



## Catholic Schools Week 2022 – Thornhill College Celebrations

Thornhill school community focused what is unique about our Catholic ethos and education during the annual Catholic Schools Week celebrations. During the opening Mass for CSW on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January, Bishop Donal outlined the theme for this year from the Gospel of John; *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"*, (John 10:10). Bishop Donal explained how Catholic Schools emphasise the hidden curriculum and actively show how young people can find ways of living life to the fullest. Inspired by his homily that schools should 'Care, Hope, Pray and Act,' we integrated this message into our activities for CSW. The whole school community took time to pray and quietly reflect during Monday morning by watching the beautiful digital assembly lead by our Year 8 pupils. During this reflection we witnessed the many gifts and talents showing how Thornhill pupils exemplify 'living life to the full' through the shoe box donations, the Hands Hampers, the enrichment crochet class and the wonderful fundraising completed by the Year 13 Mercy and JP2 groups for SVP, Sands and Children in Crossfire.

During Monday the school community also demonstrated their collegiality by departments entering our 'Bake-off' competition. Departments were tasked with baking a cake which best represents their subject and how this contributes to our school community by 'living life a full life'. It was a marvellous turnout and the we were all amazed with the outstanding effort and creativity of our colleagues. Not only did the cakes look spectacular but they also tasted delicious and we bonded together by all sharing slices of these fabulous bakes!

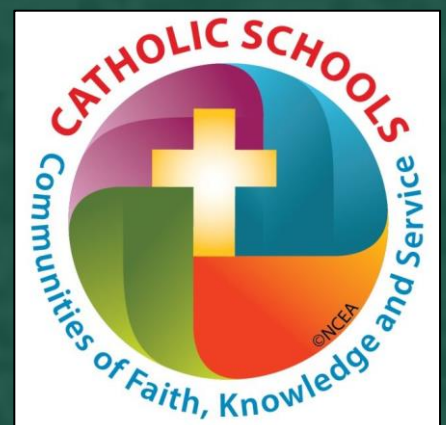
Throughout the week pupils in their RE class reflected on the theme for each day of CSW. They enjoyed discussing how living life to the full can be shown with our relationships with others, with God, within our school community and by reconnecting with our Grandparents following lockdown. Key Stage 3 pupils designed bunting, poignant hearts with their examples of living a full life, and flower bouquets of what being fulfilled means to each of them. Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils were given time to connect with these themes through mindfulness colouring and the creation of 'Crosses of Hope'. This work has been displayed in our Oratory and both pupils and staff are invited to pop in to look these stunning displays and offer a prayer of quiet contemplation.

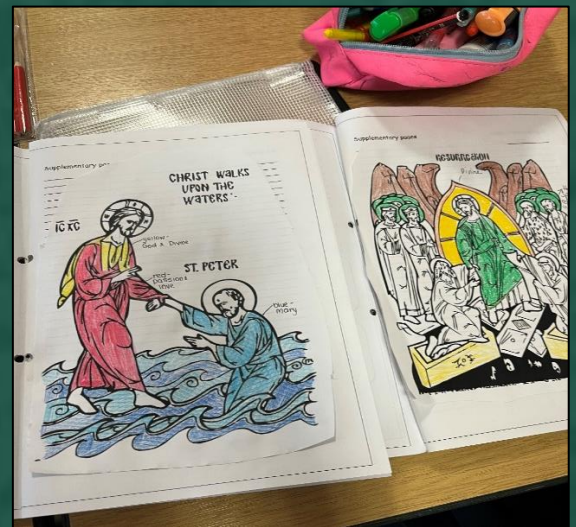
We certainly bonded as a school community and thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to celebrate the great work of our fabulous pupils. Finally, we ask you to consider the words of Pope Francis to young people on how living a full life has meaning. "Make the most of these years of your youth. Live life to the full whatever you do, dream and make good decisions...take risks even if it means making a few mistakes along the way." Be John 10:10 people, living a life of fulfilment and happiness.

