



A Welcome Message from Our Head of Year 8

As Head of Year 8, it is a great privilege to have the opportunity to welcome our Yr8 pupils to Thornhill College. The term began with great occasion to meet parents and guardians who valued the chance to speak to Form Teachers and to immediately seed good relations between home and school.

Term 1 has been a very busy one for this year group already. They have immediately impressed with excellent behaviour, courteous manners and positive outlook. The girls are doing themselves, and their parents and guardians, very proud in the way they have embraced transition from Primary to Secondary School with great courage, self-confidence and determination.

Mercy Day was a wonderful opportunity to mark the girls' new journey in Thornhill. Representatives from each class joined Ms Mallett and Fr Clerkin in planting a Laburnum Tree which will be well on its way to maturity by the time the girls leave Thornhill in 7 years' time. Each pupil also enjoyed planting a daffodil bulb around the tree which we look forward to seeing blossom and bloom next April – a symbolic marker that suggests each girl has planted roots; a steady foundation upon which to build her progress here in Thornhill.

As the pupils settle in to this academic year, my hope for their future is that they will reach the heights of potential, build self-belief and dare to dream. This is very much a new beginning for everyone - pupils and parents alike - and it is my ambition to support and encourage all Yr8s to be the best they can be.



'God built and launched this year for you;
Upon the bridge you stand;
It's your ship, aye, your own ship,
And you are in command.
Just what the twelve months' trip will do
Rests wholly, solely, friend, with you.'
(Tennyson)

Ms Mary Auld
Head of Year 8





Welcome to 'Cuan' – Our Nurture Room

A safe haven tucked away in the Art Department of Thornhill College



A nurture room embraces the social, emotional or behavioural needs of individuals in a comfortable, safe and confidential environment. It allows these needs to be expressed in an environment designed to accommodate such expressions, and therefore reduces that burdensome feeling associated with mental health. Therefore, as it penetrates such a positive impact and plays a vital role in our school community, we decided to give our nurture room a name - Cuan.

Cuan was delicately chosen by our Irish Department, and translates to mean 'Haven', in other words a place of safety, tranquility and peacefulness represented in its many features, including the gentle mood lighting and nature-themed feature wall. Each and every staff member and pupil is entitled to visit Cuan (for up to 15 minutes) to relieve them of their everyday stresses and worries. Although private, the space is regularly checked by teachers and Wellness Ambassadors to ensure that it is kept tidy, social distancing is maintained and no more than four people attend at any one time.

Our Cuan creation would not have been possible without the surrounding support of our staff and fellow pupils. When the pandemic began to creep in, we were very lucky to have been virtually advised by the professional clinical psychologist and trauma specialist, Dr Karen Triesman on the benefits of introducing a nurture room into the school setting. Within months, the Wellness Ambassadors spread the word and conducted pupil feedback, whilst the teachers decided which classroom would accommodate a nurture room best. With the help of our caretakers, and Mr O'Hagan from the TD department, the room soon launched into life as the ceiling was lowered, floors were removed and Ikea shopping commenced! To mark our collective hard work, we were very blessed to have Professor Siobhán O'Neill, Mental Health Champion for Northern Ireland, come and officially open Cuan. Ultimately, Cuan was created by all to nurture all.

Like any school, Thornhill College has a duty to create a purposeful environment, as it is only natural that we experience on 'off-day' throughout our teenage years. To not only have an escape, but know that the option of stepping back from our everyday chaos within the school grounds is heart-warming, accommodating, and something that I am very proud to say Thornhill has achieved in destigmatising mental health.

Ava McGinn
Head Girl





8E with the Wildflowers they believe represent them



Donation Thanks

Our heartfelt thanks go to local wellbeing business, "I am Self Care" for the very generous donation made to our Nurture Room of their eco-friendly products including: Wellbeing Room Mists, Aromatherapy Roller Oils, Reed Diffusers, Essential Oil Blends for diffusers / oil burners and handmade eye pillows. Each product came with its own affirmation card which start with the words 'I am...'

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| I am...Energised | I am...Relaxed |
| I am...Loved | I am...Grounded |
| I am...Focused | I am...Me |

Such a wonderful contribution to our Cuan, which we are most grateful for.

Why a Wildflower Garden?

I have always seen wildflowers as a very special part of nature, as there is so much more to them than what people believe. They are not just pretty flowers, they represent something so much more. Each flower symbolises something completely different, for example, a snowdrop represents the ability to overcome obstacles, a dandelion is a symbol of personal growth, hope and healing. The lupin symbolises creativity, imagination and the strength to recover from personal situations.

