Lane gallery, the Francis Bacon exhibition and the National Museum. They also visited the Ivan Slavin Sky exhibition (Russian artist) in Wexford.

The Student Support Team is organising a number of events over the next 2-3 weeks to highlight **friendship/inclusion issues** in accordance with the school's anti-bullying policy.

- Humourfit Theatre in Education Company will visit the school on Friday, 16 January 2015 and present dramas to 2nd and 3rd year students on bullying and to 5th year students on the issue of alcohol.
- Junior cycle SPHE students are preparing and then displaying posters with messages proclaiming what is positive about student life in the school.
- 6th year students will deliver talks to 1st and 2nd year students on issues relating to social media.
- 6th year students will be addressed on LGBT issues.

The **Students' Council** continues to be active in the school this year and the following are among their current plans/issues:

- A Loreto's Got Talent Contest in the Dun Mhuire Theatre on Thursday, 26 March 2015
- A review of the role of prefects/vice-prefects
- Discussions with the teachers-in-charge of uniforms
- Regular liaison with the school caretaker re: maintenance issues

16 January 2015

The school is very proud and appreciative of its 14 **Meitheal leaders** who received their Certificates of Achievement in Enniscorthy on Wednesday, 14 January 2015. The leaders are:

Laura Bruen
Emer Buckley
Grainne Burke
Jane Corish
Orlaith Gannon
Anna Gouldson
Emma Haddigan
Katie Lacey
Eva Law
Emily Long
Ciara McCormack
Sarah McKenna
Lisa O' Brien
Aoife O' Keeffe

Meitheal leaders are 5th year students who, after initial training, keep a close eye on 1st year students as they settle into the unfamiliar surroundings and expectations of secondary school, primarily during the months of August, September and October each year. Any concerns of a serious nature are relayed to members of the school staff but a lot of more routine issues are very competently handled by the leaders themselves e.g. where is a particular classroom, who do I see about my locker, where do I eat my lunch, who do I see if I'm not feeling well?

The school is most appreciative of the part played by the teacher-in-charge, Sr. Christine.

The school's **Log-On Learning Programme** will re-commence on Tuesday, 20 January 2015 for 6 weeks, 4.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m. each Tuesday.

Its aim is to help members of the community, parents, grandparents and relatives of our students to use technology e.g. ipads, smartphones, internet, laptops etc.

Each participant is paired with a Transition Year student so that s/he can learn at her/his individual pace.

Places are limited. Please phone Betty (Receptionist) at 053-9142783 to book a place.

The Board of Management has ratified an **amended policy on the use of mobile phones by students**, as follows:

1. The school wishes to strike a fair balance between the convenience/safety advantages of mobile phones and the need to maintain an orderly classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Accordingly, mobile phones may only be used at the following times and in an appropriate manner:

- a. Before 8.50 a.m.
 - b. During morning break and lunchtime
 - c. After school
2. At all other times - and in the course of Supervised Study - mobile phones must be switched off. In the event of an emergency e.g. illness, a student may use her mobile phone with the permission of a member of staff.
 3. Under no circumstances are mobile phones to be brought into examination centres.
 4. Students are not permitted to recharge their phones in school.
 5. Failure to comply with these rules regarding mobile phones will lead to confiscation of the mobile phone by any member of the teaching staff. When a phone is confiscated, the teacher must ensure that a parent/guardian is informed by the student of the confiscation at once. The teacher will then give the phone to the Principal.
 6. The student whose phone has been confiscated must meet the Principal to request the return of the phone.
 7. The Principal will, in general, return the phone to the student at this meeting but may also impose a disciplinary sanction in proportion to the seriousness of the regulation breach and the frequency thereof. Such sanctions may include a verbal warning, a written punishment exercise, detention or the initiation by the Deputy Principal of a formal investigation that may result in eventual suspension from school.
 8. In any instance where the Principal decides not to return the phone to a student, s/he will contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss the matter further.
 9. A student will have her examination papers cancelled should she bring a mobile phone into an examination centre.
 10. The inappropriate use of the camera/video/voice recording functions on a student's mobile phone e.g. unauthorised recording, infringement of privacy, bullying or threatening behaviour, will result in the confiscation of the phone as outlined above as well as the possible imposition of more serious sanctions.