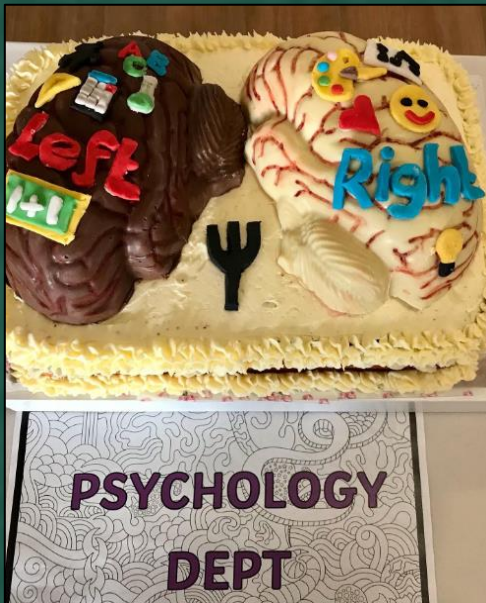
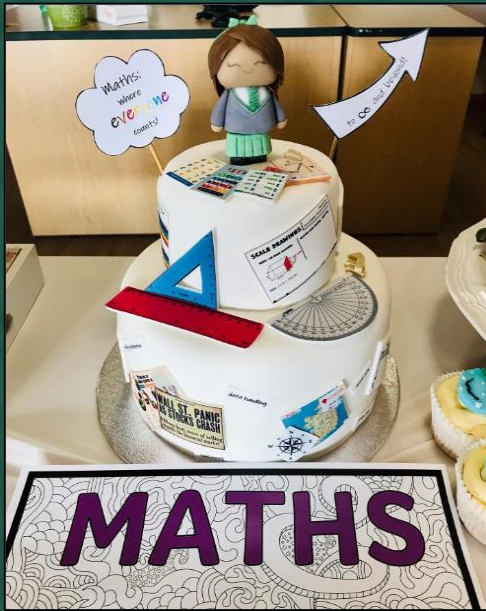
Mrs Ciara Collins and the RE Department



Live life to  
THE FULLEST,  
make a  
difference  
along the way







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*Educating concerned, informed, industrious members of the world community*

For a copy of our prospectus  
 and to watch a short video of what  
 Thornhill College has to offer visit  
[www.thornhillcollege.org.uk](http://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk)

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Dear Students / Parents / Carers

In the absence of a traditional open day this year, we are excited to share with you an address from our Head Girl to prospective students, a short film that captures the essence of all that Thornhill College has to offer prospective students and our digital prospectus. They can be accessed on our website at:

Head Girl (Ava McGinn) Address to Prospective Students  
<https://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk/information/head-girl-address-to-prospective-students>

Virtual Open Day Film  
<https://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk/information/virtual-open-day-video>

Digital Prospectus 2022  
<https://www.thornhillcollege.org.uk/information/thornhill-college-prospectus-2022>

You can also scan the above QR code for direct access to our digital prospectus.





## Mindful Moments



Congratulations to the students who are taking part in the Mindful Moments sessions with Aine.

In the fast paced, ever changing world we currently find ourselves in, this is an opportunity for our students to learn how to switch off and relax. In the Cuan room, a beautiful space that's been created to promote peace and tranquillity, students are taught breathing techniques and guided visualisations to support them in times of stress.

It's fabulous that the Thornhill community recognise the importance of student well-being and in Mindful Moments, students are encouraged to practice self-care, and to take time out for themselves. I think we could all do with more of this.

## Serenity Therapy Services

We are delighted to inform you that we have secured additional support to our counselling service and provision. Ms Roisin Lindsay is a CBT therapist with Serenity Therapy Services here in Derry and has recently joined the counselling support team at Thornhill College.

CBT is an effective intervention for many issues including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, OCD, PTSD and phobias. As we are aware the well-being and mental health of a student can be negatively impacted due to a number of reasons such as exam stress, anxieties, body image issues, grief and negative self-talk. Therefore, Roisin will work on a one-to-one basis with pupils providing personalised guidance and techniques to assist them.

If you believe your child could benefit from this service, please contact Ms Barr via the school info account: [info@thornhill.derry.ni.sch.uk](mailto:info@thornhill.derry.ni.sch.uk)



## Wildflower Winners

In the weeks leading up to our Christmas holidays, our year 8 pupils were busy constructing their creations for the wildflower garden sign competition hosted by the Senior Prefect Team. We were blown away by the dedication and artistic talent across the year group which made it impossible to choose one winner! Collectively, we decided to choose our favourite six designs, all of which were fabulous in their own unique way. These six have been incorporated into one design which has been sent off to the Nerve Centre to be made! We can't wait to see the end result & we will be sure to share it with our school community!

Huge congratulations to:

**Eadaoin Molloy**    **NataliaEffirul Ikhwan**  
**Freya Coyle**        **Molly McCaul**  
**Kirsten Mackey**    **Bethany McColgan**

We want to extend a huge thank you to everyone who entered the competition! Keep up the amazing work!

The Senior Prefect Team





## Home Economics



Well done to all our Year 8 students who worked industriously in Home Economics last week during their practical classes to make their very own pizzas. We are sure they tasted great!



## Year 9 Technology

Year 9 Clock Project: Time flies when you are having fun in the TD department. The students had lots of learning in this project looking into mechanisms and getting creative in the workshop to produce a functioning clock.



### Year 9 Clock Project

1 Open camera app / QR scanner on your phone, point phone at QR code.

2 Finally tap the pop up banner and video will play.



YEAR 9  
CLOCK  
PROJECT  
PIC•COLLAGE



## YEAR 10 MUSIC AMP



PIC•COLLAGE

## Year 10 Technology

Year 10 Amplifier Project: Fantastic design outcomes from our Year 10 students. The students demonstrated brilliant practical skills using a range of workshop machinery safely and with accuracy. Well done!