On the note of recovery, this is a very important topic here at Thornhill as we want to reconnect our school in every way we can due to the circumstances we are in. This wildflower garden will enable us to come together as a whole and work together to appreciate each and every individual and what we stand for. Our wildflower garden will form a connection with our new nurture room 'Cuan' as we believe "nature is nurture".

The aim for our wildflower garden is to represent each of our pupils here at Thornhill. As each flower represents something new, there will be a range of flowers planted in our garden, so each student gets to decide which flower is best suited to their personality and so they stand out and are unique. This garden will be full of bright, bursting colours to show our individuality however it will connect us all as one, a school community.

Laura White
Deputy Head Girl



Donation Thanks

Our thanks go to the North West Youth Services for their very generous donation of sanitary products. We certainly appreciate the support of all community partners.



MERCY DAY BLESSINGS



Our Mercy Day Celebrations

On the 24th September Thornhill College commemorated the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy by celebrating the Mercy Ethos of our school. The foundation of our Mercy Ethos can be traced back to the life and teaching of Catherine McAuley. Catherine, based her life works on the Parable of the Sheep and Goats and the teaching "whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." It is through this teaching that our school community was reminded that all of us have a specific responsibility to reach out in Mercy to those who are in need and to give of our surplus. Catherine taught that 'the tender Mercy of God has given us one another', and our acknowledgement of the needs our worldwide family, has meant that this same spirit of love and justice was experienced by all.

With the impact of COVID restrictions, our school community adapted the annual traditions for this day and instead the celebration of our Mercy ethos was focused on activities for each year group. Each form class accessed a short video which reminded our pupils of why Mercy Day is celebrated and our Year 14 Mercy Ambassadors introduced themselves to the school community. The music, prayers and short video clip resonated with our pupils, in which they reflected on our unique Mercy Ethos and the impact it can have when we reach out with open hearts.

Representatives from Year 8, along with our school chaplain Fr Clerkin continued our annual tradition of planting a tree in the school grounds to symbolise the educational journey of this year group. As the tree grows, this will be a symbol of the journey that each of them will experience during their time at Thornhill College. Each Year 8 class was then escorted outside separately to plant their own daffodil bulb for the Season of Creation. This positive action will encourage the school community to realise the importance of acting as good stewards of God's creation. The Junior School also received a baked treat and time to sit with their form class to reconnect after a busy first month back in school.

In honour of Catherine McAuley's 'a comfortable cup of tea', both the Middle and Senior School students were given a cup of tea and a baked biscuit in their form groups. This period of bonding was very much welcomed and time was given to catching up with their friends and making new ones. Catherine said that sharing a cup of tea was a means to bring about healing, counselling and a positive way to warm your spirit. This was most certainly apparent for our pupils and could be easily seen in their smiles and happy chatter.

On the whole, the celebration of Mercy Day enabled the school to come together to reflect on our unique history and the value that Mercy has on both individuals and our wider community. In the words of Pope Francis, "a little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just." Happy memories were made and these will see us through over the next weeks and months.

Mrs Ciara Collins
Liturgy Co-ordinator





Creativity in Geography



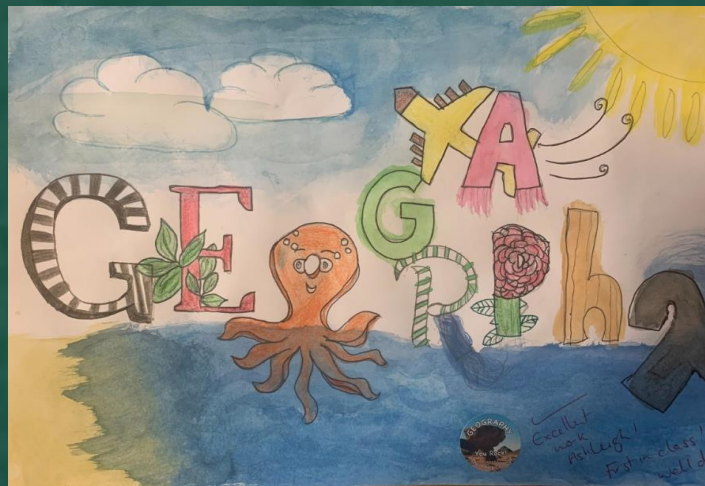
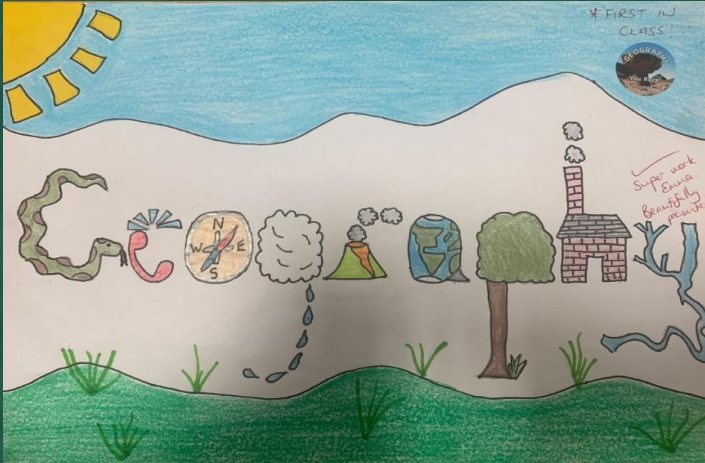
Congratulations to the winners of the Year 9 Geography Doodle Competition and Year 10 Geography Acrostic Poem Competition. It is fantastic to see such creative talents being used to demonstrate your geographical knowledge!