1st year students received their certificates for completing the **Paired Reading Programme** before Christmas. TY tutors will receive their certificates at the end of the year. All the girls involved were very generous with their time, giving up twenty minutes of their lunch time in order to develop a love of reading. Here are some of the 1st years' thoughts on the 'reading club':

- 'I now read more often and I am only a bit nervous about reading in front of the class'
- 'I am more confident reading in public'
- 'I really enjoyed taking part, it was super helpful'
- 'I loved taking part because my tutor was so nice'

TY students enjoyed working with and helping the 1st years immensely. They say it was good to mix with a different year group and form new friendships and they felt good helping others.

At the end of the programme, we all had a Christmas party in the lunch room where we had sweet treats and played charades. Well done to all involved!

Eight students have received their **Silver Gaisce Award**. To achieve this, the students have completed challenges including voluntary work, physical activity, a personal skill and a 60 km hike. The students are:

- Sarah Aspel
- Geraldine Curtis
- Maire Dempsey
- Keerthi Ramesh
- Grainne Roche
- Kate Roche
- Jane Shovli
- Georgia Warren

The school extends its sincere gratitude to the organising teacher, Ms. McDonald.

23 January 2015

This is the time of year when work starts on the **school timetable** for the next school year. To this end, information talks have recently been held for 1st and 4th year parents and students. Students are asked to submit their choice forms to Mr. O' Shea on Friday next, 30 January 2015.

The school is particularly appreciative of the very large turnout of parents at these meetings.

Arrangements are being finalised for the forthcoming **German exchange** with our partner school in Villingen, south west Germany. 51 students and 4 teachers will be on this educational trip from 5 to 12 February 2015.

The following is the outline schedule for the week:

The school is most appreciative of the work done by teachers in both schools to facilitate this exchange that is now entering its sixth year.

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30 January 2015

The school's Student Support Team (SST) recently organised a number of initiatives to coincide with **Friendship/Inclusion Week**, as follows:

- Humourfit Theatre Company visited the school on Friday, 16 January 2015 and presented a drama on bullying to 2nd and 3rd year groups and on alcohol to 5th year students. Reaction from students was very positive and they were certainly given much to think about.
- SPHE students mounted a display in the foyer of positive messages, penned by students, relating to the life and atmosphere in the school
- A group of 11 6th year students made a powerful presentation to 1st and 2nd year students on the dangers of social media. Both sessions were very interactive and thought provoking. It is now planned to make this presentation to 3rd year students after mid-term.

The school extends its best wishes to its 3rd and 6th year students who will be sitting their **mock examinations** in the two week period beginning on Monday, 2 February 2015.

6 February 2015

Loreto, Wexford participates in a wide range of **sporting activities** each year as part of its extra-curricular programme. This participation would not be possible without the generosity and dedication of teachers who work tirelessly and in a voluntary capacity to promote sport in the school. These teachers, however, are very keen to give immense credit to the students involved in sport who participate with equal dedication, skill and good humour.

We take this opportunity to present a brief summary of the achievements of the many sporting activities undertaken so far in this current year.

Hockey – Ms. Kinsella reports:

Hockey is in full flow at Loreto!

Both senior teams went on an overnight trip to Dublin on 16 and 17 January. They played Loreto, Dalkey on the Friday in what could only be described as freezing conditions. The Senior As drew 1-1 and the Inter As lost 2-0 to Dalkey. We had the pleasure of staying in Bewleys, Leopardstown on Friday night with the 4th, 5th and 6th year players. Unfortunately, due to frozen pitches on the Saturday morning, our matches against Loreto, Beaufort had to be cancelled. Instead they enjoyed a leisurely walk along the pier in Dun Laoghaire before watching UCD ladies 1sts take on Trinity 1sts in UCD.

The Senior A team were knocked out of the Senior Cup recently by Loreto, Kilkenny with a score line of 1-0 scored by a short corner. They still have the Loreto league semi-final to play in March.

The Inter A team are unbeaten this season and face Loreto, Kilkenny in the league final at the end of February and will hope to do the double in the Inter A Cup.