### Year 10 Amplifier Project

1 Open camera app / QR scanner on your phone, point phone at QR code.

2 Finally tap the pop up banner and video will play.



## Junior Rewards Scheme

Our congratulations go to our Key Stage 3 students for their fantastic achievements being recognised through our Junior Rewards Scheme. In the month of January alone the following points were awarded to students:

Year 8 = 704 points      Year 9 = 384 points      Year 10 = 338 points

Well done everyone and keep up the great work.  
We are extremely proud of you all!





Molly is a member of the Playhouse Musical Theatre Company



Molly recording back-up vocals in Blast Furnace for the 'White Handkerchief' along with Sharon Duffy who is also a professional actress and past pupil of Thornhill College

## Molly stars in the 'White Handkerchief'

Our congratulations go to our Year 14 student Molly Duffy who is currently enjoying her first professional role as an actress with the Playhouse Music Theatre Company, starring in the 'White Handkerchief' stage musical to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Bloody Sunday.

The 'White Handkerchief' is an impassioned, sensitive, reverent elegy and new drama which premiered on Bloody Sunday's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and is being performed in the Guildhall from Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> January until Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The book and lyrics are by Liam Campbell, music by Brian O'Doherty, directed by Kieran Griffiths and it has been produced by the Playhouse. The BBC have also been making a fly-on-the-wall documentary following the rehearsals for the show for the last few months and this is being narrated by Liam Neeson.

During her involvement in this production Molly has been afforded the opportunity to participate in movement and dance training with professional choreographer Nadine Hegarty, technical voice training with musical director Ben Leavy and a screen acting workshop with BAFTA winning director Kenny Glenann.

Well done Molly, we are extremely proud of you and your achievements!



## Thankyou

Thank you to Year 12 pupils Katie (12A) and Cara (12D) for their kindness and honesty. The girls noticed that a member of staff had dropped a sum of money and they made sure it was immediately returned. Ms Mallett was delighted to welcome the girls for a hot chocolate at break time.



## Important Dates

**Year 10 & 11 Internal Examinations** take place between **Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January and Friday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

The **Half Term Break** takes place from **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> until Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022.**

**Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February** is a **Staff INSET Day** – students have the day off.



## The Advice of a Year 14 Student to Year 13 Students

In term one of my final year at Thornhill College, as a Year 14's I have overcome the challenging task of the UCAS process with my peers, with the support of our family, friends and teachers; drafting personal statements, securing work experience and more drafting of our personal statements to reach our end goal. While it initially felt like a huge mountain to climb, now that my personalised statement and choices are finalised, my reference has been written and my application has been submitted, it feels like a blur. If I could go back to the start of KS5, I would definitely have some advice for my younger self. However, as this is impossible, I can share my experience with the year 13's of today instead.

You will hear your careers teachers continually emphasise the importance of securing a range of work experience and, as much as I hate to admit this, it is very important and all the more so to build up your portfolio of experience in Year 13 before you embark on your application in Year 14. Due to the pandemic it has been increasingly difficult to attain work experience, which the universities understand. However, there are a range of online courses you can immerse yourself in to complete virtual work experience and you not let the challenge of finding relevant opportunities stop you from getting where you want to be! I am hoping to study creative writing and English Literature at university and at first I felt disheartened by the lack of online resources to accommodate for my course choices. Because of this, I decided to take matters into my own hands. I did the appropriate research and emailed a number of publishing agencies, authors, poets and even newspaper agencies; I did not receive many responses but this did not stop me from using the resources and contacts I now gained to ask all the questions I had, no matter how stupid I felt they were. So, year 13's, if you don't ask, you don't get – be proactive!!!

I wish I could say that I have soared through my years at Thornhill but keeping on top of work can be a challenge, attempting to find the balance between the time commitment needed for studying, extra-curricular interests, part-time work and of course maintaining a social life. But keeping to deadlines and being organised is the best way to stay on track. But despite this, everyone makes mistakes; if you score less than expected on a test; it slips your mind to press "Hand In" on a google classroom assignment; or you bring the wrong booklet to class. It is not the end of the world and you will recover. Focus on how you can do better rather than focusing on where you went wrong!

But how do you prepare/be organised for an exam? Simply, the earlier you start revising, the easier the process will be. Keeping notes updated and organised (using files for each subject, file dividers and sticky notes) will help you find what you need efficiently and keep you right. Making sure you do your notes over time will reduce the amount of writing approaching your exam so you can focus on actually learning the course content. Use the specification as your study guide, the exam board cannot ask you anything that is not on that specification!

