

Transition Year Newsletter

Christmas 2015

Educating the mind without educating the heart, is no education at all. *Aristotle*

We would like to encourage students to involve themselves as fully as possible in all aspects of the transition year experience. Among the activities that have been taking place during the first term are the following.

Poetry Slam Workshops

Inspireland's multi award winning poet, Stephen Murray, visited the school in September. All students were given the opportunity to participate in interactive workshops facilitated by Steve. He encouraged students to delve into their own experiences and imagination, to produce their own poems. The girls enjoyed the enthusiastic, energetic and sometimes manic approach of the poet on the day.

Bowling

Well done to all of the girls on their excellent Junior Certificate results. The following day the girls were allowed to start school at 11am. They were treated to tea and biscuits and allowed the opportunity to talk with their friends about their results and celebrations. At lunch time the girls travelled with the PE teachers to Ballyshannon where they were treated to Bowling.

Delphi Adventure Centre

Towards the end of September the Transition Year group travelled to Delphi Adventure centre for a residential bonding session. During the two days the girls were arranged into teams for activities such as kayaking, abseiling, climbing, mud running and the forest walk. The experience proved to be very enjoyable for the girls and it also allowed them the opportunity to get to know their team mates better.

Life choice Programme

The second group of students have just completed the Life Choice Programme. During this course the girls learn about topics such as relationships and responsible behaviour under the guidance of Catherine Mc Cann from NCYCS. As I'm sure you are aware the girls were then given the opportunity to bring a virtual baby home with them overnight. Judging by some of the tired faces the following morning, these babies were not quite as angelic as they first appeared. The girls were then given computerised feedback from Catherine.

Your Vision, Your Journey, Your Potential

Amy Conroy presented this workshop to all Transition Year students. She worked with the girls on setting SMART goals, study skills and an introduction to Mindfulness.

Requiem for Julie

The girls were provided with an opportunity in October to visit the Hawkswell Theatre to watch the Musical, "Requiem for Julie", in which some of their classmates and friends were participating.

DeafHear

Those students who chose not to go to the above musical were visited by representatives from DeafHear. They received a talk re the damage that listening to loud music through earphones can have on a person's hearing. They were then allowed an opportunity to put their earphones with the iPod attached onto a virtual head. The girls received feedback regarding the loudness of their music and any potential damage they may inflict upon their hearing. The representatives of DeafHear will return to the school again after Christmas to test the other students' earphones.

Public Access to the Law

In November the girls were visited by three barristers, two females and one male. They were introduced to topics such as, a definition of Law, sources of Law, concept of Justice and life as a practising barrister/solicitor etc. In the afternoon the students then participated in mock trials where they were divided into solicitors, barristers and jury. The barristers were very impressed with the abilities and potential that the students illustrated. It is hoped that some of the girls may enter the forthcoming Mock trial Competition in Dublin.

Work Experience

Work experience is an integral element of the transition year programme. We are very grateful to the employers of Sligo and beyond who provide students with opportunity to experience working life. Students must reflect upon and record their experiences in their TY journals. The school will also receive feedback from the employers re the student's ability to learn new tasks, interact with others, punctuality and other skills.

Ice Skating

On the 18th December two coaches of TY students left the school at 7am to travel to Dundrum for ice skating. The girls were also allowed some time for shopping and to soak up the Christmas atmosphere. Well it has been a very stressful time!! Having to go to work each day for a whole two weeks!!!

Gaisce

Many of our students have chosen to participate in the Gaisce programme. Ms Mc Quillan has organised classes in baking, sign language and yoga, which the girls can use to help them achieve this award. Other students have chosen to undertake voluntary work with various organisations. Thanks to Ms Mc Quillan and Ms Prendergast who have worked very hard to facilitate this programme within the school.

John Paul II Awards

The JP II awards programme aims to encourage students to become more actively involved in their local parishes. It is a national programme like Gaisce and some of our students have decided to pursue both this year.

Fund Raising

A large number of TY students volunteered to assist the Rotary Club with their remembrance tree fund raising initiative before Christmas. On other occasions the girls helped to fundraise for adults with Downs Syndrome in Sligo and with the North West Hospice coffee morning in the Lord Mayor's parlour.

Young Scientist Competition

Good luck to Mr Carolan and the 4 groups of TY students who have been selected to present their projects in the RDS in January. The girls have been working fervently on their research as they attempt to make the best impression possible on the judges at this prestigious competition. Don't forget to wear your best smiles for the cameras girls!

Sci-Fest

Sci-Fest takes place in Sligo I.T. in May. Like the Young Scientist it is a national competition and allows students an opportunity to undertake research and experiments. The girls' work is then presented at an exhibition in the I.T. where it will be viewed by judges. If any student is interested in exhibiting a project at Sci-fest they should contact Mr Mc Intyre or one of the other science teachers.

Ice-Skating

On Friday 18th December TY students were treated to ice-skating in Dundrum Town Centre with the opportunity to shop and soak up the Christmas atmosphere afterwards.

Public Speaking

Congratulations to Rhian Sayers and Aishling O'Reagan who were selected from the local Soroptomist Public Speaking competition to represent Sligo at the regional level. Congratulations also to Ms Murray who teaches public speaking to transition years and coached the girls for this competition.

Day of Reflection

Sr Dorothy arranged two days of reflection for the Transition Year classes. The days were facilitated by Gerry Keegan using his unique brand of storytelling, music and song. Feedback from students indicated that the days were both enlightening and enjoyable.