The 3rd year Junior team are also unbeaten this season but hope to bring up their goal difference in the next few matches to reach the league final.

The 2nd year minor A team are also having a good season and have won all their matches except one but hope to do one better than last year and win the league and cup double. They face Presentation, Wexford in the 1st round of the minor cup. The Minor B team have not had as much luck in their league but hope to overcome Kilkenny College in the 1st round of the Minor Cup.

We have three 1st year hockey teams this year. They have been training hard all winter and will begin their matches next week against Kilkenny College. We wish them all the best.

Football – Mr. Brennan reports:

Ladies gaelic football continues to grow in Loreto, Wexford following on from recent successes within Leinster and at All-Ireland level.

This school year will see over 150 girls (1 in 5 students) represent the school in competitive football at different levels.

Our seniors reached the Post-Primary Schools Leinster Senior A Final for the 3rd year in succession. The girls got past St Leo's Carlow, Edenderry, Offaly and last year's All Ireland champions, Colaiste Iosagain, Stillorgan to set up a final against Scoil Christ Ri, Portlaoise. This turned out to be a step too far for the girls but takes nothing away from the panel of 32 who have been training since the end of August. A lot of hard work, commitment and dedication has been put in by the girls and they

deserve great credit for their efforts during the year.

For the first time ever, the school was able to field both an A and B team at under 16 level. The B team was narrowly beaten in both its group games and so unfortunately didn't progress any further. The A team, having topped their group comprehensively beating Colaiste Bride, Enniscorthy and St. Mary's, New Ross along the way, were narrowly beaten by eventual Leinster champions, Loreto, Navan.

The under 14 campaign is just beginning at the moment. Again the school will enter two teams at this age group for the second year running. Following on from last year's A final defeat, we will be hoping to go one step further this year. With 40+ 1st years and 20+ 2nd years involved already, there is a bright future for ladies football within the walls of Loreto, Wexford.

Camogie – Mr. Cummins reports:

The school's camogie teams have represented the school very well so far this year. For the first time in a number of years, all of our school teams are competing in the 'A' Division of the Leinster competition. This is testament to the great success the school has had in recent years in winning Senior and Under 14 Leinster 'B' titles.

Our Senior team competed in a very competitive group playing four games in total. Unfortunately, victory eluded this very talented group of players. Their best result was a draw versus eventual finalists Birr CS. Defeat was the order of the day against Loreto, Kilkenny and St. Mary's, New Ross, while a narrow loss to eventual winners Presentation, Kilkenny showed that our school teams are not far from the standard needed to succeed at this level.

Our Junior team also found it difficult to make an impact in the top division. An early victory over old rivals Colaiste Bride, Enniscorthy was the highlight of the season. It was followed by narrow defeats to Birr CS and St. Mary's, New Ross, before bowing out of the competition away to Loreto, Kilkenny.

While silverware was not claimed by either of these teams, coaches Mr. Cummins and Mr. Crowdle were delighted with the positive attitude of players and the level of commitment shown.

Attention now turns to the 1st and 2nd year competition that takes place in the latter part of the year. The 1st years have already participated in a County Wexford Schools Blitz in October, and based on their excellent performance in it, will no doubt perform very well in Leinster.

Cross Country – Ms. Kinsella reports:

This year the students had 2 Cross Country events to compete in. The first was in the J.F.K. Arboretum, New Ross in November on a cold, wet day. Julia Dempsey came 6th in her race and Clare Cullen was 4th in the senior race. All secondary schools in Wexford participated and the standard was very high..

The South Leinster championships were held in Roscrea College again this year on 29 January. It was an extremely wintry day with showers of snow to contend with as well as a wind chill factor of - 6. Julia Dempsey ran the Inter girls 3000m in which she finished 26th and Clare Cullen ran the Senior 2000m in which she finished 36th. Well done to both.

13 February 2015

5th year Art students completed a **personal-expression project** on January 30th. Students had the choice of using any media and they report that it was a very rewarding and personal experience for the entire class. It helped to release various emotions and it allowed students to express themselves and their feelings in the form of art.