Some words of encouragement from current Year 14's:

Lily and Hannah from 14E say to *"Do a variety of work experience to explore your options."*; *"Use your free lessons wisely."*

Ellena in 14H advises you to *"Start your personal statement when your careers teacher tells you to and volunteer over the summer when you have the free time to do it."*

Mary from 14H warns you that *"The jump from year 13 to year 14 is significant."* (Keeping up with your work and studies will ease the process).

Róis in 14E reminds you to *"Stick to deadlines especially if you are an Art student!"*

Finally, don't let yourself get carried away with the worry of all that needs to be done, you will get there in the end, make sure you enjoy the journey as well, while it lasts. Seven years flies by and those life-long friends you have made will all follow their own paths, doing so many different things. It may seem scary now, but everyone is in the same boat. So enjoy what is left of your school years but be excited for what is to come!

Hannah Coyle (Year 14)



DREAM BIG WORK HARD!



## 50 Years On From Bloody Sunday

*Contribution by Year 14 Student Róis Hutton – to an article published in the Belfast Telegraph*

Bloody Sunday feels “a lot more distant to her generation and less of a threat” as everyone her age was born after the Good Friday Agreement.

However, as a history student she studied the Troubles in detail alongside 100 young people. “We learned about Bloody Sunday and its place in the recent history of Derry and Northern Ireland more generally. That makes us 100 more young people who can help the city heal and move on from the horrible events of that day,” she said.

“Bloody Sunday still has the power to divide people in Derry, as on one side of the river there was graffiti condemning the soldiers during the trials while on the other side Parachute Regiment flags flew high on lampposts to celebrate what they did.”

Issues such as Brexit have a greater impact on how young people see the future, Róis explained. The lack of leadership shown at Stormont in dealing with bread and butter issues and policing have more impact on how they view the Executive.

“That is not to say we are not aware of the Troubles, nor that we are insensitive to the awful impact it had on countless people all around us. Hearing stories of the Troubles is something that comes with growing up in Derry, whether you want to hear them or not.

“It is vitally important that we do not forget the people whose lives were lost on that day in January 1972, nor the very many people affected by their loss.

“Perhaps the most important reason for remembering is that we learn from the past, and heal from it, and make sure that we never let anything like it happen again.”



### Congratulations!

Congratulations to all the pupils who represented Thornhill College at the District Cross Country Championships held recently.

Laura McGeady, Year 8, finished in 6<sup>th</sup> place and has qualified for the Ulster Championships.

The Intermediate girls won the team gold. Hannah Wade had an outstanding race to finish in 1<sup>st</sup> place. The other team members, Aoife Clarke, Faustina Collins, Lily-Mai Burton, Sarah Drinan and Meabh Coyle all finished in the top 18.

The senior girls finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Sophia Byrne finished in 4<sup>th</sup>, Kate McMenamin in 9<sup>th</sup> and Erin O’Loughlin in 17<sup>th</sup>. The Junior team also finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place, led home by Erin Hegarty, Isabelle Scott and Ellen McArdle.

The Junior, Intermediate and Senior teams have all qualified for the Ulster Championships on February 9<sup>th</sup> in Belfast.





**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils

She became  
a podiatrist  
**Sarah Black**



#YouCanToo



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils

She became an  
occupational therapist  
**Megan Divin**



#YouCanToo

#YouCanToo

#PastPupils

#ThePowerOfEducation



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils

She became  
an astrophysicist  
**Dr Erin Higgins**

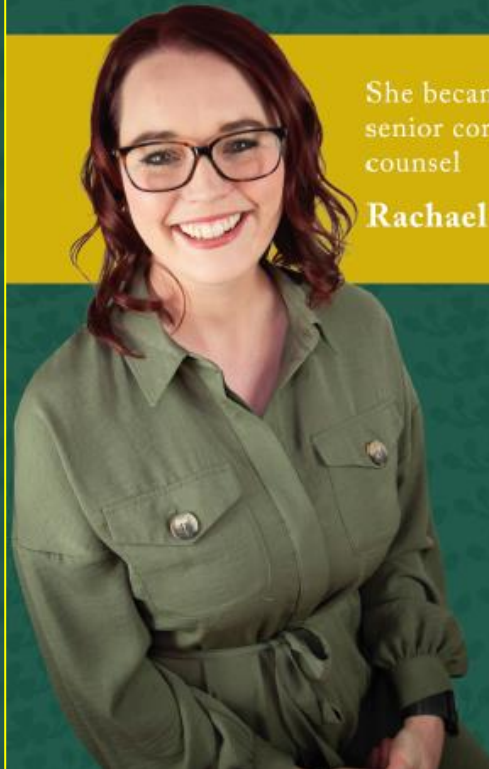


#YouCanToo



**Thornhill College**  
Past Pupils

She became  
senior corporate  
counsel  
**Rachael McChrystal**



#YouCanToo