Year 9 Geography Doodle Winners:

Nia (9A), Niamh (9B), Hannah (9C), Ava (9D), Emma (9E), Ashleigh (9F), Clodagh (9G) and Rhea (9H)

Year 10 Geography Acrostic Poem Winners:

Lauren (10A), Sian (10B), Grace (10C), Rhea/ Roisin (10D), Ellen (10E), Orlaith (10F), Sophie (10G) and Shannon (10H)



Glacier is a moving mass or mixer of ice formed by the accumulation + compaction of snow on mountains.

Epicenter is the point on the earth's surface vertically above the Hypocenter point in the crust where a seismic rupture begins.

An Ox-bow lake is a horse-shaped lake at the side of the river. A long time ago an ox-bow lake became a meander on a river.

Gheoid is an imaginary line that indicates the sea level surface that undulates over all of Earth.

Ridge is a ridge of material at or near the surface of the ocean.

Active volcanoes have a recent history of eruptions, and have potential to erupt again.

Plate tectonics is a scientific theory that explains how major landforms are created as a result of Earth's subterranean movements.

Highland is a piece of land that's either elevated or in a mountainous or hilly section of a country.

Variable is an elongated erosional landform commonly found in deserts, resembling the hull of an inverted boat.

Outstanding Lauren! Fantastic work!

G IS FOR 'GLACIERS', SO MUCH LIKE RIVERS, THEY'RE OFTEN CALLED RIVERS OF ICE.

E IS FOR 'EARTHQUAKE', A SUDDEN VIOLENT SHAKING OF THE GROUND WHICH NEVER TURNS OUT NICE.

O IS FOR 'OZONE LAYER', A THIN LAYER THAT PROTECTS US FROM THE SUN'S HARMFUL RAYS.

G IS FOR 'GLOBAL WARMING', WHICH HEATS OUR PLANET DAY BY DAY.

R IS FOR 'RIVER', A LARGE NATURAL STREAM OF WATER FLOWING TO THE OCEAN, A LAKE OR ANOTHER RIVER.

A IS FOR 'AQUICLUD', A NON-LIVING THING SUCH AS WATER, AIR, SOIL, LIGHT, MINERALS AND EVEN SILVER.

P IS FOR 'PERMAFROST', GROUND THAT REMAINS FROZEN FOR AT LEAST 2 YEARS STRAIGHT.

H IS FOR 'HURRICANE', WHICH COULD LEAVE YOUR TOWN IN SUCH A BAD STATE.

I IS FOR 'YOU' AS A HUMAN WE ARE ALL A PART OF GEOGRAPHY.

Fantastic work Orlaith! Keep up the excellent standard of work!

G IS for 'global warming' created by us humans through greenhouse gases resulting in changing weather patterns. We need to make sure we take care of our planet. There is no planet B.

E IS for 'Eratosthenes' a mathematician who made the first measurements of the size of the earth.

O IS for 'ocean' a large area of water between continents. They join smaller seas together. Oceans cover 72% of Earth.

G IS for 'glaciology', the study of the internal dynamics and effects of glaciers.

R IS for 'river', a river is a stream of water. The passage where the river flows is called the river bed and the banks on each side is called the river banks.

A IS for 'atlas'. An atlas is a book of maps and charts. Many atlases contain facts and figures about certain places. They also show geographic features like topography of an area, landscape and political boundaries.

P IS for 'political geography', a branch of geography that deals with human governments, boundaries and political units.

H IS for 'hydrographer', hydrographers analyse and maintain the flow and quality of water in rivers.

Y IS for 'yardang', yardang is a large area of soft and porous consolidated rock that has been grooved by wind erosion.

Exquisite!! Super work Sophie!