Mock examinations finish today for all 3rd and 6th year students. Papers have been sent away for correction. It is expected that the first results will be available soon after mid-term. A detailed report will be posted home when all results and comments have been entered on the E-portal system by teachers.

Between now and then, we hope that all students and staff enjoy a well-earned rest over **the mid-term break** that begins today. Classes resume on Monday, 23 February 2015.

27 February 2015

Congratulations are extended to Maria Cullen (4.1) who recently won the regional final of the **Soroptimists' Public Speaking Competition**. She will now compete in the All-Ireland final on 7 March.

The ongoing development of **literacy and numeracy** initiatives continues apace in the school. Teachers have attended inservice training this week and surveys of students have been completed in recent days. Both literacy and numeracy teams will be meeting within the next week with a view to updating the school's policy in these areas. The co-ordinating teacher is Mr. Cummins.

Several years ago, the Board appointed Derek Madden as its **Health and Safety Manager**. Derek visits the school every 5/6 weeks to monitor the health and safety policy, to oversee any changes or improvements and to meet with members of the school community to discuss health and safety matters. His next visit will be on Monday, 2 March 2015.

The Board of Management has ratified a new policy in relation to **school prefects**. This follows a period of consultation by the School Planning Group with students, staff and parents. The new policy is set out hereunder:

Prefects

In early September each year, every class group is facilitated by its class teacher as it elects, by secret ballot, two prefects for the year. Prior to the election, class teachers will outline the specific role and responsibilities of prefects.

In the presence of the class teacher and prior to the election, students seeking election will be expected to make a brief presentation to colleagues outlining the reasons why they wish to be elected and a summary of what they would hope to bring to the role.

Those elected are presented with their badge of office by the Principal at a special meeting of all newly-appointed prefects. At this meeting, two prefects from each year group will be elected to the Prefects' Council for the new school year.

The Prefects' Council will comprise 12 elected prefects. It will be assisted by a liaison teacher appointed by the Principal. The Prefects' Council will meet at least 5 times per school year and will have the following overall responsibilities:

- To ensure the smooth operation of the prefect system
- To continually seek to develop and support the role of the prefect system in consultation with staff and students
- To organise certain activities to increase the bonding of students both within and between year groups
- To organise the Cara system whereby 4th year prefects provide a peer support role to 2nd year students in a manner broadly similar to the Meitheal system for 1st year students

The specific duties of all prefects are as follows:

- To liaise with the class teacher on matters of concern and interest to students in a particular class e.g. homework issues, scheduling of tests
- To keep a watchful eye for possible instances of bullying, exclusion and other unacceptable behaviour and to notify a staff member of same at an early stage
- To emphasise to fellow students the need to keep all areas of the school in a clean and tidy condition
- To bring matters of general maintenance, health and safety to the immediate attention of the Principal or caretaker e.g. graffiti, damaged furniture or fittings, leaking taps or toilets, slippery floors
- To assist school staff in certain administrative tasks e.g. distributing notices, collecting forms
- To inform the Principal or Deputy Principal if a class is unsupervised
- To assist parents at parent-teacher meetings e.g. directing to rooms in which teachers are based, helping with queuing
- To assist with the orderly queuing of students in the lunchroom at lunchtime
- To meet and greet guests at all school events
- To act in a manner befitting the school's tradition and good name when discharging all responsibilities.

Should a prefect not carry out the specific duties in a responsible manner, the class teacher may discuss the matter with her. If a problem persists, the class teacher may, following consultation with the Principal, terminate the prefect's appointment and arrange for the election of a new prefect.

Should a student be suspended from school she will not be eligible for election/appointment as a prefect, Cara or Meitheal Leader in the following year. She must then serve a full year without suspension or detention before becoming eligible for election/appointment to such positions again.

6 March 2015

91 students, accompanied by 9 teachers, will travel on the **school tour to Barcelona** early on Saturday morning, 14 March.

They will visit various attractions such as Pablo Picasso's Museum, La Sagrada Familia Exterior, the Gothic Quarter and Cathedral, Passeig de Gracia. The group will also visit the Barcelona Aquarium which is the biggest in Europe, FC Barcelona and get to skate on the Ice Rink on the grounds of the Nou Camp Stadium. There will be a day of roller coasters at an amusement park as well as a trip to the splendour of Las Ramblas, one of Barcelona's most energetic streets.

No doubt exhausted and hopefully enriched by treasured memories, all 100 will return to Wexford to join in the St. Patrick's Day celebrations at about 4.00 p.m.

The School Planning Group – made up of staff, students and parents – is the body responsible for drafting policy statements for consideration by staff, Parents' and Students' Councils prior to discussion and ratification by the Board of Management.

This model of planning has led to the development of a very comprehensive school plan and an effective process of school self-evaluation, both of which were highly commended in the 2013 MLL Report.

The School Planning Group meets most Fridays at 1.35 p.m. and has been very welcoming of a “floating membership” structure whereby staff, students and parents with a particular interest in the area under discussion may join the group on an ad-hoc basis, without having to give a longer term commitment.

Between now and the end of the current academic year, the group will be reviewing the following matters, in the order stated:

- 1st year timetable/curriculum – following subject inspection and MLL recommendations
- School Assessment Policy: Christmas tests/marked scripts – following staff suggestion/discussion
- School Self-Evaluation – survey of selected areas

For the group to be as effective as possible, it is vital that all stakeholders are represented.

Please contact Mr. O' Shea (Principal) if any further information/clarification on these matters is required.

13 March 2015

The school was delighted to receive a visit this week from the **Nelson, Deputy Principal of Loreto Secondary School, Rumbek, Southern Sudan.**

Nelson spent a full morning in the school and spoke to many students and staff. His school has an enrolment of 180 girls at present, with this figure likely to rise to 350 over the next few years.

Loreto, Wexford holds an annual No Uniform day in aid of Nelson's school. Our Deputy Principal, Sr. Carmel, visited the school in Rumbek last summer and gave a comprehensive account of life there at the school mass last October.

31 2nd year students, accompanied by Ms. Lordan-Lohier and Ms. Herriott, travel on the **French exchange** to Rennes-Pacé in Brittany from 21 to 28 March inclusive.

Details of their visit are as follows:

Saturday : Arrival in Nantes airport 15H40, coach to College Francoise Dolto in Pacé. Arrival at 18H00 approx.

Sunday : 11H00 meet families with students at Mont Saint Michel for guided tour and picnic. 15H30 meet families with students in Saint Malo for guided tour.

Monday : 8H30 arrival in school, guided tour and breakfast for Irish students only. 9H30 – 11H30 Irish students in class (3 per class). Lunch in canteen at 11H30. Departure by coach at 13H30 for Breton Cultural Centre in Rennes (Irish/French students) Return to school 16H30 approx.

Tuesday : 8H30 – 11H30 in class, picnic lunch supplied by school, departure by coach at 12H30 for Dinan – guided tour of castle and town (Irish students only)

Wednesday : 8H30 meet in school, bus to Rennes for guided tour of city from 9H30 to 11H30, return to school. (Half day in France so students go home or are taken by parents to usual weekly activities such as dance, handball etc, Irish students can accompany them but are not expected to participate).

Thursday : 8H30 – 11H30 in class, departure by coach 13H00 to Rennes for a guided tour of the Parliament buildings (Irish students only), return to school 16H30 approx.

Friday : 8H30 meet in school and go on walking tour of Pacé (Irish students only), return to school at 11H30 for lunch, shopping in local shopping centre in afternoon. 19H00 meet in school canteen with families for farewell meal (crepes) with Breton entertainment.

Saturday : 11H00 meet in school car park with families, 11H30 departure by coach to Nantes airport, 16H05 flight to Dublin.

The programme for the week is very comprehensive. We hope that it is enjoyed by all. The school extends its gratitude to the organising teachers.

20 March 2015

Students and teachers, following safe procedures, were out of class in large numbers this morning to observe the **partial eclipse of the sun**. The school darkened considerably in the run up to 9.30 a.m. and then, amazingly, the clouds dispersed to allow a very good view of nature's phenomenon. I wonder where we will all be when the next such eclipse happens in 2016!

Mock interviews were held on Thursday, 19 March 2015 for Transition Year students. Organised by the Guidance Department and Parents' Council, the interviews were of considerable benefit to all students. The school is most appreciative of the 34 volunteer interviewers who gave so generously of their time.

As all marked scripts have now been returned, **school reports** in respect of mock examinations will be issued to 3rd and 6th year students over the next few days.

Next Tuesday is a big day for our incoming 1st year students and their parents when they will attend an **Introduction Meeting** with Mr. O' Shea and Sr. Carmel. The meeting contains an input on what life is like in the school for new students and will also feature a contribution by Head Girls, Kate Roche and Naoise Brennan.

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27 March 2015

Our **Green School Day of Action** was held on Friday, 30 January 2015. On this day a number of activities took place, as follows:

- Students placed facts about the conservation of water in balloons and then committee members went to every class in the school to pop a balloon and read a fact.
- Announcements were also made by the committee students at break, lunch and before the end of school with surprising facts and statistics. At the end of each announcement students repeated our slogan 'Save Water, Save Life'.
- A power point presentation on the conservation of water was placed on the school screens for the day. Posters were also placed around the school, especially over taps saying 'Don't drip drop, make it stop'.
- A poster competition was also held. Students who designed the best poster on water conservation won a €20 voucher for Penneys.
- The 4th year science students worked out how many giant Ballygowan bottles of water we use as a school per day to flush the toilet and wash our hands. They then placed the bottles outside reception with a display explaining this.
- 1st year Geography students created beautiful models on different ways that we can conserve water and these were displayed outside reception.
- In the staff area signs were also placed near the taps and dishwasher.
- Eva from the Green School Committee read the water meter and announced that the amount of water we were using since the week before had declined.

The school is most appreciative of the ongoing work of the very industrious and enterprising Green School Committee, led by liaison teacher, Ms. L. Jordan.

The judging of our application for a third Green Flag took place this week. Fingers crossed!

Two groups travelled to the **YSI Speak Out** in Kilkenny on 19 March 2015.

Ms Kinsella's group, "The Tree Musketeers Year 2" continued the work of last year's group providing 15 schools with 10 trees for a five year pledge they signed into with Wexford County Council. They concentrated on going into primary schools and educating 1st and 3rd class students about trees and their importance.

Mr Kavanagh's group were called "Mirror Mirror" and they concentrated on the theme of body image and changing peoples' attitudes towards it.

Both groups performed in front of 22 other groups and schools in a 2 minute performance. They were judged by 4 judges from a variety of backgrounds who will have to choose 60 groups from over 400 projects submitted. Best of luck to both groups who performed brilliantly on the day!

Congratulations are extended to **1.2 student, Maeve Hayes**, who came 3rd in the u-14 girls' high jump in the Leinster Indoor Championships with a personal best of 1.35 m. She also came 12th in the Glow Health National Championships on 22 March 2015, again equalling her personal best.

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16 April 2015

This is a busy time for **3rd and 6th year students** who are presently in the midst of oral and practical examinations in Home Economics, Music, Irish, French, German and Japanese. In addition, project work must be submitted in relation to Junior Certificate Science, CSPE and Religion and Leaving Certificate Religion, History and Geography within the next week. Also around the corner are Art and LCVP examinations. We wish all students and their teachers every success during these pressurised weeks.

All **Transition Year** students are presently half way through their second work experience period of the year. The school is most grateful to all employers who very generously support our students during their work placements. The experience gained is invaluable and often helps to influence students in their eventual career decisions.

The **TL21 Programme** is a workshop based Continuing Professional Development Programme for teachers and school leaders that promotes innovative practice and professional learning. The programme is research-led and its 2 main aims are:

1. To strengthen teachers' capacities as a co-operative and self critical authors of their own work
2. To enable students to take an active and responsible part in their own programme.

Five teachers from Loreto (Carmel Swords, Annette Byrne, Ursula Zimmermann, Lisa Shannon and Patricia Curran) have been participating in the ongoing TL21 action research project run by Maynooth University. Loreto's project is 'Improving students' engagement in learning through a weekly learning log'.

Teachers involved presented their research findings at the post-primary conference 'Ideas worth acting on' which took place on Wednesday, 25 March 2015 in the Enniscorthy Education Centre.

Equestrian report and photos

Congratulations are extended to **Bridget Cowman**, 2nd year student, who recently won two gold medals in the Hoop and Ball Special Olympics. These were not Bridget's first medals and we believe they will not be her last either! Well done to a superb athlete!

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24 April 2015

The **Loreto annual athletics event** took place in Kilkenny on 16 April 2015. Loreto, Wexford had great success and brought home plenty of medals, as follows:

- Maeve Hayes (1st) won the minor High Jump and was 2nd in the 200m,
- Liadh Dwyer (1st) was 3rd in the minor 100m,
- Nicole Scallan (1st) was 3rd in the minor Javelin,
- Sarah McRedmond (1st) was 3rd in the minor Discus.
- Anna Hennessy (2nd) was 2nd in the junior Long Jump and 3rd in the 200m,
- Eve Hession (2nd) was 3rd in the junior Long Jump,
- Zara Power (2nd) won the junior Shot Putt and was 2nd in the Javelin,
- Eimear Doherty (5th) was 2nd in the Senior High Jump
- Jane Shovlin (6th) was 1st in the senior Long Jump and 3rd in the 100m.
- Cliona Power (1st) was 3rd in the junior Discus
- Tara Connick (4th) was 2nd in the Senior Discus.

Congratulations to all the students who took part in the event.

The **1st year C hockey team** won their league against Loreto, Kilkenny on 24 March 2015. Well done to all involved.

Details of the **2015/2016 school calendar and booklists** are presently being finalised and will be posted on the school website on or before Friday, 22 May 2015.

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1 May 2015

May is a very busy month in the school's calendar in that we are finishing one academic year whilst at the same time planning for another. What follows is a **summary of main events**:

- **Staff meeting** – 3.33 to 5.33 p.m., Tuesday, 5 May
- **4th year Glendalough trip** – Thursday and Friday, 7 and 8 May
- Visit of **Blathnaidh Colhoun**, Loreto Education Development Officer, to the school on Monday, 11 May
- **School Prizegiving** – Tuesday, 12 May, lunch from 11.49 to 12.49
- **4th year trip to Fota** – Thursday, 14 May
- Visit of **Bishop Brennan** to meet all 6th year students – 10.12 class, Thursday, 14 May
- **Sports Afternoon** – 2.11, Friday, 15 May
- **6th year Retreat** – departing at lunchtime on Tuesday, 19 May (in class that morning), away all day Wednesday, 20 May
- **4th year Show** – Dún Mhuire Theatre, 8.00 p.m., Wednesday, 20 May
- **6th year Breakfast** – 9.30 a.m., Thursday, 21 May
- **6th year Graduation Ceremony and Reception** – 7.00 p.m., Thursday, 21 May in Rowe Street Church, followed by a Reception in the Talbot Hotel
- Publication of **2015/2016 booklists and calendar** on the school website
- **3rd year** classes finish for the year at 3.33 p.m. on Tuesday, 26 May
- **4th year Graduation Ceremony** – 6.00 p.m., Tuesday, 26 May in the Talbot Hotel
- **Incoming 1st year students** tour of the school – 4.00 to 4.45 p.m., Wednesday, 27 May

- **Board of Management meeting** – 4.30 p.m., Wednesday, 27 May

The **Senior A hockey team** took part in the Loreto All Ireland finals in Loreto Dalkey last Friday. They played a round robin tournament in which they played against Loreto, Foxrock, Loreto, Beaufort and old rivals Loreto, Kilkenny.

The team finished 3rd overall losing to Beaufort and Foxrock in two very tough matches, but securing a 2-0 victory over Kilkenny with SORCHA FOLEY and SARAH O'CONNOR scoring the goals. LAURA BRUEN received Player of the Tournament which was nominated by the coaches and umpires on the day.

Thank you to Joanne Brock from Loreto, Foxrock for organising the tournament and to Loreto, Dalkey for hosting. It was a great way for our 6th years - MOLLY O'DRISCOLL, GRAINNE ROCHE, KATE ROCHE, EMMA CORLEY, ANNA CORCORAN and AOIFE CORKERY - to finish their Loreto Hockey careers!

8 May 2015

The Students' Council has organised a nice programme of events for next week in the school – **Wellbeing and Positivity Week**. Among the planned activities will be:

- meditation each morning from 8.15 a.m. to 8.45 a.m.
- hula, skipping, walking and rounders at lunchtime
- yoga after school

Also thrown into the mix are a silent disco and a sports afternoon on Friday.

Carla Fusciardi-Wallace – Students' Council 3rd Year – writes:

Starting Monday, 11 May, Loreto Students' Council have organised a Wellbeing week with the theme 'Mind, Body, Soul'. This is an initiative to promote mental health and positivity throughout our school. Many activities will take place for all year groups during the week to encourage this e.g. Zumba, Yoga, Meditation and much more.

'Walk in my shoes' day will also take place on Wednesday, 13 May. This event in particular is to promote awareness and discussion of mental health. The fun walk attempts to dispel the stigma attached to mental health in general. Students and staff are invited to come into school wearing decorated or odd shoes for the day. There will be spot prizes on the day for the best dressed shoes in each year group and amongst staff. Everyone is asked to bring in €2 and all proceeds will go to St. Patrick's Hospital in Dublin. St. Patrick's is one of the main providers of mental health support to young people in this country aged 13 years and above.

The week is packed with special events for the whole school community, including Prize-giving on Tuesday and Sports Day on Friday. In support of the spirit of the week and to encourage as many as possible to take part in the events, the school management team has allowed students to wear their track-suit uniform from lunch-time on Thursday and all day Friday. We encourage all students to add something yellow to their attire (hair band, bracelet, badge) on Friday – to promote happiness and positivity!

We are very excited for students and staff in our school to get involved, and have fun, promoting mental health and general wellbeing of 'Mind, Body and Soul'.

Fantastic news was received this week when it was announced that the school had been awarded its third **Green Flag**, this time for work on water conservation. This is a remarkable achievement given the age of the buildings going back to 1792 and 1833 in places.

The school is greatly indebted to Ms. Linda Jordan and her incredibly dedicated committee of students.

The latest Green Flag will be presented by An Taisce at a ceremony in Kilkenny on 21 May 2015.

15 May 2015

Loreto, Wexford claimed 7 medals at the **South Leinster Athletics** last week in Kilkenny:

Zara Power (2nd year) was 2nd in the Shot Putt and Javelin,
Anna Hennessy (2nd year) was 3rd in the 200m,
Amy Forde (3rd year) was 3rd in the Discus,
Tara Connick (4th year) won the Discus,
Eimear Doherty (5th year) came 2nd in the High Jump,
Jane Shovlin (6th year) claimed 2nd in the Long Jump.

Congratulations to the girls who will now go on to compete in the Leinster Athletics.

6th year students were addressed by **Bishop Denis Brennan and Sr. Helen O' Riordan**
(**Chairperson, Board of Management**) in the school on Thursday, 14 May 2015.

Students and staff members were greatly heartened by the encouraging words spoken, with Sr. Helen quoting from "Scaffolding" by Seamus Heaney:

"Masons, when they start upon a building,
Are careful to test out the scaffolding;

Make sure that planks won't slip at busy points,
Secure all ladders, tighten bolted joints.

And yet all this comes down when the job's done
Showing off walls of sure and solid stone.

So if, my dear, there sometimes seem to be
Old bridges breaking between you and me

Never fear. We may let the scaffolds fall
Confident that we have built our wall."

Bishop Brennan caught the mood very well when he quoted Bob Marley – "Don't worry about a thing, 'cause every little thing gonna be alright."

There was a very large turnout of students and staff at the **Annual Prize-Giving Ceremony** in Rowe Street Church on Tuesday, 12 May 2015.

Representatives of the Board of Management and Parents' Council were present to see recognition of student achievement across a very wide range of activities – attendance, prefects, vice-prefects, Students' Council, Meitheal, Log-on Learning, Internet Safety, subject awards, special awards, sporting awards; the list is not exhaustive.

Special tribute was paid to our Chaplain, Fr. Jim Fegan, who will shortly take up his new appointment as parish priest in Ballindaggan. Thankfully, he remains as Loreto Chaplain!
